



## Barbara's story

Barbara is 17 years old and goes to Nazombe Primary School in Palombe, Malawi.



Barbara is visually impaired; at Nazombe Primary School they have an education resource centre for the blind.

Barbara said: **“I like school because I feel I will become empowered and I will become independent,** I will also be able to help others that are not able to come to school for various reasons, whether they are orphaned or they are just vulnerable, I can help them so that they can also access education like I have done.”

One way that Barbara helps others is as a leader of an after-school club which tackles issues of sexual and gender based violence.

**Barbara says:** “If I didn’t come to school I wouldn’t have known the importance of education, I wouldn’t have known what sexual and gender based violence is all about. Because I came to school I have a lot of information that is useful for me.



I have learnt that if I meet other girls who have been forced into marriage that is not right and we should talk to them so that they come back to school. Also we have been taught that we shouldn't be subjected to sexual and gender based violence in school and **now we are aware of our rights and what is not supposed to happen to us in the school.**"

When asked what challenges girls face at her school Barbara responded that **rape is one of the biggest problems.**



Now that she has attended the after-school club, Barbara said she would feel better able to support if a girl came to her to say she had been subjected to violence.

**Barbara's story was shared with Send My Friend to School.**

