



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



Safe Education for all:

A Decade of Commitment, A call to Action through the safe schools Declaration.

NAIROBI OUTCOME DOCUMENT NOVEMBER 2025



Fifth International Conference on the Safe Schools Declaration: Nairobi Outcome Document

The Nairobi Outcome Document is an initiative of the Government of Kenya, host of the Fifth International Conference on the Safe Schools Declaration held on 25th-26th November, 2025 at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi. It entails a co-chairs summary of the discussions during the conference, reflecting on the main takeaways of the various sessions, and a Voluntary Self-Assessment tool, which is an action-oriented tool intended to support and track progress in implementing the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) .

The Voluntary Self-Assessment tool was developed by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) and its member organizations¹, at the request of the Government of Kenya, in their role as technical leads for the Conference. States are encouraged to use the Nairobi Outcome Document framework to guide their national implementation of the SSD in the lead up to the Sixth International Conference. Other stakeholders are invited to use it as an advocacy and accountability tool to sustain momentum following the Fifth International Conference and to inform preparations for the next one.

26th November, 2025, Nairobi, Kenya

¹GCPEA members include UNICEF, UNESCO, Save the Children, Plan International, and Human Rights Watch. Other partners also provided support, including the ICRC and the Global Education Cluster.



CO-CHAIRS SUMMARY

Session One: High-Level Opening Ceremony and Commitment Session: Securing the present and future of safe education

1. A Decade On, States Call for Turning SSD Commitments into Concrete Protection and Accountability

Marking ten years of the Safe Schools Declaration, speakers underscored an unprecedented mobilization of conflict-affected states and a shared recognition that education is a lifeline and a legal, moral responsibility. Governments and partners emphasized the urgent need to translate political commitments into tangible implementation — including domestication of the SSD, gender-responsive and child-centred school safety plans, integration of protection into military doctrine and training, and ensuring accountability for attacks so that “silence” no longer prevails.

2. Strengthened Global Partnerships and Financing Are Essential to Safeguard Learning in an Era of Rising Instability

Across UN agencies, regional bodies, and civil society, there was a unified call to scale up joint action, robust EiE preparedness, and predictable financing to ensure continuity of education where attacks are increasing. Speakers highlighted that protecting education is foundational to peacebuilding, social cohesion, and recovery — requiring stronger global partnerships, locally driven solutions, and full funding of education in emergencies so that the next decade of SSD delivers measurable impact for children living in conflict.

Session two: Keynote address - Protecting the right to education and Children's Rights during Armed Conflict

1. Children's Right to Education Is Under Unprecedented Threat, Demanding Stronger Political Commitment to Implement SSD and other Existing Frameworks

UN experts emphasized that attacks on education have reached their highest levels in 30 years, with entire systems — such as in Gaza, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, Colombia, Myanmar, Haiti and Sudan — devastated and children in conflict losing years of learning. The SSD, the Paris and Vancouver Principles, and other frameworks already provide the tools needed for States to fulfil their child rights obligations ; what is missing is stronger political resolve to implement them, ensure accountability, and prevent classrooms from becoming battlegrounds.



2. Domestication of the Safe Schools Declaration and Ground-Level Action Are Essential to Protect Children Now

Across the panel, there was a clear call to move from discussion to action felt by children themselves: states must integrate and operationalize SSD commitments nationally; listen to children and youth; and ensure that education continues even amid crisis. As child activists reminded delegates, education is often “the one thing that [children] refuse to abandon” in conflict — and delivering on the SSD is a promise that must be fulfilled.

Session three: Voices from the ground Forum - Voices from Conflict-Affected children, youth, teachers, and communities

1. Ground-level experiences show that protecting education requires strong local systems, evidence-based action, and the meaningful inclusion of children and communities.

Speakers underscored that behind every statistic is a child whose safety depends on empowered teachers, families, and community structures. Effective protection hinges on national systems equipped with practical safety protocols, robust documentation and analysis of attacks, and the direct participation of students and affected communities in shaping policies and responses.

2. Survivors’ and frontline perspectives reaffirm that prevention must be matched with long-term support that restores learning and dignity.

Children and teachers’ voices from Kenya, Uganda, Syria, and Democratic Republic of Congo highlighted that safe education means not only preventing attacks but ensuring healing, continuity of learning, and resilience for children displaced, abducted, or traumatized by conflict. Their testimonies called for global commitments to reflect local realities, prioritize child protection in crises, and uphold education as the pathway through which children rebuild their futures.

Session four: Global stock-taking - Achievements, Challenges, Status of SSD endorsement and implementation

1. Ten years on, the Safe Schools Declaration has achieved broad acceptance and policy uptake, but protecting education now hinges on stronger state leadership and credible data.

With 122 state endorsements and growing application of the Guidelines, speakers stressed that states must lead by example as armed groups increasingly emulate state behaviour. While the SSD has contributed to strengthening legal and policy frameworks, persistent gaps in data collection, validation, and disaggregation continue to undermine accountability and limit effective, evidence-based responses to attacks on education.



2. Advancing protection requires inclusive engagement across all conflict actors and sustained investment in monitoring systems

Discussions underscored the need to engage national authorities, communities, and armed groups in applying risk analysis, documentation, and operational policies to prevent military use of educational facilities. Reliable, accessible data is vital not only for accountability but also for tailoring support to children and teachers on the ground—ensuring the next decade of SSD implementation is evidence-driven and responsive to evolving threats.

Session Five: Solution Showcase- Innovations in Multisectoral Domestication of the Safe Schools Declaration: concrete examples from SSD technical committees, new models of coordination, partnerships and financing

1. A diverse range of innovative, multisectoral practices is emerging worldwide to domesticate and operationalize the Safe Schools Declaration.

The showcase demonstrated that coordinated national mechanisms, child-centred approaches, community engagement, and legal and policy tools are helping states, UN agencies, and civil society operationalize the Safe Schools Declaration. Examples included national technical committees from affected countries, accountability initiatives, localized communication strategies, minimum standards, legal commentaries, and digital learning tools and adaptable continuity-of-learning models.

2. Peer learning and cross-sector collaboration are essential to accelerate SSD uptake, with showcased solutions revealing scalable models that strengthen national systems and inspire new partnerships.

The session underscored the value of shared lessons—from state–civil society- UN/education clusters co-implementation and regional good practices—and highlighted the central role of the State-led Implementation Network as a platform that facilitates state to state collaboration, strengthens SSD implementation, and informs the follow up to the Conference.

Session Six: Gendered impacts of attacks on education and gender-responsive implementation of the SSD

1. Gender-responsive protection must be embedded in SSD implementation

Speakers emphasized the need for mandatory gender-disaggregated data, integration of gender analysis into military doctrine and security operations, and zero-tolerance enforcement for school-related Gender-Based Violence to ensure gender responsive protection. Experience from Kenya and Spain shows that, without these concrete measures, the specific ways girls and boys are targeted — from sexual violence, early marriage, abductions, recruitment, stigma and exclusion — remain invisible, leaving gendered harms unaddressed, and undermining the SSD's core objectives.



2. States and partners need to invest urgently in trauma-informed, community-anchored reintegration and protection systems.

This requires scaling up psychosocial support for students and teachers, enforcing minimum safety standards, strengthening accountability for attacks, and funding locally led reintegration models that, as demonstrated in Nigeria, to address stigma, displacement, and practical barriers to learning. Local voices and lived experience must guide design to ensure responses are effective, inclusive and gender responsive.

Session Seven: Protecting schools and universities from military use: upholding international humanitarian law and the key role of armed actors in preserving the civilian character of educational facilities during armed conflict

1. Legal and operational safeguards to prevent military use of schools must be urgently strengthened.

Speakers emphasized that these safeguards should be urgently strengthened, including through explicit prohibition and zero-tolerance enforcement across all security forces and peace operations. Examples from the Philippines, Nigeria, African regional mechanisms, and UN peacekeeping show that progress is possible — but speakers stressed that domestication and implementation remain the greatest gaps. Protecting education must be treated as a core operational standard, not an optional add-on.

2. The Guidelines on Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict should be used as minimum standards to prevent harm.

Amid ongoing violations caused by neglect, misinterpretation, or permissive policies, the session stressed the need for concrete measures: mandatory training on the Guidelines, strict avoidance of actions that impede access to education, and real accountability for violations. The ICRC's new Legal Commentary to the Guidelines offers clearer, practical guidance to help states and armed actors implement the Guidelines and encourage States to endorse the SSD.

Session Eight: Ensuring greater accountability for attacks on education

1. Accountability can only be achieved by strengthening normative and legal frameworks.

The session underscored that ending impunity for attacks on education depends on robust domestic laws aligned with international standards, explicit criminalization of education-related violations, and enhanced institutional capacity to investigate and prosecute these crimes. Speakers highlighted the importance of embedding SSD provisions into national judicial mechanisms and strengthening child-sensitive investigative expertise to ensure justice is accessible and effective.



2. National action and collaboration are driving progress—but major gaps remain.

Examples from Colombia show how political will, legal reform, and partnerships between governments, civil society, and international actors can drive progress through truth commissions, restorative justice, and reparations. GCPEA’s Accountability Toolbox illustrates a multi-pronged approach combining legislation, prosecution strategies, sanctions, and reparative measures. Despite these advances, persistent challenges — underreporting, evidentiary constraints, and lack of recognition of education-related crimes, and insufficient child-centered expertise — continue to hinder full implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration. Reparations that address trauma, stigma, and educational disruption remain central to achieving meaningful accountability.

Session Nine: Mobilizing resources & partnerships to accelerate SSD implementation and Sustainable Development Goals to 2030

1. Urgent, predictable, and increased financing is essential to sustain SSD implementation amid major global funding cuts.

With educational needs in humanitarian contexts soaring, attacks are increasing, while funding is declining, the session highlights that without renewed investment, donor coordination and innovative partnerships, progress made under the Safe Schools Declaration risks stalling. Strengthening financing streams - humanitarian, development, and domestic - is critical to protect learning environments and meet SDG 4 by 2030.

2. Locally led, evidence-driven partnership models offer the most sustainable path to protect education in crises.

Examples from Mali and South Sudan, and regional platforms (Sahel, African Union CAAC) show that effective SSD domestication requires empowered national systems, community engagement, and coordinated multisectoral approaches. Investing in robust data, cross-agency collaboration, and flexible funding mechanisms will be key to scaling solutions from global frameworks to practical impact on the ground.



Voluntary Self- Assessment tool (2025-2030)

Building on a decade of progress since the launch of the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) in 2015, the Voluntary Self- Assessment tool outlines a prioritized menu of recommended actions and key indicators designed to accelerate implementation of the SSD and strengthen the protection of education from attack in the next five years.

The Voluntary Self-Assessment tool is a strategic roadmap for States and other stakeholders to conduct national reviews, monitor progress, and guide action in advancing and reporting on SSD commitments. It is intended to inform and inspire concrete steps that States can take, including in the lead-up to the Sixth International Conference on the Safe Schools Declaration.

Action	Key Indicators to measure progress achieved	Self-assessment
1. Secure High Level Political Commitment to Protect Education	Number of national legislation, education sector plans, security policies, humanitarian and other relevant frameworks that incorporate SSD commitments and principles.	
	Number of national high-level political statements reaffirming commitment to the SSD and its implementation.	
	Number of States that appoint SSD focal points at ministerial level.	
2. Meaningfully engage and empower Children, Youth, Teachers, and Communities leaders to participate in SSD implementation	Number of schools implementing school-based risk reduction and safety plans co-designed with students and teachers.	
	Number of student-led or teacher-led initiatives addressing the protection of education in conflict-affected settings.	
	Number of children and youth participating in SSD implementation processes at local or national levels.	
3. Advance Multisectoral Domestication of the SSD	Evidence of multisectoral SSD implementation strategies and plans involving education, defense, interior, and justice ministries.	
	Number of national education sector plans and legal reforms that reflect SSD principles.	
	Functioning cross-ministerial coordination mechanisms established for SSD implementation.	



Action	Key Indicators to measure progress achieved	Self-assessment
4. Strengthen Regional and International Collaboration for Safer Schools	<p>SSD is integrated in regional processes, mechanisms, action plans, policies, or declarations (e.g. African Union, ASEAN, ECOWAS, European Council, European Union, CARICOM, NATO, OAS, etc.).</p> <hr/> <p>SSD is integrated in relevant international initiatives, processes and fora (e.g. UN agenda post-2030, peace and security agenda, UN Security Council and Human Rights Council).</p> <hr/> <p>Frequency of inter-state or inter-agency gatherings to facilitate peer learning and exchange of good practice on SSD implementation, identify challenges, and advance collective action to protect education.</p>	
5. Restrict or prohibit the Military Use of Schools and Universities	<p>Number of States that adopt national legislation prohibiting, restricting, and/or criminalizing military use of schools and universities.</p> <hr/> <p>Number of military doctrines, military manuals, rules of engagement, operational orders, or other relevant documents revised to include prohibition of military use of education facilities, and number of relevant training sessions conducted.</p> <hr/> <p>If country is experiencing armed conflict, reduction in reported cases of military use of schools and universities by parties to the conflict.</p> <hr/> <p>If country is experiencing armed conflict, number of instances where military forces or armed groups vacate education facilities post-2025.</p>	
6. Accelerate Gender-Responsive Implementation of the SSD	<p>Number of SSD implementation plans that include gender-sensitive analysis and targeted actions addressing the specific risks faced by girls, women, and marginalized learners.</p> <hr/> <p>Number of States systematically collecting age, sex, disability and gender-disaggregated data on attacks on education and gender-specific risks.</p> <hr/> <p>Number of programs targeting protection of girls' and women's education in conflict-affected areas.</p>	



Action	Key Indicators to measure progress achieved	Self-assessment
7. Systematize Monitoring and Reporting to Prevent and Respond to Attacks on Education	Number of States that have national mechanisms systematically tracking and reporting attacks on education.	
	Number of national financial contributions for monitoring and reporting systems, such as the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism.	
	Number of states that have integrated attacks on education data into Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) for adequate response and increased resilience.	
	Support monitoring and reporting capacity building initiatives to ensure timely collection, verification, and publication of disaggregated data. Attacks on education included in national or regional early warning and response systems.	
8. Develop Synergies with Other Protection and Climate Frameworks	Number of protection frameworks or child protection systems that integrate SSD principles.	
	Number of national disaster risk reduction or resilience strategies that explicitly include the protection of education from attack. ²	
	Number of coordinated initiatives between education, protection, peace and security, and climate actors to ensure that education systems are resilient and can continue functioning during armed conflict, displacement, and climate-related crises.	
9. Ensure Greater Accountability for Attacks on Education	National courts recognize education-related violations amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity, making them a priority for investigation and prosecution, ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable.	
	Adoption of national legislation that criminalizes education-related crimes and supports survivors' access to justice, reparations, and psychological support.	

² In line with the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF), taking an all-hazards all all-risk approach to the protection of education.



Action	Key Indicators to measure progress achieved	Self-assessment
	<p>Ensure proper resourcing of accountability mechanisms at national, regional, and international levels.</p> <hr/> <p>Number of documented investigations, prosecutions, or sanctions for education related crimes at national or international level.</p> <hr/> <p>Attacks on education and SSD are included in state reporting to regional and international accountability mechanisms and processes (e.g. Treaty Bodies, Universal Periodic Review, Voluntary National Reviews).</p>	
<p>10. Mobilize Resources and Partnerships to Accelerate SSD Implementation to 2030</p>	<p>Increase in domestic and international funding allocated to SSD implementation activities.</p> <hr/> <p>Number of public-private, interagency, or civil society partnerships advancing SSD-related initiatives.</p> <hr/> <p>Number of SSD implementation projects supported by international donors, multilateral agencies, or pooled funds.</p>	





5TH
**INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON THE
SAFE SCHOOLS
DECLARATION**

Safe Education for All:

*A Decade of Commitment,
A Call to Action through
the Safe Schools Declaration.*



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

 **Norway**



Ministry of Foreign
Affairs, International
Trade and Worship
Argentine Republic



 aecid

 cooperación
española

 unicef



Global Coalition to **Protect**
Education from Attack



Save the Children

 unesco

 **PLAN**
INTERNATIONAL

