Scaling a violence prevention programme in Schools through Community Activists: Early Lessons

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Background

Children commonly experience violence within schools from both staff and peers.

COVID-19 lockdowns and school closures have increased VAC.

Schools provide an entry point to prevent VAC.
A collection of ideas and tools that help prevent VAC in schools.

School-led implementation over a period of 18 months along 6 steps.

Evidence-based methodology: 42% reduction in physical violence from staff to learners.

Raising Voices has implemented using different approaches – directly and through partner organizations.
Scaling GST through a cascade model involving community-based activists
De-centralized model reaching 1000 schools

Original RCT
Direct implementation

Raising Voices

42 schools

Current model
Decentralised implementation

Raising Voices

43 RRPs

1000 schools

Training & on-going support

RRPs use Good Schools Mobile app to record assessment data in schools
Embedded nested research within this scale-up

Overall aim: To determine the feasibility & acceptability of this cascade model & whether it leads to change in schools

Today we will explore early markers of implementation & RRP's perceptions of their role

Implementation data (all 1000 schools) → Quantitative data from teachers (96 schools) → Qualitative data from Teacher Protagonists (20 schools) → Qualitative data from RRP's (20, supporting TP schools)
Insights on implementation progress using data collected by Raising Voices
Implementation Status when schools reopened in Feb 2022

Data from 992 schools

Schools at different levels of implementation

Schools document:

- Committee formation & meetings
- Developing an action plan
- GST training & booklet discussions
- Multiple check-ins with RRPs
We are in 28 districts across Uganda
What did teachers say about their exposure to GST?

Promising GST awareness
Over 90% of the teachers said:
- their school was taking part in the program
- they had seen a poster/booklet from the program
- their school had a Good Schools teachers committee
- they had time/motivation to focus on Good Schools activities

Quantitative data from 1,121 teachers from 96 schools across Uganda
Early Experiences of RRPss

Qualitative data from 20 RRPss supporting schools across Uganda
RRPs perceived themselves as...

Activists within communities around schools

“We are part of the place so that is very important, we are residents so we interface with some of these people, they know us.” ~Male RRP, Central Uganda

Pillars to GST implementation & Raising Voices’ VAC prevention ambassadors

RRPs demonstrate good GST understanding: whole-school approach to improve school learning environments, amplify student voices & prevent VAC
Link between Raising Voices and schools.

“... we are intermediators, where Raising Voices is not there, we are there” ~ Male RRP, Central Uganda
Driven by Personal Transformation and Activism

Belief in program due to personal transformation & previous experience with GST

Care about VAC prevention & want to spread GST impact in their communities

Inspired to communicate with humility

“...personally...should I say a saved person, should I say a reformed person? - I was one of the victims of issues of corporal punishments, issues of handling children harshly... But when I was taken through the trainings of a Good School... I realized that the approaches I was using were very wrong. I started myself changing at an individual level, at home... and when they told me there is this opportunity I said as long as it's working with children,”

~ Female RRP, Eastern Uganda
Challenges with scaling

- Teacher transfers & dropouts during school closures
  Losing gains in schools & re-starting implementation
- Perception of RRP as people gaining financially from the program
- Logistical challenges

“...rural schools, there is always time for you...urban schools are not very easy so we need to be conscious about them.” ~ Female RRP, Central Uganda

Having schools which are too far from one another
Lessons and Implications

Invest time in tailored capacity strengthening for RRPs

Far & remote schools need special attention

Support to schools needs to be contextualised & flexible

RRPs are embedded in communities & bring enthusiasm for VAC prevention that goes beyond schools
Many questions around how to take successful violence prevention interventions to scale

RRP model has the reach & early data suggest the potential for high-impact

Why? RRPCs are change agents, who describe personal transformative processes & are driven by personal activism for VAC prevention

These are early data & we will continue studying it, funding permitted, to answer our overall aim