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for every child

**Preventing and
Responding to
Violence Against
Children and
Adolescents**

Theory of Change
2017

Preventing and Responding to Violence Against Children and Adolescents

Theory of Change



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I. Introduction

PURPOSE

This document presents an overarching, multisectoral theory of change to guide UNICEF's work on preventing and responding to violence against girls, boys and adolescents. The purpose is to provide a strategic vision that describes pathways of change, proposes a package of evidence-based strategies and articulates a chain of results, both to prevent violence and to improve the lives of child and adolescent victims when violence occurs.

This theory of change gives particular attention to forms of violence against children measured by the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators, including violent discipline (physical punishment and verbal aggression) and sexual violence, reflecting UNICEF's commitment to make measurable progress in those domains.¹ However, it is designed to be broad enough to address all forms of physical, sexual and emotional/psychological violence against girls and boys – including in settings affected by armed conflict and other emergencies. The proposed results, strategies and indicators in this theory of change focus on changes at the country level, which may be particularly relevant for UNICEF country office staff. However, indicators may be aggregated to monitor results at regional and global levels.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The right of all girls and boys to protection from all forms of violence has been enshrined in international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):

Article 19. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse...

BOX 1

Key recommendations from the 2015 evaluation of UNICEF's work on violence against children

1. Make violence against children an organization-wide, multisectoral priority and agree on an overarching theory of change and core indicators for measuring violence prevention and response actions.
2. Launch a multisectoral road map to reduce violence against children and translate it into regional road maps.
3. Strengthen context-specific advocacy and resource mobilization, based on evidence.
4. Accelerate the roll-out of the systems strengthening approach to preventing and responding to violence against children.
5. Renew the focus on preventing violence including through addressing social norms.
6. Improve the focus on gender and equity approaches.
7. Institutionalize child protection systems mapping and strategically plan for follow-up research and data initiatives.
8. Develop a web-based knowledge networking platform.

Preventing and responding to violence has long been an important part of UNICEF's work, particularly in the areas of research, advocacy, child protection and education. Nonetheless, a 2015 independent evaluation noted fragmentation in UNICEF's work on violence (see Box 1). That evaluation recommended that UNICEF develop an overarching theory of change for preventing and responding to violence against children, including attention to strategies, results and indicators.²

I. Introduction

The rationale for an overarching approach to violence is supported by evidence that girls and boys often experience multiple types of violence, sometimes referred to as ‘polyvictimization’.³ It also responds to evidence that research, policies and programmes that focus on one form of violence in isolation may overlook important links to and risks and consequences of other forms of violence during childhood and across the lifespan.⁴

A re-examination of UNICEF’s work on preventing and responding to violence against girls, boys and adolescents may be particularly important at this moment in time, given the following:

- United Nations (UN) Member States have signalled a renewed political commitment to address violence against girls and boys by agreeing to support the SDGs, including their targets and indicators. Many SDGs and their targets address drivers and risk factors associated with violence, including those focused on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies (Goal 16), as well as those related to

poverty, health, education, inequality and sustainable communities. Several SDG targets mention violence against girls and/or boys specifically (see Table 1), and UNICEF has made a commitment to help countries achieve measurable progress in these areas.

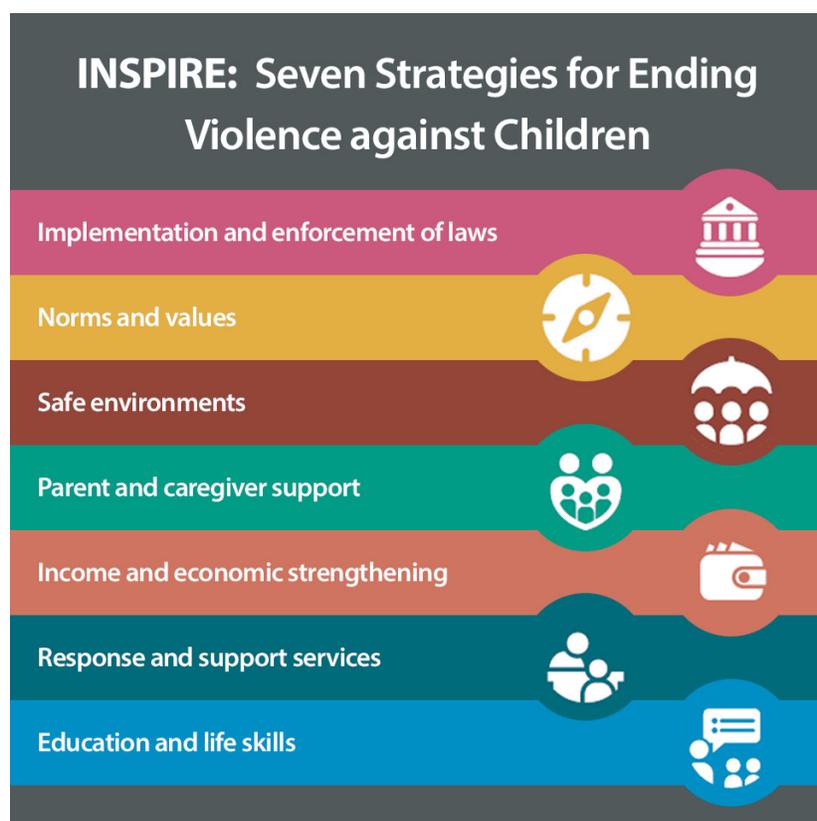
- To capitalize on this new opening to address violence, a Global Partnership to End Violence against Children (www.end-violence.org) was launched in 2016. The Global Partnership aims to facilitate collaboration among governments, UN agencies, civil society groups, philanthropic foundations, academia and girls and boys themselves. As a founding member, UNICEF has an opportunity and a responsibility to consider how to contribute to this new platform.
- In 2016, UNICEF collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international partners to develop a technical package titled ‘INSPIRE: Seven strategies to end violence against children’,⁵ based on global evidence about effective or at least

TABLE 1

Selected examples of SDG targets focused on ending violence or harmful practices against girls and boys, including adolescents.

	<p>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.</p>	<p>Target 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.</p> <p>Target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p>
	<p>Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.</p>	<p>Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.</p> <p>Target 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.</p>
	<p>Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</p>	<p>Target 4.A Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.</p>

In 2016, UNICEF collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international partners to develop a technical package titled *'INSPIRE: Seven strategies to end violence against children*



promising strategies for preventing and responding to violence against girls and boys. This collaboration provides an opportunity for UNICEF to review their work on violence in light of global evidence and the work of partner agencies.

- UNICEF is developing a new Strategic Plan for 2018-2021. This effort provides an opportunity to review and strengthen results, indicators and strategies relevant to violence against girls and boys at global, regional and country levels.

HOW THIS THEORY OF CHANGE BUILDS ON PREVIOUS WORK

This document builds on many previous theories of change and results frameworks related to violence

against girls, boys and adolescents. These include UNICEF's past strategic plans and results frameworks for specific types or dimensions of violence, such as sexual abuse and exploitation of children, gender-based violence in emergencies, sexual and gender-based violence in education, child marriage, children's access to justice, peacebuilding and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) (see Annex A).

Given the broad scope of this theory of change, it provides a concise overview rather than a comprehensive review of evidence about how to prevent and respond to violence against girls and boys. However, it benefits from many recent international efforts to synthesize what is known about approaches that are effective or at least promising, including reviews by UNICEF, partner agencies, governments and academic researchers (see Box 2).

BOX 2

Select global and regional evidence reviews about how to prevent and respond to violence against children

Violence against children generally

UNICEF, *Toward a World Free from Violence: Global Survey on Violence against Children*. UNICEF and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, New York, 2013. <http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/publications>

UNICEF, *Ending Violence against Children: Six Strategies for Action*. UNICEF, New York, 2014. www.unicef.org/publications/index_74866.html

UNICEF, *Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse: Thematic Report*. UNICEF, New York, 2013. www.unicef.org/publicpartnerships/files/Child_Protection_from_Violence_Exploitation_and_Abuse_2013_Thematic_Report.pdf

WHO, *INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence against Children*. World Health Organization, CDC, Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, PAHO, PEPFAR, Together for Girls, UNICEF, UNODC, USAID, World Bank, Geneva, 2016. www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/media/news/2016/12_07/en/

Child maltreatment

Knerr, Wendy, Frances Gardner and Lucie Cluver, *Parenting and the Prevention of Child Maltreatment in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Review of Interventions and a Discussion of Prevention of the Risks of Future Violent Behaviour among Boys*. Sexual Violence Research Initiative, Medical Research Council and the Oak Foundation, Pretoria, 2011. www.svri.org/parenting.pdf

Knerr, Wendy, Frances Gardner and Lucie Cluver, 'Improving Positive Parenting Skills and Reducing Harsh and Abusive Parenting in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Review', *Prevention Science*, vol. 14, no. 4, 2013, pp. 352-363.

Mikton, Chris and Alexander Butchart, 'Child Maltreatment Prevention: A Systematic Review of Reviews', *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, vol. 87, no. 5, 2009, pp. 353-361.

Skeen, S. and M. Tomlinson, 'A Public Health Approach to Preventing Child Abuse in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Call for Action', *International Journal of Psychology*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2013, pp. 108-116.

Violence and neglect in early childhood

Landers, Cassie, *Preventing and Responding to Violence, Abuse, and Neglect in Early Childhood: A Technical Background Document*. Child Protection Section, UNICEF, New York, 2013. www.unicef.org/protection/files/Report_on_preventing_and_responding_to_violence_in_early_childhood_2013_Cassie_Landers.pdf

UNICEF, *Compendium of Promising Practices to Ensure that Children under the Age of Three Grow up in a Safe and Supportive Family Environment*. UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Geneva, 2015. www.unicef.org/ceecis/UNICEF_Compendium_of_promising_practices_Web.pdf

BOX 2 (cont.)

Sexual abuse and exploitation of children

Radford, Lorraine, Debbie Allnock and Patricia Hynes, *Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation: Evidence Review*, UNICEF, New York, 2015.

Walsh, Kerryann, et al., 'School-Based Education Programmes for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse', *the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, vol. 4, no. CD004380, 2015.

School-related sexual and gender-based violence

Greene, M., et al., *A Girl's Right to Learn without Fear: Working to End Gender-Based Violence at School*. Plan International, Surrey, United Kingdom, 2013. www.ungei.org/srgbv/files/Plan_SRGBV_FullReport_EN.pdf

Leach, Fiona, Máiréad Dunne and Francesca Salvi, *School-Related Gender-Based Violence: A Global Review of Current Issues and Approaches in Policy, Programming and Implementation Responses to School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) for the Education Sector*. UNESCO, Paris, 2014. www.ungei.org/index_5709.html

Parkes, J., et al., *A Rigorous Review of Global Research Evidence on Policy and Practice on School-Related Gender-Based Violence*. University College London, Institute of Education, London, 2015. www.unicef.org/education/files/SRGBV_review_FINAL_V1_web_version.pdf

UNESCO, *School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report. Education 2030*. UNESCO, Paris, 2017. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002469/246970e.pdf>

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, *Ending the Torment: Tackling Bullying from the Schoolyard to Cyberspace*. SRSG, New York, 2016. [http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/sites/default/files/2016/End bullying/bullyingreport.pdf](http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/sites/default/files/2016/End%20bullying/bullyingreport.pdf)

Violence against women and girls

Ellsberg, Mary, et al., 'Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls: What Does the Evidence Say?', *Lancet*, vol. 385, no. 9977, 2014, pp. 1555-1566.

Fulu, Emma and Lori Heise, *What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls, Evidence Reviews*. Paper 1. State of Research on Violence against Women and Girls. UK Department for International Development, What Works Programme, London, 2015. www.whatworks.co.za/documents/publications/16-global-evidence-reviews-paper-1-state-of-the-field-of-research-on-violence-against-women-and-girls/file

DEFINITIONS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS AND BOYS

In keeping with UNICEF's prior work – 'Hidden in plain sight: A statistical analysis of violence against children'⁶ and 'Ending violence against children: Six strategies for action'⁷ – this theory of change addresses all forms of interpersonal violence (e.g. physical, sexual and emotional) against girls, boys and adolescents that occur in the home, in and on the way to school, in the community, in workplaces and through information and communication technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet.

Harmful practices such as *FGM/C* and *child marriage* are important issues for UNICEF, but they do not receive priority focus in this theory of change, as they are already being addressed by extensive prevention and response guidance. Similarly, UNICEF recognizes *trafficking* as an important issue, but one that is being addressed elsewhere, including by other agencies.

Child labour is approached as a context of heightened risk of violence, rather than as a form of violence itself, in keeping with the approach taken by INSPIRE.

UNICEF bases its understanding of violence against girls and boys on article 19 of the CRC, which refers to "... all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse..." However, operational definitions of and terms for specific forms of violence often vary widely and sometimes overlap, posing challenges for research and programming. For example, violence may be defined by perpetrator (e.g. child maltreatment and intimate partner violence), by context (e.g. cyber-bullying), by act (e.g. sexual violence) or by lethality (e.g. child homicide).

See Box 3 for some definitions of key forms of violence against children and adolescents, some of which have been outlined by international human rights standards while others have been adopted by UN agencies.

BOX 3

Definitions of key forms of violence against children and adolescents

Violence against children: "All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse".

Source: UN General Assembly, Article 19, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx

Sexual violence: An umbrella term used to refer to all forms of sexual victimization of adult women, men and children, including different forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation. "Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work".

Source: Based on definition in WHO, 'Sexual Violence', by Rachel Jewkes, Purna Sen and Claudia Garcia-Moreno, in *World Report on Violence and Health*, edited by Etienne G. Krug, et al., 2002, pp. 147-182.

Child sexual abuse: Engaging in sexual activities with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities (this does not apply to consensual sexual activities between minors), and engaging in sexual activities with a child where use is made of coercion, force or threats; or abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child,

BOX 3 (cont.)

including within the family; or abuse is made of a particularly vulnerable situation of the child, notably because of a mental or physical disability or a situation of dependence.

Source: Article 18 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, 2007.

Child sexual exploitation: Child sexual abuse becomes sexual exploitation when a second party benefits through sexual activity involving a child. It includes acts such as: exploitation of a child or adolescent in prostitution and/or child sexual abuse material. In the Council of Europe Convention it also covers situations where a child or other person is given or promised money or other form of remuneration, payment or consideration in return for the child engaging in sexual activity, even if the payment/remuneration is not made; and the intentional causing, for sexual purposes, of a child who has not reached the age for sexual consent, to witness sexual abuse or sexual activities, even without having to participate.

Source: Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and articles 19-23 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

Violent discipline: Child discipline method that relies on physical (corporal) punishment and/or psychological aggression. "Psychological aggression refers to the action of shouting, yelling or screaming at a child, as well as calling a child offensive names such as 'dumb' or 'lazy'. Physical punishment is defined as shaking the child, hitting or slapping him/her on the hand/arm/leg, hitting him/her on the bottom or elsewhere on the body with a hard object, spanking or hitting him/her on the bottom with a bare hand, hitting or slapping him/her on the face, head or ears, and beating him/her over and over as hard as possible".

Source: UNICEF, 'Violent Discipline: Methodology', 2016. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/violent-discipline/>

Corporal punishment: *Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light.*

Source: UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, CRC General Comment No. 8, *The Right of the Child to Protection from Corporal Punishment and Other Cruel or Degrading Forms of Punishment*, 2006. www.refworld.org/docid/460bc7772.html

Bullying: "...intentional and aggressive behaviour occurring repeatedly against a victim where there is a real or perceived power imbalance, and where the victim feels vulnerable and powerless to defend himself or herself. The unwanted behaviour is hurtful: it can be physical, including hitting, kicking and the destruction of property; verbal, such as teasing, insulting and threatening; or relational, through the spreading of rumours and exclusion from a group".

Source: Olweus, Dan, *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do (Understanding Children's Worlds)*. Wiley-Blackwell, 1993.

Intimate partner violence: "Any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship. Examples... [include] acts of physical violence... sexual violence... emotional (psychological abuse)... and controlling behaviours. The definition of intimate partner varies between settings and includes formal partnerships, such as marriage, as well as informal partnerships, including dating relationships and unmarried sexual relationships. In some settings, intimate partners tend to be married, while in others more informal partnerships are more common".

Source: WHO, *Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence*, 2013. www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/

MAGNITUDE AND CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Fragmented but growing international evidence indicates that high proportions of girls, boys and adolescents experience some form of violence (see Box 4). A 2016 global meta-analysis estimated that more than three-quarters of the world's children had experienced moderate or severe physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse during the past year, affecting nearly 1.5 billion boys and girls aged 2-17.⁸ While nationally representative data on certain forms of violence (e.g. violent discipline and bullying) are available from many countries, UNICEF analyses note that data on other forms of violence (e.g. sexual abuse of boys) are “woefully lacking”.⁹ UNICEF has reviewed the global

prevalence research on various forms of violence against children in many recent publications and provides regularly updated data through global databases.¹⁰

Evidence suggests that children are more likely to experience certain forms of violence at different ages (see Figure 1), and prolonged exposure to multiple forms is often linked to more adverse effects.¹¹ The evidence base on the prevalence of many types of violence disaggregated by age and sex is incomplete, however, and this is an ongoing area of work.

The following section summarizes some of what is known about the prevalence of violence against children and adolescents for selected forms of violence that are particularly relevant to UNICEF's work and the SDGs (also see Box 5).

BOX 4

Selected UNICEF publications on violence against girls and boys

A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents, 2017.

Hidden in plain sight: A statistical analysis of violence against children, 2014. www.unicef.org/publications/index_74865.html

Child disciplinary practices at home: Evidence from a range of low-and middle-income countries, 2010. www.unicef.org/protection/Child_Disciplinary_Practices_at_Home.pdf

A statistical snapshot of violence against adolescent girls, 2014. www.unicef.org/publications/index_76212.html

Breaking the silence on violence against indigenous girls, adolescents and young women, 2013, UNICEF, UN-Women, UNFPA, ILO and the SRSG on Violence against Children. www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/VAIWG_FINAL.pdf

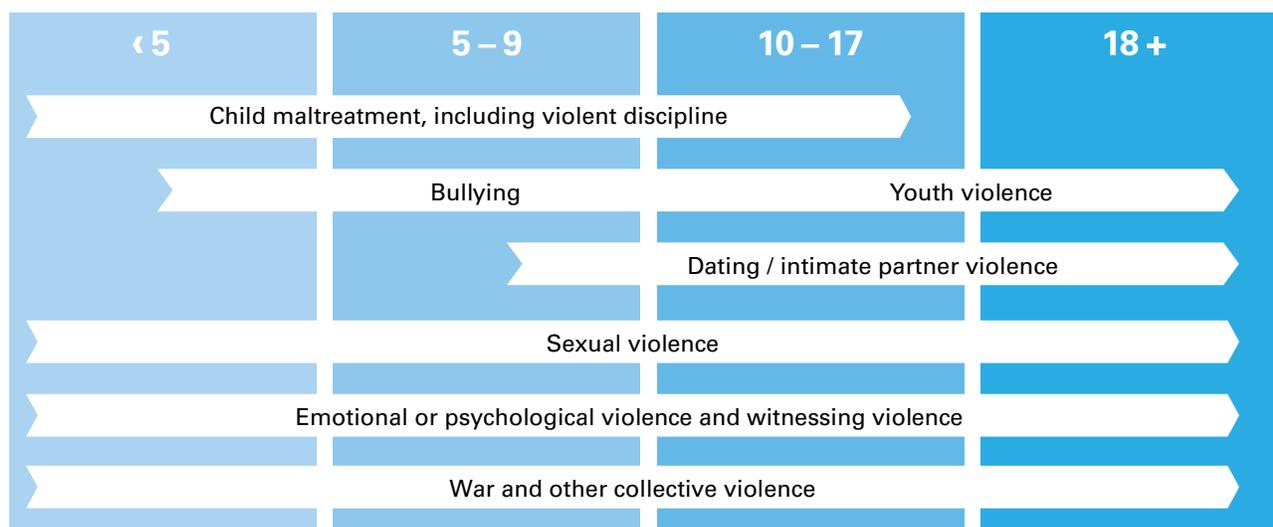
The multi-country study on the drivers of violence affecting children. A cross-country snapshot of findings, 2016, by M.C. Maternowska, A. Potts and D. Fry, UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti. www.unicef-irc.org/e-book/THE-MULTI-COUNTRY-STUDY-PAGER/HTML/

Corporal punishment in schools: Longitudinal evidence from Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam, 2015, by M.J. Oganda Portela, Innocenti Discussion Paper No. 2015-02, UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti. www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/CORPORAL%20PUNISHMENTfinal.pdf

Experiences of peer bullying among adolescents and associated effects on young adult outcomes: Longitudinal evidence from Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam, 2016, by K. Pells, M.J. Oganda Portela and P. Espinoza Revollo, Innocenti discussion paper no. 2016-03, UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti. www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IDP_2016_03.pdf

FIGURE 1

Selected forms of violence according to the most likely age of occurrence.



Source: Adapted from *INSPIRE, Seven Strategies for Ending Violence against Children* p.14.

BOX 5

Selected SDG indicators related to violence against children and adolescents

16.2.1: Per cent of children aged 1-17 who experienced any **physical punishment and/or psychological aggression** by caregivers in the past month.

16.2.3: Per cent of young women and men aged 18-29 who experienced **sexual violence** by age 18.

16.1.1: Number of victims of intentional **homicide** per 100,000 population, by sex and age (including the age group 0-19).

5.2.1: Per cent of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological **violence by a current or former intimate partner**, in the last 12 months, by form of violence and by age group.

Violent discipline (physical punishment and verbal psychological aggression).

A 2014 UNICEF analysis estimated that 6 in 10 children aged 2-14 (almost 1 billion worldwide) had experienced regular physical punishment by caregivers in the past month. Even higher proportions (about 7 in 10) experienced psychological aggression, such as being yelled at or called names. Harsh physical punishment – being hit hard and repeatedly or on the face – affected an average of 17 per cent of children from 58 countries. Limited data on violent discipline are available for children aged 15-17, as they were not measured by the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS).

Childhood sexual abuse.

Nationally representative data on childhood sexual abuse are limited and often difficult to compare across studies due to variations in methods and measures.¹² Few countries have nationally representative data on child sexual abuse, especially against males. UNICEF estimates, however, that about 1 in 10 girls (approximately 120 million worldwide) have experienced forced intercourse or other

sexual acts.¹³ In most but not all studies, boys typically report lower levels of child sexual abuse than girls, but levels of sexual abuse against boys are often substantial.^{14,15} Children usually know the perpetrators, and a large proportion of sexual violence against adolescents is perpetrated by romantic or intimate partners.

School-related violence, bullying and fighting.

While no SDG indicator specifically measures violence in schools, target 4.A calls for safe, non-violent learning environments. Sexual and gender-based school-related violence has received growing international attention.^{16–18} Girls and boys may experience physical, sexual, verbal or psychological violence in and around schools, as well as online, by other students, teachers, staff and people in the community. Internationally comparable data on corporal punishment against girls and boys in school are limited, but evidence suggests it remains widespread.¹⁹ For example, a four-country UNICEF study in 2015 found that the percentage of 8-year-old children who reported being physically punished in school during the past week ranged from 20 per cent in Viet Nam to 78 per cent in India.²⁰

Multinational, school-based surveys such as Global School-based Student Health Surveys (GSHS), the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children surveys and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study have produced large databases of internationally comparable data on certain types of peer violence, such as fighting, bullying and physical assault.²¹ Peer violence may occur in many locations, but schools are an important setting for interaction among peers, including violence.²² An analysis of GSHS and other school-based surveys found that 20 per cent to 50 per cent of girls and boys aged 13 to 15 reported being physically attacked in the past year in 25 countries. In 104 countries, 14 per cent to 68 per cent reported being involved in a physical fight in the past year; and in 106 countries, 7 per cent to 74 per cent of students reported by being bullied in the past month.²³

Physical and sexual violence by intimate or romantic partners.

Worldwide, nearly one in five adolescent girls aged 15-19 are married or cohabiting as if married.²⁴ Evidence suggests that nearly one third (29.4 per cent) have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their partner.²⁵ A recent analysis of Demographic and Health Survey data from 34 countries found that young women (aged 20-24) who had married or cohabited as children had a significantly elevated risk of partner violence in the past year compared with those who did not marry or cohabit before age 18; and that elevated risk persisted into adulthood.²⁶ Violence within romantic, informal adolescent partnerships is also prevalent in many settings, though comparable, multi-country data are limited.

Lethal violence. According to UN estimates from 2012, about 95,000 children and adolescents up to age 19 were victims of homicide in 2012 (the most recent data available). Evidence suggests that the share of deaths due to intentional injury (including homicide) increases as children enter adolescence, and is significantly higher among males than females.²⁷

RISK FACTORS AND DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE

Recent publications document a fragmented but growing body of evidence about risk factors and drivers associated with physical, sexual and emotional violence in childhood and adolescence.^{28–31} In accord with work by the UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti, the term ‘drivers’ is used for factors associated with an increased likelihood of violence at the structural or institutional level, while risk and protective factors are those at the individual, interpersonal and community levels.³²

A full discussion of what is known about causes and correlates of violence against children (much less each specific form) is beyond the scope of this document.

However, some important factors identified by international reviews are noted below (see Annex B for more details). As noted earlier, patterns and levels of violence vary according to age and sex. For example, while sexual abuse affects both girls and boys, global reviews find that girls report higher levels of forced sexual intercourse than boys in almost all settings.^{33,34} Girls who marry or cohabit as children are particularly at risk.³⁵ Meanwhile, global estimates indicate that males account for the majority of victims of child homicide (nearly 7 in 10),³⁶ and adolescent males experience higher rates than younger children and female cohorts.

Some studies link risk factors to specific types of violence; for example, a large body of evidence suggests that male attitudes supporting male entitlement to sex correlate with a higher risk of perpetrating sexual violence against girls and women.^{37,38} However, many factors are associated with multiple forms of violence against girls and boys, and growing evidence highlights the interconnectedness of different types of violence in childhood.³⁹

Girls and boys in vulnerable situations

Global evidence suggests that girls and boys in certain contexts are more vulnerable to many types of violence. For instance, vulnerability may be heightened for children living with disabilities, in institutional care and deprived of liberty; those living in extreme poverty, unaccompanied or separated from family; children on the move (migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced children); and children living with HIV, facing discrimination for their sexual orientation or gender identity, belonging to marginalized social or ethnic groups, and those living with other social and economic disadvantages.⁴⁰

Links between risk factors and violence are often complex, however, and may vary by setting, type of violence, gender and age. For example, while household poverty has been linked to greater risk of certain

types of violence in some settings, research suggests that associations between violence and poverty are not straightforward and need to be understood in the broader geographic and social context.⁴¹

Drivers and risk factors at higher levels of the ecological framework

While individual factors that increase the risk of violence are clearly important, there is broad consensus in the field that violence prevention and response must not focus too narrowly on individual characteristics of victims and perpetrators. Rather the focus should be enlarged to give more attention to broader social, economic, normative and institutional environments in which children and adolescents live.⁴² Annex B summarizes factors and drivers associated with an increased risk of violence identified by many studies at the level of societies, legal and policy frameworks, systems and institutions, communities, households and families. This theory of change gives attention to two particular sets of high-level, cross-cutting factors across all parts of the results chain. These are:

- a) Social norms about gender equality and the acceptability of violence and discrimination (in other words, violence as a human rights and public health issue)
- b) Situations of fragility and conflict at the community and society/national level, including armed conflict, criminal violence, forced displacement, natural disasters and other emergencies.

These factors often interact. For example, in many settings, girls face heightened vulnerability to certain types of violence due to social and gender norms that hamper their development. Evidence suggests that girls are uniquely disadvantaged during armed conflict, forced displacement and other crises. Pre-existing gender norms that restrict girls' development often persist throughout such crises. As social connections and networks splinter, harmful gender norms can become even more entrenched.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE

All forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse against girls and boys may have serious negative short-term and long-term physical, mental and reproductive health consequences. These include physical injury, sexually transmitted infections, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, unplanned pregnancy and in

some cases death.⁴³ Evidence suggests that toxic stress associated with exposure to violence in childhood can impair brain development and damage other parts of the nervous system, with lifelong consequences.⁴⁴ Violence may also have serious social and economic consequences for individuals and society, including reduced school performance and long-term economic costs.⁴⁵



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2. Proposed Theory of Change

This section includes three components that together comprise a theory of change:

- **Cross-cutting principles and assumptions** that inform the proposed results chain.
- **Conceptual framework and schematic representations of the results chain**, including a simplified and a more detailed schematic that show proposed results at the impact/goal, outcome and output levels; high-priority actions and strategies; and potential barriers, challenges, drivers, risk factors and bottlenecks.
- **Narrative summary of the theory of change**, which provides the rationale for the proposed results and describes the links between different levels of the results chain (from outputs to outcomes to impact/goal) and the priority strategies proposed to achieve those results.

In addition, a *detailed results framework* with results statements, indicators, means of verification and notes about data availability, strengths and weaknesses for each indicator has been developed as a separate but complementary document.

CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS

In accord with UNICEF's previous work, recommendations of the 2015 evaluation and global evidence about effective violence prevention and response, this theory of change is informed by the following general principles, which apply throughout the results framework:

- A child rights perspective, as laid out in the CRC.
- Principles and rights recognized by other international human rights instruments, including the Convention

on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- UNICEF's commitment to the rights and needs of girls and boys living in situations of vulnerability (e.g. girls and boys living with disabilities, in institutional care, in extreme poverty, deprived of liberty, separated from family or living with any social or economic vulnerability).
 - UNICEF's commitment to gender equity, gender equality and gender-responsive policies and programming as cross-cutting themes.
 - Principles laid out in UNICEF's 2008 global child protection strategy, which called for developing protective environments in which "girls and boys are free from violence, exploitation, and unnecessary separation from family; and where laws, services, behaviours and practices minimize children's vulnerability, address known risk factors, and strengthen children's own resilience..."⁴⁶
 - The importance of ensuring participation of girls, boys and adolescents in programme and policy design, both to give them a voice and to improve the quality of programming and monitoring.
 - A results-based management framework approach.
 - A life cycle approach that recognizes how risks and needs vary by age during childhood and adolescence can help to design more effective programmes and make best use of scarce resources.
- In addition, the broad design of this theory of change is informed by evidence from the research and programme evaluation literature supporting findings that:
- Violence against girls and boys is preventable.⁴⁷

2. Proposed Theory of Change

- Effective violence prevention and response requires action at all levels of the ecological model including legal and policy frameworks; systems and institutions; society/communities; households/families; mothers, fathers and other caregivers; and girls and boys, including adolescents.⁴⁸
- Every sector has an important role to play in violence prevention and response, including justice, social welfare/social protection, health and education, among others. Multisectoral collaboration among all sectors is essential for creating a protective environment for children.
- Whole system and whole institution strengthening, combined with multisectoral collaboration, is almost always more effective than narrow policy changes, short-term projects and vertical programming.^{49,50}
- Building the evidence base and using 'research to action' can raise awareness, build political will to address violence, hold systems accountable and

mobilize better evidence-based policymaking and programming for violence prevention and response across all sectors.

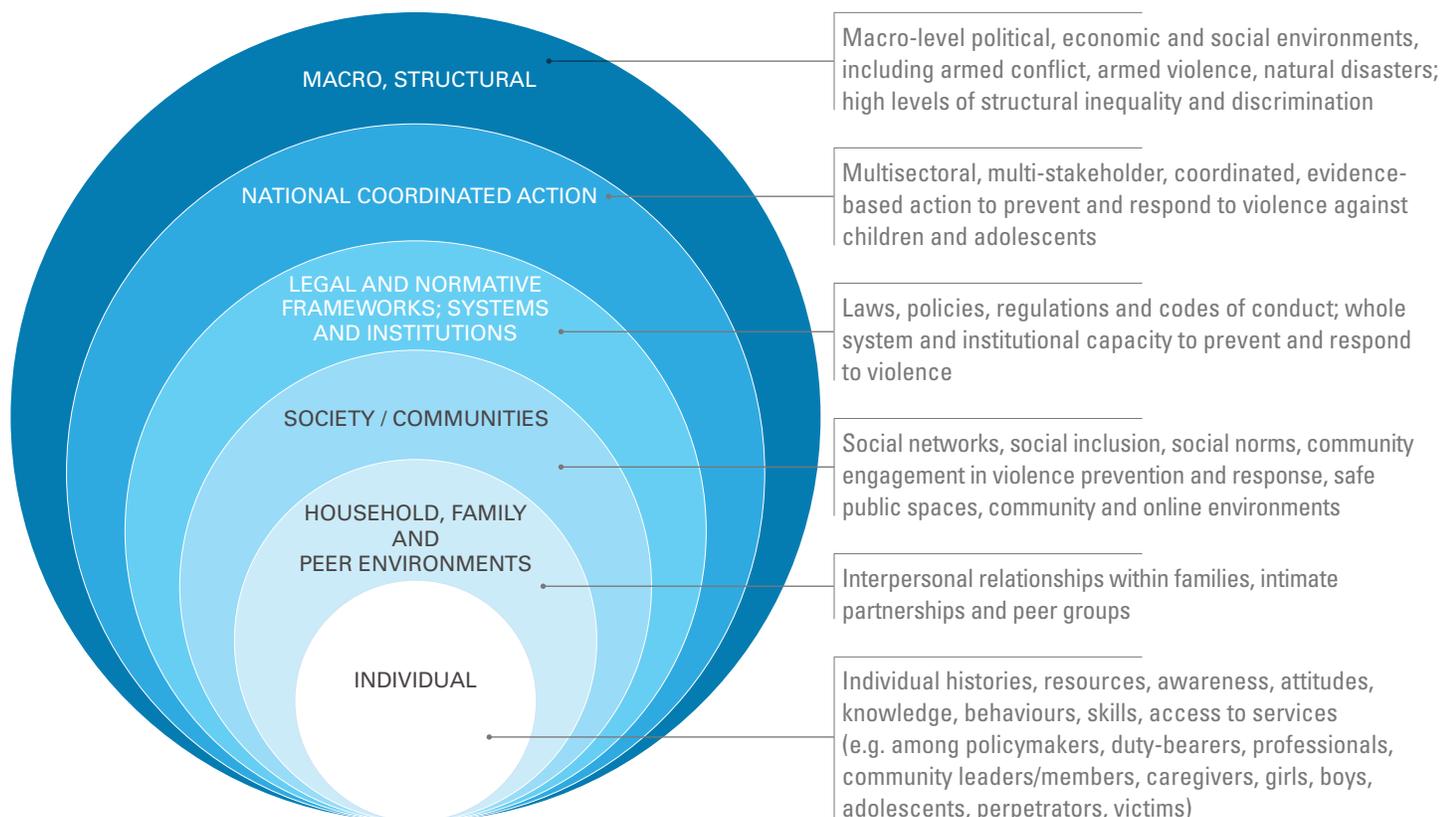
Levels of intervention: the socio-ecological model

This theory of change is informed by evidence that preventing and responding to violence against girls, boys and adolescents requires addressing risk and protective factors at many levels of the socio-ecological framework (see Figure 2).⁵¹ These include macro-structural factors; national coordinated action; legal and normative frameworks; systems and institutions; communities; interpersonal relationships within households, including parent/child; peer relationships; and characteristics, awareness, attitudes, knowledge and behaviours of individuals at all levels of society – including policymakers; duty-bearers and professionals; community leaders; mothers, fathers and other caregivers; girls, boys and adolescents; and victims and perpetrators.



FIGURE 2

Socio-ecological model for understanding violence against children and adolescents.



Source: Adapted from UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti, 'Understanding Children's Experiences of Violence in Peru: Evidence from Young Lives', p. 14. www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IWP_2016_17.pdf

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS AND SCHEMATIC OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE

The following pages present schematic illustrations of the theory of change. The first is a conceptual framework showing change organized by level of the ecological framework. The second is a matrix presenting a more detailed chain of results statements at the level of outputs, outcomes, impact/goal and vision, as well as high-priority actions and strategies and examples of barriers, challenges, drivers and bottlenecks.

Vision



A world free of violence against girls and boys, including adolescents.

Impact / Goal



All girls and boys, including adolescents and those living in situations of vulnerability, grow up with greater freedom from all forms of violence; and those who do experience violence benefit from greater access to care, support, justice and other services needed to ensure physical, mental and social well-being.

RISK-INFORMED CHILD PROTECTION systems that are more resilient in situations of armed conflict, forced displacement and other emergencies.

GREATER AWARENESS of violence as a public health/human rights problem; **SOCIAL NORMS** more supportive of gender equality and freedom from violence and discrimination.

OUTCOMES

GREATER NATIONAL COMMITMENT
to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents.

STRONGER LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS
(criminal, civil, administrative and regulatory) that support the rights of girls and boys, including adolescents, and provide greater protection from violence and discrimination.

GIRLS, BOYS AND ADOLESCENTS
are more empowered to exercise rights and agency to live free of violence, seek help and build gender-equitable, non-violent relationships.

NATIONAL PLANS
for coordinated, multisectoral violence prevention and response.

STRONGER MECHANISMS AND GREATER SUPPORT among policymakers and civil society
for strengthening legal protections for girls, boys, adolescents.

EXPANDED ACCESS
to education, life skills and livelihood programmes; age-appropriate information and services related to violence, rights and sexual and reproductive health.

INVESTMENT
in violence prevention and response across all sectors.

ENHANCED SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES
across all sectors, including prevention, reporting mechanisms, response and support services.

HOUSEHOLDS, FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS have:

- Greater household economic security
- More gender-equitable attitudes and practices; less violence against women
- More nurturing parent/child relationships

OUTPUTS

STRONGER PLANNING AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS
that are multisectoral, multi-stakeholder and include adolescent/child participation.

HUMANITARIAN
Stronger programming on violence against children and gender-based violence in emergencies

JUSTICE Child-friendly justice; better implementation of laws related to violence and discrimination	SOCIAL WELFARE Enhanced violence against children-related social welfare/child protection prevention and response	HEALTH Enhanced violence-related public health research and prevention; care and support for victims	EDUCATION Greater access to education, life skills and livelihood programmes that are more inclusive and gender equitable and address violence
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EXPANDED COVERAGE
of prevention efforts, including parenting programmes, household economic support, C4D and community mobilization.

SOCIETY / COMMUNITIES have:

- greater social and economic equality
- lower levels of community violence
- norms supporting non-violence and non-discrimination
- more engagement in Violence against Children prevention

GREATER AWARENESS
of evidence about violence among policymakers and civil society.

ENHANCED SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY
across all sectors, including normative frameworks; data collection systems; protocols, infrastructure and supplies; workforce preparedness; referral networks; multisectoral collaboration; integrated attention to violence prevention and response across all programming; case detection, reporting, referrals, care, support and prevention.

EXPANDED EVIDENCE
on violence against girls, boys and adolescents; strengths and gaps in responses to violence across all sectors; and promising strategies for scale-up. Research, surveillance, administrative data collection, mapping, monitoring, evaluation

Vision



A world free of violence against girls and boys, including adolescents.

Impact / Goal



All girls and boys, including adolescents and those living in situations of vulnerability, grow up with greater freedom from all forms of violence; and those who do experience violence benefit from greater access to care, support, justice and other services needed to ensure physical, mental and social well-being.

Cross-cutting Outcomes

- **Policies and programmes** across all results areas **are more risk-informed and supportive of resilience** at individual, family, community and system levels, so child protection strategies continue seamlessly across humanitarian and development cycles, including in situations of armed conflict, forced displacement and other emergencies.
- Policymakers, professionals, leaders, community members, caregivers, girls, boys and adolescents have greater **awareness of violence against children** as a human rights and public health problem and greater agreement with **social norms** that support freedom from violence, harmful practices, gender inequality and discrimination, particularly against vulnerable groups.

All outcomes contribute to impact/goal but also influence one another across the results chain. In other words, the chain of results flows horizontally and vertically.

	National, multisectoral action	Legal/policy frameworks	Systems and institutions: prevention, reporting mechanisms and response services across all sectors (including but not limited to sectors listed below)				Society/communities	Families and caregivers	Girls, boys and adolescents	
OUTCOMES	Countries have strengthened national commitment to fund and implement comprehensive, evidence-based, multisectoral, coordinated plans, policies and actions (including MRM plans) to prevent and respond to violence against girls, boys and adolescents.	Countries have strengthened legal and policy frameworks (as written and implemented) to protect girls and boys, including adolescents, from violence and discrimination, in accord with international norms (e.g. CRC and CEDAW).	Whole systems and institutions have improved the quality, coverage, access to and multisectoral coordination of violence prevention, reporting mechanisms and response services.				Communities are more engaged in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the right of all girls and boys to grow up free of violence and discrimination, regardless of age, sex, disability or any other social or economic disadvantage • Creating safer environments for girls, boys and adolescents. 	Households/families have greater social and economic stability and security, more gender-equitable attitudes and practices, and lower levels of violence against women in the home.	Mothers, fathers and caregivers have built more nurturing parent/child relationships and have improved positive parenting and gender-equitable attitudes, skills and practices.	Girls, boys and adolescents are more empowered to exercise and advocate for rights and agency to live free of violence; seek help when violence occurs; build healthy, gender-equitable, non-violent relationships; and postpone marriage and childbearing until adulthood.
OUTPUTS	Countries have strengthened the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of multi-stakeholder, multisectoral planning and coordination mechanisms • Evidence base about violence against children (research, mapping, surveillance and monitoring) • Awareness of evidence for informed policies and planning. 	Countries have strengthened: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms to monitor and reform laws and policies in accord with international norms • Public and policymaker support for legal reform and children's rights • Justice sector capacity to implement laws. 	Each sector has strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls, boys and adolescents in accord with a systems approach, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normative frameworks for addressing violence and child protection, e.g. policies, regulations, guidelines, protocols, minimum standards, codes of conduct and plans of action (developed with child participation, adopted, costed, funded, implemented and monitored). • Evidence and data collection systems related to violence and child protection, including research, mapping, surveillance, administrative data systems, monitoring and evaluation. • System and institution-wide resources such as infrastructure, supplies, policy and protocol implementation, workforce strengthening and data systems. • Workforce preparedness of duty-bearers, professionals and paraprofessionals, e.g. number, qualifications, training, knowledge, skills, attitudes, awareness, etc. • Referral networks, multisectoral collaboration and community outreach. • Integration of attention to violence against children across all policies and programming. • Investment in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Case detection, responses, referrals, monitoring, care, support and documentation. » Dedicated, evidence-based initiatives to prevent and respond to violence against children and adolescents in accord with international good practices (including INSPIRE strategies). 				Communities and community-based organizations have greater awareness of children's rights, including the right of girls and boys to grow up free of violence and discrimination, regardless of age, sex, disability or any other social or economic disadvantage.	Vulnerable households have greater access to social and economic support programmes that integrate attention to gender equity, family violence prevention and safe transitions to adulthood.	Mothers, fathers and caregivers have greater: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to higher quality parenting support services • Awareness of positive parenting and child development. 	Girls, boys and adolescents have greater access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, life skills, livelihood and violence prevention programmes • Age-appropriate information about sexuality and healthy relationships • Knowledge about rights and where to seek help for violence.

Note: Violence against children includes all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, including violent discipline and sexual abuse and exploitation of girls and boys, including adolescents, in all settings (e.g. home, school, community, online). Girls and boys in situations of vulnerability include those with disabilities, in institutional care, deprived of liberty, in extreme poverty, unaccompanied/separated from family, and affected by HIV or any other social or economic disadvantage.

HIGH-PRIORITY ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Cross-cutting strategies: C4D strategies to change social norms; and efforts to strengthen the resilience of policies and programmes across all results areas, including in emergency situations.

PRIORITY ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

<p>National, multi-sectoral action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and disseminate the evidence base, (research, mapping, surveillance and monitoring). • ‘Research to action’ strategies to raise awareness and mobilize action. • Multisectoral, multi-stakeholder planning mechanisms (e.g. task forces), with child/adolescent participation. • Develop, adopt, cost, fund, implement and monitor multisectoral national plans. • Develop public expenditure tracking mechanisms. • Develop MRM* action plans, where applicable. 	<p>Legal/policy frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review laws and policies for compliance/accord with international norms related to violence and discrimination (e.g. CRC and CEDAW). • Advocate for legal reform and implementation. (J) • Reform laws and policies related to violence against girls, boys and adolescents, including access to weapons. (J) • Strengthen policies related to child-friendly justice. (J) • Campaigns to raise awareness of and support for violence-related laws and rights. 	<p>Prevention, reporting mechanisms and response services within each sector, including systems approaches for whole system and whole institutional capacity building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Review, revise and implement stronger normative frameworks (e.g. policies, protocols, codes of conduct, plans of action, etc.) relevant to violence, in accord with international norms. » Perform comprehensive mapping of whole sector/system/institution-wide resources and gaps, both within each sector and across the child protection system as a whole. » Invest in administrative data collection systems that track cases of child abuse and neglect, monitor institutional and professional practices, and document sector-specific expenditures. » Invest in institutional resources (e.g. infrastructure, data systems, equipment, supplies, referral networks, etc.) based on comprehensive needs assessments in each sector. » Invest in workforce preparedness, including sensitizing, training, hiring and retaining more and better-qualified duty-bearers, professionals and paraprofessionals. » Build referral networks; enhance multisectoral collaboration and community outreach. » Integrate attention to implications of violence across all policies and programming. <p>• Invest in reporting systems, case detection, responses, referrals, monitoring, care and support.</p> <p>• Invest in dedicated, high-priority, evidence-based violence prevention initiatives in each sector.</p>					<p>Justice (J)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in child-friendly justice reforms and enhanced support for child victims, in accord with international norms (e.g. UN Model Strategies). 	<p>Social welfare (SW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in the social welfare and child protection workforce. • Invest in enhanced case management services and information systems. 	<p>Health (H)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align protocols and practice with international clinical guidelines on child sexual abuse and child maltreatment. • Invest in enhanced post-rape care for girls and boys. • Integrate attention to violence within public health programming. 	<p>Education (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school violence initiatives. • Integrate attention to violence in and around schools in education policies and programmes. 	<p>Humanitarian/emergency (H/E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-based violence in emergencies programming. • Family reunification strategies in emergencies. 	<p>Society/communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C4D strategies to change social norms about gender, violence and discrimination. (J, H, SW, E) • Mobilize communities and community-based organizations to prevent and respond to violence and discrimination against girls and boys, including adolescents, particularly the most vulnerable. (H, SW, E) 	<p>Households/families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social care and support programmes for households that integrate attention to gender equality, violence against children and violence against women. (SW) • Cash transfer programmes, especially those that address or evaluate the impact on girls’ empowerment and safe transitions to adulthood for girls and boys. (SW) 	<p>Mothers, fathers and caregivers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive parenting programmes for mothers, fathers and other caregivers across the child life cycle, reinforced by C4D strategies. (SW, H, E) • Parent and caregiver support services (e.g. home visits) for vulnerable families. (H, SW) 	<p>Girls, boys and adolescents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life skills and livelihood programmes that integrate attention to rights, gender norms, healthy relationships and violence. (H, E) • School-based violence prevention programmes. (E) • Adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services and programmes. (H) • C4D strategies to raise awareness, change norms.
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NOTES: *INSPIRE* strategies are in blue. *MRM = Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism. (J) = Justice; (SW) = Social Welfare; (H) = Health; (E) = Education; (H/E) = Humanitarian/emergency.

BARRIERS, CHALLENGES, DRIVERS, RISK FACTORS AND BOTTLENECKS (EXAMPLES)

BARRIERS, CHALLENGES, DRIVERS, BOTTLENECKS

Multisectoral action	Legal/policy frameworks	Prevention and response services	Society/communities	Households/ families	Mothers, fathers and caregivers	Girls, boys and adolescents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of political will, mechanisms and/or resources to invest in coordinated, multisectoral violence prevention and response. • Lack of evidence (especially population-based data) to raise awareness of violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak legal and policy frameworks that inadequately protect girls and boys from violence and discrimination. • Institutions that lack capacity to implement laws or protect children in accord with international norms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of system and institutional capacity to prevent and respond to violence in each sector. • Inadequate investment in workforce preparedness, particularly child protection. • Resource constraints in each sector for violence prevention and response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social, economic and gender inequality; discrimination against vulnerable groups. • Lack of community and youth engagement in protecting the rights of girls and boys. • Structural inequality, armed conflict/violence and emergencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic instability, lack of livelihoods, poverty-related stress, marital conflict, family disintegration. • Gender inequality and violence against women in the home. • Family separation, particularly in emergency situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of political will, mechanisms and/or resources to invest in coordinated, multisectoral violence prevention and response. • Lack of evidence (especially population-based data) to raise awareness of violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness, information and skills about rights, violence, healthy relationships and how to seek help. • Lack of support for managing challenges of adolescence and safe transitions to adulthood, including sexual and reproductive health services. • Barriers to education and life skills/livelihood programmes. • Gender- and age-based power imbalances.

Among policymakers, programme managers, duty-bearers, professionals, paraprofessionals, community members, community leaders, mothers, fathers, caregivers, girls, boys and adolescents:

Low recognition of violence against girls, boys and adolescents as a human rights and public health problem

and

Social norms and attitudes that support and enable violence, harmful practices, gender inequality and discrimination against vulnerable groups

are cross-cutting



NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE

The following section provides a narrative description of the results chain, the rationale for each results statement at the output, outcome and impact/goal level, and the recommended high-priority actions and strategies for each section.

Vision and impact/goal statements

Vision 	A world free of violence against girls and boys, including adolescents.
Impact / Goal 	All girls and boys, including adolescents and those living in situations of vulnerability, grow up with greater freedom from all forms of violence; and those who do experience violence benefit from greater access to care, support, justice and other services needed to ensure physical, mental and social well-being.

This impact/goal statement describes two sets of changes in the lives of girls, boys and adolescents. The first focuses on prevention – phrased in positive terms as greater freedom from violence. The second focuses on protecting and restoring children’s physical, mental and social well-being when violence occurs.

This two-part structure harmonizes with article 19 of the CRC as well as the INSPIRE package. It highlights the importance of both prevention and response and reflects evidence that high-quality responses are essential for long-term prevention, and vice versa. The emphasis on greater freedom from violence is designed to describe idealistic but feasible change, in contrast to the vision statement, which describes an idealized image of a world free of violence against children and adolescents.

In keeping with UNICEF’s work in other areas, this proposed impact/goal statement makes particular mention of girls and boys living in situations of vulnerability. As noted earlier, these include girls, boys and adolescents living with disabilities, in institutional care, deprived of liberty, living in extreme poverty and unaccompanied/separated from family, as well as those living with other social, ethnic or economic disadvantages.

Overall structure of the outcomes and outputs

Within the field of violence prevention and response, there is rarely a narrow, vertical chain of results linking a single strategy to a single output, outcome and impact/goal. One strategy (e.g. legal reform, social norm change) may influence multiple outcomes and be most effective at preventing violence when used in combination with others.

As a result, this theory of change assumes that outcomes will produce change across the results chain both horizontally (by affecting other outcomes) and vertically (by contributing to change at the impact/goal level). The results chain is structured so that evidence-based, national, coordinated actions contribute to changes in legal and normative frameworks, systems and institutions across all sectors. In turn, all those efforts both contribute to and are influenced by social and behavioural change across the ecological framework (society/communities; households/families; mothers, fathers and other caregivers; and girls, boys and adolescents).

This approach aligns with the UNICEF 2008 child protection strategy,⁵² which recognized the importance of strengthening child protection systems, supported by multi-sectoral coordination and broader social change. This results chain is also informed by evidence of the need to achieve changes across all levels of the ecological framework, as described earlier in this document.

Cross-cutting outcomes: Macro-level structural factors and contexts

Cross-cutting outcomes

- **Policies and programmes across all results areas are more risk-informed and supportive of resilience at individual, family, community and system levels, so child protection strategies continue seamlessly across humanitarian and development cycles, including in situations of armed conflict, forced displacement and other emergencies.**
- **Policymakers, professionals, leaders, community members, caregivers, girls, boys and adolescents have greater awareness of violence against children as a human rights and public health problem and greater agreement with social norms that support freedom from violence, harmful practices, gender inequality and discrimination, particularly against vulnerable groups.**

Rationale for these outcomes

The proposed results chain includes two cross-cutting outcomes that influence change across all results in the framework. The first cross-cutting outcome focuses on strengthening policies and programmes to ensure that they are **more risk-informed and resilient**, so that child protection strategies can continue in emergency situations such as armed conflict, forced displacement, natural disasters and other humanitarian situations. Emergency situations are examples of macro-level factors that may increase the risk of violence against children and adolescents and weaken protective systems. Ideally, all countries should consider the implications of both existing and potential emergencies, and integrate attention to those risks within policies and programmes relevant to violence against children.

The second cross-cutting outcome is that all stakeholders will have **greater awareness of violence against children and greater agreement with positive social norms**.

2. Proposed Theory of Change

Almost all sections of this theory of change require some type of awareness-raising and change in social norms. Social norm change may be particularly powerful when used in combination with other prevention strategies. For example, changing social norms that condone violence and raising awareness of violence against girls and boys as human rights and public health issues may be essential for building support among policymakers for national multisectoral action; convincing professionals in all sectors to recognize their responsibility as duty-bearers; building gender-equitable, respectful family relationships within households and families; and reducing acceptance of harsh parenting.

National, evidence-based, coordinated multisectoral action

Outcome	
Countries have strengthened national commitment to fund and implement comprehensive, evidence-based, multisectoral, coordinated plans, policies and actions (including MRM* plans where applicable) to prevent and respond to violence against girls, boys and adolescents.	
Outputs	High-priority strategies
Countries have strengthened the capacity of multi-stakeholder, multisectoral planning and coordination mechanisms .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in multisectoral and multi-stakeholder planning mechanisms (e.g. tasks forces and coalitions) that include participation by government, civil society, girls, boys and adolescents. • Develop, adopt, cost, fund and implement multisectoral, national plans and actions designed to strengthen violence prevention and response across all sectors. • Develop public expenditure tracking mechanisms. • Develop and implement MRM action plans where applicable.
Countries have strengthened the evidence base about violence against children (e.g. research, mapping, surveillance, evaluation and monitoring).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and disseminate the evidence base, including violence-related research, mapping, surveillance, monitoring and evaluation.
Countries have strengthened awareness of evidence for informed policies and planning (among key groups, including policymakers and the general public).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Research to action’ strategies that use evidence to raise awareness among policymakers and the general public, build political will for action and mobilize multisectoral, coordinated actions to address violence against girls, boys and adolescents.

*Monitoring and reporting mechanism on grave violations committed against children in situations of armed conflict.

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and outputs

National commitment to address violence against children and adolescents refers to engagement and action, led by the highest levels of government. These actions may include involvement in national planning and mobilization efforts, ratification of international rights treaties, support for legal and policy reform, allocation of national budgets for addressing violence and support for national plans that address violence prevention and response.

National actions and plans. There is international consensus that the most promising approaches to long-term prevention of violence against girls and boys are supported by comprehensive and coordinated action across many sectors, including government and civil society, that address both prevention and response.⁵³ This approach aligns with UNICEF's commitment to a multisectoral systems approach to addressing violence within the field of child protection, as noted in the *Programme Note on the Theory of Change for the 2014-2017 UNICEF Strategic Plan*.⁵⁴

Child protection systems often have many diverse elements, potentially drawn from the social welfare, education, health, justice, labour and security sectors, and increasingly from ICT, travel and tourism... comprehensive policies can set programming priorities, secure sufficient and reliable budgets, strengthen service delivery, influence legal frameworks and motivate the general public, which in turn can be a powerful force for instigating wide-ranging reform.

In countries affected by armed conflict, forced displacement and other emergency situations, other types of national plans are also important, such as MRM action plans for grave violations against children.⁵⁵ In addition, all countries may benefit from ensuring that national plans, policies and programmes incorporate greater attention to the risks of emergencies, in accord with the cross-cutting outcome mentioned earlier.⁵⁶

Expanding and disseminating the evidence base. In many countries, a key barrier to national action is a lack of awareness about the magnitude and consequences of violence against children, among both policymakers and the broader public. Evidence – particularly national, population-based data – can raise awareness of violence as a public health and human rights problem and build support for action among policymakers and the general public. It can also contribute to stronger evidence-informed policymaking and programme planning, especially when data are disaggregated by age, sex, geographic setting and key forms of vulnerability.

Evidence needed may include data on the prevalence, patterns, drivers and risk factors of violence against children and adolescents; strengths and gaps in response and prevention efforts; lessons learned about good practice; and evidence about which prevention and response strategies are effective or at least promising. Investing in programme monitoring evaluation more generally may help to prevent harm and improve violence-related policies and programmes in the future. Population-based data sources (both household and school-based surveys) may also allow countries to measure and report on violence-related SDG indicators, as UN Member States have agreed to do.

Rationale for strategies

Build and disseminate the evidence base on violence against children and adolescents, which may include:

- Population-based household or school-based surveys with data disaggregated by age and sex, such as MICS, Demographic and Health Surveys and Violence against Children Surveys^{57,58}
- Facility-based or qualitative research on violence against children and adolescents
- Administrative and surveillance data systems
- Desk reviews that synthesize evidence about violence against girls and boys
- Comprehensive assessments of the child protection system (e.g. as described on pages 50-62 of UNICEF's Child Protection Resource Pack),⁵⁹ including those that map strengths and gaps in response and prevention efforts within each sector.

All data collection – including research, administrative data collection and programme evaluations – should be carried out in accord with international recommendations about safe, ethical and high-quality research on violence against children and adolescents.^{60,61}

'Research to action' strategies use evidence to raise awareness among policymakers and/or the general public, build political will for action and mobilize stakeholders to collaborate for multisectoral, coordinated action. Some countries have used findings from national Violence against Children Surveys to mobilize national action.⁶² But 'research to action' strategies can also use desk reviews of existing research when a dedicated, national survey is not feasible.

Multi-stakeholder planning mechanisms may include task forces, coalitions or other planning and policymaking groups. Ideally, these include the participation of many sectors and many types of stakeholders, including high-level government officials, non-governmental organizations, other civil society groups, and children and adolescents, as documented in a case study from United Republic of Tanzania.⁶³

Comprehensive national, multisectoral plans for prevention and response. Some countries, such as Tanzania, have developed a comprehensive national plan to address violence against children.⁶⁴ Other countries, such as Zimbabwe, have multiple plans and strategies that address different target populations and forms of violence, which contribute to comprehensive national responses when taken together as a whole.⁶⁵ Emerging good practice guidelines suggest that national plans should include attention to prevention and response, gender equity and equality, the needs of vulnerable populations, strategies for coordination across sectors (for service delivery and data sharing), and comprehensive service responses.⁶⁶ Ideally, they should be informed by evidence about effective or at least promising approaches to violence prevention and response, including both international and national lessons learned.

Developing and adopting the national plan is just the first step in a long process, however. Once a government adopts a written plan, it must be costed, funded and implemented. In the longer term, such plans should be monitored, evaluated and improved. One important way to monitor national action, including the implementation of national plans, is to develop a **public expenditure tracking mechanism** that monitors expenditures invested in prevention and response to violence against children and adolescents and/or child protection. Both UNICEF and the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children are working to develop tools for this purpose.^{67,68}

Legal and policy frameworks

Outcome	
Countries have strengthened legal and policy frameworks (as written and implemented) to protect girls and boys, including adolescents, from violence and discrimination, in accord with international norms (e.g. CRC and CEDAW).	
Outputs	High-priority strategies
<p>Countries have strengthened mechanisms to monitor and reform laws and policies in accord with international norms (e.g. CRC).</p> <p>Countries have increased public and policymaker support for legal reform and children's rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review laws and policies for compliance/accord with international norms related to violence and discrimination (e.g. CRC and CEDAW). ● Advocate for legal reform and implementation, including by raising awareness among policymakers and the general public. ● Reform laws and policies (including criminal, civil and administrative codes, policies and regulations) that address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » violent discipline (at home and school), child sexual abuse and exploitation, access to weapons » protection of children and adolescents from violence and discrimination more generally » gender inequality and discrimination » child-friendly access to justice. ● Campaigns to raise awareness of and support for violence-related laws and rights.
<p>Countries have strengthened justice sector capacity to implement laws (<i>this overlaps with strengthening the justice system, below</i>).</p>	<p>Ensure that legal reform efforts incorporate attention to implications for training, costing, staffing and administrative law as well as regulations needed for full implementation.</p> <p><i>(See more justice sector strengthening strategies further down.)</i></p>

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and outputs

Strong legal and policy frameworks are an essential component of a protective environment for children and adolescents that prevents, prohibits and responds to all forms of violence against children. In addition to protecting children from harm and providing justice for victims, legal and policy change may also contribute to attitude and behaviour change in society by influencing norms about acceptable treatment of children, the rights of girls and boys, and what acts constitute a crime. Such strategies are particularly effective when accompanied by other strategies, such as awareness campaigns (see box below).

The value of combining legal reform with awareness raising and social norm change strategies – laws banning corporal punishment in Europe

Population-based research from five countries in Europe found that laws prohibiting corporal punishment led to reduced violent discipline of children in multiple countries. However, legal bans were more effective when accompanied by intensive, long-term efforts to change social norms, raise awareness of laws and promote positive disciplinary practices among parents.^{69, 70}

Legal and policy frameworks may include national and subnational criminal and civil legislation, family codes, administrative laws, policies, regulations and codes of conduct. While the justice sector (e.g. the police and judiciary) plays a central role in implementing legal and policy reforms, revised laws and policies may affect and require participation from many sectors, including health and social welfare.

Most countries have committed to bringing their legal and policy frameworks into accord with international human rights agreements, such as the CRC and CEDAW.

Child-friendly justice

‘Child-friendly justice’ is based on the principle that civil, administrative and criminal justice systems must protect the rights and well-being of all children who come into contact with these systems, whether as victims, witnesses or children in conflict with the law. Justice systems should be a positive force in children’s lives, not a source of additional trauma. International children’s rights documents, including the CRC, established children’s right to integrity, participation, information and proper representation when in contact with justice systems. There is a growing body of international guidance about good practice for achieving child-friendly justice based on the CRC, with implications for every aspect of justice system interactions with children. For example, see guidance from the Child Rights International Network at www.crin.org/en/guides/legal/child-friendly-justice.

However, many countries have ratified these agreements with reservations, and much remains to be done to domesticate key provisions into national laws. Increasingly, international guidance on best practice has emphasized the need to increase access to ‘child-friendly justice’⁷¹ and other norms, such as those described in the UN Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children.⁷²

Rationale for strategies

Effective reform and implementation of legal and policy frameworks often requires many steps, including the following:

Review and revise laws and policies in light of international rights obligations, including the CRC and CEDAW. The Committee on the Rights of the Child monitors compliance with the CRC, and UNICEF already has responsibility for facilitating broad consultations within States to maximize the accuracy and impact of reports to the Committee. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has developed a checklist that can help countries assess legal and policy frameworks and their implementation in accord with international norms laid out in the *United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice* (UN Model Strategies).⁷³ Revising laws and policies typically takes time, and should ideally involve participation by many stakeholders, including children and adolescents.

Legal advocacy and awareness campaigns. In some cases, awareness raising and advocacy may be needed to mobilize the general public, key constituencies and policymakers to revise laws and policies relevant to violence against children. Advocacy efforts can also encourage policymakers to implement and monitor implementation of new laws.⁷⁴ Finally, as mentioned earlier, awareness campaigns increase awareness among the general public about the rights of children and the legal and policy frameworks designed to protect them.

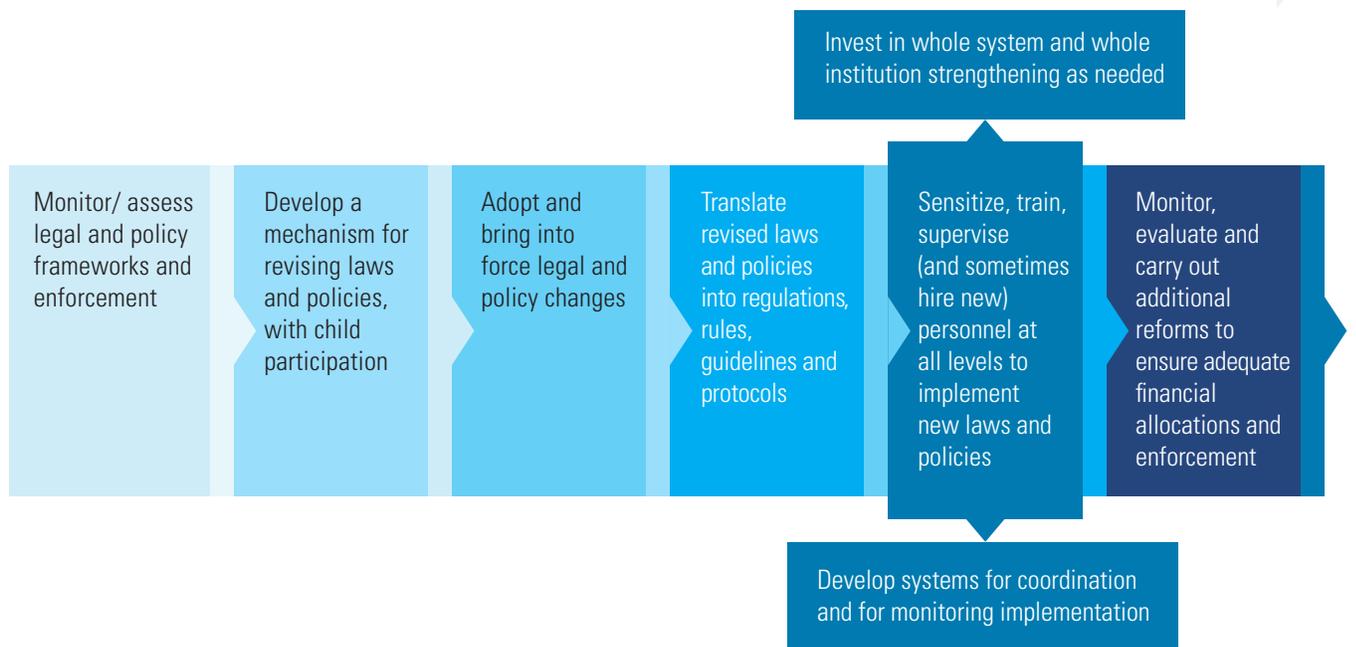
Strengthening justice sector capacity to implement laws and policies. Achieving legislative reform may be a challenging and important achievement on its own, but it is always just a first step in a longer chain of results. The greater challenge is to ensure that laws and policies are implemented and enforced in ways that protect girls and boys from harm. Once the content of laws and policies is revised and adopted, the next challenge is to help key systems and institutions implement those policies (see Figure 3). This stage often requires regulations and rules that translate laws into practice, and substantial investment to ensure adequate staffing and to train duty-bearers to implement new policies. Where resources are limited, countries may need to strengthen the capacity of whole justice systems and institutions,^{75,76} as discussed in the section on strengthening justice sector responses to violence. Countries may also need to develop monitoring systems that hold institutions and duty-bearers accountable. Children, adolescents and families also need to be aware of their legal rights and able to access legal aid, law enforcement reporting mechanisms and support services essential for child-friendly access to justice.

FIGURE 3

Steps in strengthening and implementing legal and policy frameworks.

At all stages of the process:

- Advocate/mobilize support for legal and policy reform among policymakers and the public
- Raise awareness of legal rights among the general population



Systems and institutions: Prevention and reporting mechanisms and response services across all sectors

Note that sectors include but are not limited to justice, social welfare, health, education and humanitarian/emergency programming.

Outcome	
<p>Whole systems and institutions have improved the quality, coverage, access to and multisectoral coordination of violence prevention, reporting mechanisms and response services for girls and boys, including adolescents.</p>	
Outputs	High-priority strategies
<p>Each sector has strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, in accord with a systems approach, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Normative frameworks for addressing violence and child protection, e.g. policies, regulations, guidelines, protocols, minimum standards, codes of conduct and plans of action (<i>developed with child participation, adopted, costed, funded, implemented and monitored</i>). ● Evidence and data collection systems related to violence and child protection, including research, mapping, surveillance, administrative data systems, monitoring and evaluation. ● System and institution-wide resources such as infrastructure, supplies, policy and protocol implementation, workforce strengthening and data systems. ● Workforce preparedness of duty-bearers, professionals and paraprofessionals, e.g. number, qualifications, training, knowledge, skills, attitudes, awareness, etc. ● Referral networks, multisectoral collaboration and community outreach. ● Integration of attention to violence against children across all policies and programming. ● Investment in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » case detection, responses, referrals, monitoring, care, support and documentation » dedicated, evidence-based initiatives to prevent and respond to violence against children and adolescents, in accord with international best practices (including INSPIRE strategies). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt systems approaches for whole system and whole institutional capacity building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Review, revise and implement stronger normative frameworks (e.g. policies, protocols, codes of conduct, plans of action, etc.) relevant to violence, in accord with international norms. » Perform comprehensive mapping of whole sector/system/institution-wide resources and gaps – both within each sector and across the child protection system as a whole. » Invest in administrative data collection systems that track cases of child abuse and neglect; monitor institutional and professional practices; and document sector-specific expenditures. » Invest in institutional resources (e.g. infrastructure, data systems, equipment, supplies, referral networks, human resources, etc.) based on comprehensive needs assessments in each sector. » Invest in workforce preparedness to address violence against children, including sensitizing, training, hiring and retaining more and better-qualified duty-bearers, professionals and paraprofessionals. » Build referral networks; enhance multisectoral collaborations and community outreach. » Integrate attention to implications of violence across all policies and programming. ● Invest in reporting systems, case detection, responses, referrals, monitoring, care and support. ● Invest in dedicated, high-priority, evidence-based violence prevention initiatives in each sector.

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and outputs

Prevention: All sectors have an important role to play in preventing violence against children and adolescents. For example: *Justice* sector reforms that increase access to child-friendly justice and reduce impunity for perpetrators can send a powerful message throughout society about the rights of girls and boys to grow up free of violence, particularly when (as noted earlier) legal reforms are combined with Communication for Development (C4D) strategies. *Social welfare* programmes that assist vulnerable families, support caregivers and intervene to help girls and boys at risk can help to reduce the risk of violence and recurrence of violence, as well as break long-term cycles of risk. *Health* programmes that address violence against children as a public health problem may help build the evidence base, reframe violence against girls and boys as a public health problem, and influence social norms and behaviours within communities, families and children's and adolescents' peer groups. The *education* sector can play a critical role in preventing violence in childhood – and across the lifespan – by providing access to safe, equitable learning opportunities that prepare children for adulthood. The education sector can also play a role in prevention by ensuring that school curricula and learning environments promote rather than undermine support for human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination against vulnerable groups. And *humanitarian/emergency action* that integrates attention to gender-based violence may reduce risks that children and women face in fragile contexts.

Enhanced reporting mechanisms and response services to violence across all sectors. Globally, there is an urgent need for reporting mechanisms and response services for violence against girls, boys and adolescents across all sectors. Victims of violence need access to high-quality reporting mechanisms and response services across all sectors, as well as compassionate, competent, comprehensive care and support from professionals and paraprofessionals. All duty-bearers, professionals and paraprofessionals who interact with children and adolescents – regardless of sector – need to understand their responsibilities for recognizing and responding to cases of abuse. Key to a compassionate response are attitudes that support victims and avoid stigma, blame and minimizing of the violence or that prioritize the reputation of perpetrators (or institutions) over the well-being of victims. Evidence from low- and middle-income countries suggests that accessibility, quality and comprehensiveness of services in the justice, social welfare, health and education sectors may prevent harm and improve outcomes.⁷⁷ More effective service responses can also be a form of secondary prevention, by helping girls and boys find a way out of situations of ongoing violence.

Violence prevention and response are closely linked. For example, better institutional responses to violence may contribute to long-term prevention at the population level. Researchers documented a dramatic downward trend in cases of sexual and physical abuse of boys and girls in the United States over several decades, linked – at least in part – to increased numbers of law enforcement and child protection personnel, more aggressive prosecution and incarceration policies, better access to mental health treatment and growing public awareness about child abuse.⁷⁸

Multisectoral coordination. Evidence suggests that lack of coordination among sectors can be a barrier both to prevention and to comprehensive service responses. While this theory of change reserves a dedicated space in the results chain for coordinated, multisectoral action, each sector must find ways to contribute to multisectoral coordination as part of efforts to strengthen system and institutional responses to violence. No individual sector can provide a comprehensive package of prevention or service responses that child victims may need, and all sectors need to consider how to contribute to referral networks that link or integrate health, law enforcement and social services; coalitions and task forces for planning and prevention; and community-based child protection mechanism that mobilize grass-roots leaders and organizations. Understanding how best to implement multisectoral approaches is still an emerging area of work, however.

Rationale for strategies

Strengthening prevention and response to violence across whole systems and whole institutions. Evidence suggests that efforts to get whole systems and institutions to integrate attention to violence throughout their policies and programmes are almost always more effective than narrow policy changes or short-term projects, regardless of sector.⁷⁹ For example, ‘whole school’ approaches to violence prevention and response have emerged as an important strategy in the education sector.⁸⁰ Similarly, decades of experience from the health sector suggest that narrow initiatives to change providers’ responses to violence against women and girls through training are rarely effective or sustainable without a systems approach that includes changes across whole institutions and systems.⁸¹

Attitudes and practices of duty-bearers and professionals often change slowly, and sustainable change often requires more supportive institutions and work environments – including policies, protocols, infrastructure, supplies, adequate staffing levels, referral networks and multisectoral collaboration. Whole system approaches also harmonize with UNICEF’s long history of commitment to child protection system strengthening. A systems approach also builds on UNICEF’s work with countries to increase the capacity of whole sectors to address violence against girls and boys in countries around the world, particularly in the field of child protection and education.

Systems and institutions need policies, protocols, supplies, infrastructure, human resources and referral networks. Institutions need accountability mechanisms to ensure that professionals and paraprofessionals do not have harmful attitudes or practices towards victims, including discriminatory attitudes against girls. An adequately sized and prepared workforce is essential. Institutions may also need to ensure that they have enough female and male service providers to make reporting and response services accessible to both girls and boys. Once reporting systems and response services are prepared to respond to cases of violence against girls and boys in appropriate ways, with referral systems and support services of adequate quality, the next challenge is to increase access to and coverage of those services. Overcoming this challenge often requires addressing social norms and lack of awareness that may pose barriers to disclosure and help-seeking.

Sector-specific outcomes, outputs and strategies

Justice (J) outcome	
<p>Justice sector systems and institutions have improved access to child-friendly justice and enforcement of laws that protect girls, boys and adolescents from violence and discrimination.</p>	
Output	High-priority strategies
<p>The justice sector has strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, in accord with a systems approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in child-friendly justice reforms and enhanced support for child victims, in accord with international norms (e.g. UN Model Strategies).
Social welfare (SW) outcome	
<p>Social welfare systems, including child protection, have strengthened access to high-quality prevention and responses to violence against girls, boys and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable.</p>	
Output	High-priority strategies
<p>The social welfare sector, including the child protection system, has strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, in accord with a systems approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in the social welfare and child protection workforce. Invest in enhanced case management services and information systems.
Health (H) outcome	
<p>Health systems and institutions have strengthened violence-related public health research and prevention as well as case detection, care and support for girls, boys and adolescents who experience violence.</p>	
Output	High-priority strategies
<p>The health sector has strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, in accord with a systems approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align protocols and practices with international clinical guidelines on child sexual abuse and child maltreatment. Invest in enhanced post-rape care for girls and boys. Integrate attention to violence in public health programming.

Education (E) outcome	
<p>Education systems and institutions provide greater access to safe, inclusive, gender-equitable education, life skills and livelihood programmes, responsive to all forms of violence against girls, boys and adolescents.</p>	
Output	High-priority strategies
<p>The education system has strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, in accord with a systems approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement whole-school violence initiatives. • Integrate attention to violence in and around schools in education policies, plans and programmes.
Humanitarian/emergency (H/E) outcome	
<p>Humanitarian/emergency actions have increased access to and quality of prevention and responses to violence against children and gender-based violence against women and children.</p>	
Output	High-priority strategies
<p>Humanitarian/emergency actions have strengthened the capacity of whole systems and institutions to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, in accord with a systems approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-based violence in emergencies programming in accord with UNICEF's framework and theory of change. • Family reunification strategies in emergencies and other support for separated or unaccompanied children.

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

In keeping with previous work by UNICEF, this theory of change reflects the understanding that child protection includes multisectoral efforts to address underlying risks and vulnerabilities that lead to violence and exploitation.⁸² These include work carried out by many sectors, including justice, social welfare, health and education. Meanwhile, child protection services are understood as those that specifically aim to protect children from harm – particularly, but not exclusively, within social welfare systems.

Rationale for sector-specific strategies

A comprehensive discussion on how to improve violence prevention and response within each sector is beyond the scope of this document. Evidence and international guidance about effective or at least promising approaches to violence against children are evolving quickly. Staying abreast of good practices may require UNICEF staff to collaborate closely with agencies that are continuously reviewing evidence and developing international norms, guidelines, tools and plans of actions, including UNODC for the justice sector, UNESCO for the education sector and WHO for the health sector. Nonetheless, the rationale for selected priority actions in each sector is described below.

Justice: Invest in reforms to achieve child-friendly justice in accord with international norms. As noted earlier, child-friendly justice is based on the principle that civil, administrative and criminal justice systems must protect the rights and well-being of all children who come into contact with these systems, whether as victims, witnesses or children in conflict with the law.⁸³ Achieving child-friendly justice may require reforms across whole systems and institutions. These include specialized courts and/or juvenile justice systems, protocols and programmes for providing support to child victims and witnesses, additional resources, staff training, equipment and multisectoral collaboration.⁸⁴ UNICEF has worked to increase access to child-friendly justice in many settings, as documented in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.⁸⁵

United Nations Model Strategies for justice sector responses to violence against children

A key resource for countries wanting to improve the criminal justice sector response to violence is UNODC's guide, *Planning the implementation of the United Nations model strategies and practical measures on the elimination of violence against children in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice: A checklist* (www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/14-08452_Ebook.pdf). The UN Model Strategies aim to improve the capacity of the criminal justice system to prevent, prohibit and respond to all forms of violence against children, including children in contact with the justice system.

Social welfare: Invest in the social welfare and child protection workforce. The social welfare/child protection/social service workforce includes paid and unpaid professionals and paraprofessionals, both governmental and nongovernmental. They staff programmes aimed at alleviating poverty, reducing discrimination and promoting social justice — all of which may contribute to preventing violence. The social welfare workforce also plays a key role in helping children, adolescents and families access services, including victims of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and family separation. In many countries, social welfare systems are chronically underfunded, so increasing the size and preparedness of the workforce is a first step in the longer process of systems strengthening.⁸⁶ **Investing in case management services and information systems** is another important priority action for UNICEF, supported by growing international guidance and tools.^{87,88}

Health: Align protocols and practice with international norms and clinical guidelines for child maltreatment, child sexual abuse and post-rape care for girls and boys. This is an important way to improve service responses.⁸⁹ Violence has implications for all dimensions of child and adolescent health. Health providers are often the first to detect cases of abuse, and victims often have both acute and long-term needs for health care and support. Therefore, all health providers who care for children and adolescents need to be prepared to respond to cases of violence, supported by institutional resources adequate to protect confidentiality, privacy and safety. Countries can draw on a large body of good practice knowledge about responding to violence,⁹⁰ though much of this has focused on violence against women and girls⁹¹ or on humanitarian contexts.⁹² This body of evidence supports the need for a systems approach, as noted earlier. WHO is currently developing guidelines for responding to violence against girls and boys, expected within the next year or so, including:

- Clinical guidelines for responding to sexual assault/rape or contact sexual abuse of children and adolescents. See www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/development-guidelines/en/
- Guidelines for the health sector response to child maltreatment. See www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/child_maltreatment_guidelines/en/

Integrating attention to violence within public health programming is another priority action that includes many prevention efforts among parents and caregivers as well as adolescents, described later in this document.

Education: Increase access to safe, inclusive, gender-equitable education, life skills and livelihood programmes that can respond to all forms of violence against girls, boys and adolescents. There is a large and growing body of knowledge about how to address violence against children and adolescents within the education sector.⁹³ This includes strategies to reduce levels of violence against children in and on the way to school; strategies to reduce barriers to education among girls and boys; and specialized life skills and livelihood programmes that contribute to long-term violence prevention. UNICEF has been heavily involved in this work, in collaboration with UNESCO and many other agencies, and programme guidance is evolving rapidly.⁹⁴ ‘Whole-school’ violence initiatives are one example of an emerging model that shows promise for low and middle-income settings.^{95,96}

Humanitarian/emergency action: a cross-cutting issue and a dedicated area of work. UNICEF plays such an important role in addressing violence against children and women in emergency settings that humanitarian/emergency action has been given a dedicated set of results and strategies within this results chain. It draws from the UNICEF gender-based violence in emergencies programming framework and theory of change, as well as UNICEF’s work related to unaccompanied and separated children.

Emergency situations, such as armed conflict and natural disasters, have cross-cutting implications for all parts of the results chain in this theory of change, however, including the work of each sector. For example, for the education sector international guidelines have been developed to protect schools and universities from military use and attack.⁹⁷ In the health sector, there is a large body of programming guidance on gender-based violence in emergencies, including sexual violence against women and girls.⁹⁸ In social welfare, there are guidelines for addressing the needs of unaccompanied and separated children who experience sexual violence.⁹⁹ In addition, UNICEF has developed guidance for risk-informed programming for all countries regardless of circumstances.¹⁰⁰

Society/communities

Outcome	
<p>Communities are more engaged in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the right of all girls and boys to grow up free of violence and discrimination, regardless of age, sex, disability or any other social or economic disadvantage • Creating safer environments for girls, boys and adolescents. 	
Output	High-priority strategies
<p>Communities, civil society and community-based organizations have greater awareness of children’s rights, including the right of girls and boys to grow up free of violence and discrimination, regardless of age, sex, disability or any other social or economic disadvantage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C4D strategies to change social norms about gender, violence and discrimination, build social cohesion and mobilize communities to address violence and discrimination against girls, boys and adolescents, particularly the most vulnerable. (J, H, SW, E) For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Mass media awareness campaigns » Communication for social change (e.g. ‘edutainment’). » Community workshops, such as those focused on promoting positive parenting or intimate partner violence, or both. • Mobilize communities and community-based organizations to prevent and respond to violence and discrimination against girls, boy, and adolescents, particularly the most vulnerable. (H, SW, E) • Strategies by institutions in each sector (e.g. justice, social welfare, health and education) to collaborate with civil society and community-based organizations through coalitions, referral networks, awareness raising and other forms of community outreach. (Also see similar strategy in systems strengthening section above.)

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and output

A growing body of evidence suggests that the broader societal and community environment has an important influence on whether or not girls and boys are protected from violence and receive adequate care and support when they experience it.¹⁰¹ Evidence suggests that raising awareness and changing social norms that support violence are essential components of long-term prevention and better responses to violence.¹⁰² Norms that condone violence against girls and boys, prioritize family reputation over victim well-being and blame victims for violence they experience are widespread in many settings. For example, around the world, substantial proportions of girls, boys, women and men support the ‘necessity’ of physical punishment for raising children,¹⁰³ the acceptability of wife-beating and male entitlement to control women.¹⁰⁴ These norms facilitate violence and pose barriers to help-seeking.¹⁰⁵ Conversely, gender norms about masculinity may pose barriers to disclosure for boys who experience sexual violence.¹⁰⁶

Key components of protective environments may also include social inclusion, strong civil society networks and groups, informal social networks, safe and accessible public spaces, increased access to services, and reduced proliferation of weapons and substance abuse.

Rationale for strategies

C4D and community mobilization strategies show promise for raising awareness of violence and changing norms that facilitate violence.¹⁰⁷ Community mobilization may also have potential to reduce social, economic, legal and political power imbalances based on generation, gender and other social or economic disadvantages and to increase community and bystander engagement in violence prevention and response.^{108,109} Community-based strategies have also shown promise in reducing levels of criminal violence, proliferation of weapons and the harmful use of alcohol and other substances.¹¹⁰ However, this is an emerging area of work, and more evidence is needed to clarify the links with violence prevention.



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Households and families

Outcome	
<p>Households and families have greater social and economic stability and security, more gender-equitable attitudes and practices, and lower levels of violence against women in the home.</p>	
Outputs	High-priority strategies
<p>Vulnerable households have greater access to social and economic support programmes that integrate attention to gender equity, family violence prevention and safe transitions to adulthood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social care and support programmes for households that integrate attention to gender equality, violence against children and violence against women. (SW) • Cash transfer programmes, especially those that address girl's empowerment and safe transitions to adulthood for girls and boys. (SW) <p><i>(Also see strategies mentioned earlier, including C4D strategies to promote gender equality and end violence against women and girls in the home, as well as family reunification strategies during emergencies.)</i></p>

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and output

Evidence suggests that economic insecurity, gender inequality and violence against women in the household are household/family-level factors associated with violence against children and adolescents. Some of these links are complex, however, particularly the link between poverty and violence (see Box 6). Studies find strong correlations between economic instability/destitution/food insecurity and various forms of violence, including child maltreatment¹¹¹ and child sexual abuse.¹¹² In some settings, poverty is linked to higher rates of child labour, which may increase children's vulnerability to violence. Economic insecurity also contributes to family disintegration, and separation of children from their families may raise the long-term risk of violence against boys and girls.¹¹³

This outcome also focuses on gender-equitable relations within the household, including violence against women in the home. Evidence suggests that exposure to partner violence against women often co-occurs with physical child abuse; it may also increase the risk of violent discipline as well as children's risk of perpetrating or experiencing other types of violence during adolescence and adulthood. Conversely, social and economic empowerment of women in the household often correlates with increased household investment in children's education, postponement of marriage for daughters, and other factors that lower the risk of violence against girls and boys.¹¹⁸

BOX 6

The complex link between poverty and violence

Evidence suggests that the link between poverty and violence is complex. A UNICEF analysis of MICS data found higher rates of violent discipline in poorer households compared with wealthier households in 13 of 30 countries studied.¹¹⁴ A study that used multilevel logistic regression to analyse MICS data from 28 countries found an association between all forms of child abuse and household poverty.¹¹⁵ However, that research also found that norms supporting violence were more strongly correlated with certain kinds of violence than poverty – both at the household level (in the case of child abuse) and at the national level. This echoes evidence from multi-level analysis of data from 44 countries that norms condoning partner violence and male control of women were stronger predictors of high rates of physical and sexual partner violence against women and girls than economic indicators such as gross domestic product.¹¹⁶ A systematic review of research from low- and middle-income countries concluded that poverty appeared most likely to increase the risk of child sexual abuse in specific circumstances; these include circumstances in which poverty, destitution or food insecurity contributed to family disruption or disintegration, forced parents to work away from home so they were unable to provide adequate child supervision, or drove girls and boys away from the protection of family environments into situations of child labour, working or living on the streets.¹¹⁷

Rationale for strategies

Social care and economic support programmes for households usually aim to reduce social and economic vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation, rather than reduce violence. However, emerging evidence suggests they have potential to prevent violence against girls and boys by addressing household/family level risk factors such as poverty-related stress, food insecurity, family disintegration/separation, long-term vulnerability to violence associated with lack of school completion and (in some settings) early child marriage.^{119–121}

Similarly, empowering women and adolescent girls is often an explicit objective of cash transfer programmes in developing countries.¹²² If such programmes can contribute to more egalitarian power dynamics and lower levels of partner violence against women in the home, they may have the potential to reduce child exposure to violence and the risk of other types of violence in adolescence and adulthood. Social care and economic support programmes for vulnerable families are strategies that UNICEF is already helping countries to design, implement and evaluate.¹²³ Specialized strategies to support household economic security and resilience may be needed in situations of emergencies, including forced displacement.

Mothers, fathers and other caregivers

Outcome	
<p>Mothers, fathers and other caregivers have built more nurturing parent-child relationships and have improved positive parenting and gender-equitable attitudes, skills and practices.</p>	
Outputs	High-priority strategies
<p>Mothers, fathers and caregivers have greater:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to higher quality parenting support services • Awareness of positive parenting and child development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive parenting programmes for mothers, fathers and other caregivers across the child life cycle, reinforced by C4D strategies. (SW, H, E) • Parent and caregiver support services (e.g. home visits) for vulnerable families. (H, SW)

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and outputs

Evidence reviews from low- and middle-income countries highlight a number of risk and protective factors among mothers, fathers and other caregivers associated with violence against girls and boys.¹²⁴ *Supportive and nurturing parent/child relationships* appear to be protective, as do *attitudes, knowledge and skills that encourage positive (as opposed to harsh) parenting practices*.

Conversely, factors that appear to raise the risk of violence include caregiver stress; mental health conditions; substance abuse; lack of social and service support; attitudes that support violent discipline, gender inequality and other harmful practices; lack of knowledge about child development; and lack of nonviolent parenting knowledge and skills. Many of these factors are associated not only with violent discipline in the home but also with other forms of violence, such as child sexual abuse and exploitation and youth violence (both victimization and perpetration). Some studies have found that mothers and fathers who believe and support girls and boys who disclose experiences of violence can help children achieve better outcomes after violence has occurred.^{125, 126}

Rationale for strategies

Growing evidence suggests that a variety of **positive parenting and caregiver support programmes** have promise for improving parent-child relationships, increasing positive parenting and preventing violent discipline and other forms of child maltreatment and neglect. Much of this evidence comes from high-income countries, but evidence from

low- and middle-income settings is growing.^{127,128} Parent support programmes may include home visits for new mothers, community-based programmes for mothers and fathers, comprehensive support services for mothers, fathers and other caregivers, and multi-level strategies that include C4D strategies such as behaviour change communication programmes.^{129–131}

Evidence of best practice in this area is still emerging, however, and there are many gaps in knowledge about which approaches work best in which settings. UNICEF staff can help countries design and invest in support for mothers, fathers and other caregivers, as well as identify local strategies that can be adapted from other settings or evaluated to identify approaches worthy of scaling up.

Girls, boys and adolescents

Outcome	
<p>Girls, boys and adolescents are more empowered to exercise rights and agency to live free of violence and seek help when violence occurs; build healthy, gender-equitable, non-violent relationships; and postpone marriage and childbearing until adulthood.</p>	
Outputs	High-priority strategies
<p>Girls, boys and adolescents have greater access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, life skills, livelihood and violence prevention programmes • Age-appropriate information about sexuality and healthy relationships • Knowledge about rights and where to seek help for violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life skills and livelihood programmes that integrate attention to rights, gender norms, healthy relationships and violence. (H, E) • School-based violence prevention programmes. (E) • Adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services and programmes. • C4D strategies to raise awareness and promote social norms related to gender equality and nonviolence. <p><i>Note that many high-priority strategies in other parts of this proposed theory of change have potential to influence outputs and outcomes among girls, boys and adolescents. This is particularly true for strategies for increasing access to inclusive and gender-responsive education, as well as economic support for households, such as cash plus programmes designed to facilitate safe transitions to adulthood.</i></p>

Note: Blue font indicates INSPIRE strategies.

Rationale for outcome and outputs

All results and strategies within this theory of change are intended to benefit girls, boys and adolescents. However, there are important ways in which children and adolescents themselves can be change agents in their own lives, among their peers and within their families and communities. This part of the results chain focuses on ensuring that children and adolescents have resources, including knowledge, skills and opportunities to manage challenges during the transition to adulthood.

One intended result is to *empower girls, boys and adolescents to understand and exercise their rights, and to seek help for violence when it occurs or when they feel at risk*. Another intended change is to help *children and adolescents build more gender-equitable, non-violent relationships*, including with peers, romantic partners, family members and others in the community. The third set of changes is to help adolescents *postpone sexual debut* until an appropriate age, and to *postpone marriage and childbearing* until they are ready to take on adult responsibilities.

Evidence suggests that all these changes have potential to contribute to long-term prevention of violence, as well as help individual children and adolescents reduce their vulnerability to violence, increase resilience and possibly lower the risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence later in life. Postponing marriage and childbearing until adulthood can also help strengthen households and families in the long run.

Rationale for strategies

Evidence suggests that *C4D strategies that address gender norms* can help young people build more gender-equitable, respectful and nonviolent relationships with peers and partners. *School and community-based prevention programmes* may increase boys' and girls' awareness of violence and knowledge about where and how to seek help when violence occurs. *Life skills and livelihood programmes* for adolescent girls and boys may help build more gender-equitable norms, prepare for adult economic responsibilities, and help girls postpone childbearing and marriage until they are ready to be parents.^{132, 133}

These programmes may also give adolescents the skills to form more economically secure and nonviolent families in the long run. *Adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health programmes* may also be essential for helping young people postpone childbearing until they are ready, particularly in settings where large proportions of girls begin childbearing at an early age.^{134, 135}

It is important to note that almost all strategies in this theory of change contribute to changes in the lives of girls, boys and female and male adolescents. This includes efforts to raise awareness about violence and gender equality, make educational institutions safer and more gender equitable, strengthen the economic stability of families, and improve positive parenting. For example, cash transfer programmes are listed in this theory of change as a household economic strengthening programme, but in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, government cash transfer programmes (cash plus) have shown potential to help adolescent girls make safer transitions to adulthood by

delaying sexual debut and pregnancy and reducing sexual exploitation.^{136–138} Thus strategies that target other levels of the ecological framework may directly or indirectly produce social and behavioural change among girls, boys and adolescents relevant to the outcome and outputs in this section of the theory of change.



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ANNEX A. Theories of change and results frameworks that informed this document

Violence against girls and boys

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ANNEX B. Risk and protective factors associated with violence against girls and boys, including adolescents

Factors associated with physical, sexual and emotional abuse of girls and boys, including adolescents, documented in reviews of the global and regional evidence, with particular attention to evidence from low- and middle-income countries.^{139–149}

Level	Risk factors	Protective factors
Macro/ structural contexts such as humanitarian and emergency situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed conflict, natural disaster, high levels of criminal/gang violence • Emergencies that undermine systems and institutions • Displacement (forced or voluntary) • High rates of family separation, unaccompanied minors • Fragile states (political, economic, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong humanitarian programmes that mitigate the risks that children face in emergency situations • Risk-informed policies and programmes across all sectors
Legal frameworks, systems and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak legal frameworks (criminal codes, policies and regulations) that do not provide strong protection from violence against children • Lack of legal and regulatory protections for children's rights more generally • Justice sector systems and institutions that lack capacity or resources to uphold the rule of law, reduce impunity and protect children from harm • Lack of accessible, high-quality services and reporting mechanisms • Weak institutional capacity to respond to violence against children within the justice, health, education and social welfare sectors • Lack of comprehensive or integrated services • Professionals who lack awareness of violence against children or the preparation or attitudes to support victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong legal and policy frameworks that protect children's rights • Systems and institutions with capacity to address physical and sexual violence against girls and boys • Institutional commitment to address violence against children as a human rights and public health issue
Community/ society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of societal/community awareness (invisibility) of violence against children • Social norms that support or tolerate violence and stigmatize or blame victims • Social norms that prioritize family privacy or family or perpetrator reputation above victim well-being • Social norms that support gender inequality • Social norms that support discrimination against girls and boys in situations of vulnerability • High levels of social, economic, legal and political disempowerment based on generation, gender or other social or economic disadvantage • High levels of violence in the community, including criminal activity and armed conflict • Proliferation of arms in the community • High levels of alcohol and other substance abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of violence against children as a human rights and public health problem • Social norms that support gender equity and equal rights; respect for the rights of all boys and girls, regardless of disability or social or economic disadvantage • Community engagement in protecting girls and boys from violence and discrimination • Community access to legal protection and services • Strong legal and policy frameworks • High levels of social inclusion

Level	Risk factors	Protective factors
Households and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty-related household stress Destitution; food insecurity Family disruption, disintegration and separation Presence of a non-biological caregiver Gender inequality in the family Marital conflict/exposure to violence against women in the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social welfare systems that support families Informal social support networks Economic security Stable, supportive family relationships Gender equity, nonviolent family environments Family support for education and postponing marriage and childbearing until adulthood (especially for girls)
Mothers, fathers and caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental stress; lack of social and service support Mental health conditions including substance abuse and depression Attitudes that support violent discipline and other harmful practices Harsh parenting practices Lack of positive parenting knowledge/skills Lack of awareness about violence against children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close, nurturing parent-child relationships Awareness, skills and support for nonviolent childrearing Access to social support and services for mothers, fathers and other caregivers Supportive (belief) response from mothers and fathers when violence is disclosed Gender-equitable norms
Individual girls and boys including adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age and sex History of earlier violence victimization Extreme poverty; food insecurity Living with a disability Loss of a parent; family separation Living in institutional care, deprived of liberty; other social or economic disadvantage Exposure to violence against mother Child marriage (before age 18) Involvement in child labour Stigmatized sexual orientation or gender identity Migrant or refugee status, especially if unaccompanied by parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender-equitable norms Knowledge and skills about sexuality and healthy relationships Access to safe, inclusive education and life skills Skills, attitudes and psychosocial support needed to postpone early sexual debut, marriage and childbearing Awareness of violence and knowledge of how/where to seek help Close, supportive relationships with mothers, fathers and other caregivers Personal resilience (for recovering after abuse has occurred, including coping skills and self-esteem)
Individuals (as actual or potential perpetrators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substance abuse and mental health disorders Exposure to violence or neglect in childhood (as a victim or a witness to violence against the mother) Attitudes about male entitlement to sex and right to control women and girls Involvement with gangs/organized crime Support for social norms that condone violent discipline at home or school, partner violence against women or harmful practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to early intervention for adverse events Access to mental health and substance abuse services

ANNEX C. Summary of priority strategies for action

Cross-cutting actions

- Review and strengthen risk-informed policies and programmes across all results areas so child protection strategies continue seamlessly across humanitarian and development cycles, including in situations of armed conflict, forced displacement and other emergency situations.
- Integrate attention to armed conflict and other emergencies into violence-related policies and programmes.
- Implement C4D approaches to encourage social norm change related to violence against children across all sectors and levels of society.

National, multisectoral, coordinated action

- Build and disseminate the evidence base on violence against children and adolescents (research, mapping, surveillance and monitoring).
- Implement ‘research to action’ strategies to raise awareness and mobilize action.
- Develop multisectoral, multi-stakeholder planning mechanisms (e.g. task forces, coalitions), with child/adolescent participation.
- Develop, adopt, cost, fund, implement and monitor coordinated, multisectoral national plans to address violence against girls and boys, including adolescents, with results frameworks and accountability mechanisms.
- Develop public expenditure tracking mechanisms.
- Develop action plans under the MRM where applicable (e.g. in situations of armed conflict).

Legal and policy frameworks

- Review laws and policies for compliance/accord with international norms related to violence and discrimination (e.g. CRC, CEDAW and UN Model Strategies).
- Advocate for legal and policy reform and implementation (J)
- Reform laws and policies (including criminal, civil and administrative codes, policies and regulations) with child and adolescent participation, including those that address (J):
 - » Violent discipline (home and school), child sexual abuse and exploitation, and access to weapons
 - » Protection of children and adolescents from violence and discrimination more generally
 - » Gender inequality and discrimination
 - » Access to child-friendly justice.
- Develop campaigns to raise awareness of and support for violence-related laws and rights.

Prevention, reporting mechanisms and response services within each sector

- Adopt ‘systems approaches’ for whole system and whole institutional capacity building, including:
 - » Review, revise and implement stronger normative frameworks (e.g. policies, protocols, codes of conduct, plans of action, etc.) relevant to violence against children and adolescents, in accord with international norms.
 - » Carry out comprehensive mapping of whole sector/system/institution-wide resources and gaps, both within each sector and across the child protection system as a whole.
 - » Invest in administrative data collection systems that track cases of child abuse and neglect; monitor institutional and professional practices; and document sector-specific expenditures.
 - » Invest in institutional resources (e.g. infrastructure, data systems, equipment, supplies, referral networks, etc.) based on comprehensive needs assessments in each sector.
 - » Invest in workforce preparedness to address violence against children and adolescents, including training, sensitizing, hiring and retaining more and better qualified duty-bearers, professionals and paraprofessionals.
 - » Build referral networks and enhance multisectoral collaboration and community outreach.
 - » Integrate attention to the implications of violence across all policies and programming.
 - » Invest in reporting systems, case detection, responses, referrals, monitoring, care and support.
 - » Invest in dedicated, evidence-based violence prevention initiatives in each sector.

Justice sector prevention and response (J)

- Implement system-wide reforms to provide access to child-friendly justice and enhanced support for child victims, in accord with international norms.

Social welfare prevention and response (SW)

- Invest in the social welfare and child protection workforce.
- Invest in case management services and information systems.

Health sector prevention and response (H)

- Use a systems approach to improve the health service response to violence against children and adolescents.
- Align protocols and practice with international clinical guidelines on child sexual abuse and child maltreatment.
- Invest in enhanced post-rape care for girls and boys.
- Integrate attention to violence within public health programming for children and adolescents.

Education prevention and response (E)

- Adopt whole-school violence initiatives.
- Integrate attention to violence in and around schools into education policies and programmes.
- Protect children from violence in schools in situations of armed conflict.

Humanitarian/emergency programming (H/E)

- Implement gender-based violence in emergencies programming.
- Implement family reunification strategies in emergencies.

Society/communities

- Adopt C4D strategies to change social norms about gender, violence and discrimination. (J, H, SW, E)
- Mobilize communities and community-based organizations to prevent and respond to violence and discrimination against girls and boys, including adolescents, particularly the most vulnerable. (H, SW, E)

Households/families

- Implement social care and support programmes for households that integrate attention to gender equality, violence against children and violence against women. (SW)
- Implement cash transfer programmes, especially those that address girls' empowerment and safe transitions to adulthood for girls and boys. (SW)

Mothers, fathers and caregivers

- Develop positive parenting programmes for mothers, fathers and caregivers across the child life cycle, reinforced by C4D strategies. (SW, H, E)
- Provide parent and caregiver support services (e.g. home visits) for vulnerable families. (H, SW)

Girls, boys and adolescents

- Implement life skills and livelihood programmes that integrate attention to rights, gender norms, healthy relationships and violence. (H, E)
- Adopt school-based violence prevention programmes. (E)
- Implement adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services and prevention programmes. (H)
- Adopt C4D strategies to raise awareness and change norms among adolescents.

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