Together for girls

Ending violence against children

PREFACE

Together for Girls is a global public-private partnership dedicated to eliminating violence against children, with a particular focus on sexual violence against girls. Based on a pioneering model piloted in Swaziland in 2007 and launched at the Clinton Global Initiative in 2009, the partnership brings together five UN agencies including UNICEF, WHO, UN Women, UNAIDS, and UNFPA, the private sector through BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), Nduna Foundation, Grupo ABC, CDC Foundation, and the U.S. Government through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (including USAID, CDC/Global AIDS Program, Department of Defense and Peace Corps), the U.S. Department of State, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Violence Prevention Division.

Together for Girls partners recognize that violence, and particularly sexual violence, have long-term negative consequences for children that influence their future as individuals and ultimately communities and countries. In response we focus our work on three pillars: (1) National surveys and data to document the magnitude, nature and impact of violence against children, particularly sexual violence against girls, to inform government leaders, civil society and donors; (2) evidence-based coordinated program actions in countries to address prevention and response identified through the surveys; and (3) global advocacy and public awareness efforts to draw attention to the problem and promote evidence-based solutions. In addition, developing and strengthening the capacity of individuals and institutions is an important cross-cutting element of the partnership.

We are pleased to present the Together for Girls Technical Action Framework. Developed with extensive input across partners, it presents a strategic framework for action, based on our best knowledge across the areas of violence prevention and response, child protection, and gender-based violence. It is intended to inform the work of Together for Girls' partners in-country including governments and civil society. This is a living document that will incorporate new evidence and experiences as they become available.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TECHNICAL ACTION FRAMEWORK FOR TOGETHER FOR GIRLS

The purpose of this Technical Action Framework for Together for Girls is to provide key stakeholders with an overview of the strategies that can be used to prevent and reduce sexual violence and its consequences to children, especially girls. The Framework outlines the rationale and essential elements of a comprehensive approach to addressing sexual violence and thus contributes to the promotion, protection and fulfillment of the fundamental human rights of girls.

Key elements of the strategy include the large-scale implementation of evidence-based policies and programs to prevent sexual violence from occurring in the first place, and to ensure an effective response if it occurs. While this Framework is focused on preventing and reducing sexual violence against girls, the strategies outlined here, including the development of the human and institutional capacity to address sexual violence against girls and social norms in relation to sexual violence, will also be useful for preventing and responding to sexual violence against boys.

BACKGROUND

The Issue

- Sexual violence against girls is a global human rights violation of vast proportions with severe health and social consequences. As with other forms of violence against women and girls, gender discrimination and inequality is at the root of sexual violence against girls. It can take different forms, including sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual exploitation. Sexual violence has serious and long-lasting consequences for the physical and mental health of individuals and their social and occupational functioning, as well as for their families and communities, and can impede social and economic development.

- The true scale of the problem is poorly understood by communities and policymakers because of limited reliable data on the magnitude and nature of the problem. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that up to 20% of girls experience child sexual abuse.[1] In addition, every year millions of children, girls in particular, are exploited in prostitution and pornography and trafficked for those purposes. Girls, especially as they enter adolescence, are at risk of various forms of sexual violence due to their age and gender. These risks are exacerbated when additional factors of exclusion and discrimination intersect, such as those based on race, ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status/class. Sexual violence against girls occurs in many settings, including those where they should be safe and nurtured — at home, en route to and from and in schools, in their immediate communities, or in situations of displacement. Increasingly, the use of the internet and mobile phones also put girls and boys at greater risk to different forms of sexual violence. Intimate partner violence (i.e., physical, emotional and sexual violence towards girls in intimate relationships, dating or within child marriage) often occurs simultaneously with other forms of physical, verbal and emotional abuse.

- Sexual violence is also perpetrated against boys. It is estimated that between five and ten percent of boys are victims of child sexual abuse.[2] Male victims also suffer from physical, mental health, social and occupational consequences. In addition, data suggests that, for some boys, the experience of sexual abuse as a child increases the risk that they will perpetrate violence later in life.[3]

- There are a number of factors that make children, particularly girls, vulnerable to sexual violence, and that increase the likelihood that boys and men will perpetrate such violence. A key factor is social tolerance of sexual violence against girls at different levels of society. Many times the abuse/exploitation is perceived as something normal and outside the control of communities, which results in low levels of reporting of cases to the authorities. In addition, the girl who has experienced sexual violence is often blamed for the violence. This social tolerance to sexual violence stems from the low status of women and children in many societies and cultural norms surrounding gender and masculinity. Other challenges include poverty, social disparities and exclusion; limited educational and employment opportunities for girls; family disintegration; and weak legal and policy frameworks and enforcement resulting in impunity and inadequate protection of children from sexual violence. These are known as risk factors and are shown in Figure 1.

Displaced girl, 12, raped when fetching firewood (Sudan)

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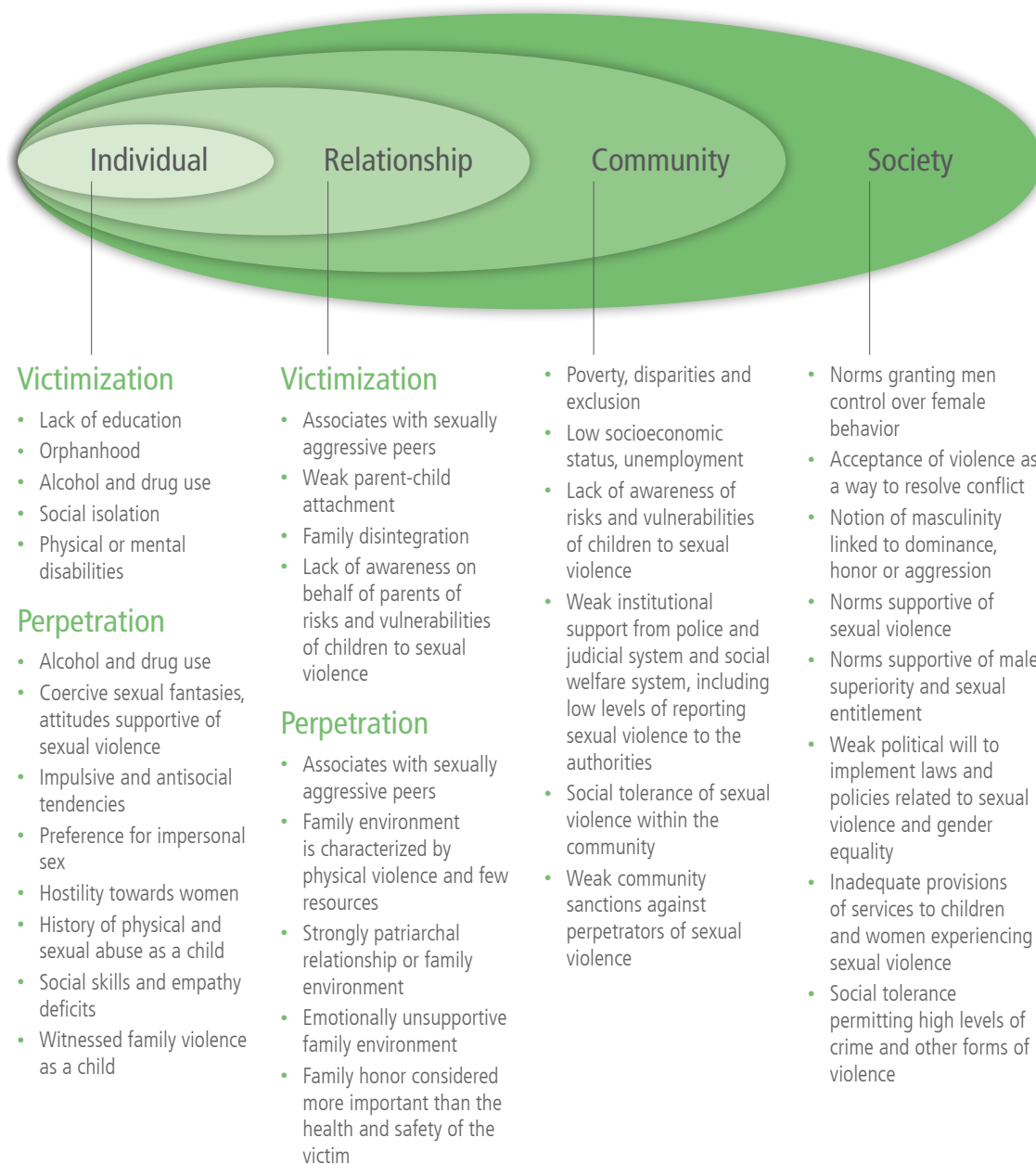**1** WHO-ISPCAN (2006). *Preventing child maltreatment: a guide to taking action and generating evidence.* Available at: www.who.int/violenc_injury_prevention/violence/activities/child_maltreatment/en/index.html
2 Ibid.
3 Jespersen AF, Lalumière ML, Seto MC. (2009). Sexual abuse history among adult sex offenders and non-sex offenders: a meta-analysis. *Child Abuse & Neglect.* 33(3): 179-192.

FIGURE 1:
RISK FACTORS FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE
VICTIMIZATION AND PERPETRATION

Individual | Relationship | Community | Society

Victimization

- Lack of education
- Orphanhood
- Alcohol and drug use
- Social isolation
- Physical or mental disabilities

Perpetration

- Alcohol and drug use
- Coercive sexual fantasies, attitudes supportive of sexual violence
- Impulsive and antisocial tendencies
- Preference for impersonal sex
- Hostility towards women
- History of physical and sexual abuse as a child
- Social skills and empathy deficits
- Witnessed family violence as a child

Victimization

- Associates with sexually aggressive peers
- Weak parent-child attachment
- Family disintegration
- Lack of awareness on behalf of parents of risks and vulnerabilities of children to sexual violence

Perpetration

- Associates with sexually aggressive peers
- Family environment is characterized by physical violence and few resources
- Strongly patriarchal relationship or family environment
- Emotionally unsupportive family environment
- Family honor considered more important than the health and safety of the victim

- Poverty, disparities and exclusion
- Low socioeconomic status, unemployment
- Lack of awareness of risks and vulnerabilities of children to sexual violence
- Weak institutional support from police and judicial system and social welfare system, including low levels of reporting sexual violence to the authorities
- Social tolerance of sexual violence within the community
- Weak community sanctions against perpetrators of sexual violence

- Norms granting men control over female behavior
- Acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict
- Notion of masculinity linked to dominance, honor or aggression
- Norms supportive of sexual violence
- Norms supportive of male superiority and sexual entitlement
- Weak political will to implement laws and policies related to sexual violence and gender equality
- Inadequate provisions of services to children and women experiencing sexual violence
- Social tolerance permitting high levels of crime and other forms of violence

Box 1 – Definition of Sexual Violence against Children

Sexual violence: The World Health Organization has developed the following definition of sexual violence, which is commonly used by the public health sector:

Sexual violence can be defined as 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. (Krug EG et al., eds. *World report on violence and health*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002).

Sexual exploitation and abuse of children: The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) – legally binding for 193 countries – protects children from all forms of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. According to article 34, State Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; and the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2000) together with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (2007) provide the following definitions of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation in prostitution and pornography, and the sale of children.

Child sexual abuse:

a) 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;

b) Engaging in sexual activities with a child where use is made of coercion, force or threats, or abuse is made of a recognized position of trust, authority or influence over the child, 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.

It should be noted that the provisions of paragraph a) are not intended to govern consensual sexual activities between children under the age of 18 years. *(Article 18 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse)*

Child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation also include: child prostitution and child pornography, the participation of a child in pornographic performances (including recruiting, coercing and causing a child to participate in pornographic performances, or profiting from or otherwise exploiting a child for such purposes and knowingly attending performances involving the participation of children), intentional causing, for sexual purposes, a child who has not reached the legal age for sexual activities to witness sexual abuse or sexual activities, even without having to participate, and the solicitation of children for sexual purposes. *(Articles 18-23 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse)*

Child prostitution: The use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration. *(Article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography)*

Child pornography: Any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes. *(Article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography)*

Sale of children: Any act or transaction whereby a child is transferred by any person or group of persons to another for remuneration or any other consideration. *(Article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography)*

Box 2 – Definition of Violence against Women

Violence against women: The term "violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. *(United Nations General Assembly Resolution: Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993)*

Consequences:

- Sexual violence experienced as a child can have a profound impact on core aspects of emotional, behavioral and physical health and social development throughout life.
- Short-term effects include: physical injury and increased risk of a range of sexual and reproductive health problems, including unintended pregnancy, post-traumatic stress and the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.[4]
- Long-term effects can be wide-ranging and include:
  - Aggression, conduct disorder, delinquency, anti-social behavior, substance abuse, anxiety, depression and suicide
  - Specific health problems, such as obesity, diabetes and ischemic heart disease
  - Sexual transmitted infections, particularly HIV. Recent studies have confirmed the connection between sexual violence and HIV.[5]
  - Reduced school performance, including an increased likelihood for children to drop out, repeat a year or have diminished educational achievement and performance, including language deficits and reduced cognitive functioning
  - Social stigma and discrimination against the girl and her family. Sexual violence not only has profound consequences on the individual child and his/her family, but the community and society at large. It raises questions about what is permissible and can result in the ongoing cycles of re-victimization and reoccurrence of gender-based violence. The threat and acts of sexual violence present in the community impact not only the girls and the women who have experienced them, but those who have not.

Challenges:

- **Underreporting and lack of recognition of sexual violence**

  Available evidence suggests that in high-income countries, only 10% of child sexual abuse cases receive services or are reported to authorities. For many low- and middle-income countries, this proportion is not known but assumed to be lower. Children who face violence often remain silent due to fear and stigma, and many children accept it as an inevitable part of life.

- **Greater commitment is needed by governments to explicitly plan and budget for sexual violence prevention and response**

  Many policymakers do not appreciate the benefits for individuals and society that would result from action to prevent sexual violence against girls and to counter the specific effects of sexual violence, including among the most vulnerable. Few governments have sought to prioritize sexual violence as a problem in their national development strategies and plans, and of those that do only a few have budgeted for explicit anti-sexual violence activities. One reason for this omission is that neither the social and economic consequences of sexual violence nor the comparatively lower costs of acting to prevent it are well-recognized.

- **Need for more effective coordination across sectors**

  Sexual violence against girls is a problem requiring coordinated action across multiple sectors and actors in society. This is because the causes and risk factors for sexual violence are complex; it occurs in multiple settings (e.g., homes, neighborhoods, schools, care and justice institutions, the workplace, cyberspace and refugee camps), and its consequences have critical implications and long-term repercussions for key areas of social and economic development, including health, education and human capital formation.

- **Limited systemic efforts aimed at preventing sexual violence**

  To date, actions focused on sexual violence against girls have been limited. Where they do occur, actions have often focused on providing care for victims and punishing perpetrators. Yet given its high prevalence and far-reaching consequences, even in the best-resourced countries, response services will only reach a fraction of victims. Systemic efforts aimed at preventing sexual violence have been woefully inadequate.

- **Limited reliable evidence on sexual violence against children for effective planning and programming**

  To be effective, strategies for both the prevention of sexual violence against girls and the provision of services to address its consequences should be based on scientific evidence and subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation. However, in contrast to other forms of violence against children, such as child physical abuse by parents and bullying by peers, evidence for the effectiveness of strategies to prevent sexual violence against girls is limited. Strategies that have been widely used to address sexual violence in the United States include offender management and school-based education programs. There is little evidence that the former is effective in preventing sexual violence against children.
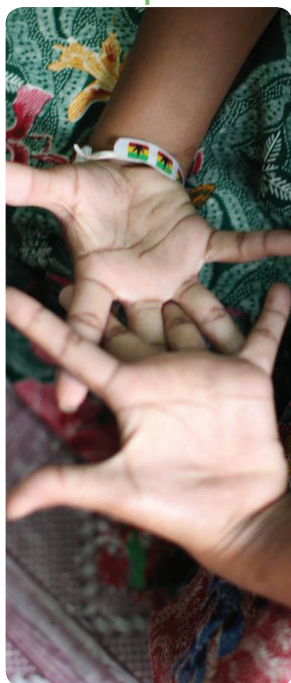
Girl, 16, raped the year before (Thailand)

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4 World Health Organization/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. (2010). *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence.* Geneva, World Health Organization. Available at: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241564007_eng.pdf **5** Jewkes R et al. (2010). Intimate partner violence, relationship gender power inequity, and incidence of HIV infection in young women in South Africa: a cohort study. *Lancet. 376(9734), 41-48.*

While the latter is promising, further research and development is required.[6] In addition, in many resource-poor settings, it is precisely girls who are out of school due to poverty and gender discrimination who may be at especially high risk and for whom out-of-school prevention strategies need to be designed. Teen dating violence prevention programs have also been found effective in reducing sexual violence in teen relationships. 'Safe Dates' is a prominent example that was developed and tested in the United States but is being used in other parts of the world.

Opportunities:

- Although derived largely from developed countries, there is considerably more evidence for the effectiveness of strategies that address other forms of violence against children in the family and community. Given the shared risk factors between sexual violence against girls and these other forms of violence for which effective prevention strategies have been identified, there are sound theoretical reasons to assume that sexual violence against girls will also be reduced by applying prevention strategies shown to be effective in reducing other forms of violence that affect children.
- The cumulative experiences gained in addressing gender-based violence based on 'whole community' mobilization to promote awareness raising and foster collective commitment to positive social norms have generated important strategies and methodologies that can be adapted to address sexual violence more specifically.
- Effectively preventing sexual violence against girls requires addressing social tolerance not only at the community level but with key decision makers, government officials and service providers responsible for implementing the laws and policies at national and sub-national levels. It is important to build models that integrate and strengthen existing programs and structures to avoid vertical programming.
- Breaking the silence surrounding sexual violence is a crucial part of prevention and response strategies: shifting the issue from a private matter to one that society refuses to tolerate. At the same time, it is critical to address norms and values of gender and the perception of children and their status in society. Therefore, ending sexual violence against girls will require strong political commitment and government investment, and the active participation of different actors in society, including civil society, communities and families and children.

Together for Girls

Together for Girls is a unique partnership that brings together private sector organizations, UN entities and governments in the fight against sexual violence against girls. Current partners include the Nduna Foundation, BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), the CDC Foundation and Grupo ABC, five UN entities, including UNICEF, UNAIDS, UN Women and UNFPA and WHO, and the U.S. Government through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan (PEPFAR— which includes USAID, CDC, DOD, and Peace Corps) in collaboration with the Office of Global Women's Issues of the U.S. Department of State, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Violence Prevention Division in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The objective of Together for Girls is to work with governments, civil society and the private sector to build on existing platforms and programs to eliminate sexual violence against girls. This framework offers practical approaches that will bring us closer to achieving that goal.
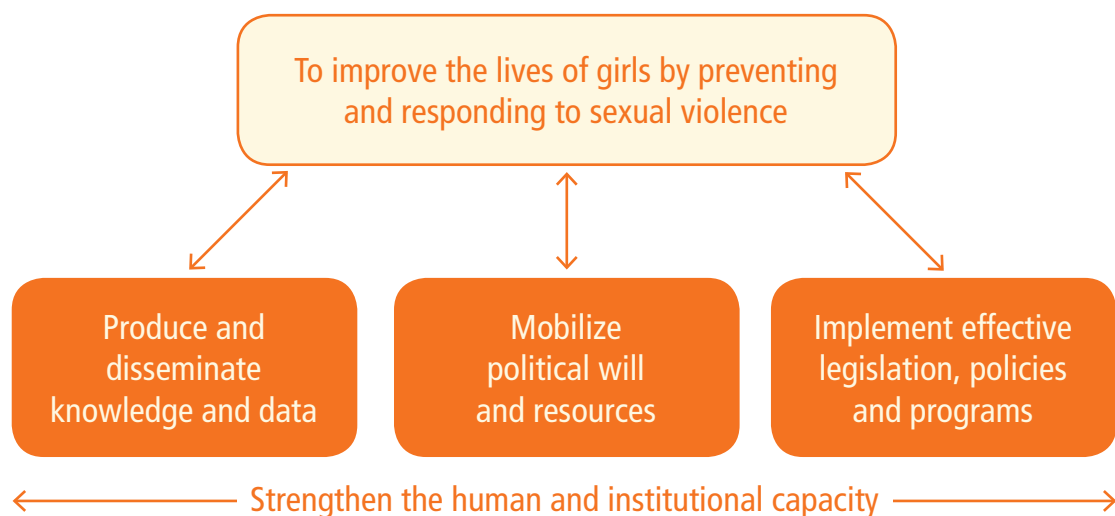
Goal and Objectives

Goal: To improve the lives of girls by preventing and responding to sexual violence

Objectives: The Framework includes four objectives that, in combination, are designed to achieve this goal:

1. Produce and disseminate knowledge and data to enable effective prevention of and response to sexual violence against girls.
2. Mobilize political will and resources to address the problem.
3. Implement effective legislation, policies and programs to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children, with a focus on girls.
4. Establish systems for developing training, skills and institutional capacity. This is a cross-cutting effort that supports objectives 1–3.

6 Finkelhor D. (2007). Prevention of Sexual Abuse Through Educational Programs Directed Toward Children. *Pediatrics.* 120(3): 640-45. **7** World Health Organization/Liverpool John Moores University. (2010). *Violence Prevention: The evidence.* Geneva, World Health Organization. Available at: http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/4th_milestones_meeting/evidence_briefings_all.pdf and MacMillian H, et al. (2009). Interventions to prevent child maltreatment and associated impairment. *Lancet. 373:* 250-66.

To improve the lives of girls by preventing and responding to sexual violence

Produce and disseminate knowledge and data

Mobilize political will and resources

Implement effective legislation, policies and programs

Strengthen the human and institutional capacity

Underlying Approaches

Four core approaches inform this Technical Action Framework:

- Gender equality: Sexual violence against girls is rooted in gender discrimination, which stems from cultural and social norms that deny women and girls equal rights. Integrating strategies to improve gender equality is therefore critical to the success of each element of the Framework.

- Human rights: This Framework emphasizes a human rights–based approach for addressing sexual violence against girls, based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other international human rights standards.

- Public health: The Framework integrates a public health approach to preventing and responding to sexual violence against girls. Key characteristics of the approach are that it relies on systematically sound and ethically collected data and an evidence base of scientifically evaluated programs; emphasizes prevention while ensuring quality services for victims/survivors; is population based; is multisectoral and interdisciplinary; adopts a life-course perspective; ensures the principle of 'do no harm' and is based on the ecological model.

- Country ownership: This Framework recognizes that government commitment is critical to addressing sexual violence. Strategies against sexual violence will best succeed if placed at the center of national priorities, engaging all levels of society—national, community and especially household levels. A government-led, national, multisector planning and implementation model, with civil society participation at national and sub-national levels, is critical to ensure coordinated actions at all levels. The voices of affected individuals and communities are also essential to planning, implementation and review.

Strategies and Actions to Achieve the Four Objectives

Objective 1: Produce and disseminate knowledge and data to enable effective prevention of and response to sexual violence against girls.

Strategy 1: Establish systems for surveillance, monitoring, evaluation and research.

Illustrative Actions:

- Obtain nationally representative and population-based data at regular intervals to provide baselines and track select indicators on a routine basis
- Monitor progress over time
- Increase evidence base by evaluating effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of policies, interventions, programs and implementation process
- Support qualitative research and conduct lessons-learned exercises to inform policy and program design, particularly around norms and value systems related to sexual abuse and exploitation of girls
- Build and strengthen capacity for data collection, monitoring, evaluation and research

Objective 2: Mobilize political will and resources to address the problem.

Strategy 2: Raise awareness and commitment for action through advocacy and assess prevention readiness and capacity.

Illustrative Actions:

- Support civil society, including women's rights, specialized organizations in the field of child protection and violence against women, youth and men's groups and community-based and faith-based organizations
- Assess prevention readiness and capacity at national and community levels through systematic interviews with decision makers from key sectors and audits of relevant existing programs and budgets
- Attract and allocate specific and sustained local and international funding
- Implement a sustained public awareness campaign to increase commitment for the rights of girls and boys to be protected from sexual violence
- Strengthen international, regional, national and local partnerships

Objective 3: Implement effective legislation, policies and programs to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children, with a focus on girls.

Strategy 3: Establish systems for strengthening and enforcing legal frameworks and implementing evidence-based policies and programs to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children, with a focus on girls.

Illustrative Actions:

Legislation and policy
- Ensure national legislation conforms to relevant human rights treaties (e.g., CRC, CEDAW) and is effectively enforced
- Mainstream efforts to address sexual violence in existing national strategies, action plans and budgets
- Strengthen support for families and communities through social protection policies and social, educational and economic opportunities and services for girls
- Strengthen institutional capacity of relevant government ministries at all levels — particularly social welfare agencies and health, education and justice sectors — to design and deliver programs for prevention and response, ensuring a coordinated approach (including support services to victims, capacity building of professionals, development and implementation of referral protocols, inter-institutional protocols, etc.)
- Empower national and local government authorities and communities to be accountable and take action by:
  - Engaging national and community authorities and leaders
  - Engaging schools and other community-based child-serving organizations and women's groups addressing gender-based violence
  - Involving religious leaders and institutions
  - Engaging men and boys

Community mobilization and promotion of change in behavior/social norms

- Design and implement appropriate evidence-based prevention programs based on country needs (e.g., parenting programs; school programs addressing gender roles, children's rights and violence; programs empowering girls and programs engaging men and boys, etc.)
- Support community discussion and dialogue to address the social tolerance of sexual violence against girls, and explore how to promote a climate of non-tolerance and change social norms, attitudes, behaviors and practices harmful to girls and boys
- Promote equal value for girls and boys

Increase and improve comprehensive services to strengthen the response

- Ensure gender-responsive and child-sensitive procedures for children in the justice system (e.g., police, prosecutors, judges)
    - Integrate care and treatment for sexual violence into the health sector
    - Institutionalize response for detection, management and referrals in the education sector
    - Strengthen capacity for social welfare agencies to conduct effective case management, re-integration and prevention

Objective 4: Cross-Cutting Objective
Establish systems for developing training, skills and institutional capacity. This cross-cutting objective will be integrated into Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Strategy 4: Produce and disseminate knowledge and data; mobilize political will and resources; and implement effective legislation, policies and programs.

Illustrative Actions:

- Ensure rights-based, gender-responsive attitudes, practices and compliance by health, security, education, legal and other providers
- Strengthen institutional capacity of relevant government ministries at all levels of government and of relevant NGOs and CBOs to design and deliver programs (prevention and response)

Conclusion

We must act now to prevent and reduce sexual violence against girls, but we must learn from these actions to refine and shape future policies and interventions. Progress in learning what works depends not just on rigorous evaluation of specific policy and programmatic innovations, but also of the implementation process. The full impact of sexual violence against children on their lives, well-being and health, as well as on the development of nations, is still being determined, but by any measure, this impact is enormous. In a very real sense, the way a nation treats its children shapes its future. Sexual violence against girls is not an inevitable consequence of individual behavior, social environment or culture, but a problem that can be understood, changed and prevented. Realizing this change will require the concerted and coordinated action of governments, civil society, communities, and families taking effective steps to protect the human rights of girls to a life free of violence.

Girl, 13, raped by neighbor (Sierra Leone)
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TABLE:
TOGETHER FOR GIRLS ACTION FRAMEWORK: GOAL, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Goal: To improve the lives of girls by preventing and responding to sexual violence against girls		
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Actions**
1. Produce and disseminate knowledge and data to enable effective prevention of and response to sexual violence against girls	Establish systems for surveillance, monitoring, evaluation and research	• Obtain nationally representative and population-based data at regular intervals to provide baselines and track select indicators on a routine basis • Monitor progress over time • Increase evidence base by evaluating effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of policies, interventions, programs and implementation process • Support qualitative research and conduct lessons-learned exercises to inform policy and program design, particularly around norms and value systems related to sexual abuse and exploitation of girls • Build and strengthen capacity for data collection, monitoring, evaluation and research
2. Mobilize political will and resources to address the problem	Raise awareness and commitment for action through advocacy and assess prevention readiness and capacity	• Support civil society, including women's rights, specialized organizations in the field of child protection and violence against women, youth and men's groups, and community-based and faith-based organizations • Assess prevention readiness and capacity at national and community levels through systematic interviews with decision makers from key sectors and audits of relevant existing programs and budgets • Attract and allocate specific and sustained local and international funding • Implement a sustained public awareness campaign to increase commitment for the rights of girls and boys to be protected from sexual violence • Strengthen international, regional, national and local partnerships

Goal: To improve the lives of girls by preventing and responding to sexual violence against girls		
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Actions**

3. Implement effective legislation, policies and programs to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children, with a focus on girls
 	
a) Legislation and policy
 	
b) Community mobilization and promotion of change in behavior/social norms
 	
c) Increase and improve comprehensive services to strengthen the response
	Establish systems for strengthening and enforcing legal frameworks and implementing evidence-based policies and programs to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children, with a focus on girls	A. Legislation and policy
		• Ensure national legislation conforms to relevant human rights treaties (e.g., CRC, CEDAW) and is effectively enforced
		• Mainstream efforts to address sexual violence in existing national strategies, action plans and budgets
		• Strengthen support for families and communities through social protection policies and social, educational and economic opportunities and services for girls
		• Strengthen institutional capacity of relevant government ministries at all levels — particularly social welfare agencies, and health, education and justice sectors — to design and deliver programs for prevention and response, ensuring a coordinated approach (including support services to victims, capacity building of professionals, development and implementation of referral protocols, inter-institutional protocols, etc.)
		• Empower national and local government authorities and communities to be accountable and take action by:
		  - Engaging national and community authorities and leaders
		  - Engaging schools and other community-based child-serving organizations and women's groups addressing gender-based violence
		  - Involving religious leaders and institutions
		  - Engaging men and boys
		B. Community mobilization and promotion of change in behavior/social norms:
		• Design and implement appropriate evidence-based prevention programs based on country needs (e.g., parenting programs; school programs addressing gender roles, children's rights and violence; programs empowering girls and programs engaging men and boys, etc.)
		• Support community discussion and dialogue to address the social tolerance of sexual violence against girls, and explore how to promote a climate of non-tolerance and change social norms, attitudes, behaviors and practices harmful to girls and boys
		• Promote equal value for girls and boys
		C. Increase and improve comprehensive services to strengthen the response
		• Ensure gender-responsive and child-sensitive procedures for children in the justice system (e.g., police, prosecutors, judges)
		  - Integrate care and treatment for sexual violence into health sector
		  - Institutionalize response for detection, management and referrals in the education sector
		  - Strengthen capacity for social welfare agencies to conduct effective case management, re-integration and prevention

4. Establish systems for developing training, skills and institutional capacity. This cross-cutting objective will be integrated into Objectives 1, 2 and 3.	Produce and disseminate knowledge and data; mobilize political will and resources; and implement effective legislation, policies and programs	• Ensure rights-based, gender-responsive attitudes, practices and compliance by health, security, education, legal and other providers • Strengthen institutional capacity of relevant government ministries at all levels of government and of relevant NGOs and CBOs to design and deliver programs (prevention and response)

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TOGETHER

WE CAN END

VIOLENCE AND

BUILD A FUTURE

WHERE CHILDREN

ARE SAFE, HEALTHY

AND VALUED.