

significant new funding to the sector (around USD 200 million), and potentially will revitalise and strengthen dialogue and joint planning process.

With some 1.5 million refugees, Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa. Education remains a priority for refugee families. An Education Response Plan was put in place in 2018 by MoES, which sets a framework for the integration of refugees in host communities and the education system more broadly. Over the years, DG ECHO and Education Cannot Wait (ECW) have invested substantial funding to support education in refugee-based areas, including cash for education. While humanitarian funding will continue, the Action will seek to explicitly complement humanitarian funding with for instance supporting the transition of learners previously supported by humanitarian aid from primary to secondary, scaling up accelerated education programmes for over-aged learners or policy dialogue to recognise community schools in refugee based areas.

Uganda has a progressive legislative and policy framework relating to prevention of SGBV<sup>8</sup>. The SRHR policy and legal framework is yet to be consolidated through the finalisation and approval of a SRHR policy and an Adolescent Health Policy. In terms of addressing SRHR in the school environment, progress on the approval of the School Health Policy has been slow. In 2018, the Government launched a framework for sexuality education which aims at empowering young people with information and life skills that are age-appropriate, culturally and religiously sensitive, and that enable them to make safe and healthy life choices on their sexual and reproductive health. The framework is used as a guide to the development of sexuality education curricula, textbooks and programmes. The 2019 Sexuality Education guidelines for in and out-of-school children are yet to be approved. Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) Guidelines on violence against children in school, adopted in 2014, aim at supporting a violence-free learning environment in school. Guidelines for Prevention and Management of Teenage Pregnancy in education institutions, launched by the Minister of Education and Sports in October 2021, provide second chance to teenage pregnant girls and children mothers to come back to school. In spite of the above, GBV remains widespread throughout the country. The implementation and enforcement of these laws, guidelines and policies remain the biggest challenge. Many of these remain unknown to the majority of the rights holders and some duty bearers. Therefore, the population cannot demand for their rights and those with the responsibility to enforce these laws are at times incapable of enforcing them due to ignorance of the laws and the lack of resourcing for their enforcement. SGBV practices remain majorly “acceptable” to some sections of the population. Likewise, some sections of the population, especially religious leaders, remain resentful of SRHR programmes. The above has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak. For example, in a study by UN Women and UBOS in 2020 in the middle of the COVID19 pandemic, 47% of the sampled population knew someone who had been a victim of GBV since March 2020. Physical violence was reported at 50% of the known cases, economic violence at 30%, psychological violence at 28%, and sexual violence at 23%.

A sharp increase of teenage pregnancies in the context of the COVID-19 lockdown has attracted political attention and made the issue prominent in the national agenda. The government in partnership with UNFPA and UNICEF launched a national campaign called “Protect the Girl, Save the Nation campaign” which is spearheaded by 3 high-level Ugandan women: the First Lady and Minister of Education, the Vice President and the Prime Minister.

The EU-UN Spotlight initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls in Uganda (2019-2022) has progressed well and has generated a good momentum at national and local government levels. The Action builds on the foundations of the Global Spotlight Initiative and narrows the focus to the specific objective of enhanced SGBV prevention and response, and increased access to and utilisation of multi-sectoral quality SRHR and SGBV services for women and adolescent girls, including in schools.

Several other development partners are active in the areas of education, SGBV and SRHR. Belgium, Ireland, UK, US, the UN and the World Bank are the main development partners in the education sector and most EU Member States are active in the areas of SRHR and SGBV. The implementation of the Action, involving several bilateral and multilateral implementing partners, will create opportunities for synergies with other development partners.

---

<sup>8</sup> Domestic violence Act, Trafficking in persons Act, Children Act, Laws on inheritance, Land (Amendment) all have sufficient provisions to protect women and girls