FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Minimum Standards
for Safe Schools

Nigeria
Education in Emergencies
Working Group

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This Minimum Standards for Safe Schools document was developed by the Federal Ministry of Education with support from Education in Emergencies Working Group Nigeria partners.

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Foreword

The Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) is a global intergovernmental political commitment that provides countries with the opportunity to express support for protecting students, teachers, schools, and universities from attack in times of armed conflict. It is important to ensure the continuity of education at all times and deter the use of schools by security forces. In December 2019, President Muhammadu Buhari signed the Safe Schools Declaration ratification document, signalling Nigeria's commitment to uphold the principles of the SSD.

Following the president's ratification of the SSD, the Federal Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Education in Emergencies Working Group Nigeria (EiEWGN), developed a Plan of Action 2018-2020 to mainstream SSD laws and policies in Nigeria. As part of the action plan, the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (NPSSVFS) along with the Guidelines for Implementing the NPSSVFS were developed in 2020. To further facilitate holistic implementation of the SSD laws and policies in Nigeria, it was necessary to set clear benchmarks and provide tools for the certification of schools and learning centres as safe for educational pursuits.

tThe minimum standards are comprehensive tools that prescribe the bare minimum qualities and practices that schools must adhere to in order to keep learners, school users, and schools safe, secure, and violence free. It aligns with the NPSSVFS and the implementation guide, both of which apply the Safe Schools Common Approach. Each approach has clear standards expected of a safe school; the activities to be implemented to attain the standards; and guidance notes to provide clarity. Tools for measuring and reporting progress, an early warning system, disaster risk reduction, and disaster risk management systems have all been developed.

The roles of key stakeholders have clearly been delineated. These stakeholders include the school-based management committee (SBMC)/board of governors, parent-teacher association (PTA), proprietors, school heads, teachers, safety and security committees in line with the NPSSVFS and the implementation guidelines. It is expected that compliance with the minimum standards will produce a safe school environment that is learner-friendly, free of violence, and conducive to teaching and learning. This is in line with our expectations as clearly outlined in the Ministerial Strategic Plan (2018 – 2023) and the SSD PoA 2021-2023 'Making Schools and Learning Centers Safe, Secure and Enabling for Universal Access and Quality Learning Outcomes'. All states are therefore encouraged to ensure that all public and private basic and secondary schools and non-formal learning centres attain and indeed surpass these minimum standards for safe, secure, and violence-free schools.
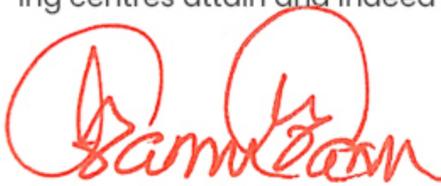
Malam Adamu Adamu
Honourable Minister of Education
Federal Ministry of Education

Preface

The Minimum Standards for Safe Schools document targets the basic and senior secondary education levels operating as either private or public schools as well as the non-formal sector in Nigeria. The document prescribes the most basic standards that schools and learning centres must have to be declared safe for teaching and learning. It is a comprehensive tool that highlights all school safety approaches focused on prevention, intervention, and response to issues of safety, security, and violence within and around schools.

The development of the minimum standards followed an all-inclusive approach that ensured the harnessing of the views and inputs of stakeholders at various levels, including learners. This was achieved by conducting a rapid assessment to determine the readiness of public and primary basic and secondary education institutions to implement the NPSSVFS. The findings formed the basis for the minimum standards. The minimum standards were therefore developed based on evidence from the field.

The guiding principles for the minimum standards include the ideas that education is a fundamental human right of all those who want to learn; that there should be zero tolerance for violence against children; that education must continue at all times, even during armed conflict; that learning institutions must not be militarised; that high levels of professionalism, uniformity of approach, measurement of results, and strong institutional systems are necessary to create schools that are safe, secure, and violence-free. Every school and learning centre must have clear leadership to coordinate the various stakeholders to support the achievement of a safe, secure, and violence-free school. Schools must develop risk management and mitigation plans to build resilience and enable them to cope with the effects of hazards and conflict when they occur; such plans will include data collection, documentation, reporting, and escalation of issues to higher authority and law enforcement.

Importantly, the Safe Schools Common Approach (SSCA) was adopted in the development of the minimum standards. These include standards for addressing violence against children (VAC), conflict, natural and every-day hazards and safe school infrastructure. Each approach is accompanied by its own minimum standard, action, guidance notes, and tools. The tools are comprehensive and easy to use by education institutions in their effort to protect learners and school users from hazards and violence.

The minimum standards will provide benchmarks and tools for schools and learning centres to self-assess their level of compliance with the principles that support teaching and learning in a safe and secure environment. The quality assurance officers at state and federal levels are expected to use the instruments to measure progress of the implementation of the NPSSVFS minimum standards.

Honourable Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba
Honourable Minister of State for Education
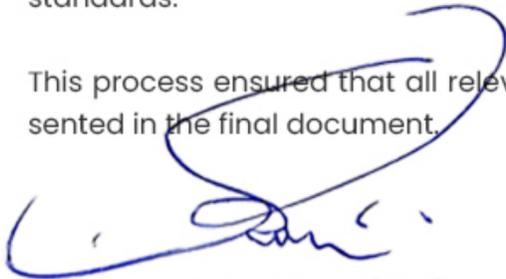Federal Ministry of Education

Acknowledgments

Our sincere appreciation goes to the Honourable Minister of Education, Malam Adamu Adamu, for signing the Safe Schools Declaration Letter of Endorsement on March 8, 2018. This singular act started the process of developing the national safe school framework in Nigeria. We would like to thank the Honourable Minister of State for Education, Honourable Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba, for the exceptional support and encouragement given towards the development of the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools.

The production of the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools provides practical guidance to all public and private basic and secondary schools (including non-formal schools) in Nigeria. This was made possible by the Education in Emergencies Working Group Nigeria (EiEWGN) partners : Plan International, Restoration of Hope Initiative, UNICEF, and Victims Support Fund providing funding. The partnerships ensured that the task was accomplished at a critical period in Nigeria when attacks on schools were on the increase.

We also appreciate the time and guidance of the personnel of the Federal Ministry of Education, Departments and Agencies; the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA); Federal Ministry of Health; Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC); National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS); Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the technical teams in the states, who participated in the data gathering and pilot testing.

We acknowledge stakeholders from across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) who participated in the initial meetings, data collection, critique, piloting, and validation of results. We also acknowledge the technical leadership of Dr Nguyan Shaku Feese in coordinating the study and the development of the minimum standards.

This process ensured that all relevant stakeholders, including learners, were consulted and their views represented in the final document.

Arc. Sonny S. T. Echono (fnia)
Permanent Secretary
Federal Ministry of Education

Acronyms

CBDRM	Community-Based Disaster Risk Management
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CRA	Child Rights Act
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSACEFA	Civil Society Action Coalition for Education for All
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DMM	Disaster Monitoring and Mitigation skills
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
LGEAs	Local Government Education Authorities
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NERDC	Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NMEC	National Mass Education Commission
NPSSVFS	National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools
NUT	Nigeria Union of Teachers
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SAME	State Adult Mass Education
SBC	Social Behavioural Change
SBMC	School-Based Management Committee
SDMC	School Disaster Management Committee
SEMA	State Emergency Management Agency
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMoE	State Ministry of Education
SSCA	Safe Schools Common Approach
SSD	Safe Schools Declaration
SST	School Safety Team
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TRCN	Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission
VAC	Violence against Children
VAPP	Violence against Persons (Prohibition)
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Definition of terms

This document will adopt the definition of terms in the National Policy on Safe Schools and Violence-Free School and the safe school implementation guidelines as indicated below:

Abduction: The act of making a person go somewhere with you, especially using threats, force or violence.

Bullying: Bullying is the use of force, threat or coercion to abuse, intimidate or aggressively dominate others. The behaviour is often repeated and habitual. Bullying arises from imbalances in social or physical power.

Child Abuse: It is any form of maltreatment by an adult, which is violent or threatening to the child. This includes neglect. Some types of child abuse are :

- Physical abuse: all forms of physical violence.
- Emotional or psychological abuse: an adult regularly berates the child, acts in a dismissive and hostile manner towards the child or intentionally scares the child.
- Physical neglect: the child does not receive the care and nurturing needed.
- Emotional or psychological neglect: continuous lack of positive attention to the child. Ignoring the child's need for love, warmth, and security. This category also covers cases in which children are witnesses to violence between their parents or caregivers.
- Sexual abuse: sexual contact which an adult forced upon a child.

Child: A person who has not reached 18 years of age.

Child-friendly Schools: Such schools adopt a rights-based, multi-sectoral approach, concerned with the whole child. Child-friendly schools are safe; have well trained teachers, adequate resources and appropriate physical, emotional, and social conditions for learning. These schools value diversity and promote inclusivity, gender-sensitivity, tolerance, dignity, and personal empowerment.

Child Recruitment: This is when a person who is less than 18 years old is recruited by an army or simply participates in an armed conflict. The child might not necessarily wear a uniform or carry a weapon, but he or she can be recruited into an armed group as a cook, carrier, guard, spy, messenger, bodyguard, sex slave, mine detector,' and so on.

Conflict: Communal or inter-state disputes or insurgent disputes with state authority or society at large, often exacerbated by any of the following: the use of schools by security forces; armed attacks on schools; unrest; community clashes; unexploded ordnances; abduction/kidnapping; child labour and recruitment of child soldiers.

Corporal Punishment: Traditionally refers to punishment using physical force, usually inflicted by a person of authority, with the intention of causing physical pain for disciplinary purposes.

Disability: Long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment that hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Early warning system: The set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities, and organisations threatened by a hazard to prepare and to act appropriately in time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss.

photo credit: Plan International

Education: In this context, it is an important socialising instrument that is critical for the social, emotional, and psychological development of young people. As such, education is a vehicle for transforming individual behaviours and broader social norms regarding violence, gender equality, and discrimination.

Everyday hazards: These are epidemics, nutrition deficiency, pandemics, and power shortage.

First aid kit: A collection of basic medical supplies and equipment used for giving treatment to a sick or injured person before full medical treatment.

First aid: Help given to a sick or injured person until full medical treatment is available.

Gender-based violence: Violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering against someone based on gender discrimination, gender role expectations, and/or gender stereotypes, or based on differential power status linked to gender.

Harassment: Any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions that tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or that create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Hazard: Any phenomenon, natural occurrence or other activity or event that potentially leads to disaster.

Hostage: A person or group of people seized or held as security for the fulfilment of a condition or demand.

Implementation of disaster management: A series of efforts to put into effect development policies that reduce the risk of disasters; these efforts also include disaster prevention and emergency response activities. Such implementation provides a means of measuring and communicating the impact or outcome of a programme, a process or the method used.

Inclusive education: A commitment to removing all barriers to the full participation in education of every individual, irrespective of their background and experience. Inclusive education may involve adapting and modifying content, approaches, structures, and education strategies in order to meet the individual needs of all learners, allowing them to benefit from quality education.

Intervention: A solution or decision that interferes with the course of a process or an event, causing it to take a different direction or come to a different end.

Man-made hazard/disaster: Man-made hazards/disasters are broadly classified into two groups:

- Technological disasters: These include disasters due to engineering failures and transport-related disasters.
- Sociological disasters: These include criminal activities, violence, riots, war, and terrorism.

Mitigating factors: Factors or circumstances that are taken into account before selecting consequences for infraction of rules. Examples of mitigating factors include the learner's age, maturity, previous conduct, disability, and willingness to make reparation; the nature and severity of the behaviour infraction and whether the behaviour infraction was provoked by bullying or harassment.

Mitigation: A series of efforts to lessen disaster risks, through physical development, awareness raising, and capacity improvement against disaster threats.

Natural hazards: Flood, wind, and storm or related natural phenomena.

Perpetrator: A person who carries out a violent act or causes hurt and/or harm.

Physical disability: A limitation on a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina. Physical disabilities also include impairments such as respiratory disorders, blindness or epilepsy, which affect other facets of daily living.

Physical violence: An intentional action that causes physical harm to the victim, including, for example:

(i)   Physical assault or any use of physical force against a victim,
(ii) Forcibly confining or detaining a victim
(iii) Physically depriving a victim of access to food, water, clothing, shelter or rest.

Positive discipline: A discipline model for schools and parents that focuses on a child's positive behaviour, based on the assumption that there are no bad children, just good and bad behaviours.

Psychological violence: See 'violence, psychological.'

Psychosocial support: A holistic approach to care and counselling that addresses the mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of an individual.

Referral: The process of noticing a concern about a child or family, deciding that action needs to be taken and reporting that concern to someone with the relevant responsibility. This might be directly or by giving information to the family about where they should go for further help.

Respectful relationships: These are interpersonal interactions where all parties feel safe, are treated with fairness, are valued and feel accepted.

Safeguarding: Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health and development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of effective care; acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safe schools: The system that promotes the protection of students from violence, exposure to weapons and threats, theft, bullying and the sale or use of illegal substances on school grounds.

School infrastructure: This includes classrooms, laboratories for science practicals, halls, and open fields for games, games equipment, dormitories, sanitation facilities, and others.

School safety: This refers to schools and school-related activities in which learners are safe from violence, bullying, harassment and substance use.

School safety organisation: An identified group of individuals from within the school community assigned to ensure the safety and proper disaster management of a school and to take necessary action before, during, and after a disaster situation.

School users: Persons that may not necessarily be learners or staff but who make use of the school premises or facilities to provide services or are beneficiaries of services provided in the school.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse includes any act that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, regardless of their awareness of what is happening. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual, and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant.

Sexual violence: See 'violence, sexual.'

Verification: The process of establishing the truth, accuracy or validity of something.

Victimisation: The act of singling someone out for cruel or unjust treatment.

Violence: This refers to all forms of physical or psychological violence, injury, and abuse; neglect or negligent treatment; maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual exploitation or abuse.

Violence against children (VAC) in school: All acts of violence inflicted on children below 18 years within the school setting or while on their way to and from school.

Violence, psychological: This refers to harassment, confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation or any other treatment that may diminish a learner's sense of identity, dignity, emotional wellbeing and self-worth.

Violence, sexual: This encompasses any unwanted sexual act, attempt to engage in an unwanted sexual act, unwanted sexual advances or other similar action by any person – regardless of their relationship to the victim in any setting.

Witness: In the context of violence, a witness is a person who is present at and sees a violent act.

Section One: Introduction

The Federal Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Education in Emergencies Working Group in Nigeria (EiEWGN), developed this Minimum Standards for Safe Schools document to serve as a tool for certifying that non-formal learning centres and public and private basic and secondary schools are safe places for teaching and learning. This is a logical follow-up to the development of the NPSSVFS and the Guidelines for Implementing NPSSVFS.

In 2014, the Federal Ministry of Education conducted a national survey on violence in schools. The result revealed that there was a high prevalence of violence against children (VAC) in schools. A technical working group was set up to develop a policy for violence-free schools (VFS) in Nigeria. In May 2015, Nigeria was one of the first 37 countries to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD), and the honourable minister signed the letter of endorsement in 2018. In March 2019, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) approved the development of a national policy to guide the implementation of the SSD; this resulted in the development of a comprehensive NPSSVFS. The Guidelines for Implementing NPSSVFS was developed in 2020 to guide the actualisation of the NPSSVFS.

The Minimum Standards for Safe Schools will provide tools to certify that schools are safe places for teaching and learning. They provide a way of measuring and communicating the impact of implementing NPSSVFS. The standards will provide the minimum benchmark for activities, systems, and processes for making sure that schools are safe and habitable places for learners and teachers in public and private basic and secondary schools, facilitators in non-formal learning centres, and all other personnel in educational institutions to carry out their activities without risk. The standards also ensure that in the event of risks, the educational institutions have plans in place to ensure safety of lives and property.

The main objective is to improve safety in schools and ensure a violence-free environment for teaching and learning. The specific objectives are to provide tools that will:

a. communicate the mechanisms to be put in place by all schools to address all kinds of hazards and violence to ensure that schooling continues at all times.

b. highlight specific actions, following the Safe Schools Common Approach, to be taken by educational institutions (schools and learning centres) to prevent the occurrence of hazards or violence against learners and school users.

c. measure the effects of hazards or violence in schools and learning centres and report their occurrence.

d. provide guidance on processes and procedures for ensuring safe learning environments for all users.

e. clarify the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders in preventing or mitigating the effects of hazards and violence in educational institutions.

Conceptual Framework for the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools

The conceptual framework adopted for the minimum standards is the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (NPSSVFS). NPSSVFS drew from various existing laws and policies, including but not limited to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999); the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) Act 2004; Child Rights Act 2003; Safe Schools Initiative (SSI); Safe Schools Declaration (SSD); and the Safe Schools Common Approach (SSCA). This section will briefly refer to the SSI, SSD, SSCA, NPSSVFS, and the implementation plan.

Safe Schools Initiative (SSI)

In May 2014, following the abduction of 276 girls in Chibok, Borno State, it became imperative for the Nigerian government to set in motion guidelines that would protect the right to high quality and equitable education for all in Nigeria.

photo credit: UNICEF

The SSI was an immediate response plan to the attack against education in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States, which involved the abduction of students, killing of teachers, and destruction of school infrastructure. The focus was on (1) school-based interventions; (2) community interventions to protect schools; and (3) special measures for at-risk populations.

Safe Schools Declaration (SSD)

The SSD is a global intergovernmental political commitment that provides countries with the opportunity to express support for protecting learners, education personnel, schools, and universities from attack during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during armed conflict; and the implementation of concrete measures to deter security forces from using schools. Governments also commit to strengthening the monitoring and reporting of attacks on educational institutions; investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of attacks on educational institutions; and providing assistance to victims.

President Muhammadu Buhari in December 2019 signed the SSD ratification document, signalling Nigeria's commitment to uphold the principles of the SSD. Nigeria was part of the first group of 37 countries that endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) on May 29, 2015. The Honourable Minister of Education signed the letter of endorsement on March 8, 2018. On March 20, 2019 the Federal Executive Council (FEC) approved the memorandum on 'Mainstreaming and Implementation of the SSD Laws and Policies in Nigeria,' thus paving the way for the domestication of SSD through the development of the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (NPSSVFS).

The National Policy on Safety, Security, and Violence-Free Schools

The National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free School (NPSSVFS) was developed in 2020 in line with the Safe Schools Declaration to provide clear procedures for protecting learners from all forms of hazards, violence, and exploitation, while they pursue their educational goals. It also provides guidelines on safety and security of school infrastructure, both in times of peace and in times of conflict. It is aimed at providing guidelines for implementing comprehensive school safety plans while providing prevention and response mechanisms at national, state, local government, and school levels.

The policy focuses on:

i) protecting learners and education workers from death and injury in schools and learning centres.
ii) planning for education continuity in the face of expected natural or man-made hazards.
iii) safeguarding education sector investments at all times.
iv) strengthening a disaster-resilient citizenry through education.

Figure 1: Approach to School Safety

The NPSSVFS is based on four pillars, as indicated in figure 1 below.
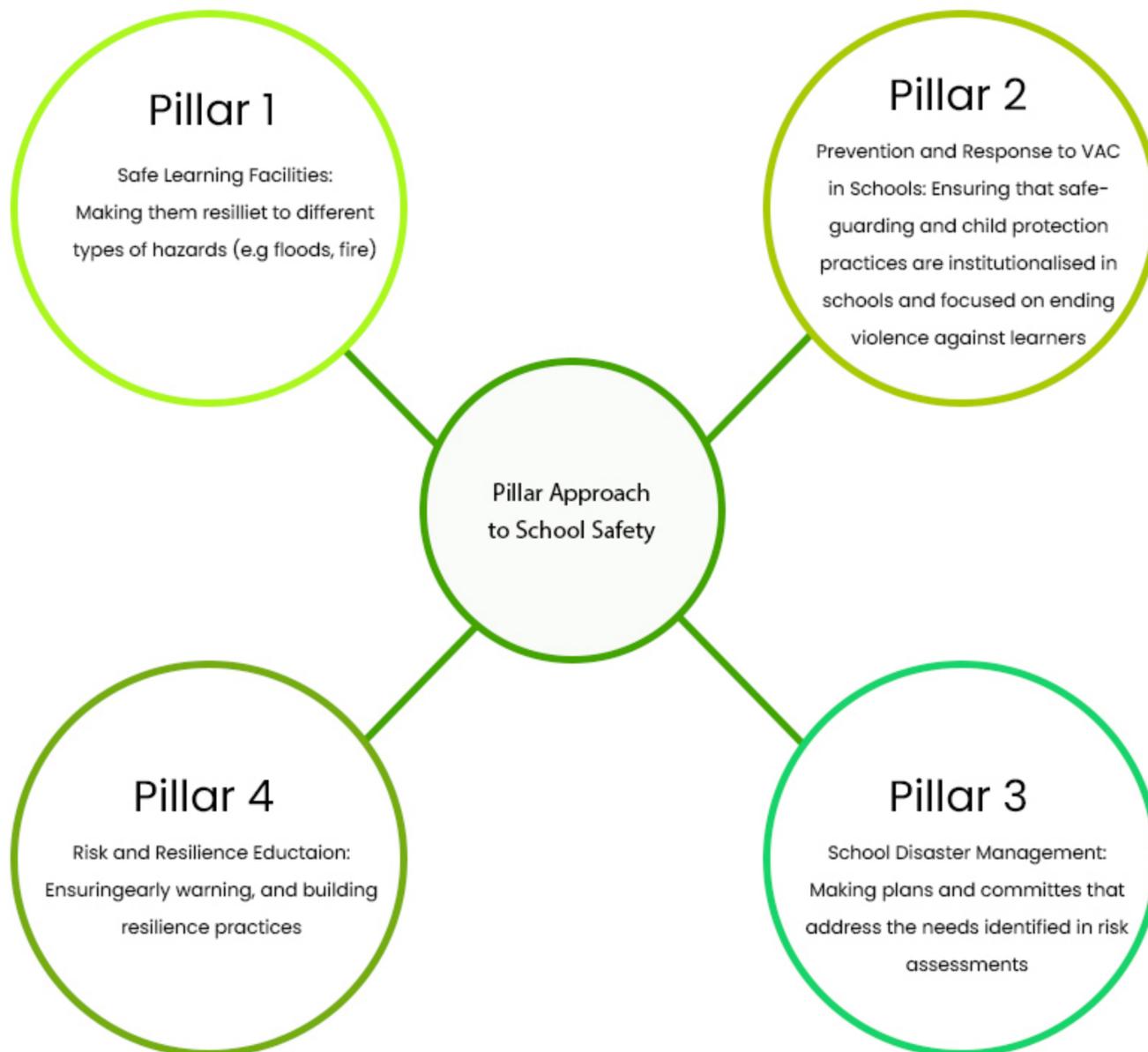
Source: National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (2021)

Guidelines for Implementing the National Policy on Safety, Security, and Violence-Free Schools

The Guidelines for Implementing the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools was developed in 2020 to facilitate the actualisation of the NPSSVFS. It provides "institutional structure for reporting, tracking and responding to issues of safety, insecurity, and violence in schools...guidelines for monitoring and evaluating the progress made...spells out the roles of key stakeholders, such as the school-based management committee/board of governors, Parent-Teachers Association (PTA), head teacher, and safety focal point teacher (SFPT) in the implementation process."

Process of Developing the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools

Following the development of the national policy and its implementation guidelines in 2020, the Federal Ministry of Education decided to develop minimum standards for safe schools. The process of developing the standards commenced with a rapid assessment of the readiness of non-formal learning centres and public and private basic and senior secondary schools to implement the NPSSVFS. The objectives were to:

- understand how violence against children (VAC) affects teaching and learning.
- identify which natural hazards have been experienced in schools and learning centres.
- identify the conflict prevention and reduction mechanisms that exist in schools or learning centres.
- identify the common everyday hazards that occur in schools and learning centres.
- understand how school managers and learning centre authorities provide safety at education facilities.

This study covered:

- public and private basic education schools in Nigeria.

- public and private senior secondary education schools in Nigeria.

- non-formal education learning centres in Nigeria.

- education officials at the   federal, state and local goverment levels.

Four instruments developed based on the Safe Schools Common Approach areas were used to collect data from the respondents: questionnaires for school-level stakeholders, learners, and policy makers at federal and state levels. The respondents were categorised as per the table below:

Figure 1: School Safety Plan

photo credit: Save the Children International

Table One: Stakeholders

School Level	Local Government Level	State Level	Federal Level
• The head teacher/ Principals	• The LGEA education secretary	• 2 Ministry of Education officials	• 1 Ministry of Education officials
• Teachers	• 2 Traditional leaders from the school host community	• 2 Ministry of Women Affairs officials	• 1 Ministry of Women Affairs officials
• SBMC members	• 2 Religious leaders from the school host community	• 2 Ministry of Health officials	• 1 Ministry of Health
• Learners		• 2 Local government officials	• 1 Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC)
• Community leaders		• 2 SUBEB representatives	
• Parents		• 2 State Adult Mass Education (SAME) officials	• 1 Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)
		• 2 Civil Society Action Coalition for Education for All (CSACEFA) officials	• 1 National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
		• 2 Education programmes in the state	• 1 Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)
		• 2 Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT)	• 1 National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
		• 2 State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) officials	• 1 Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT)
			• 1 National Mass Education Commission (NMEC)
			• 1 Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All
			• 1 Development Programme
			• 1 Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC)

photo credit: UNICEF

Table Two: Distribution of Schools per LGA

School Level	Urban	Rural
Primary	2 (1 public & 1 private)	2 (1 public & 1 private)
JSS	2 (1 public & 1 private)	2 (1 public & 1 private)
SSS	2 (1 public & 1 private)	2 (1 public & 1 private)
Non-formal	2 (1 public & 1 private)	2 (1 public & 1 private)
Total	8	8

Table Three: Distribution of respondents per school

School Type	No of Head Teachers or Principals / School	No of Community Leaders	No of SBMC	No of Parents	No of Teachers	No of Learners	Respondents/ school
SSS	1	2	2	2	2	4	13
JSS	1	2	2	2	2	4	13
Primary	1	2	2	2	2	4	13
Non-formal	1	2	2	2	2	4	13

photo credit: Riplington & Associates

Data Collection Methods

The data was collected in Yobe, Katsina, Edo, and Plateau States. These states were purposefully selected for the study based on such considerations as the ease of data collection using technology; the existing structures of key partners in the state to support the process; anecdotal reports of incidents of VAC, and reported cases of conflict in some of the states. The research questionnaires were sent electronically to the relevant officers within the State Ministries of Education, who distributed the questionnaires to the identified enumerators at the State Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) Education Management Information System (EMIS) unit. The enumerators were trained online and supervised during the data collection process by the EMIS senior officers. The enumerators distributed the electronic versions of the questionnaires to the respondents and followed up with them to ensure proper completion of the instruments. The respondents electronically completed and transmitted the instruments to the central server one week after the date of receipt. For learners and respondents who were unable to use technology, the questionnaires were administered physically by the enumerators, who later transmitted the result to the central server. The data were then extracted from the central server, cleaned, and analysed. The report produced from the analysis was validated by groups of stakeholders during a meeting in Jos, Plateau State.

photo credit: Riplington & Associates

Findings

The findings revealed that most schools are not yet ready to implement the NPSSVFS due to institutional and human capacity limitations and also due to limited knowledge about safety, security, and violence against children. It was also revealed that VAC happens at home, on the way to school, and in school. Although there was no mention of online harassment or bullying, this is an area in which to take action. The findings show that most schools do not have risk management and mitigation plans that would enable education to continue during and immediately after armed conflicts.

The results also revealed that learners have useful information on how to reduce violence against children at home, on the way to school, and while in school. The information gathered from the study was used to develop the standards and the accompanying activities and guidance notes to provide practical direction for school leadership. Tools were also developed to be used to certify education institutions as safe, secure, and violence-free for teaching and learning. The tools were tested in three states: Enugu, Borno, and Ekiti, following which a report was developed on the usability of the tools. The tools were reviewed based on the result of the pilot testing, and a final version was produced.

Guiding Principles for the Minimum Standards

The purpose of these minimum standards is to provide guidelines on how schools can remain safe places for learners to access high quality and equitable education and safe places for teachers and every other member of the school community to support teaching and learning. The guiding principles are:

1. Education is a fundamental human right: All learners must have the opportunity to receive good quality and equitable education at all times, even during armed conflict and hazards.

2. Zero tolerance of violence against children: Schools and learning centres must adopt and communicate policies and guidelines that promote safe, secure, and violence-free learning environments because studies have shown that children learn better under non-threatening situations.

3. Continuation of schooling at all times: Schools have risk management plans that enable evacuation of learners to safer areas for teaching and learning to continue even during hazards and violent conflicts.

4. Non-militarisation of learning institutions: Effort must be made to avoid the use of schools and learning centres by the military; when unavoidable, the military must obtain permission and then clean up after use.

5. High level of professionalism: All members of school safety committees and all teachers, especially the focal point teacher (FPT), must be trained on all relevant areas to ensure they are able to respond to hazards and also handle complaints about violence with strict confidentiality.

6. Uniformity: The minimum standards provide clear information on benchmarks to be met in order to have safe and secure environments for learning.

7. Measurement of results: The minimum standards contain tools for schools to use for institutional self-assessment and for evaluators to use for external assessment of the schools and centres in order to certify the institutions as safe for learning.

8. Strong institutional systems: Every school must have clear leadership to coordinate the various stake holders to achieve safe, secure, and violence-free schools. Schools must develop risk management and mitigation plans to build resilience and enable them to cope with hazards and conflicts when they occur Such plans will include data collection, documentation, reporting, and escalation of issues to higher authorities and law enforcement agencies where necessary.

Structure of the Minimum Standards

This Minimum Standards document is divided into four main sections. Section 1 is the introduction, which presents background information, objectives, the conceptual framework, the process of developing the standards, and the guiding principles. Section 2 presents the minimum standards and discusses the Safe Schools Common Approach, the Theory of Change, and strong systems, along with the five areas of concern addressed by the Safe Schools Common Approach (SSCA): violence against children (VAC), natural hazards, conflict, everyday hazards, and safe school infrastructure. Section 3 presents the tools for measuring implementation and certifying educational institutions as safe for teaching and learning, while section 4 details the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders.

Section Two: Minimum Standards for Safe Schools

This Minimum Standards document provides learning centres and public and private basic and senior secondary schools with a description of what the relevant authorities are expected to put in place to ensure schools and learning centres are safe and secure for learners and other school users. The minimum standards form the basis for a common understanding of what should constitute safe, secure, and violence-free schooling and provide a yardstick for measuring compliance and for the communication of the results of the implementation of NPSSVFS. The minimum standards are based on the Safe Schools Common Approach.

2.1 Safe Schools Common Approach

This section will briefly describe the five areas addressed by the Safe Schools Common Approach (SSCA) and outline the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools. These are the five areas of concern of the SSCA, on which the minimum standards are based: violence against children; natural hazards; conflicts; everyday hazards; and safe school infrastructure. These will be preceded by presentation of what constitutes a strong school system necessary for the delivery of the common approach.

Figure 2: Safe Schools Common Approach

Table 4: Safe Schools Common Approach

Violence	Natural Hazards	Conflicts	Everyday Hazards	School Infastructure
Threatened use of unlawful force	Flood	School Occupation by Security Forces	Epidemic	Vandalism of School property
Corporal Punishment	Fire	Communeral or inter-state disputes	Nutrition deficiency	Security of School property
Physical Abuse	Wind	Insurgent disputes with state authority	Pandemics	Arsonism
Psychological Abuse	Earthquake	Insurgent disputes with state authority	Power Outage	Theft of school property
Sexual Abuse		Insurgent dispuse with society at large	Sudden Deaths	Design of school infa-structure
Gender-Based Violence		Armend attacks on schools	Common Diseases	WASH Facilities
Negligent Treatment intended to cause fear, pain, physical or psychological suffering		Civil unrest	Dangerous Items	Building collapse
Bullying		Community clashes		
		Unexploded ordnance		
		Unexploded ordnances		
		Abduction/kidnapping		
		Child Labour		
		Recruitment of Child Soldiers		

The Theory of Change is that:

- If schools and learning centres are violence-free environments;
- If schools and learning centres mitigate the effects of natural hazards;
- If schools and learning centres prevent or prepare to address conflict;
- If schools and learning centres prevent or mitigate the effects of everyday hazards;
- If school infrastructure is safe,
- then schools and learning centres will be safe, secure, and violence-free environments where teaching and learning can take place for improved learning outcomes.

Each of the approach areas will have three elements:

1) The standard which prescribes the benchmark;
2) Activities which are tasks to be undertaken to enable the attainment of the standards;
3) Guidance notes to provide further explanations of what should be in a safe, secure, and violence-free school or learning centre in order to guarantee good quality and equitable education for all learners.

The implementation of the Safe Schools Common Approach must necessarily be guided by strong institutional systems at all levels, but especially at the school level. As a result, in addition to the five common approach areas, standards will be set for strong school systems that will support the attainment of an enabling environment for safe, secure, and violence-free schools.

photo credit: Plan International

Table 5: Strong School System

Standard	Activity	Guidance Note
Institutional commitment to safe, secure, and violence-free learning environments	• Develop school policy on safety, security, and violence-free schools and implementation guidelines • Communicate guidelines to all school users • Appoint school safety focal point teacher (SFPT) • Establish functional committee for school safety and security with clear roles and responsibilities • Develop code of conduct for learners • Develop emergency response plan • Develop and operate substance use and abuse policy • Establish a system in the school/centre for anonymous reporting, such as suggestion boxes in strategic places in the school • Establish procedures for referral to medical, legal or social services in the school/centre • Establish links between the school and the local clinic	• The guidelines and school policies should be continuously communicated through school assemblies and sensitisation sessions in order to prevent verbal, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. • There should be a school safety and security committee, which should include the head of the learning centre, school head/principal, safety focal point teacher, school counsellor, health personnel in the school, and representatives of SBMC/CBMC/PTA. • The school should commit to up-skilling guidance counsellors to provide professional therapy sessions to learners and teachers in order to improve pedagogy. • The committee should develop a comprehensive plan to prevent and respond to violence in the school/learning centre and the plan should include steps for evacuating learners from the education premises in cases of emergency.
Strong capacity to prevent or mitigate effects of hazards and violence in schools	• Develop handbook to guide staff on relevant training topics: first aid, fire drills etc. • Conduct training sessions on relevant safety and security and violence-free topics • Procure necessary materials to implement school safety activities at school/centre	• School personnel need the capacity to respond to the situation, therefore there must be plans to train staff and learners on safety and security of learners and school infrastructure.
Monitoring system	• Conduct regular needs assessment at the school/centre to identify gaps. • Develop a monitoring framework for measuring the effects of actions taken to ensure safety and security of learners and school/centre users.	

photo credit: Plan International

Standard	Activity	Guidance Note
	• Conduct regular self-assessment to determine areas of improvement.	• Schools/centres must monitor the implementation of NPSSVFS by collecting data on a regular basis to guide the development of response and raise awareness of critical issues.
	• Participate in external evaluation for results and evidence.	
	• Use data to improve the process.	• Schools can set up independent teams for ensuring that penalties are implemented for violations of its policies on the safety and security of learners.
	• Share results with critical stakeholders.	
		• Guidance counsellors within the school should also monitor and evaluate learners periodically to assess behavioural changes in them.

Table 6: Violence against children

Standard	Activity	Guidance Note
Prevent violence against children at home	• Hold meetings with parents/guardians on the importance of the safety and security of their children or ward at home. • Create awareness of the need for parents/guardians to keep an eye on the safety of their children/ward. • Create awareness of the need for parents/guardians to ensure that their children participate in education. • Encourage parents/guardians to ensure learners are fed before leaving for school. • Create awareness of the need to reduce house chores to enable children to play and learn at home. • Enlighten parents/guardians on the rights of children to live in safety and on the protection of children against physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. • Teachers should visit children at home when they are at risk. • Enlighten parents on how to teach their children to have a positive self-concept and how to educate their children about sex. • Educate parents and guardians on how to relate with their children/wards appropriately.	• There must be zero tolerance for violence against children at home, on the way to school, and at school. Therefore, all parents and guardians, teaching and non-teaching staff, and the School Based Management Community (SBMC) members must work collaboratively in a harmonised way to ensure that all stakeholders understand that children must be protected at all times from violence and all forms of abuse. This collaboration should establish a protocol for dealing with child violence and abuse and for reporting such to the appropriate authorities.
Violence against children on their way to school	• Adults to accompany children to school. • Create awareness of the dangers of following remote or quiet routes to schools/centres. • Train learners not to stop on their way to school. • Create community awareness of the need to protect learners on their way to school/centres. • Use data to improve the process. • Encourage communities to plant under-growth crops such as soya beans and groundnuts by the pathways to eliminate hideouts for perpetrators.	• Confidentiality: All reports should be treated confidentially. Parents and learners should be confident that their reports or names will not be made public at any point during the investigation into a report. • Code of conduct: Staff and learners should have a code of conduct that guides acceptable and non-acceptable interactions. • Accessibility: The school should make provisions for an accessible focal point teacher to whom learners can report cases of violence at all times.

Standard	Activity	Guidance Note
	• Dog owners should keep their dogs in check during the day to avoid scaring school children. • Education marshals/community volunteers should be adopted by the state government to guide school children. • Provide safe transportation to school/centres where possible. • Encourage parents/guardians to enrol learners in institutions closest to their homes. • Police should patrol the community to protect learners on their way to school/centre. • Schools should be constructed close to towns. • Reduce distance from home to school.	
Violence against children in school/learning centre	• Abolish all forms of corporal punishment in school. • Put in place systems to check that students do not carry arms or dangerous weapons to school. • Train learners on the dangers of bullying, including cyber bullying and dangerous play. • Train teachers/facilitators and staff on child safety and security. • Create clubs, such as martial arts clubs, to train the children in self-defence. • Train teachers on how to handle difficult behaviour. • Teachers and facilitators should engage learners with productive learning activities. • Implement a referral system and track all cases of violence. • Record all reported incidents of aggression, abuse, harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying or cyber harassment. • Report crimes to relevant authorities, such as the police, for immediate action. • Produce a template for detailed reports. • Communicate all procedures to be followed when responding to incidents of harm, both in and out of school.	• Confidentiality: All reports should be treated confidentially. Parents and learners should be confident that their reports or names will not be made public at any point during the investigation into a report. • Code of conduct: Staff and learners should have a code of conduct that guides acceptable and non-acceptable interactions. • Accessibility: The school should make provisions for an accessible focal point teacher to whom learners can report cases of violence at all times.

Standard	Activity	Guidance Note
	- Create awareness of the dangers of violence. - Parents to visit schools and check on the welfare of their children or wards. - Employ security personnel for educational institutions. - Provide safe spaces for learners to discuss issues. - Conduct training on child safeguarding. - Strengthen the guidance and counselling unit to support learners.	

photo credit: UNICEF

Table 7: Natural hazards

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
Early warning systems	• Appoint a focal point teacher to work with the relevant authorities to gather information on potential natural hazards • Train and retrain school management on early warning systems and create awareness of the signs of emerging hazards. • Form school and community joint committee for disaster risk management	• Natural hazards are difficult to predict and avoid; however, schools/learning centres must have disaster management and risk mitigation plans in place to reduce the impact.

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
Disaster management	• Train teachers and students on climate change. • Develop a response plan and build resilience. • Plant trees to serve as windbreakers in areas prone to windstorms. In riverine areas, flood barriers should be put in place. • Disaster risk reduction clubs should be held in schools. • When disaster happens, assess the situation and choose the appropriate response quickly and carefully based on plan. • Notify learners of actions to take in cases of disaster. • Notify emergency responders and the school/centre management team. • Evacuate and lock down the school/learning centre, if deemed necessary. • Assess injuries and provide emergency first aid to those who need it. • Assign staff to organise and monitor emergency supplies. • Train teachers/facilitators and learners on disaster management. • Involve government, parents, and the host community in school disaster risk management. • Conduct training sessions on natural hazards.	• Schools should work in concert with relevant agencies like the meteorological centre to get information on weather and other impending natural disasters. • Evacuate learners as soon as possible in a safe manner.

Table 7: Natural hazards

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• Mitigating the effects of natural hazards	• Communicate clearly with learners and emergency services. • Document all incidents and report to the appropriate authorities. • Conduct periodic safety drills according to the hazards that the school/centre is most likely to face. • Develop capacity of school staff and learners to give first aid treatment. • Install windbreakers. • Create water channels and construct drainage to prevent erosion. • Install firefighting gadgets. Train SBMC on disaster risk management. • Frequent inspection and renovation of school infrastructure. • Distribution of SBC/IEC materials on natural hazards to all schools and communities.	• There should be a rapid response team (RRT) within the schools and communities for all forms of natural hazards. There should also be a mechanism for reporting hazards at school to the community.

Table 8: Conflict

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• Prevent militarisation of learning institutions	• Develop clear policy on non-militarisation of schools with regards to billeting, as provided for in the Armed Forces Act. • Conduct regular sensitisation on the neutrality of learning institutions during conflict. • Security agencies to receive clearance before camping in a school or learning centre. • Shutdown learning institutions in the event of a threat to leaners or the school community. • Remove all ordnance and clear the school after operation.	• Conflicts can have serious effects on education; therefore, all schools and learning centres must put in place strategies to manage conflict and ensure that teaching and learning continues at all times even during armed conflict.

Table 8: Conflict

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
Continue education during armed conflict and situations of violence	Assess learning institutions that have been occupied by armed forces before sending learners back to school. Do not allow armed guards in the school/centre. Temporarily relocate learners to safer sites including temporarily margining of schools/learning centres in the event of conflict and disaster Convert boarding schools to day schools only where it is safe to do so Transfer learners, teachers and education personnel to schools/centres in safer zones Carry out distance learning using technology Organise shifts system of schooling providing double shifts (morning and afternoon) to enable as many learners as possible to participate regularly Create temporary learning spaces with tents and other materials to facilitate good	Learning must go on even during conflict therefore the school management working with other relevant stakeholders should consider all factors before temporary closure of the school/learning centre or call reinforcement of security so that learning can continue while the conflict is being addressed. If the school is closed, there should be agreed timeline to reopen as quickly as possible or relocated to a safer place for continuity of learning.

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
Secure the schools	Construct perimeter fencing such as brick with razor (concertina) wire around schools where appropriate Establish system for early warning signs Put car blockades (rocks, cement blocks) in front of buildings to deter cars with weapons from entering the school environment Select safe school sites, designs, and construction including prioritizing improvements for schools that are most vulnerable to attack Appoint trained unarmed guards to work in concert with the police to secure schools/learning centres	Safe school environment is very central to keeping learners secure. School construction policy must be adhered to such that the building materials are of high quality and fences are built to prevent encroachment by unauthorised people.

Table 8: Conflict

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
	• Deploy relevant safety and security equipment including technology to protect from conflict • Provide physical protection for learners, teachers/facilitators and other education personnel if attacks occur • Secure the school area before allowing re-entry • Train teachers/facilitators and learners on personal safety and security • Provide emergency exit in schools • Create muster points in schools • Train staff and learners on protocol for emergency evacuation of premises	

Table 9: Everyday Hazards

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• Nutrition	• Provide food for learners to support their nutrition and capacity to learn • Expand the school feeding programme to cover all learners • Train parents on the benefits of good nutrition and encourage them to feed their children/wards • Provide functional canteens to enhance the opportunity for good nutrition	• Good nutrition is essential for the growth and development of children. It helps with their capacity to learn and comprehend. Schools/learning centrecentres need to monitor the food intake of learners to ensure they have balance diet

Table 9: Everyday Hazards

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• WASH	• Provide enough taps stands at least two meters from each other, use nudges for social distance and suggest water schedule to avoid gatherings. • Provide training on how to safely use, dose and store disinfectant	• To support the fight against COVID-19 and also ensure that learners operate in a hygienic environment it is essential that WASH facilities are provided. • Learners need to be constantly hydrated to aid concentration.

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• Health hazards	• Create health clubs in schools/learning centres • Routinely sensitize the health teams on developing health concerns and mediation plans • Establish school/centre clinic to deal with health issues quickly Develop plans on how to deal with health pandemics or endemics when they occur and follow NCDC guidelines • Establish a functional reporting and communication system with health officers and parents within the community • undertake regular capacity building on school health issues • Conduct induction training on school health for newly recruited or posted teacher/facilitator Support routine immunisation	• In the event that a hazard occurs, the system should be robust enough to limit the effect on learners and school users as the effects of epidemics or pandemics and even sudden death of learners or teachers can lead to school closure and the termination of learning. • The capacity of teachers in safeguarding and sensitizing learners on issues of safety and security including health risks should be of high priority.

Table 10: Safe School Infrastructure

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• A Child Friendly School/learning centre	• Equip the school/centre with appropriate furniture for the different level of education/ learning centres • Put in place infrastructure that promotes equitable and inclusive access for every learner • Put in place emergency response equipment with established emergency procedures • Teach learners and let them practise emergency response procedures • Strengthen the quality of WASH facilities (water point, latrine, pro-vision of water and soap) with a special focus on meeting the needs of girls and learners with disabilities. • Establish protocols for disease outbreak	• Good quality facilities, structure and environment of learning foster healthy, safe and secure atmosphere for teaching and learning. • Learners are able to carry-out activity-based learning and also physical exercises to improve their health of body. • It is therefore important that approved school drawings should be strictly followed for instance there must be no provision of burglary proof on windows in the classroom to allow for escape when required. • Inclusive approach to WASH for improved access, hygiene practices and dignity

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
• Observe strict building guidelines	• Provide school fence with lockable gate • Provide security system including technology for ensuring that only authorised personnel are allowed in the school premises • Ensure there is cross ventilation in classrooms • Provide accessible clean source of water • Provide two exit doors in class-rooms and staff rooms with libraries, dining rooms etc. • Make sure doors to classrooms open outwards and not inwards • Provide locks for other rooms such as storerooms, libraries etc. • Clean and maintain buildings well • Check that windows are not broken	• School infrastructure guidelines should be in line with the UBEC minimum standards for school structures.

Table 10: Safe School Infrastructure

Standard	Activities	Guidance Note
	• Check that buildings are not vandalised or covered in graffiti • Check that bathrooms are in good working order • Put ramps and other facilities for the use of persons with disability • Make toilets accessible to all learners including persons with disability • Provide different sanitary materials for boys and girls • Provide fire extinguishers for school/learning centre • Clear pathways of any obstruction including water dispensers, desks or tables and chairs • Provide sufficient sanitation facilities including rubbish disposal in quantity and quality • Adequately furnish all rooms • Establish a maintenance culture for school/ learning centre • Provide learners with identification within the school premises • Ensure school/ learning centre is well lit • Locate schools/learning centres close to township or community • Alternate escape routes to be used in emergencies should be created in schools/learning centres. • CCTV cameras should be installed at strategic points. • Identify muster points within the school to be used in emergencies.	

Photo credit : Victims Support Fund

Section Three: Tools

This section presents tools to be used to measure the impact of implementing the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence Free Schools (NPSSVFS). It is expected that schools will use the tools annually to conduct institutional self-assessment and the information will be used in preparing and reviewing school improvement plans that integrate safety and security of learners, staff and school infrastructure. Quality Assurance Officers will also use the tools every three or four years to conduct external assessment of school and learning centre in order to certify them as safe, secure and violence free for teaching and learning.

Each of the five common approach areas has tools for measuring compliance.

Table 4: List of Tools

Standard	Common Approach Area	Tool
1	• Strong Systems	Form 1: The National Safe Schools Questionnaire
		Form 1 Part 3: Policies and referral process
		Form 1: Abused Child (Survivor) Information
		Form 2: Tracking Cases of Child Abuse/Violence against Children in Schools
		Form 3: External Tracking of Cases of Violence Against Children in Schools
2	• Violence Against Children	Form 1 Part 4: Positive and collaborative practices and attitude
		Form 1 Part 5: Prevention and response to violence
3	• Natural Hazards	Form 6: Emergency Preparedness and Response
4	• Conflict	Form 4: Attack on School and Response
5	• Everyday Hazard	Form 7: Safe Schools Risk Assessment
6	• Safe School Infrastructure	Form 1 Part 2: School Infrastructure

The National Safe School Questionnaire

This questionnaire be used to gather data on the types of hazards and violence in and around the school/centre and the findings to be used to design interventions that will promote safe, secure and violence free learning environment.

PART 1: Personal Information

School Name :
Community :
LGA :
State :
Date :

Please select your role in the school

Assistant Head teacher/Vice Principal -
Teacher -
Community member -
Education personnel -
Parent/guardian -
Health worker -
Learner -

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

o   The questionnaire is anonymous. Other than your role in the school, do not put down any personal information, such as name or grade.

o   If you do not know the answer to any question, leave it blank.

o   You are not obliged to answer any of the questions. It is useful but not mandatory to answer.

o   The questionnaire has 6 other parts (2- 7):
- Parts 3 and 4 have "Yes" and "No" options.
- Parts 2, 5, 6 and 7 have 5-point response options of:
 1 = Strongly Disagree
 2 = Disagree
 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
 4 = Agree
 5 = Strongly Agree

o   If you disagree, please write in the comments section the instances known to you.

o   Mark your selection with a tick or cross.

o   If you wish to clarify or add any further detail, please make use of the comments section.

Form 1: Child-Friendly School Infrastructure

Child-Friendly School Infrastructure	Yes	No	Comment
The school has a fence and lockable gate			
The school has a system for ensuring that only authorised personnel are allowed in the school premises			
The school has water from an improved source (municipal tap, borehole or protected well)			
The school has electricity supply			
The school has no broken windows			
The school has no damaged or vandalised classrooms			
The school has sufficient tables and chairs for all learners			
You are happy with the school's standards of infrastructure			
You are happy with the hostel's standards of infrastructure			
The school has fire extinguishers			
The school has separate toilets for girls and boys, and they do not have to queue up for a long time before using the toilet			
The bathrooms clean and stocked with soap and toilet paper			
There are separate taps and basins for girls and boys			
The classrooms are cleaned and tidied every day			
The school has a rubbish disposal system that removes waste from the school grounds			
The school is able to carry out minor repaired when required The school is able to get large-scale damage (walls, ceilings, paths, sewage, water, refurbishments) repaired within six months			
There are no areas in the school which are not monitored by teachers			
The school community helps with basic maintenance and repairs to the school			

Form 1: Policies and Referral Process

Policies and Referral Process	Yes	No	Comment
The school has a functional Committee for School Safety and Security			
The committee membership comprises of parents, teacher, learners and community members.			
There is a school focal point teacher (SFPT) that learners report cases to			
The school has a code of conduct in place for learners.			
The school has a code of conduct in place for staff members.			
The school has an anti-bullying policy in operation.			
The school has a substance use and abuse policy in operation.			
There are clear rules on the limits of learners and school personnel			
Learners were fully involved in the development of these policies.			
The school community was fully involved in developing these policies.			
Parents and learners have signed to confirm that they have read and understand the policies.			
There is a system in the school for anonymous reporting.			
You know the procedures for referral to medical, legal or social services in your school.			
If you have a problem, you feel the school can help you get help.			
If you have a problem, there is somebody in school who you feel most comfortable speaking to.			
Your school has links to the local clinic.			
Your school has links to the local social workers.			
Your school has links to the vigilante.			

Form 1: Positive and Collaborative Practices and Attitudes

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Positive and collaborative practices and attitude	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
There are after-school activities at the school.						
Parents and community members are involved with school activities.						
If there is a problem at a learner's home, a teacher will undertake a home visit.						
There is a first-aid kit at the school.						
There is someone at the school trained in first aid.						
The teachers at the school are happy and motivated.						
The teachers and the learners respect each other.						
The teachers greet the learners in a friendly way at the start of the day and at the beginning of each lesson.						
The teachers care about the wellbeing of the learners.						
The head teacher/principal is approachable and easy to talk to.						
Learners of different backgrounds are respected for their diversity.						
Teachers discipline learners without using violence or physical pain.						
Teachers keep a professional distance from learners						
People at the school are praised for good work and a good effort.						
Life skills lessons take place every week for every class eligible.						

Positive and collaborative practices and attitude	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
Life skills lessons are interactive and informative.						
Lessons in general are interesting and engaging.						
Lessons allow learners some freedom to be creative.						
Parents are able to visit classrooms and observe lessons taking place.						
You feel that you have a role to play in efforts to make the school safe and happy.						

Form 1: Prevention and Response to Violence

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Prevention and response to violence	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
There is nowhere in your school where you feel unsafe. (If you disagree, please note in the comments section where in the school you feel unsafe.)						
When bullying occurs, it is dealt with quickly and fairly.						
Learners feel comfortable reporting bullying to a teacher.						
Learners feel responsible for reporting bullying.						
There are Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) focal point teachers in the school.						
Learners feel safe to report SGBV cases.						
You think that the anti-bullying policy is fair.						

Prevention and response to violence

	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
You feel that the school knows how to address cyberbullying.						
Physical fighting is not common at the school.						
The teachers never beat or physically discipline learners at the school.						
You have never seen weapons at the school.						
Learners are informed of what to do if a violent person is on the school grounds.						
Learners are not treated differently because they are boys or girls.						
Name-calling based on gender is prohibited in the school.						
Learners do not feel at risk of sexual harassment at school.						
The teachers do not sexualise learners in any way (flirting, touching, kissing, making suggestive comments or effecting sexual acts).						
The school encourages boys and girls equally in academics and after-school activities.						
Learners receive training on coping skills.						
Cultism is not a problem at the school.						
The school has a reporting system that learners and teachers are aware of						
Learners feel safe to report acts of violence to school staff						
Learners are aware of emergency response plans in the school						
The school tries to encourage learners to be good decision-makers.						

Prevention and response to violence

	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
Learners and teachers participate in emergency drills periodically						
There is a muster point in the school that learners and teachers are aware of.						
There is a school safety plan that learners and teachers are aware of						
There is a school safety plan that learners and teachers are aware of						
There is an emergency exit in school that learners and teachers are aware of.						
Safety checks are conducted in the school regularly.						

Form 2: Violence: Reporting, Referral, and Tracking Response Forms

Abused Child (Survivor) Information

Reference number:	Name of child:	Registration/Admission no:

Sex:	Age:	Class:	Phone number (Parent/Guardian):

Residential address:

Type of alleged act of violence/abuse:	Location where the act took place:

Number of times the child has encountered this form of violence in the past:

Other forms of violence previously encountered by the child at the hands of the alleged perpetrator:

Measures taken by the school/other collaborating agencies against the alleged perpetrator regarding the violence:

Name of alleged perpetrator:	Contact address of alleged perpetrator:

Relationship of the child with the alleged perpetrator:	Date (and possibly, the time) of the act of violence:

Impact of the act of violence on the child:

Witnesses (if any) and their observations (Use plain sheet and attach if statement is detailed)

Name of witness:	Address of witness:

Observation (Brief statement of the event, as witnessed):

Signature/Date

_____

Source: National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools in Nigeria (2021).

Form 2: Tracking Cases of Child Abuse/Violence against Children in Schools

Form for Tracking Cases of Child Abuse/Violence against Children in Schools

Reference no. of the case:		
Name of the person/actor tracking the case:		
Designation/position held:		
Contact address:	Phone number(s):	Email:

Bio-data of the abused child (survivor)	
Name of the school:	Name of the abused child (survivor):

Registration/admission number:	Sex:	Age:	Class:

Nature of abuse / Type of violence:	Phone contact (Parent/Guardian):

Bio-data of the alleged perpetrator			
Name of the alleged perpetrator:			
Sex:	Age:	Occupation:	Phone number(s):
Contact Address:			

Bio-data of the alleged perpetrator			
Name of the alleged perpetrator:			
Sex:	Age:	Occupation:	Phone number(s):
Contact Address:			

Source: National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools in Nigeria (2021).

Form 3: External Tracking of Cases of Violence against Children in Schools

Form for External Tracking of Cases of Child Abuse/Violence Against Children in Schools

S/N	Body/ Collaborating Agency Where Case Is Referred	Recommended Actions or Decisions of Body/ Collaborating Agency	Status of Implementation of the Recommendations or Decisions	Remarks
1.	School safeguarding team (SST)			
2.	School-based management committee (SBMC), centre-based management committee (CBMC), or board of governors (BOG)			
3.	Ministry of Education/ UBEC/SUBEB/LGEA			
4.	Social welfare			
5.	Police			
6.	Family court (court of law)			
7.	Correctional centre			

Overall observations and conclusions of the person tracking the case:

Name of the person tracking:	Signature:
Designation:	Date:

Source: National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools in Nigeria (2021).

Form 4: Attack on School and Response

Education Incident report

Date of incident (dd/mm/yy):	Reporting organisation:
Date of monitor report: (dd/mm/yy):	Contact information:

Incident - General Information

Name of school:

Community:

LGA:

State:

GPS coordinates:

Latitude: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   Longitude: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Type of school:
☐ Government school   ☐ Private school   ☐ Quranic school
☐ Community school – temporary   ☐ Community school – permanent
☐ INGO/NGO permanent school/LS   ☐ INGO/NGO temporary school/LS

Level of education:
☐ ECD   Primary   ☐ Secondary   ☐ Primary and secondary

No. of classrooms in the school:

Incident Type

1. Occupation of school
   1a ☐ Armed forces (who? If known, provide in the narrative)
   1b ☐ Armed groups (who? If known, provide in the narrative)
   1c ☐ IDPs or other civilians
   1d ☐ Authorities

2. Direct attack on school/learning space
   2a ☐ Physical armed attack on school
   2b ☐ Shelling/mortars
   2c ☐ Fire/arson
   2d ☐ Destruction of school/learning space and infrastructure
   2e ☐ Looting/theft (teaching and learning material, food, water)

3. Indirect attack on school/learning space
   3a☐ Shelling, mortars
   3b☐ Crossfire
   3c☐ Fire/arson
   3d☐ Other damage/destruction, please specify: _

4. Threats and/or attacks on teachers/head teacher
   4a☐ Threats/Intimidation
   4b☐ Physical attack on teacher en route to school or at school
   4c☐ Arrest/detention
   4d☐ Abduction
   4e☐ Sexual abuse

5. Threats and/or attacks on learners
   5a☐ Threats/intimidation
   5b☐ Physical attack leading to injury/death
   5c☐ Abduction
   5d☐ Recruitment to armed forces/armed groups
   5e☐ Physical attack on learners en route to school or at school
   5f ☐ Sexual abuse

6. Education ideology or political interference
   6a☐ Enforced curriculum
   6b☐ Intimidation or imposed actions due to education ideology, politics and/or religion
   6c☐ Intimidation or imposed actions due to cultural practices

7. Denial of access to school/learning space due to
   7a☐ Road blocks
   7b☐ Armed conflict in the area (by armed groups and/or armed forces)
   7c☐ Communal conflict in the area
   7d☐ Intentional denial of humanitarian access to schools/learning space

Incident Initiated By: (tick several if relevant, and add specifics in narrative)

☐ Armed forces
☐ Community group
☐ Authorities
☐ IDPs or other civilian actors
☐ Unknown
Others,
specify: _

Impact of Incident:

Impact on Learners:

	# of Girls	# of Boys	# of Children Total
Affected (not killed or injured) Killed Injured			

Impact on Teachers

	# Female	# Male	# of Teachers Total
Affected (not killed or injured) Killed Injured			

Impact on Other Education Personnel:

	# Female	# Male	# of Education Personnel Total
Affected (not killed or injured) Killed Injured			

Impact on School Building:

☐ Entire school/learning space
☐ Classrooms: Number of classrooms: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
☐ Outdoor area/playground
☐ WASH facilities (latrines, handwashing area)
☐ Offices/kitchen/library/other spaces
☐ Fencing/protection
Other, specify: _

Severity of Damage

☐ Severe damage
☐ Medium damage
☐ Minor damage
☐ No physical damage

Impact on School Operations

☐ No change   ☐ Closed 1-5 school days   ☐ Closed more than 4 weeks
☐ Total closure/indefinite   ☐ Closed 2-4 weeks

Action Taken

Source: Education in Emergencies Working Group Nigeria (2020)

Form 5: Emergency Personnel Names and Phone Numbers

Designated responsible official for (fire, health, conflict) emergencies	Name:	Phone:
School block monitors (if applicable)	Block A Name: Block B Name:	Phone: Phone:
Assistants to the physically challenged (if applicable):	Assistant 1 Name: Assistant 2 Name:	Phone: Phone:
Fire service: Police: Civil defence: NEMA/SEMA/LEMA School security	Phone: Phone: Phone: Phone: Phone:	

Emergency Planning Checklist	Yes/No	Notes	Person Responsible
Is there an accessible first aid box?			
Is the equipment in the first aid box in good condition?			
Are the staff trained to carry out first aid?			
Are there arrangements in place to obtain additional sources of safe drinking water?			
Are there arrangements in place to obtain additional sources of food?			
Are there arrangements in place to obtain additional sources of emergency supplies?			
Are there arrangements in place to obtain additional first aid equipment?			
Are there arrangements in place to protect school/learning centre records?			
Are there arrangements in place to protect school/centre equipment?			
Are there arrangements in place/training for volunteers to assist persons with disabilities?			
Are there arrangements in place to accommodate wheelchairs?			
Are fire extinguishers available?			
Is there a method to ensure the entire school will be notified of an emergency?			

Adapted from Nova Scotia School Emergency Management Template Plan (2008)

Form 6: Everyday Hazards: Safe Schools Risk Assessment

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done Yes/No

Source: Published by the Health and Safety Executive (2020)

Figure 2: School Risk Mapping

photo credit: Save the Children International

Section Four:
Roles of Stakeholders in Ensuring Safe, Secure, and Violence-Free Schools

The relevant stakeholders for ensuring safe, secure, and violence-free schools are individuals, groups, and officials with vested interests in the progress, continuity, and success of the education system. While the Federal Ministry of Education has an obligation to set standards for the protection of the rights of all citizens to education, the State Ministry of Education, through its departments and agencies (MDAs), working with the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) and community representatives, implements programmes that reduce conflicts, prevent violence against children, and address natural and man-made hazards, thereby creating a safe and secure environment for learning. The following table outlines the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders in supporting school safety and security.

Table 12: Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders

State Ministry of Education (SMOE)/SUBEB	Local Government Education Authority
Give administrative support to schools	Reflect relevant safe school activities in strategic and work plans
Develop safe school policies, including risk assessment and management plans	Enhance capacity of schools to implement school development/improvement plans
Communicate policies and strategic plans to stakeholders	Communicate school safety policy and plans to teachers, education personnel, and other education stakeholders at the local government level
Develop and strengthen partnerships with education stakeholders	Support schools to carryout self-assessment on school safety
Advocate for safe schools	Conduct regular monitoring of the implementation of safe school activities
Co-ordinate training on safe schools at state and local government levels	Produce reports on assessments of safe schools conducted at local government levels
Provide resources (human and material) for the implementing of safe school activities at the state level	Escalate issues to SUBEB and Ministry of Education
Construct schools in line with agreed standards to ensure safety	Carryout regular maintenance of school infrastructure

State Ministry of Education (SMOE)/SUBEB	Local Government Education Authority
Respond to requests for assistance from LGEA Monitor the implementation of NPSSVFS	Conduct regular risk assessment
Conduct external evaluation of schools	Act on early warning signs
Establish safety committee to liaise with the Federal Ministry of Education on school safety	Provide schools with resources (human and material) to deal with immediate hazards

Members of Educational Institutions

A. School Head Teacher/Principals/Proprietors

- Apply safe school policy guidelines at the workplace
- Supervise implementation of school safety activities at the school
- Work with relevant stakeholders to develop institutional safe school plan and strategies
- Integrate safe school policy guidelines in school improvement plans (SIPs)
- Agree on appointment of safe schools focal point teacher (SFPT)
- Establish safe school committee to include community-level stakeholders
- Liaise with the LGEA and SUBEB to provide water and sanitation facilities within the school environment
- Provide data to LGEA, SUBEB, SAME and the Ministry of Education state and national safe school coordinators
- Build capacity of teachers to contribute to safe, secure, and violence-free school
- Conduct annual school self-assessment and adjust school improvement plan to accommodate findings
- Support the conduct of external school evaluation once every three years
- Support teachers to implement school safety programmes
- Develop a clear communication strategy to engage learners and other stakeholders on disaster management
- Escalate cases to higher authority

B. Teachers/Facilitators

- Adhere to the safe school policy
- Support implementation of safe school activities
- Provide support to learners
- Identify warning signs
- Report cases to the school head
- Listen to learners to understand their complaints
- Report abuse cases
- Visit the homes of learners to follow up on suspected abuse cases
- Use learner-centred approach in teaching to enable learners to be involved in their own development

Photo credit : Jesuit Refugee Service

Photo credit : UNICEF

Parent-Teacher Associations/ School-Based Management Committee/Centre-Based Management Committee

- Support the integration of safety, security and violence-free school initiatives into school improvement plans (SIP)
- Work with the wider school community on the implementation of school improvement plan
- Support with risk identification
- Support the identification of earlier warning signs
- Provide information on safety and security to members of the community
- Mobilise resources (human and material) from community to support safe school infrastructure
- Identify local vigilantes for security
- Advocate for peace in the community
- Create awareness for participation

Section Five : Other Resources

Safety and Welfare Manuals

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Education/Managing Safty_and_Health_in_Schools/Primary_Schools_Guidlines/Guide ines_on_Managing_Safety_Health_and_Wefare in-_Primary_Schools.pdf

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/education/managing_safety and_health_inschools/new-guidelines_files/spp-part-a-b-c-interactive-f.pdf

Child Protection Training Manuals for Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff

https://trcn.gov.ng/PUBLICATION/CODE%20OF%20CONDUCT.pdf

https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/actguide/action_guide.pdf

https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/documents/5396.pdf

Action Plan for Ending Violence against Children in Schools

https://www.unicef.org/media/83206/file/Violence-Against-Children-ToC.pdf

https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/9994/pdf/gp_strategy_en.pdf

https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/who-inspire_ seven-strategies-for-ending-violence-against-children.pdf

School Safety Plans

https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/who-inspire_ seven-strategies-for-ending-violence-against-children.pdf

https://www.santapaulaunified.org/cms/lib/CA01001761/Centricity/Domain/280/9_e_SantaPaulaHighSchoolCSSP201718_0.pdf

Disaster Risk Management Manuals

https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/documents/2727.pdf

https://www.academia.edu/39309225/School_Disaster_Risk_Reduction_and_ Management_Manual

School Development Plan

http://www.sdpi.ie/guidelines/PDF/Unit04.pdf

Emergency Preparedness and Response

https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/emp-plantemplateweb.pdf

https://inee.org/system/files/resources/INEE_Minimum_Standards_Handbook_2010%28HSP%29_EN.pdf

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(a) http://www.moe.gov.na/files/downloads/bc0_NSSF.Part.A.Introduction.&. Overview.pdf
(b) http://www.moe.gov.na/files/downloads/191_NSSF.Part%20B.Practical.Guide.pdf
(c) http://www.moe.gov.na/files/downloads/ad2_NSSF.Part.C.Resource.Kit.pdf

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UNICEF (2018). Preventing and Responding to Violence against Children Draft Programme Guidance. New York, NY: UNICEF.

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World Health Organization (2016a). INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence against Children. Geneva: World Health Organization.

Digital Versions of the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools may be accessed at

www.education.gov.ng

and

https://www.humanitari-anresponse.info/en/op-erations/nigeria/education

Please spread awareness about the minimum standards and implement to protect education in Nigeria!

photo credit: UNICEF

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