

PLAN ETHIOPIA



Desk Review/Case Assessment on the Present Situation of Corporal Punishment, Sexual Abuses and Bullying in Schools in Ethiopia

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Acronyms

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ANPPCAN	Association for Nation-wide Action for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect
CBO	Community based Organizations
EFA	Education for All
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PTA	Parent –Teacher Association
TTC	Teacher Training College
UN CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WEO	Woreda education Office

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the situation of corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying in Ethiopia. The research method employed was a Meta analysis in which research findings in the area were reviewed to understand the types, prevalence, perpetrators, consequences and trends of child right violence in schools. Cases from four Plan project areas (namely Addis Ababa, Shebedino, Jimma and Lalibela) were also assessed and included where appropriate. The legal context in the country was used as a basis for the analysis of the findings. Accordingly, findings showed that the international conventions are parts of the laws of the land; the FDRE Constitution (1995) gives a ground to the protection of the Rights of the Child; and the Ministry of Education provided a guideline on how to manage misbehavior in schools which prohibits any form of right violence. However, indicators of prevalence of punishment, sexual abuse and bullying showed consistency with global and local findings. Besides, the cases collected indicated that all cases are not reported to police or any other legal institution for fear of further attack and stigmatization. As to the perpetrators, teachers, head teachers, guards, and students themselves seem involved in violating the rights of school children. Some teachers ask as how to maintain discipline without using punishment which could a question of awareness on right issues and pedagogical methods of correcting misbehavior. Though there is scarcity of studies in the area of bullying, the available ones and the cases indicate that bullying is used to create a precondition to sexual abuse; the offenders are males and the victims are females. Hence, providing legal materials to schools, integrating activities of different stakeholders, organizing training sessions, institutionalizing guidance and counseling service in schools, and conducting longitudinal studies to specify the culture specific aspects of violence, etc are recommended as areas of future action.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The World community is making series of commitments to protect from maltreatment and to improve the situation of human beings, with special attention to children and women. The UN Universal Declarations of Human Rights (adopted by the UN Assembly in 1948) gives "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations". For example, Article 5 of this declaration states, "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". In the same declaration the right to education is also emphasized (Article 26).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (entered into force as of 2 September 1990 by 193 state parties) states the obligations to take appropriate measures to ensure child protection against all forms of discrimination, torture, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment (Articles 2 and 37). Furthermore, Article 19 prohibits all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation (including sexual abuse). The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (entered into force 29 November 1999) too requires state parties to take measures to ensure child safety and protection in their territory, which could include harmonizing legislative, administrative, social and educational issues (See specifically Articles 11 and 16).

Thus, the four pillars of the Rights of the Child (as stipulated in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child) are:

- a) *The Best Interest of the Child* (Article 3 of the CRC) – all actions or decisions concerning the child shall consider the best interest of the child.
- b) *Non-discrimination* (Article 2 of the CRC) – All children should be treated equal. Children need to be provided with equal opportunities without any discrimination irrespective of color, language, ethnicity, race, sex, political /religious affiliations, property, disability, birth or other status.
- c) *Participation* (Article 12, 13 of the CRC) – The child has the right to participate and express its opinions in issues that concerns him/her.
- d) *Survival and Development* (Article 6 of the CRC) - The child has basic rights for survival and development. The child has the right to get basic needs fulfilled and to be protected from and dangers and abuses. The child has generally the right to get services that are necessary for its physical, mental, emotional and social development.

Among the basic rights of children is the right to education aimed at the development of human capital - the advancement of overall child development (*including the implementation of child rights principles*), eliminating harmful traditional practices, developing solutions to problems and challenging situations, maximizing earnings, distributing wealth, participation and empowerment, etc. As a result, declarations on **Education For All** (EFA) were made in 1961 (the Addis Ababa Conference), 1990 (at Jomtien, Thailand), and 2000 (at Dakar, Senegal). UNESCO and UNICEF (2005) publication on measuring exclusion from primary education, however, indicated that, “in a world that promises universal primary education”, about 115 million primary school age children are not yet in schools.

In Ethiopia, one of the signatories of the UN CRC and The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, primary education Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) has reached 95.6% (100.5% for males and 90.5% for females) in 2007/08 academic year. The net enrolment rate in the same year, however, was still at 83.4% (86.0% for males and 80.7% for females) indicating that about 17% of the primary school children are not schooled (MoE, 2009).

Thus, there is still a long way to go to achieve UPE in the country for it is not only a function of expansion but also improvements in quality, equity, relevance and completion rates. Students should demonstrate the realization of the relevant minimum level of competencies expected at each level, disparities in access should be abolished, and dropout and repetition rates should be reduced to acceptable levels.

Learning requires emotional stability and attention; and if a child is threaded in or around the school s/he may not feel at ease to come to school again. Besides, there is a growing consensus on the influence of childhood experience on adult personality. Thus, safety in schools is a precondition to both quality and efficiency of school performances.

This document, therefore, focuses on three basic safety issues in schools. These are Corporal Punishment, Sexual Abuse and Bullying in schools identified as integral elements of the global campaign "***Learn without fear***" by Plan International.

1.2. Objectives of the document

The general objective of the assessment is to identify the situation of corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying in schools in the four project areas of Plan Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Lalibela, Shebedino and Jima program units. Thus, it gives due emphasis to the following specific objectivities:

- ❖ examine existing relevant studies to summarize the findings and draw concluding remarks on the current situation of violence against children;
- ❖ identify concrete cases to show the extent and nature of corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying in the schools;
- ❖ analyze available policies and legal issues against corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying in schools; and
- ❖ suggest relevant strategies and actions to improve the situation of school based corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying in the future.

1.3. Methodology employed in developing this document

In preparing this document three basic data sources were used: review of previous research findings and policy/legal documents, and case assessment from schools in the Plan Ethiopia project areas mentioned above.

- (1) Review of research findings (Meta Analysis):** Studies conducted by different individuals and organizations (obtained from the respective offices and/or websites) were reviewed to identify the nature, extent and consequences of the problems under discussion - corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying in

schools. Some of the documents were national surveys and others were conducted in specific areas, mainly in Addis Ababa schools. In reviewing the documents the objectives of the campaign "Learn without fear" and the CRC standards as stipulated in the document were used as governing principles. Furthermore, unless some connection was evident, only school based research results were used for the purpose of this study. The framework used to review the research papers include the following issues – objective of the study, sampling and sample size, data collection and analysis techniques employed, results identified.

- (2) Case assessment:** relevant cases were collected from the schools in the four project areas. Thus, Woreda Education Offices (WEOs), Plan Program Units, Woreda Women's affairs, and NGOs like ANPPCAN Ethiopia were consulted to identify relevant cases. The case identification was done using different approaches. First, relevant Plan Ethiopia staff members (usually education and child protection unit officers) in the four program areas were contacted for discussion on the task. Then, discussions were held with WEOs, school principals, teachers, students, community members and in one case (Hawassa) with relevant woreda police members.

It was realized that in Plan program offices or WEOs no document was available on such cases. Thus, the alternative was to organize discussion sessions with the school principals, teachers, students, class leader students and representatives of the women's affairs offices. It was using the hints from such discussions that the victims were contacted and interviewed systematically.

- (3)** Policy and legal documents were also analyzed to identify gaps in the area and the compatibility of theory with practice.

In interviewing the research participants, the ethical issues considered and procedures used include the following:

- give enough information and explanation to the participants on the objective of the study, the limited use of the information collected, the importance of the study, and the organization conducting the study.
- ask the consent of the individual to give the necessary information voluntarily and the right to refuse otherwise.
- inform the participant about the anonymity and confidentiality of the information provided.

Finally, the data collected through the above methods was analyzed qualitatively vis-à-vis the CRC standards.

1.4. Organization of the report

The organization of the report followed a topical approach as it is used by Plan International (2008) in preparing the document entitled as, "*Learn without fear: The Global Campaign to End Violence in Schools*". Thus, corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying are treated in separate parts. giving due attention to the concept of the issue, research findings in Ethiopia (prevalence of the problem, underlying causes and consequences) and cases collected directly from the schools. Besides, a discussion part is included which deals with analysis of consistency of findings, and identification of trends and potential challenges in promoting the "*Learn without fear*" campaign in Ethiopian schools.

1.5. Limitations

As described above, this document was prepared through a review of research reports and case assessment from schools in the program areas of Plan Ethiopia – Addis Ababa, Lalibela, Shebedino and Jimma. But, though principals and teachers in these schools had some orientation on the rights of the child as stipulated in the CRC document, there were no previously identified relevant cases that made the field work very difficult. Because: (1) given that teachers and principals have some information on CRC, it was not easy to convince them to report on the situation of violence against children in schools; and (2) the victims and the larger community were not ready to disclose information because of fear of stigmatization and retribution. In the validation workshops some participants also mentioned that the reluctance on disclosing cases could be to avoid further questions from the researchers for it is believed that 'yes I know' instigates further questions whereas 'no I don't know' shortens the discussion. Thus, the cases collected from the four areas (Addis Ababa, Jimma, Lalibela and Shebedino) may not be the best ones for public consumption.

2. Domestic legal bases on child protection

As mentioned in the introductory part of this document, Ethiopia is one of the signatories of the UN CRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). These international agreements are already incorporated as integral parts of the Federal Constitution (1995) (Article 9 (4)). Even the interpretation of the fundamental rights and freedoms in the Ethiopian Constitution (1995) is stressed to be in line with the Universal declarations of Human Rights. Article 13(2) states as follows:

“The fundamental rights and freedoms specified in this Chapter shall be interpreted in a manner confronting to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenants on Human Rights and International instruments adopted by Ethiopia.”

Thus, Ethiopia has ratified the CRC and ACRWC means both are the laws of the country and are obligatory. Anyone working with children like school teachers (and the school as an institution) in Ethiopia, therefore, are obliged to perform their activities in accordance with the CRC and ACRWC principles and as adopted in the Ethiopian Constitution. In relations to the intentions of this paper, Article 36 of the Ethiopian Constitution (1995) is worth mentioning. It says every child has the right:

“Not to be subject to exploitative practices, neither to be required nor permitted to perform work which may be hazardous or harmful to his or her education, health or well-being.” Article 36 (1d)

“To be free of corporal punishment or cruel and inhumane treatment in schools and other institutions responsible for the care of children.” Article 36 (1e)

Furthermore, an assessment by Seyoum and Aman (no date) showed that the constitutions of the regional states are not substantially different

from the federal constitution. Thus, it is possible to conclude that corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying on school children are legally prohibited as all harm the education, health and well-being of the child. Besides, the legal frameworks and institutions were established to discharge the legal duties and give protection to the child. These include the following:

Legal frameworks designed:

The main and more relevant to the purpose of the paper are the following:

- (a) The civil Code (1960) – Article 1706 states: “The nature of duress shall be determined having regard to the age, sex and position of the parties concerned.” There is also an indication on the need to reasons of concern. Article 267 (2) says, “To inflict light bodily punishment on the minor for the purpose of ensuring the latter’s education.” In this case, the interpretation of violence depends on the subjective judgment to determine on what is reasonable for the guardian.
- (b) The Federal Family Code: Article 7 states, “Neither a man nor a woman who has not attained the full age of 18 years shall conclude marriage.” This article implies sexual harassment before 18 (on children) is prohibited.
- (c) The Ministry of Education is the responsible organization for the education of children in the country. Thus, it used to frame guidelines on school administration for which the manuals published in 1981, 1998 and 2001 could be taken as examples. The latest one is the one published in 2001 entitled as “ /
" (*"Guideline on educational leadership organization, Community Participation and Finance"*).

In this guideline the rights, obligations and measures to be taken to correct misbehaviors on the part of students (as well as teachers) are included. Some of the details are the following:

Obligations of the teacher include:

- Refrain from any sexual contact with students, be it within or outside the school compound.
- Avoid violence of rights of students – intimidation, giving irrelevant answers to students questions, etc)
- Avoid physical punishment of students.

It also states that appropriate measures will be taken on failures to comply the obligations mentioned in the guideline.

Rights of students include:

- To know the rules and regulations of the school;
- To ask questions;
- To evaluate the teacher; etc

Some of the obligations of students are:

- Attendance (absenteeism with out acceptable reason is not allowed).
- Avoid violating the rights of girls - threatening, rape and any other form of violence.
- Avoid humiliating, scolding and physically attacking teachers.

Failure to fulfill the obligations on the part of the students can be corrected using the following measures as appropriate:

- Allow the offender to learn from his/her experience.
- Inform the parents about the misbehaving of their child.
- Suspend the offender for one or two years, expel totally from the school as appropriate.

- Violating the rights of girls could result in suspending for one year, or total dismissal from school depending on the nature of the violence. (For details see the annex attached herewith (MoE, 2001, pp 44-47)).

From the guideline from the Ministry of Education (2001) punishment, sexual harassment and bullying are prohibited and consequential to the offender. The school community is advised to advise the students, inform parents regarding the misbehavior or suspending from school, but punishment is prohibited.

Institutions established: Ministry of Women's Affairs (Proclamation No. 471/2005), National Children's Commission (Proclamation No. 208/1981), The Police, Public Prosecutor and The Court.

3. Corporal punishment in Ethiopian schools

3.1. The concept of corporal punishment

As societies vary in socio-culture aspects, so do their conceptions to the actions against children. An act termed as abusive and harmful in one society could be viewed as constructive in another society which makes the intention of finding out a universally accepted definition of corporal punishment a futile exercise. Thus, the definitions given below are adapted from the point of view of the CRC standards.

Corporal punishment is a type of physical maltreatment when caregiver's behavior is an act of commission with an aggressive component in involving actual physical contact of non-sexual nature. It is usually done in the name of disciplining the child or to make the child live up to the expectations of cooperativeness, conformity and consistency in behavior (Hoover, 1972). In societies like Ethiopia, where a child is viewed as a private property, it is a means of expressing concern, ensuring care and attention, and helping the child fulfill the requirements for future adult life. No consideration of the possible negative consequences such as trauma.

The forms of corporal punishment also differ, probably depending on the assumption of its assumed "effectiveness" to modify the behavior of the child. The definition adopted by Plan International (2008) gives a list of indicators as how corporal punishment is practiced:

"Corporal punishment is physical force by someone in a position of authority against someone in his or her care with the intention of causing some degree of pain or discomfort. This can take the form of hitting children with a hand, or with a cane, strap or other objects; kicking, shaking or throwing

children; scratching, pinching, biting or pulling hair; forcing them to stay in uncomfortable position; locking or tying them up; burning, scalding or forced ingestion – for example washing mouths out with soap" (Plan, 2008, p.12; SCS and African Child Policy Forum, 2005, p.6).

This is the operational definition adopted in this paper and focuses on three basic components:

1. It is a physical force implemented on the will of the care giver, and not on child's interest.
2. Its immediate consequence is some degree of pain or discomfort on the part of the child; and
3. It can take many forms such as biting with hand, or other object, kicking, pinching or pulling the hair, shaking, etc.

Save the Children Sweden and African Child Policy Forum (2005, p.6) also shared the same conception and forms and urged to abolish it from the home and school settings.

3.2. The situation of corporal punishment in schools

3.2.1. Research Findings:

Save the Children Denmark also conducted a study on violence against girls in Ethiopian primary schools in 2008. The covered the nine regional states and the two city administrations (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa). A total of 2,252 respondents were included from 41 woredas and 132 educational institutions (116 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, and 5 TTCs). The proportion of school children in this study was about 1,268 of which about 22.51% were female students. The others were teachers (# 342), parents (# 324) and key informants (# 318). In relation to corporal punishment, the analysis of the data collected through structured survey, FGDs and interviews disclosed that "schools in

Ethiopia practise various forms of corporal punishment on boys and girls." (p.26). Students and teachers were asked about their perceived prevalence of corporal punishment in schools, and 34% and 25% respectively confirmed its existence in different forms. Furthermore, it was indicated that during the field visit, the team observed the use of corporal punishment in most of the schools. Students were forced to kneel down, and teachers & guards used to have sticks on their hands.

The report showed a sort of controversy in the findings. On one hand, teachers, PTA members and principals tended to deny or played down the existence of corporal punishment in schools. On the other hand, there were indicators about how it is practised in schools which was supported by an expression of doubt as how to maintain discipline in the classrooms without the use of corporal punishment. As a result, the study team showed the practical difficulty of accepting the claim that the prevalence of corporal punishment in schools is declining.

The other study was conducted by Save the Children Sweden (2005) in Addis Ababa, Oromia, Amhara, Tigray and SNNPRS. The sampling was performed combining stratified/purposeful and quota sampling techniques based on sex, age, level of education, status, role, type of community and organization. The sample population included a total of 1,873 children (48% females), and 448 (35% females) teachers, parents, CBO leaders and representatives of relevant organizations. Data was collected using structured interview, FGD, story telling and self-administered questionnaire and the qualitative and quantitative analyses techniques showed the following results:

- Corporal punishment seemed widely used in schools. The document quoted indictors from children's experiences in schools.

"A teacher has beaten me with his belt saying that I had conversation with my friend in the classroom." 14 year - old boy

"Alleged to have talked with my friend, my teacher ordered me come out in front of the class. He knocked my head against the blackboard, kicked me heavily on my leg and I fell down." 13 year-old boy

"One day our teacher said that those who had not done their homework should come out in front. Unfortunately, I hadn't done my homework on that particular day, so I went out. Then the teacher beat me with a stick. In the meantime, he knocked my head against the wall as a result of which my forehead was bruised." 15 year-old girl (p.20)

- Though corporal punishment is prohibited by the UN CRC, the African Charter and the Ethiopian constitution, it is practiced in schools. Children confirmed that kneeling down, hitting the head, pinching, slapping and hitting with stick are the most frequently used forms of corporal punishment. In general, it was indicated that hitting with stick, hitting with plastic tube or electric wire, whipping with belt, slapping, punching, kicking, hitting the head, pinching, kneeling down, tying with rope or electric wire, forced manual work, forced painful physical exercise, and twisting figures with a pencil in between are practiced in schools with varying degree.
- Parents, community leaders and teachers agree on the prevalence of corporal punishment in schools. But, when it comes to the respondent teachers themselves, they refused saying that it is practiced by minority teachers.
- It was found out that certain types of severe punishments such as inhale smoking/burning pepper and denial of food were limited to the home environment. But, children and community leaders also agreed that there are cases where teachers have inflicted serious bodily injuries on children.
- Perpetrators of corporal punishment in schools were found to be teachers, class monitors, boys and guards. However, the results indicated that teachers have reduced the tendency of using corporal

punishment as a means of correcting misbehaviors. On the other hand, the situation with class monitors and guards seemed overlooked. Monitors took revenge on students who report them to teachers for doing things wrong. Guards misuse their responsibility and punish children mercilessly. (See the case on the next part).

- School related causes of physical and humiliating punishment were identified as culture and attitude, lack of awareness about alternative forms of discipline, large class size and problems related to enforcing relevant legislation.
- The study also pointed out that physical punishment is usually associated with unhappiness, humiliation, low self-esteem, sadness, shame, etc. The following instance was quoted as evidence.

"I feel very scared and depressed as the person with whom I live always beat me. I also feel jealous and I always cry when other kids in the neighborhood play and enjoy themselves." 12-year-old girl

- Besides, bodily injury and death, school dropout, lack of interest, and low retention and achievement rates in schools as short term effects. This in turn might have two types of long term effects. One, it might lead to the development of a society with weak emotional and physical aspects. Second, the children are likely to be violent when they grew up as adults.

Daniel and Gobena (1997) conducted a study on child abuse and neglect in 30 elementary schools and selected organizations in Addis Ababa. The total number of sampled respondents (excluding organizations) was 541 (355 grades 5 – 6 students, 181 teachers and 5 victims). Data was collected using questionnaire, structured observation, structured/unstructured interviews, case studies and FGD which was

analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Results indicated that:

- the most commonly used method of correcting misbehavior in Addis Ababa elementary schools was found to be the use of corporal punishment. Both the cases included and the FGD sessions with students yielded that it happened to be at any part of the body.
- the immediate consequences inflicted students experienced were bleeding of the forehead, nasal fractures, swelling of different parts of the body, bruise, simple and compounded fracture s of the hands, etc.
- the perpetrators of corporal punishment were almost all members of the school community –students themselves, classroom monitors, teachers, unit leaders, vice directors, and school guards. It was mentioned that corporal punishment was administered as a response to any type of offence committed by the children.
- It was disclosed that teachers use any instrument that happened to be in the hand in administering corporal punishment. Some of the mentioned ones are sticks, pen or pencil, electric wire, rubber, duster, stinging nettle, elbow and fist.
- as a consequence of corporal punishment inflicted children were found to be emotionally disturbed - less enthusiastic, less confident and anxious. However, the study did not show significant difference in social behavior (such as withdrawal and problems in peer relation) between maltreated and non-maltreated individuals. This was attributed to the pervasive nature of corporal punishment in schools which might happen to almost every body any time at any grade level.

The study on violence in junior and senior schools in Addis Ababa by Dereje and Deresse (1997) too supported the above findings in that physical and snatching properties were the most common types of violence in grades 7 and 8 but bullying and attempted rape in the senior schools. It further uncovered that teachers and principals were among

the perpetrators in schools who punish students for not doing homework, failing to act according to the school regulations or as a consequence of disruptive behaviors.

Ayalew (1996) conducted a study under the title, "School discipline and corporal punishment in Ethiopian schools". The study covered 425 teachers in randomly selected 15 junior and senior secondary schools in Amhara, Oromia, and SNNPR. The data collected through questionnaire depicted the following major findings:

- The five major behavior problems were found to be failure to do homework, cheating during examinations, tardiness, truancy and jumping over fences by forfeiting classes in that given order.
- The majority (42.5%) of the respondent teachers pointed out that corporal punishment was the dominantly used technique to modify misbehaviors.
- Teachers viewed corporal punishment as an expression of concern and a means for good up bringing of the child. And, even majority thought that parents support the use of corporal punishment in the schools.
- Teachers perceived that corporal punishment was administered by teachers, unit leaders, principals and guards. Thus, it was concluded that the international obligations are in place but not supported by clear and strict obligations in the education system.

3.2.2. Cases from schools and documents:

The cases were collected to show the patterns, forms, perpetrators, causes, and consequences on the life of the children. Read the following and share the feelings.

Case C1. Sheb 01

"Some years ago, I was teaching sport and physical education. One day almost half of the students did not come to the field. And, I learned that they were doing homework on another subject which was to be presented on the next period. I went to the classroom and ordered every body to go out to the field. While they were going out I was hitting every child with a stick. Unfortunately, I hit the watch of a student and it was destroyed totally. He cried for it was bought few days ago as an encouragement for his good achievement in education."

(Interviewed school principal in Shebedino)

The reason why the students were in class doing homework on another subject could be for fear of punishment as a result of failure to do it in time. Besides, the unfortunate consequence was not only the breaking of the watch, but also a moral inconvenience – the watch was a gift to motivate the student to study hard and a sign of honor.

Case C2. Sheb 02

"One day a girl in my class came and asked me for permission. I asked her the reason. She told me I am going to be sick by tomorrow. The teacher beaten her saying how do you know you will be sick by tomorrow. She left. Another one came and told me the same. I punished this girl too. Then, another time a third one came and told me the same. I tried to understand what it means and asked my friends. They told me the secrete – it was about menstruation."

(Reported by a school teacher in Shebedino)

In this case, the punishment does have any base- no misbehavior was observed; and (2) the act indicated lack of orientation in developmental psychology (human psychology).

Case C3. Sheb 03

"About three years ago, a physics teacher was teaching grade seven students. The topic was 'First law of motion'. One student, hiding himself from outside, was repeating what the teacher was saying in the classroom. Thus, the teacher caught the student and punched him around his head. Unfortunately, his nose was bleeding and the teacher took him to a nearby clinic where he was told to take him to a bigger hospital for further treatment. The teacher asked for apology to the parents of the child and the parents forgave him saying that it was done to correct the child, not to hurt him.

(Reported by a school teacher in Shebedino)

It was unfortunate that the consequence was beyond the will of the teacher. Had it not been for the wise decision of the parents, the result could have been bad even for the teacher himself.

Case C4. Sheb 04

"I was a principal in primary school. I was supervising whether teachers were in their classrooms or not. I observed that one section from grade one didn't have a teacher at that time. I went in and asked them about the program. They informed me that the teacher didn't come. I wrote some questions on the chalkboard and informed the students that I am going to correct their answers. They started to come in hurry and I put the stick in my armpit. Unfortunately, the tip of the stick pricked the eye of a child coming from backside. His eye was bleeding and I took him to the clinic for treatment. This was unexpected result of not only corporal punishment but also even having stick in ones hand. "

(Reported by a school teacher in Shebedino)

You might have a stick in your hand, with no deliberate intention to punish students. But the stick in hand might have psychological impact on the part of the students because of fear of punching and still it might found its own way and hurt the child like the incident in Case C4.

Case C5. Jim 01 – four males and one female students reported similar stories

"I was lashed by my teacher for two reasons – when I failed to do homework and when I fought with other student in the classroom. As a result, I am very reserved to participate in class activities for I thought he could slash me again."

Interview with five students from around Jimma town aged 11-13 in grades 5-7.

Case C5 shows that punishment interferes with academic matters. Children were punished for other reasons but they decreased their level of participation in the classroom, which might still affect their school achievements and self-confidence.

Case C6. ACPF 01 (Sixth Grade Student)

"When I was in fifth grade, I lost my pencil. When the school director learned that I was not writing, he beat me with a plastic hose. My nose was bleeding and I went to the clinic."

Source: African Child Policy Forum (2006, p.10)

Case 7. ACPF 02 (13 year old student informant)

"In our classroom there was an intelligent girl. Our teacher liked her very much. Our class monitor was not happy with this and was rather jealous, so he notified the school authorities that she was misbehaving in the class. It was, however, found out later that the accusation had no grounds. Seeing that his plan did not work, he waited for her on her way home from school and punched her in her face. As a result, two of her teeth were broken."

Source: African Child Policy Forum (2006,p.10)

Case C6 indicates physical injury as a consequence of physical punishment. The perpetrators (as shown in cases C7, C8 & C9) are not only school teachers/principals but also students and guards. Every one seems following the culture and exercising punishment beyond his or her formal duties and responsibilities and based on personal elements and interests.

Case C8. SCS 01 (15 year old girl)

"My friend and I were talking in class. Our class monitor accused us of improperly conversing and gave our names to the school authorities. We also petitioned against him for falsely accusing us. Anyways, we apologised in front of the school director for fault we did not commit and signed a document that we would not disturb again. Since the class monitor was not happy with our petition, he beats us now and then with no reason.

Source: Save the Children Sweden (2005, p.20)

Case C9. ACPF 02 (13 year old student informant)

"One day, I was a little bit late for school. I was running fast to arrive in time. When I arrived at the gate of our school, I tried to sneak in. But the guard came from nowhere and severely beat me on my back by a big stick. I fell down. I fully recovered only after visiting some doctor." 7th grade student (p.31)

Source: African Child Policy Forum (2006, p.10)

The above cases give practical evidences as to the nature of corporal punishment in Ethiopian schools, the prevalence, forms, cause, consequences and perpetrators. The consistency of the findings in terms of time and global results, possible consequences, factors and implications are discussed in the discussion part of the paper.

4. Sexual abuse in and around schools in Ethiopia

4.1. The concept of sexual abuse

Sexual abuse of children "includes any kind of sexual activity inflicted on children, especially by someone who is responsible for them, or has power or control over them, and who they should be able to trust" (UNVAC, 2006). It is a kind of taking the advantage of a situation (e.g. control over them, grade points or power) and using children for sexual

activities without their consent, readiness or interest. Thus, it is said to be exploitation.

It is usually preceded by other forms of violence and abuse like bullying, corporal punishment, etc to reduce resistance and step up to the next stage - sexual violence. Sexual abuse of children in schools includes violent acts against female integrity, forced sex and sexual harassment including demands for sexual favors in return of grades. The abusive acts could be genital fondling, kissing/fondling, leading to touch perpetrator's genitals, vaginal intercourse, oral-genital contact, simulated intercourse and anal intercourse. Its long-term consequences are usually related to poor self-functioning (or depression, low self-esteem, chronic self-destructiveness) and poor social functioning (interpersonal sensitivity, suspiciousness and hostility).

4.2. The situation of sexual abuse in schools

4.2.1. Research Findings:

To start with, sexual violence is becoming a common problem affecting both boys and girls. Estimates by WHO (2002) showed that worldwide about 150 million girls and 73 million boys under the age of 18 had faced different forms of sexual violence. In Ethiopia the situation is not different from this.

There is a scarcity of local studies targeting sexual violence/abuse in schools. Most of the reviewed documents were found targeting to the happenings on the individual without limiting the scope to the school environment.

One of the studies on violence in school setting (in Ethiopia) was the one conducted by Save the Children Denmark in 2008. (The nature of the study was described in detail in the previous part – corporal punishment in schools). The findings uncovered that incidents of sexual abuse were common in all sample regions and schools. The difference was a matter of degree. The situation of sexual violence in schools was stated as follows:

"The most common experience of girls was that members of school communities used bad or abusive language against them, as a result of which they felt their self-esteem is badly damaged. Other types of sex-related violence directly linked to the school environment include sexual gestures by teachers or male students and physical punishment directed to selected parts of their body by teachers." (p. ix)

The three types of sexual violence focused in this study showed the following results:

- A. Seduction - the act of alluring school girls with the intention of arousing sexual interest in them. In the school setting it was reported that teachers seduce girls by promising them good marks.
- B. Sexual harassment- can range from subtle behavior to explicit demands for sexual activity or even sexual assault. Findings showed that both the school setting and on the way to and from school were considered as places where most sexual harassment of school girls take place. Further elaboration was included in this regard which says:

"Sexual harassment in schools and on the way to and from school was highest in Amhara followed by Oromia and SNNPR, while sexual harassment in the home was highest in SNNPR followed by Oromia and Amhara. The perpetrators include members of the school community i.e. school boys, teachers, administrators, school guards, and counselling officers. Some key informants indicated that acts of sexual harassment by teachers include asking girls for a date, touching their body parts, making persistent remarks on their physical appearance

and body size (body attractiveness, fat, boring), threatening to punish by marks (i.e., some teachers threaten girls with low marks if they refuse for a date). The harassment on the way to and from school is committed by non-school boys, un-married men looking for suitable partners or seeking to satisfy their sexual desires or married men hunting young girls for sex." (p. ix)

C. Rape – Most likely to happen on the way between home and school, and the perpetrators were found to be old men, truck drivers, civil servants, individuals renting rooms in girls' parents' houses, friends/friends of friends, rural merchants who shuttle between towns and villages, police officers and soldiers, and farmers. But, about 2.5% of the respondents also reported having experienced rape within the school setting. (p. ix)

Another study was conducted by African Child Policy Forum (2006) with particular focus on violence against girls in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. It was a survey study on selected young women in the capital cities of these African countries.

The study in Ethiopia included 485 female respondents from various social classes with varying backgrounds. They were between 18-24 years old and questioned to give information on their experiences until they were 18 years old. Results related to sexual violence revealed that 332 of the 485 (68.45%) had been one way or the other sexual abused before they were 18 years old. It further showed that 30% of them were raped before they reached 18 years of age. In this case, constant verbal sexual references to girl's body, touching and fondling a girl's genitals were the three most prevalent forms of violence against girls. Furthermore, the age range that makes girls highly vulnerable for sexual violence was 14 to 17 years of age.

The perpetrators of sexual abuse were reported by forms of violence – incident sexual touching, forced touch genitalia, raped girl, and forced perform oral sex. In the list of perpetrators for the first three forms of violence 'boy of the same age at school' were among the many and the involvement of male teachers was indicated in the last one (oral sex). Thus, though the study didn't necessarily focus on the school setting, the results were found to be indicators of the prevalence of sexual violence against girls in schools.

Worku A and Addisie M (2002) also conducted a study on sexual violence in Debarik secondary school. They assessed the prevalence, outcome and awareness of the female students. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative techniques. In the quantitative technique 216 female students were included, while other 6 students and 10 women from the town were selected for FGD, and head of the policy department was interviewed. Result indicated that 62% had heard sexual violence on young girls; sexual violence was reported by 65.3% of the respondents; the prevalence of preformed and attempted rape were 8.8% and 11.5% respectively. Those raped (8.8%) reported unwanted pregnancy, suicide attempt, vaginal discharge and abortion as consequences. Thus, it was concluded that sexual violence is a major public health problem with high rates of under-reporting.

According to Dereje and Deresse (1997) school teachers and head masters had reported that the magnitude of violence is higher in senior classes rather than in junior classes; and the type of violence ranges from intimidation to attempted rape and injuring sensitive organs, stabbing and even death. Violence is targeted mostly against the physically weak, smaller school children and girls. Actually, mention was made that the way girls dress was considered as a possible cause for the violence against girls in schools.

4.2.2. Cases from schools and documents:

Due to fear of stigmatization, sexual violence incidents are under-reported. The victims or parents are so reluctant to share their experience with anyone else or report to the police. In most cases, the victims might not be satisfied with the actions take by legal institutions. The following cases give some lessons with regard to the prevalence of sexual violence in schools, causes, consequences and perpetrators.

Case S1. Sheb 1 (abduction from around the school)

"On Monday last week (17 Nov.2008) about 8:00 am I was informing students to enter into their classes. In the mean time I realized that two school girls were crying around the gate. I asked them what happened. They could not give me the answer. Another girl came and told me that an elder sister of one of these girls was abducted near the gate of the school. I learned that she was in grade 3 and we informed to the police. The father of the abductor was caught and jailed, but the girl and the abductor are not yet found".

A school principal in Shebedino

In Plan project areas, schools and WEOs were informing that it has been years go since Child Rights (including punishment and sexual harassment) had been respected. Case S1 in the sexual harassment, however, shows that abduction is still a persisting practice in the society. The way between the school and home is not yet safe for the girls in schools.

Case S2. Hawa 1 (Attempted rape)

"It was last year, 2000 E.C. A six year old was registered at grade one. One day at 12:00 pm, she was waiting at the gate of the school for some one, a relative, to come and take her home. The guard observed this and asked her to come into the guard's house until some one appears. She agreed and went in. That time the guard started to rape her- he took her to the bed and took off his and her clothes. At this time, students who were observing the situation from outside reported to the school administration and the guard was caught by police. At the time of the field work for this study, he was in prison waiting for decision from the court".

Hawassa Police Department

From Case S2, it was learnt that guards are also among the perpetrators of sexual harassment and the practice is not age selective.

Case S3. Hawa 2 (performed rape)

"A school girl was raped last time. She is 14 years old and a grade six student. One day while she was going to school with her female classmate, a boy 22 years old came and tried to abduct her using a cart. She shouted and he was caught by police. When she was asked, she reported that he already raped her before some days in the same manner. She did not disclose this to anyone for fear of social stigmatization. It was verified by health professionals and the guy is in prison waiting for the court decision".

Hawassa Police Department

It is discouraging that girls can be raped even in towns, on the way from home to school. The abductor used the advantage of fear of stigmatization on the part of the girl.

Case S4. AA1 (Performed rape)

"I am grade six student, 13 years old female. There was a boy working in a minibus that always follows my footsteps. One day, he came with the minibus while I was playing with my peers around home. He asked two of my friends to bring him drinking water and the other one escaped. He caught me and carried me to the minibus. He took me to the back seat of the minibus, closed the window curtains and locked the door. I shouted, but no one rescued me. So, he tied my hands with a rope and take of my cloths and his. He raped me, actually he used condom. I didn't know what happened at first, but later I realized that though I was clean my cloth was soaked with blood. I washed my cloth and slept. When my parents asked me I told them that I am sick. On the next day, I went to school. And during physical education period I fainted. They asked me and I told them the reality. They took me to the hospital. My father was informed about the situation, and the boy was caught and sentenced for imprisonment.

"The problem is that the abusers are not punished harshly and the society is not taking any measure to stop it.

"By now there is no wound. But, sometimes I have a feeling of pain and white fluid discharges from my genital.

"Besides, I hate all men; I suspect that similar problem would happen anytime by anyone anywhere. I can not walk alone; my brother should take me to school and back home. If feel pain while in class or studying, I remember the boy and drop everything. I wish I have a power for a while. I would sentence him to death or life imprison."

A school girl in primary school

As described above, the towns are also bushes in the sense that (1) the males were comfortable to rape girls, and (2) practically no one rescued the girls from rape even during day time.

Case S5. Lal 1 (Sexual harassment)

"It was last year (2000 E.C). I was in my class and my class mate asked me to introduce me with a person who I didn't know before. We introduced each other. By the next morning he came to around my house with his friends and he told his friends that I am his girl friend. I didn't give any reaction simply I left to school. But, he came to my class and asked me to go out and drink somewhere. I refused. He went out of the school and he was waiting me in a local beer house, near my home. I saw him from distance and I changed my way. Then, he became conscious of that and started to find me. Fortunately, the community was watching the situation and my parents were already informed. Thus, I first met my mother and brother who were coming to me and when saw me he could do nothing.

"We informed the situation to the police. But, police said that it is difficult to take him to the court for you were not hurt. They simply warned him not to repeat the misbehavior."

13 years old school girl

Case S5 is an attempted rape. Surprising enough, the boy was comfortable to do it in public, to take the girl from school by force and policy informed the parents that law becomes active after an offence is exercised. The conception seems wrong for policy should also work to protect the public from crimes.

5. Bullying in Schools

“It is a fundamental democratic right for a child to feel safe in school and to be spared the oppression and repeated, intentional humiliation implied in bullying.” [Olweus, 1999, p 21]

5.1. The concept of bullying

Though the concept of bullying showed a variation in course of time and depends on the socio-cultural aspects of the society, literatures showed that there is a growing consensus on the conception given by Olweus (1997) which says, “A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students” (p.496). This is going to be the working definition of this paper for it is the one adapted by Plan International (Plan, 2008).

The definition implies that (1) bullying constitutes a negative action (2) which is a type of aggression (3) committed repeatedly and deliberately (4) to harm another person. Bully behaviors are hostile behaviors aimed at hurting others instigated in the absence of any provocative situation. Such behaviors could be physical or verbal, that can result social exclusion. Some examples of such bully behaviors could be teasing, physical attack, name-calling, spreading rumor, etc in which the victims may be an individual or group. It is said to be repeated in the sense that the victims are usually out numbered, physically weak or with less potential to recover (Olweus, 1997, Smith and Sharp, 1994).

In schools, the bully at one time could be the victim at another time. Besides, some students may be engaged in bully activities for three

reasons: (1) to gain popularity within the school setting, (2) to revenge others who bullied them before, or (3) to create conducive ground for other types of violence like sexual abuse against girls. In general, therefore, bullying hurts the weak implies (1) a right violence, (2) a power imbalance, and (3) necessitates an intervention program to help the victim develop coping mechanisms.

5.2. The situation of Bullying in Ethiopian Schools

5.2.1. Research findings:

It was unfortunate that no research was conducted in bullying in schools in Ethiopia. The studies by Dereje and Deresse (2004) and Save the Children Denmark (2008) indicated about bullying in schools just as misbehaviors mentioned by the respective respondents. Dereje and Deresse found out that snatching properties, gang robbery, intimidation/bullying, attempted rape, etc as the most prevalent acts of misbehavior in Addis Ababa schools. In this case, bullying and intimidation were used to mean the same and as indicators of misbehavior. It was stressed also that violence victims were physically weak, smaller school children and girls, which goes with the essence of the term bullying given above. Apart from this, no further explanation was added to show its nature and possible measures to reduce its prevalence.

On the other hand, Save the Children Denmark (2008) mentioned some factors that can be used as indicators of bullying behavior under psychological violence. In this study, verbal insult, degrading/humiliating, threatening and name calling, which could be categorized as examples of bullying behavior, were the four major types of psychological abuses identified as the most prevalent ones in Ethiopian schools. Other than these, for now it is possible to conclude

that there is no systematically organized data on bullying in schools that can give lessons from previous experiences.

5.2.2. Cases from schools and documents:

In line with the conception of bullying adapted above the following cases were collected from documents and field works.

Case B1. Sheb 1 (Intimidation)

"It was last year (2007/08) when I was grade 3 student. I was a monitor for the classroom. There was one relatively older boy who used to disturb in the classroom. I told him repeatedly not to disturb, otherwise I am going to report to the homeroom teacher. He replied 'fake you! If you do so I will kick you when you go home' and he tried to do so by the end of the school time. My friends (females) helped me to protect myself and I reported to the school on the next day. He was warned by the school administration not to repeat such things. As a result, he did not threaten me afterwards".

Grade four female student in Shebedino

Case B1 shows that the school administration took an immediate action to correct the misbehavior of the student who tried to threaten the girl. Such responses are good not only to correct misbehaviors at the start but also to build assertiveness on the part of the victim.

Case B2. AA1 (Black mailing)

"On the way to school, a young man was threatening me to become his girl friend and I told him that I do not want to have a boy friend at the time. He sent me some other young men but I resisted. He informed his friends and others that I was his girl friend before. As a result, I was terrorized, I suspect that he will rape me and kill me like the incidents we are watching in the television. One day, he stayed me on the way to school and slapped me. I reported to my mother about the situation and she discussed the case with his father. But, he misinformed his father and my mother saying that he met me quarrelling with my boyfriend and when he advised me not to do so I scolded him. Thus, my mother came and quarreled with me for having a boyfriend. I tried hard to convince her that this is a lie and I lastly succeeded to do so. He is not threatening me this time but still I am afraid of being raped one day".

Interview with 18 years old school girl in Addis Ababa

Case B2 informs that offenders use all possible strategies to achieve their goals. The boy tried to threaten the girl physically and misinformed others for psychological purposes.

Case B3. AA2 (Name calling)

"A person, whom I did not know before, used to call my name when I am on the way to school or back home. He sent me his friends to tell me that he is a very dangerous; I have to accept his request and become his girl friend. I refused. Then, he changed his mind and informed others that I am his girl friend. When I felt that I am threatened, I informed to my grandmother about the condition I am facing on the way to school. She told me she is going to report to the police. But, I do not know what will happen afterwards".

Interview with 13 years old school girl in Addis Ababa

In case B3, the offender is changing strategies (like in case B2) and the girl is not convinced about the effectiveness of informing the case to the policy.

Case B4. Jim1 (Intimidation)

"When I was on my way to school, my school mate (boy) stopped me saying that he loves me. I refused his request. Then after, he told my friends that unless I accept his request he is going to spread acid on me. I am frustrated not to be like Kemilat and I do not really know what to do".

Interview with 14 years old school girl in Jimma area

The common element for bullying in the above cases B2-B4 seems sexual interest. If the girls do not accept the interests of the boys, then they have to tell them their physical harassment plan.

Case B5. Jim 2 (Teasing)

"I asked a question in my English class. May be the question was not up to his expectation, he teased me saying 'are you a donkey or chimpanzee?' which was taken up by my class mates. Now, it is widely used as my nick name by the school community and I feel ashamed. Besides, from that day, I did not participate in classroom activities. "

Interview with 14 years old school girl and boy (both in grade 8) in Jimma area

In case B5, the bullying behavior was initiated by the teacher. The consequence is not only labeling but also decrease in academic activities and achievements.

Case B6. SCD1 (Intimidation and threat of harm)

"A boy asked me to be his girlfriend. I refused the request. Sometime later, the same boy asked me for sexual intercourse. Once again, I refused the request. As a result, the boy took a revenge on me repeatedly by insulting, threatening, and intimidating. Some of the words he used to intimidate and threat me were: I want you for sex and not for marriage, you are excellent for sex, I will spread acid on your body, I will block the way you go home. This negatively affected my education in general and my academic achievement in particular". A school girl

Source: Save the Children Denmark (2008, p.30)

The idea in Case B6 is consistent with what was discussed above. The boy is trying to realize his intention through verbal intimidation supported by an explanation a plan for physical harassment.

6. Discussion

This part deals with analysis of the findings from the review of the documents and case assessments in relation to legal frameworks, the Ethiopian context and findings in other countries.

To begin with, just by Article 9 (4) of the Federal Constitution both the CRC and ACRWC are integral parts of the Ethiopian legal system. Other articles like article 36 also replicate the provisions in the two conventions and basically it seems that no legal constraint to recognize the rights of the child in schools. But, given the capacity we have, detailed guidelines are not available at local levels. Even, as described by Seyoum and Aman, the publication and distribution of the conventions seems overlooked which could be very important to make the documents available at the grassroots level. Besides, language is a determinant factor to implement policy/legal issues. It facilitates the understanding and interpretation of the provisions at the grassroots levels – schools, courts, etc. But, there seems less effort made to make the conventions available in the local languages in Ethiopia which could have been paramount importance in schools for discussion with children and parents and to enforce the implementation of the provisions.

The guide by the MoE gives alternative mechanisms to handle disciplinary problems in schools. The FGD participant teachers, however, were saying, “If corporal punishment is not allowed how we are going to maintain discipline in the classrooms”. This implies problems of capacity in classroom management and lack of awareness on the nature of measures proposed in the MoE document to maintain school discipline.

Despite the adoption the CRC and ACRWC provisions as the laws of the land, studies on the nature of violence in schools in Ethiopia are showing consistent findings over time and with global trends. On one hand, the findings of Dereje and Deresse in 1997 and that of Daniel and Gobena (1997) were confirmed in 2008 - after ten years (Save the Children, 2008). The cases collected from schools too showed that the nature of violence against children in the area is not improved. On the hand, these findings confirmed that the situation in Ethiopia is not different, if not

worse, from the global situation - the basis for the global campaign “**Learn without fear**” (Plan International, 2008).

Prevalence of violence in Ethiopia is astonishingly high but reporting was found to be low. The African Child Policy Forum (2006) showed that reporting on physical violence and sexual abuse in Addis Ababa were found to be about 71% and 16% respectively. The reports were made to friends, brother or sister, mother, father, etc. But, only less than 20% of the victims who reported were satisfied with the outcomes. In the sexual abuse cases, reporting was even consequential for about 36.4% of them reported that they were rather punished after the reporting:

I was raped when I was a small girl by a stranger. My family put a great mental damage to me by telling me that I willingly went to him. (20 year old respondent)

Thus, it can be concluded that: (1) there are gaps in implementing the CRC and ACRWC provisions; (2) unreported cases are so immense and the indicators of prevalence could be much higher than the figures obtained from the studies; and (3) there is awareness problem at the grassroots level with regard to the issues of rights and violence – both children and adults do not seem having the proper awareness on the rights of adults on children.

Though Dereje and Deresse (1997) indicated that bullying behavior of students tend to increase at senior classes, compared to junior ones, the victims of corporal punishment, sexual abuse and bullying could be as young as six years old. There seems a possibility for corporal punishment and bullying to precede sexual abuse. Some teachers, school boys, guards and others might punish girls either as revenge for refusing their request, to prepare them for their hidden objective or just for it is cultured in the schools.

In the sexual harassment cases, it was implied that the offenders in all cases were males and the victims were females. The offenders used intimidation, rumor and physical attack as instruments for the realization of their intentions. Many of the bullying cases mentioned too showed that the intention of the bullies was related to sexual matters and the strategies used to realize the intentions can range from simple verbal intimidation to intended physical attack.

Surprising enough, abusive acts like rape and abduction can be committed during day time and in the towns. Was it really because no one has witnessed the acts? Or was it because the victims volunteered or kept quiet for fear of physical attack? Do the victims have any role in provoking for violence? A participant of the validation workshop indicated his suspicion by saying " ". This is not to say that there is any legitimacy in committing violence against someone but indicates possible perspective for investigation and designing intervention schemes. Those questions and others should be explored to develop a complete picture of the situation. Police also needs evidence of attack, and the strategy does not seem focusing on protection from attack.

In school settings, the abuses perpetrated by teachers, school boys, principals, guards and the larger community has immediate and long term consequences. The immediate consequences could be like physical injury, psychological injury (e.g. guilty feeling), dropout of school, attention diversion (deficit), low school achievement and there by repetition, and even sometimes death (see also Dereje and Deresse, 1997; Daniel and Gobena, 1997; Save the Children Denmark, 2008; Plan International, 2008). These factors extend their influence to the inefficiency of education and delay the realization of UPE as intended. In

the long run also, such a situation strengthens the possibility of replication of these violent acts by the victims when they become adults, which might result in constructing violent society. Because, today's children are tomorrow's adults.

7. Major gaps identified and recommendations

7.1. Major gaps identified

From the review of research findings and assessment of cases, the following gaps were found to be worth mentioning:

1. Legal ground related issues: It is good that the two conventions were made part of the law of the country (FDRE constitution Art. 9(4)) for it serves as a stepping stone to institutionalize accountability in fighting against abuse and guide the practice at the local level. However, it seems incomplete for copies were not made available for immediate consumption; nor was it translated into nationality languages to foster community communication and thereby awareness about violence against children in schools and even in the community. The Ministry of Education document, however, showed the rights, obligations and measures to be taken to correct misbehaviors in schools. Actually, current trends show that the best strategy of disciplining children is working on their strong sides and promote positive behaviors to strengthen their likelihood of being replicated.

Schools, women's affairs offices, police, the court are some of the grassroots institutions supposed to fight against violence. However, the responsibility in schools seems left just to no one. No specific duties are given to the teacher, students themselves, the principal, the guards, etc in fighting against violence in schools and even in reporting cases to

concerned bodies. Failing to report about violence witnessed is not really consequential. Recall the attempted sexual harassment (case S5 happened to Lal1) was of no consequence to the abuser and the dissatisfaction of victims who reported about sexual abuses. Besides, parents are not willing to disclose an act of violence against their children, mainly because of the tendency of undermining the legal consequence but social. As a result, it is assumed that unreported cases are so many and prevalence of violence could be much greater than what is known today.

2. Institutional capacity – contrary to the high prevalence of violence in schools, there were no documented cases in WEOs, Women's affairs Offices, schools and even in Plan Ethiopia Program Units. Besides, parents and the community at large seem giving priority to social perception issues rather than to the well-being of their children and tend to hid violence incidents on their children. Above all, there seems confusion on the part of children and their guardians (including teachers) about the rights of adults on children. Practice shows that a child is considered like a private property and guardians are empowered to shape them, even by force, the way they want them to be. These all are indicators of the level of awareness at the grassroots level on the rights of children and the obligations of all community members to contribute their own share.

3. Prevalence of corporal punishment, sexual abuse, and bullying in schools is high

Child rights violence is a widely spread phenomenon in Ethiopia. It can be said that the school environment is not conducive for the well-being of the children in general and for learning in particular. Corporal punishment and sexual abuse are practiced by principals, teachers, boys and guards. In some cases, it seems that corporal punishment and bullying are preconditions for sexual abuse. Bullying, however, is

commonly a characteristic of school boys, dropout students, etc and occurs when there is a power imbalance either in terms of numbers or physical strength. Besides, it is already indicated that teachers, school boys, guards, principals and other community members can be categorized as abusers for some are direct participants in committing violence acts and others fail to report violence, still other fail to discharge their responsibility. Thus, many individuals are becoming directly or indirectly part of the violent acts against children. Moreover, the prevalence of violence against children showed consistency over time – what was established in the second half of the 1990's was also true in the second half of 2000's.

4. Support to victims of Violence- Violence against children results physical injury, psychological injury or both. But, institutionalized support systems are not available in the education system which is necessary to minimize traumatic effects.

5. Areas of Research- It is good that some research has been done that provided evidences on the situation of violence against children in schools. However, as the local studies focused on the prevalence, immediate consequences and perpetrators of violence against the child two limitations were evident. One, the studies fail short of information on the nature of bullying, its underlying factors and consequences. Two, there was no longitudinal research works in Ethiopia, which made it difficult to forward ideas on the types of long –term consequences and relevant intervention schemes in relation to the Ethiopian cultural and socio-economic contexts.

7.2. Recommendations

1. The scarcity of the convention documents, including in local languages, seems a limiting factor to the practice and awareness

creation endeavors. Thus, the MoE and concerned NGOs should work towards printing the conventions in Negarit Gazetta in Amharic and Nationality languages to ensure legal status and availability of the documents in all places.

2. It seems that there could be unreported cases of violence for fear of social stigmatization and further attack. One factor is assumed to be the failure of the policy and legal frameworks to indicate specific duties and responsibilities of all concerned. The other could be lack of confidence on the operational aspects of the legal institutions available – like police and the court. Therefore (a) police should establish a linkage with schools and the community and emphasize on protecting children from harm, (b) the guideline developed by the MoE does not seem well understood and used by the school communities. Thus, MoE should take the lead to reorient the school community and the society about the proposed mechanisms to maintain school discipline and the principles of child rights. In this effort, NGOs like Plan Ethiopia should participate in funding such programs and providing relevant resources for the purpose.
3. There seems lack of proper understanding on the rights of the child and the rights of guardians on children. Besides, teachers were raising questions regarding alternative mechanisms to maintain discipline in the classroom. Thus (a) the procedures proposed by the MoE should be practiced, (b) the policy document on disciplining school children should be assessed for possible improvements, (c) awareness creation trainings and materials should be provided to the school community in particular and the out side community in general, and (d) right issues should be included in school curricula as appropriate. In this regard, the MoE should take the lead to integrate activities by NGOs, the legal institutions, the community and the schools.

4. WEOs, Women's affairs office, Plan Ethiopia program units etc should be able to record cases as lessons for future interventions and to follow their destinations.
5. Intervention units such as school clubs should be strengthened by empowering students to handle activities. There should also be a strong link between police and the school intervention units to facilitate information flow and support when needed.
6. It seems important to see for a possibility of institutionalizing guidance and counseling units in schools to guide the activities of the intervention units and to reduce traumatic effects on victims. In this regard, MoE should train and assign experts in the area and NGOs like Plan Ethiopia should participate in providing the necessary materials, training, and funding supports for the purpose.
7. Longitudinal studies should be encouraged in the area of violence against school children to specify the culture specific effects of violence against children in schools. Besides, research findings in the area of bullying are almost none existent in Ethiopian schools. Researches in other countries (like Olweus, 1997), however, it is assumed that its prevalence in schools is high. Thus, bullying focused studies should be encouraged to organize evidences for further intervention.

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