



Asia-Pacific Networks Stand Together to Address School-related Gender-Based Violence on the International Day of the Girl Child

BANGKOK, 10 October – For many children in Asia-Pacific, school is not a safe space for learning, but a place where they are forced to deal with threats of bullying, harassment, assault and even rape.

On the occasion of the **International Day of the Girl Child**, observed on 11 October, concerned networks in Asia-Pacific are calling for action to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in the region.

The theme of the day, “**Empowering Adolescent Girls: Ending the Cycle of Violence**”, speaks directly to the issues at the core of gender violence in schools – gender discrimination, gender inequality and harmful gender and social norms. While all children can be affected by violence, girls are particularly exposed to violence in, around, and on the way to school in Asia-Pacific.

Gender-related violence in schools is a violation of human rights that also raises additional barriers to learning and can adversely affect the health of young people. In extreme cases it can even drive young people to suicide. Studies also show that violence begets violence, perpetuating a vicious cycle that can last generations.

Partners in the East Asia Pacific UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women (UNiTE) campaign work together to ensure that students have the best possible opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and resources they need to reach their potential in a safe, nurturing environment. This includes working to promote gender equality, non-violence and acceptance.

On the International Day of the Girl Child, these networks are launching a social media campaign to mobilize policy-makers, the education sector and youth as well as to invite discussion and action on this blight to our region's education systems. The principles underlying the campaign are captured in this infographic, which explains SRGBV and how it threatens our children's futures.

UNGEI and UNiTE encourage the graphic to be shared widely to raise awareness of school-related violence, and to join the efforts to build communities where all children can pursue their fundamental rights to an education in a safe environment.

It is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#) and other regional languages ([Bahasa](#), [Bengali](#), [Burmese](#), [Chinese](#), [Filipino](#), [Khmer](#), [Korean](#), [Sinhala](#), [Thai](#), and [Vietnamese](#)). Share on social media: [#SRGBV](#) [#DayOfTheGirl](#) [#UNGEI](#) [#UNiTE](#)

For more information on:

UNGEI: Launched in April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a partnership of organizations working at global, regional and country levels to ensure that girls receive a quality education that prepares them to be full and active participants in their societies. To maximise actions which are most needed and will have the greatest on girls' education, UNGEI's [policy advocacy efforts](#) focus on four strategic priorities, one of which is the reduction/elimination of school-related gender-based violence. For more information on UNGEI, see www.ungei.org or contact Chemba Raghavan, craghavan@unicef.org. For specific information on the SRGBV working group contact: Laura Devos, ldevos@unicef.org or Justine Sass, j.sass@unesco.org.

UNiTE: Launched in 2008, the United Nations Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign is a UN System-wide initiative aiming to raise public awareness and increase political will and resources for preventing and ending all forms of violence against women and girls. Through global, regional and national advocacy initiatives, the UNiTE campaign is working to mobilize individuals and communities, with a strong focus on actively engaging with men and boys and young people. More information can be found at endviolence.un.org or contact Anna-Karin Jatfors, anna-karin.jatfors@unwomen.org.

Other resources:

- The East Asia Pacific UNGEI partnership has produced the [first regional review of school-related gender-based violence in the Asia-Pacific region](#), drawing on research, programme documentation, and lessons learned from a 2013 regional roundtable on SRGBV.
- The Asia-Pacific UNiTE Campaign Secretariat, together with a group of Asia-Pacific regional members of the UNiTE Youth Network, have developed a [regionally-focused, youth-friendly toolkit for peer educators](#) to facilitate discussions on gender equality, violence against women healthy relationships and positive activism.