

Safety a challenge in preschools in informal settlements
*Accelerating early childhood development through
partnership*

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Presenter

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“No child will succeed academically if they don’t first feel safe in school. No teacher will teach at their best if they are not confident that there’s a plan in place to ensure their school is well prepared for an emergency.”

Introduction

- SDG 4.2 seeks to ensure that by 2030 all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education to be ready for primary education
- Learning in a safe and secure environment therefore is key in ensuring quality

Introduction

- School safety is defined as measures put in place by staff, parents, learners and other stakeholders to minimize or eliminate risk conditions that may cause accidents, bodily injury as well as emotional and psychological distress.
- Accidents if not prevented can cause disability or death, while emotional and psychological trauma can lead to lack of self-esteem leading to poor performance.

(Kenya safety standards manual for schools, 2008)

Methodology

- The study was conducted in Nairobi County (Kibera, Mukuru, Mathari, Dagoretti and Kawangware)
- Mixed methods approach employed
- 136 participants from 54 preschools participated in the study comprising of 78 preschool teachers, 54 head teachers and 4 education officers
- Data was collected through interviews for HTs and education officers, questionnaire for preschool teachers and observation checklists
- Both descriptive statistics and qualitative data analysis procedures were applied
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Results: Enrollment

Class/Gend	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Day care	591	49.4	606	50.6	1197	100
Preprimary 1	686	51.9	637	48.1	1323	100
Preprimary 2	731	49.2	754	50.8	1485	100
SNE	23	76.7	7	23.3	30	100
Total	2031	50.3	2004	49.7	4035	100
Teachers	14	8.3	155	91.7	169	100

Results

- The **first research question** sought to establish **safety and security measures** put in place in preschools in informal settlements.
- The focus was on **measures** put in place by **government** and **schools**

Measures by Government

Government has come up with various documents outlining the standards and guidelines on safety and security of learners in schools:

1. National school health strategy implementation plan 2011-2015
2. The early childhood development service standards guidelines 2006
3. The safety standards manual for schools in Kenya 2008
4. Registration guidelines for alternative provision of basic education and training (APBET) 2015

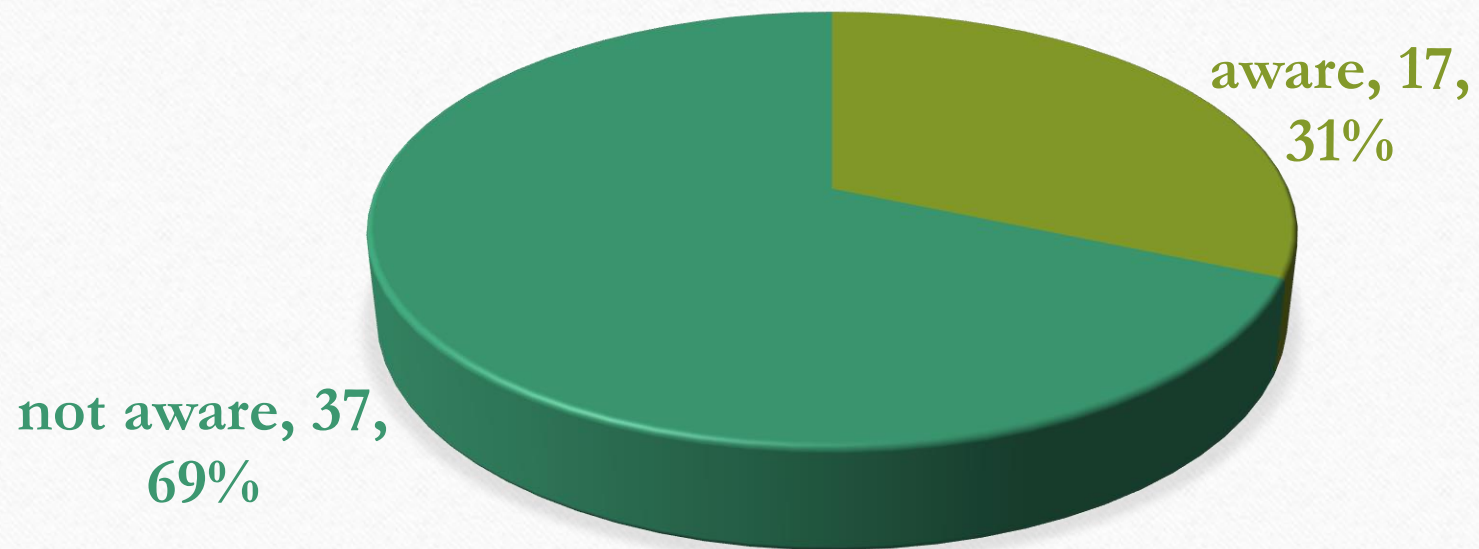
Measures by Government

Among the guidelines outlined include:

- classroom accommodating 25 children to measure 8 by 6 meters.
- adequate **ventilation and lighting**, proper **roofing, windows, doors** and proper **flooring**.
- Children sized **chairs**, separate **toilets** for both boys and girls at a ratio of 1:25.
- surface of **outdoor play** areas to be free from sharp objects, harmful plants and discarded materials and equipment.
- **school compounds** to **fenced** off and have **lockable** gates.
- **feeding programme**.
- APBET **institutions** to make arrangement with **neighbouring institutions** to use their **learning facilities**.

Teachers' Awareness of Standards and Guidelines

TEACHERS AWARENESS



Measures by schools: Learning environment (observations)



Measures by schools: Availability of water and handwashing facilities (observations)



Measures by schools: availability of Play space and equipment

	Frequency	Percentage
Play space available	23	42.6
Play space not available	31	57.4
Play equipment available	8	14.8
Play equipment not available	46	85.2

Measures by schools: Availability of firefighting equipment and first aid kits

	Frequency	Percentage
Fire Fighting Equipment		
Yes	10	18.5
No	44	81.5
Total	54	100
First Aid Kit		
Yes	26	48.1
No	28	51.9
Total	54	100

Challenges experienced

- **Physical facilities** in some schools were inadequate

This school lacks enough space in the classroom because the children are too many and cannot even move freely inside the class (Tr. Krn). The biggest challenges we are experiencing are the classroom furniture which are not up to standard and also are few (Tr. Dstny).

- **Inadequate outdoor play space**

The school doesn't have its own compound it's in a rented ground (Tr. Glry). The playground is not enough to accommodate the number of children (HT Grp Yrd).

Challenges experienced

- **Dropping and picking** children was a challenge in some schools.

The small children who go home by themselves sometimes are attacked by the big students, they are beaten and they fear to report them to teachers or parents (Tr. ABC). Children come to school alone and go back for lunch alone hence causing insecurity for the young children (Tr. Brllnt).

- Some schools were **not fenced** while others did not have **lockable gates**.
- inadequate **water and sanitation facilities**.
- **Feeding programme** was a challenge for some school.
- **Firefighting equipment** and **first aid kits** not available in some schools while in those that had teachers were not trained on how to use them

Implications of the findings

- **Inadequate** physical facilities will **subject children to accidents/injury**
- **Children walking to school unaccompanied** is exposing them to insecurity/accidents or bullying by older children etc
- **Unfenced school compound** will allow children to sneak out of schools without teachers noticing.
- **Lacking adequate water and sanitation facilities** is exposing children to water borne diseases.
- **Allowing children to go home for lunch** is exposing them to insecurity while allowing them to **buy food from kiosks** has health implications.
- **Lack of firefighting equipment** and **first aid kits** is an indication that schools are **inadequately prepared to respond to emergencies** related to fire outbreak and injury

Recommendations

- Pre-primary education being a devolved function, there is need for Nairobi City County in collaboration with actors in ECD to **come up with ECD centres of excellence in informal settlements** to provide safe, secure and conducive environment for learning.
- Making it mandatory for **all schools to have firefighting equipment and first aid kits** and **training members of staff** on how to use them.
- The challenges outlined point to **implementation gaps** in the standards and guidelines.

Recommendations

- **Disseminating standards and guidelines** to all implementers of children's safety is key (head teachers, teachers, parents etc)
- Nairobi City County in collaboration with actors in ECD to **ensure that guidelines and standards are implemented:**
 - Physical facilities and infrastructure
 - Water, hygiene and sanitation
 - Feeding programmes
 - Dropping and picking children
 - Provision of play space and play equipment

Conclusion

- Achieving SDG 4.2 requires **collective responsibility** of all actors in early childhood to collaborate in providing quality early childhood services especially to children from disadvantaged background by using evidence to inform actions/implementation of programmes.
- Research institutions/researchers – provide evidence
- Service providers (family, community, institutions) – utilize evidence

Thank you

