



Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

Safer Access to Essential Public Services Programme (SAF). SAF is a risk management methodology that seeks to mitigate, reduce and prevent the impacts of exposure to armed violence on professionals and beneficiaries of essential public services, such as education, in order to maintain and expand access and the supply of these services to the population.

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

Brazil

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

- ☒ Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- ☒ Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- ☐ Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- ☐ Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- ☐ Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

The programme is developed by the Brasília Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Brazil in partnership with Municipal Education Secretariats of Rio de Janeiro, Duque de Caxias, Porto Alegre, Vila Velha and Fortaleza Municipalities.

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

Access to education
humanitarian consequences of armed violence
Risk Management
partnerships
capacity building
sustainability
scalability

6. What makes it a best practice? *

a) work in partnership with local public institutions; b) Impact on expanding access to education through a reduction in the number of school closures and a reduction in closing periods due to situations of armed violence. c) Sustainability through internal mechanisms in institutions such as public policies (Municipal Decree No. 20.830 dated December 2020 of the Municipality of Porto Alegre, which together with Law No. 2902 dated 08/24/2018 that puts in place SAF in the Municipality of Duque de Caxias. d) capacity for replication and scalability of the program to various institutions providing essential public services, due to the modus operandi in which a network of replicators is trained and all materials for its replication and monitoring are made available, including online Safe Behaviours trainings. e) Focus on strengthening existing capacities of institutions. f) transfer of know-how and expertise, without material costs for local institutions. During its expansion and consolidation process, the SAF has proven to be a valuable strategy to support institutions and the population that depend on these services, especially in areas most vulnerable to armed violence. The results of the SAF implementation in multiple and diverse scenarios have shown the relevance and efficiency of the methodology as a tool to mitigate the effects of violence on professionals and the provision of services. Among other results reported by partners for the 2017-2018 period, it was possible to evidence a reduction of more than 38% in service closures in at least three different municipalities, despite vulnerability indices in these areas remain relatively constant or have even increased. It was possible to see from the reports of partners that the impacts of SAF increasingly transcend the quantitative results, as in addition to reductions in unit closures or in cancellation of activities, they can be evidenced in a series of changes that indicate the relevance of SAF in providing positive transformations in institutions that implement it, such as: the development of capabilities in institutions; the strengthening of intersectionality and internal and external communication mechanisms, in addition to the growing sensitization of partner authorities regarding the importance of adopting actions for risk management and stress management.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

Armed violence in Brazil has consequences both on the provision and on the population's access to essential public services such as education. Situations of violence in service units or their surroundings, in addition to causing the suspension of service provision, and sometimes the need for temporary closure of these units, end up causing impacts on the health and physical and mental well-being of professionals, which can be translated into the absence of professionals in the units for medical reasons, transfers, idle vacancies in the medium and long term, or even the permanent closure of these units because there are no conditions for their operation in that territory. Violence, in addition to impacting institutions and professionals and their ability to provide services, ends up directly affecting the population, especially in areas that present greater vulnerability, as it restricts their access to basic services that are essential for their wellbeing and economic and social development, leading to consequences that often transcend generations.

Frequent cancellations of classes and lack of teachers in schools located in areas heavily affected by violence are just a few examples of the direct consequences of violence in Education. These consequences, over a longer time horizon, can be seen in food insecurity, drops in school development indicators, age-grade distortion, school dropout, and later in difficulties in entering the labor market, due to lack qualification and preparation of these young people. On the other hand, the distancing of young people and children from schools, added to the need for subsistence that forces them to be a source of resources for the family nucleus at an earlier age, often ends up bringing them closer to armed groups.

Considering the above mentioned, the ICRC developed the SAF, a methodology designed to prevent, reduce, mitigate and respond to the consequences when a community is exposed to situations of armed violence.

Its objectives are as follows:

- To protect lives, foster safe environments and strengthen the resilience of staff in public institutions and essential public service facilities who are working in areas affected by armed violence.
- To collaborate with the departments in charge of providing essential public services to develop integral strategies for managing risks, managing crises, treating risks and managing stress, all based on concrete actions to put in place a self-protection system for staff.
- To promote changes in the knowledge, behavior and attitude of staff and managers in the face of risks relating to armed violence, so that they can be managed in an effective, efficient and consistent manner.
- To improve the overall efficiency of services and to leverage human and financial resources.
- To expand access to essential public services by allowing workers to have free access to communities, and the communities to service delivery points

8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

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The SAF involves raising awareness among managers and/or decision makers of the security situation of staff and people who operate in violent and insecure environments every day. The ICRC extends its expertise and experience to local, state and federal authorities voluntarily and free of charge, and conducts programmes specifically tailored to local needs and to the capabilities of each public agency (department) as follows:

- It collaborates with the providers of core public services on identifying and analyzing the risks inherent in armed violence, and designs action plans that are tailored to the network of facilities and staff.
- It promotes the setting up and organization of support groups that are responsible for the day-to-day management of the equipment, communications and internal and external coordination of public agencies and offices, which allows for better risk management.
- In collaboration with the relevant authorities, the ICRC trains multipliers to ensure that a network of qualified local workers is available and that the methodology is implemented elsewhere in the region.
- It provides governments with technical support for the development and implementation of the methodology by conducting technical follow-up visits. It ensures that actions are sustainable and that the methodology is mainstreamed by the various authorities and core public service providers.

The SAF has now been implemented in various cities in Brazil, in partnership with education and health authorities in areas highly vulnerable to armed violence. Currently the SAF is implemented in education facilities in Duque de Caxias (Rio de Janeiro), Porto Alegre (Rio Grande do Sul), Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro), and Fortaleza (Ceará).

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

During its expansion and consolidation process, the SAF has proven to be a valuable strategy to support institutions and the population that depend on these services, especially in areas most vulnerable to armed violence. The results of the SAF implementation in multiple and diverse scenarios have shown the relevance and efficiency of the methodology as a tool to mitigate the effects of violence on professionals and the provision of services. Among other results reported by partners for the 2017-2018 period, it was possible to evidence a reduction of more than 38% in service closures in at least three different municipalities, despite vulnerability indices in these areas remain relatively constant or have even increased.

It was possible to see from the reports of partners that the impacts of SAF increasingly transcend the quantitative results, as in addition to reductions in unit closures or in cancellation of activities, they can be evidenced in a series of changes that indicate the relevance of SAF in providing positive transformations in institutions that implement it, such as: the development of capabilities in institutions; the strengthening of intersectionality and internal and external communication mechanisms, in addition to the growing sensitization of partner authorities regarding the importance of adopting actions for risk management and stress management. Key outcomes from implementing the SAF include:

- Continued provision of services to people in the areas most vulnerable to armed violence;
- Integrated management across departments and services and the development of shared strategies for preventing safety incidents in cities;
- Improved internal organization and assignment of roles, including internal communication, coordination and teamwork;
- Empowerment of staff, increased satisfaction and commitment at work;
- Management of workers' stress and resulting decrease in turnover rates/easier allocation of staff;
- Effective allocation, provision and management of funds;
- Faster response to safety incidents.

Outputs/2022

31,088 trained education professionals

936 schools trained (504 Rio de Janeiro, 77 Duque de Caxias, 94 Fortaleza, 258 Porto Alegre and 32 Vila Velha)

266,093 estimated number of students from the trained service units; Impact Evaluation

Currently, an impact assessment is carried out by an external consultancy. Results are expected by August.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

Triggers for transformation:

In the 2019 school year alone, schools in Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre and Fortaleza recorded more than 890 closures due to armed violence.

However, despite this being a reality common to most Brazilian municipalities, the general panorama is that professionals from different essential public services remain unprepared to work daily in areas heavily affected by violence. In turn, managers of institutions are not prepared to develop crisis management and stress management actions, or even to identify potential risks associated with the context in which they work. This situation, added to the lack of specific legislation and public policies that protect both professionals and the provision of services to the population, results in the expansion of humanitarian consequences that already emanate from violence.

In this sense, we can observe a lack of preparation of institutions and professionals to act in crisis situations, affecting the provision of education to the population.

Lessons Learnt

Advocacy for the development of laws to provide sustainability and ensure the continuity of actions despite changes in government spheres;

Importance of facilitating the methodology replication process, allowing the autonomy of partner institutions to guarantee the Program's replicability and scalability (eg Digital Tools, distance training, development of different technical and methodological materials to support the autonomous replication process, etc.)

Implementation and strengthening of a network of partners for the exchange of best practices and peer support.

Consider existing capacities in each institution;

Develop a response considering the needs and capacities of partners and the affected population;

Develop a targeted response to the affected population.

11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”.

What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

The education authorities in countries largely affected by armed violence still needs to improve their institutional capabilities to manage the impact of armed violence on the provision of their services. In this sense, it is important to develop an action strategy centered on the population assisted (institutions providing services, professionals and the population in general) that seeks to promote public policies through advocacy actions with authorities at different government levels, which aim at the protection and well-being of professionals and the population assisted, ensuring the expansion and an adequate provision of essential public services.

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

<https://www.icrc.org/pt/publication/acesso-mais-seguro-para-servicos-publicos-essenciais-brasil>
<https://www.icrc.org/pt/document/foco-na-preservacao-da-vida-e-na-protecao-das-pessoas>
<https://www.icrc.org/pt/publication/manual-orientador-para-gestores-sobre-acesso-mais-seguro>