International Conference

Learn W/out Fear
Looking at Violence from the Gender Perspective

Hamburg, 12 - 14 November 2008

Plan International

Plan is an international child rights organization working with and for children in 66 countries worldwide. We partner with children, their families, communities, organizations and local governments to bring about positive change for girls and boys. Listening to what girls and boys have to say about their rights, needs and concerns is key to this approach.

Global learning as well as advocacy are important areas of work for the organization. Plan focuses especially on the linkage between grassroots development work and high-level policy. Striving for gender equality is part of its program strategy.

Violence in Schools

The 2006 UN world report on Violence against Children has shown the multiple dimensions of violence in schools and its impact on the learning environment and social development of girls and boys. Children and adolescents are affected by violence in schools at different levels both as victims and as perpetrators.

Violence can be categorized as: physical, verbal, sexual, psychological and emotional. Most acts of violence are a combination of two or more of these forms. The gender dimension is relevant to all of them. Violence is often the result of structural factors in society such as social and economic inequalities and discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, social class or other categories of diversity. At the same time, structural violence is often not obvious. Unequal gender relations as a common structural framework for social interaction can encourage violent behaviour.

As violence is also the expression of underlying conflicts, it is important to focus on different conflict resolutions to prevent violence in schools.

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1 World Report on Violence against Children, United Nations - [http://www.violencestudy.org/a553](http://www.violencestudy.org/a553)

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The Gender Perspective

Whereas gender relations are an important aspect of violence in schools, the gender dimension of violence in itself is usually not the centre of attention. Studies seldom differentiate sufficiently between girls and boys and their role as both victims and actors or the forms of violence they experience and how they deal with it. Furthermore, the variety within each gender group has to be taken into account. Consideration of the gender dimension of violence contributes to the development of appropriate and sustainable means to prevent and reduce violence in schools.²

Looking at violence from the gender perspective therefore needs to consider how girls and boys are affected differently and to question simultaneously the differences within the groups of girls and boys: What are their specific roles? What types of roles within violent settings do we see? How can the youth participate in stopping violence in schools?

What influence do teachers and the school environment have in perpetuating gender violence? What role can they play in addressing it? How important are family, social, cultural and political settings?

The International Conference

This conference is part of Plan’s worldwide campaign ‘Learn Without Fear’ which envisions a world where children can go to school in safety and expect a quality learning experience. The conference will provide a forum for international experts to link research results with practical experiences. The aim is to compile a set of gender-sensitive recommendations in order to support advocacy work for safe and child-friendly schools worldwide. The conference addresses representatives from NGOs, international institutions, schools and universities.

The programme has been developed in association with the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex.

Venue

Patriotische Gesellschaft
Trostbrücke 4-6
20457 Hamburg
Germany

Webpage

You find more information on the conference at www.learnwithoutfear.de

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² Dunne, Humphreys and Leach have demonstrated “it is important that broad dissemination of the analysis of gender relations and their complexity as well as further research [...] be undertaken.” Gender and Violence in Schools’, www.sussex.ac.uk/education/documents/gender.doc

**Wednesday, 12 November 2008, 12:00-7:30pm**

- **Words of welcome**
  - Marianne M. Raven, Executive Director, Plan

- **How can the results of the UN Study ‘Violence against children’ and their gender implications be used for advocacy work?**
  - Prof Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, Independent Expert on the UN study “Violence against Children”

- **Looking at violence in schools from the gender perspective**
  - Prof Fiona Leach, Professor of International Education, University of Sussex

- **Plan’s advocacy work with children and adolescents from the gender perspective**
  - Ann-Kristin Vervik, Plan International

- **The international youth project ‘Learn Without Fear’**
  - International youth representatives and Institute for the Constructive Management of Conflict and for Mediation (ikm)

- **Poster Session**
  - Presentation of research work, projects and campaigns

**Thursday, 13 November 2008, 9:00 am-8:00pm**

- **Advocacy work on ‘stopping violence against girls in school’**
  - Victorine Kemonou Djitrinou, International Education Advocacy and Campaign Coordinator, Action Aid

- **How to lobby states to end corporal punishment of girls and boys**
  - Peter Newell, Coordinator, Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children

- **World café on good practice**
  - a) Safe Schools Project in Ghana, Prof Beatrice Okyere
  - b) Work with violent school boys, Günter Haverkamp
  - c) Non violent communication for teachers, Nada Ignjatovic Savic
  - d) Innovative school concept from Hamburg (tbc)

- **Working groups**
  - Based on a concept paper, four working groups will compile **gender-sensitive recommendations** for the prevention and intervention of violence in schools.
  - Working groups 1+2: In school interventions
  - Working groups 3+4: Out of school interventions

**Friday, 14 November 2008, 9:00am-1:00pm**

- **Teachers as positive role models against gender-based violence in schools**
  - Dr Sara Humphreys, Visiting Lecturer, Sussex School of Education, University of Sussex

- **Working groups continued: Finishing the recommendations**

- **Panel discussion**
  - Presentation of the results of the working groups

- **Handing over of the recommendations**
  - Gaston De la Haye, Senior Consultant, Education International and Board Member of the Global Campaign for Education (tbc)
  - NN, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (tbc)
  - Tom Miller, CEO Plan

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