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OUT IN THE OPEN

Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression

MAIN REPORT

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The cover image is derived from a series of postage stamps released by United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) as part of the UN Free & Equal campaign led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The stamps by UNPA art director Sergio Baradat, celebrate the diversity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

PHOTO CREDITS:

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FOREWORD

All forms of discrimination and violence in schools are an obstacle to the fundamental right to quality education of children and young people and no country can achieve inclusive and equitable quality education if students are discriminated against or experience violence because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity.

In 2011, UNESCO convened the first-ever UN international consultation on homophobic bullying in educational institutions, recognizing that this complex and sensitive issue needs to be addressed as part of wider efforts to prevent school-related violence and gender-based violence, in order to achieve quality education for all.

Since then UNESCO has expanded its work on school-related gender-based violence, including preventing and addressing homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings, as part of its mandate to ensure that learning environments are safe, inclusive and supportive for all and its contribution to the achievement of the new global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As part of this work, and within the framework of a three-year programme supported by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, *Education and Respect for All: Preventing and Addressing Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying in Educational Institutions*, UNESCO has provided support for efforts to improve the evidence base, including the global review of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings and of education sector responses that provided the basis for this report. These efforts have contributed to a better understanding of the nature, scale and effects of violence in schools, including the links between school-related gender-based violence and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, and of the elements of a comprehensive education sector response.

This report presents the main findings of the global review. It aims to give an analysis of the most up-to-date data on the nature, scope and impact of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression and of current action. It also intends to provide education sector stakeholders with a framework for planning and implementing effective responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression as part of wider efforts to prevent and address violence in schools.

Qian Tang (Ph.D.)
Assistant Director General for Education

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Particular thanks are due to those who contributed to this main global review report, including Piotr Pawlak Maciej and Claudia Moreno Uriza who conducted a desk review of indicators for measuring violence in schools, and Hivos and Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA) who worked in partnership with UNESCO on a multi-country study of gender, diversity and violence in schools in Southern Africa. UNESCO would also like to thank all those who reviewed drafts of this main report, including Sophie Aujean (ILGA Europe), Suki Beavers (UNDP), Eliza Byard (GLSEN, USA), Esther Corona (Mexican Association for Sex Education and World Association for Sexual Health), Julio Cezar Dantas (Todo Mejora, Chile), Peter Dankmeijer (GALE, The Netherlands), Daouda Diouf (ENDA, Senegal), Peter Gross (UNICEF), Tiffany Jones (New England University, Australia), Changu Mannathoko (UNICEF), Remmy Shawa (Sonke Gender Justice Network, South Africa) and colleagues from Education International.

The development of this main report and of its summary was coordinated by a team led by Christophe Cornu, Senior Programme Specialist, under the supervision of Christopher Castle, Chief of the Section of Health and Education, and the overall guidance of Soo Hyang Choi, Director of the Division for Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development at UNESCO. UNESCO staff who provided inputs included Mary Guinn Delaney, Cara Delmas, Joanna Herat, Yongfeng Liu, Justine Sass and Tigran Yepoyan. UNESCO would also like to thank Bruno Selun and Jasna Magić (Kumquat Consult), who drafted the original text of the reports, and Sarah Middleton Lee, who edited this report.

ABBREVIATIONS

CSO	Civil society organization
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
ENDA	Environment and Development Action in the Third World
EU	European Union
FRA	Fundamental Rights Agency
GALA	Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action
GLEN	Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (Ireland)
GLSEN	Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (USA)
GSA	Gay Straight Alliance
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPE	Health and Physical Education
IDAHOT	International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia
IGLYO	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Youth and Student Organisation
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
ILGA-EUROPE	European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
LGB	Lesbian, gay and bisexual
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
YRBS	Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (US)

GLOSSARY

The terms and concepts used in this report reflect widely accepted definitions as well as work conducted by UNESCO and partners on school-related gender-based violence[1] and, where possible, are consistent with United Nations definitions.

Definitions for common terms and concepts used in this report include:

Adolescent:	A person aged 10–19 years, as defined by the United Nations.
Bisexual:	A person who is attracted to both men and women. Some men and women have adopted the term to describe their identity.
Bullying in schools:	A type of violence that can be characterized as: ● involving deliberately harmful or aggressive behaviour ● being repeated over time, and ● involving a power imbalance between those who bully and those who are bullied. Bullying can involve: ● **Physical bullying**, including repeated hitting, kicking and taking (or threatening to take) possessions; and ● **Psychological bullying**, including **verbal bullying** (repeated mocking, name calling and unwanted teasing) and **social or relational bullying** (repeated exclusion, gossiping, the spreading of rumours and the withholding of friendship). Cyber bullying is a type of psychological bullying. Acts of bullying are often also referred to as acts of intimidation. It is commonly accepted that bullying does not include sexual coercion and harassment, which are classified under sexual violence.
Child:	A person under 18 years, as defined by the United Nations.
Corporal punishment:	Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light.
Curriculum:	A curriculum addresses questions such as what students of different ages should learn and be able to do, why, how and how well.
Cyber bullying:	A type of psychological bullying. It includes repeated threats, criticism or unkind comments or images that are sent using information and communication technology, such as mobile phones, email or that are posted on social media, including chat rooms and networking sites.

1 Key UNESCO reference materials include: *Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying, 2012 [1], Teaching Respect for All: Implementation Guide, 2014 [2] and Global Guidance on Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence, 2015* [3].

Discrimination:	Exclusion or unfair treatment of a particular person or group of people based on race, colour, ethnicity, sex, gender, age, religion, nationality, ethnicity (culture), language, political opinions, socio-economic status, poverty, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics or other personal traits. Victims of discrimination are prevented from enjoying the same rights and opportunities as other people. Discrimination goes against the basic principle of human rights: that all people are equal in dignity and entitled to the same fundamental rights. Discrimination is often manifested through comments, bullying, name calling or social exclusion. There are many manifestations of discrimination in educational institutions, including violence.
Educational setting/institution:	An establishment whose primary activity is education. These include: schools (from pre-primary levels through primary grades onto secondary schooling); colleges; universities; and other places of learning that provide tertiary or higher education. Educational institutions could be public or private. *In this report, "schools" is often used to refer to all educational settings.*
Education sector/ system:	All the activities whose primary purpose is the provision of education in educational institutions, as well as the people, institutions, resources and processes – arranged together in accordance with established policies – to support the provision of education in educational institutions at all levels of the system. At the national level, the education sector/system is usually coordinated by one or several ministries of education.
Gay:	Same-sex sexual attraction, same-sex sexual behaviour and same-sex cultural identity in general. It often specifically refers to men who experience sexual attraction to, and the capacity for an intimate relationship primarily with, other men.
Gender:	The social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships: between women and men and girls and boys; and between women and between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes.
Genderqueer:	A person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.
Gender-based violence:	Violence that is perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes and is enforced by unequal power dynamics. This is a manifestation of discrimination on the grounds of gender.
Gender expression:	How a person expresses their own gender to the world, such as through names, clothes, how they walk, speak, communicate, societal roles and their general behaviour.
Gender identity:	A person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned to them at birth. This includes the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.

Gender non-conformity/non-conforming:	People who do not conform to either of the binary gender definitions of male or female, as well as those whose gender expression may differ from standard gender norms. In some instances, individuals are perceived as gender non-conforming by other people because of their gender expression. However, these individuals may not perceive themselves as gender non-conforming. Gender expression and gender non-conformity are clearly related to individual and social perceptions of masculinity and femininity.
Gender variance:	Expressions of gender that do not match those predicted by one's assigned sex at birth, including people who identify as transgender, transsexual, queer or intersex.
Heteronormativity:	The belief that heterosexuality is the normal or default sexual orientation.
Homophobia:	The fear, discomfort, intolerance or hatred of homosexuality and sexually diverse people.
Homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings:	A form of school-related gender-based violence that is grounded in the fear, discomfort, intolerance or hatred of: ● homosexuality and sexually diverse people (homophobia), and ● transgender and other people perceived to transgress gender norms (transphobia). This violence targets students based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. The targets are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and others whose gender identity/expression does not fit into binary gender norms. Intersex students may also be the subjects of this violence, but there is currently no available scientific data on this. Homophobic and transphobic violence can involve: physical violence; psychological violence, including verbal and emotional abuse; sexual violence, including rape, coercion and harassment, and bullying, including cyber bullying. *This report uses 'homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings' to refer to all types of school-related gender-based violence that are based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, including bullying. However, where research addressed specific types of violence – such as bullying – this is stated.*
Homosexual/ homosexuality:	A person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex.
Intersex:	People who are born with sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations. In some cases, intersex traits are visible at birth, while, in others, they are not apparent until puberty. Some chromosomal intersex variations may not be physically apparent at all. Being intersex relates to biological sex characteristics and is distinct from a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. An intersex person may be straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual, and may identify as female, male, both or neither.[2]
Lesbian:	A woman who experiences sexual attraction to, and the capacity for an intimate relationship primarily with, other women.

2 Adapted from: *Fact Sheet: Intersex, Free and Equal*, United Nations for LGBT Equality [4]

LGBTI:	It stands for Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex. *This report uses 'LGBTI' students to refer to all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex students who may be affected by homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. Where intersex (I) or transgender (T) students are not included in the data presented in the report, the acronyms have been amended to LGBT, or LGB, depending on the groups for whom data are available.*
Men who have sex with men (MSM):	Men who have sex with men – regardless of whether or not they also have sex with women or have a personal or social gay or bisexual identity. This concept also includes men who self-identify as heterosexual, but who have sex with other men.
Queer:	A reclaimed word that can be used as an umbrella term for a range of sexual identities including LGBTI or gender questioning. It is also used by some people who do not want to label themselves.
Questioning:	A person who is interrogating their sexual orientation or gender identity.
School-related gender-based violence:	A form of violence in schools. It is perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes and is enforced by unequal power dynamics. It is a manifestation of discrimination on the grounds of gender. As with other forms of violence in schools, school-related gender-based violence can: involve different types of violence; occur in different educational settings; and be carried out by different categories of perpetrators.
Sex:	Classification of people as male, female or intersex, assigned at birth, based on anatomy and biology.
Sexual orientation:	A person's capacity for profound emotional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender, the same gender or more than one gender. For example, gay men experience sexual attraction to, and the capacity for an intimate relationship primarily with, other men. Lesbian women experience sexual attraction to, and the capacity for an intimate relationship primarily with, other women. Bisexual individuals are attracted to both men and women.
Transgender:	A person whose gender identity differs from their sex at birth. Transgender people may be male-to-female (female identity and appearance) or female-to-male (male identity and appearance). Transgender people may be heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.
Transphobia:	Transphobia is the fear, rejection or aversion – often in the form of stigmatizing attitudes or discriminatory behaviour – towards transgender people, including transsexuals and transvestites.
Transsexual:	A transgender person who is in the process of, or has undertaken, treatment (which may include surgery and hormonal treatment) to make their body congruent with their preferred gender.
Transvestite:	A person who regularly, although not all the time, wears clothes that are mostly associated with another gender than their birth gender.

Violence in schools:	The different types of violence that affect children in schools and other educational settings. It can involve: ● physical violence, including corporal punishment ● psychological violence, including verbal and emotional abuse ● sexual violence, including rape, coercion and harassment, and ● bullying. These different types of violence often overlap and reinforce each other. Violence in schools can occur in schools and other educational settings (classrooms, playgrounds, toilets, changing rooms) and around schools, as well as on the way to or from schools. Violence in schools can be carried out by different categories of perpetrators – students' peers, but also by educational and non-educational staff.
Young person:	A person between 10 and 24 years old, as defined by the United Nations.
Youth:	A person between 15 and 24 years old, as defined by the United Nations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence in schools and other educational settings is a worldwide problem. Students who are perceived not to conform to prevailing sexual and gender norms, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), are more vulnerable. Violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, also referred to as homophobic and transphobic violence, is a form of school-related gender-based violence. It includes physical, sexual and psychological violence and bullying and, like other forms of school-related violence, can occur in classes, playgrounds, toilets and changing rooms, on the way to and from school and online. This report presents the findings of a global review, commissioned by UNESCO, of homophobic and transphobic violence in schools and education sector responses.

THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

A significant proportion of LGBT students experience homophobic and transphobic violence in school. This is shown consistently by data from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and the Pacific, with the proportion affected ranging from 16 per cent in Nepal to 85 per cent in the United States. LGBT students are also more likely to experience such violence at school than at home or in the community.

LGBT students report a higher prevalence of violence at school than their non-LGBT peers. In New Zealand, for example, lesbian, gay and bisexual students were three times more likely to be bullied than their heterosexual peers and in Norway 15-48 per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual students reported being bullied compared with 7 per cent of heterosexual students.

Students who are not LGBT but are perceived not to conform to gender norms are also targets. In Thailand, for example, 24 per cent of heterosexual students experienced violence because their gender expression was perceived as non-conforming and, in Canada, 33 per cent of male students experienced verbal violence related to their actual or perceived sexual orientation including those who did not identify as gay or bisexual.

School-related homophobic and transphobic violence affects students' education, employment prospects and well-being. Students targeted are more likely to feel unsafe in school, miss classes or drop out. For example, in the United States, 70 per cent of LGBT students felt unsafe at school, in Thailand, 31 per cent of students teased or bullied for being or being perceived to be LGBT reported absence from school in the past month and, in Argentina, 45 per cent of transgender students dropped out of school. As a result, students who experience homophobic and transphobic violence may achieve poorer academic results than their peers. LGBT students reported lower academic attainment in Australia, China, Denmark, El Salvador, Italy and Poland. Homophobic and transphobic violence also has adverse effects on mental health including increased risk of anxiety, fear, stress, loneliness, loss of confidence, low self-esteem, self-harm, depression and suicide, which also adversely affect learning.

THE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE

The education sector has a responsibility to provide safe and inclusive learning environments for all students. Addressing homophobic and transphobic violence in schools is critical to effective learning, to meet human rights commitments, including the right to education

and the rights of the child, and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG4 – ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Effective education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence require a comprehensive approach. Such an approach includes all of the following elements: effective policies, relevant curricula and training materials, training and support for staff, support for students and families, information and strategic partnerships and monitoring and evaluation. It also includes both preventing and responding to violence, involves all relevant stakeholders and is implemented at national and sub-national levels.

Few countries have all of the elements of a comprehensive education sector response in place. Very few countries have education sector policies that address homophobic and transphobic violence or include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in curricula or learning materials. In most countries, staff lack training and support to address sexual orientation and gender identity/expression and to prevent and respond to homophobic and transphobic violence. Although many countries provide support for students who experience violence, services are often ill-equipped to deal with homophobic and transphobic violence. Partnerships with civil society organizations with expertise in preventing and responding to homophobic and transphobic violence can contribute to effective responses. Few countries collect data on the nature, prevalence or impact of homophobic and transphobic violence, which contributes to low awareness of the problem and lack of evidence for planning effective responses. Only three countries have conducted large-scale evaluations of programmes to prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence in schools.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The global review recommends that the education sector takes the following actions to support effective responses to school-related homophobic and transphobic violence:

1. Monitor systematically the prevalence of violence in educational settings, including violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
2. Establish comprehensive national and school policies to prevent and address violence in educational settings, including violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
3. Ensure that curricula and learning materials are inclusive.
4. Provide training and support to teachers and other education and school staff to prevent and address violence in educational settings, including violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
5. Ensure safe school environments are inclusive and provide support for students affected by violence, including violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, and their families.
6. Provide access to non-judgmental and accurate information on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression through information campaigns and partnerships with civil society and the wider school community.
7. Evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of education sector responses to violence, including violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

This introduction provides the key concepts addressed in this report – violence in schools, school-related gender-based violence and homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. It explains the aim and audience of the report, how it was developed and its limitations, and outlines the structure of the report. This introduction also presents scientific data and an analysis on the nature of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings and its educational, health, well-being and employment impacts for students.

> No violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable.
>
> UN Global Study on Violence against Children, 2006 [4]

WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

A large body of evidence compiled in 2014 revealed the extent of violence against children in the world [5] in various settings, including at home, in their local communities and at school. While schools and other educational settings are supposed to be safe environments, where children and young people can learn and develop without fearing any threats and where they feel protected, existing data on the high prevalence of different forms of violence in schools are alarming. For example, data from 106 countries collected through reliable international surveys show that the proportion of adolescents aged 13 to 15 who say that they have recently experienced bullying ranges from 7 per cent to 74 per cent [5, pp. 120–121].

As part of its work on preventing and addressing violence in schools, UNESCO commissioned a comprehensive global review of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in schools and other educational settings and of education sector responses.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THIS REPORT?

This report aims to provide the first ever global synthesis of data on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings, and existing responses by the education sector in all regions of the world, including gaps in those responses. It aims to be a tool for evidence-based advocacy and programming by education policy-makers, including ministries of education and other educational authorities; general education stakeholders; and all those concerned with the well-being and protection of children and young people.

This report aims to provide a tool to support evidence-based advocacy and programming by the education sector. It serves as a stock-take, documenting the most systematic and up-to-date data on:

- **Violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings** in all regions of the world, and
- **Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings** in all regions of the world.

The data outlined in this report can be used for indicative comparisons across countries in the same region, as well as across regions. It also serves as a form of baseline against which future progress in this area can be assessed.

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE FOR THIS REPORT?

The primary audience for this report is **education policy-makers and other key stakeholders** who are responsible for the safety, health and well-being of students. This includes, most importantly, ministries of education. It also includes other relevant government ministries, as well as national human rights agencies and institutions.

The other audiences for this report include:

- **Non-governmental organizations** (NGOs) working with students and young people that are interested in inclusive educational policies.
- **Teacher and education workers' unions and organizations** working at all levels in the education sector.
- **Students, parents and local communities** working towards safe and inclusive schools.
- **Academics and researchers** with an interest in gender, sexuality and human rights as they relate to education.
- **Development partners** supporting human rights, gender equality and GBV interventions and programming.

HOW WAS THIS REPORT DEVELOPED?

Data collection

To represent the vast diversity of information available on the subject, this report collected data in four ways:

1) **Literature review:** A web-based desk review was carried out of over 500 different resources, including research articles, published and unpublished reports, operational toolkits and manuals, policy papers, peer-reviewed literature and media reports (see Box 1). These addressed violence in schools, school-related gender-based violence and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings in all regions of the world.

BOX 1 INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA FOR THE LITERATURE REVIEW

To be included in this report, studies had to:

- provide data on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings;
- demonstrate sound quantitative or qualitative approaches to data collection;
- be available online; and
- be dated between 2000 and 2015.

Studies with very small samples (in relation to the country or context studied) were mostly excluded or are clearly identified as such in this report.

The literature review attempted to ensure regional diversity. To this end, it: only included the most recent or relevant data from countries that are heavily represented in this area of research; and purposefully included data from countries that are less well represented.

When considering education sector responses, the interventions had to relate directly to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings and to be initiated, supported or implemented (at least in part) by the education sector.

2) **Regional consultation processes:** The findings of three regional initiatives, coordinated by UNESCO within the framework of a global programme (Education and Respect for All: Preventing and Addressing Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying in Educational Institutions), were analysed and incorporated.

   The processes included: a Regional Consultation on Homophobic and Transphobic Violence in Educational Institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean (held in Bogotá, Colombia, October 2014); and an Asia Pacific Consultation on School Bullying Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression (held in Bangkok, Thailand, June 2015). These events brought together representatives from ministries of education, UN agencies, research bodies, teachers' organizations, teachers' unions and human rights NGOs.

   In Southern Africa, a five-country study (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) addressed the scope and nature of violence and gender-based violence in schools in general. For the first time in the region, it also explored violence related to sexual and gender diversity.

3) **Data collection instrument:** A specific instrument was designed to gather data for this report. It enabled the systematic review of national education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings and how such violence is monitored. The instrument was sent to 20 key informants and was completed by 12 from North America and Western and Central Europe. These included representatives from ministries of education, academia and CSOs.

4) **Key informant interviews:** Formal and informal interviews were held with 53 key informants. These included representatives of national governments, multilateral organizations, academia and CSOs[3] working on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational institutions and based in countries and regions not covered by the regional consultation processes. The informants were selected on the basis of their ability to contribute an informed understanding of education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings in their specific country or region.

3 The civil society representatives included: NGOs representing young people and students; NGOs working to protect and promote the human rights of LGBTI people; and teachers' unions.

Data on school-related violence including gender-based violence, and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in particular, were collected from 94 countries and territories and analysed for the purpose of this report.[4]

Overall, the methodology found that very few policies and programmes addressing violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings have been evaluated scientifically (in terms of their processes, outcomes and impact). It is, therefore, difficult to refer to most policies and programmes as being evidence-*based*. However, a number of initiatives in the education sector have shown positive results and can be described as evidence-*informed* or *promising* practices. The examples and case studies presented in this report were selected because they are illustrative of such practices and are well documented.

Limitations to data collection

The research for this report had a number of limitations. These include the fact that it focused on resources available in English, French and Spanish and did not directly access those in other languages (for which it relied on key informants' voluntary assistance). This proved particularly problematic when trying to access data on important developments in Nordic countries (such as Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden).

A further limitation was that the research did not examine all countries in the world – as the research team focused on those where it knew information existed or was obtainable. The review also only included studies that were publicly available online or provided by key informants. Those available solely in print or through paid access were not considered. Finally, the research reviewed studies with greatly varying designs, sample sizes and data collection methods. As such, the pieces of data presented in the text are often not directly comparable to each other.

Data on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings vary widely in their quality, scope and availability. States rarely collect data themselves. In the majority of countries where data are available, they have been gathered through studies by NGOs or academia. Many such studies consist of surveys conducted among LGBTI respondents reached through LGBTI websites, local community venues, schools or university clubs, NGOs or at events. These data are valuable for understanding the nature and impacts of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings. However, they do not bring the population-level rigour and reliability of large-scale studies that use random sampling and quantitative analysis.

Overall, these limitations reflect the diversity and disparity in data collection on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational institutions and the education sector's response. UNESCO intends this report to be a contribution to addressing this important field in a more harmonized and globally comparable way.

HOW IS THIS REPORT STRUCTURED?

This report presents the key findings of the global review and is organized as follows:

- Section 1 provides the definition of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/

4 Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa. North America: Canada and the United States of America. Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. Asia and the Pacific: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burma, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Kiribati, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Tonga, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. Europe: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

- Section 2 provides an overview of the prevalence of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression worldwide.
- Section 3 discusses the response to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, describing the principles and elements of a comprehensive education sector response and the extent to which countries are implementing these elements.
- Section 4 includes recommendations and related actions to strengthen the response to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in schools and other educational settings.

1.1. What is violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings?

> Homophobic bullying is an unacceptable infringement of basic human rights. In the school setting, homophobia is a direct violation of the right to quality education. It leads to absenteeism, poorer academic performance and achievement, and sometimes to suicide. The right to quality education is not the privilege of a few. It is a universal right. All students – all of them – have the right to quality education in a safe environment.

Irina Bokova, Director General, UNESCO, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, 17 May 2012

Violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings targets students[5] who are, or who are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT); and others whose gender expression does not fit into binary gender norms (masculine and feminine) such as boys perceived as 'effeminate' and girls perceived as 'masculine'. Students who are intersex (I) may also be the subject of violence, although there is currently not enough available scientific data on this.

> Regularly people tell me I do not have the right to live.

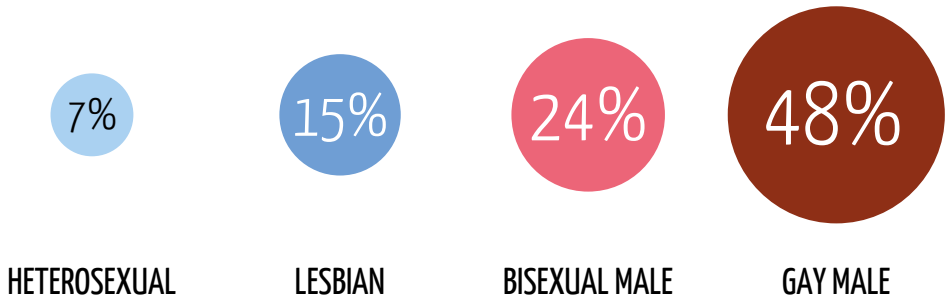
Nikita, age 18, trans man, Russia

5 *The report uses 'Students' to refer to all learners in educational settings. However, where research addressed only selected members of this group – such as 'children' or 'young people' – this is stated.*

- A 2008 study in **Canada** of students in Grades 9-11 found that 33 per cent of male students had experienced verbal harassment related to their actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity, **including those who did not identify as gay or bisexual** [6] .
- A 2014 study in **Thailand** found that 24 per cent of **heterosexual students** suffered violence because their gender expression was perceived as non-conforming to gender norms [7].

LGBT students consistently report a higher prevalence of violence compared to their non-LGBT peers. Those **who fail to conform to 'masculine' norms** – i.e. male students who are gay or bisexual, and male-to-female transgender students – **seem more likely to be the targets of violence** (See Figure 1).

FIGURE 1 **PREVALENCE OF BULLYING**
REPORTED BY STUDENTS OF DIFFERENT SEXUAL ORIENTATION



Source: E. Roland & G. Auestad, 2009

- A study from **New Zealand** in 2014 shows lesbian, gay and bisexual students are three times more likely to be bullied than their heterosexual peers, and transgender students are five times more likely to be bullied than non-transgender students [8].
- Data collected in **Norway** in 2015 found that between 15 per cent and 48 per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual students reported being bullied, compared to 7 per cent of heterosexual students. The extent to which students experienced bullying depended on their sexual orientation, with 15 per cent of lesbian students, 24 per cent of bisexual male students and 48 per cent of gay male students respectively reporting being bullied [9].
- In a survey in **Belgium** in 2013, 56 per cent of young LGBT respondents reported at least one experience of homophobic or transphobic violence or discrimination at school, with male-to-female and gay male students experiencing the highest levels of violence [10].

In this report, violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression is often referred to as homophobic and transphobic violence as it is grounded in: the fear, discomfort, intolerance or hatred of homosexuality and sexually diverse people – lesbian, gay, and bisexual – (homophobia); and transgender people (transphobia).

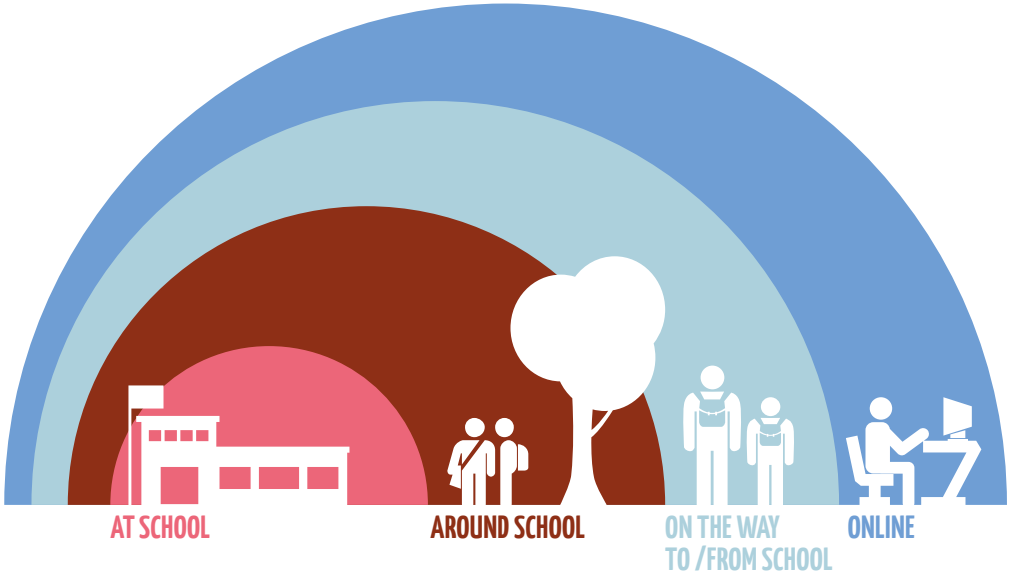
Homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings is a form of school-related gender-based violence, since it is clearly perpetrated as a result of existing gender norms and stereotypes (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2 **VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS:**
HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IS A FORM OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Like other forms of school-related violence, school-related homophobic and transphobic violence can occur in classrooms, playgrounds, toilets and changing rooms, around schools, on the way to and from school, and online (see Figure 3).

> My childhood was all sunk in desperation day after day. Each school day went terribly to me [sic] because I was teased by class and schoolmates. Wherever I was, I suffered finger points, bullying, stone or slippers throwing from them [sic]. They laughed at me by yelling "hey pe-de".
>
> Transgender young person, Viet Nam [7, p. 34]

FIGURE 3 **NOT JUST INSIDE SCHOOLS:** HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS HAPPENS IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE



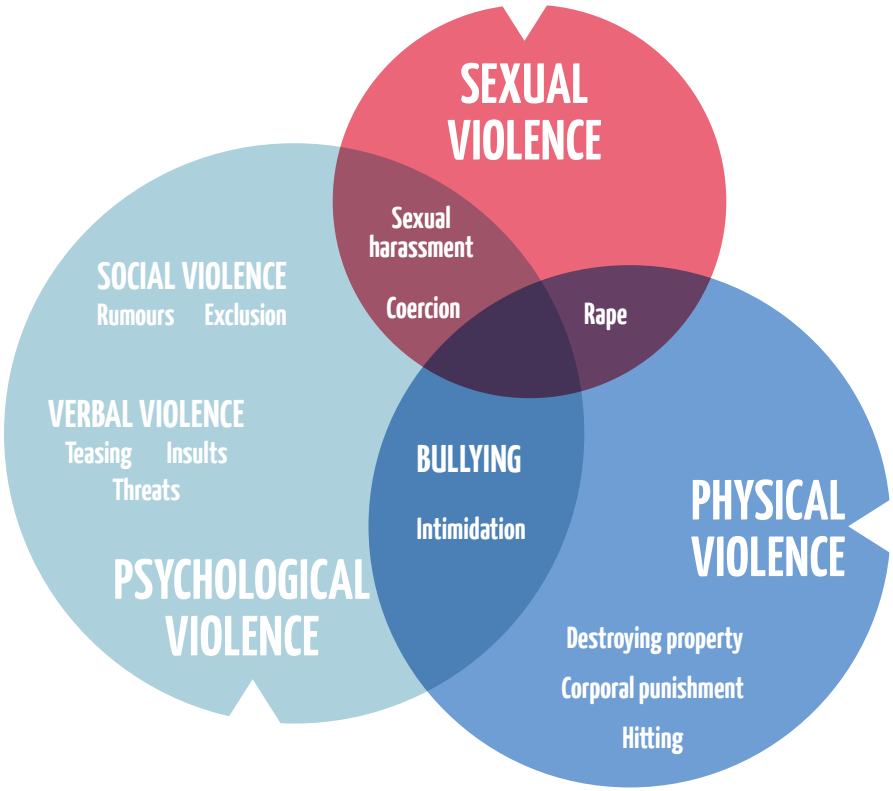
The pressure to conform to dominant gender norms is high. Young people who do not choose to or cannot conform, such as LGBTI people, or those who have not learned the "proper" behaviour, can be sanctioned through violence.'

Source: UNESCO, 2015

Homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings can encompass different types of violence (see Figure 4):

- Physical violence
- Psychological violence, including verbal and emotional abuse
- Sexual violence, including rape, coercion and harassment
- Bullying, including cyber bullying.

FIGURE 4 **MORE THAN BULLYING:**
HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE MANIFESTS IN A NUMBER OF WAYS



Most data available on homophobic and transphobic violence focus on bullying. Homophobic and transphobic bullying involves physical bullying (including repeated hitting, kicking and taking, or threatening to take, possessions); and psychological bullying including verbal bullying (repeated mocking, name calling and unwanted teasing) and social or relational bullying (repeated exclusion, gossiping, the spreading of rumours and the withholding of friendship).

Cyber bullying is a type of psychological bullying. It includes repeated threats, criticism or unkind comments or images that are sent using information and communication technology, such as mobile phones, email and social media, including chat rooms and networking sites.

Although available data mostly focus on bullying, LGBTI students can be the targets of other forms of violence.

These include sexual violence and – 'implicit' violence, also referred to as 'symbolic' or 'institutional' violence (in education policies, regulations, curricula, teaching materials and teaching practices that are explicitly hostile or implicitly non-inclusive of LGBTI students).

> The hardest part was when people would use words like "gay" and "homo" to mean bad… I found this even harder to deal with than outright homophobia because, while such usage is not a personal attack, it implies that it is bad to be gay.
>
> Dan, 18, New Zealand [7, p. 38]

BOX 2 EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings can be categorized as follows [11]–[14]:

- Explicit homophobic and transphobic violence: This consists of overt acts that make subjects feel uncomfortable, hurt, humiliated or intimidated. Peers and educational staff are unlikely to intervene when witnessing these incidents. This contributes to normalizing such acts that become accepted as either a routine disciplinary measure or a means to resolve conflicts among students. Homophobic and transphobic violence – as with all school-related gender-based violence – is acutely underreported due to subjects' fear of retribution, combined with inadequate or non-existent reporting, support and redress systems [11], [15]–[17]. The absence of effective policies, protection or remedies contributes to a vicious cycle where incidents become increasingly normal.
- Implicit homophobic and transphobic violence: This, sometimes called 'symbolic violence' or 'institutional' violence, is subtler than explicit violence. It consists of pervasive representations or attitudes that sometimes feel harmless or natural to the school community, but that allow or encourage homophobia and transphobia, including perpetuating harmful stereotypes. Policies and guidelines can reinforce or embed these representations or attitudes, whether in an individual institution or across an entire education sector. This way, they can become part of everyday practices and rules guiding school behaviour [13], [18].

Examples of implicit homophobic and transphobic violence include:

- Asserting that some subjects are better suited to students based on their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression (for example, science for heterosexual male students and drama for gay male students).
- Suggesting that it is normal for heterosexual students to have greater agency or influence (for example, with the opinions of LGBTI students treated as marginal and unimportant).
- Reinforcing stereotypes related to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression in curriculum materials or teacher training, such as through images and discourse (for example, that refer to heterosexuality as 'normal').
- Reinforcing stereotypes related to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression in educational policies, rules and regulations (for example, by not even acknowledging that LGBTI students are part of the school community and by not specifying them in relevant policies).

Although they may not be considered serious on their own, repeated occurrences of implicit violence lead to a biased understanding of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. This in turn leads to higher occurrences of homophobic and transphobic violence.

The majority of available research focuses on homophobic and transphobic violence in primary and secondary schools. Fewer initiatives address colleges, institutes or universities. In this report, the term 'school' is sometimes used as a generic term for an educational setting, especially in the phrase 'violence in schools'.

Homophobic and transphobic violence can also be carried out by different categories of perpetrators. While this kind of violence occurs most notably among students, it can also occur between teachers and students. Such violence can also target school staff, particularly teachers. This can be perpetrated by students, other school staff or educational authorities. However, this report will focus only on violence affecting students.

Although some organizations and governments addressing children's rights and gender-based violence have started to acknowledge school-related gender-based violence over the last decade [12], [18], very few have recognized homophobic and transphobic violence as a specific form of such violence.

Homophobic and transphobic violence is a learned behaviour that is driven by stigma and prejudice [19]–[21]. Although it is typically perpetrated by boys and young men – often to protect or reinforce their masculinity [21]–[24] – girls and young women can also resort to such violence. Like other forms of school-related gender-based violence, students and adults who witness homophobic and transphobic violence are unlikely to react. This is in part because this kind of violence is rooted in deep cultural beliefs about gender roles, masculinity and femininity.

Homophobic and transphobic violence occurs in educational settings in all regions of the world. However, it tends to occur more frequently in regions or cultures with less equal power relationships between women and men, where strong norms of heterosexuality and 'traditional' gender roles prevail. In some of these contexts, LGBTI people still face criminalization and state-sanctioned punishment. They are frequently depicted as deserving public condemnation and, in several cases, as warranting state-sanctioned punishment [25]–[27].

BOX 3 LAWS CRIMINALIZING SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS OR THE DISCUSSION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION

As of 2015, 75 countries have criminalized some form of same-sex sexual activity or relationships [28]. Also, four countries have outlawed the discussion of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression in positive or neutral terms (sometimes referred to as 'propaganda of homosexuality'), either in public or in the presence of minors [29]. These policies contribute to legitimizing discrimination and violence against LGBTI people, including in educational settings.

1.2. What is the impact of school-related homophobic and transphobic violence?

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) children are often victims of bullying and violence in schools, at home and via social media. This has a serious effect on their well-being and prevents openness about their personal identity. Like all children, LGBTI children are entitled to enjoy human rights and require a safe environment in order to participate fully in society.

Nils Muižnieks, European Commissioner for Human Rights, Human Rights Comment, 2 October 2014

Homophobic and transphobic violence has a significant impact on students' education and employment prospects and on their health and well-being. It affects students who are targeted by violence and students who are perpetrators and bystanders.

The following pages provide examples of these impacts, with further details included in the subsequent regional overviews of prevalence.

1.2.1. Impact on education and employment

Homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings measurably impacts on students' access to quality education and achievements [30]–[37]. Those who study in homophobic and transphobic environments or who suffer homophobic and transphobic violence are more likely to:

- **FEEL UNSAFE AT SCHOOL.** A 2015 study in the **United States** found that 70 per cent of LGBT students felt unsafe at school [32]
- **AVOID SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.** In a 2013 survey from **Europe**, which included Ireland, Italy, Denmark, Croatia and Poland, 49 per cent of young LGBT respondents said they sometimes chose not to participate in class questions or discussions [36].
- **MISS CLASSES OR SKIP SCHOOL ENTIRELY.** Another study conducted in 2013 in the **United States** study revealed that 30 per cent of LGBT students had missed at least one day of school in the previous month because of feeling unsafe [34]. A 2014 study by Mahidol University in Thailand found that 31.2 per cent of students who were teased or bullied for being or being perceived to be LGBT, reported an unauthorised absence from school in the past month; compared with 15.2 per cent of students who were not teased or bullied [38].
- **DROP OUT OF SCHOOL.** In **Argentina**, a 2007 study showed that 45 per cent of transgender students dropped out of school, either due to transphobic bullying by their peers or being excluded by school authorities [1].
- **ACHIEVE LOWER ACADEMIC RESULTS THAN THEIR PEERS.** In an online survey in China in 2012, 59 per cent of LGBT respondents reported that bullying had negatively affected their academic performance [7]. In a large 2009 - 2014 survey in **England,** 37 per cent of LGBT young people aged from 16 to 25 said their time at school had been affected by discrimination or fear of discrimination; leading to lower grades [39]. In **El Salvador**, only 36 per cent of 100 transgender women interviewed for a 2012/2013 study obtained their secondary school certificate, as a result of violence and exclusion [40]. Data collected from **Australia** in 2013 demonstrated a high correlation between victimisation and lack of concentration in class, lower marks, and attendance for transgender youth [41], [42]. According to the 2013 survey in **Europe** [36], 50 per cent of respondents reported having difficulties concentrating, 37 per

cent reported getting lower marks, and 40 per cent felt they did not acquire skills at school as well as they should have.

I was not accepted and I was discriminated against because of my orientation as well as I was bullied. I left school this year. I was in Grade 8. I decided in the second semester to drop out. I talked to my Mom about the experience and told her I just want to leave school.

Student who dropped out of school, Namibia [43]

BOX 4 EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

Exclusion from school is both:

- A form of implicit violence – when educational institutions exclude or reject a student because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, or that of their parents.
- An impact of direct violence – when LGBTI students skip classes and avoid returning to school to avoid violence, leading to their exclusion.

I tried to apply for high school... The school said to me that they could not accept me after seeing my gender listed as a woman on the health insurance card because they didn't have any precedent of having a transgender student and didn't want any trouble [sic] to happen to me.

Hiroto, a transgender man, Japan [7, p. 30]

BOX 5 INCREASED RISK FOR TRANSGENDER STUDENTS

Transgender students tend to experience particularly harsh discrimination in educational settings. Like LGB students they report: lower concentration in class; lower marks; and lower attendance [41], [42]. Transgender students are more likely than average to miss school or miss out on their education entirely due to concerns about their personal safety [44]. A study from Argentina reported that 45 per cent of transgender students dropped out of school either due to transphobic bullying by their peers or to being excluded [1].

Students who have a lower academic achievement and or leave school early have fewer qualifications, which in turn influences their employment prospects. A broad analysis of experiences of homophobia and transphobia conducted in 2014 within emerging economies, found that they can correlate with lower or limited employment opportunities [45].

When those in charge do not respond effectively to violence in educational settings, the entire social climate can be negatively affected. Violence can lead to all students [34], [46]:

- experiencing a climate of fear, insecurity and disrespect
- experiencing difficulties in learning
- feeling less safe

- perceiving that staff have little control over the situation and do not care about students' safety and well-being.

This has a negative impact on learning and achievements for all students, undermines students' trust in the staff and the institution, and can result in students disliking or feeling disconnected from school [34], [46], [47]. In a survey in **Canada** in 2009 [48] 58 per cent of heterosexual students expressed emotional distress over homophobic comments overheard in school.

We know that exclusion, bullying and violence have immediate, long-term and intergenerational effects. This includes school attendance, performance, and completion […] And for those who think that bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity only affects LGBTI youth. This is wrong. It affects the whole climate of the school and community.

Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of UNESCO Asia Pacific Bureau for Education
Asia-Pacific Consultation, 15 June 2015, Bangkok

1.2.2. Impact on health and well-being

Homophobic and transphobic violence is also associated with poorer than average physical and mental health. The adverse effects on young people's mental and psychological health include: **increased risk of anxiety, fear, stress, loss of confidence, low self-esteem, loneliness, self-harm, depression and suicide**.

- The 2013 study from **Thailand** [38] found that 22.6 per cent of LGBT students who were teased or bullied for being or being perceived to be LGBT, reported feeling depressed; compared with 6 per cent of students who were not teased or bullied.
- Studies from **Belgium** [49], the **Netherlands** [50], **Poland** [51] and the **United States** [52], [53], suggest that LGBT students and young people are between two and more than five times more likely to think about or attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. The 2013 study from **Thailand** showed that 6.7 per cent of LGBT students who were teased or bullied for being or being perceived to be LGBT, reported attempting suicide in the past year; compared with 1.2 per cent of students who were not teased or bullied [38]. In **Mexico**, the first National Survey on Homophobic Bullying conducted in 2012 revealed that one in four LGBT people had thought about suicide as a result of the bullying they suffered at school [54].

One of my former classmates happened to be in the same class and he ceaselessly warned my girlfriend to stay away from me. He fabricated a lot of rumours… That experience was horrific torture for me and everyday my thoughts were only on how to kill myself. Once I attempted to jump off a building to commit suicide but was stopped by others. I was greatly depressed and began cutting my fingers with a knife. I felt that the whole world has turned against me and nobody was willing to help.

Lesbian woman, 24 years old, China [7, p. 39]

Experiencing homophobic and transphobic violence contributes to 'minority stress' – stress that is specifically experienced by LGBTI people as a result of *'nonconformity with prevailing sexual orientation and gender norms'* [53]. Experiencing homophobic and transphobic violence

adds to this type of stress which, in turn, negatively affects LGBTI people's health [19]. To cope with minority stress, many LGBTI students hide their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression within educational settings [55]. Institutions may also discourage LGBTI students and teachers from acknowledging their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression [56], [57] leading to self-censorship and constantly being on their guard. Some countries forbid such public disclosure by law [29], [58]. This unnatural behaviour can limit students' ability to express themselves and can make it harder for them to befriend peers of the same sex (out of fear of seeming to be attracted to them). It can even cause them to bully their LGBTI peers in order to pretend that they belong to the majority [34], [59]. Over a longer period, it can be detrimental for students to cope with homophobic and transphobic violence at the very time when they are building their identity, self-confidence and social skills.

Studies from the **United States** found that homophobic and transphobic violence contributesto LGBT young people being **more likely to be homeless or in foster care**, compared to their non-LGBT peers [32], [33].

There is also some evidence that young people who experience homophobic and transphobic violence at school may be **more likely to adopt risky health behaviours** [50], [60]. Sexual violence can result in unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV [16], [18], [53], [61]. In addition, homophobic and transphobic violence can have wider social impacts for those who are targeted [32], [45].

My Teacher told my parents that I was troubled because he suspected I was gay.

Antonio, age 19, gay, Mexico

I still remember being absolutely horrified by the possibility of people in my elementary and secondary school thinking I was "a fag". I still experience consequences of those years of nervous tension caused by constant self-control and self- censorship.

Gay man, 29, Poland [62, p. 36]

"My teacher told my parents that I was troubled because he suspected I was gay."

Antonio, age 19, gay, Mexico

2. THE SITUATION OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

2. THE SITUATION OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Section 2 presents evidence on the nature and prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings in the different regions of the world.

As reported to UN human rights mechanisms, homophobic and transphobic violence occurs widely in all societies in all regions of the world [63]. This particular type of violence includes incidents of psychological violence, such as threats, coercion and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. It also includes physical violence, such as beatings, sexual assault, kidnappings and killings.

As examples: between January 2013 and March 2014, 594 hate-related killings of LGBT people were recorded in the 25 members states of the Organization of American States [64]; in the five years prior to 2013, a quarter of more than 93,000 LGBT respondents to a survey in the 28 member states of the European Union had been attacked or threatened with violence [62]; in 2013 alone, 2,001 incidents of violence against LGBT people were reported in the United States [65]; and between 2008 and 2014, 1,612 killings of transgender people were recorded across 62 countries [63].

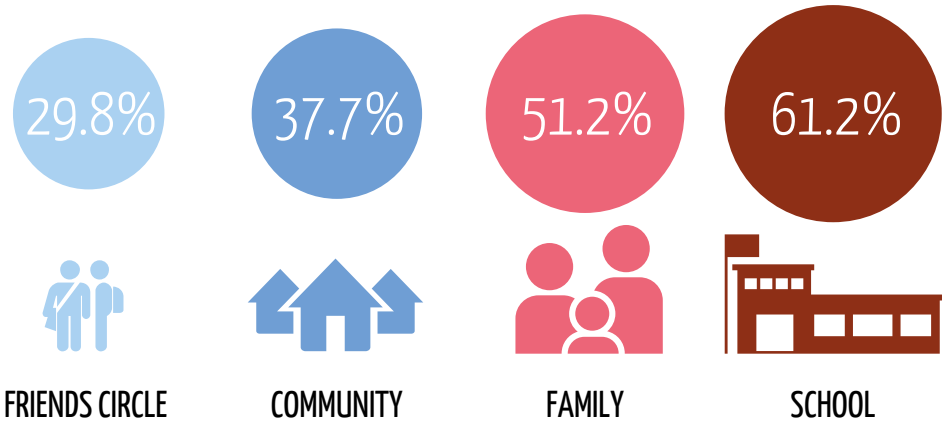
Schools reflect these wider societal trends. As such, it is unsurprising that homophobic and transphobic violence also exists in educational settings in all regions of the world.

HOW COMMON IS HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS?

There is a lack of comprehensive and comparable data on the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence in schools. The extent to which country data are available varies between regions, but few governments routinely collect data on the nature and prevalence of violence including bullying in educational settings. Only a handful of countries gather specific data on homophobic and transphobic violence. There are no international surveys that collect data across countries. Europe is the only region to have conducted a regional survey. Most of the available data were collected by research institutes and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

However, all data reviewed for this report consistently show that a high proportion of students are affected by homophobic and transphobic violence in school, and that LGBT students are more likely to experience such violence at school than at home or in the community [62], [66]–[68] (See Figure 5). In general it is psychological violence, including social exclusion and verbal bullying, that is most reported by LGBT students, ranging from 16 per cent in Nepal to 85 per cent in the USA [34], [69]. In terms of age, incidents of violence tend to increase as LGBT students grow older and enter adolescence.

FIGURE 5 **PERCENTAGE OF LGBT STUDENTS REPORTING EVER EXPERIENCED PREJUDICE/DISCRIMINATION IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS**



Source: J. Takács, 2006

The absence of data for a country does not indicate that such violence does not occur. On the contrary, it may suggest that policy efforts have not taken place in this area and data have not been collected.

BOX 6 SOURCES FOR DATA ON HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE

This report uses data from the following regions and countries/territories:

- **Africa**: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.
- **Asia**:
  - **Eastern Asia:** China, Hong Kong SAR, Japan and Mongolia.
  - **Southern Asia**: India and Nepal.
  - **South-Eastern Asia:** Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam.
  - **Western Asia:** Israel and Kazakhstan.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay.
- **North America**: Canada and the United States.
- **The Pacific**: Australia and New Zealand.
- **Europe:** Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

The following provides some examples of data by region.

2.1. Africa

It is not that I really want to discriminate against homosexuality. However … our African culture nor the Bible support homosexuality … although not explicitly stated, the government does not support it.'

Male teacher, Namibia [43]

Little data exist on the nature and prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings in the Africa region.

In part, this is due to, as of 2015, 33 countries criminalizing consensual sexual behaviour or relationships between people of the same sex [25]. It also reflects other hostile measures against sexual and gender diversity. For example, in 2014, Algeria and Nigeria adopted new laws that forbid the discussion of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression in a positive or neutral fashion – making it impossible for teachers and educational institutions to even consider addressing related problems, including violence [29].

In 2014–2015, UNESCO partnered with the international organization Hivos International on the first multi-country study on violence in schools in Southern Africa to include attention to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [70] [see Box 7].

BOX 7 MULTI-COUNTRY STUDY ON VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/ EXPRESSION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Methodology

In 2014–2015, UNESCO, in partnership with Hivos, supported a study on violence in schools – including gender-based violence and bullying – in Southern Africa. It covered five countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. Except for South Africa – where the rights of LGBT people are protected by the Constitution and a series of laws – sexual and gender diversity are not well accepted by societies in those contexts. Laws (either explicitly or through interpretation) criminalize same-sex relationships between men.[6] Even where those laws are rarely enforced, the prevalence of societal stigma and discrimination towards LGBTI people is high.

For the first time in the region, ministries of education accepted an initiative to explore aspects of school-related gender-based violence related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression – in terms of the prevalence, nature and impacts of this kind of violence, as well as existing responses by the education sector. The study was conducted by a multi-country research team coordinated by Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA), an NGO based in South Africa.

The study included a desk-based review of, in all five countries: existing education sector policies related to: violence in schools in general; gender-based violence; and homophobic and transphobic violence. A large amount of primary data was also collected through qualitative and quantitative methods in the four countries where no data was available: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. (In South Africa some studies had already been conducted in the past). The study involved 68 in-depth interviews and 67 focus group discussions with teachers, students, out-of-school youth, parents and guardians, school management teams, government educational officials, civil society representatives and social workers. There was also a survey, using a self-administered questionnaire completed by 2,523 Grade 11 students (aged 16– 17, on average) and teachers in 37 schools.

6 In Botswana, the law criminalizes 'sex against the order of nature' and 'bestiality', without any language that defines what that means, although it is understood to refer to homosexuality in particular. In Lesotho and Swaziland, the law criminalizes sodomy, with a clear mention of sodomy between men. In Namibia, there is also a sodomy law, but it does not refer explicitly to sodomy between men.

Through a series of national consultation meetings before and after the data collection process, in each country, the study instigated a collaborative process with ministries of education, CSOs (including LGBTI organizations) and other key stakeholders, in order to shape and inform the research process, including the research questions and terminology. For example, it was agreed by all stakeholders to use culturally-sensitive terms with students and teachers. These included talking about 'diversity-related violence' that targets students who are 'perceived as different in terms of their gender, such as boys who look or act like girls and girls who look or act like boys'. This helped to build understanding of the rationale for the study and its methodology, and fostered ownership of the findings by the education sector.

Findings

- The results from the survey conducted among students and teachers in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland reveal extremely high levels of violence in schools in those countries.[7]
  - Between 70.8 per cent of respondents (Swaziland) and 96.4 per cent (Botswana) said that violence occurs in their school. This violence is experienced on a daily basis by between 9 per cent of respondents in Swaziland and 21 per cent in Botswana. Otherwise, the majority of respondents said that it occurs on 'some days'.
- Diversity-related violence (defined above) was reported by respondents in all four countries: 18.4 per cent in Swaziland; 41.0 per cent in Namibia; 43.7 per cent in Lesotho; and 44.3 per cent in Botswana. Further information was provided through the answers to a series of questions. For example:
  - In response to the question 'Who are mostly the victims of violence and/or bullying in schools?', a number of the respondents mentioned 'students different in terms of gender': 7.9 per cent in Swaziland; 10.7 per cent in Botswana; 17.6 per cent in Namibia; and 20.4 per cent in Lesotho.
  - In response to the question 'Why does the violence occur?', a number of the students and teachers said 'Because some people are perceived as different in terms of their gender': 11.6 per cent in Botswana; 18.8 per cent in Swaziland; 23.1 per cent in Namibia; and 26.1 per cent in Lesotho. It was the first reason given by respondents in Lesotho and Swaziland, and the second one in Namibia. Other main reasons included 'to take money', 'it's tradition' and 'teachers don't stop the violence'.

Questions on the nature of violence in general, including diversity-related violence, showed that violence is mostly verbal – ranging from 80 per cent in Swaziland to 91.2 per cent in Botswana. It is also physical – from 66.6 per cent in Lesotho to 88.8 per cent in Botswana. Sexual violence[8] is less prevalent, although the percentages are still very worrying – from 21.2 per cent in Lesotho and Swaziland to 37.7 per cent in Botswana.

Findings from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions suggest that the extent of sexual violence may have been underreported by the survey respondents. This is because the unwanted touching of breasts, bottoms and other parts of the body may have been normalized in schools and is no longer perceived as violence.

The study found that, in all countries, the vast majority of perpetrators of violence are older boys (64.1 per cent of responses in Lesotho; 68 per cent in Namibia; 70.9 per cent in Swaziland; and 79.1 per cent in Botswana).

The targets of violence are younger boys and younger girls. Approximately the same percentage was seen in Namibia (with 48.7 per cent of respondents stating young boys versus 47.3 per cent stating young girls). Meanwhile, the percentages indicated: slightly more young boys than young girls in Swaziland (35.7 per cent versus 31.1 per cent); slightly more young girls than young boys in Lesotho (48.1 per cent versus 43.7 per cent); and a large majority of young boys in Botswana (54.9 per cent versus 36.9 per cent).

The interviews and focus groups confirmed the existence and relatively high prevalence of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in some countries.

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7 The survey excluded corporal punishment.

8 Sexual violence in the context of the study was defined as: unwanted touching; lifting, pulling down or taking off other's skirt, shirt or trousers; holding others in a sexual position as if about to rape her/him; forcing people to have sex by hand, mouth or penetrating their vagina/anus; and aggressive flirting.

‘Definitely, definitely … It is clear that it is happening in most schools.’

Education Officer, Swaziland

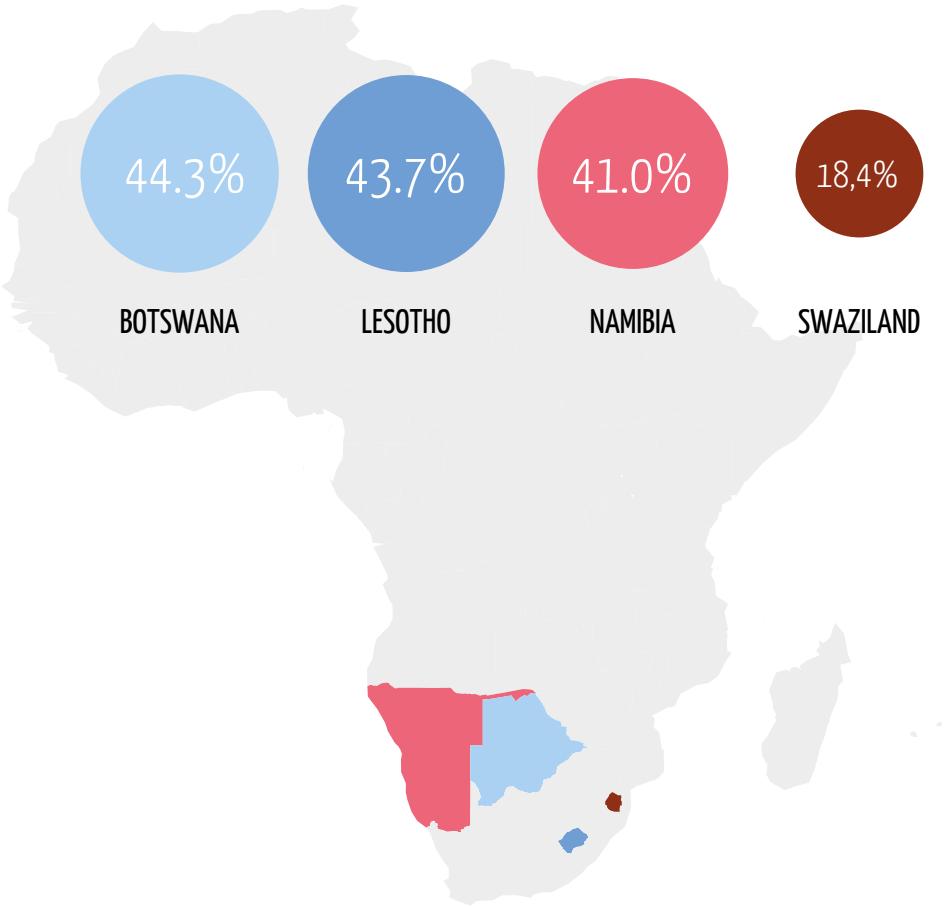
However, incidents of this type of violence in schools are under-reported because of the social context. The study found that teachers and other school staff holding discriminatory attitudes and beliefs hinder the effective reporting and support for students that experience gender-based violence in general and diversity-related violence in particular.

‘This abnormal behaviour, it’s something that more often than not goes unreported … we try to ignore it, even when we see it. We do not want to confront such situations, and as such we find at the end of the day we don’t have much information on it.’

Teacher, Botswana

Only one third of respondents said that their school is a safe space for students who are perceived as different in terms of gender.

FIGURE 6 **PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS AWARE OF THE EXISTENCE OF DIVERSITY-RELATED VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS**



Source: UNESCO, 2015

Data from studies conducted in South Africa indicate that students in that country are often targets of violence in schools, including homophobic and transphobic violence. The National School Violence Study (NSVS) was undertaken by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) in 2012 and includes the most recent national data on the types and prevalence of violence in schools. According to its findings, 22.2 per cent of high school students report being threatened or the victim of a robbery, assault and/or sexual assault at school. While these levels are high, the findings indicate that the levels of violence in secondary schools have stabilized somewhat in recent years. Overall, the NSVS found that one fifth of students had experienced cyber violence or bullying [70].

A 2011 study in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, suggests that high levels of violence (verbal, physical and sexual) are experienced by lesbian and gay students in schools. Jokes were the most common manifestation of verbal violence reported by both lesbian/bisexual females (63 per cent) and gay/bisexual males (76 per cent). The main perpetrators of the violence were other students (65 per cent), followed by educators (22 per cent) and school principals (9 per cent) [71].

Elsewhere in Africa, the scarce data that do exist on violence in schools (both general and gender-based) indicate that psychological, physical and sexual violence are common and frequent across the region [72]. International organizations have found widespread evidence of psychological violence, threats and public shaming in school settings, as well as of bullying among students being justified due to age or gender hierarchies [11], [73], [74].

2.2. Asia

Diverse understandings and perceptions of homosexuality coexist in the Asia. Here, as of 2015, 19 countries still criminalized consensual sexual acts between men and at least seven also had discriminatory laws that could apply to sexual relations between women. However, diverse sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions are increasingly accepted.

In parallel, regional interest to tackle homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings is increasing [7], [66].

Most of the existing data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings have been collected by NGOs and academic institutions. This has largely been through community-based studies, sometimes with guidance from research institutes or in partnership with multilateral organizations (including UNESCO). Across the region, the most prevalent form of homophobic and transphobic violence on record is psychological violence, including psychological bullying, often manifested through cyber bullying [7]. Physical and sexual violence are also reported.

FIGURE 7 **PREVALENCE OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE** IN ASIA

HONG KONG SAR [75]

10% of LGB secondary school students experienced physical and sexual violence

40% of LGB secondary school students experienced verbal harassment and social exclusion

JAPAN [76]

68% of LGBT people aged 10-35 experienced violence in school

MONGOLIA [38]

7% of LGBT students experienced physical violence

NEPAL [69]

16% of LGBT students experienced verbal harassment in school

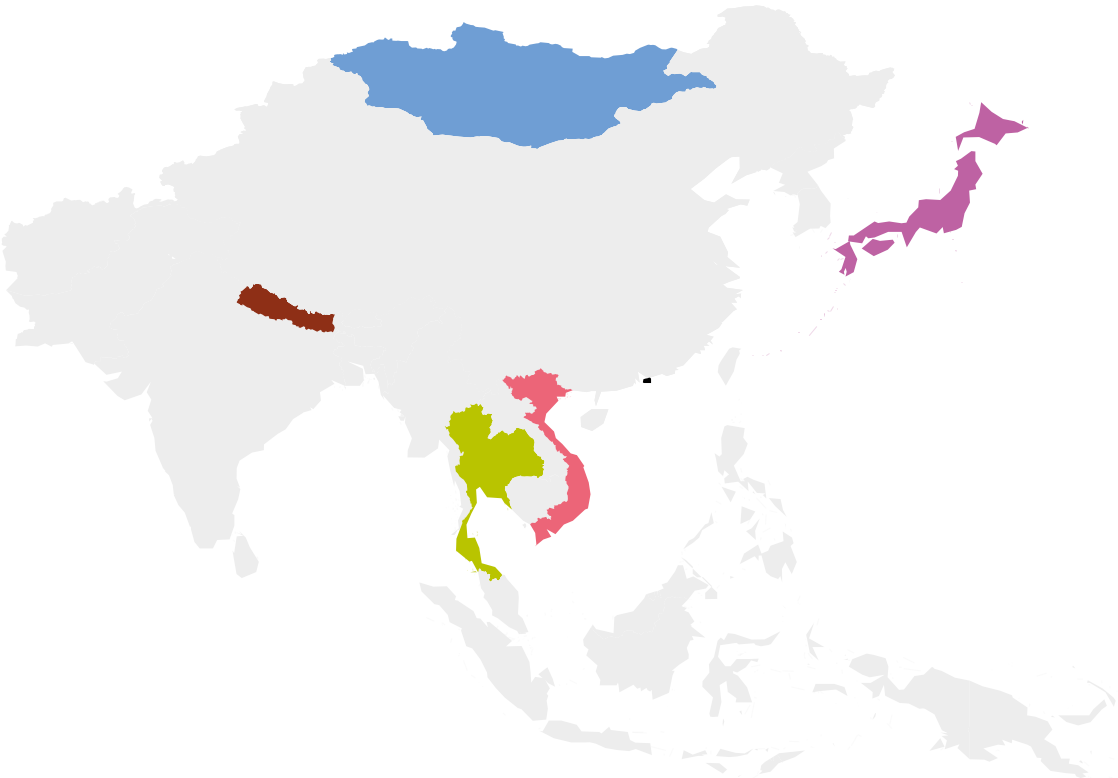
THAILAND [38]

55% of LGBT students experienced physical, psychological or sexual violence in the month prior to the study

24% of heterosexual students experienced homophobic or transphobic violence because of their gender expression

VIET NAM [7]

44% of LGBT students consider homophobic and transphobic stigma at school 'serious'



No data are available on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings in Central Asia. However, studies in **Kazakhstan** and **Kyrgyzstan** in 2013 and 2010 (respectively) point to existing school-related gender-based violence [78], [79]. In a 2009 study in **Kazakhstan**, over four out of five LGBT respondents said that they always or frequently hid their sexual orientation at school or university [80].

My teacher once said to me in front of the whole class that my kind and I should be sent to taiga* on the spot.

Respondent #559, Kazakhstan [80, p. 51]
(*A forest of high northern subarctic latitudes, near the steppes of Siberia)

In a 2013 survey by the National Human Rights Commission of **Mongolia** on discrimination against LGBT individuals [77], a quarter of respondents indicated that they had experienced discrimination in school and 6.7 per cent said that they had experienced physical violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

In **Nepal**, a national study of 1,178 LGBT respondents in 2014 found that 16 per cent reported experiencing verbal harassment in educational settings [69].

A 2015 report from **India** observed that students who do not conform to traditional gender norms of appearance are more likely to experience violence in schools compared to LGB people in general [81]. Hijra people – who live according to the norms, customs and rituals of a Hijra transgender community – report experiencing school as a particularly unsafe environment. In 2009 research in Bangladesh, they cited feelings of loneliness and abusive treatment, with their feminine behaviour often the subject of jokes and humiliation [82].

In **China**, 421 LGBT students from middle schools, tertiary and vocational institutions responded to a community centre's online study [7]. This found that 77 per cent of respondents reported experiencing at least one type of violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, with verbal abuse being the most prevalent.

In response to a 2009 online survey in **Hong Kong SAR**, LGB and questioning secondary school students reported experiencing: verbal harassment and name calling (four out of ten); social exclusion (four out of ten); and both physical and sexual violence (one out of ten) [75]. Rates of violence were two to three times higher for gay and bisexual male respondents compared to lesbian and bisexual females.

In a 2014 online survey of 609 LGBT people aged 10–35 in **Japan** [76], 68 per cent of respondents reported experiencing violence in elementary, junior high or high school. Those experiencing violence reported insults, social exclusion, physical violence and, to a lesser extent, sexual violence. In most cases, the perpetrators were peers, although one in ten respondents reported that the perpetrators were teachers.

In 2014 in **Thailand**, 55 per cent of LGBT students reported experiencing violence on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity/experience in the month preceding the study [38]. This included physical violence, insults and sexual violence. Also, 24 per cent of non-LGBT students reported experiencing homophobic and transphobic violence because they were perceived to be LGBT.

In **Viet Nam**, online surveys have taken place to document incidents of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. In 2014 [7] a survey of over 3,200 LGBT young people found that 44 per cent of respondents said stigma linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression was a serious problem at school. Common forms of reported homophobic and transphobic violence included teasing by peers and insults from school staff. Similarly, around half of LGBT respondents to a 2012 study said they had experienced stigma and violence as a result of not conforming to traditional gender roles. Three quarters of those respondents also reported hearing homophobic insults. In 2015, the Institute of Educational Sciences launched the largest study on this issue to date in Viet Nam. This analyses qualitative and quantitative data from

secondary schools in six cities and provinces as a part of a larger study on school-related gender-based violence. The research is under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Training [7].

In **Malaysia**, according to studies conducted over 2002 to 2014, prevalent forms of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings include humiliation, sexual violence and expulsion from school [83]–[85]. School management in the country appear to frequently reinforce gender stereotypes by punishing students who do not 'fit' within traditional gender roles. A study in 2012 found that discriminatory practices include: universities enquiring about 'gender confused' students; 'conversion camps' for schoolboys with 'effeminate tendencies'; and a federal policy, published through a student handbook, categorizing homosexuality and 'gender confusion' as serious offences [86].

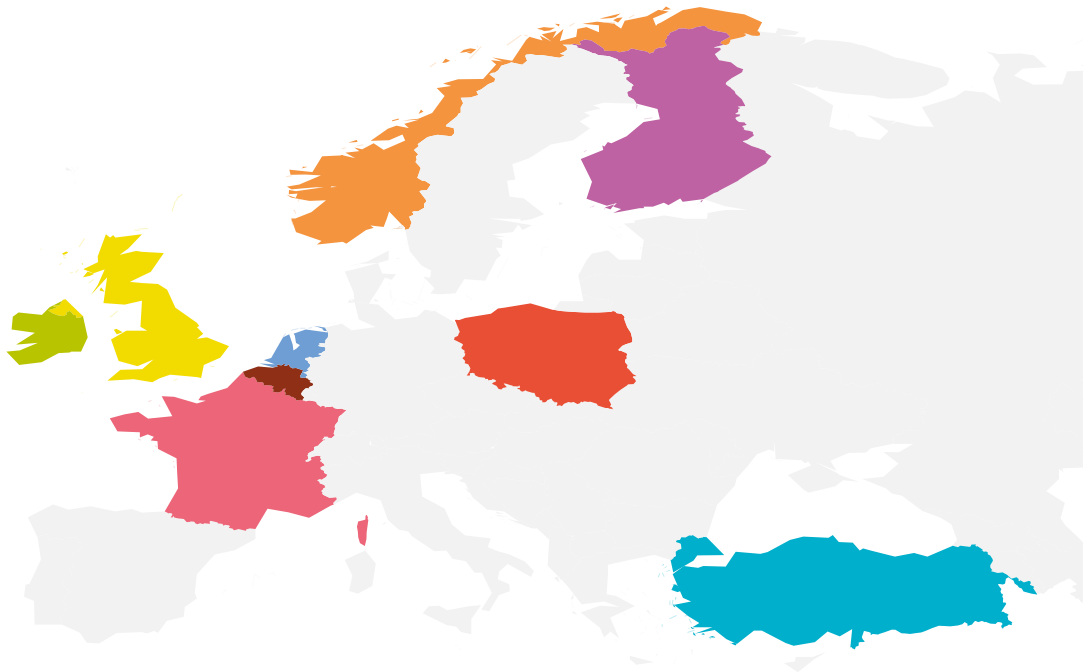
In **Israel**[9], despite legal and some socio-cultural support for LGBT individuals, educational institutions do not appear always welcoming to LGBT students [87], [88]. In a 2008 online study of LGBT students, four out of five respondents declared hearing pejorative expressions – such as 'fag' or 'woman' (demeaning to boys) – often or usually [87]. Reports varied significantly depending on respondents' gender. While 25 per cent of girls reported hearing homophobic or transphobic remarks frequently, the level was 43 per cent for boys.

2.3. Europe

In many countries in the European region, NGOs – alongside academia and research institutes – have collected data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings for several years. Governmental bodies in Belgium, Finland, France, parts of Germany, the Netherlands and parts of Spain also collect data on the experiences of LGBT students in educational settings. Research in Central and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, is often anecdotal and tends to remain unacknowledged by the education sector [89].

In the European region the most prevalent form of homophobic and transphobic violence reported is psychological violence.

FIGURE 8 **PREVALENCE OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EUROPE**



9 According to the United Nations classification of regions, Israel is within the Western Asia region.

BELGIUM [10]

56% of LGBT students experienced homophobic or transphobic violence at school at least once

FINLAND [90]

36% of LGBT students suffered homophobic or transphobic bullying at school

FRANCE [91]

12% of primary and secondary headmasters agreed that homophobia is a regular or serious concern

IRELAND [92]

52% of LGBT people experienced homophobic or transphobic name-calling while in school

THE NETHERLANDS [93]

23% of LGBT students were bullied at school

NORWAY [9]

15% of lesbian students,

24% of bisexual male students and

48% of gay students are bullied,

compared to 7% of heterosexual students

POLAND [55]

52% of LGBT students felt lonely, and

63% of LGBT students thought about suicide, compared to

12% of the general population of the same age

TURKEY [94]

67% of LGBT students experienced discrimination at school before the age of 18

As a result of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity,

8% of LGBT students dropped out of school before the age of 18,

and 5% of LGBT students dropped out of university

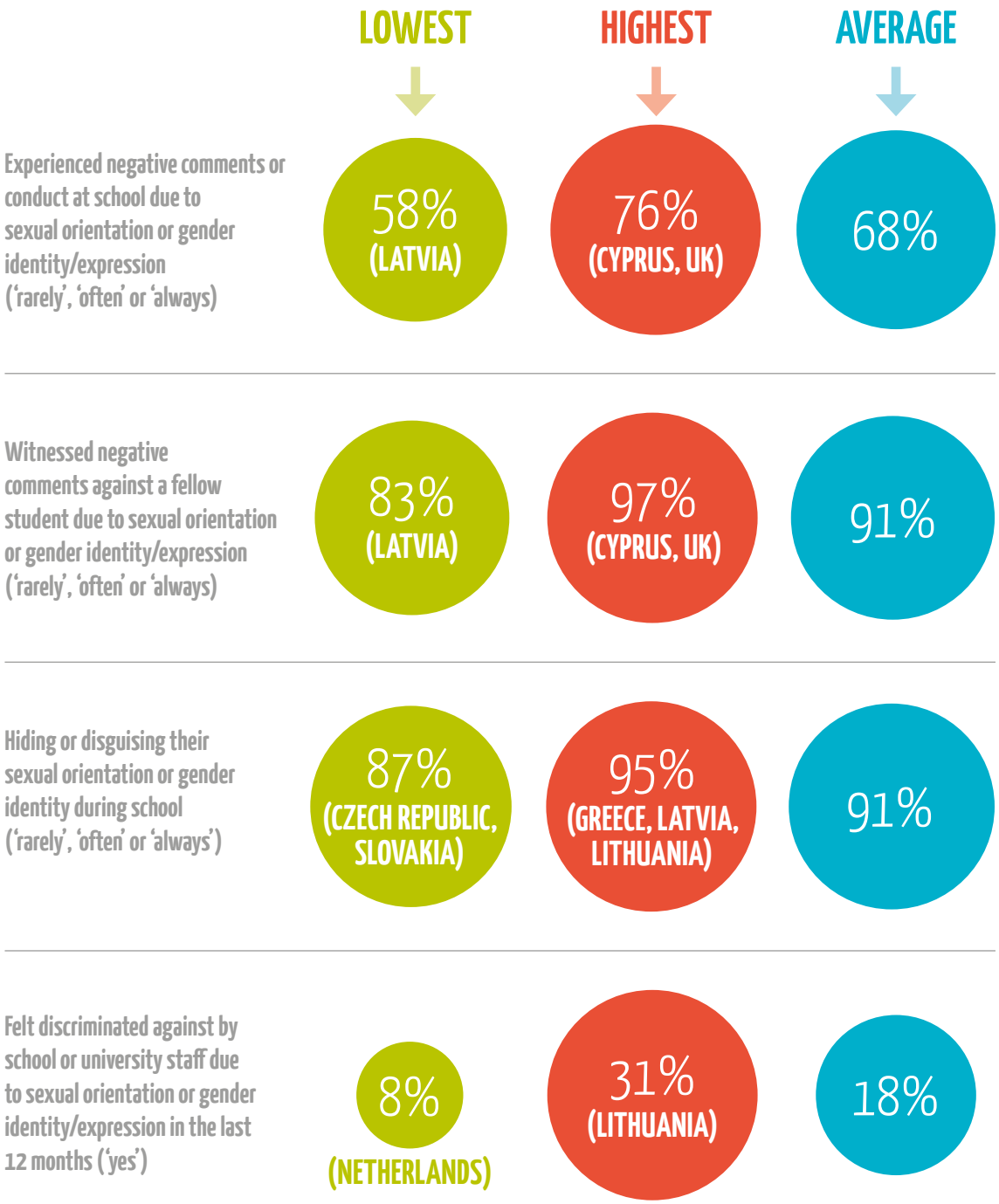
UNITED KINGDOM [35], [95], [96]

99% of students heard homophobic insults in schools

Between 20% and 55% of LGBT students experienced bullying

In 2013, the **European Union** Agency for Fundamental Rights published the region's largest ever survey of LGBT people to date, featuring over 93,000 respondents from 28 countries [62] [see Figure 9]. A large majority of respondents reported experiencing negative comments or conduct in educational institutions due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. Most of them frequently hid or disguised their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression at school. Significant numbers also reported witnessing homophobic or transphobic psychological violence against fellow student (91 per cent on average across all countries), which suggests that such violence is pervasive.

FIGURE 9 **EXPERIENCES OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Source: European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). 2012.

In the **United Kingdom**, surveys indicate that homophobic and transphobic violence affects considerable number of LGBT students [35]. Studies from 2012 and 2014 show that between 20 and 55 per cent of respondents reported experiencing homophobic violence, including physical violence, due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression [35], [96]. The use of homophobic insults in schools also appears to be extremely widespread. In a 2012 study, 99 per cent of all students reported hearing phrases such as 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay' used pejoratively, or insults such as 'poof' (to a boy or man) or 'lezza' (to a girl or woman). In universities, 20.6 per cent of transgender people reported feeling completely safe on campus. This compares to 36.7 per cent of their LGB peers and 43 per cent of their heterosexual peers [95].

In **Ireland**, according to research in 2009, 52 per cent of LGBT individuals report being called abusive names at school due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression [92]. Many also report verbal and physical threats.

In **Belgium**, research into the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings originates mostly from the region of Flanders. It further confirms that school is often where LGBT young people experience more prejudice and discrimination than other contexts. In a national survey conducted by the NGO Çavaria in 2013, 56 per cent of young LGBT respondents reported at least one experience of homophobic or transphobic violence or discrimination at school [10]. Transgender (male-to-female) and gay men experienced the highest levels of violence.

The government of the **Netherlands** surveys the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence as part of a biennial monitor on social safety in schools. The 2010–2014 edition shows that 23 per cent of LGBT students report being bullied at school. Significantly, around half preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation and/or gender identity at school [93].

In **France**, limited data collection by the Ministry of Education in 2012 indicated that 158 cases of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings were recorded nationwide [91]. However, policy-makers, teachers' unions and NGOs agree that this survey did not accurately record incidents related to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. A 2013 report on homophobia and transphobia to the Minister of Education highlighted that 12 per cent of primary and secondary school headmasters agreed that homophobia was a 'regular or serious concern' [91].

In **Finland**, research commissioned by the Ministry of Interior in 2011 studied discrimination experienced by students in their education and leisure time [90]. It found that 36 per cent of students had suffered bullying at school due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. A 2015 study supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture showed that, although a majority of respondents were concerned by homophobic bullying, over half did not report it. This was mostly because they doubted that they would receive effective remedy and they feared having to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression [97].

A 2015 government review in **Norway** found that, among young people, the pejorative use of 'homo' was one of the most common insults against boys [98]. It also found that boys reported derogatory remarks about their perceived or actual sexual orientation nearly five times as often as girls [99]. The findings highlighted the vulnerability of gay or bisexual male students – with 48 per cent and 23.8 per cent (respectively) reporting being bullied. This compared to 15 per cent of lesbian girls and 7.3 per cent of heterosexual peers [9].

In a small-scale academic study in **Portugal** in 2012, researchers found that the targets of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings - as well as the educational staff – undervalued the importance of aggressive homophobic behaviour [100]. They also found that school communities often failed to offer effective responses. These findings confirmed that boys are more likely to suffer homophobic violence than girls.

In a large online academic study in **Hungary** in 2008, 93.6 per cent of LGBT respondents reported being bullied by fellow students in secondary school, 50.1 per cent reported discriminatory or derogatory mistreatment by teachers and 29.2 per cent of respondents reported distorted representation of LGBT-related issues in school curricula [101].

In a small-scale, community-based study of LGB individuals under the age of 18 in **Malta** in 2006–2008, just over half reported suffering psychological violence from their peers in educational settings on at least three occasions [102]. A third reported experiencing psychological violence on more than ten occasions, while 13.3 per cent reported experiencing physical violence at school.

In **Turkey**, a large online survey of LGBT individuals conducted by the Social Policies, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association and Boğaziçi University Social Policy Forum in 2015, found that two thirds of respondents had experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression at school before the age of 18 [94]. Half reported experiencing negative comments or reactions due to their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression at university.

I'm constantly being attacked, I'm afraid of walking around the school, I don't even go to the school shop alone because I'm afraid to meet those who bully me. In school a few students from another class constantly accost me with some remarks, they even made a rhyme about me.'

Boy, 15, Poland [55, p. 42]

Research from **Poland** suggests that young LGBT people experience more violence in schools than the general student population. Research undertaken in 2010–2011 shows that: 69 per cent of LGBT students hide their sexual orientation at school; 56 per cent feel lonely; and 63 per cent have thought about suicide (compared to 12 per cent among the general population of the same age) [55]. Further research in 2012 found that boys acting 'girly' were the most likely targets of homophobic violence in educational settings – with more than four in five reporting experiencing violence [103]. The same survey found that most homophobic insults witnessed at school were directed against boys.

In 2013, in a survey of 322 secondary school students in the **Croatian capital Zagreb**, 32.4 per cent of respondents said that they had verbally and/or physically abused peers due to their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity [104].

A 2008 study of the daily experiences of LGBT young people in **Slovenia** showed similar results. It found that 36 per cent of respondents reported at least one experience of homophobic violence during their schooling, while 11 per cent reported experiencing physical violence at school [56]. The same NGO also surveyed the experience of LGB teachers in 2011. These cited pressure from school management to censor themselves or hide their sexual orientation at the workplace and felt unable to openly show support to LGBT students [57].

10 Federal Law of 29 June 2013: 'On the introduction of amendments to Article 5 of the Federal Law', 'On the protection of children from information liable to be injurious to their health and development' and individual legislative documents of the Russian Federation aimed at protecting children from information promoting the denial of traditional family values (no. 135-FZ).

11 Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information and Mass Media, available at: http://rkn.gov.ru/mass-communications/p700p701/ [accessed September 2015].

12 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Russian Federation, 25 February 2014, CRC/C/RUS/CO/4-5, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/52f89e2b4.html [accessed 25 September 2015].

BOX 8 RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

In 2013, the Russian Federation amended its federal law on the protection of children from information harmful to their health and development.[10] This punished the promotion of 'non-traditional sexual relations' to minors with fines and administrative sanctions. The Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information and Mass Media issued guidelines explaining that this can include the positive portrayal or approval of people with 'non-traditional sexual relations' – namely LGBT people.[11] Among other repercussions, the law led to the closure of the Children 404 website – the only public source of counselling and support for LGBT children in the country.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has expressed concern that, although intended to protect children, the law 'encourages the stigmatization of and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, including children, and children from LGBTI families'. The Committee recommended that the law should be repealed.[12]

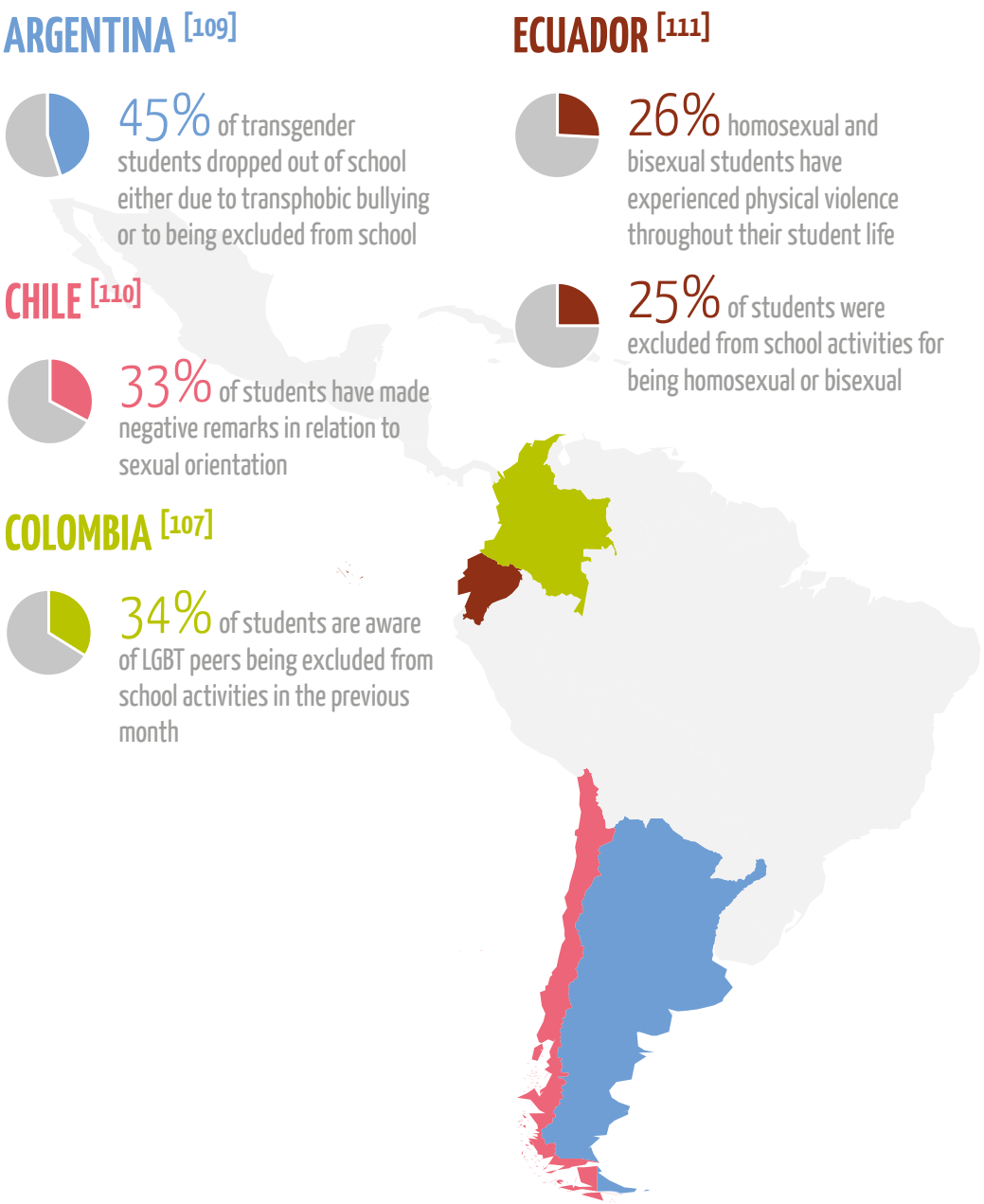
In this context, studies and actions to address homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings are highly challenging. However, there are indications that levels of such violence are high. For example, a representative nationwide survey of general violence against children, published in 2012, found that three in ten children had suffered from violence between the ages 5–14, with a fifth of incidents occurring in schools [105]. Most of the incidents involved psychological violence, although examples of physical and sexual violence and cyber bullying were also cited.

2.4. Latin America and the Caribbean

In Latin America existing data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings consist mostly of small-scale community-based studies that do not draw reliable conclusions about the levels of such violence. In the Caribbean, only one UNICEF study in Jamaica offers limited data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings [106]. One of the more reliable studies from the region was conducted in 2014, at secondary schools in Bogota, **Colombia**. It revealed that 34 per cent of students are aware of LGBT peers being excluded from school activities [107].

The most prevalent form of violence reported in the region is verbal violence, followed by physical violence, perpetrated by peers and educational staff in both public and private schools [40], [54], [108].

FIGURE 10 **PREVALENCE OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA**



In **Chile**, **Guatemala**, **Mexico** and **Peru**, a small-scale study[13] among 18 to 24 year olds looking at violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational institutions in 2011 suggests that LGBT students frequently experienced insults and bullying [108]. Here, 88 to 96 per cent of all respondents reported hearing homophobic insults frequently or occasionally, while LGBT respondents consistently reported higher levels of bullying than their peers.

A 2011 UNICEF study in **Chile** confirmed that homophobic insults are used frequently, with a third of the surveyed students admitting making negative remarks in relation to sexual orientation

13 The 2011 study analysed data from 499 respondents aged from18 to 24 years old in four countries (Chile: 98; Guatemala: 111; Mexico: 112; Peru: 178). While this data cannot be interpreted as representative, it can provide a useful insight into the experiences of LGBTI people in these countries.

[110]. In **Mexico**, a study in 2009 found that two in five primary school students state that 'being gay or lesbian is bad', as do a third of those in secondary school [112].

LGBT students in Latin America reported experiencing violence more frequently than their heterosexual peers. For example, in the first national survey on homophobic bullying in **Mexico** – conducted by the Youth Coalition, COJESS México and Eneache in 2012 – 75 per cent of gay boys, 50 per cent of lesbian girls and 66 per cent of transgender young people reported being subjected to some type of bullying at school, mainly through insults and mockery, but also through physical and sexual violence [54]. In a 2013 study in **Ecuador**, 25 per cent of MSM reported being excluded from school activities for being homosexual and 26 per cent report suffering physical violence while studying [111].

Social exclusion is another common form of reported psychological violence in the region. In **Colombia**, a 2014 survey of 87,000 students in secondary schools in Bogotá revealed that 34 per cent of respondents were aware of LGBT peers being excluded from school activities in the month preceding the study [107]. Yet the results of a multi-year study by the educational authorities of the same city, published in 2012 and drawing on the largest sample available in the region (118,000 students in Grades 6–11), show that homophobic stigma in schools has decreased. Here, 70.3 per cent of respondents reported that they had not seen anyone be rejected at school due to their homosexuality recently. This was up from 63.6 per cent in 2011 [113].

By contrast, a small-scale national study in **Colombia**, conducted by an LGBT NGO in 2012, identified sustained levels of discrimination on the part of teachers and school staff, and infrequent effective sanctions or support from school management [114].

In the Caribbean, a study from 2015 offers limited data on the scope of bullying in **Jamaican** schools. Here, 64.9 per cent of students report having ever been bullied, with 70 per cent of these saying that they were bullied within the school year just ending [106]. The UNICEF study stated that, overall, the targets of bullying are 'anyone perceived to be weak or somewhat different from others', particularly children who are 'outstandingly different in behaviour, physically or in speech', including those perceived to be LGBT. Teachers also cited the following characteristics for students who carry out bullying: 'boys who are quiet and soft spoken, children who may act and look differently … students who are less masculine, physically weak'.

No data are available on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings from other countries in the Caribbean. As of 2015, consensual same-sex sexual activity was illegal in nine out of 14 states in the region.

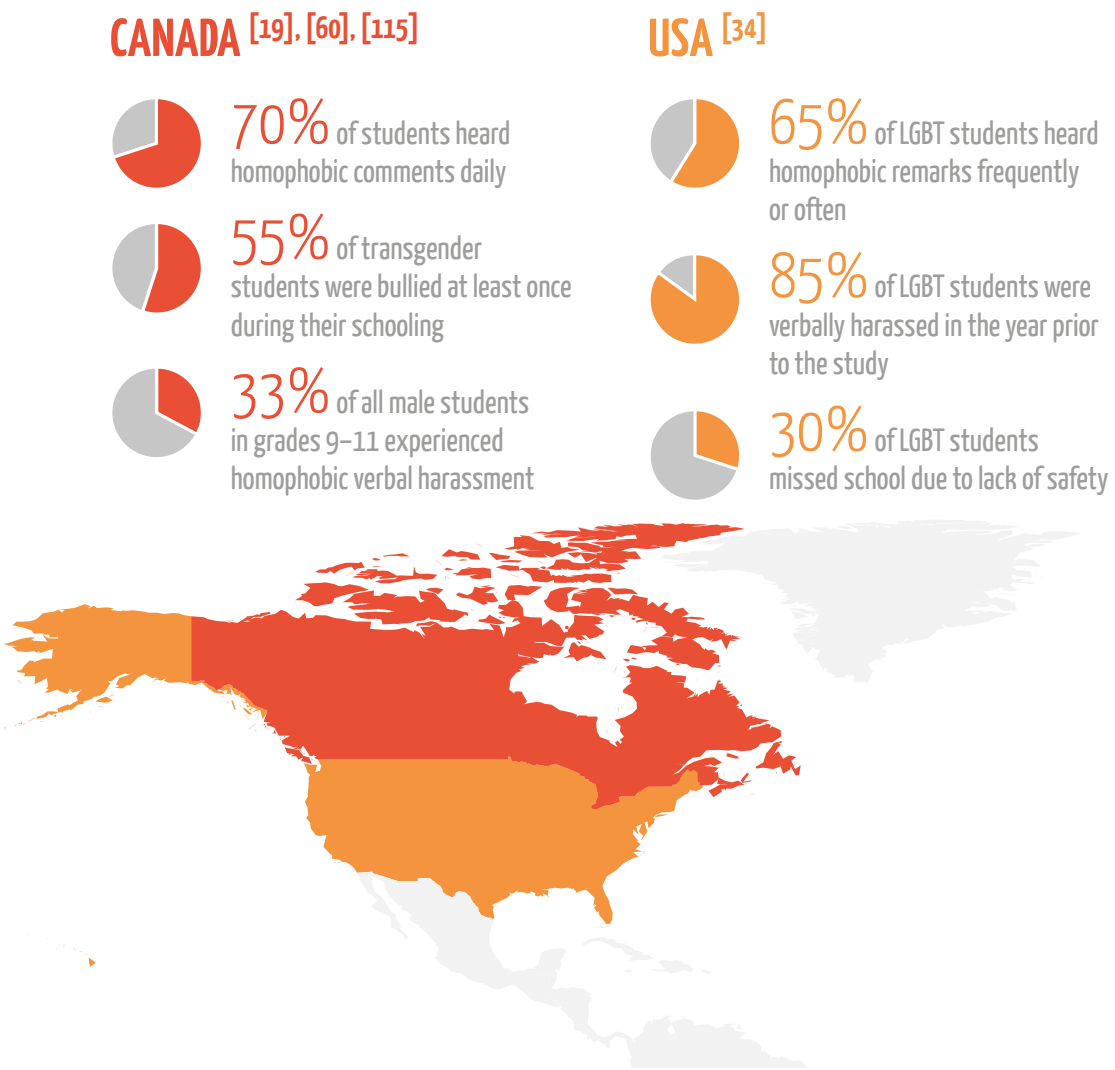
2.5. North America

Since the 1990s and early 2000s, NGOs have collected extensive, reliable data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings in the United States and Canada (respectively) [34], [60], [115]–[117]. Verbal violence is the most frequent manifestation of homophobic and transphobic violence in the region, followed by physical harassment and bullying.

In the current decade, government authorities (both federal and state/provincial) have also turned their attention to this kind of violence. They have recorded progress in relation to policy (such as with an increasing number of school, state or federal policies developed to protect students from homophobic and transphobic violence) and practice (such as with school communities knowing more about the extent and nature of homophobic and transphobic violence and increasingly learning to address it) [46].

Yet, according to studies ranging from 2006 to 2010, schools in North America remain unsafe for a considerable number of LGBT students [118]–[120]. Homophobic and transphobic violence in the region manifests mostly through verbal violence, followed by physical harassment and bullying. The most common impact of such violence is lower self-esteem, poorer health and well-being, lower academic attainment and early school leaving.

FIGURE 11 PREVALENCE OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



Large-scale studies in **Canada** have found that LGBT young people experience violence more frequently than their non-LGBT peers. The British Columbia Adolescent Health Survey examined the experiences of LGB young people in three research exercises (1992, 1998 and 2003). The findings indicate that both boys and girls in Grades 7–12 experience more verbal harassment when they are homosexual than when they are heterosexual [121].

In Ontario, a representative survey of 1,819 students in 2008 found that one third of all boys in Grades 9–11 reported experiencing homophobic verbal harassment [6]. This illustrates how such violence also affects non-LGBT students. A 2015 study of transgender young people found that 55 per cent of school-aged respondents said they had been bullied once or more during their schooling [122].

Examining data from several provinces, nationwide research in Canada in 2014 suggests that homophobic speech is extremely prevalent in educational institutions, with 70.4 per cent of students reporting hearing homophobic comments daily at school [116]. One in ten respondents report experiencing physical violence attributed to their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. This suggests that homophobic and transphobic violence remains present in educational settings, although with a low prevalence.

In the **United States**, studies of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings have consistently found high rates of violence [123]–[127]. Nationwide, 2.5 per cent of schools reported that harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression had taken place in the school year 2009–10 [128].[14]

A 2013 nationwide survey by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) of 7,898 LGBT students aged 13–21 acknowledged progress in policy and practice. However, it also highlighted that the great majority of LGBT students still reported homophobic or transphobic verbal harassment at school [34]. Such students also frequently reported name calling and teasing in schools as the most prevalent forms of homophobic violence).

Transgender students in the United States also appear to suffer higher rates of violence than their peers. A community survey of 295 such students in 2009 found that almost nine in ten respondents had been verbally harassed due to their sexual orientation or gender identify/expression [44].

2.6. The Pacific

In the Pacific region, Australia and New Zealand provide methodologically sound data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. This includes large-scale, longitudinal surveys and specific data on the experiences of bisexual and transgender individuals. Little data is available from elsewhere in the region.

14 Only a small percentage of the overall student population, 0.6 per cent, reported being called names in relation to their sexual orientation. However, this data must be interpreted with caution, as this number is based on a small number of reports, below the study's reporting standards.

FIGURE 12 **PREVALENCE OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN THE PACIFIC**

AUSTRALIA [68], [130]

25% of LGBT students experienced physical violence during physical education classes and

33% received threats and insults

61% of LGBT young people experienced psychological violence in school

18% of LGBT young people experienced physical violence in school

NEW ZEALAND [8]

17% of LGB secondary school students are bullied weekly or more

LGB students are

+++ 3 times more likely to be bullied than their heterosexual peers

Transgender students are

+++ ++ 5 times more likely to be bullied than non-transgender students

In **Australia**, a national study conducted by the La Trobe University on the sexual health and well-being of LGBT young people has taken place every six years since 1998. The 2010 report found that psychological violence, notably insults, occurred more frequently than physical violence (reported by 61 per cent and 18 per cent of respondents respectively). A great majority reported other forms of psychological violence, including bullying, such as exclusion and rumours in schools (69 per cent) [68]. Many of the students reported feeling unsafe at school, while the data

indicated higher levels of homophobic and transphobic violence in comparison to the previous two studies (in 1998 and 2004) [131], [132].

Research supported by the government of **New Zealand** has, since 2001, addressed the health and well-being of secondary school students every six years. The 2014 report found that 17 per cent of LGB respondents declared being bullied at school weekly or more frequently. Among them, 46 per cent reported that the violence was due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation. While LGB students were three times more likely to be bullied than their heterosexual peers, transgender students were five times more likely to be bullied than their non-transgender peers [8].

Studies in **Australia and New Zealand** have found that psychological violence is particularly pervasive in physical education classes. *Out on the Fields*, an international study published in 2015, found that such classes were the second most likely place for homophobic behaviour to occur in both countries [133]. In an Australian study in 2014, a quarter of LGBT students reported experiencing physical violence in physical education classes. A third reported receiving threats and insults, while four out of five reported homophobic language being used casually during such lessons [130].

> I have to take gym, and I don't feel safe in the locker rooms. I know people will stare at me no matter which locker room I am in.
>
> Student who identified as genderqueer,5 Grade 10, US [34, p. 43]

3. THE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE

3. THE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE

Section 3 shares scientific data, case studies and analysis of education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. It starts by defining what is meant by an 'education sector' and 'national response'. It outlines the frameworks and principles that inform a comprehensive response and then describes what such a response encompasses. It then details the six elements of a comprehensive response: effective policies; relevant curricula and learning materials; training and support for staff; support for students and families; information campaigns and strategic partnerships; and monitoring of violence and evaluation of responses.

3.1. Why the education sector?

Homophobic and transphobic violence has an adverse impact on learning for all students and on the health and well-being of students who are subjected to violence. Addressing homophobic and transphobic violence in schools is critical to effective learning and inclusive and equitable education, to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to meet human rights commitments.

The education sector has a responsibility to provide safe and inclusive learning environments that enable all children and young people to access quality education. Schools that are safe and inclusive for all children and young people are essential for effective learning.

BOX 9 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "EDUCATION SECTOR"?

The primary purpose of an education sector or system is to provide education to children and young people in educational settings.

An education sector is comprised of many institutions (ministries of education, local educational authorities, teacher training institutions, schools, universities, etc.) and involves a wide range of people (curriculum developers, inspectors, school principals, teachers, school nurses, students, etc.). These institutions can vary according to different contexts.

Schools deliver education, with support from the rest of the education system through various elements such as education policies and guidelines – to which school policies can refer –, curricula and learning materials, as well as pre- and in-service teacher training programmes. The school environment – both physical (infrastructures) and psychological (school climate) – is also guided by school policies that should ensure the well-being of students when they are in school.

What happens in schools is influenced by decisions made by educational authorities at different levels: local, regional, state, national.

The education sector is fully integrated into society, through interactions with a large number of stakeholders and other sectors. These include parents, local communities, religious leaders, NGOs, stakeholders involved in health, child protection, justice and law enforcement (police), media and political leadership.

GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS TO GUIDE THE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE

In any context, education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence should be informed by, and should aim to fulfil, the international frameworks to which that country has committed.

Several international human rights mechanisms mandate safe, accepting and supportive learning environments that are free from violence and discrimination for all students. Together, these frameworks support a rights-based response to violence in schools – one that can be applied to addressing homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings.

The right to education is recognized under: Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960); Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); Article 10 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); and Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. The original text, adopted in 1989, did not refer directly to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. However, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has specified how the Convention can be used to protect children who are perceived to not conform to gender norms, including LGBTI children. This is particularly through the Committee's General Comments, which interpret the content of the human rights provisions. For example, in 2003, the Committee clarified in General Comment (GC #4), Paragraph 6, that 'States parties have the obligation to ensure that all human beings below 18 enjoy all the rights set forth in the Convention without discrimination (art. 2) […] These grounds also cover adolescents' sexual orientation' [134]. This, therefore, recognized that the universal rights described by the Convention apply also to children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or perceived as such.

Subsequently, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child made concluding observations to several State Parties (which can be considered as jurisprudence). It also issued additional General Comments related to the protection of the rights of LGBT children using the following three articles of the Convention:

Article 2: The right to non-discrimination.

Article 19: The right to be protected against any form of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse.

Article 24: The right of the Child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health [135].

Several past and current international development agendas also mandate learning environments that are safe and inclusive for all students and guarantee their well-being, specifying or implying that educational institutions should be free from violence.

BOX 10 UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM BULLYING

'The General Assembly, [...] recognizes that bullying, including cyber bullying, can have a potential long-term impact on the enjoyment of the human rights of children and negative effects on children affected by or involved in bullying; [...] Encourages Member States to take all appropriate measures to prevent and protect children, including in school, from any form of violence, including forms of bullying, by promptly responding to such acts, and to provide appropriate support to children affected by and involved in bullying.'

UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/158 on Protecting Children from Bullying, 18 December 2014

UN Member States made a commitment to improve access to education through the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), as part of the Education for All framework [136].

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000) aspired to achieve universal primary education (Goal 2) and gender equality in education (Goal 3) by 2015. The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015) aspire, among other targets, to inclusive and equitable quality education for all (Goal 4) [see Box 11] [137].

BOX 11 PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The SDGs are part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development agreed by all UN Member States in September 2015. Countries set 17 goals and related targets to accelerate sustainable development. Among those goals and targets, some can be directly referred to when advocating for and implementing education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence:

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Target 3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases.

Target 3.4 By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.

Target 3.4 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance use, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.

Target 3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.

How is this relevant to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings? *As evidence in this report confirms, homophobic and transphobic violence has very negative impacts on the physical and mental health of the children and young people it targets. The prevalence of suicide attempts is much higher amongst LGBTI students than their heterosexual peers, often because they are bullied. As a result of low self-esteem and, sometimes, anxiety and depression, they are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviours. These include: drug use; the harmful use of alcohol; and non-protected sexual intercourse, exposing them to transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Such students need age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education that meets their needs, particularly by covering issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.*

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Target 4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Target 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Target 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people and children in vulnerable situations.

Target 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Target 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

How is this relevant to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings? *This report shows that homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings has dramatic impacts on the children and young people that it targets, in terms of access to school, absenteeism, school dropout and academic performance. It is, therefore, an obstacle to the right to quality education of many children and young people throughout the world. It also has negative impacts on the employability of some young people. Data from several regions reveal that transgender people are routinely denied access to school or are expelled and, therefore have a very low level of education. A significant number of them end up seeing sex work as the only or easiest way to earn a living.*

In most countries, LGBTI students are already particularly vulnerable. Homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings makes them even more vulnerable. The only way to address these vulnerabilities is to ensure that: educational institutions are safe for absolutely all students; and education teaches the knowledge and skills to build societies that challenge harmful gender norms and are respectful of human rights and diversity.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Target 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

How is this relevant to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings? *Girls who are lesbian, alongside male-to-female transgender children and young people, suffer double discrimination. They are often discriminated against because of both: their gender and their sexual orientation (lesbians) or gender identity/expression (male-to-female transgender people). In some countries, lesbians are the targets of sexual violence, including corrective rape that aims to force them to change their sexual orientation. In many countries, physical violence, including murder, particularly targets male-to-female transgender people. In some regions, they are sexually exploited and disproportionally engage in sex work, as a result of being denied the right to attend school and the subsequent lack of work opportunities.*

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Target 10.2. By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

How is this relevant to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings? *Education sectors should prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence both: within educational settings, by making all institutions safe for LGBTI students; and through education, by changing beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against LGBTI people and exclude them from society.*

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Target 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

Target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

Target 16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

How is this relevant to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings? *By preventing and addressing homophobia and transphobia in school settings, education sector responses can also reduce homophobic and transphobic violence in society in general. The recognition of the rights of transgender children can contribute to ending sexual exploitation, including of male-to-female transgender people in some regions of the world. Non-discriminatory and inclusive education sector and school-level policies are a key element of a comprehensive and effective response to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings.*

In September 2014, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a ground-breaking resolution condemning all forms of violence against people based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. It also called on the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to review the evidence and good practice [138].[15] The May 2015 report of the Commissioner recommends that States should take action to end discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons. This includes by 'establishing national standards on non-discrimination in education, developing anti-bullying programmes and establishing helplines and other services to support LGBT and gender non-conforming youth, and providing comprehensive, age-appropriate sexuality education' [137].

In September 2015, in an unprecedented joint initiative – 12 UN agencies, including UNESCO – issued a powerful joint call to action on ending violence and discrimination against LGBTI adults, adolescents and children [139]. The call states that: 'Children face bullying, discrimination or expulsion from schools on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, or that of their parents', and that 'States should uphold international human rights standards on non-discrimination, including by prohibiting discrimination against LGBTI adults, adolescents and children in all contexts – including in education'.

15 Asia-Pacific countries voting in favour included: Japan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, and Viet Nam. Asia-Pacific countries voting against included: Indonesia, Maldives and Pakistan. Asia-Pacific countries abstaining included: China, India and Kazakhstan.

REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS TO GUIDE THE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE

There are also regional instruments (binding treaties and non-binding ministerial declarations and resolutions) that guarantee students' right to education. Although these regional instruments (including binding treaties) guarantee the right to education for all, the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter are the only regional treaties with explicit references to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in their jurisprudence and can be referred to in relation to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings [see Box 12].

BOX 12 REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS THAT GUARANTEE STUDENTS' RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Africa:

- The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1986) recognizes the right to education.

Latin America and the Caribbean:

- 17 states signed the San Salvador Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights (1969), with Article 13 establishing that education policies must aim to protect and uphold human rights.
- The Ministers of Education and Health of Latin America adopted the Mexico City Ministerial Declaration *Educating to Prevent* (2008) [140]. This establishes the need for comprehensive sexuality education and refers to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
- Between 2008 and 2012, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States adopted five resolutions condemning 'acts of violence and human rights violations perpetrated against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity' [141]. This included a landmark resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity (2011) [142].

Asia:

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Human Rights Declaration (2012) recognizes the right to education.

Europe:

- The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950) recognizes the right to education.
- The Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity (2010) calls on the Council of Europe's 47 members to 'ensure that the right to education can be effectively enjoyed without discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity' [143] [see Box 17].
- The European Social Charter guarantees the right to the protection of health, including through the provision of advisory and educational facilities [144]. This positive obligation 'extends to ensuring that educational materials do not reinforce demeaning stereotypes and perpetuate forms of prejudice which contribute to the social exclusion, embedded discrimination and denial of human dignity often experienced by historically marginalized groups such as persons of non-heterosexual orientation' [145].

BOX 13 RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS (2010)

The Recommendation to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity was adopted unanimously by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2010. It advises the education sectors of the 47 member states to take measures 'at all levels to promote mutual tolerance and respect in schools, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity'.

It specifies that this should include 'providing objective information with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity, for instance in school curricula and educational materials, and providing pupils and students with the necessary information, protection and support to enable them to live in accordance with their sexual orientation and gender identity'.

The recommendation further advises countries to 'design and implement school equality and safety policies and action plans and may ensure access to adequate anti-discrimination training or support and teaching aids' [143]. [16]

Within the United Nations, 75 Member States outlaw consensual sexual relations, relationships between adults of the same sex or the public discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. In such contexts, these and other legal restrictions make it difficult to collect evidence that homophobic and transphobic violence exists in educational settings and must be addressed. A notable exception is Jamaica, where, although consensual same-sex activity is illegal, the Minister of Education has commissioned research into the impact of homophobic bullying [106]. As of 2015, the Minister sought to mention homophobic bullying in the next version of the national anti-bullying guidelines.

In many other countries, while LGBTI people are not criminalized, a hostile social climate can still make it difficult for the education sector to address homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. Same-sex relationships are still considered as a disease by many people, even though the General Assembly of the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from their list of mental disorders in May 1990. In these contexts, homophobic and transphobic violence can be partly prevented and addressed through policies and programmes on violence in schools in general, including school-related gender-based violence.

3.2. What are the key principles for education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence?

Analysis of policy and practice has identified a number of key principles that provide the foundation for effective education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence and support safe and inclusive learning environments. Effective education sector responses are (see Figure 12):

- **Rights-based** – A rights-based response protects the human rights of all students, including the right to education, safety, dignity, health, equal opportunities and freedom from discrimination.
- **Learner-centred and inclusive –** A learner-centred and inclusive response addresses the different perspectives, needs and experiences of all students. Lesbian girls and women, gay boys and men, bisexual people, male-to-female and female-to-male transgender people and intersex people do not necessarily have the same perspectives, experiences or needs. Responses must also bear in mind the perspectives and needs of students who may not be

16 The paragraph concludes with a sentence, originally added by the Russian Federation, that 'such measures should take into account the rights of parents regarding education of their children'.

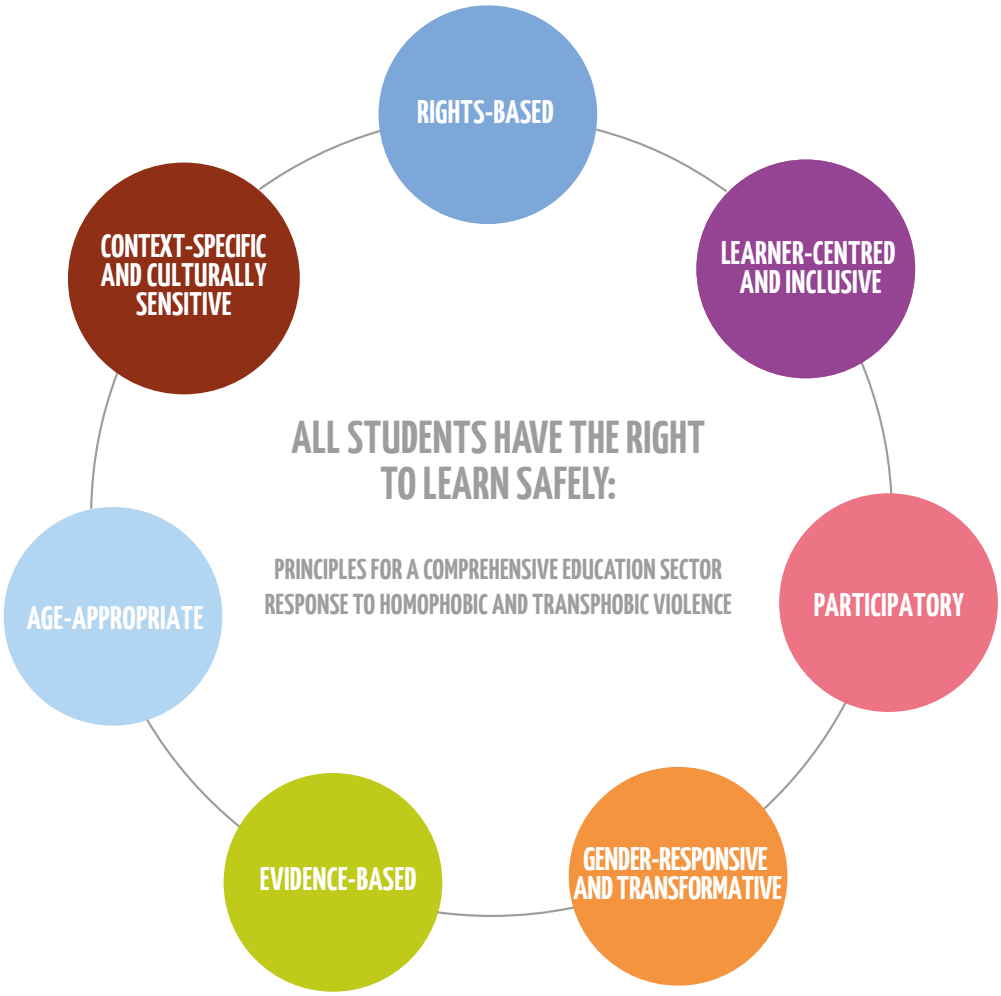
LGBTI themselves, but who may be the target of homophobic and transphobic violence due to their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

- **Participatory –** Students or elected students' representatives should be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education sector responses to violence. In Ireland and Malta, policies to protect transgender students from violence in schools have been developed with youth and LBGTI organizations to ensure that policies respond to their needs.
- **Gender-responsive and transformative** – A gender-responsive and transformative response takes account of all genders and gender identities as well as gender equality and challenges gender-related discrimination and harmful stereotypes. It also aims to transform existing structures, institutions and gender relations so that they are based on gender equality. In Thailand, transgender students in some secondary schools can choose their uniform, based on the principle that students' well-being is more important than norms about gender and clothing.
- **Evidence-based** – An evidence-based response draws on scientific evidence and expert opinion from disciplines including public health, psychology and social science and ensures that education stakeholders are aware of relevant evidence.
- **Age-appropriate** – Information and support should be consistent with a student's actual and developmental age. An age-appropriate response addresses issues related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in a way that students can relate to safely. In Spain, the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equal Opportunities published a guidebook for the education sector to respond to homophobia and transphobia in educational settings including resources for students at different ages and levels of the education system.
- **Context specific and culturally sensitive** – Responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings need to be tailored to the social, cultural and legal context. Some contexts are more challenging than others, but experience shows that it is possible to address such violence even in challenging contexts, using appropriate entry points and approaches. In the United States, for example, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) has used an approach and terminology that are consistent with national values, including the right to quality education as a key civil right that guarantees equal opportunities.

When I finally found out what 'faggot' and 'gay' meant, I realized that these insults were for me.

Diogo, 25, Gay, Portugal

FIGURE 13 **ALL STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO LEARN SAFELY:**
PRINCIPLES FOR A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE



3.3. What is a comprehensive education sector response?

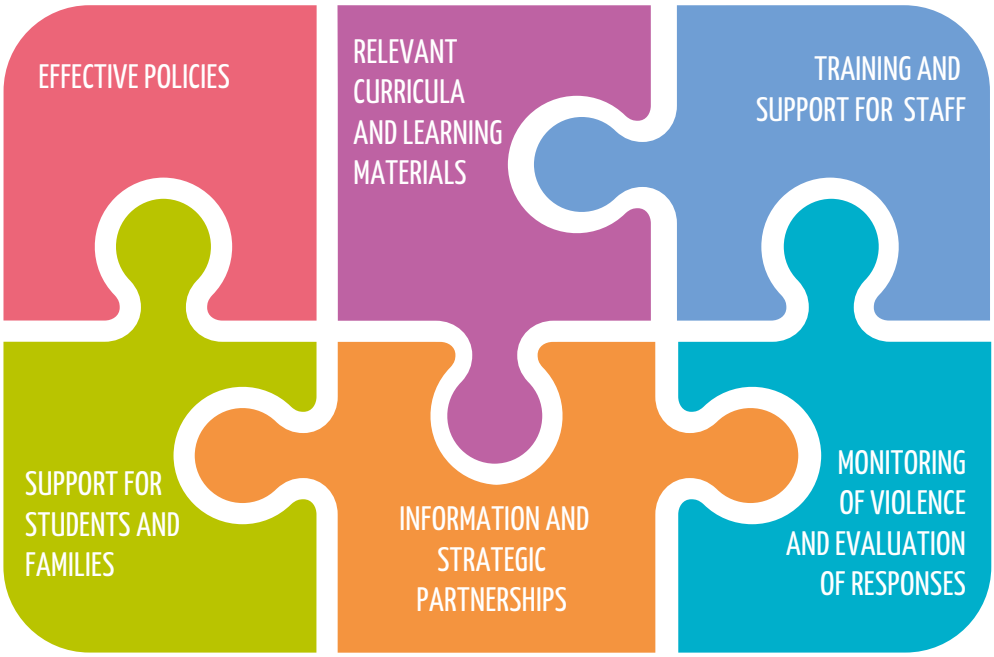
Work conducted in countering violence in schools in general has shown that 'school and system wide interventions', often referred to as 'whole school' strategies or approaches, are particularly effective [124], [146]. The same applies to education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence. In this report, 'whole school' responses to homophobic and transphobic violence are also referred to as 'comprehensive' education sector responses, which can also be referred to as 'holistic', 'systematic', 'systemic', 'system-wide'.

A comprehensive education sector response to homophobic and transphobic violence encompasses all of the following elements:

- **Effective policies** – National and school policies on how to prevent and address school-related violence including homophobic and transphobic violence, are the foundation for an effective response. Such policies can provide guidance on, for example, roles and responsibilities, training required by teachers and other staff, interventions to prevent violence, mechanisms for reporting incidents of violence, support for students, and monitoring and evaluation. At school level, policies are often translated into codes of conduct for staff and students.

- **Relevant curricula and learning materials** – Curricula provide teachers and other education stakeholders with clear guidelines on what students should learn at different ages, and learning materials usually reflect what is in the curriculum. The inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression in curricula and learning materials is critical to ensure that teachers address these issues in the classroom. Ensuring that curricula and learning materials convey positive rather than negative messages about these issues is equally critical.
- **Training and support for staff** – School staff, especially school principals and teachers, are central to an effective response. They play a central role in influencing the school and classroom environment and student attitudes and, more specifically, in preventing violence and responding to it if it occurs. However, teachers and other staff need appropriate training and support from school management to enable them to address the issue of homophobic and transphobic violence, and to avoid inadvertently conveying negative messages about sexual and gender diversity.
- **Support for students and families** – Schools and other educational institutions need to have measures in place to provide effective support to students who are the targets of homophobic and transphobic violence as well as to their families, the perpetrators of violence, bystanders and other students affected by violence. Policies that provide guidance on delivery of support, for example, in school or through referral to other services, play a critical role.
- **Information and strategic partnerships** – Partnerships between the education sector and other actors can enhance the quality and effectiveness of interventions to prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence in schools and, more specifically, the relevance and accuracy of information provided to educators and students. Partnerships with civil society, in particular with LGBTI NGOs, can contribute to successful responses.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – Monitoring and evaluation are critical for evidence-based policy making. Monitoring the nature, prevalence and impacts of homophobic and transphobic violence is critical to the design and planning of appropriate interventions. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions is also critical to ensure that they are having the desired impact.

FIGURE 14 **VIOLENCE-FREE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:**
THE ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE



A comprehensive education sector response is also comprehensive in terms of:

- **Scope** – The response takes steps to both prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence, i.e. it includes strategies for primary prevention of and for responding to violence.
- **Actors** – The response involves all relevant stakeholders i.e. education ministries, local education authorities, teacher training institutions, schools, universities, curriculum developers, inspectors, school principals, teachers, school nurses, students, parents, communities, and other sectors.
- **Scale** – A comprehensive response is implemented at national and sub-national levels, i.e. at provincial, state and district level depending on the country context, not just in a few schools.

BOX 13 WHAT IS A NATIONAL LEVEL EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE?

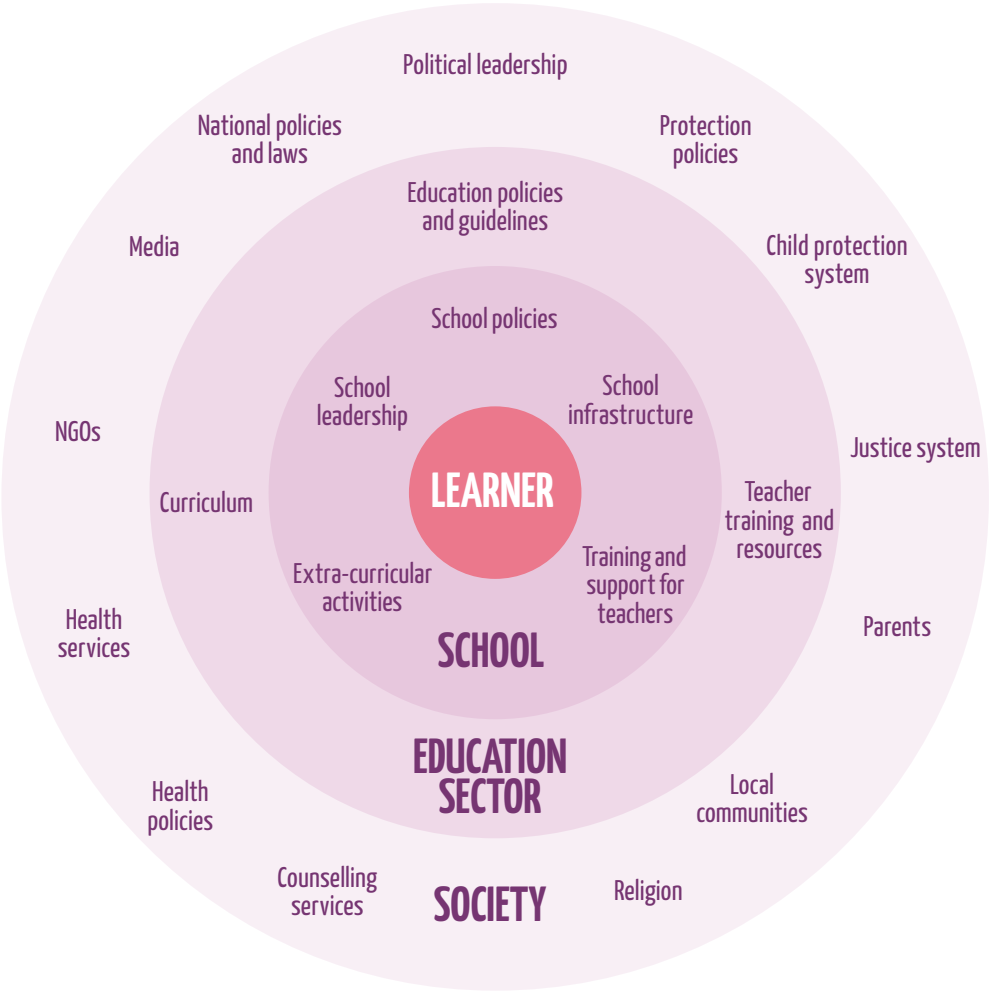
This report focuses on education sector responses at the national level, i.e. responses implemented by each country. However it is important to acknowledge that the education sector is organized differently depending on the context. In each country, there are usually several decision-making levels regarding education policies, including a range of educational authorities and institutions that make decisions in different areas of education. The levels of autonomy for the implementation of those policies, and the mechanisms for accountability, also vary depending on the context. The 'geographical' levels likely to be involved in policy-making and/or implementation include:

- national level, including one or several ministries of education
- state or regional level, in federal countries (such as Germany, India and USA) or in countries where regional authorities have broad powers in relation to education (such as Belgium and Spain)
- local level, such as district or municipality
- school (educational institution) level

In countries with a centralized political and administrative system, most decisions are usually made at the national level, while the autonomy of the other levels, including educational institutions, can be limited. For example: there is usually a national curriculum for each subject and national teaching materials based on those curricula; and all educational institutions in the country have to deliver the same content, using the same materials and methods. Meanwhile, in federal countries, educational policies are mostly developed at the state level and there might not be a single, national curriculum per subject. In some countries, local educational authorities have extensive powers in various areas, such as the recruitment and training of teachers.

Finally, depending on the context, schools can be more or less autonomous in terms of the teaching methods used and, for example, the design of specific school policies. Therefore, this report recognizes that, in practice, within some countries, responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings are not national per se and vary according to states, regions or even districts and schools.

FIGURE 15 **TACKLING HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE:**
A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE INVOLVES THE WHOLE EDUCATION COMMUNITY



Source: Adapted from UNESCO. 2015. Asia-Pacific Consultation on School Bullying Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity / Expression – Meeting Report. Bangkok, Thailand, p.10.

CASE STUDIES AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND THAILAND: A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

In Australia, the Safe Schools Coalition's approach actively supports the establishment of Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) and other youth-led initiatives for peer support and information. It also provides professional development for teachers and other school staff that can be tailored to schools' specific needs. It has developed guidelines on non-discrimination, bullying and diversity policies and a broad set of resources, including books and videos [147].

The Ontario Teachers' Federation and Center in Canada developed and delivered a Safe@School initiative. This included workshops for students, school staff and parents that address topics such as bullying, homophobia, sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination. Safe@School resource kits have been distributed to all Ontario schools and boards [148].

In Thailand, UNESCO, Plan International and other partners are working to implement a pilot programme in Bangkok and Chiang Mai. This aims to prevent school bullying and other forms of violence and to make schools more gender-responsive environments for all students regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. The programme is designed to test embedding policies and practices into the curriculum and daily life of the participating schools.

WHAT ARE THE STAGES IN DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE?

Progress in implementing measures to prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings varies between regions and countries. The most comprehensive initiatives are being implemented in Australia and New Zealand, Canada and the United States, and a number of countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America. However, the education sector response has been limited in the majority of countries in the world, particularly in Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Central Asia and some areas of the Pacific. In addition, it is important to note that many countries do not have comprehensive strategies to prevent and address violence in schools in general.

In general terms, the range of responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings appears to correlate to a country's: socio-cultural context (in terms of the society's beliefs and attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity, as well as to human rights and gender equality); and legal context (in terms of the rights of LGBTI individuals and the situation of human rights in general).

Overall, education sector responses tend to focus on homophobia and violence linked to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, and less on transphobia. Most responses focus in some way on diverse expressions of gender and support students to understand that gender may be expressed in a different way from binary models (of masculine and feminine). Responses vary greatly in their: scope (from a single class to the national level); duration (from one-off events to several years); and level of support that they enjoy (from individual teachers to the highest levels of government).

In most contexts where they exist, education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings are relatively young. Only a small number – in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States – have been evaluated.

As outlined in Table 1, experiences to date suggest three types of national education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence:

- External response
- Selected response

- Comprehensive response

All countries – while responding to their specific context and progressing at an appropriate pace – should work towards developing and implementing a comprehensive response. This kind of response tends to require more planning and resources (human, financial and technical) than external or selected responses (defined in Table 1). However, they are more likely to be effective and sustainable.

While most countries do not have any specific responses to homophobic and transphobic violence, they may take action to address violence in schools in general, such as through anti-bullying policies. While better than no action at all, such responses are usually inadequate if they do not address the specificities of violence that is based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Overall, responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings evolve over time. The tendency witnessed in all regions is for education sectors to first allow or encourage external responses, then to implement selected responses and occasionally to later adopt comprehensive responses. Each type of response may help to make the case to consider moving to the 'next level'. The pace of evolution depends on diverse factors, such as the resources and leadership available. It can also be disrupted, for example, if there is a change in the political environment.

TABLE 1 TYPES OF NATIONAL, STATE OR REGIONAL EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

	Description of Response	Advantages of this type of response	Challenges to response
External response	Designed and implemented by actors outside the education sector, such as NGOs promoting the rights of students or LGBTI people. Usually implemented at the community or institution level or in selected educational institutions only. **Example:** In Poland, Campaign Against Homophobia, an NGO, works with teachers' unions, the Centre for Education Development, local teacher training offices and some school directors to help secondary schools to plan, coordinate and monitor anti-discrimination programmes and activities.	• Allows a response to violence with or without support from the whole education sector. • Can be flexible and adaptable to the context. • Helps build the case for a selected and/or comprehensive response by the education sector in the future.	• The scope is proportional to the (often limited) resources available to the implementers. • Interventions are implemented only at the request of educational authorities and, therefore, can stop at any time. • Funding may be temporary and, unless they are conducted on a totally voluntary basis, responses might not be sustainable. • Sustainability may also be an issue if implementation depends only on volunteers – as their retention in NGOs is often problematic. • It is rarely evaluated, with effectiveness and efficiency difficult to measure over time.

	Description of Response	Advantages of this type of response	Challenges to response
Selected response	Designed and implemented by the education sector, including decision-makers at different levels, and possibly in partnership with other actors outside the education sector – to address homophobic and transphobic violence during a limited period of time (such as one year) or with a limited scope (such as Grade 11 students only). Usually designed by the education sector at a national or state level, although sometimes implemented with a limited geographical scope. **Example:** In 2011, in Taiwan of China, the Ministry of Education announced that courses related to gender equality (that had been taught in senior high school since 2004) would be expanded to primary and junior high schools [7].	• Responds to specific, identified needs. • Is flexible and adaptable to the context. • Helps build the case for future comprehensive responses. • If evaluated, can produce data over several years to determine its effectiveness.	• Rarely addresses all aspects of homophobic and transphobic violence, focusing on just one or two elements (such as curricula) – leading to an incomplete response. • May be limited in time and subject to changing political support.
Comprehensive response	Designed and implemented by the education sector at the national level (or state/regional level in countries where the education system is fully decentralized), possibly in partnership with other actors – to systematically and comprehensively address homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. Encompasses all or most of the elements needed for an effective response (see Box 13). **Example:** Australia has already institutionalised a national whole-school programme that addresses discrimination and school-violence including bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression or intersex characteristics. Although it is important to note that this program has recently been questioned by a new government. It is crucial that progress keep being made. Countries such as Canada, Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom are moving towards the development of comprehensive responses, although scale up implementation has not been evaluated.	• Responds lastingly to homophobic and transphobic violence on a large scale. • Establishes a clear and effective commitment to addressing homophobic and transphobic violence. • Produces data over several years to determine their effectiveness and impact.	• Several years are usually needed to build the case for a comprehensive response and to implement it. • It requires high-level political commitment to start.

In general terms, external responses are easier to implement and can be deployed in most contexts, including where there is little political support for issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Selected responses are less common, only seen where education sector leadership at some level supports such issues. Comprehensive responses are less common still, usually requiring support at the highest level of the education sector, for example at the ministerial level.

In education sectors that are evolving from no response to an external response, the sector's knowledge of homophobic and transphobic violence, and the political will to address it, may be limited. A further challenge may be the resources of NGOs that, for example, may be limited to specific contexts (such as only in the capital city or only in some schools).

In education sectors that are evolving from external to selected responses, the sector has often commissioned or acknowledged emerging reliable research into homophobic and transphobic violence, or sometimes reacts to specific cases of violence. They assess existing research and external responses and may start lending initial support – such as by vetting NGOs to speak in schools, by offering pre- or in-service teacher training or by establishing a day of awareness or support. This scaling up from community-level or institution-level responses to a wider level requires reliable evidence to demonstrate that selected responses are needed. It also often requires intense advocacy by civil society. There is no one-size-fits-all model.

Education sectors evolving from selected to comprehensive responses do so within the framework of broader responses to school-related violence including bullying in general. The sector builds on its experience with existing (external and selected) responses to establish clear objectives. In so doing, they often strengthen their relationships with relevant NGOs and external experts. This evolution requires subscribing to the objective of combating homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings, often at the highest political levels. This is made possible thanks to policy-makers in relevant ministries having previously acquainted themselves with sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues. It is also often thanks to strategic partnerships between the education sector and NGOs pushing for change. In this process, education sector leaders can face political opposition to varying degrees, which can influence the pace or depth of progress.

There is no one-size-fits-all response for every context. As such, the responses shared in this report take into account legal and socio-cultural realities.

Whatever the context, and in countries where the education sector has not done anything yet to prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence specifically because of a challenging social and legal context in relation to sexual and gender diversity, it is important that efforts are situated within wider anti-violence/bullying initiatives that promote anti-discriminatory thinking and respect for all.

CASE STUDY IRELAND: DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

In 2013, Ireland adopted a new comprehensive national plan to address bullying in schools, including homophobic and transphobic bullying. Key steps in the process included:

- **2005: Producing evidence.** Through research, BeLonGTo, a youth NGO, identified a link between coming out and self-harm for LGBT children and young people. This led to the group being recognized as a key population in the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.
- **2009–2011: Widening the evidence base.** Two additional pieces of research, commissioned by NGOs, generated evidence about the mental health of LGBT people and the lives of older LGBT people, starting a national conversation about daily realities for the LGBT community.
- **2010: Pledging action.** Teachers' unions and LGBT and youth NGOs presented the evidence to political and education sector leaders ahead of a national election, asking for action. The political parties forming a government committed to developing anti-bullying policies (including addressing homophobic bullying) in their programme.
- **2012: Getting to work.** The Department of Education and Skills organized the first public anti-bullying forum and started an anti-bullying working group, which included policy-makers, experts and NGOs.
- **2013: A new policy.** The Ministers for Education and Skills and for Children and Youth Affairs jointly launched the National Action Plan on Bullying, which referred to homophobic and transphobic bullying. The plan included financial support for information campaigns, LGBT-sensitive school inspections and training teachers on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues. It also included incorporating homophobic and transphobic bullying into new mandatory anti-bullying procedures for all schools.
- **2015: Guidelines for implementation.** The government issued national anti-bullying procedures to help primary and post-primary schools to implement the National Action Plan on Bullying [149].

3.4. How is the education sector responding to homophobic and transphobic violence?

3.4.1. Effective policies

Few countries have developed education sector policies to prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence in schools, reflecting the fact that recognition of the prevalence and harmful impact of such violence in the sector is a relatively recent development. Most countries that have developed policies have taken one of the two following approaches:

- Integrating references to sexual orientation and gender identity or to homophobic and transphobic discrimination and violence into existing education sector policies on general violence, bullying or discrimination.
- Developing specific education sector policies that focus on violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

The first approach aims to protect and support LGBTI students by mainstreaming issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity into broader policies to prevent and address discrimination and violence. However, available data suggest that in countries where policies do not clearly refer to homophobic and transphobic violence, this form of violence may not be addressed by schools. For example, a large-scale qualitative research study conducted in 19 European countries in 2013 by the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency concluded that: 'Where anti-bullying measures are in place, these are often generic and they may be ineffective in dealing specifically with bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity [150].

The second approach requires political leadership and a legal environment that is conducive to the protection of the rights of LGBTI people. A number of countries have developed specific education sector policies that address homophobic and transphobic violence in schools and other educational settings (see Figure 15).

My school days were basically me hiding, hating myself and never really knowing why.

Mia, age 22, trans woman, Sweden

NATIONAL POLICIES

National policies and plans are a key opportunity for governments to demonstrate leadership on addressing homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings and creating an enabling environment. They provide a common vision of what an issue means to a country and what actions it considers most important.

I want every single LGBT young person to know that I am on their side, and that this government will do everything it can to make sure that their time in school is a happy one, that allows them to be themselves and achieve all that they are capable of.'

Nicky Morgan, UK Secretary for Education, Speech given at the Stonewall Education Conference, 10 July 2015, London

The nature of national policies and legislation of relevance to homophobic and transphobic violence varies greatly between countries, for example, reflecting legal traditions and political contexts. In several countries, national constitutions forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation and, less often, gender identity/expression.[17] Although, symbolically, they offer the highest possible legal protection, such constitutional rights may be difficult to operationalize – including in the education sector – if they are not translated into practical laws and policies.

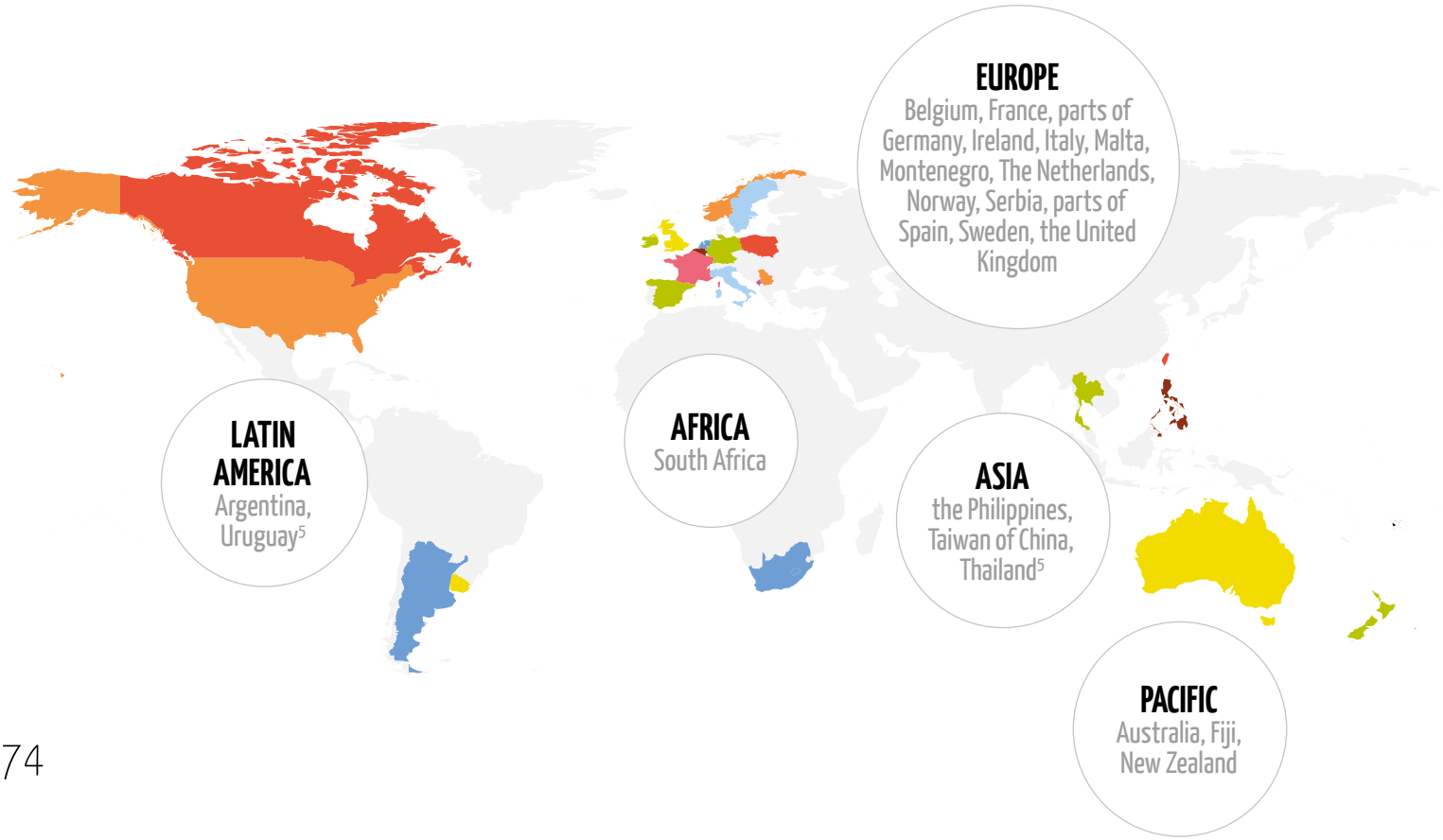
Broad national anti-discrimination policies refer to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression in a number of countries, particularly in Asia, North America, Western and Central Europe, and the Pacific.[18, 19] In Europe, there is a notable trend to adopt national action plans or strategies to secure the enjoyment of human rights by LGBTI people. These often include measures related to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings.

17 States that constitutionally outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation, and less frequently gender identity, include Austria, parts of Argentina, Bolivia, parts of Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Finland, parts of Germany, Kosovo, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland [29], [264].

18 This review relied on several sources to establish the existence of anti-discrimination legislation, and does not offer a comprehensive global overview of these laws.

19 States with anti-discrimination legislation covering sexual orientation, and less frequently gender identity, include Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, parts of China (Taiwan), Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, FYR Macedonia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Kosovo, Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Timor-Leste, the United Kingdom and parts of the United States.

FIGURE 16 **COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES WITH POLICIES ADDRESSING HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS**



National legislation against discrimination (as a whole) has served as a basis to develop national policies – which either include, or are specific to, the education sector – that address discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. In general, the education sector tends to address homophobic and transphobic violence through wider policies on violence, such as those related to bullying in schools or safe schools.

In **Asia**, the Philippines is the only country to include specific references to violence on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in a national law (2013) [7] (see case study below). In Japan, in 2015, the Ministry of Education issued landmark guidance urging local education boards to ensure that schools cater to the needs of LGBT students [7]. At a more local level, the 2004 Gender Equity Education Act in Taiwan of China seeks to eliminate gender stereotypes from the curriculum and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in schools [7]. However, a regional report developed for this review notes that implementation measures for this Act may be inadequate to effectively prevent and address discrimination [7].

All other countries in the Asia region, apart from Pakistan, have legal or policy frameworks to address violence in educational institutions or the health of minors, although they vary in their nature and jurisdiction [7]. In India, following a 2014 ruling by the Supreme Court recognizing the status of Hijras, the University Grants Commission called on all universities to recognize transgender students and to include a transgender category on all application forms, academic testimonials and official documents [66].

CASE STUDY THE PHILIPPINES: THE ANTI-BULLYING ACT 2013

In the Philippines, local and international research had documented alarming rates of bullying and violence in schools [7], [25]. This encouraged policy-makers to produce bullying prevention schemes. In 2012, the Department of Education started developing a unified policy to prevent and manage school violence, arguing for a zero-tolerance approach.

The resulting Anti-Bullying Act, passed in 2013, requires all schools, both public and private, to adopt policies to prevent and address all acts of bullying. It specifically addresses cyber bullying and refers to gender-based bullying (described as any act that 'humiliates or excludes a person on the basis of perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity'). The Act defines the: nature of bullying behaviour and prohibited acts; prevention and intervention programmes, including procedures to handle incidents of bullying; duties and responsibilities within educational communities; training and development; requirement for monitoring; and sanctions for non-compliance.

However, in the year following the Act, only 38 per cent of schools submitted their child protection or anti-bullying policies. This low rate was attributed to low awareness of what the Act required, combined with weak monitoring by the Department of Education. The Department issued a further memorandum to clarify the data submission requirements and is working to build the sector's capacity to implement the policy.

The Anti-Bullying Act will be integrated into teachers' pre-service training, while Child Protection Specialists will be trained nationwide. The Department of Education is working with NGOs and experts to establish minimum standards on sexuality education that include gender-based bullying and bullying on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. These standards will be tested in the main regions before being implemented nationwide.

In **North America**, in 2002, the Supreme Court in Canada ruled that LGBT students and same-sex parents had the right to be safe from discrimination and to see their lives reflected in the school curriculum [151], [152]. In 2005, it ruled that school districts were 'liable for the discriminatory conduct of the students who harassed' and that they had a duty to provide students with 'an educational environment that does not expose them to discriminatory harassment' [153]. The Ontario Education Act of Canada was amended in 2012 to specifically integrate attention to homophobic bullying following several years of amendments to Safe School legislation [154]. The Act strengthened legal obligations for school boards to foster positive school environments and to prevent and address inappropriate student behaviour, including homophobic or transphobic violence. For example, principals must suspend students and consider expulsion for misbehaviour that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hatred, including that which is based on gender, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. School boards must provide support for victims of bullying, witnesses and perpetrators. In Quebec, legislation was adopted in 2012 for schools to provide healthy and safe learning environments, allowing every student to develop their full potential regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression [155].

In the United States, LGBT students are not protected under federal legislation. However, in 2010, the Department of Education issued guidance to specify that federal provisions outlawing discrimination on the basis of sex in education (Title IX) also offered some protection against bullying on the basis of sexual orientation [156]. In 2014, it extended this protection on the grounds of gender identity [157]. The Department of Justice also clarified that transgender students must be allowed to use restrooms that correspond to their gender identity and that failure to do so amounts to sex discrimination under Title IX.

In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, Argentina is the only country that offers a full normative framework to tackle sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues in educational contexts through the National Law on Integral Sexuality Education (2006) (26.150), the National Law on Education (2006) (26.206), the National Law for the Promotion of Coexistence and Tackling Social Conflict in Educational Institutions (2013) (26.892) and a federal guide for educational responses for

addressing challenging situations linked to school life. The guide also contains a specific section on discrimination and harassment due to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

In 2015, the Constitutional Court of Colombia and the Supreme Court of Mexico found that bullying undermined victims' dignity, integrity and education [158] and that the education sector had a direct duty to protect students from violence based on their personal characteristics.

In Uruguay, the General Law on Education (2014) includes a general reference to non-discrimination due to sexual orientation. In El Salvador, the General Law on Youth, while not referring to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, recognizes and guarantees the right to integral comprehensive sexuality education (2013). Also the General Law on Education's article 5-A condemns inequalities and discriminatory practices between or towards students when based on traditional gendered roles (1990).

Other countries have instruments to prevent and counter discrimination or violence, including bullying. Examples include the following:

In Chile, Law 20.609 (2012) and the Law on Education (2009) are in place to counter discrimination in general and can also be applied to a school setting. However, as none of the laws are LGBT-specific, addressing homophobic and transphobic violence is left at the discretion of individual schools.

In Colombia, no specific policy exists to tackle homophobic and transphobic violence. Law 1620 (from 2013) and the Regulatory Decree (1965) establish minimal norms for applying the Integral Roadmap for Educational Community Living and its protocols, in order to prevent and mitigate situations affecting school community living and the exercising of human, sexual and reproductive rights,

In Honduras, the Law Against Bullying was adopted in 2014. However, it does not refer to particular motives for bullying.

In Peru, the General Law on Education (2003) establishes that integral sexuality education is part of the right to education. A Law promoting violence-free community living in educational institutions (29719) exists (2011), although it does not refer to homophobic or transphobic violence.

Cuba, El Salvador and Peru guarantee the right to comprehensive sexuality education, which should cover issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

As with other regions of the world, although these rights-based policies are on the statute books in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, a regional survey of 19 states – conducted by the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights in 2011 – noted that, in the majority of cases, they are not rigorously implemented and are 'always very general, dispersed, and in some cases ambiguous' [159].

In **Europe**, some countries have specific laws and policies to address homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. In Belgium, the Flemish Ministry for Education and Equal Opportunities issued a Common Declaration for a Gender-Sensitive and LGBT Friendly Policy in Schools in 2012, establishing a framework for sexuality education and providing guidelines for schools to develop LGBT-inclusive policies [160], [161].

In France, although no national policy mentions homophobic and transphobic violence, the Ministry of Education's annual letter to principals has, since 2009, mentioned combating homophobia. Also, a 2012 governmental plan to combat homophobic and transphobic violence foresees specific actions in the education sector [162]. In Portugal, the Students' Statute (2012) includes protection against discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. In Sweden, the Discrimination Act (2009) explicitly bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in education, and obliges pre-schools, schools and universities to take proactive measures against violence. The United Kingdom's Equality Act (2010) makes it a duty for schools to advance equality for their LGBT students. The Act explicitly mentions sexual orientation and gender

reassignment[20] and mandates that every school should have a behaviour policy preventing all forms of bullying [146].

BOX 14 LITHUANIA: CONFLICTING LEGISLATION

In Lithuania, the Law on Equal Treatment (2008) mandates secondary and post-secondary educational institutions to guarantee equal opportunities for all students and specifically refers to sexual orientation. However, Lithuania is one of only four UN member states[7] to criminalize the sharing of information about sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. Its Law on the Protection of Minors against the Detrimental Effect of Public Information was amended in 2010 to outlaw the sharing or discussing information that would promote sexual relations or other concepts of family other than heterosexual relations [58]. This legally prevents addressing issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational settings.

According to European Union research published in 2014, 90 per cent of LGBT individuals in Lithuania reported 'always' or 'often' hiding their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression when they were at school (the highest level of such behaviour in the EU). Also 31 per cent felt discriminated against by school or university personnel in the year preceding the survey [62] (also the highest percentage found in the EU).

In some countries, education is directed at a sub-national level, as are education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence. In Germany in 2010, the State of Berlin adopted a regional Action Plan against homophobia and transphobia, which features precise actions for the education sector [163]. Among Spain's 19 autonomous communities and cities, as of 2015, ten have LGBT-inclusive policies against violence or discrimination in educational institutions, seven of which outline specific responses and procedures for homophobic and transphobic violence [164].

FIGURE 17 **EXAMPLE OF GUIDANCE TO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR LGBT-INCLUSIVE ANTI-VIOLENCE POLICIES**

Combating homophobia

Proven approaches to combat homophobia in Victorian schools include:

- modelling exemplary behaviour by the school leadership team and the teaching and student support staff
- fostering a culture of openness and a celebration of diversity, and a mutual understanding of expected behaviours in the total school community
- immediately addressing issues caused by peer pressure, social stigmatisation or bullying
- following existing school governance procedures
- applying existing Department of Education and Early Childhood Development policies and support materials on bullying, discrimination and inclusive sexuality education
- recognising same-sex attracted young people as an everyday part of the school's social mix
- respecting students who choose to remain unidentified, by making information and contacts related to support services readily available.

diversity

Source: State of Victoria, 2008

20 The Equality Act 2010 refers to the protected ground of 'gender reassignment' as follows: 'A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex [265].'

In **the Pacific**, Australia's 2013 Sex Discrimination Act (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) builds on previous state-level legislation and provides protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and intersex status (although some exemptions exist for some religious schools) [165]. Also in Australia, the State of Victoria's Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provides guidance to support sexual diversity in schools (see Figure 7) [166].

In Fiji, the 2015 Policy on Child Protection in Schools requires schools to respect children's sexual orientation and to take action against bullying, including homophobic bullying. In New Zealand, the Ministry of Education published a Guide for Sexuality Education (2015) stating that school anti-bullying procedures should directly address bullying related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression and that these incidents should be recorded as such and monitored. The comprehensive guidance also touches upon the curriculum, school uniforms, restroom facilities, procedures and policies in sports and extra-curricular activities.

Other countries in the region offer limited protection from school-related violence. Papua New Guinea alone specifically forbids such practice, while other countries protect children's health in general or offer only limited protection to children (in Tonga).

In **Africa**, a review of policies on gender, diversity and violence in schools in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland – conducted within the study supported by UNESCO in 2015 – found that countries have generic legal and policy frameworks (including in education) that provide a conducive environment to address violence in schools. In Lesotho and Swaziland, they are mostly related to child protection. Swaziland has an education sector policy where Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) are supposed to be 'protective and secure environments which accommodate all learners'. In Botswana and Namibia, Education for All National Action Plans and other education policies clearly mention inclusive and non-discriminatory education. However, none of these policies make reference to sexual and gender diversity, except for South Africa [70]. Only South Africa has explicit policies to deal with homophobic bullying in education (see case study).

The UNESCO-supported study found that, in interview, national policy-makers in Southern Africa suggest that the overall absence of specific policies may reflect the lack of reliable evidence on the nature, prevalence and impact of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings in the region, or that it is not considered a political priority. Where specific national legislation or policies (including in the education sector) are lacking, other entry points may exist to address homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. These include international or regional human rights frameworks, but also general laws and policies against violence in educational institutions (for which additional guidance can be produced to detail how they apply to homophobic and transphobic violence). Finally, national anti-discrimination laws in Southern Africa (whether or not they mention sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) may also provide good entry points for the education sector to consider adopting new policies or upgrading existing ones.

CASE STUDY SOUTH AFRICA: GOVERNMENT RESOURCES TO ADDRESS HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

In South Africa, in its resource *Safer Schools for All: Challenging Homophobic Bullying* (2014), the Department of Education provides teachers, students, school principals, senior management and school governing body members with information on how to prevent homophobic bullying. The guidelines are intended to foster the emotional well-being and academic potential of students in the country's schools and to help develop safe and inclusive school spaces. The resource frames homophobic bullying around issues of gender-based violence and sexual harassment in schools. It was developed to be used alongside pre-existing training materials created by the Department of Basic Education's 'Prevention and Management of Bullying in Schools' initiative. Approximately 60,000 copies of the resource were distributed to schools around the country.

Guidelines for the *Prevention and Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Schools* also offer important advice, as well as the *Speak Out: Youth Report Sexual Abuse* handbooks and posters, which educate learners about sexual abuse. In 2015, the Department of Basic Education recommended that the topic of homophobic bullying and sexual harassment should be addressed in the Life Orientation subject area. Schools are also expected to draw up their own school-specific Codes of Conduct for learners that address bullying, including homophobic bullying.

In 2015, South Africa's Department of Basic Education also offered a *School charter against homophobic bullying*. This outlines the need to:

- promote the self-esteem of all students in all aspects of school life
- value other cultures and lifestyles ('It's OK to be different')
- treat all people with respect, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression
- ensure equal rights for everyone
- offer counselling and support around issues concerning sexual and gender identity/expression
- create more opportunities for discussion in school to raise awareness about homophobia and its effects
- challenge name calling of all types
- distribute LGBTI resources around school
- Discipline those who engage in homophobic bullying.

Source: UNESCO, 2016

SCHOOL POLICIES

For national education sector policies to work, they need to be translated into policies and procedures at the level of educational settings (such as schools). These ensure a practical response within the institutions where homophobic and transphobic violence actually occurs. They also promote more equitable norms that are accepting of diversity in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

While national policies provide frameworks, school policies,[21] including codes of conduct (see Box 14), offer more immediate protection or guidance for those involved in homophobic and transphobic violence – whether targets or perpetrators. These policies signal to the entire educational community that violence is unacceptable, that students' safety is important and that sexual and gender diversity is accepted and valuable [149], [167]. They can be put in place from pre-primary through higher education levels, as well as in non-formal educational contexts.

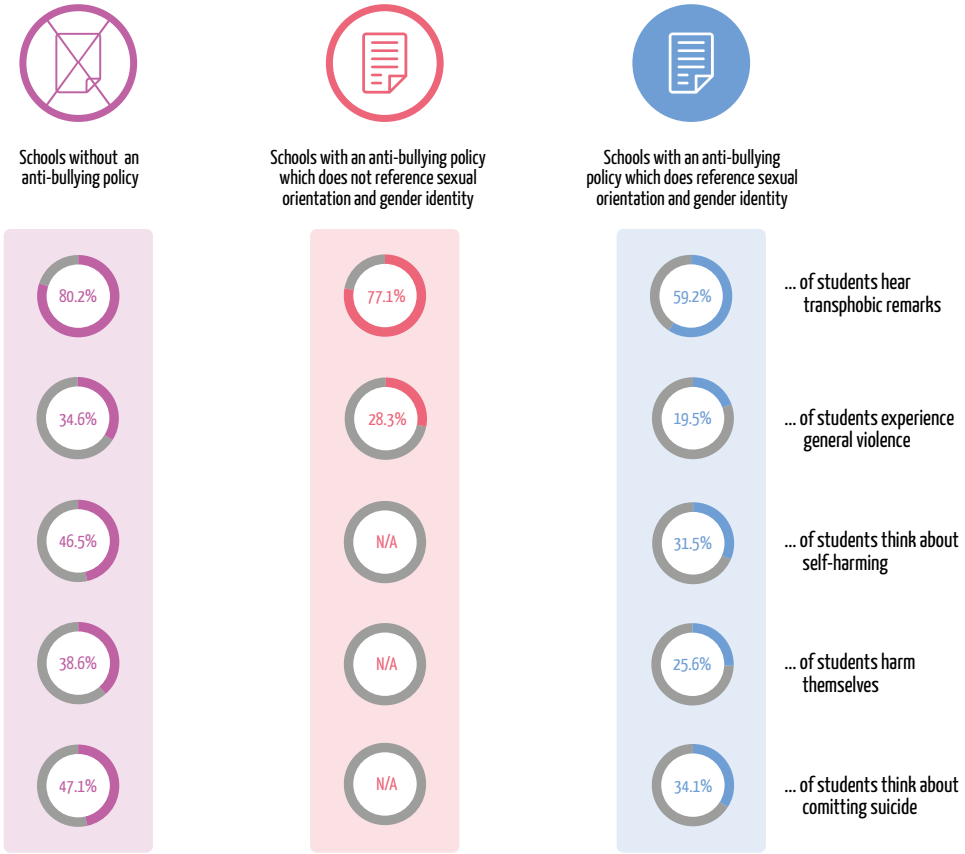
21 'School-level policies' and 'institution-level policies' are used interchangeably.

BOX 14 THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SCHOOL POLICIES

A study published in 2014 by the University of British Columbia, Canada showed that, in schools with explicit anti-homophobic bullying policies in place for more than three years, gay and bisexual boys were over 70 per cent less likely to think about or attempt suicide, while suicide attempts among lesbian and bisexual girls were two-thirds lower [168].

Evidence from Australia and the United States, published in 2010 to 2015, shows that inclusive policies correlate with LGBTI students being less likely to hear pejorative language, suffer violence, consider or attempt harming themselves and consider or attempt suicide [34], [68], [118], [165].

FIGURE 18 **INCLUSIVE ANTI-BULLYING SCHOOL POLICIES HELP COUNTER INCIDENTS OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE**



Source: J. Kosciw et al, 2013 [14] & L. Hillier et al, 2010

Promising school policies to address homophobic and transphobic violence do the following [120], [146], [149]:

- **Name the problem:** Policies refer explicitly to homophobic and transphobic violence, using understood terminology.
- **Are comprehensive:** Policies refer to both how homophobic and transphobic violence can be prevented and how it will be addressed; and have a broad scope (such as addressing school transport as well as school buildings).

- **Define actions:** Policies clearly establish what actions will be taken to prevent and respond to homophobic and transphobic violence.
- **Clarify responsibilities:** Policies establish clear responsibilities in the educational community for teachers, managers, support staff, parent-teacher associations, parents and students.
- **Are practical:** Policies address the daily realities for LGBTI students, such as enabling them to dress in their chosen school uniform and to access appropriate bathroom facilities.
- **Are needs-based:** Policies respond to the specific needs of different community members, for instance training for staff, support structures for victims, and efficient reporting and monitoring mechanisms,
- **Are result-oriented:** Policies have clear mechanisms for being implemented and measures to ensure their continuous evaluation.

Effective policies in educational settings not only counter incidents of homophobic and transphobic violence when they occur. They also reduce implicit violence at the institutional level and, ultimately, improve social attitudes and behaviour towards LGBTI people

In addition to focused policies, there are also critical entry points within other types of school policies that provide an opportunity to address issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (see Box 15).

BOX 15 CODES OF CONDUCT THAT ADDRESS HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE

A code of conduct is a set of guidelines on the recognized ethical norms (or values) and standards of acceptable conduct and behaviour in an educational setting. Codes are typically developed at a national level and rolled out among schools and other educational settings to ensure institutional and legal back-up. Their purpose is to:

- guide and support education practitioners
- protect students, teachers and school staff
- achieve and maintain a high degree of educational professionalism, and
- promote public trust in and support for the education profession.

Attention to homophobic and transphobic violence should be integrated into wider codes of conduct for educational settings, such as within sections that cover school-related gender-based violence. Codes should address the unacceptability of homophobic and transphobic violence in any form. They should also cover mechanisms for reporting misconduct, as well as appropriate responses to LGBTI students experiencing or witnessing violence. In addition, they should stipulate the consequences of breaching the code, clearly showing how implementation of the code is supported by the law.

Developing a code of conduct that includes attention to homophobic and transphobic violence encompasses a number of key steps. These include: consulting a wide range of stakeholders, including teachers, school officials, parents and students; training and awareness-raising (so that teachers, school staff, parents and students know about the code); reporting and sanctioning misconduct; and regularly monitoring and reviewing the code.

Not all of the elements of promising school policies to prevent and address homophobic and transphobic violence can be fully implemented in all countries. This is particularly the case in countries that criminalize consensual same-sex relationships. For example, in these contexts, it is almost impossible to make explicit references to LGBTI students, sexual orientation, gender identity, homophobia or transphobia in any documents used in schools. However, it is always possible to reflect on terminology that is acceptable and still understood by the whole school community. For example, school policies might refer to the unacceptability of discriminating against students who are perceived as different because of their appearance – as homophobic and transphobic violence often targets students based on the way they look.

INCLUSION OF TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX STUDENTS IN POLICIES

Transgender children and young people come to realize (at various ages before, during or after puberty) that the sex that they were assigned at birth does not correspond to their deeply felt internal and individual experience. They may, or may not, want to discuss their feelings. They may, or may not, want to wear clothes designed for other genders, reflect on the way they look or, ultimately, express their identity in public, including in educational settings. Their peers or educational staff may express surprise or react negatively, sometimes to the extent of subjecting transgender students to physical or psychological violence. In these times of transition, educational communities must support transgender students and protect them from violence.

Intersex children often have to undergo surgical and other procedures to make their appearance conform to binary (male or female) sex norms. Such procedures are frequently justified on the basis of cultural and gender norms and discriminatory beliefs about intersex people and their integration into society. They are regularly decided by doctors and parents/tutors, under social pressure, and are performed without the full, free and informed consent of the person concerned (who is too young to be part of the decision-making). Later in life, some intersex children may feel that they were forced into sex and gender categories that do not fit them and they may express a gender that is different from the sex they were surgically assigned. This may lead to discrimination and violence in educational settings - although such experiences are not yet scientifically documented.[22]

Research from all regions suggests that transgender students and students who express their gender differently from the 'norm' face even higher rates of violence and discrimination than LGB students [29], [42], [62], [122]. Transgender students experience specific forms of implicit violence [44], [169], [170], for example, because:

- School uniforms are often specific to boys and girls. Transgender students may not be authorized to wear the uniform that matches their gender identity/expression. This is problematic because they are effectively forced to wear clothes that they sincerely feel are for another gender.
- The official records of educational institutions contain students' personal details, including their gender or title. These records usually reflect students' official documents, which may not reflect their gender identity/expression. Furthermore, while records may be accurate when a student enters a school, they may become obsolete once the student starts gender reassignment procedures. As a result, students' official documents – such as their diplomas or certificates – reflect a gender that is different from their own. This can invalidate them and/or disclose information that they wish to keep private.
- Educational institutions sometimes offer single-sex activities or facilities, including restrooms, changing and showering areas for physical education, dormitories or halls of residence and gendered sports options. These force transgender students to select 'male' and 'female', leading to a degrading choice between picking an option that does not correspond to their gender or risking physical or psychological violence from peers or staff.

'I was told that the rules of the university require us to cut our hair, conceal our breasts and dress as males during the graduation ceremony. We complained about the discriminatory rules for wearing male attire. The university replied that people who have already completed their sex change operation can wear female dress, but otherwise we must wear male clothes.'

Transgender woman, Thailand [7, p. 36]

22 Fact Sheet: Intersex, Free and Equal, United Nations for LGBT Equality (see https://www.unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex_Factsheet_ENGLISH.pdf).

Educational institutions must guarantee the safety and well-being of students who are transgender or do not conform to gender norms. Doing so requires anti-violence and anti-discrimination policies to specifically mention gender identity/expression. Practice suggests that effective guidelines advise educational institutions to [122], [170], [171]:

- protect transgender students' right to privacy and confidentiality in relation to their gender status
- respect students' choice to identify as their desired gender by using their preferred pronouns and names – which may or may not correspond to the gender they were assigned at birth – and ensure they are used in official documents, such as certificates, diplomas and student cards
- respect students' clothing and appearance choices
- train teachers and support staff about gender identity/expression issues
- state within policies that diverse gender identities/expressions are welcome.

Education sectors in several countries have either started working towards or have already published transgender-inclusive policies. Examples include:

- In 2015, Malta passed ground-breaking legislation outlawing a range of discriminations based on an individual's gender identity/expression or sex characteristics [172].
- In 2015, Ireland's Ministers for Education and for Community and Social Support hosted a roundtable discussion with policy-makers, teachers' unions, principals and transgender rights NGOs to discuss issues and inform future policies for transgender students, including bullying, uniforms and access to post-secondary education [173].
- In 2013, several provinces in Canada developed specific guidelines for educational staff to respect the rights of transgender students and staff, for example providing guidance on restroom facilities, uniform rules and the use of pronouns [171], [174].
- In 2011, the United Kingdom agreed a comprehensive multi-year policy for transgender equality that includes measures for the education sector [175].
- In 2010, Australia produced comprehensive state guidelines for educational institutions to implement new legislation on gender identity/expression and intersex status [176].
- In 2015, Japan produced guidance allowing transgender students to use uniforms, bathrooms and locker rooms in line with their gender identity/expression [7].
- In 2010, The Netherlands produced guidance for universities to reflect students' gender accurately on diplomas [169], [177].

CASE STUDY THAILAND: PRACTICAL POLICIES TO ENSURE TRANSGENDER-INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

In Thailand, although no national guidance exists, some vocational and technical secondary schools allow transgender students to choose their uniform [7]. Bangkok University has issued dress guidelines for students under the categories 'boy', 'girl', 'tomboy' and 'ladyboy'. Some schools and universities have also introduced toilets that are not specific to users' gender.

Having a policy to deal with trans, intersex and gender variant students was the next logical step after the adoption of the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act. In fact, the policy was adopted little more than a month after the adoption of the Act to ensure that the situation of these students is fully normalised in schools and teachers are empowered to fully cater for their needs. While I do know that there were issues here and there, I'm told that some trans children have never been happier, and are thriving at school.

Helena Dalli, Maltese Minister for Civil Liberties

CASE STUDY MALTA: GROUND-BREAKING LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION AND INTERSEX STATUS

In Malta, the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act (2015) was adopted in April 2015. It outlaws a range of discriminations based on an individual's gender identity/expression or sex characteristics. To help the education sector adapt to this new law, the Ministry for Education and Employment published the Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students in Schools Policy in June 2015. This allows students to: present themselves and be addressed according to their preferred gender; choose the facilities, such as restroom, that match their gender; and wear a uniform that matches their gender. The policy also includes recommendations for implementation in schools.

The government became aware of this issue through the parents of a six-year-old transgender child and the negative experiences of transgender students. The Ministry for Education and Employment set up a working group with representatives from their own Ministry, the Directorate for Education, the national LGBTIQ Consultative Council and the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties. Over one year, the group developed the policy with input from national and international LGBTI NGOs, experts and transgender and intersex people (who approached politicians personally to share their experiences).

The policy applies to state educational institutions, although Church-run and independent institutions are also encouraged to follow it, and will be monitored annually within regular government auditing. It will also be the subject of a specific evaluation project run by the government and civil society through research with principals, teachers, parents and students.

Intersex children often have to undergo surgical and other procedures to make their appearance conform to binary (male or female) sex norms. Such procedures are frequently justified on the basis of cultural and gender norms and discriminatory beliefs about intersex people and their integration into society. They are regularly decided by doctors and parents/tutors, under social pressure, and are performed without the full, free and informed consent of the person concerned (who is too young to be part of the decision-making). Later in life, some intersex children may feel that they were forced into sex and gender categories that do not fit them and they may express a gender that is different from the sex they were surgically assigned. This may lead to discrimination and violence in educational settings - although such experiences are not yet scientifically documented. [23]

23 Fact Sheet: Intersex, Free and Equal, United Nations for LGBT Equality (see https://www.unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex_Factsheet_ENGLISH.pdf).

CASE STUDY AUSTRALIA: GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING SCHOOL POLICY ON GENDER IDENTITY, INCLUDING INTERSEX STATUS [7]

In the State of Victoria, Australia, the Department of Education and Training has developed a guide to ensure that schools support students' gender identity, including those with intersex status. The guide is in line with the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010) and the Sex Discrimination Act (2010). It includes stipulation that:

- The young person and a family representative/caregiver must be invited to be part of the process to formulate a school management plan.
- A letter from a gender identity specialist may be requested by the school to support them in developing their plan. This is not a conditional requirement for the school, but is intended to help ensure that schools can adequately provide care by planning appropriately.

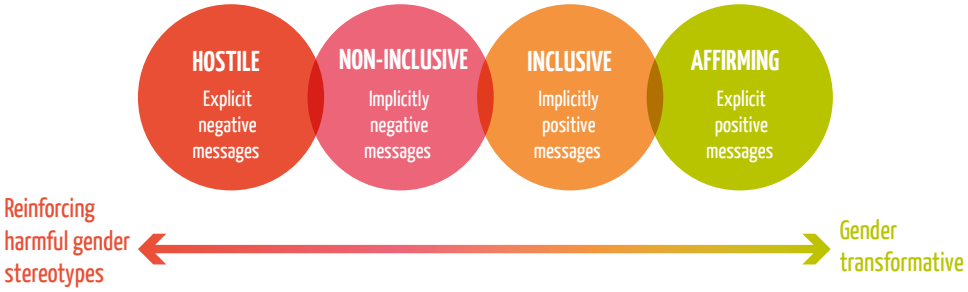
The guide leaves arrangements on facilities (toilets, showers and changing rooms) to the discretion of the schools. It applies a 'mature minor' principle around parental consent for minors – advising principals to consider whether an individual student is of sufficient maturity, understanding and intelligence to make, and understand, the consequences of related decisions.

3.4.2. Relevant curricula and learning materials

The second element of a comprehensive response to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings is relevant curricula and learning materials.

Through their content and the way that they are delivered, curricula, learning materials and extra-curricular activities in educational settings - such as sports or theatre – convey influential messages about 'normality', legitimacy and power.

FIGURE 19 **FOUR PROFILES OF CURRICULA:**
THE CURRICULUM CONVEYS IMPORTANT MESSAGES ABOUT SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY



Curricula are never neutral. Those that do not feature sexual and gender diversity convey the implicit message that people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions are not part of society. Worse still, some curricula may explicitly convey negative messages about LGBTI people.

Curricula generally take one of four approaches for sexual and gender diversity:

- ***'Hostile'* curricula:** i.e. they explicitly convey negative messages about LGBTI people, which reinforce negative gender stereotypes and contribute to homophobic and transphobic violence. For example textbooks were withdrawn by the government in Croatia (in 2009) and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (in 2010) because they described homosexuality as a disease.

- ***'Non-inclusive'* curricula:** These omit any representation of sexual and gender diversity in their materials and, for example, ignore these aspects when discussing historical figures who were LGBTI. This has the result of rendering LGBTI people '*invisible*'. Most curricula worldwide fall into this category.
- ***'Inclusive'* curricula:** These convey implicit positive messages about sexual and gender diversity when they promote the human rights of all, regardless of personal characteristics including sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. These curricula are likely to also encourage gender equality.
- ***'Affirming'* curricula:** These convey explicit positive messages about sexual and gender diversity by featuring positive representations of LGBTI people and explicitly affirming their equality in dignity and rights. They provide educators with clear guidelines and examples on how to refer to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in a sensitive way.

Hostile and non-inclusive curricula tend to exist in contexts where homophobia and transphobia are widespread. They do nothing to prevent or reduce violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. On the contrary, hostile curricula contribute to reinforcing stereotypical and patriarchal views of gender – indirectly leading to homophobic and transphobic violence. Meanwhile, by not challenging these stereotypical and patriarchal views, non-inclusive curricula also contribute to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. In contrast, inclusive or affirming curricula may discuss definitions of masculinity and femininity and challenge existing stereotypes about gender and sexuality – contributing to increasing LGBTI students' feeling of belonging and safety [34], [178].

Sexuality and gender sensitivity learning materials developed by RainbowYOUTH in New Zealand

Research suggests that curricula featuring sexual orientation and gender identity/expression positively impact students' and teachers' beliefs and attitudes, encouraging critical thinking and increasing feelings of safety at school [178]. They also help to address violence. The literature confirms that challenging homophobia and transphobia in education is most effective when LGBTI issues are reflected and featured through teaching and lesson plans, and when LGBTI people are positively portrayed across the curriculum [125], [179], [180].

BOX 16 KEY FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE CURRICULA

Evidence indicates that integrating attention to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression within relevant, existing themes in curricula is more effective than using a stand-alone curriculum. Developing or revising curricula should begin with a review of existing materials to identify entry points, as well as possible inaccurate or stigmatizing content or negative stereotypes, myths or incorrect information. Successful curricula and learning materials need to:

- be informed by research on effective teaching about gender, violence prevention and life skills;
- address taboos surrounding adolescent sexuality, sexual orientation and gender; identity/expression and provide access to accurate information about diversity in sex, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression;
- enhance positive attitudes (equality, respect, rights);
- provide knowledge and foster critical thinking;
- develop skills and motivate action;
- be age-appropriate and begin early. Values and attitudes form in early childhood, and bullying, discrimination and intolerance can occur as early as primary school years;
- draw on good practice on what works in other settings and adapt to the cultural and educational setting context.

As detailed in the following pages, the development of effective curricula requires particular attention to three issues [21], [181], [182]:

- The representation of sexual and gender diversity in curricula
- Entry points for addressing sexual and gender diversity in curricula
- Age-appropriate attention to sexual and gender diversity in curricula

THE REPRESENTATION OF SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY IN CURRICULA

In every region, the education sector appears hesitant to include representations of diverse sexual orientations or gender identities/expressions in the curriculum – although no exhaustive data currently exists. In most countries for which data is available, curricula and learning materials do not include any direct or indirect mention of sexual and gender diversity. Only a few countries have developed curricula that are 'inclusive' or 'affirming'. In 2013, the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency study, conducted in 19 countries, found that 'respondents in most countries argued that there is a lack of objective information about sexual orientation and gender identity in school curricula which can impact on the formation of social attitudes' [150]. Even where policies mandate including diverse sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions in curricula, these rarely translate into practice. Few quality learning materials on these issues are currently in use worldwide. Some countries have started conversations about learning materials, or have started providing LGBTI-inclusive materials as part of civics and human rights classes, sexuality education classes, or through supplementary books, posters or information leaflets (covered in more detail in Information campaigns and strategic partnerships below). The overwhelming majority of existing materials still consist of heteronormative representations, and representations of traditional masculine and feminine gender roles [179], [183]–[185].

BOX 17 HETERONORMATIVE CURRICULA

When teaching materials, class posters and teacher training manuals feature representations of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions, they imply that LGBTI people are a legitimate part of society. When they do not, they imply to both students and staff that people who are homosexual, bisexual, transgender or intersex are outside the 'norm'. Presenting heterosexuality as the only norm is called heteronormativity [152], [186], [187].

In 24 countries, national or regional curricula mention issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, although they are effectively implemented to widely varying degrees: in **Africa** (South Africa), **Asia** (Israel, Mongolia, Nepal and the Taiwan of China), in **North America** (Canada, the United States), in **Latin America** (Argentina, Brazil, parts of Mexico and Uruguay), in **Europe** (parts of Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, parts of Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, parts of Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom) [188] and in the **Pacific** (Australia and New Zealand). At the time of writing, Finland was in the process of updating its curriculum in relation to sexual and gender diversity.

In a great majority of other countries, curricula ignore issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression – or indeed issues of gender altogether. This means sexual and gender diversity is not addressed in school, unless individual teachers or schools choose to address it themselves, or invite NGOs to do so. However in the absence of clear policy, schools and teachers often hesitate to discuss sexual and gender diversity because it may be sensitive, and they may fear disagreement from parents [189], [190]. A small-scale comparative study in Chile, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru suggested that a third to half of young people aged 18–24 discussed or heard about sexual and gender diversity to varying degrees in class [108],

suggesting these discussions took place at the initiative of teachers despite the curricula being silent on the issue.

BOX 18 POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY ISSUES IN THE CURRICULUM

In a few countries, attempts to include issues of gender, sexuality or sexual diversity in curricula have been met with opposition from some sectors of society including religious groups, parents' groups and some politicians.

In Europe, some of these groups argued that students should not learn about sexuality in schools, and understood gender equality and sexual diversity as amoral concepts (which they sometimes refer to as 'gender ideology' or simply 'gender'), sometimes fearing it will 'sexualize children' or teach them to masturbate in primary school [191]. This opposition has slowed or sometimes discouraged the adoption of curricula supporting sexual and gender diversity [188].

For example, in France the Ministry of National Education piloted classes on sexual and gender diversity in 2013. Following strong opposition from some sectors of society and political parties, the ministry chose not to deploy the pilot further, and instead established programmes focusing only on sexism and gender-based stereotypes, leaving out sexual orientation and gender identity [192].

Evidence-based guidance from UNESCO and the World Health Organization, as well as from numerous professional bodies of doctors, psychologists, teachers and parents univocally attest that it is safe to teach children and young people about gender equality and diverse sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions in an age-appropriate manner [193], [194].

In 2011, a scan of school curricula in ten East and Southern African countries (Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe), undertaken by the joint UN HIV Prevention Working Group in the region (comprised of UNICEF, UNESCO and UNFPA), found that none of the curricula addressed sexual diversity in an appropriate way [195]. Moreover, while almost all curricula mentioned sexual abuse, the lessons tended to be aimed solely at girls.

A global survey on education sector responses to HIV and AIDS conducted by the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education in 2011 found that 19 out of 30 countries reported having reviewed and adapted their tertiary HIV and sexuality education curricula to address stigma, discrimination and homophobia [196]. However, it also noted that homophobia may not be addressed to quite the same degree, if at all, as stigma and discrimination – and that combining homophobia with these two subjects may convey a misleading impression.

When curricula do mention sexual and gender diversity, two major obstacles hinder their implementation. First, textbook editors may omit sexual and gender diversity issues if they are too controversial. After the government of Spain included sexual and affective diversity in its Law on Education in 2006 [197],[24] only three out of 11 textbooks analysed two years later mentioned sexual diversity in line with the law (seven either ignored the topic or made incomplete references, and one denigrated marriage for same-sex couples, which has been legal since 2005) [198]. (However, the change led to increased discussion of the topic in class, as three-quarters of teachers nationwide reported discussing it with students [199] Second, delivering an inclusive curriculum relies on teachers being informed and confident enough to discuss sexual and gender diversity, an issue they may not be familiar with: in South Africa, although the curriculum mentions sexual orientation explicitly, it is seldom addressed in class. Both teachers and policy-makers frequently regret weak support or the absence of clear guidance for them to bring up these issues in class.

24 The national curriculum has since been reviewed in 2013, and no longer includes sexual and gender diversity at the national level. The curriculum varies between regions, and several regions include sexual and gender diversity in their curricula [164].

In a small number of countries, ethically questionable curricula misrepresent homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender identities or LGBTI people as deviant or abnormal. A UNESCO report from the Asia Pacific region [7] found that some textbooks perpetuate negative stereotypes and include inaccurate, stigmatising and discriminatory information. Examples were found in Mainland China, Hong Kong SAR, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand.

In 2005, a textbook on secondary education pedagogy in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia described homosexuality as 'abnormal' and homosexual people as 'highly neurotic and psychotic persons' in the chapter *Negative Aspects of Sexual Life* [200]. It was withdrawn in 2010. In Croatia, the textbook *With Christ to Life* described homosexuality as 'intrinsically disordered' and 'contrary to the natural law'. It was withdrawn by the Ministry of Education in 2009, following the European Committee of Social Rights' conclusion that it was 'biased, discriminatory and degrading' [145]. In Moldova, NGOs reported in 2011 that the Medical University still used textbooks describing homosexuality as a disease [188]. NGOs in Serbia also found that several textbooks analysed between 2006 and 2014 featured strongly homophobic views, linking homosexuality to mental disorders or 'malignant paranoid psychosis' [201]. These textbooks spread false information and directly contribute to homophobic and transphobic violence.

> The perception of LGBTI people is pathologized. We are seen as people with a mental illness as is still reflected in textbooks, or as immoral… Problems about education include outdated learning materials, and very conservative and homophobic educators.
>
> Lesbian woman, China [7, p. 54]

ENTRY POINTS IN CURRICULA

Choosing where to discuss sexual and gender diversity in curricula must be done bearing in mind the social, cultural and historical context of each country. Literature and practice suggest that it is best to discuss sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues in the following contexts [194], [202]–[205]:

- **Citizenship, human rights or civics classes**, where discussions can take place on: diversity, tolerance and respect for all; concepts of bias, prejudice, stigma, discrimination and bullying; international and national frameworks that protect human rights; national laws on equality and non-discrimination (in particular laws forbidding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, when they exist); and the role of civil liberties in democratic societies.
- **History and politics classes**, where discussions can take place about: relationships in other societies; contemporary political debates about marriage, family laws or anti-discrimination laws; and political debates in neighbouring countries.
- **Language, literature and art classes**, where discussions can take place on: the lives and relationships of authors or artists who were LGBTI; cultural works or artefacts representing diverse forms of relationships; or works of art related to sexual and gender diversity.
- **Health, personal education and sexuality education classes**, where age-appropriate discussions can take place on: gender; gender roles, norms and stereotypes; one's own sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, including issues of respect and disclosure; or the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions in society.

BOX 19 INTERNATIONAL GUIDANCE ON SEXUALITY EDUCATION

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that primary and secondary school curricula should address issues around discrimination [206]. The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education has noted that in order to be comprehensive, sexual education must pay special attention to diversity, since everyone has the right to deal with his or her own sexuality.'

Both UNESCO and the WHO have issued detailed and evidence-based recommendations on addressing issues around sexual orientation and gender identity/expression within sexuality education [193], [194].

Some countries have included sexual and gender diversity in recent reforms of their curricula. For example, Finland's review of its national core curriculum for basic education, due to be finalized in 2016, is expected to have more visible references to sexual and gender diversity [207]. In 2008, Mongolia included sexual behaviour and diversity in its sexual and reproductive health curriculum for Grades 6–9, including lesbian and gay individuals as textbook examples [7].

In the Netherlands, while no national curriculum exists, primary and secondary schools must work towards core educational objectives [208]. These were updated in 2012 to encourage teachers to introduce sexual and gender diversity across all subjects, particularly in sexuality education, biology, citizenship and social classes. In the Philippines, where the Reproductive Health Law (2013) mandates sexuality education, NGOs are working with the Department of Education to establish minimum standards on sexuality education that address both gender-based and homophobic and transphobic violence [7].

In Sweden, the curriculum for primary and secondary education was updated in 2015 to include concepts of sexuality, gender and identity in several subjects. In the United Kingdom, the regional government of Scotland built on its existing curriculum and *Getting It Right for Every Child* agenda [209] to produce guidance for teachers and school managers to address sexual and gender diversity across subjects including health and well-being, social studies, religious and moral education, art, literature, history, philosophy and social studies [210].

BOX 20 INCLUSION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION IN CURRICULA IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

In Southern Africa, the review of curricula conducted within the multi-country study supported by UNESCO in 2014-2015 (see Box 19), revealed that some of them include elements related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

In Lesotho, the Life Skills curriculum was revised in 2012 to incorporate comprehensive sexuality education, creating the space for the teaching of gender and diversity-related issues. In Namibia, the Life Skills curriculum for Grade 8 explicitly addresses the topic 'gender roles' in relation to different types of families. For example, the students are expected to '… in their own words define and discuss different sexual patterns, such as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, asexual and celibacy (choice to refrain from sexual intercourse), in their own words define sexism in writing and [lastly] appreciate [their] own sexuality' [70]. In the Grade 12 Life Skills curriculum, the unit of self-awareness requires students to understand what homosexuality is, the impact it has on the individual and issues of conduct.

In Swaziland, the *Guidance and Counselling Life Skills Education Curriculum and Teachers' Manual* from Grades 8–12 include a wide spectrum of topics on sexuality including: gender-based violence; sexual abuse and reporting sexual abuse; self-image; self-esteem; self-concept; sexual identity; societal norms and values; assertiveness; dealing with emotions; exploring issues of sexual orientation; the impacts of sexual abuse; and transiting to senior secondary, among others. However, teachers are not well trained and, therefore, are not able to deliver these programmes.

Beyond individual subjects, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression can feature in educational curricula in diverse ways [211], [212]. Examples include:

- Using examples in textbooks that illustrate diverse families and individuals (including LGBTI people) in subjects such as science, economics or languages.
- In class or school assemblies, referring to sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression within larger discussions on equality, non-discrimination or violence in schools.
- Inviting external speakers – such as local LGBTI NGOs – to discuss sexual orientation or gender identity/ expression, which may alleviate any anxiety felt by teaching or support staff.
- Marking specific days to mobilize the educational and wider community around human rights.

BOX 21 UNESCO LESSON PLAN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

In 2012, UNESCO developed four age-specific and age-appropriate lesson plans for primary and secondary education [213], encouraging teachers to use the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (17 May) to promote tolerance, prevent homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings and create safer learning environments for students. Some lessons focus on gender norms, stereotypes and definitions of masculinity and femininity, without discussing sexual orientation or gender identity/expression directly. This can be useful in contexts where homosexuality is criminalized or highly stigmatized.

AGE-APPROPRIATE CONTENT IN CURRICULA

Research with younger children indicates that personal beliefs and attitudes about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression form during the early stages of childhood [205], [214], [215]. This means that early and age-appropriate responses are crucial to prevent negative attitudes and violent behaviour [216]. Yet, LGBTI-inclusive materials can mostly be found in secondary or post-secondary curricula.

Some countries do include sexual and gender diversity in primary education. For example, in China, the Beijing Normal University has piloted a school-based sexuality education programme for migrant children in a limited number of schools [66]. It integrates diversity issues into the curriculum from year five and addresses bullying on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. In Taiwan of China, the Ministry of Education announced courses related to gender equality taught in senior high school since 2004 would be expanded to primary and junior high schools [7].

BOX 22 HOMOPHOBIC INSULTS IN PRIMARY AND PRE-PRIMARY INSTITUTIONS

In a US survey of over 1,000 primary school students and 1,000 kindergarten and primary school teachers in 2012, almost half of students and half of teachers reported hearing the word 'gay' (used pejoratively) often [214].

In a UK survey of 1,832 primary school teachers in 2014, seven out of ten respondents heard students use the word 'gay' pejoratively, while three out of ten heard students use homophobic insults such as 'poof', 'dyke', 'queer' and 'faggot' [215].

In Finland, a project involving teachers and parents promotes non-violence, security and equality between kindergarten and Grade 9, examining violence from a gender perspective concerning both girls and boys [217]. In Germany, the State of Berlin has introduced sexual diversity into the primary curriculum, focusing on the concepts of difference, tolerance and acceptance [21]. In

Ireland, social, personal and health education features in primary and junior curricula, including discussions of sexual orientation in the context of children's personal development, health and well-being [218]. Also, some schools in Israel work with NGOs to teach children in kindergarten about different types of families and gender roles [21].

CASE STUDY CANADA: ONTARIO'S HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Ontario's new Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum was published in 2015. It provides students with accurate, up-to-date and age-appropriate information – supported by research and public health data – on their health and well-being. Students learn about healthy relationships and consent, online safety, mental health and various forms of diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression.

Prior to its review, the HPE curriculum was over 15 years out of date. For example, it did not take into account any internet activity or social media. Between 2007 and 2014, the review was guided by research, expert advice from academics and comparisons with other curricula nationally and internationally. Over 70 health-related organizations contributed to reports submitted for consideration. Thousands of parents were consulted through an online survey and face-to-face meetings, as were parent and student organizations.

Parent groups in particular wanted to know what their children would learn about. In response, the Ministry created a series of parent resource guides to explain the contents of classes. While some parents and religious groups expressed concern, significant public support for the revised curriculum was confirmed through polling and public statements.

The new curriculum now mainstreams equality and inclusion across all subjects and features age-appropriate content. For example, students in Grade 3 learn to describe how visible and invisible differences (including sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) make each person unique. They also learn how to identify ways of showing respect for differences in others. In Grade 6, students learn to address various stereotypes (including homophobia) and assumptions about gender roles or expectations. In Grade 8, students learn about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression and how these concepts are connected to respect for themselves and others.

3.4.3. Training and support for staff

Educators must be given the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills, provided with high quality teaching tools and materials, and receive sufficient support from education authorities to promote equitable and inclusive education in safe and secure teaching and learning environments.

Fred Van Leeuwen, General Secretary, Education International, July 2015 Foreword, Quadrennial Survey on Equality and Diversity 2010–2014

The third of the elements of a comprehensive education sector response to homophobic and transphobic violence in support and training for teachers and other school staff.

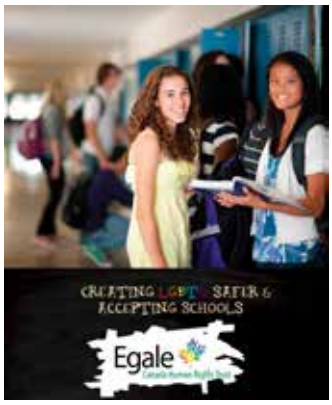
Teachers foremost – but also support staff, counsellors, caretakers, head teachers, managers and inspectors – are central to any effective response to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. Staff are responsible for preventing violence, responding to it when it occurs, and promoting inclusion and acceptance.

However, to fulfil their supportive role and to teach inclusively, teachers themselves need support [189], [210], [219]. This includes:

- opportunities to clarify their own attitudes and behaviours about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression;
- practice, through teacher education programmes, to test different pedagogical approaches and strategies and to become prepared with new content;
- access to resources such as inclusive curricula and teaching and learning materials to influence classroom practice.

Research suggests that the skills and attitudes of educational staff, particularly teachers, about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression greatly impacts students. Supportive staff appear to strengthen a range of positive indicators for LGBTI students [219]–[221]. These include:

- reduced incidence of missing school
- reduced feelings of insecurity
- greater academic achievement
- higher educational aspirations, and
- a stronger sense of belonging in school.



The 'Creating LGBTQ Safer & Accepting Schools' workbook is delivered to schools by Egale Canada Human Rights Trust in support of Canada's vision to make education safe and accepting for all.

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER TRAINING AND SUPPORT

In most countries, educational staff lack adequate training and resources to help them understand and address sexual orientation and gender identity and expression and, more specifically, homophobic and transphobic violence. Evidence from education sector professionals and NGOs also suggests that generic training on violence in educational settings is not sufficient to address homophobic and transphobic violence adequately.

In several countries, the education sector is allocating increasing resources to the training and support of educational staff (both teaching and non-teaching) in this area – through manuals, professional development courses and professional guidance on homophobic and transphobic violence.

In practice, this is often in-service training, small-scale and not mandatory and educational staff lack the resources to genuinely understand and address sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues, particularly when it comes to homophobic and transphobic violence [189], [205], [222], [223]. As a result, teachers can be less likely to intervene against this form of violence than against other types of violence [189], [224]. In 2013, a study by the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency revealed that, in the Member States studied, with the exception of Ireland, 'all education professionals interviewed said they received no training about LGBT issues as part of standard specialised professional education' [150]. When training was available, it was typically 'voluntary and not part of mandatory teacher training or professional development'.

> I've had literally no training at all about how to deal with it so no, I would not feel comfortable dealing with it.
>
> Teacher in the United Kingdom[150]

Teachers in Slovenia say that they do not feel competent to stop homophobic insults or physical violence [189], while only 8 to 17 per cent of teachers in Spain and the United Kingdom say they received sufficient training [199], [215] In the 2014 Annual Report on Human Rights in the State of Bolivia, 94 per cent of LGBT respondents stated that, in their experience, teachers lacked appropriate knowledge of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [225]. However, some teachers wish it were otherwise. In Japan, six out of ten primary and secondary school teachers state that they would have liked to receive training on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [7].

I personally believe that I have enough information about the topic. But it is important that I am aware that I also have a few unaddressed fears about it. How to tackle homophobia is not addressed specifically at seminars about violence and discrimination.'

Lev, school teacher in Slovenia [189, p. 26]

Where training does take place, it seems to make a measurable difference for teachers. This has been seen in Nepal (see case study). In the United States, after attending the Respect for All programme of the New York City Department of Education, half of teachers were more willing to intervene when hearing homophobic or transphobic language. Also, the same proportion said they were more aware of LGBT students' experience and two out of five said the training had enhanced their ability to communicate with students about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [226].

I am much more confident in my ability to talk to students about gender/sexuality issues; whereas before the training I felt sympathetic but was hesitant to speak up.'

High school counsellor and social worker, US [226, p. 10]

CASE STUDY NEPAL: TEACHER TRAINING AND POOL OF SUPPORTIVE TEACHERS

Since 2013, sexuality and gender diversity has featured in Nepal's national school curriculum on sexual and reproductive health for Grades 6, 7 and 8. In 2014, to facilitate the introduction of the new curriculum, and to familiarize teachers with issues linked to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, the NGO Blue Diamond Society developed and implemented a specific training course for teachers and school administrators.

The course features a training manual, booklet (with frequently asked questions) and toolkit for head teachers, teachers, students and parents. The toolkit provides basic information about issues linked to gender, sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. It helps schools to identify problems that LGBTI students may face, including violence, and offers possible solutions.

As of 2015, the toolkit had been used to train teachers in the country's central, eastern and western regions. The World Bank supported the development and implementation of the trainings. Following the training, some of the teachers formed the Chetana ('Awareness') Trainers Pool in order to train more teachers and offer practical support to educational staff when dealing with LGBT issues. According to the Trainers Pool, it trained over 600 teachers in central Nepal in 2013–14.

PRE AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

Ideally, to reach as many people as possible, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression should be part of pre-service training for teachers. In practice, however, most training worldwide takes place in-service.

Preservice training occurs nationally or sub-nationally in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Argentina and parts of Brazil provide professional development programmes for many in the educational community: teachers in training; teachers in service; school superintendents; deputy directors and directors; support staff; and non-teaching staff, including counsellors, doctors and social workers. These programmes include themes related to the prevention of discrimination and management of violence, including homophobic and transphobic violence [158]. In Belgium, regional pedagogical guidance services offer both pre-service and in-service training programmes, supported by NGOs and commercial entities. Sub-national education authorities also support a centre for expertise in sexual health that provides LGBTI-inclusive education and training to teachers.

CASE STUDY AUSTRALIA: PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING [165]

In Australia, the Society and Education Unit is a required unit for some primary and secondary teaching degrees at the University of New England. It introduces teachers to issues linked to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in schools through the sociology of education.

The course was developed as, since 2013, the Sex Discrimination Amendment Act has required schools to provide education without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or intersex status. The University of New England sought to train future teachers in this respect, with a 13-week university unit in its current format since the same year. The course encourages future teachers to recognize their assumptions about LGBTI individuals and to learn about approaches to gender and sexuality in schools. The 12 lectures and tutorials present critical and post-modern theories of gender and sexual orientation. Three assessments require future teachers to apply these theories to their experiences at school, to their own sexuality education resources and to their own teaching plans.

Through interactive lectures, future teachers learn theory through various activities, including making videos, dancing and role-playing different teaching approaches. Skills to develop lessons are taught and assessed, so that all future teachers finish the course with clear plans and resources.

Across different contexts (whether at university, in rural contexts or online with no face-to-face sessions), teachers are trained to understand their professional duty to care for LGBTI students and the pedagogical approaches to include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in class. Teachers have rated the unit very highly, saying they most valued learning practical skills and how to address these issues in a fun way.

This unit was incredibly stimulating!!! It made you think outside of the box and become aware of some biases that you may have, which in turn allows you to compensate for this and break out of the stereotypes. It also gave you an insight into sexual education which I haven't got from any other unit.'

– Teacher in pre-service training, 2014 class

While in-service training and support is more common, its scope can be more limited – as it is often optional and constitutes an additional task for teachers. In the majority of cases, these trainings are developed by LGBTI rights NGOs or teachers' unions and are implemented or endorsed by the education sector nationally, sub-nationally or at the level of institutions.

Examples of promising practices exist. In Canada, the Ministry of Education of Ontario supports the NGO Egale to develop online resources to train school boards about sexual and gender

diversity. The same NGO delivers workshops for school teachers, managers and directors to create LGBT-inclusive and safe school environments. In Quebec, teacher training programmes have reached over 10,000 professionals since starting in 2012.

In partnership with two vetted NGOs, the sub-national government of Berlin in Germany organizes trainings on diversity for educational staff, which feature discussions of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [227]. These appear extremely popular, increasing from one to two per year before 2010 to 20–30 per year as of 2015. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the Government Equalities Office and Department of Education support the NGO Stonewall to train school staff (particularly in faith schools, rural schools and schools with high percentages of disadvantaged students or minority ethnic backgrounds), local authorities and educational institutions about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [228].

CASE STUDY URUGUAY: IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

Uruguay's comprehensive education policy to combat homophobic and transphobic violence and discrimination is part of the National Programme for Sexual Education. It teaches trainee teachers about: self-awareness; gender and identity in the family; gender and domestic violence; social stereotypes; and the role of media and advertising stereotypes.

In order to train teachers, the education sector relied on partnerships not only between different sectors of government, but also with concerned public services and civil society organizations. Teacher training for sexuality education was delivered in partnership with NGOs, which was particularly helpful for demystifying and discussing topics linked to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, including violence. The training aimed to help teachers foster an educational culture based on the respect of human rights and openness to sexual and gender diversity. Training was made available through online and in-class sessions. As of 2015, some 200 teachers had been trained nationwide.

This experience met with some resistance. For example, conservative civil society groups opposed the training and slowed the dissemination of the *Guide to Education and Sexual Diversity* for teachers. Nevertheless, the training raised teachers' awareness about power relationships, such as between majority and minority groups. Overall, it made an important contribution to the implementation of LGBT-inclusive sexuality education.

Where there is little or no cooperation between the education sector and NGOs, training resources tend to lack LGBTI-specific content, often only including passing references to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression or homophobic and transphobic violence (as part of wider training on violence).

Manuals and guides can be popular ways to provide in-service support. In 2011, Norway's Directorate for Education and Training published – and now regularly updates – a guide on relationships and sexuality for primary school teachers and school nurses [207]. In the United States, the Department of Education in Michigan published a guide in 2011 on creating safe schools for LGBT students and has provided training for teachers in over 180 school districts [229].

CASE STUDY SWEDEN: A 'NORM CRITICAL' APPROACH

The Swedish National Agency for Education trains educational staff in sexuality and relationship education. It also develops related support materials. The curriculum for these subjects addresses strengthening students' self-esteem and identity and fostering respect for others' bodily integrity.

The agency uses a 'norm critical' approach. This means that, instead of focusing on individuals and groups who are different from a 'norm', it examines how and why norms determine who is 'normal' or 'abnormal'. This encourages staff to undertake a deeper reflection about discrimination and difference.

INADEQUATE TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Education sector professionals and NGOs suggest that some trainings and resources that they receive remain too generic – often only referring briefly to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression or to homophobic and transphobic violence. This is often the case in countries where the education sector cooperates little or rarely with LGBTI groups, human rights NGOs or teachers' unions that have expertise in relevant areas.

For example, in France, the Ministry of National Education includes homophobic and transphobic violence in teachers' wider training on harassment. However, the specificities of this type of violence are left out. Anecdotal evidence points to similar challenges to training provided by ministries of education, youth, social services or equality in Chile, Colombia, Croatia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Lithuania, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Slovenia and Uruguay.

3.4.4. Support for students and families

GLSEN Safe Space Kit adapted for use in Chile

In many countries for which data has been analysed, support is offered to students who are the targets of violence (including bullying), either in schools or outside of schools through referral mechanisms. However, staff in charge of providing support are often poorly prepared to deal with cases of homophobic and transphobic violence. They are not comfortable discussing issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. They may even hold homophobic or transphobic views themselves and, therefore, cannot meet the needs of the LGBTI students who request support or are referred to them.

Only in some instances do education sectors offer support that can address the needs of students who are the targets of homophobic and transphobic violence and, sometimes, their families. The types of support provided are varied. They can include: counselling services in educational institutions by trained staff; national helplines for the targets of violence; peer support through gay-straight alliances and school clubs; or groups for parents of LGBTI students.25 Support can be provided both inside and outside educational settings. In some countries, school nurses are the only staff in schools who provide support to LGBTI students who are targets of violence, 'which may contribute to the pathologisation of LGBT people' [150].

25 Because of the variety of responses, it is not possible to accurately list the countries in which they take place.

Outside educational settings, support is often delivered by NGOs, with or without support from the education sector. Specific support is available mostly in contexts where a general culture of counselling and personal support exists that, in turn, is applied to LGBTI issues.

In Belgium, there are a number of ways for a student to file a complaint if they experience violence or harassment in a school. There are helplines offered by NGOs or public services. One is actually run by the Ministry of Education. A young person can phone in or mail and talk about their experience and an expert counsellor will try and provide help, support and if needed refer the student to other Youth support services.

Interview with a civil servant from the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training

SUPPORT IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Experience shows that the subjects of homophobic and transphobic violence are likely to seek support from teachers and peers in their educational community [230], [231]. The education sector and academia has started exploring how counsellors and other educational staff can provide effective services. However, literature documenting or guiding this work appears to be minimal, with more research needed [222], [232]. Practitioners note that it is also crucial to support the perpetrators of violence, to help them: reflect on their actions; work with others; develop better social skills; and explore power in socially acceptable ways [124], [233].

Peer support is an especially important form of support to LGBTI students who experience homophobic and transphobic violence. It might take the form of student associations, youth groups, peer mentoring systems, extra-curricular or club-based activities. Such initiatives can help to create feelings of connectedness, empathy and respect. They can also build confidence, leadership behaviours and social skills.

Peer mediation or peer counselling schemes can also be established in educational settings, where students – including those who are LGBTI – are trained to assist other students in mediating peer conflict or assisting students who may be distressed. These programmes are more likely to be effective when students have been trained in simple counselling skills, and school staff are committed to the long-term maintenance of the programme.

Numerous schools and universities in Australia, Canada, China, India, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States provide space for peer-to-peer support. This includes clubs or groups where LGBTI or questioning students and their friends meet and interact safely, known as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs). These are student-led, school-based clubs that are open to all learners regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. They aim to improve the school environment, challenge discrimination and homophobic bullying and support learners who may be LGBTI. In educational institutions with a GSA, LGBTI students experience less social isolation, tend to have better self-esteem and achieve better academic performance [129], [234], [235]empirical studies investigating GSAs and their impact are sparse. Utilizing a sample of college students drawn from a large Southern university (N = 805; 78% White; 61% female; average age 22. They are twice as likely to say that their educational community is supportive of LGBTI people. There are over 4,000 GSAs in the United States [115], [234], [235] .

CASE STUDY INDIA: BREAKING BARRIERS, A GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE

Breaking Barriers is a GSA at the Tagore International School in Delhi. Under guidance from a member of staff, students aged 14–17 years run the alliance to foster empathy, understanding and acceptance towards LGBTI students.

In 2013, a student posted *'I'm a lesbian and you can't understand me'* to the school's Facebook page. This prompted two students and a member of staff to examine LGBTI students' experience of violence and discrimination in the school. In the first six months of the project, with support from school managers, a group of 50 students were trained to address issues of gender and sexuality across various school activities.

The students set up: a Facebook page featuring encouraging postings about LGBTI issues; a notice board in the school; an anonymous complaint box for LGBTI students to discuss any violence or discrimination; and a shelf dedicated to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in the school library. They also started documenting their work through video. National and local NGOs supported their work through training for the wider school community.

We indirectly focus on bullying by creating empathy and imparting information. Also, there is a zero-tolerance policy in our school for gender and sexuality based bullying, though we have faced no occasion so far to take action. As a personal observation, it is no longer politically correct in our school to make insulting gender and sexuality-based jokes, which goes a long way. Also, open conversations about sexuality are more frequent in senior classrooms, which reduce ignorance-based bullying.'

Shivanee Sen, Assistant Counsellor and Project Mentor

Implementation of the project included challenges and obstacles. Families with opposing views prevented some students from taking part in the group's activities. Also, after the 2013 overturning of the Delhi High Court's 2009 ruling (decriminalizing consensual acts between adults of the same sex), some schools have refused to host workshops.

The alliance was initially scheduled to take place over a year. However, continuing commitment by the students and teachers led to the project continuing. The alliance received overwhelmingly positive reactions from the school community, as well as from local NGOs. Its work was covered in local and national media and, in 2014, received an award for socially conscious young leadership. In future, the students hope to deliver workshops in other schools in New Delhi.

In the State of Berlin in Germany, the regional action plan against homophobia mandates every school to nominate a contact person for sexual and gender diversity [163]. They are identified as a recommended contact point for students and the subjects of violence or discrimination and they keep themselves abreast of developments on homophobic and transphobic violence. The region offers courses for these contact points, for example, on specific support for transgender students or on links between homophobia and racism.

CASE STUDY MEXICO: COMPREHENSIVE WORKSHOP ON HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

In Mexico, in partnership with UNESCO's Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean, the NGO Democracy and Sexuality Network (DEMYSEX) developed a workshop to raise awareness about homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings and to support the education sector to prevent it.

The workshops last 12 hours and are supported by detailed facilitation guidelines and tailor-made educational resources, including presentations, case studies, graphics and other materials. The workshops were implemented in Chile, Guatemala and Mexico. They allow teachers and educational authorities to:

- review the characteristics, root causes and specific examples of homophobic and transphobic violence
- understand the importance of approaching homophobic and transphobic violence as a specific issue, not only as part of general violence in schools
- understand homophobic and transphobic violence from a human rights perspective
- consider how educational staff can counter homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings
- identify measures to gradually prevent and consistently manage homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings.

Support can also be offered to students' families. Launched in 2007, Project Touch was the first social service for LGBT young people and their families in Hong Kong SAR. The programme's educational workshops have reached 30,000 students and 2,000 school professionals, while its counselling services have reached over 1,200 LGBT young people and 250 parents. Among the student and parents participating, 83 per cent reported improved emotional health, while 80 per cent of parents reported improved relationships with their children [7].

BOX 23 SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Findings from the multi-country study supported by UNESCO in 2014–2015 in Southern Africa (see Box 7) indicate that some mechanisms are in place in schools for reporting incidents of violence and referrals. In Swaziland, for example, Disciplinary Committees in schools are commonly used to determine what happens to the perpetrators of violence, while the Guidance Teachers attend to the targets of the violence and determine the response, depending on the severity of the case. However, the existing mechanisms were not perceived to provide sufficient support for students who experience diversity-related violence (as defined in the study), mostly as a result of the lack of information and training for the staff, including teachers, who are supposed to provide support.

'I have assisted these children who identify as different or are identified as different. I need training because I currently feel like a hypocrite. I don't understand them and I don't accept them myself even though I assist them. Training will help me understand them and work through my own prejudices.'

Teacher, Lesotho [70]

SUPPORT OUTSIDE OF EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Evidence indicates that, when violence occurs in schools, students are most likely to, first, turn to a teacher for support. As such, responses at and by educational settings are of primary importance – with teachers trained to listen to students, support them and help report incidents.

It is also important that, where necessary, they can refer students and their families to additional, external support that they might need. Examples include hotlines, child protection services, health services or LGBTI groups.

In Australia, Minus18, a youth-led network for LGBT teens, provides mental health advice and peer support through online chat, in addition to workshops and social events for young people [7]. Also in Australia, the NGO Safe Schools supports school counsellors and chaplains who feel unable to help LGBTI students directly – enabling them to find vetted community services [66].

In Japan, the Ministry of Health and Labour set up an LGBT hotline in 2012, while the services of a national suicide prevention network were extended to LGBT young people [7]. In Malta, the NGO Malta Gay Rights Movement provides psycho-educational services to teachers, counsellors and social workers, as well as a psychosocial support to students and parents. Here, the University of Malta's student LGBT society also provides information in universities.

In Slovenia, Legebitra, an LGBT NGO, has provided peer and professional psychosocial support to students, parents and educational staff since 1999, with the support and endorsement of the local authorities and national government [236].

CASE STUDY ARGENTINA: HELPING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ENTER EMPLOYMENT

In Argentina, the Employment Insurance and Training scheme is a programme by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security that facilitates the employment of workers that experience difficulties in finding jobs. The programme is offered to people who belong to groups that are likely to suffer discrimination.

Since 2013, transgender people have been able to enter this programme through local employment offices or NGOs working on gender identity/expression. Beneficiaries receive a monthly allowance for up to two years to help them complete their primary or secondary education, look for a job and/or receive vocational training to improve their professional skills. The scheme also supports those who wish to follow a Self-Employment Programme, developing skills to set up a small business.

The Ministry opened the programme to transgender people based, among other data, on a 2012 survey by the National Institute of Statistics and Census. The survey's results showed that only 20 per cent of transgender people had finished their secondary education, while 85 per cent said they were, or had been involved, in sex work. The same percentage also reported being barred from employment based on their gender identity/expression.

In Canada, to support the families of LGBT students, the Ministry of Education in Ontario implements Parents Reaching Out, a grant programme to increase parents' engagement in local communities [237]. As part of these grants, the Ministry has supported workshops to help parents learn about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

BOX 24 ONLINE RESOURCES SUPPORTING LGBTI STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Many education sectors have embraced online resources as a means to offer services that can be anonymous and easily accessible by many. With the potential to reach high numbers at comparatively little cost, such resources related to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings have started to be developed in almost all regions. Government and education sector websites feature LGBTI-inclusive content in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

SUPPORT ONLINE

Cyber bullying can include online: name calling; slandering; threats, stalking; unsolicited materials of a sexual nature; and stealing or exposing subjects' personal data without their consent. Cyber bullying has several unique characteristics that differentiate it from other types of violence in educational settings. Digital communications offer anonymity to perpetrators. They also enable the wide and often uncontrolled dissemination of text, pictures or videos, which may include intimate or sexual materials. Perpetrators may feel less accountable when their actions take place online. Importantly, increasing evidence demonstrates that online and offline bullying are closely linked [238]–[240]we have documented the prevalence of cyberbullying and school bullying victimization and their associations with psychological distress. Methods. In the fall of 2008, 20406 ninth- through twelfth-grade students in MetroWest Massachusetts completed surveys assessing their bullying victimization and psychological distress, including depressive symptoms, self-injury, and suicidality. Results. A total of 15.8% of students reported cyberbullying and 25.9% reported school bullying in the past 12 months. A majority (59.7%.

As with other forms of homophobic and transphobic violence in settings, LGBTI students are more likely to experience cyber bullying than their non-LGBTI peers. A study in the US of 4,400 randomly selected students aged 11–18 years found that LGBT respondents were almost twice as likely as their peers to experience cyber bullying [239].

There is limited evidence of countries specifically addressing cyber bullying. The United Kingdom's Government Equalities Office has launched the website Stop Online Abuse to offer support to targets of cyber bullying and to help them report incidents. The website particularly targets women and LGBT people, providing legal advice and practical tips to respond to abusive comments online. It includes a specific section on transphobia [241]. The United States Department of Health and Human Services has set up a similar section on its website Stop Bullying [242].

3.4.5. Information campaigns and strategic partnerships

A community-wide, youth-led approach is needed to combat bullying – involving teachers, parents, schools and children. An effective framework should involve the collaboration of governments, organizations and individuals to build best practices for dealing with and preventing bullying […] Our focus should be on tolerance, knowledge and empowerment rather than on punitive measures.

Mitchell, Children's Commissioner. Speech given at the Bullying, Young People and the Law Symposium. 18 July 2013, Melbourne, Australia

PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society (LGBTI NGOs, teachers' unions, health professionals, faith groups, parent groups) working on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and education issues in every region have developed and contributed considerable expertise in preventing and reducing homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. This has paved the way (sometimes decades in advance) for the education sector's own responses. The sector has welcomed civil society's input to varying degrees, depending on its own readiness and understanding of the issue, as well as the wider political context.

Research for this report found that policy-makers from Asia, North America, Latin America, Europe and the Pacific acknowledge that partnerships with civil society, particularly LGBTI NGOs, contribute to successful responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational

settings. For example in the research conducted by the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency in 2013, 'Virtually all public officials referred to the fundamentally important role of LGBT NGOs in influencing the nature and pace of reform in LGBT rights', including in relation in education [150]. The most promising responses from the education sector to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings have involved civil society in some way. Overall, cooperation between the sector and civil society tends to deepen and become more frequent as both parties realize that cooperation is mutually beneficial. These partnerships may encompass initiatives such as: information campaigns about sexual and gender diversity; marking specific events (see Box 25); establishing anti-bullying networks; conducting long-term awareness-raising and training programmes; supporting the development of education policies; hosting regional policy conferences; and implementing local responses at the level of schools or districts.

The #PurpleMySchool campaign in 2015, run by UNESCO, UNDP and 'Being LGBTI in Asia' seeks to raise awareness of school bullying of LGBTI people based on their sexuality or gender identity.

BOX 25 MARKING SPECIFIC DAYS TO MOBILIZE ACTION

Teachers and educational institutions can seize opportunities presented by specific days to discuss sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. For example:

- **International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia** (17 May) marks the anniversary of the 1990 decision by the World Health Organization to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. The day is marked in over 130 countries by institutions, NGOs and educational communities.
- **International Human Rights Day** (10 December) is celebrated by numerous human rights actors, national and international institutions, and by the United Nations.
- **Other relevant international days** officially recognized by the United Nations, such as the International Day of Non-Violence (2 October) and the International Day for Tolerance (16 November).
- **Pink Shirt Day** (22 May) in New Zealand or **Purple Friday** (December) in the Netherlands encourage people to talk about bullying, oppose it and show their support for sexual and gender diversity by wearing pink or purple. Resources are available for educational institutions to use on the day.
- **LGBT History Month** in the United Kingdom (February) and the United States (October) offers an opportunity for educational communities and teachers to explore sexual and gender diversity in national or global history.
- **Day of Silence** organized by Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) in the United States (April) sees students across the country pledge a day of silence to call attention to the silencing effect of homophobic and transphobic violence in schools. This is also observed in New Zealand.

Experience shows that, for these partnerships to be successful, they must: use reliable evidence; benefit from political leadership and an enabling political climate; and be implemented in good faith by all parties. Partnerships between the education sector and civil society usually seek to [89], [243]:

- build and disseminate evidence on the nature, prevalence and impact of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings;
- improve and share expertise about discrimination and violence in educational institutions;
- include sexual and gender diversity in curricula and teaching materials;
- support educational staff to deal with issues of sexual and gender diversity; and
- support students and their families confronted with homophobic and transphobic violence.

For policy-making in this area, governments in some Latin American countries (including Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, parts of Mexico and Peru) convene cross-sectoral working groups that include civil society to advise government departments on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. In Belgium, in 2015 the Flemish Ministry of Education launched a Consultation Platform on Bullying, bringing together youth and LGBT NGOs, school networks, pedagogical guidance services and student organizations to strengthen the region's response to homophobic and transphobic bullying. In New Zealand, in 2015 the Human Rights Commission, Ministry of Education, NGOs and teacher unions jointly produced Bullying Prevention and Response – a guide for schools on how to prevent and respond to bullying, including that of homophobic and transphobic nature [244].

Partnerships in the field of curriculum development and staff training exist in countries such as Cambodia. Here, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has collaborated with NGOs and community groups to develop a sexuality education curriculum for Grades 7–10 [7]. In Nepal, joint work between the Ministry of Education and the Blue Diamond Society, an LGBT NGO, led to including sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in the national curriculum for health, physical education, social studies and population education for Grades 6–9. The NGO then partnered with lawyers, schools, teachers, students and parents to develop a toolkit to help teachers to implement the new curriculum. This was piloted with over 600 teachers in 2014, with support from the World Bank [7].

In Canada, the Ministry of Education in Ontario works closely with teacher and manager unions, the Ontario Human Rights Commission, LGBT and gender equality NGOs and an anti-bullying network to develop and deliver evidence-based resources for educational institutions [245].

The education sector and civil society have also come together to publicly discuss responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational setting – a practice that proved useful for sharing promising practices. NGOs from Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom undertook joint research and convened an international conference (Breaking the Walls of Silence, Ljubljana, 2013) on homophobic and transphobic violence in secondary schools in the European Union [182]. This was conducted in partnership with Slovenia's national and local youth office, national equality body and teacher associations. In the US, the government convened two national conferences: (the White House LGBT Conference on Safe Schools and Communities, 2012 [246]; and the White House Conference on Bullying Prevention, 2010 [46], which included LGBT youth issues. These brought together several hundred students, teachers, parents, community advocates, law enforcement officers and elected officials. Similarly, ILGA-Europe, an LGBTI NGO, organizes regular roundtables with policy-makers from education ministries in Europe to discuss responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings [247].

Such partnerships can also be conducted at the local level. For example, in Portugal, the Department of Youth and Education of the Valongo City Council has partnered with local organizations to offer peer education and diversity workshops in local schools, as well as to train city council staff on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

At the level of educational institutions, partnerships between the education sector and civil society can help to respond to homophobic and transphobic violence in situ. They provide useful support to educational staff who have to respond to incidents of violence where and when they occur.

In Poland, the Campaign Against Homophobia, an LGBT NGO, works with teachers' unions, the Centre for Education Development, local teacher training offices and school directors to help secondary schools to plan, coordinate and monitor their programmes and activities against discrimination and violence. Based on this work, the NGO also disseminates promising practices across schools. In the United Kingdom, the Government Equalities Office and the Department for Education finance eight NGOs nationwide to help schools to prevent and reduce homophobic and transphobic violence [146].

NGOs can also support initiatives in universities. In China, the NGO Common Language promotes inclusive university curricula by supporting teachers and student clubs to discuss sexual and gender diversity. As of 2015, the organization worked with 13 universities nationwide and supported over 30 local groups (mainly student associations) to organize LGBT-inclusive activities [7]. In Turkey, another LGBT organization, KAOS GL, works with selected universities, students, counsellors and teachers' unions to organize events around International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

PARTNERSHIPS TO RAISE AWARENESS

The education sector can also partner with civil society to promote information campaigns on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

In Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico, education ministries and governmental bodies responsible for social inclusion and non-discrimination policies have supported and promoted information campaigns in partnership with NGOs. In Canada, Quebec's provincial government has supported the Family Coalition, an LGBT NGO, to develop an information campaign on same-sex families. The NGO has developed resources for teachers, parents and students and, by 2015, had trained 3,500 teachers in 700 educational institutions.

In France, the Ministry of National Education organized several information campaigns displaying information posters, in schools and elsewhere in cities, advertising a helpline offering support services for LGBT young people. In Ireland, the Ministry of Education has funded the NGO BeLonG To Youth Services' long-running campaign against homophobic and transphobic bullying to honour commitments under its National Action Plan on Bullying [248].

There are multiple examples of NGOs being invited into educational settings to deliver awareness raising and trainings on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. In Scotland, LGBT Youth Scotland delivers sessions in schools – conducted by young social workers or peer educators aged between 13 and 18 years, usually under the supervision of a teacher – to explore students' beliefs and attitudes about diversity [243]. In France, three NGOs are vetted by the Ministry of National Education and can be invited by individual schools to speak to students.

Strategic partnerships and information campaigns are critical for effective education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. They complement the other five elements: national and school-level policies; relevant curricula and learning materials; support and training for teachers and other school staff; support for students and families. Each element is vital in its own right. However, all are needed to ensure a response that is truly comprehensive.

3.4.6. Monitoring of violence and evaluation of responses

Currently the monitoring of violence in schools and the evaluation of efforts to tackle violence against children worldwide are deeply fragmented, of 'highly uneven' quality and not directly comparable [249]. Few countries systematically collect comprehensive data at a national level on violence in schools, including school-related gender-based violence. This is often linked to the lack of effective reporting mechanisms set up by the education sector to register incidents of violence in educational institutions. Educational authorities and other governmental institutions often fail to include indicators and questions on violence in schools in the existing surveys aimed at collecting general data on education, such as the annual school census that is managed in many countries by Education Management Information Systems (EMIS).

Some multilateral organizations, including UN agencies, have conducted international or regional school-based, household or online surveys that include some questions on the school climate and violence in schools, although they do not always allow the measurement of school-related gender-based violence.

As a result there is little data on violence in schools in general, which makes it difficult to analyse the evolution of the prevalence of violence and its nature over time. Research on the monitoring of violence in educational institutions also remains at an early stage, with on-going initial research into global measurement frameworks but no agreement at this stage on international indicators.

The problem is more acute when it comes to measuring homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings. Data collected by governments or international organizations are even more scarce. This is due to various reasons: in some cases policy-makers are not aware of this particular form of violence due to the lack of information and/or invisibility of LGBTI students. Even when reporting mechanisms are available, incidents of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions may be underreported by targets of violence because of the fear that they could be stigmatized and bullied even more. This is a vicious circle that contributes to the lack of visibility of LGBTI students and the violence they face. For example, the research conducted in 2013 by the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) stresses that 'LGBT students remain unseen in educational institutions" and that 'the interviews with education professionals have shown the underreporting of LGBT bullying issues is a major challenge across the majority of EU Member States' [150]. Absence of monitoring is also explained by lack of interest, denial of the problem by the education sector, fear of negative reactions from some sectors of society, especially in contexts where consensual same-sex relationships between adults are criminalized.

The scarcity of the data on homophobic and transphobic violence in schools is problematic for various reasons: first, it prevents painting accurate global, regional and national pictures of this kind of violence to understand it better. Second, it contributes to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression being ignored when designing national and local anti-violence policies, and contributes to the invisibility of homophobic and transphobic violence in the eyes of the education sector. Finally, in most countries the education sector does not have the evidence necessary to design and implement appropriate and effective responses to this kind of violence.

These reasons make it urgent for the education sector to start systemically monitoring homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions, and systematically evaluate responses to it. There are a series of methodological and ethical challenges in designing surveys, collecting and analysing the data on homophobic and transphobic violence. However, this should not prevent the education sector from doing it while strengthening its efforts to monitor violence in general and gender-based violence in educational institutions.

I was told I brought shame to my society and my religion. I have endless nightmares and suffer depression

Nora, age 25, lesbian, Middle East

CURRENT MONITORING OF VIOLENCE BY GOVERNMENTAL BODIES AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Despite the global state of play, valuable efforts exist to monitor school-related violence including homophobic and transphobic violence in a small number of countries. These can usefully inform new monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Examples of monitoring of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings by governmental bodies

Currently, governmental bodies only monitor school-related homophobic and transphobic violence in the socio-cultural and legal contexts that are most favourable to sexual and gender diversity. This tends to be in countries where long-established NGOs have spent years or decades working to promote and protect the human rights of LGBTI people and raising awareness about the violence that affects them in educational settings and elsewhere. Governmental bodies usually start to carry out their own monitoring after these organizations have started monitoring violence years, if not decades, earlier. This is problematic, since reliable data on homophobic and transphobic violence in contexts more hostile to sexual and gender diversity is needed as much, if not more.

Governmental bodies have made efforts to directly monitor homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings in eight countries out of the 94 countries surveyed for this report: **Belgium**, **France**, parts of **Germany** (at the sub-national level) and **Colombia** (at the municipality level), **Mexico**, **Mongolia**, **the Netherlands** and the **United States** (**Norway** had included sexual orientation and gender identity markers in previous national student surveys, but stopped in 2012).

- In **Belgium**, the governmental Centre for Equal Opportunities initiated a nationwide Diversity Barometer on Education, which includes a survey of diversity and discrimination on the basis of characteristics protected under anti-discrimination laws (including but not limited to sexual orientation and gender identity). The survey will take place every six years, starting in 2016. It will review existing research, evaluate diversity policies and practices in schools, and suggest new approaches to protecting students [250].
- In **Colombia**, the Department of Education of the District of Bogotá surveyed homophobic and transphobic violence in secondary schools in 2006, 2011 and 2013 (when the departments of culture, of sports and of women's rights joined the initiative). These large-scale studies collected questionnaires from 118,000 students (in its latest version) in Grades 6–11, allowing probability-based sampling and strongly reliable findings [113].

- In **France**, the Ministry of Education seeks to record incidents linked to sexual orientation as part of a survey on general security in schools sent to headmasters annually [91]. However policy-makers, teachers' unions and NGOs agree it does not accurately monitor school-related homophobic and transphobic violence: the survey focuses only on the gravest incidents of violence, and incidents motivated by homophobia or transphobia can and have been reported without their bias motive.
- In **Germany**, the Department of Education of the State of Berlin monitors violence in educational institutions through a central complaint point, although so far no complaints have been received in relation to homophobic and transphobic violence [251]. At the time of writing this report (December 2015), discussions were on-going about implementing low-threshold independent complaint points (or ombudspersons) in every school district to deal with discrimination, including on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. According to compulsory guidelines on mobbing, harassment and bullying given to every school, head teachers must assess whether incidents of violence must be reported to the state Department of Education [252].
- In **Mexico**, a 2009 survey of school-related gender-based violence by the Ministry of Public Education and UNICEF included an exploration of discrimination and violence towards lesbian, gay and bisexual students. The large-scale survey covered 300 primary and 100 secondary schools and involved interviews with teachers and head teachers, focus group discussions with students and 30,000 questionnaires [112].
- In **Mongolia**, in 2013 the National Human Rights Commission conducted a small-scale survey as part of its research for a national report on human rights and freedoms. The survey asked respondents whether they had been subjected to discrimination or assault based on their sexual orientation or gender identity in their educational environment [77].
- In **the Netherlands**, a biennial survey on social safety in schools directly informs the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's national strategy for gender equality and sexual diversity; it covers issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
- In the **United States**, three large data collection exercises routinely take place. First, over the years, state and local school surveys on risk behaviours have progressively included questions on students' sexual identity or behaviour, feeding into the federal Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have analysed data from YRBS surveys from 2001–09 [60], and produced critical evidence demonstrating the frequency and impact of homophobic and transphobic violence in public high schools. This led to commissioning additional research into the safety and well-being of LGBT young people. Building on these state and local initiatives, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention chose to include items related to sexual orientation in both the federal and state/local versions of the 2014 YRBS. This will lead to ground-breaking population-based federal and state data on the experiences of LGBT young people. Second, since 2009 the Department of Education has been monitoring student harassment of other students based on their sexual orientation or gender identity as part of the federal School Survey on Crime and Safety. Finally, since the school year 2015–2016 it is mandatory for all schools to provide the federal government data on violence based on sexual orientation, and on violence based on gender identity/expression (to be monitored under sex-related violence).

When governmental bodies survey homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions themselves, they tend to do so as part of wider surveys on general safety or violence in schools.

In six of the 94 countries for which data has been collected for this report, governmental bodies do not monitor homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions themselves but have directly used data collected by research institutes or NGOs to inform their work. This is the case in **Australia**, **Canada**, **Ireland**, **Malta**, **New Zealand** and the **United Kingdom**.

- In **Australia**, ministries of education in several states and territories cited research by LGBT NGOs as a source for designing and implementing education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence. NGOs have continued to monitor homophobic and transphobic violence, contributing to the improvement of state – and lately, national – responses to violence.

- In **Canada**, research conducted by NGOs and academics informed amendments to legislation (the *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act 2010* and the *Accepting Schools Act 2012*) and contributed to the development of inclusive resources and training for the education sector.
- In **Ireland,** research by NGOs led to LGBT young people being recognized as a key population in the national suicide prevention strategy of 2005 [253]. Further research conducted in 2009 [92] fed into the development of LGBT-inclusive anti-bullying policies in 2013.
- In **Malta** and **New Zealand**, ministries of education have used data produced by NGOs in the design of national policies and guidance on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions [172], [254].
- In the **United Kingdom**, the Government Equalities Office and the Department for Education commissioned and used research by NGOs to inform the national LGBT policy [255], inclusive school policies [256], teacher trainings and the national curriculum.

Governmental bodies appear to rely on data generated by NGOs only in Anglophone countries in North America, Western Europe and the Pacific, where well-resourced NGOs working on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression have operated for several decades.

BOX 26 MONITORING OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS BY RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND NATIONAL NGOS

Non-governmental actors collect the great majority of existing data on school-related homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings worldwide. National and international NGOs, notably, have undertaken these efforts since the 1990s in some countries, and have greatly contributed to the development and evolution of relevant specific indicators. Their research is frequently done on smaller scales than studies done or supported by governmental bodies and multilateral organizations, often due to limited resources. However, they provide a useful starting point for understanding the nature and impacts of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings, and should be taken into consideration by the education sector.

It is useful to involve NGOs promoting the human rights of LGBTI people at the design or test stages of studies. These organizations can provide useful guidance on the specificities linked to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, including in the formulation of questions (for example, they may shed light on specific forms of violence experienced by transgender students), as well as the identification of respondents and the analysis of the data. Findings of studies conducted by NGOs can help governments to design further research, or consider implementing selected responses to homophobic and transphobic violence

Ultimately, however, the education sector cannot rely on NGOs to collect data over a long period of time as it is costly and therefore hardly sustainable. Sometimes it is impossible for this to take place (for example, where NGOs are barred entry into educational institutions).

While an increasing number of countries are starting to monitor gender-based violence in educational settings, particularly in the global South, these countries do not tend to monitor homophobic and transphobic violence yet.

Monitoring of violence in educational settings by multilateral organizations and international NGOs

Multilateral organizations – including UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the WHO – routinely monitor violence in educational institutions as part of their monitoring international development metrics such as literacy, access to education or public health. Since violence can and frequently does negatively affect individuals' education and health, multilateral organizations often include questions on violence in the large-scale surveys they conduct. In parallel and sometimes in partnership, international children's rights NGOs (INGOs, such as Plan International or Save the Children) also survey violence in educational institutions as part of large-scale projects and

programmatic work related to education or children's rights. Studies by multilateral organizations and INGOs often produce data comparable internationally.

Multilateral organizations and INGOs frequently monitor school-related violence and school-related gender-based violence, particularly in countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia. They have developed reliable methodologies for collecting data on the nature, prevalence, impacts and responses to violence, including specific indicators.

BOX 27 LARGE-SCALE STUDIES BY MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS SURVEYING VIOLENCE OR GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Several large-scale studies have surveyed violence or gender-based violence in educational settings, often through research repeated over several years. These studies offer sound methodology for monitoring violence in educational institutions. Although the indicators and questionnaires used in these studies are not specific to homophobic and transphobic violence, it would be worth exploring how they could be adapted to provide data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions (see a discussion of indicators in the last part of this section).

- The **Global School-based Student Health Survey** (GSHS), developed by the WHO and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in partnership with UNAIDS, UNESCO and UNICEF. The GSHS includes information on experiences of violence among students aged 13–17 in 66 low- and middle-income countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, Europe and the Pacific) [257].
- The **Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children** cross-national survey (HBSC), managed by the WHO, regularly collects data about the health, well-being, social environments and health behaviours of children aged 11, 13 and 15 in 44 countries and regions in Europe and North America [10].
- The **Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education** (LLECE), managed by UNESCO, collects data on the educational achievements of primary school students in 15 Latin America and Caribbean states, and includes indicators on violence as it relates to students' achievements [258].

Multilateral organizations and INGOs rarely monitor school-related homophobic and transphobic violence. When they do so, it is always in the context of wider research on violence against children, gender-based violence or educational achievements, or in the context of international development programming. Some of these studies focus on students' views on LGBTI individuals, which may help to assess how accepting or hostile educational institutions are for LGBTI students.

- In **Brazil**, UNESCO analysed previous research about young people and sexuality in 2004. The research used questionnaires, individual interviews and focus group discussions to survey 16,422 students, 4,532 teachers and 3,099 parents on their personal views of sexual and gender diversity [259]. Similar research into the views of 5,000 teachers had been conducted in 2002 [260].
- In **Costa Rica**, UNICEF and UNDP conducted a study of secondary school students' views on their lives at school, at home and in their community in 2011 [261]. The study involved 1,907 interviews with students. While it did not directly monitor violence, it surveyed respondents' attitudes and beliefs vis-à-vis sexual and gender diversity, and the place of LGBT individuals in society.
- In **Nepal**, the UNDP surveyed 1,178 LGBT adults in partnership with a research institute in 2014. The survey asked respondents whether they had experienced discrimination or violence at school [69].

As part of its large-scale survey of LGBT people's experience of discrimination and violence in its 28 Member States, the European Union asked 93,079 respondents about school-related homophobic and transphobic violence [62]. This exercise, so far unique, has produced directly comparable international data on the scope and prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions.

Evaluating education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings

Education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings have so far only been formally evaluated in **the Netherlands**, the **United Kingdom** and the **United States**. These examples offer useful guidance for the education sector in other countries that may be considering evaluating their own responses to violence. The evaluations provide policy-makers and political decision-makers with reliable information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of existing responses – evidence that will be invaluable to design future responses.

- In **the Netherlands**, the Ministry of Education evaluated a project on the 'social safety' of LGBT students, piloted in 130 primary and secondary schools in the years 2012–2013 and 2013–2014. The project sought to support schools in rolling out updated national education objectives on sexuality and sexual diversity. The evaluation was to determine the pilot's impact, and assess what factors affected this impact (for example, teachers' skills, or support from school management). The evaluation collected data through questionnaires and interviews with students and teachers, and found that these new objectives did have a measurable positive impact on social safety for students. Among other key lessons, the ministry found that support from teachers and school management was crucial to success, and that LGBTI NGOs could play a useful role in terms of initiating discussions in schools (see case study).

CASE STUDY NETHERLANDS: EVALUATING THE CURRICULUM

Following new nationwide educational attainment targets adopted in 2012 for sexuality and sexual diversity curricula, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science encouraged educational settings to increase their focus on sexual and gender diversity to improve the social safety of LGBTI students.

To determine the new curricula's effectiveness, the ministry ran a pilot project in which 130 schools were required to introduce at minimum:

- information sessions on LGBTI issues with external experts
- lessons in social interactions for students
- training or guidance for teachers to deal with LGBTI issues
- including mentions of sexual and gender diversity across the curriculum (and not only in sexuality and sexual diversity), and
- involving parents.

Half the schools received grants to implement the changes in the first year of the pilot, and the other half in the second year. In all schools, students completed questionnaires at the start and end of both school years (in the last two grades in primary schools, and in the first two grades in secondary schools). The impact was assessed by measuring students' attitudes towards LGBTI people, their experience of violence and their resilience to it, their safety (both objective and subjective) and the schools' own attitude towards sexual and gender diversity.

Teachers also filled in questionnaires, and interviews were held at 20 selected schools with head teachers, teachers, students, external speakers and some parents.

The study found that, in primary schools, a greater number of students (regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity) reported feeling safer in their classroom and of belonging to their school after the pilot was implemented. A third of teachers and students felt safety had increased, notably as homophobic and transphobic insults were used less often.

Similar findings of increased safety were reported in secondary schools, with more visible differences in schools that were previously less open to sexual and gender diversity.

Among the challenges that arose, some schools or teachers were reluctant to participate in the pilot to avoid 'difficult' discussions, or potential resistance, particularly in schools with a large number of Muslim students.

- In the **United Kingdom**, the Government Equalities Office commissioned a qualitative study to explore which responses to homophobic and transphobic bullying were the most effective. The study took place over four months in 2014, and found that a mixture of responses – prevention, classroom-based teaching and addressing homophobic and transphobic bullying as it happened on school grounds – was the best way to address homophobic and transphobic bullying [146].

CASE STUDY UNITED KINGDOM: EVALUATING A WIDE RANGE OF RESPONSES

In 2014, the Government Equalities Office commissioned an independent research agency to evaluate the most effective education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic bullying. The research unearthed a range of views from educational staff, which helped the government to assess different responses for their effectiveness.

First, the evaluation reviewed existing legislation and policies guiding the education sector's responses to homophobic and transphobic bullying, and existing educational resources – paying particular attention to resources specific to cyber bullying, or bullying targeting bisexual or transgender students.

Second, evaluators interviewed 20 teachers and educational staff involved in the delivery of anti-bullying responses across different schools, as well as four school case studies – each including the observation of responses to homophobic and transphobic bullying, interviews or focus group discussions with staff, and focus group discussions with students who were involved in the responses or had been bullied themselves.

The evaluation allowed classifying education sector responses into four different approaches:

- Proactive approaches to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying in whole educational communities, sometimes by involving parents and more community actors. These approaches were found to be more effective than responses limited to specific subjects or age groups.
- Interactive teaching or discussions in class delivered by teachers or external speakers on sexual and gender diversity.
- 'Playground' or school life approaches to address homophobic and transphobic behaviour where and as it takes place, for instance, by encouraging staff and students to react systematically to the use of homophobic or transphobic language.
- Reactive and supportive approaches to record incidents and support victims and perpetrators of homophobic and transphobic bullying.

The evaluation concluded that whole-school approaches, together with interactive teaching and discussions in class, were the most effective methods for preventing homophobic and transphobic bullying, while 'playground' and reactive or supportive approaches were best to address bullying when it happened.

- In the **United States**, GLSEN evaluated a programme by the New York City Department for Education training teachers to deal with homophobic and transphobic violence. Carried out in 2013, the evaluation surveyed 813 teachers before, during and after their participation in the training, and compared their responses to those of staff who did not receive any training. The evaluation found that trained teachers had measurably more confidence to deal with homophobic and transphobic violence in schools, which in turn measurably improved the social climate and students' safety (see case study).

CASE STUDY UNITED STATES: EVALUATING A TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

In 2007, the New York City Department of Education launched the Respect for All initiative, mandating – among other measures – that each school should designate at least one staff member to receive reports of bias-motivated violence, including homophobic and transphobic violence. With the support of five NGOs, the Department of Education developed a two-day training programme for secondary school teachers to address bias-related violence, with a specific focus on violence linked to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

The training was offered to teachers across New York schools over three years between 2007 and 2010, and 69 trainings were delivered in the first year alone.

In 2008, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) sought to find out whether the programme had impacted on participants' awareness, knowledge, beliefs and behaviour in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues.

The Department of Education and an ethical review committee approved the research. GLSEN surveyed 813 teachers before, six weeks after and six months after the training, also comparing results with teachers who had not completed the programme. These quantitative findings were complemented by focus group discussions with some of the teachers who received training.

The evaluation found that after the training, participating teachers:

- reported better knowledge of terms related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression
- knew better where to find appropriate LGBTQ-related educational resources
- looked for LGBTQ-related resources more frequently
- communicated more with colleagues and students about LGBTQ issues, and
- engaged themselves more in the creation of safer schools for LGBTQ students.

Teachers' empathy for LGBTQ students, views on the importance of reacting to homophobic and transphobic remarks and level of comfort when intervening remained the same, or varied only marginally.

The evaluation produced valuable evidence that specific training could successfully help teachers to foster a safer social climate in schools for LGBTI students.

CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS IN MEASURING HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Collecting data on violence targeting children in schools is challenging for a mixture of different reasons that are closely interlinked:

- **Methodological issues:** When trying to measure the scope of violence in schools and to find out about the types of violence experienced by students, some key issues include: from what categories of the school community to collect the data; what data should be collected from each categories; and using which methods. For example, should there be studies or surveys where researchers ask students directly about violence in school, through self-reports about the violence they experienced as targets or perpetrators? Or should they be asked about incidents of violence that they have witnessed as bystanders? Should any of these questions be asked via self-administered questionnaires or questionnaires administered by researchers in schools? Does it make more sense to collect this data outside of schools, for example, through household surveys? Or through online surveys where students have access to the internet? Or is it better to rely on mechanisms for reporting incidents of violence in educational institutions when they are available, either in the schools themselves or outside schools (governmental hotlines, internet-based reporting systems, police and justice sectors, etc.)? What questions can be asked of children, using terminology that is easy to understand, age-appropriate and culturally sensitive?

- **Legal and ethical issues:** In most countries there are strict rules related to research involving children, as they are under the age of consent. Therefore requesting informed consent from the children in a study involves their parents and guardians. Asking children about violence, and particularly violence they have experienced themselves, can be traumatic. Finally, researching issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/orientation in education and in relation to children has additional challenges. In some contexts it is not legal to discuss these issues either in schools or even outside of schools. Where it is legal, it may be considered as a very sensitive topic to be discussed with children and young people. Asking children and young people questions related to their sexual orientation and gender identity in the school setting is ethically questionable, as it could embarrass them and expose them to stigma and discrimination, unless questions are asked in strict confidence and anonymity is granted by independent researchers external to schools.

Education sector policy-makers should consider the following aspects when engaging in monitoring and evaluation efforts. They are a simple overview, and are covered extensively in publications on research with children.

Specificities of research on violence affecting children in schools

As for all research, **informed consent** from participants is essential: they must be told and must understand why they are invited to participate in research, what questions will be asked and how their answers will be used. Specific national legislation may determine whether and how consent can be obtained from children. This may involve their parents or guardians, and must be done with extreme care and respect for respondents' privacy (as they may not want to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression to their relatives).

In addition to informed consent, research must guarantee **anonymity**: participants must be guaranteed that their answers will not be linked to their names, they must be told whether and how long their data will be kept, and by whom. This is essential from an ethical perspective, and to enable respondents to answer questions sincerely.

Surveying children or adults about violence they have experienced can be difficult or traumatic, and can only be done with due diligence for respondents' own safety and well-being. Leading them to remember or discuss their experience of violence must be done in a safe environment, where a trained researcher will offer appropriate help if necessary (for example, speaking to a counsellor, or directing respondents to a helpline) and report the situation to the relevant authorities if necessary (particularly if the respondent is in immediate danger). These safeguards must be provided however the research takes place: when filling an online form (for example, by offering online support, or redirecting respondents to a helpline), when filling a printed form in class (for example, by providing the whole class with information on dealing with violence afterwards) or in interviews (for example, by offering immediate support). In addition to these initial considerations, research on violence must always be carried out in line with applicable professional standards for social research.

Specificities of research on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression

Researching issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression may require using **specific terminology**. Although LGBTI-related terms may not be familiar to policy-makers and researchers, it is important to use them appropriately in order to refer to the right groups and concepts. Terms vary between regions and countries, and must be used appropriately depending on the context. In contexts where sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues are taboo or where governmental bodies hesitate to collect data, it may be useful to refer to people who are 'different/perceived as different in terms of gender', for example, as it was decided by researchers and education policy-makers for the study conducted in four countries in Southern Africa [70].

Monitoring homophobic and transphobic violence must be done with regards to applicable laws, particularly in **contexts criminalizing LGBTI identities**, and in no circumstances must anyone – students, teachers, educational staff, parents or researchers – be put at risk due to the research.

Mechanisms and methods to monitor violence

Large-scale school-based or population-based quantitative surveys are essential to understanding the prevalence of violence in educational institutions, and its impact on education and health at the scale of a country or region. When it comes to the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence, this type of research currently takes place in only ten countries (**Australia**, **Belgium**, **Canada**, **Colombia**, **France**, **Mexico**, **the Netherlands**, **New Zealand**, the **United Kingdom** and the **United States**). Where governments do carry out research directly, they generally survey homophobic and transphobic violence as part of mechanisms already in place: annual school censuses; or surveys on violence, social safety, health and risk behaviours, or the general school climate. Using mechanisms already in place offers a cost-effective and reliable way to produce data based on a large and representative set of answers. Large-scale quantitative research allows rigorous sampling and analysis, and – when repeated – allows the analysis of trends and variations over time. It is an essential part of monitoring efforts.

As well as surveys, many countries use, or should use, data collected on incidents of violence though reporting mechanisms made available to students, school staff, parents, etc. in educational institutions and outside educational institutions (hotlines, internet, police and justice, etc.).

Small-scale or community-based research is more frequently conducted by NGOs or research institutes, and is essential to understand the nature of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions, and its impact on the education and health of individuals. Although it is more common, this type of research produces findings that are only valid for the sample studied, and not for the general population. However, small-scale studies are necessary to understand the nature of homophobic and transphobic violence, and can usefully inform responses by the education sector:

'Community-based samples, while not representing the broader population, serve an important purpose and should not be dismissed as has often occurred within government agencies. Rather, these studies reflect the lived experience of self-identified LGBT youth and are vital sources of essential data to reflect the changing cultural experiences of LGBT youth, ethnic and cultural differences, risk and protective factors, socialization and development.' [262, p. 111].

This research allows trained researchers to ask specific questions about homophobic and transphobic violence, and to analyse the phenomenon and its specificities in more detail. This approach is often a useful complement to large-scale quantitative surveys. However, it is unsustainable for the majority of NGOs to monitor homophobic and transphobic violence over long periods of time due to the high costs involved, and most NGOs' inability[26] to carry out repeat research over multi-year periods. It may be desirable for governmental bodies to partner with NGOs to conduct surveys that are planned over a long period of time. There is also a problem with data being generated by NGOs, particularly LGBT organizations, as data can be biased or perceived as such by policy-makers in many contexts. It is then a problem in terms of the use of the data by the education sector, whether bias exists or not.

Whatever the size of the research on violence in educational institutions, common data collection methods are self-administered questionnaires for students and staff, individual interviews with students, staff or parents, and online surveys for the same groups. When it comes to evaluating education sector responses, the most common data collection methods are desk research and policy analysis. This is sometimes complemented by case studies or surveys with education

26 This inability is often due to the forms of funding available to NGOs, which do not allow reliable planning or programming over long periods of time.

professionals to establish whether policies on homophobic and transphobic violence exist in their local context (school or school district).

Gender identity/expression is too frequently left out of research. Frequently, data collection by the education sector will focus on homophobia or respondents' sexual orientation, and ignore transphobia or respondents' gender identity/expression. This can be due to the fact that governmental data collection efforts are informed by legislation and policy in the area of discrimination, which can refer to the ground of sexual orientation but not gender identity/expression. Even if legislation does not touch upon gender identity/expression, including this characteristic when researching violence can lead to useful findings (including on the necessity to update existing laws and policies).

While most research on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings only takes place once, repeating research allows the monitoring of evolving trends, particularly on the prevalence of violence. This is crucial to understanding whether existing responses work over time, and to what extent. Repeating research is easier and more cost-effective for governmental bodies than for NGOs or research institutes, especially when done as part of regular data collection exercises such as school censuses or regular surveys on violence.

Finally, monitoring homophobic and transphobic violence has intrinsic limitations, including under-reporting. Victims of bias-motivated violence report incidents less frequently than other victims [18], [263] for a number of reasons: they may not want their sexual orientation or gender identity (or any other part of their lives) disclosed, for instance to parents; they may feel ashamed; they may fear retaliation or repeat violence; or they may simply not know this type of violence can and must be reported.

Under-reporting is a major obstacle to monitoring homophobic and transphobic violence, and leads to data that potentially under-represents the prevalence of violence. To address this, monitoring mechanisms must be carefully designed and set up, ideally with the help of experts on homophobic and transphobic violence.

CASE STUDY PERU: SYSTEMATICALLY RECORDING AND RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE

The SíseVe system in Peru explicitly covers homophobic and transphobic violence, and offers a useful framework to systematically record and respond to violence in schools:

- **Register** the incident.
- **Respond** to the situation via interviews with those involved and their families, while guaranteeing the students' protection.
- **Offer help** to the victims affected, should they require medical or legal support, before any communication with their parents.
- **Follow up** to find out what further actions were undertaken in the school community, for instance mediation sessions with a teacher.
- **Close the case** when there is evidence that students' well-being has improved.

The SíseVe system allows identifying when incidents are motivated by homophobia or transphobia, and can provide the number or percentage of reported cases in which specific insults were proffered, for example. SíseVe has great potential as a mechanism to systematically record and respond to specific forms of violence.

The importance of disaggregation

Disaggregating data means separating it based on specific criteria. For example, asking students about their own sexual orientation in addition to their experience of violence will allow researchers

to compare how much violence students experience if they are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Asking students about their age and gender allows a greater understanding of how violence affects specific age groups or genders differently.

Disaggregation, particularly by age, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression,[27] is essential in terms of producing relevant and useful data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. It reveals patterns that are invisible when looking at a whole group: for example, it may lead to the realization that lesbian students and male-to-female transgender students are more exposed to some forms of violence (for example, sexual violence), or that transgender students face specific challenges (for example, more school days skipped). Without disaggregation, it would also be impossible to measure how much violence affects students when they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or heterosexual.

Disaggregation is done by asking respondents about their personal characteristics as part of surveys or interviews, and keeping this data linked to the rest of their answers. It must be done in the context of anonymous research that cannot be used to determine a person's sexual orientation or gender identity/expression and their name.

Existing research on violence in educational settings still rarely disaggregates data by gender, let alone by sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. More disaggregated data is essential in order to understand how violence affects different groups, and how the education sector can effectively respond to different forms of violence.

REVIEW OF INDICATORS USED TO MONITOR SCHOOL-RELATED VIOLENCE INCLUDING HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE AND MONITOR AND EVALUATE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSES

For the purpose of this report, a review of 'indicators' used to monitor violence in educational settings was conducted. They included: (a) indicators that meet the exact criteria of what an indicator should be; and (b) questions included in surveys, which are often referred to as indicators, even if they cannot be defined as such. They have been used in both quantitative and qualitative studies, on large or small scales, and most of them have already produced data.

The review considered 437 indicators used in approximately 114 countries and territories to monitor the prevalence and nature of violence in educational institutions, its impacts (mostly on those targeted by violence), and education sector responses to violence. Indicators considered for the review are used by different categories of institutions:

- Governments: ministries, national research institutions including centres for statistics, and other governmental bodies
- Independent research institutions
- International governmental organizations (multilateral organizations) such as UN agencies
- International NGOs (INGOs)
- National NGOs
- Corporate sector.

The review distinguished three broad categories of violence in educational institutions:

- Violence in general, or school-related violence
- School-related gender-based violence
- Violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

27 Sexual orientation and gender identity are different, and must be surveyed separately. A transgender person may be homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual, for example. See Glossary.

Indicators reviewed monitor and/or evaluate processes, outcomes or impacts in relation to the following main three areas:

- Prevalence and nature of violence
- Impact of violence
- Education sector responses to violence

The review was a desk-based review of existing documents. UNESCO commissioned two reviews in the Asia-Pacific region and in Latin America, in order to find out about specific indicators used in those two regions, particularly through access to documents available only in Portuguese and Spanish in Latin America. Although the review considered a large number of indicators, it does not claim to be comprehensive, as researchers did not have access to documents not available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

Indicators to monitor the nature and prevalence of violence

Indicators that focus on the nature and prevalence of violence measure what it consists of, and how often it occurs:

- **Indicators related to the nature of violence:** nature of violent incidents (verbal, physical, sexual, online); location of violent incidents (in private, in the classroom, in public spaces, around school, online); profile of perpetrators (peers, adults); profile of victims (age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression); bias motivation (use of specific terms against victims, such as homophobic or transphobic insults).
- **Indicators related to the prevalence of violence:** number or percentage of students reporting being victims of violence; number or percentage of students reporting perpetrators of violence; number or percentage of students reporting witnessing violence; frequency of violent incidents.

Indicators to monitor the impact of violence

Indicators that focus on the impact of violence measure mostly negative impacts of violence on the education and health of those who are targeted by violence, and in some cases on perpetrators and bystanders:

- **Indicators related to the impact of violence on education:** levels of academic achievement; levels of academic motivation; targets' and bystanders' feeling of safety; number of school days missed; number or percentage of students who dropped out of school (victims, perpetrators or witnesses); number or percentage of students who were excluded from school (victims, perpetrators or witnesses).
- **Indicators related to the impact of violence on health:** levels of self-confidence; victims' image towards others; use of substances; reports of self-harm ideation and attempts; reports of suicide ideation and attempts.

Indicators to monitor or evaluate education sector responses

Indicators that focus on the education sector's responses to violence, either **monitor** responses, i.e. find out whether they exist, and coverage (how many people are reached); or **evaluate** their effectiveness (outcomes) and impact, i.e. find out whether responses have the intended effects. They include:

- **Indicators related to policies:** existence of laws, policies or codes of conduct at the national, local or school level; student, teacher and parent awareness of these policies.
- **Indicators related to reporting mechanisms:** existence of mechanisms to report violence; student, teacher and parent awareness of these mechanisms; frequency of use.

- **Indicators related to curricula:** representation of sexual and gender diversity in curriculum materials; reported discussion of sexual and gender diversity in classroom discussions.
- **Indicators related to training for staff:** reported training received on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues; reported training received on homophobic and transphobic violence.
- **Indicators related to attitudes and beliefs:** students, teacher or parents' attitudes and beliefs towards violence (whether it is legitimate or normal for example).

Overall conclusions on existing indicators

- The **majority of indicators** that were identified and reviewed for this report **monitor violence in general.**
- **Very few indicators monitor school-related gender-based violence in particular**. The vast majority of indicators **focus only on sexual violence targeting girls, perpetrated either by male students or teachers**. This is a narrow definition of school-related gender-based violence, which is now evolving to include violence based on gender norms and stereotypes in general, and not targeting girls only. Disaggregation by sex, of data collected through indicators on school-related violence in general, should be the rule as it can be helpful to understand school-related gender-based violence. However, there should be specific indicators that monitor the prevalence and nature of this form of violence, its impacts and education sector responses to school-related gender-based violence.
- The review identified a **significant number of indicators on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (120 indicators).**

Characteristics of indicators on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression

Out of the 120 indicators identified by this review, almost all of them are used by NGOs and universities, in a limited number of countries. Only a few governments have started to collect data on homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions. Efforts are still recent and monitoring is not systematic yet in most of those countries.

Data for the indicators used by NGOs is often collected through surveys conducted outside of schools. For example, this may be done through online surveys among students who self-identify as LGBTI, or among adults who also self-identify as LGBTI and report about their experience of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression while they were in school, sometimes several years prior to their response.

This is linked to the various legal and ethical constraints already discussed in this report when asking students questions about the prevalence, nature and impacts of violence and homophobic and transphobic violence in particular. In many countries, the law prevents researchers from asking young people under the age of consent questions about their sexual orientation and gender identity, and therefore violence based on those grounds, particularly in the school context. In some countries, the criminalization of LGBTI people's characteristics, identities or behaviours also makes this type of research impossible.

For obvious reasons of anonymity and confidentiality, information linked to students' sexual orientation or gender identity/expression may not be collected through surveys organized or conducted by educational authorities, unless trusted and efficient measures are in place to guarantee anonymity. When data collection on homophobic and transphobic violence is carried out in educational institutions, this is usually done through anonymous self-administered questionnaires. In other cases students are asked to report about the experience of students in general in their school in relation to homophobic and transphobic violence, and not on their own experience.

Taken together, these characteristics mean that the **data currently available on violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression often offer a limited understanding of its nature, prevalence and impacts.**

Tables 2 and 3 provide selected examples of indicators measuring school-related violence, and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. They provide a starting point for action to be taken by the education sector in order to start monitoring violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity in educational institutions, or to strengthen what has already been done. Educational authorities have the responsibility to ensure that indicators used to collect data on violence in schools in general somehow also capture data on homophobic and transphobic violence. Indicators currently used in some countries to collect data specifically on homophobic and transphobic violence, in particular by NGOs, cannot always be used by educational authorities themselves because of the above-mentioned constraints. In some contexts hostile to sexual and gender diversity, they cannot even be used by external stakeholders because the terminology is not acceptable. Efforts are therefore needed to develop internationally recognized indicators that can be used by a range of stakeholders in the education sector, and can be adapted to different contexts.

TABLE 2 • SELECTED EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS ON SCHOOL-RELATED VIOLENCE

Indicator	Institution(s) using the indicator & where (global, regional and/or country level)
Prevalence and nature of violence	
Percentage of students who have been victims of any form of violence in schools (e.g. bullying, corporal punishment or abuse by teachers)	Plan International/India
Percentage of students reporting cyber bullying/Percentage of students who were cyber-bullied in the previous six months	Microsoft study in 25 countries/Hong Kong SAR
Number of non-fatal victimizations against students ages 12–18 and rate of victimizations per 1,000 students	National Center for Education Statistics, Bureau of Justice Statistics/US
Percentage of public school students in Grades 9–12 who reported having been in a physical fight at least once during the previous 12 months	Ministry of Education/Argentina
Percentage of students abused by their schoolmates/adults in the school	Ministry of Education/Argentina
Percentage of students who are victims of harassment/intimidation/ physical violence nationwide	Vital Voices Association/Plan International/Ombudsman of the Republic of Bolivia
Percentage of students who report the following abuse: 'I have been insulted', 'I have been ignored', 'I have been called offensive nicknames', 'I have been rejected', 'I have been spoken badly of', 'Things of mine were hidden', 'Things of mine were stolen'	Secretariat of Public Education, National Institute of Public Health/Mexico
Percentage of students who feel safe at school	Australian Council for Educational Research/Australia
Impacts of violence	
Number of school-associated violent deaths, homicides and suicides of youth aged 5–18	National Center for Education Statistics, Bureau of Justice Statistics/US
Percentage of students who, during the past 30 days, did not go to school because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on the way to or from school	WHO GSHS/Global
Proportion of children who skipped school because they were afraid/felt unsafe to go to school due to violence in the last 12 months	UNICEF/Asia Pacific region
Percentage of students aged 12–18 who reported avoiding school activities or one or more places in school because of fear of attack or harm during the school year	National Center for Education Statistics, Bureau of Justice Statistics/US
Education sector responses	
Percentage of students who, during this school year, were taught in any of the classes about how to avoid being bullied	WHO GSHS/Global

Indicator	Institution(s) using the indicator & where (global, regional and/or country level)
Proportion of children who know what to do/who to turn to in case of victimization	UNICEF/Unknown
Percentage of schools with protective school policies in place	UNICEF/Unknown
Proportion of students who disagree with the statement that calling students names doesn't hurt them	USAID/Ghana, Malawi
Proportion of teachers who had knowledge of and received training on the Teachers' Code of Conduct	USAID/Ghana, Malawi
Proportion of teachers who believe students have the right not to be hurt or mistreated	USAID/Ghana, Malawi
Proportion of schools that have a Code of Conduct addressing all acts of school-related gender-based violence	USAID/Global
Proportion of teachers who believe they have the responsibility to act as a protector of children's rights	USAID/Ghana, Malawi
Percentage of schools with system of reporting, referral and monitoring on 'violence against children' cases established and functional	Plan International/Philippines, Sri Lanka
Percentage of schools with protective school policies in place	UNICEF / Asia Pacific region
Existence of national child protection policy in educational institutions	UNICEF/Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand
Existence of national education 'step-by-step' response procedures for child protection infringements in place	Governments/Papua New Guinea, Philippines

TABLE 3 • SELECTED EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS ON VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/ EXPRESSION

Indicator	Institution(s) using the indicator & where (global, regional and/or country level)
Prevalence and nature of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression	
Percentage of respondents who felt discriminated against by school or university personnel in the last 12 months because of being LGBT	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights/EU
Percentage of respondents who experienced negative comments or conduct at school because of being LGBT	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights/EU
Percentage of respondents who heard or saw negative comments or conduct because a schoolmate/peer was perceived as being LGBT	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights/EU
Number of times a student appeared to be rejected from school because s/he was perceived as being homosexual	Secretaría de Educación del Distrito/ Bogotá, Colombia
Percentage of children who were subjected to discrimination based on their sexual orientation and gender identity in the school or educational environment	National Human Rights Commission/ Mongolia
Percentage of children who have ever been assaulted at school or in an educational environment because of their LGBT status	National Human Rights Commission/ Mongolia
Percentage of respondents who experienced discrimination based on their LGBT status in school	UNDP and Williams Institute/Nepal
Percentage of students having been in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey/and sexual identity	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/US
Frequency that LGBT students experienced verbal harassment in the past school year	GLSEN/USA

Indicator	Institution(s) using the indicator & where (global, regional and/or country level)
Frequency that LGBT students experienced physical harassment in the past school year	GLSEN/USA
Frequency that LGBT students experienced physical assault in the past school year	GLSEN/ USA
Impacts	
Percentage of LGBT students who feel unsafe at school because of actual or perceived personal characteristics	GLSEN/USA
Percentage of LGBT students who avoid spaces at school because they feel unsafe or uncomfortable	GLSEN/USA
Percentage of LGBT students who avoid school activities because they feel unsafe or uncomfortable	GLSEN/USA
Education sector responses	
[Percentage of schools with] Classes in which positive representations of LGBT-related topics are taught	GLSEN/USA
LGBT students' perceptions of the effectiveness of staff responses to incidents of harassment and assault	GLSEN/USA
Percentage of LGBT students taught LGBT-related topics in any classroom curriculum	GLSEN/USA
LGBT students' reports on the availability of LGBT-related curricular resources	GLSEN/USA
Frequency that LGBT students' family members intervened in incidents of harassment and assault	GLSEN/USA

These indicators—already in use—show that the education sector is able to meaningfully monitor violence in different socio-cultural and legal contexts. On the basis of these indicators, ministries of education, multilateral organizations and civil society should work towards developing a robust framework to monitor violence in educational institutions, including gender-based violence and including homophobic and transphobic violence.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Section 4 uses the findings of this report to present recommendations to the education sector. The seven recommendations focus on strategic and practical actions to strengthen future responses to homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings.

The following recommendations focus on strategic and practical actions to develop and strengthen effective and comprehensive education sector responses to homophobic and transphobic violence. They take into consideration the specificities of different legal and socio-cultural contexts in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.

4.1. Systematic monitoring of violence

RECOMMENDATION 1: THE EDUCATION SECTOR SHOULD MONITOR SYSTEMATICALLY THE PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS, INCLUDING VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION.

Specifically:

- Use existing routine data collection mechanisms that already include questions on the school environment and safety, for example, school-based surveys managed by the education sector, reporting mechanisms for incidents of violence, regional and international surveys such as the Global School-based Student Health Survey and the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children cross-national survey.
- Ensure that these mechanisms include appropriate and sensitive indicators and questions related to homophobic and transphobic violence and that data are disaggregated by age, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression to identify the prevalence and nature of violence that is experienced by different groups of LGBTI students.
- Adapt terminology to the context, particularly in countries where same-sex relationships are illegal.
- Review relevant and reliable data collected through specific studies conducted by NGOs and research institutions

4.2. Comprehensive national and school-level policies

RECOMMENDATION 2: THE EDUCATION SECTOR SHOULD ESTABLISH COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL AND SCHOOL POLICIES TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS, INCLUDING VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION.

Specifically:

- Ensure that policies are evidence-based and refer explicitly to students who are particularly at risk of violence, including students whose sexual orientation and gender identity/expression is perceived as different from the 'norm'.
- Integrate issues relating to homophobic and transphobic violence into education sector policies on violence, bullying, safe schools, inclusive education and anti-discrimination where such policies exist.
- Use culturally-appropriate terminology in policies in countries where sexual and gender diversity are sensitive issues, for example, refer to 'students whose expression does not conform to gender norms or stereotypes' rather than LGBTI students.
- Involve students, particularly those who are LGBTI, in the development of policies, including through collaboration with civil society organizations that represent LGBTI people and students or work on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

4.3. Inclusive curricula and learning materials

RECOMMENDATION 3: ENSURE THE CURRICULA AND LEARNING MATERIALS ARE INCLUSIVE.

Specifically

- Provide all students with access to non-judgmental and accurate information on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
- Include education about discrimination and respect for all in the curriculum at all levels of the education system, starting at an early age.
- Ensure that curricula and learning materials are evidence-based and inclusive with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, including representation in content and illustrations, and remove or avoid inaccurate and stigmatising content in curricula and learning materials. In contexts where it is difficult to mention sexual and gender diversity in curricula and learning materials, it is still possible to address issues such as definitions of masculinity and femininity, gender roles and stereotypes and how these can be harmful to individuals and society.
- Identify and use appropriate entry points in curricula to help students understand issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity in a way that is age-appropriate and culturally sensitive, for example, through citizenship, human rights or civics, history and politics, language, literature and art, and health, personal and sexuality education.

4.4. Support for training and other school staff

RECOMMENDATION 4: PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION AND SCHOOL STAFF TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS, INCLUDING VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION.

Specifically

- Provide teachers with pre-service and in-service training to deliver content related to sexual orientation and gender identity in the curriculum, ideally through a participatory approach to training that enables teachers to reflect on their values, attitudes, language and behaviours. In contexts where it is difficult to mention sexual and gender diversity, teacher training may focus on issues such as definitions of masculinity and femininity, gender roles and stereotypes and how these can be harmful to individuals and society.
- Ensure that teachers, other school and educational staff receive training to enable them to respond to violence, particularly bullying, in educational settings. This involves having the knowledge, attitudes and skills to: identify incidents of violence, including homophobic and transphobic violence, and immediately stop them; report incidents to the relevant authorities using existing mechanisms and procedures; and listen to students who are victims of homophobic and transphobic violence or witnessing it and provide them with support, either directly or by referring them to the relevant school staff or external institutions.

4.5. Safe, inclusive and supportive school environments

RECOMMENDATION 5: ENSURE SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE FULLY INCLUSIVE AND PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THOSE STUDENTS AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE, INCLUDING VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION, AS WELL AS FAMILIES.

Specifically

- Communicate school policies related to safety and inclusion to the whole school and ensure that they are monitored by school management.
- Put in place effective mechanisms and procedures to report any incident of violence; these should be available in schools and, as appropriate, outside of schools, for example, hotlines or internet-based reporting mechanisms that protect privacy and confidentiality.
- Ensure that reporting mechanisms can document incidents of violence that are based on sexual orientation and gender identity in a culturally-sensitive way, so that these are properly reported.
- Introduce or amend regulations that promote inclusiveness for transgender students, for example, respect for transgender students' preferred names, clothing and appearance choices, processes to safeguard the privacy of students who transition while in schools, and the confidentiality of students' intersex status.
- Ensure that students affected by violence can report incidents in confidence, without having to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity against their will and without feeling judged.
- Make available appropriate support or referral for support from trained staff for students affected by homophobic and transphobic violence, including those who are targets of violence, bystanders and families.

- Ensure that support is also available to the perpetrators of homophobic and transphobic violence, so that they understand the reasons for their attitudes and behaviours and can change them.
- Encourage peer support networks among students.

4.6. Information campaigns and partnerships with civil society

RECOMMENDATION 6: PROVIDE ACCESS TO NON-JUDGMENTAL AND ACCURATE INFORMATION ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/ EXPRESSION IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS, THROUGH INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE WIDER SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

Specifically

- Ensure that educational settings offer accurate, age-appropriate and evidence-based information on sexual and gender diversity through, for instance, information campaigns including posters, leaflets and films. These campaigns can often complement the inclusion of relevant information in the formal curriculum.
- Encourage the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders in the design, implementation and evaluation of activities that prevent and address violence, including homophobic and transphobic violence:
  - parents and parent associations, teachers' unions, student organizations.
  - civil society organizations that offer evidence-based expertise and are ready to work with the education sector to address homophobic and transphobic violence, including NGOs that represent LGBTI people; youth NGOs; and NGOs working on human rights, sexual and reproductive health, or gender. In some countries these organizations have already gained expertise in the response to school-related violence, including homophobic and transphobic violence.
- Establish partnerships with other sectors that play a role in preventing and addressing violence in schools, for example, health and social services.

4.7. Evaluation of education sector responses to violence

RECOMMENDATION 7: THE EDUCATION SECTOR SHOULD EVALUATE THE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF ITS RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE, INCLUDING VIOLENCE BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION.

Specifically

- Ensure that all programmes and interventions are evaluated regularly to assess whether or not they are working.
- Evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of education sector responses to violence including the extent to which the response is comprehensive. This should include, for example, evaluating the way in which programmes are delivered, the effectiveness of training and delivery of the curriculum, the extent to which mechanisms are being used, the cost

effectiveness of interventions, and their impact on prevention of and responses to violence in schools.

- In countries where the education sector response has been limited, an initial assessment of the situation, priority needs and opportunities to implement the elements of a comprehensive response can be conducted. This also provides a baseline against which to monitor the progress and impact of the response.

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No country can achieve inclusive and equitable quality education if its own students are discriminated against or experience violence based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity - a type of violence often referred to as homophobic and transphobic violence and which is found prevalent in all educational settings in many countries.

This report summarises the main findings of a global review - providing the first ever overview of the most up-to-date data on the nature, scope and impact of, as well as current actions to address, homophobic and transphobic violence in educational settings worldwide. It also provides education sector stakeholders with a framework for planning and implementing effective responses as part of wider efforts to prevent and address violence in schools.

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