Ensuring that all students are able to learn and thrive needs to be a priority to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and targets in the region and globally.

From Insult to Inclusion calls for scaled up action to:

- 1. Analyse the situation: Studies are needed to better understand the nature, scope and impact of bullying, violence and discrimination in schools, including forms driven by homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, intersex prejudice, heteronormativity and intolerance. Adaptation of existing standardised instruments could be costeffective, while targeted online surveys fill immediate evidence gaps. Assessments should form part of regular school evaluations, 5. Promote safe and inclusive school and data used to inform interventions.
- framework: Education authorities should mandate protection from violence, bullying and discrimination in schools including clear references to forms directed at learners and staff because of their sexual orientation, gender Budget allocation is required to put in place communication, implementation and response mechanisms, and to monitor the impact. Other 6. Build a stronger evidence base: policies to remove barriers to education, including gender-neutral uniforms and infrastructure for schools should be encouraged.
- 3. Mainstream diversity and inclusion in curricula and learning materials: Inaccurate and stigmatising images and text against LGBTI persons in existing curriculum and textbooks should be removed as a priority. Students should learn early through evidence-based, age-appropriate educational content that discrimination and prejudice in any form is unacceptable. Students should also be equipped with skills to interact in positive and prosocial ways.

- 4. Support teachers to deliver inclusive education and effective responses to bullying, violence and discrimination: School authorities and leadership should support teachers to foster respectful relationships and inclusive practices, and prevent and address abuse through pre- and in-service training programmes. Teachers also need guidance on what to do if they witness, suspect or are informed and school-based research are needed to about incidents of discrimination and violence.
- cultures and environments: Students should be able to express an appearance that corresponds **2. Develop an inclusive policy** to the gender with which they identify, and have their preferences for name and gender pronouns respected. Links to counselling, health, or other support services should be made available in ways that respect students' right to privacy and confidentiality. Opportunities to engage parents identity, gender expression or intersex status. and caregivers in creating inclusive school cultures and environments should be created.
  - More robust evaluations of interventions are needed to inform and scale up good practice in the region. Education sectors should develop a better understanding of factors that contribute to more inclusive school communities and the benefits that are achieved by doing so at the



There is a need for comprehensive education programmes that are based on evidence and supported by policy, for strengthened partnerships with young people themselves, and for more systematic data collection of the situation and the response. It is through such policies, programmes and partnerships that the rights of LGBTI and intersex young people will be recognised, including their rights to education, non-discrimination, and health.

This is the Executive Summary of an Asia-Pacific review of bullying, violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. It draws on over 500 published and unpublished reports, peer-reviewed literature and media reports from nearly 40 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as information from key stakeholders throughout the region.

## Depending on your needs and interests, the report can help you:

- Learn about the situation of LGBTI youth in Asia-Pacific schools and evidence gaps.
- Analyse what is happening in your own context and whether there is an adequate education sector response.
- Advocate for inclusive school environments that respect and value diversity in all
- Act to improve policy and programmes so that all learners can achieve their right to education.

Read the full report, From Insult to Inclusion: Asia Pacific report on school bullying, violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. (2015), online at http://goo.gl/SgaC3c

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** 

2015

"Everyone has the right to education...Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the ...maintenance of peace."

-The Universal Declaration of Human Rights







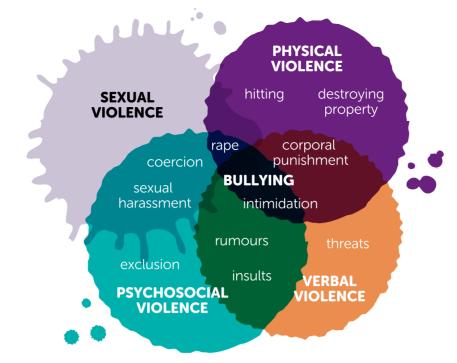


**Asia-Pacific governments** have made commitments to face discrimination, bullying and violence from safeguard the right of every child to a quality education, without discrimination or Such experiences do not stop at the school gates exclusion. Despite this, learning environments are not always safe and inclusive places but instead can be sites of physical, verbal, psychological and sexual violence. For children and young people who do not Bullying is one of the most widely documented schools can often be alienating and marainalizing places.

This is true for some lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) learners who their peers and adults whilst in school. These young people also often face institutional discrimination through non-inclusive school cultures, facilities, rules and curricula. but can occur on the way to and from school and in virtual spaces, through cyberbullying.

Much of the research on school violence has neglected to explore the role of gender and sexuality. However, most forms of violence in schools are deeply rooted in unequal gender relations, gendered social norms and discriminatory attitudes and practices. For these reasons this violence is often referred to as school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)

types of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region. Students conform to societal norms, are bullied when they are repeatedly exposed to aggressive behaviour which intentionally jury or discomfort. Bullying involves an ver and can be verbal, such



Types of violence

School-related gender-based violence includes acts or threats of sexual, physical, psychosocial or verbal violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes and enforced by unequal power dynamics.

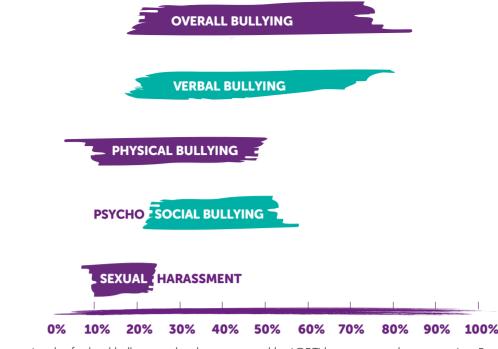
**Research** on school bullying, violence and • Gender discrimination and the lower status discrimination based on sexual orientation, greatly across Asia-Pacific. While further steps common themes emerge from available research:

- The majority of LGBTI students report having experienced some form of bullying, violence or discrimination. Limited data are available on intersex learners, although emerging data from Australia show them to be highly affected.
- Rates of peer victimization among LGBTI students are higher than among their non-LGBTI peers, and victimization appears to have a more profound effect.
- Verbal bullying is the most common form reported; however psychosocial bullying is also prevalent, followed by the physical bullying and sexual harassment.
- Though data are limited, transgender students appear to be more commonly targeted for discrimination and bullying.

- accorded to women and airls can intersect with gender identity and expression (SOGIE) varies homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in some settings to make lesbian, bisexual and transgender are needed to strengthen the evidence base, girls and young women particularly vulnerable.
  - Not only self-identified LGBTI students are subject to SOGIE-based bullying, violence and discrimination, but also those who do not conform to gender norms of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'.
  - Perpetrators are largely other students; however, teachers and other education staff are also reportedly responsible for violence and discrimination.
  - Institutional level discrimination and exclusion are common including misrepresentation in textbooks and curricula and an absence of gender-appropriate regulations and facilities.
  - In many instances those targeted by violence and bullying do not seek help, as schools have insufficient support or response mechanisms to deal with the issues.

"Going to school was an ordeal. I was treated as if I were an object with no feelings. I did not think education was worth all the taunts, jeers and threats I had to face on a daily basis."

- Khurram, gay man, Rawalpindi, Pakistan



Levels of school bullying and voilence reported by LGBTI learners in studies across Asia-Pacific (%)

risk of physical and mental health problems ideation and behavior, and substance abuse. sex attracted students were found to be two to of depression than opposite-sex attracted (46%) of LGBTI respondents under the age of US\$1.9 billion. 18 reported having attempted suicide, while in Japan, approximately half of those bullied said they had no one to talk to, 32% had considered suicide, and 22% had self-harmed.

The **impacts** of this bullying, violence and There is evidence from the region that discrimination are far-reaching. They contribute educational performance and achievement to a hostile or unsafe school climate, affecting are also affected, leading to life-long impacts not only those who are targeted but also on employment and economic prospects and those who witness or perpetrate these acts. broader societal level impacts. In China, nearly 6 in 10 (59%) LGBTI participants in an Those who face violence are at greater online survey reported that bullying affected their academic performance, with nearly 1/4 including depression and anxiety, suicidal (24%) reporting losing interest in studying.

For example, in New Zealand, same- or both- Other analyses find homophobia to have a significant impact on economic development. three times more likely to suffer from symptoms In India, for example, the economic cost of homophobia was estimated to be 0.1-1.7% of students. In the Republic of Korea, nearly half the country's Gross Domestic Product or at least

> "One of my former classmates... fabricated a lot of rumors... That experience was horrific torture for me and everyday my thoughts were only on how to kill myself... I felt that the whole world has turned against me and nobody was willing to help."

- 24 year-old lesbian woman, China



The **education sector response** to a significant barrier to addressing violence and prevent or address SOGIE-based bullying, discrimination against LGBTI people of any age. violence and discrimination is progressing Few education ministries have institutionalized at different rates, and using different entry professional development for teachers that points, across the region. Comprehensive enables values clarification and skills-building programmes are rare, and while there are on gender, sexuality and non-violence. Australia many initiatives underway, they are generally and New Zealand were found to have the being implemented in a fragmented manner, most comprehensive guidance on curriculum, with insufficient documentation and evaluation. In many settings, NGOs and universities are programmes for teachers, while Nepal taking the lead on interventions with LGBTI provides an example of an NGO-government organizations, in particular, often playing a partnership to strengthen teachers' ability to pivotal role. There are many good practice implement a new SOGIE-inclusive curriculum. examples from around the region, but these are not typically undertaken within wholeschool approaches or holistic programmes.

Most countries have specific education policies, laws and/or guidelines that uphold the rights and dignity of children in the educational as community-based programmes. For example, environment, which include the legal prohibition Project Touch in Hong Kong SAR provides a of violence. However, the Philippines was the particularly comprehensive range of services, only country found to include specific reference including counselling and support groups. However, to bullying on the basis of sexual orientation there is limited information on the coverage and gender identity in a national law. In a and effectiveness of these programmes, and number of countries throughout the region, many LGBTI students are not seeking services prohibitive legal and social environments are still due to fear of further discrimination or inaction.

resources and professional development

Throughout the region, there are many examples of programmes for learners that address SOGIErelated bullying, violence and discrimination. This includes peer support, links to counselling services and awareness-raising activities, as well

