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**Monitoring and Reporting to Enhance the Protection of Education
in Situations of Insecurity and Conflict:
South Kivu Province, DRC
Final**

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ACRONYMS

CGCA	Columbia Group for Children in Adversity
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAA	Education Above All
GCPEA	Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MoE	Ministry of Education
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSRSG-CAAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
PEIC	Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict
RHA	Rebuild Hope for Africa
RRMP	Rapid Response to Population Movements
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United National Children's Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

Armed violence against schools by militant groups threatens students and school personnel across the world, damaging individuals physically and psychologically, up-ending families and communities, and upsetting systems of learning. Malala Yousafzai has drawn global attention to the need for safe and equitable access to education, after surviving a Taliban assassination attempt when she was 15 and winning the Nobel Peace Prize for her advocacy in 2014. That same year, Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls in a Nigerian school (AP, 2014; Segun & Muscati, 2014), the Taliban killed 145 people in a military academy in Pakistan (Tremblay, 2014; Walsh, 2014), and Israeli attacks on schools in Gaza killed 45 people (HRW, 2014). Although these particular events were widely reported by the news media, United Nations (UN) agencies, and human rights groups, many more like them are likely to have gone undocumented due largely to the absence of pragmatic, streamlined, and validated methods for monitoring and reporting disruptions of education by armed groups (GCPEA, 2014).

UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1612, in 2005, was a first step in creating such a system. It established the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict to manage the new Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) for grave violations against children. Among the six grave violations tracked by the MRM is attacks on schools, including attacks on school personnel, and threats against these persons. In 2011, UNSC Resolution 1998 further prioritized attacks on schools by making them “trigger violations” whose perpetrators were to be listed in the annexes of the UN Secretary-General (UNSG)’s *Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, which publishes the official MRM data annually.

The MRM, however, operates in a limited number of countries, and the data must pass rigorous UN-verification procedures—meaning that many cases are likely to go unreported (Potts, Myer, & Roberts, 2011; Alfaro et al., 2012). Indeed, the latest *Report on Children and Armed Conflict* (2014), indicated that, “[a]ccess by the United Nations remained severely restricted throughout 2013, significantly disrupting the monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children.” Moreover, the MRM has traditionally limited its scope to direct attacks on schools that violate international humanitarian law, focusing less on higher education and on indirect acts that may interfere with the right to education, like the military use of schools (Karimova, Giacca, & Casey-Maslen, 2013). Recently, the Security Council has called for greater monitoring of the military use of schools with UNSC Resolution 2143 (2014), and the UNSG has asked UN member states to adopt measures to deter such use (2014).

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)’s *Education under Attack 2014* is the most comprehensive study of attacks on schools to date, though it refrains from issuing a total number of incidents (GCPEA, 2014). Instead, the study—which covers January 2009 to September 2013—uses broad ordinal categories, including “very heavily affected” (1,000 or more incidents or victims), “heavily affected” (between 500 and 999 incidents/victims), and “other

affected” (between five and 499 incidents/victims), to estimate a “minimum count” per country. The report cites a lack of adequately detailed documentation and of verification processes as critical challenges.

According to the GCPEA’s analysis, “there is still a need to strengthen monitoring and reporting partnerships between UN agencies, international and national NGOs and education ministries and district education offices [...]” In response to this need, the Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (CGCA), in partnership with Rebuild Hope for Africa (RHA), has conducted a study in the province of South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to assess the current roles and capacities of the various education and protection actors for monitoring and reporting attacks on education in the province. The study also aimed to appraise the effectiveness of these efforts through semi-structured interviews with a sample of key informants from government, civil society organizations, and UN agencies, while exploring avenues for improving the surveillance of such incidents. Finally, the study attempted to characterize the patterns of incidents in the city since December 2012, though it did not seek to capture the global total of attacks during this period.

BACKGROUND

The DRC has been wracked by conflict for about two decades, with scores of militias continuing to wreak havoc on communities throughout the eastern provinces. On the border with Rwanda, the small provinces of North and South Kivu have been among the most affected by conflict, with ongoing reports of massacres, mass population displacements, and grave violations against children. Between 2010 and 2013, these two small provinces accounted for more than half of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) throughout the DRC, leading the UNSG to refer to the Kivus as “the epicentre of violence” (2014). This chronically insecure environment has dire implications for the lives of educators, students, and their loved ones.

Education under Attack 2014 estimated that between 500 and 999 attacks on education had taken place in the DRC between 2009 and 2013, most of which were concentrated in the eastern provinces (2014). The UNSG’s country report on the DRC estimates that at least 180 schools were directly affected by conflict in the country from January 2010 to December 2013, with 47 schools being destroyed (2014). Indeed, the latest *Report on Children and Armed Conflict* in 2014 verified 95 such attacks in just the year of 2013, as well as 25 incidents of the military use of schools (2014).

An unpublished study by Columbia University from 2010 using key informant interviews with education and child protection actors documented 167 attacks on schools in the small province of South Kivu alone between late December 2009 and early August 2010. Another study, this time using a three-staged cluster survey in South Kivu, found that, out of 1,558 school-aged children in the sample, 224 (14%) had experienced school disruptions due to conflict over the course of 2010, and that an estimated quarter of school-aged children had been prevented from attending school that year because of the fear of armed group violence (Alfaro et al., 2012).

Preliminary interviews with key actors suggested that higher education institutions (HEIs), such as universities, on the other hand, were not usually targeted by attack in South Kivu.

METHODS

Between late May and early August 2014, the CGCA and RHA team conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants from 54 organizations in the education and child protection sectors in the cities of Bukavu, Baraka, Shabunda, Uvira, and Walungu. These informants included representatives of the Ministry of Education (MoE), religious organizations responsible for school administration, several UN bodies, and international and national NGOs. After providing their informed consent verbally, informants were asked in French or Swahili if they were aware of any disruptions of education caused by armed groups in the province since Christmas 2012. They were then probed on the description of the event, as well as its date or period, location (including village, territory, and school), and the group suspected of being responsible for the event. They were also asked to supply any relevant reports or databases in their organizational archives. All informants were guaranteed confidentiality.

Often, interviews took place across multiple sessions, as informants needed time to review organizational archives, or call colleagues in the field. Interviews were conducted both individually and in group settings. “Disruption” was used as a broad term so as not to limit informants’ responses to a narrow conception of “attack,” which in French has a more limited meaning than in English. The interviewers then clarified that the study focused on attacks on education, and provided the following list: *intimidation, theft, indoctrination, recruitment, abduction, kidnapping, illegal incarceration, injury, abuse, torture, sexual- or gender-based violence, forced labor, forced marriage, and murder, whether in school or on the way to school, as well as military use of schools, and partial or total destruction of school buildings or other facilities, by an armed group*. This definition was derived from *Education under Attack 2014*, and was culturally tested and adapted through key informant interviews with education actors in Bukavu at the beginning of the study. Although the MRM distinguishes between “attacks” and “military use of schools,” this study considered both “attacks on education,” as both can interfere with the right to education.

Reports were accepted if they included at least: (1) a description of the event that met the previous definition; (2) a date or period between December 25, 2012 and July 31, 2014; and (3) the school name. Reports were excluded if the details reported for two or more of these criteria were incongruent (ie. if an abduction of students happened in August, during summer vacation), if there was uncertainty as to whether the event happened in or on the way to school, or as to whether the event was caused by an armed group (ie. if a school was looted at night, but there were no witnesses). Although numerous reports were given about school being interrupted because of violence in the village, these reports could not be classified as “attacks on education” despite their undoubtedly having a deleterious effect on education.

The reports were then cross-referenced with one another to remove redundancies, and when two reports covered the same event but with slightly different details, priority was given to the stronger source of report (ie. a written field evaluation would trump an oral report). The events were then mapped digitally, and about 10% were chosen, based on geographic spread, accessibility, security, and diversity of sources that provided the reports. In this way, 24 schools along three disparate routes were selected across the province for verification. Five schools in the territory of Uvira and one in Fizi were selected along the Uvira-Sebele route; eight schools in Shabunda territory were selected along the Lungungu-Mapimo route; and nine schools in Walungu territory and one school in Kabare were selected along the Walungu-Chulwe route. An additional four schools that were reported by key informants had already been confirmed by one of the authors during an evaluation of the incidents previous to the study period.

As part of the verification process, the team interviewed on-site informants, including school directors and village chiefs when possible, and teachers from the school, school neighbors, or other reliable sources otherwise (Annex 1). Reports were considered confirmed if the events fell within three months of the initial report, even if the details of the incident differed (ie. the type of incident was classified as “looting” rather than “extortion”), as long as the on-site report matched inclusion criteria. These same on-site informants were also asked whether nearby schools had been attacked to their knowledge. Lastly, after verifying a given school, the two nearest schools were also visited, when possible—even when no incidents were reported there—and their directors, village chiefs, and teachers were interviewed so as to gain some insight into the probability of false negatives (ie. what is the proportion of schools that were attacked but never reported by key informants).

RESULTS

Organization of South Kivu’s Education System

The DRC’s education system still reflects its Belgian foundations, with six years of primary schooling and six years of secondary schooling. At the beginning of 2013 (latest available data), South Kivu had 4,856 primary and secondary schools officially listed by the MoE, serving about 1,201,780 students. A large proportion of the province’s schools are privately administrated by Catholic, Protestant, and, to a limited extent, Islamic coordinators, many of which do not feature in the MoE’s official database. A 2012 study estimates that 30.3% of school-aged children (5-17 years old) are out of school in South Kivu, slightly higher than the national average of 28.9% (Institut Supérieur des Sciences de la Population, 2013).

The MoE, seated in Bukavu and run by the Provincial Director of Schools, manages a complex network of employees, from school teachers and directors at the village level across eight territories, to an array of bureaucrats and inspectors at the provincial level. While teachers tend to be less involved in the affairs of the schooling system, school directors in each region convene up to three times a year with the school inspectors to discuss administrative issues, including recent damage or attacks on schools in the region. Thus, inspectors are supposed to be well informed on

the affairs of schools of the entire region, but the information does not readily travel much higher than this regional level, and the inspectors have limited knowledge of attacks on schools.

School directors are required to report annual figures to the MoE, including the makeup of the student body, teacher qualifications, and outcomes for their state examinations. Data management, however, is poor, with most directors filling out their forms by hand and having to carry them in person to Bukavu, as the country has no postal system. As a result, the MoE's database is incomplete and, where it overlaps with that of the Protestant Coordinator (the only other school database we were able to access), is inconsistent, with school names and locations often being spelled differently, for example, or school populations differing significantly.

The education cluster, led by UNICEF, is vital to the proper functioning of South Kivu's education system, coordinating dozens of NGOs to deliver emergency education in a province rife with attacks and mass population displacement. UNICEF leads monthly education cluster meetings to share information and best practices, and to prioritize programming response. A key partner to the education cluster is the Rapid Response to Population Movement (RRMP), co-led by UNICEF and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), with the mandate to conduct rapid assessments and deliver integrated services to displaced populations. In the first six months of 2013 alone, the RRMP delivered emergency education and psycho-social services to 194,000 children from 5 to 11 years old throughout South Kivu (Ponabana, 2013).

The education sector implemented USD 2.3 million worth of humanitarian projects across the DRC in 2013, constituting just 3% of the total USD 64.7 million dispersed by the Common Humanitarian Fund that year (2014). South Kivu received USD 10.3 million (16% of the total), though there are no available figures for what percentage of that was allocated to the education sector.

Monitoring and Reporting Systems

The DRC has had an active MRM for 10 years, having been selected as a pilot site for the mechanism's rollout in 2005. There is no evidence that any other system exists for monitoring attacks on education at the country level. The MRM's Country Taskforce on Monitoring and Reporting is co-chaired in Kinshasa by the UNICEF Country Representative and the Deputy Special Representative to the Secretary-General for DRC. Functionally, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO)'s Child Protection section manages the monitoring, reporting, and verification of grave violations, while a UNICEF-funded MRM Specialist within MONUSCO coordinates activities related to response, advocacy, and training (UNICEF, 2013). As the education cluster coordinator, UNICEF is also responsible for training partner organizations to use the MRM and for establishing partnership agreements to expand monitoring capacities. At the national level, protection cluster members have reportedly also been trained to monitor and report grave violations, and the MRM has been included as a fixed agenda item at national Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) meetings (UNICEF, 2013). Because of the country's vast size, the national cluster and working group systems have corresponding bodies

at the provincial and city level in priority areas, such as North and South Kivu.

Across the DRC, all monitoring parties are supposed to use a uniform MRM reporting format, which, for confidentiality's sake, does not include the name of the victim, the source of the report, or name of the perpetrator, with the latter two names being coded. No paper forms are carried into the field, and the data are entered electronically at a later point. Local monitors maintain separate MRM email accounts, which are periodically changed, and use the Internet at certain times of the day to report to provincial leads who in turn report to the Task Force at the national level. The Task Force warehouses all reports in a centralized database, established in 2008, which it draws on for its annual reports.

In South Kivu, this system struggles with a number of bottlenecks. Out of 54 informants interviewed during the course of this study from the education and protection clusters, and from the state and religious school administrators across the province, fewer than five systematically documented attacks on education, despite the fact that many had received such reports from teams in the field, school directors, or other partners. A large proportion either had never heard of the MRM or did not know how to file reports of grave violations, suggesting the need for more training opportunities. In a province with poor telecommunications infrastructure and frequent power outages, informants in remote areas found it challenging to transmit official reports to the capital in Bukavu, not to mention that the lag-time between learning about an incident and being able to document it on a computer would affect the quality and completeness of reports, which are critical to UN verification procedures. On the other hand, many informants from NGOs in cities outside Bukavu had successfully received incident reports from remote villages (Table 1); but when interviewed in Bukavu, their colleagues had no records of these reports, suggesting a breakdown in the relaying systems within these organizations. Of those that were aware of the MRM and had been trained to complete incident reports, some felt discouraged from taking part in the process because they did not believe their reports would catalyze a response, a frustration that has been observed by other groups in the DRC (Watchlist, 2013). The MRM does not have a formal response component, not to mention that if a report makes it to the provincial level and is deemed to be of high quality, it is considered unconfirmed until verified by MONUSCO, which has limited resources for these procedures.

In Bukavu, NGO representatives occasionally report attacks on schools in monthly education cluster meetings, and, although there is no evidence of these reports being systematically documented, they do to a degree inform response coordination. The UNICEF education cluster coordinator in Bukavu also solicits reports of attacks on schools from cluster partners at least once a year, using a template. Attendance at the cluster meeting while this database was being populated, and interviews with many cluster members, however, revealed that, although many organizations have the capacity to report incidents—and indeed, did report them to the research team—many choose not to contribute to the coordinator's annual database. This likely has to do with the fact that the template demands a high level of detail and, without incentives or a belief that reports will

be used to benefit the affected communities, members do not consider this effort a priority.

Protection Mechanisms

International Instruments

The DRC is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ratified in 1976), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1986), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1996), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1976), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (1987), and the Rome Statute (2002), but not to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The DRC's constitution also includes a provision allowing courts and military tribunals to apply international treaties. In 2006, a military tribunal in the Ituri region drew on this provision, applying the Rome Statute to convict warlord Ives Kahwa Panga Mandro of, among other things, war crimes for intentionally attacking a primary school, a medical center, and a church. Mandro was convicted and sentenced to 20 years in prison, before being acquitted by an appeals court (Coursen-Neff & Sheppard, 2011), and reconvicted in 2014, again among other things for war crimes, and sentenced to nine years in prison (Radio Okapi, 2014).

National Developments

The DRC has made considerable advances in strengthening its child protection system in recent years. Notably, in October 2012, the Government and the UN signed an action plan committing to identify children associated with armed conflict, prevent and respond to grave violations against children, and combat impunity for perpetrating these violations. In May 2013, the Ministry of Defence issued a directive to prohibit, among other things, the occupation of schools, punishable by disciplinary measures or military prosecution. To ensure progress on these initiatives, the Ministry of the Interior dispatched high-level focal points to the eastern provinces in July 2013. In Kinshasa, representatives from 18 embassies, delegations, and organizations such as the World Bank and European Union Advisory and Assistance Mission for Security Reform have come together under the auspices of the 'Friends of CAAC' to secure ongoing support and funding for the action plan across the international community.

While these steps represent impressive progress in terms of governmental commitments, whether this will measurably improve children's protective environment remains to be seen. Few key informants we interviewed seemed to be aware of the action plan and its commitments. What's more, the Government's policy of integrating militants formerly associated with non-State groups into the national military (the FARDC) risks legitimizing perpetrators of grave violations. Furthermore, the Amnesty Law, adopted in February 2014, which grants amnesty for acts of insurgency, acts of war, and political offenses dating back to 2006 (though not for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide) may mean that some perpetrators of attacks on education are never tried or convicted (HRW, 2014; Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, 2014).

In his latest report on the DRC, the UNSG urges the Government “to meet, without further delay, its commitment to preventing and stopping [attacks on schools] and the military use of such facilities” (2014). He also recommends that the FARDC develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) to protect schools and children, while the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict requests that the Country Taskforce prioritize the full implementation of the action plan and reach out to non-State groups for the development of, among other things, an action plan to end attacks on schools (2014).

Frequency of Attacks

Over the three-month course of this study, 238 attacks on education were documented in South Kivu between December 25, 2012 and July 31, 2014 (Figure 1). Of these, seven began in 2012 (but continued into 2013), 172 began in 2013, and 59 began in 2014. Key informants in Bukavu reported 173 attacks, while 58 reports came from key informants in Baraka, Shabunda, Uvira, and Walungu (Table 1). Also, three reports from Walungu and one report from Shabunda overlapped with those received in Bukavu.

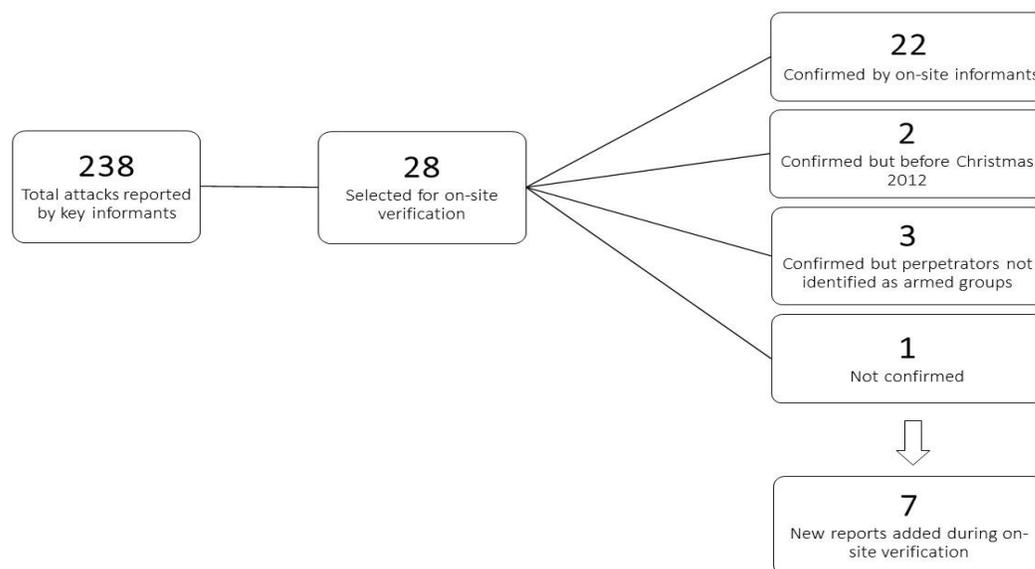
These reports came from hundreds of interviews with informants from 54 organizations engaged in education and child protection, counting all the subdivisions of catholic and protestant school administrations under one umbrella, respectively (ie. ECP 24e CLMK and ECP 37e CADC would be considered one informant organization, namely as Protestant Coordinator). Of these 54 organizations, 22 were in Bukavu, while the rest were in Baraka, Shabunda, Uvira, and Walungu (Table 2).

Slightly more than a third of these organizations supplied information that met the inclusion criteria. Of the 238 reports, 17 (7%) were reported by more than one organization, and 49 (21%) overlapped with UNICEF South Kivu’s annual database mentioned above (that database had an additional 53 cases listed, but they did not meet our inclusion criteria, either because they occurred before the recall period or lacked vital information). Local organizations had the greatest knowledge of attacks on education, with 121 reports, followed by education institutions, such as the MoE, with 73 reports, and finally international organizations, including INGOs and UN agencies, with 57 reports (Figure 2). It should be noted that 49 of the 57 (86%) incidents reported by international organizations came from UNICEF, which in turn received them from local organizations and education institutions in the education cluster.

The attacks affected 217 schools (188 primary, 29 secondary) across seven of the eight territories of South Kivu (Table 3). Of these schools, 172 were listed either in the MoE database or the Protestant Coordinator’s database for the 2012-2013 school year (the most recent for which there are available figures). These schools included a total of 43,171 listed students. On average, 54% of the students in these schools were boys and 46% girls—a difference of 3,685 students. This reflects the broader provincial proportions, but shows a slightly larger disparity between boys and girls than the national proportions in 2012, as 52% of the students in the country’s primary and secondary schools combined were boys and 48% were girls (Institut Supérieur des Sciences

de la Population, 2013). When only secondary schools are taken into account, 71% of the students in the schools reported as having been attacked were boys and 29% girls, compared to 60% and 40% in South Kivu, and 52% and 48% throughout the country, respectively.

Figure 1. Organization of Verification Procedure



Attacks on education also seemed to be related to teacher quality. When analyzed according to territory, the MoE's list of qualified teachers per school (2013) leaves Kabare (including Bukavu) with the greatest proportion of qualified teachers in the province at 81.6%, followed by Uvira (70.4%), Mwenga (68.4%), Idjwi (68.2%), Kalehe (66.9%), Walungu (66.4%), Fizi (62%), and Shabunda (53%). When these numbers are compared to the frequency of attacks reported by territory in the present study, a negative relationship ($R^2 = 0.569$) appears, indicating that territories with more reports tend to have lower proportions of qualified teachers (Figure 3).

Source of report	Number of reports
Bukavu	173
Uvira	33
Shabunda	8
Baraka	10
Walungu	7
Added during verifications in villages	7
Reports repeated in two or more cities	4
Total	238

City of Key Informant	Number Contacted	Number Who Provided Reports
Bukavu	22	7
Baraka	9	2
Shabunda	5	2
Uvira	17	9
Walungu	1	1
Total	54	21

The reports involved everything from military use of schools (ie. for shelter), looting, and extortion, to rape, abduction of children for forced labor, and torture; though military use and looting were by far the most common. Informants often expressed uncertainty about the specific details of the events, and, when multiple were interviewed at once, or when the same event was reported by independent informants, there were frequent inconsistencies. A similar trend appeared with regards to suspected perpetrators; and in some cases, informants who were afraid to name specific armed groups instead named multiple groups. For these reasons, no attack type or suspected perpetrator frequencies are reported for the 238 attacks (though such figures are given for the verified cases below).

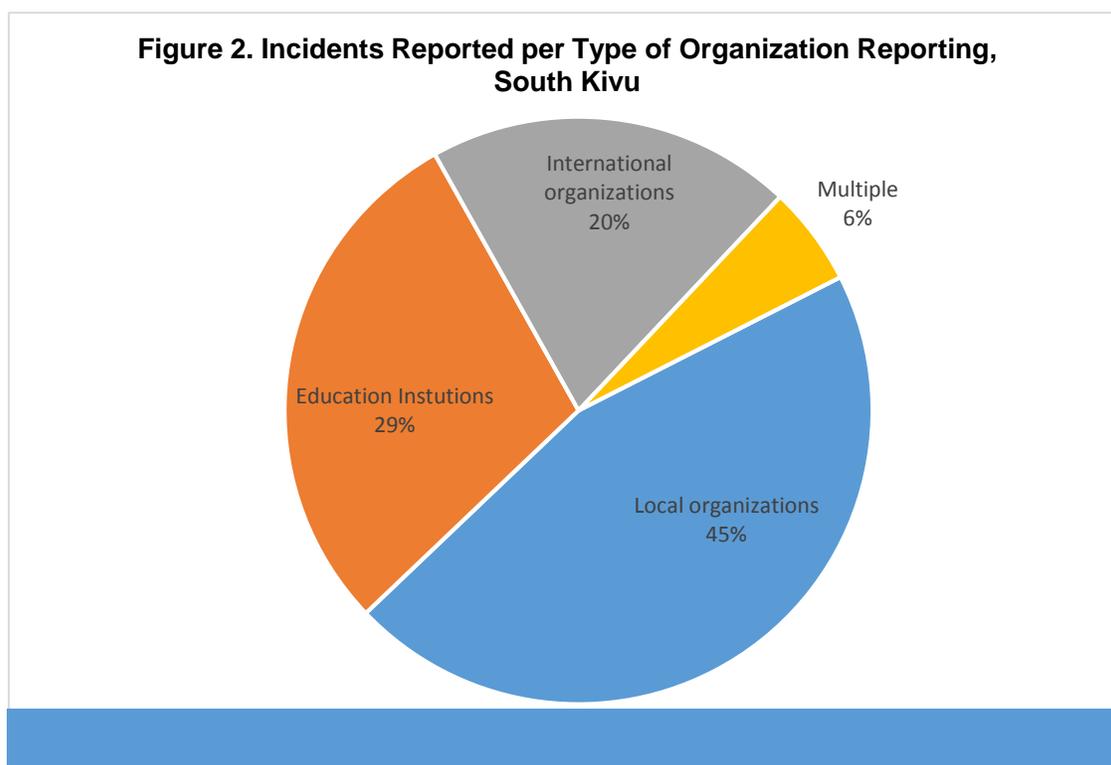


Figure 2. Local organizations include Congolese-run NGOs and community-based organizations; international organizations include INGOs and UN agencies; education institutions include government and religious school administrators, school leaders, and school teachers. Some incidents were reported by more than one type of organization.

Numerous reports were also made of attacks by “unknown bandits”; and hundreds of cases were reported of school being disrupted or discontinued indefinitely due to insecurity in the village or mass population displacement, though none of these were included in the 238 figure, as they did not match the inclusion criteria. Thirty-one discreet armed groups were identified with regards to these attacks, though many of them were factions of the Mai-Mai and the Raïa Mutomboki (RM). Also included, were six reports of IDPs taking over schools by force for use as shelter.

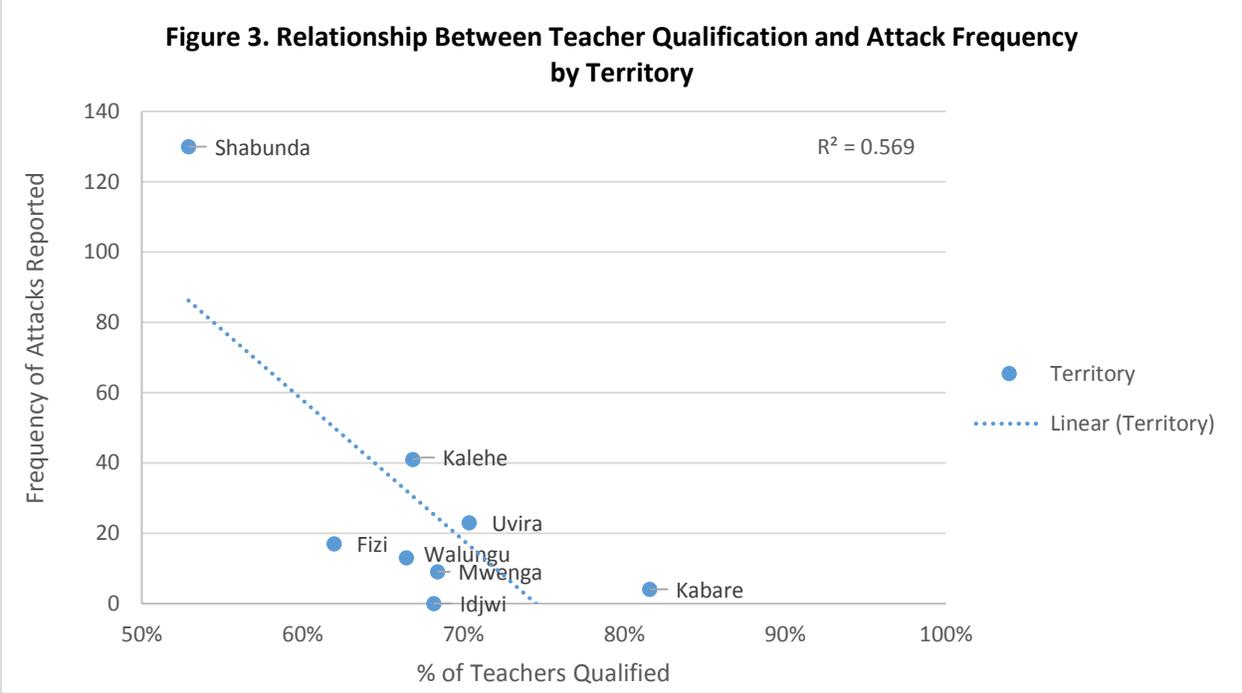
Location of incident	Number of reports
Shabunda	130
Kalehe	41
Uvira	23
Fizi	17
Walungu	13
Mwenga	9
Kabare	5
Idjwi	0
Total	238

Twenty-four schools, drawing on reports by seven different sources, were chosen for verification, and of these, 18 were confirmed by on-site informants (Annex 1). An additional four attacks were verified by one of the authors before the study period, of which three were confirmed. In four of the six total reports not confirmed, the *event* took place, but it either occurred before the recall period, or was perpetrated by “unknown bandits” rather than the armed group in the original report. One of the other reports was of a fire probably set by an armed group, but the director claimed it to have been caused “by nature” during the verification. Only one report involved events that did not seem to have actually taken place. Altogether, that constitutes a confirmation rate of 79% ($22/28 \times 100$). Assuming this confirmation rate is constant for the entire 238 reports, at least 187 (238×0.79) attacks on schools took place in South Kivu during this period.

During verification, on-site informants reported seven additional attacks on schools. Four of these seven concerned schools that were already being verified, but for previously unreported events. For instance, while confirming one event at a given school, on-site informants reported two additional events at that same school. The three other events were reported when asking on-site informants about attacks in schools nearby those being verified. Lastly, 12 schools were visited that had not been reported by key informants so as to verify whether they were true negatives or false negatives. On-site informants reported zero attacks in these 12 schools, indicating that they were indeed true negatives.

Of the 29 confirmed attacks (22 previously reported and seven added and confirmed on site), 13 were reported as having been perpetrated by the RM (eight by the RM Juriste faction, two by RM Mabala, one by RM Sisawa, and two by unknown factions), eight by the FARDC (the

national army), two by both the RM and FARDC, two by the FDLR, three by the Mai-Mai (one by the Yakutumba faction, one by Kanyegere, one by an unknown faction), and one by displaced peoples (Annex 1). These reports involved 20 cases of looting, 17 cases of military use, six cases of school facilities being damaged, four cases of intimidation, and two cases of extortion. In addition, there were six cases of abduction, including students, teachers, and a director, as well as five cases of forced labor, including students and teachers. In one case, a perpetrator opened fire through the window of a director’s office while he was absent. Another director was abducted and tortured twice, along with his teachers in the second instance.



DISCUSSION

The quantity and quality of these 238 reports attest to the need for enhanced surveillance of attacks on education in South Kivu. It is clear that actors in the province’s education and child protection sectors have a wealth of knowledge about attacks on education that is not currently being used effectively, resulting in an extreme underestimation of the risk over one million students in South Kivu face every day. Fewer than five informants of the 54 organizations showed evidence of documenting attacks on education systematically, despite the fact that many had received such reports from teams in the field, school directors, or other partners. A large proportion, furthermore, expressed confusion about the proper channels and procedures for reporting such cases (for instance, if they did not have enough information to complete an MRM form), suggesting a need for expanded training in monitoring and reporting.

Beyond training, improving surveillance would involve working with education and child protection actors, within and outside the cluster system, to standardize documentation (including at the very least recording the name of the school, a description of the attack, a date, and a suspected perpetrator), and to strengthen reporting and referral pathways across levels of education, government, care providers, and humanitarian organizations.

While the present study took a brief three months to complete, the data collected on useful sources of information should further reduce the amount of time for a repeated estimate. Of the 54 informants contacted, the majority either had nothing to report, or produced reports that lacked information crucial for verification (Table 2). The fact that informants in just two cities were able to provide 87% (206/238) of the total amount of reports, and that fewer than half of the key informants in the province had usable reports, indicates that, by selecting the strongest informants in those cities, future provincial surveillance efforts could achieve similar findings even more efficiently.

Because of this study's narrow inclusion criteria, the 238 figure likely underestimates the total number of attacks in South Kivu since the end of 2012 considerably. Still, this figure is much greater than those suggested by either the *Education under Attack 2014* report, which estimated between 500-999 attacks throughout the entire country over four-and-a-half years, and the *Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, which reported 120 attacks throughout the country in 2013, including military use of schools. Indeed, when the present study's confirmation rate is applied to the total incidents reported for 2013, at least 141 attacks took place (179×0.79) in South Kivu alone.

As was expressed by key informants at the outset of the present study, most of the major adverse effects of armed groups on education likely occur through indirect mechanisms. The findings suggest that, beyond direct attacks on schools, South Kivu's education system also suffers from a disproportionate disparity in attendance between girls and boys, as well as high degrees of interruption due to the presence of armed groups. For example, a number of school directors reported their students having missed state final exams due to the presence of armed groups nearby, leading to delayed graduation. The more insecure territories also seem to have a lower proportion of qualified teachers than their relatively more secure counterparts. These secondary effects imply that, even in times of relative calm, students—and especially female students—in South Kivu's most historically violent areas experience multiple and likely enduring educational disadvantages compared to their peers in other areas.

Although this study did not ask specifically about suspected motivations for attacks on education, many explanations were volunteered by informants, including, most predominantly, reprisals against rival military groups, or against the population, for allegedly supporting a rival group, material need, shelter, and demonstration of authority. Attacks on schools were typically accompanied by attacks on the broader community, as military groups travelled in and out of villages.

LIMITATIONS

This study has a number of limitations. The strict definition of “attacks,” the need to document the names of schools and suspected perpetrators, and the focus on informants in urban centers, limit the scale of events reported, likely neglecting a host of violent events that are less direct but potentially no less consequential to the lives of students and educators. A better assessment of the system’s sensitivity would have involved visiting more unreported schools surrounding those that had been reported during the verification procedures. Only 12 such schools were visited because in many cases all schools along the verification route had been reported (rebel groups tend to attack all local schools as they migrate along the traversable routes from one area to another). A more representative verification sample would have improved this situation, as the routes chosen had disproportionately clustered attacks. Furthermore, because the verification sites were chosen by purposive sample, there is no way of knowing how representative this confirmation rate is of the other reports, reducing the veracity of applying the 79% confirmation rate to the total 238 attacks.

The fact that this study drew primarily on recall information affected the quality of the reports in many cases, leading to stated uncertainty when reporting, as well as inconsistencies in the details of the attacks when redundant reports were cross-referenced and during verification. School and village names were also frequently misspelled or spelled differently than in databases or maps (which are often also internally inconsistent) due to a lack of standardization. During the verification process itself, on-site informants often could not recall which periods their schools had been attacked in, and had to consult with neighbors. Five of the six reports that were considered “not confirmed” during the verification process resulted from poor information regarding attack timing or perpetrator identity. A real-time surveillance system, however, should reduce these effects both by reducing the recall period and by strengthening documentation protocols.

Many informants noted not having documented and reported attacks they had witnessed for a number of reasons. Some did not know the best means of relaying reports, others did not classify the events as “attacks” and thus did not consider them worth reporting (ie. “There were no attacks on the school, just the regular military occupation and looting”), while still others saw no direct personal benefit from reporting the attacks. In some instances, the logic of these latter two reasons led informants to dramatize the events they reported. For instance, after cases of looting and abduction in Shabunda were confirmed on site, a new informant provided reports that included the very same cases, except that these new reports added that the houses were made of straw, when in fact they were made of brick, and that the perpetrators had burnt the schools down, when in fact they had not. These reports were excluded, and efforts were made in every interview to remind informants that they would not be rewarded for reports and that exaggerating reports would have no benefit. Details were also cross-checked whenever possible, especially when they seemed extreme or out of line with observed trends (ie. armed groups like RM Juriste are associated with a consistent modus operandi, which involves the military use of schools, looting, destruction of school buildings, and abduction, but not arson).

The databases used to cross-check schools that were reported, and that served to provide the statistics on the disparity between boys and girls and teacher qualifications, were not comprehensive or uniform. The main database was from MoE's 2012-2013 entry statistics, which were a year old at the start of the study period, thus preceding the recall period, and which lacked records for 46 of schools reported. The Protestant Coordinator, which administers about a third of the schools in the province, also provided a database of schools from the 2012-2013 year, which had records for an additional six of these 46 schools. No such database was available for the Catholic Coordinator, which is the other large administrator of schools in the province. Lack of student information about the remaining 40 schools may have skewed the results either towards or away from parity. Due to lack of accessible data, the national statistics given about the disparity between boys and girls were drawn from the Institut Supérieur des Sciences de la Population's 2013 EADE-RDC, which publishes the attendance rate as a function of age group rather than school level (2013). Students between six and 11 were considered to be in primary school, while those between the ages of 12 and 17 were considered to be in secondary school, though this may not have been the case in every instance.

Many of these limitations result from the study having targeted a 19 month recall period. A functional surveillance system would involve streamlining the various databases on education and child protection, receiving these databases on a timely basis, and centralizing them for regular analysis—a process which would considerably strengthen and speed up attack reports. Among the numerous benefits to be gained for South Kivu's schools and NGO community with such a system, include greater availability and reliability of data, and thereby, improved coordination and timeliness of response, as well as a stronger basis for funding applications. Furthermore, such a system would provide an example for education clusters in other provinces throughout DRC, if not other countries.

Despite its limitations, this study provides an encouraging foundation for such a system. Its 238 reports constitute the most comprehensive documentation of attacks in South Kivu during this period, and its 79% confirmation rate (or an 86% confirmation rate if all years are included) indicate a high degree of veracity. This method can be easily replicated and adapted to various contexts, offering a tremendous opportunity to improve monitoring and reporting of attacks on education around the world.

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ANNEX 1. VERIFICATIONS

Status	Source of verification	Type of attack	Suspected perpetrator	Year attack began	Territory of attack
Confirmed original report	Director of school	Military use	FARDC	2012	Fizi
Confirmed original report	Director of school	Military use	FDLR	2013	Fizi
Confirmed original report	Director of school	Damage to school, looting, military use	FDLR	2013	Fizi
Confirmed original report	Village chief and teacher from school	Military use	Mai-Mai Yakutumba	2013	Fizi
Confirmed original report	Teacher of school and teacher nearby school	Damage to school, looting	FARDC	2013	Kabare
Confirmed original report	School director, village chief, and prefect of nearby school	Looting, military use, abduction of students, forced labor	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Confirmed original report	Neighbors of school	Looting, military use, and intimidation of teachers	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Confirmed original report	Teacher of school and prefect of nearby school	Looting, abduction of students, forced labor	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Confirmed original report	Prefect of school and teacher of nearby school	Abduction of teachers and students for forced labor, extortion	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Confirmed original report	Village chief, teacher from school, prefects from two nearby schools, and teacher from nearby school	Looting	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda

Confirmed original report	Teacher from school	Looting, military use, and forced labor of students	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Confirmed original report	School director	Military use, abduction, extortion, and torture of director	RM Mabala	2014	Shabunda
Confirmed original report	Teacher of school	Gunshots into the director's office	Mai-Mai	2013	Uvira
Confirmed original report	Director of school	Military use	Mai-Mai Kanyegere	2013	Uvira
Confirmed original report	Director of Parents Committee and neighbor of school	Military use, damage to school, looting	FARDC	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Director of school and local MONUSCO monitor	Looting	FARDC	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Teacher of school	Looting	FARDC	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Director of school	Military use, damage to schools, looting	FARDC	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Director of school	Military use, looting	FARDC and RM	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Wife of the school director and teacher of nearby school	Damage to school, looting, military use	FARDC and RM	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Village chief	Looting	RM	2013	Walungu
Confirmed original report	Teacher of school	Looting	RM	2013	Walungu
Not confirmed	Director of school	Looting	ex-FNL	2014	Uvira
Not confirmed	Prefect and teacher from school	Looting	ex-FNL	2014	Uvira

Not confirmed	Village chief	Damage to school, looting, military use	Mai-Mai	2013	Fizi
Not confirmed	Chief of village	Military use	Mai-Mai Kanyegere	2013	Uvira
Not confirmed	Prefect and teacher from school	Burning of school	RM	2013	Walungu
Not confirmed	Village chief, teacher from school, prefects from two nearby schools, and teacher from nearby school	Burning of school	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Report added during verification	Teacher from school and one from nearby school	Damage of schools, looting	FARDC	2013	Walungu
Report added during verification	Director of the school	Military use	FARDC	2013	Walungu
Report added during verification	Teacher from school and one from nearby school	Military use	Displaced peoples	2014	Walungu
Report added during verification	School director, village chief, and prefect of nearby school	Looting	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Report added during verification	Village chief and teacher of nearby school	Looting	RM Juriste	2013	Shabunda
Report added during verification	Director of the school	Military use, intimidation, abduction of director for two days, torture of director and teachers	RM Mabala	2014	Shabunda
Report added during verification	Director of the school	Intimidation, abduction, forced labor of students	RM Sisawa	2014	Shabunda