Together for Girls
Strategy 2024-2030
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The Crisis
Physical, emotional, and sexual violence, which are often interconnected, all contribute to negative outcomes for children, communities, and nations.

Childhood sexual violence is particularly taboo and hidden.

It encompasses a wide range of abuses, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, rape, dating violence, and peer-to-peer sexual violence. It affects children of all backgrounds, races, genders, and nationalities, occurring in a multitude of settings: homes, families, communities, places of worship, schools, sports environments, within the context of child marriage and conflict situations, and online.

Approximately 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 8 boys experience some form of sexual violence before their 18th birthday.¹


Violence against children is a global crisis of immense scale. It’s time to break the silence on childhood sexual violence by Daniela Ligiero, Chief Executive Officer, Together for Girls and Co-founder, Brave Movement.

One in three children, or 1 billion children have experienced sexual, physical, or emotional violence in the past year.²

The consequences last a lifetime.

2 https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-children
It doesn’t have to be this way. The evidence is clear.

Violence is preventable. Change is possible. Decades of research show how effective solutions can prevent sexual violence.

We can create transformational change if we think strategically and act boldly.

Implementing these solutions, with policies and programs to ensure survivors access healing and justice, will have direct positive outcomes across human development indicators, including health, education, and social protection, as well as economic growth.
02

Our Progress
In the first 14 years of our partnership, we have achieved significant impact:

33% of the world’s children, adolescents, and youth (under age 24) living in lower-income countries are represented in national data from Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS), settings where data is often lacking.

23 countries have incorporated VACS results into national agendas setting broader positive child-related policies and programs like abolishing child marriage, corporal punishment, and statutes of limitations for crimes against children.

Survivor activists leading the global Brave Movement to End Childhood Sexual Violence are mobilizing with allies in every corner of the world, calling for bold and transformative change from world leaders.
Over $160 million has been leveraged to end violence against children and adolescents in lower- and lower-middle-income countries.

Major gains have been achieved in countries with repeat VACS. For example, in Kenya and Eswatini.

The repeat VACS in Kenya showed the population-level prevalence of childhood sexual violence fell by more than 50% for girls and two-thirds for boys. In Eswatini, the repeat VACS showed a 41% drop in girls experiencing sexual violence.
We connect the dots among understanding the problem, identifying effective solutions, tracking progress, and mobilizing for action.

By doing this we create a synergistic effect that amplifies TfG’s impact and drives toward our ultimate goal of creating a safer world for children and adolescents.

For this strategy refresh, we considered a series of key questions, drawing on an independent evaluation of our work to date and insights from partners and stakeholders.

This learning has shaped this strategy refresh, which will be buttressed with supporting sub-strategies and yearly work plans:

1. What is working well?
   ✔ TfG successfully unites varied stakeholders around a common goal, such as collaborating with governments, United Nations (UN) entities, civil society, and researchers on VACS implementation and subsequent response, as well as partnering with survivor leaders, allies, and civil society organizations for impactful advocacy and campaigning to break the silence and change laws and policies.

   ✔ Our Data-to-Action model, starting with VACS and followed by the development of a nationally-led multisectoral response, has been instrumental in catalyzing funding, laws, and policies alongside measurable decreases in violence against children, notably in Kenya and Eswatini.

   ✔ Our work integrates violence against women and violence against children, consistently applying a gender lens.

   ✔ We amplify survivor voices alongside allies, and in a very short time, have built a powerful movement through the Brave Movement. Continuing to support and expand the Brave Movement and supporting survivor leadership, as well as survivor-centered activism and campaigning, are crucial to drive political will and action.

2. What can be further leveraged?
   ✔ We can enhance decision-makers’ access to and understanding of violence data on both prevalence and solutions, including VACS findings and what works to drive change.

   ✔ TfG can promote a narrative of hope and positive change, sharing success stories broadly to inspire action.

   ✔ Strengthening support for local, civil society, and grassroots organizations is key to driving sustainable and lasting impact. Further collaboration with these entities, alongside our partnerships with governments and the UN, is essential.
3. What can improve?
✔ The issue of violence against children, especially sexual violence, is not prioritized enough globally or nationally. Increasing public awareness and political will to act is imperative.

✔ Funding to address violence against children is insufficient. Intensifying efforts to secure more resources is necessary — beyond developing policies and plans to ensure programs and services at scale.

✔ Integrating violence against children issues across sectors, such as education, health, and social protection, is needed to ensure a sustainable and comprehensive approach.

4. What emerging issues are we well-positioned to address?
✔ Our advocacy and awareness raising can address the rapid increase in digital threats to children and their connection to violence happening offline.

✔ We are well placed to drive better understanding of violence against children and adolescents occurring among the growing numbers of displaced populations, due to conflict and climate change, which heightens risks of violence against children.

“As we enter the final phase of implementing the globally agreed-upon 2030 agenda, we pledge to intensify our efforts and strategically focus on areas in which we can achieve the greatest impact.”

Gary Cohen
Social entrepreneur; Board Chair and Founder, Together for Girls
Country partners

Botswana  Cambodia  Colombia  Côte d’Ivoire
El Salvador  Eswatini  Ethiopia  Guatemala
Haiti  Honduras  Jamaica  Kenya
Lao PDR  Lesotho  Malawi  Moldova
Mozambique  Namibia  Nigeria  Rwanda
Tanzania  Uganda  United States of America  Zambia
Zimbabwe
Our ambition: The 5 key challenges we will tackle
Challenge 1: Lack of data and evidence

Challenge 2: Limited use of existing evidence and knowledge

Challenge 3: Lack of political will to act

Challenge 4: Lack of coordinated, multi-sectoral approaches

Challenge 5: Emerging threats - digital and displacement
Although our work to date has contributed to significant improvements regarding this challenge, the ongoing lack of data and evidence is hindering the field of violence against children and adolescents.

Significant gaps remain in our understanding of the extent, nature, and causes of — and our collective response to — violence at all levels, from local to global.

This is especially true for childhood sexual violence, a particularly hidden and taboo form of violence.

This lack of data obscures the true magnitude of the problem and hampers effective evidence-based programs and policies.

Central to our approach are the Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS), which are distinctive globally for directly interviewing youth aged 13–24.

This method emphasizes the voices of children and young people who have lived through these experiences.

A VACS, and its accompanying nationally-led processes, transform a country’s ability to understand and address violence against children, adolescents, and youth at scale, as seen in an independent evaluation of a decade of work (The Power of Data to Action: Country Experiences and Lessons Following Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys).

We are dedicated to increasing the reach of VACS in collaboration with partners, under national leadership, and with a further strengthened focus on enhancing local capacity for conducting and interpreting these surveys. We aim to explore and integrate new methodologies to more deeply embed these processes and key indicators within national frameworks and official statistics.
We will work with partners to implement research and the VACS in multiple settings, including in humanitarian contexts, and expand original research that blends quantitative and qualitative methods. This research aims to deepen our understanding of violence against children, encompassing aspects of victimization, perpetration, and the identification of both risk and protective factors.

We will continue to support the generation of state-of-the-art data to guide transformative action.

We generate quality, comprehensive data
- We know where, how, and why violence against children and adolescents happens, and find evidence-based solutions that work to prevent it.
- We address urgent data gaps, such as studying violence against children in humanitarian settings.
- We support governments and national partners to collect and use relevant data.

This report was supported by USAID’s HEARD Project, USAID, CUNY SPH, Implementation Science Collaborative, Together for Girls, and URC.
There’s a significant need to compile and distribute diverse types of evidence, including insights gained from practical experience. Many decision-makers, advocates, and practitioners frequently lack access to or are unaware of the insights that multiple types of data provide.

The use of data should be a continuous conversation with those who rely on this information for their work and decision-making.

Over the past 14 years, we have contributed to the growing collection of data and best practices for combating violence. Especially in terms of bringing attention to the magnitude of the problem, to create a significant impact for children.

Yet overall, valuable data on violence against children remains underused, especially when it comes to solutions that work.

To effectively share knowledge, it’s crucial to customize the translation, packaging, and delivery based on the audience’s needs. Various methods exist for disseminating information to ensure its practical use, and it’s vital to always consider the end user’s specific requirements to enhance the application and use of data.

**Solution 1: Sharing what works**

We will share the latest, best, and most relevant solutions to end childhood sexual violence.

Leveraging our work from the last decade and beyond, we aim to focus and enhance our strategies for data translation and dissemination — moving beyond the ability to showcase the extent of the problem to also focus on solutions to it.

Our experience is that it is essential to translate, package, and summarize complex data in ways that resonate with different audiences to enhance its application.

Experience from countries like Kenya and Eswatini shows that when actions are informed by data and evidence, substantial reductions in violence can be achieved.
Commemorating “16 days of Activism Against GBV.”

Image credit: LVCT Kenya.

As part of these efforts, and in collaboration with our partners the WeProtect Global Alliance and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), the Safe Futures Hub: Solutions to End Childhood Sexual Violence will compile and share a variety of evidence, including lessons from practical experience.

This initiative aims to mobilize various forms of knowledge (including practice-based learning), facilitate knowledge sharing, and spark dialogue among stakeholders such as practitioners, advocates, and decision-makers. We will work to ensure the knowledge is shared and applied effectively.

**The Safe Futures Hub: Solutions to End Childhood Sexual Violence will**

✓ Curate and disseminate diverse forms of evidence, including practice-based knowledge.

✓ Transform the response to ending childhood sexual violence.

✓ Tailor products to the end user’s specific requirements to enhance the application and use of data.

Commemorating “16 days of Activism Against GBV.”
Image credit: LVCT Kenya.
Violence against children and adolescents, particularly sexual violence, frequently fails to garner attention and urgency from decision-makers.

Leaders in government, private entities, religious and sporting organizations, technology, and civil society often do not acknowledge the long-term societal impacts of this violence.

This lack of prioritization can be attributed to a lack of knowledge about the magnitude of consequences related to sexual violence, minimal political repercussions for inaction, and a societal tendency to view such issues as taboo, inevitable, or confined to the private sphere rather than as matters of public concern or state responsibility.

It leads to insufficient political will to enact decisive measures, and also systems that allow perpetrators to escape accountability.

**Solution 3: Data-driven, survivor-centered movement-building, advocacy & campaigning**

We will expand and deepen our movement-building efforts, our advocacy, and our campaigns to ensure that inaction is not an option.

We will engage in coordinated advocacy and campaign efforts, ensuring that neglecting the issue of violence against children, especially sexual violence, is not an option.

Our advocacy will shed light on the immediate effects of violence and will emphasize its impact on mental health, societal stability, and economic health. This broader perspective is designed to provoke a more robust political response and foster a culture of responsibility and accountability.
In addition, we will ensure that the voices of survivors and those most affected by childhood sexual violence are at the center of our efforts.

Our approach to combating sexual violence against children transcends political boundaries, uniting stakeholders across the spectrum on this global public health and human rights crisis. There is an urgent need to increase investments at all levels.

“The financial resources allocated to this issue are woefully inadequate, underscoring the need for enhanced funding and infrastructure to facilitate comprehensive interventions across prevention, healing, and justice at scale and for grassroots organizations leading these efforts.”

Daniela Ligiero
CEO and President, Together for Girls, and Co-founder and Global Steering Group Chair, Brave Movement

By engaging survivors (whether publicly declared or not) and allies, we aim to create substantial change across all levels of society.

- Elevating public survivors' leadership and voice: Central to our movement is the promotion of survivor leadership and voice, breaking the silence, fighting stigma and shame, and ensuring their experiences and insights guide political efforts.

- Conducting coordinated campaigns and advocacy: We engage in aligned campaigns and advocacy, collaborating with multiple stakeholders to address key issues like online safety and the elimination of statutes of limitations, alongside region- and nation-specific efforts.

Through 2030, the Brave Movement will focus on several key global advocacy campaigns (such as online safety and abolishing statutes of limitation) and on supporting local and regional political priorities. As we have done up to now, our specific focus will be guided by the movement’s leadership and opportunities for maximum impact.

We will continue to build mechanisms for growth and connectivity at all levels through pathways for collaboration, showcasing leaders and organizations doing transformative work, a membership hub, and frameworks for locally-led Brave Movement platforms (e.g Brave Kenya).
In 2023, the Brave Movement submitted a legal definition of the term “survivor” in the context of child sexual violence in European Union law. This definition has been presented and defended to the European Commission for potential inclusion in a proposal for a Recast of a 2011 Directive related to rights for victims of child sexual abuse.

The Brave Movement campaigns across 3 pillars:

- **Prevention**: Including advocating for safer internet to keep children and young people safe online.

- **Healing**: Including advocating for more resources to support survivors in their healing journeys.

- **Justice**: Including abolishing statutes of limitations around the world to aid justice for survivors, and prevent perpetrators for continuing abuse. We will be guided by the cause, not political ideology.

We will be guided by the cause, not political ideology.

Addressing any form of violence against children should not be confined to any particular political ideology; it is a universal issue that goes beyond partisan divisions. It holds the potential to bring together a diverse array of actors from all points on the political spectrum.

This issue, centered on the well-being and protection of children, can serve as a common ground for cooperation and dialogue among diverse political groups.
Effective advocacy and campaigns require strong data.

Information highlighting the magnitude of the problem, coupled with evidence on what works, is essential to drive change.

In addition, the ability to track at the national level how countries are doing in their efforts compared to other countries in their region and around the world can help foster political commitment and drive action. Highlighting successful examples can help provide a roadmap for change.

Out of the shadows index: shining light on the response to child sexual abuse and exploitation.

The Out of the Shadows Index, developed with The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) and centered on childhood sexual violence, acts as a significant tool for advocacy. It enables monitoring and highlighting the advancements made by different countries in this area.

An updated index, developed with TfG and key partners, will allow us to highlight the success of countries that are taking steps to address the problem and also show where additional attention to this issue is needed. It will be accompanied by extensive and robust communications and marketing campaigns to ensure engagement and exposure rise to new levels.

Leveraging The Economist’s esteemed reputation adds substantial credibility to the index, facilitating engagement with audiences beyond the conventional child protection sphere.

An updated version of the index, developed with TfG and key partners, will allow us to highlight the success of countries that are taking steps to address the problem and also show where additional attention to this issue is needed.
Challenge 4: Lack of coordinated, multi-sectoral approaches

Safety is a fundamental right for children, yet violence prevention and response are often siloed into the child protection sector. This lack of interdisciplinary collaboration results in fragmented initiatives, reducing their collective efficacy.

Solution 4: Enhance locally-led cross-sector collaboration

We will work to connect interrelated sectors, highlighting the impact of violence on areas such as learning, health, and justice.

Child safety must become a cross-sectoral priority, influencing strategies in education, health, justice, and beyond.

One
Emphasising the intersections between child and women’s rights.
We aim to foster a coordinated, multi-sectoral response and build a connected field of actors and organizations.

Two
Continuing our outreach to relevant sectors
We will combine data with powerful advocacy to elevate these issues within sectors - focusing primarily on health, education, and justice.

Building on 14 years of our Data to Action methodology

Our strategy focuses on strengthening partnerships across diverse sectors, underscoring how violence impacts facets of society such as education, health, and justice.

We will build on the lessons learned over a decade of work and from the independent evaluation The Power of Data to Action: Country Experiences and Lessons Following Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys such as:

- The VACS data, and associated processes to use the data, provide evidence that violence against children and adolescents is a knowable, solvable problem.
VACS data provides the foundation for developing interventions that work and measuring progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
■ Coordination across sectors is critical to driving change. Strong, government-led multisectoral coordination is the single most important factor in translating VACS results into positive action for children. Multisectoral coordination plays a role in every step of the VACS process.

■ VACS data generates learning and action. VACS data and associated capacity-building processes generate learning and action, build capacity, and inform national responses to end violence against children.

■ All areas related to violence against children need more funding. Funding gaps are a barrier in all aspects of prevention and response to violence against children, beginning with VACS itself and extending to post-VACS efforts. Almost 90% of survey respondents cited inadequate funding as a barrier to post-VACS efforts.

We will continue to highlight the link between child rights and women's rights, supporting the adoption of comprehensive, multisectoral action plans on a national level.

Our efforts will combine data on how violence affects learning, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health with effective advocacy. We plan to extend our work on the connection between violence and HIV and increase our focus on mental health challenges.

In the education sector, we aim to strengthen our initiatives to end violence against children in and through schools, working in partnership with initiatives like Safe to Learn.

Within the justice system, we will amplify the Brave Movement’s global campaigns to abolish statutes of limitations for sexual violence crimes against children.

We will continue to support the development and monitoring of coordinated, multisectoral National Action Plans led by national governments. We also aim to shift power by engaging in partnerships with local civil society actors, supporting them in playing a greater leadership role in the design and implementation of policies and programs.

By bringing together legal, educational, health, and social strategies, we strive to drive sustainable change and secure the safety and well-being of children and adolescents.
Digital threats to children are becoming more common, broadening the range of traditional risks.

The growth of online child sexual abuse and exploitation is alarming, with an 87% increase in reported cases of child sexual abuse material since 2019, totaling over 32 million reports globally.¹

The rapid advancement of technology introduces new risks, requiring ongoing updates to protective measures. However, the response from governments and technology companies has been inadequate.

Global crises, such as climate change, conflict, and humanitarian disasters, amplify these threats by displacing large populations and exposing children to increased violence.

The failure to protect displaced children, or those living in humanitarian settings, leads to significant trauma and societal losses. This changing environment highlights the need for proactive and adaptive responses to safeguard the well-being of children in a constantly evolving world.

At the same time, the number of displaced children and adolescents has reached unprecedented levels, with more than 43 million displaced.⁴
We will remain adaptable and flexible to take on new and evolving challenges that align with our core mission where we can have a positive impact — starting with digital and displacement threats.

TfG is committed to addressing new and emerging challenges. Our strategy emphasizes adaptability and collaboration and will focus on our added value by:

- **Updating VACS:** We will help VACS evolve to ensure strong national ownership and institutionalization of data production and use, to cover questions related to online violence, and to adapt it for use in humanitarian settings (HVACS), recognizing the unique threats faced by displaced children.

- **Strengthening the Safe Futures Hub:** This platform will address both technology-facilitated and offline violence, bridging the gap between digital and physical risks to youth and creating a space for ongoing dialogue and partners across digital and non-digital settings.

- **Advocating for accountability:** Through the Brave Movement, we’ll push for stronger actions from governments and tech companies to protect children online. We aim to transform digital spaces into safe environments for children, advocating for designs and policies that prioritize their well-being.

Adapting the Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS) for humanitarian contexts

- ✔ The VACS has added a module on online violence, and has been adapted for use in humanitarian settings, where there is a dearth of quality data.

- ✔ Both climate change and conflict continue to displace large proportions of the global population.

By refining our approach to address emerging challenges, TfG is committed to enhancing safety for all children, whether they’re engaging in digital environments or experiencing displacement.

As new threats surface, we’ll stay adaptable, focusing on challenges that align with our mission and areas where we can provide significant contributions.
04 Our shared vision
Our goal
To increase the political will, resources, and global collaboration to address violence against children and adolescents, especially sexual violence, ensuring key stakeholders are knowledgeable and committed to this cause.

We will ensure prevention, healing, and justice for this generation and generations to come. Childhood sexual violence is particularly taboo and hidden.

Our method
Through data and advocacy, our global partnership drives action to break cycles of violence and ensure prevention, healing, and justice.

We envision a world where every child and adolescent is safe, protected and thriving.
Our model, principles and values
Everyone, including children and adolescents, has the right to live free from violence.

We all have a role to play in making this a reality.

Our approach is articulated through our 4 interconnected initiatives. Collectively, these contribute to the overall goal to building a world where every child and adolescent is safe, protected and thriving.

By forming a comprehensive strategy, these 4 initiatives leverage data, evidence, advocacy, and survivor voices to create a multifaceted approach to ending violence against children, especially sexual violence.

By connecting the dots among understanding the problem, identifying effective solutions, tracking progress, and mobilizing for action, TfG creates a synergistic effect that amplifies its impact and drives toward its ultimate goal of creating a safer world for children and adolescents.

Our model

Through data and advocacy, Together for Girls drives action on violence prevention, healing, and justice.

The evidence is clear: there is strength in numbers. A multi-sector, coordinated response reduces violence against children and adolescents and helps keep them safe from harm.

Data

Data and evidence guide the way.
Generating quality, comprehensive data illuminates the pervasive problem of violence against children, informing effective solutions for prevention and response.

- We seek to know where, how, and why violence against children and adolescents happens and find evidence-based solutions that work to prevent it.
- Address urgent data gaps, such as studying violence against children in humanitarian settings.
- Build the capacity of national governments and partners to collect and use relevant data.

Advocacy

When we stand together, we are powerful.
Raising awareness to drive lasting change through communications and campaigns to build political will, shape policy agendas, and elevate survivors’ voices.

- Catalyze the Brave Movement to end childhood sexual violence, a survivor-centered movement campaigning for the right of all children and adolescents to live in safety and dignity.
- Shape global and national policy agendas, building political will to drive lasting change.
- Shatter the silence around sexual violence by amplifying survivor voices and ensuring they are incorporated into policy discussions.
Champion evidence-based solutions to end violence against children, helping ignite national, regional, and global interventions.

Action
We can — and must — create lasting change for millions of children and adolescents.

- Galvanizing a coordinated, multi-sectoral response to bring evidence-based solutions to scale and ensuring violence prevention, healing, and justice.
- Prevention to protect current and future generations.
- Healing, including gender-responsive, age-friendly services for victims, survivors, and their families.
- Justice for survivors and accountability for perpetrators and the complicit.

Our values

Everyone, including children and adolescents, has the right to live free from violence. We all have a role to play in making this a reality.

United in our commitment to end the global crisis of sexual violence against children, Together for Girls partners work across sectors, disciplines, and geographies. Our values provide a shared understanding of how we can work together to create a safer world.

Together for Girls strives to create an agile, courageous, collaborative, empathetic, and respectful culture. We aspire to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our partnership. We hold ourselves accountable for our values by integrating them throughout our work.

Courage
We’ve seen the power of a voice speaking out to shatter silence and fight for truth. We’ve witnessed the ripple effect of courage, inspiring others to take action.

Our partnership seeks to amplify brave survivor voices dismantling the harmful stigma around sexual violence. We aim to equip leaders and decision-makers to take bold action that can create a safer world.

Collaboration
Inclusivity and collaboration drive our mission to end sexual violence; only by working together across sectors can we address this multi-faceted issue.

Empathy
Our partnership recognizes and appreciates each other as whole people. To foster an empathetic culture, we strive to build and maintain psychological safety, trust, and accountability. We seek to embody empathy through our work.

Respect
Respect is central to our mission at Together for Girls. We choose to create a culture of respect for ourselves and for others, including our peers and partners. We seek to show respect in the way we interact, treat each other’s time, and build relationships.

Diversity, equity and inclusion
Throughout the partnership, we have a collective commitment to integrated values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. These values are fundamental to the change we want to create through the Together for Girls partnership and underpin our work.

Agility
To achieve our vision of a safer world, we must have an agile approach to our work. We seek to prioritize ongoing learning and commit to creating a culture that is flexible and open to incorporating innovative solutions, ideas, and tools in order to advance our work.
Our guiding principles

Founded on global learning and the experiences and lessons learned by Together for Girls, our partnership is guided by the following principles:

**Strength in numbers**

**Data must guide the way**
We believe that to effectively end violence against children and adolescents, we must first understand it. We must use both quantitative and qualitative data to define and understand the magnitude, specificities, and consequences of violence, as well as elevate context-specific, evidence-based solutions.

**Violence is preventable**
Decades of research have shown that there are effective solutions to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and adolescents. However, these interventions are not well known or understood, often causing leaders and decision-makers to feel powerless. We curate and elevate evidence-based solutions from around the world to help drive transformative action.

**Partnership is necessary**
No single actor or sector in isolation can end violence against children or violence against women. Deep, lasting global change for a problem of this magnitude can only be achieved through partnership. We unite different actors and disciplines that often do not work together to address a multi-faceted problem.

**Accountability is essential**
Violence prevention and response is a relatively new area of intervention for many communities, countries, and development partners. As we introduce and scale-up interventions, we must monitor and evaluate these efforts to ensure we are not causing harm and are supporting the most effective and efficient approaches in each country or context.

**Gender matters**

**Ending violence is fundamental to achieving gender equality**
We are a feminist partnership, grounded in the understanding that to advance gender equality, we must break long-standing cycles of violence against children and women. Our approach connects efforts between those working to end violence against children and those working to end violence against women.

**Focus on adolescent girls**
We take a holistic and inclusive approach to ending sexual violence. Efforts to address violence against children and violence against women are often siloed leaving adolescent girls behind. Adolescent girls face unique challenges and experience the types of violence common to all children (e.g., corporal punishment in schools), as well as violence that is much more common among women (e.g., intimate partner violence). They are more vulnerable to sexual violence, unintended pregnancy, and HIV.

**Gender shapes experience**
A gender perspective is crucial for understanding how structural factors, such as access to education, resources, and opportunities, and rigid gender and sexual norms define the different challenges and risks that children and adolescents face. This includes understanding the different experiences of girls, boys, and gender-expansive young people in all their diversity.

**Boys play an important role**
We recognize the ways in which boys experience violence and the harmful gender norms that drive its normalization and perpetuation. A decade of data from the Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS) demonstrates how boys are especially vulnerable to physical violence and experience high rates of sexual violence as children and adolescents. Moreover, boys who experience childhood sexual violence are more likely to grow up and perpetrate violence against a partner. Boys play an integral role in breaking longstanding cycles of violence; ending violence against boys and ensuring their well-being and right to live free from harm is essential.
Nothing about us, without us

Survivor voices must be at the center
We recognize each data point on violence is a person’s individual experience and story. To end sexual violence against children, we must center and amplify survivors’ voices — their deep wisdom and great political power can create lasting change. We believe in the power of survivors and allies coming together to demand a safer world.

National and local ownership is key
All policies and programs must be country-led, engage local stakeholders’ input and identified needs, and work towards long-term, lasting change for children, adolescents, and communities. Global data is helpful to showcase the magnitude of the problem, yet every country is different. Having detailed, country-specific and country-owned violence data on prevalence, perpetrators, consequences, locations, risk, and protective factors are essential to guide effective and locally-relevant responses.

Youth engagement is crucial
We aspire to break down the barriers to youth participation in the processes and decisions that impact their lived experiences and well-being. Through our research and advocacy, we create ethical pathways for youth to share their experiences and participate in solutions.

Our four approaches

1. VACS Data to Action: Understanding the problem and mobilizing governments for action:

This initiative serves as the foundational pillar of TfG’s strategy, providing critical insights into the prevalence, nature, and consequences of violence against children. This data is essential to understanding the specific contexts and challenges of violence against children in each country, thereby informing the development of targeted programs and policies for effective change.

The entire Data to Action process ensures that data is used to inform the development of a multisectoral, country-led response.

2. Safe Futures Hub: Sharing solutions that work to show the way forward.

Building on the insights provided by VACS and other data sources on the magnitude of the problem, the Safe Futures Hub: Solutions to End Childhood Sexual Violence acts as a repository, a learning and exchange space, and a dissemination point for the best and latest evidence on interventions that work to address and solve the problem of violence against children.

This platform offers a roadmap for action by sharing practice-based knowledge and successful case studies. It ensures that stakeholders across sectors have access
3. Out of the Shadows Index: Tracking countries' progress on the issue:

This initiative complements the first two by providing a measurable and comparative analysis of how well countries are addressing the problem of violence against children. An updated index will track progress and highlight areas for improvement, offering a benchmark for countries to aspire to and a tool for advocacy groups to demand action. By shining a light on the efforts of individual countries, the index motivates governments and stakeholders to improve their responses and adopt best practices identified through VACS and the Safe Futures Hub.

4. Brave Movement: Ending the silence and building political pressure to act:

This initiative mobilizes the collective power of survivors and allies to demand action from leaders and decision-makers. The Brave Movement uses the data and evidence gathered by VACS, the solutions highlighted in the Safe Futures Hub, and the accountability framework provided by the original Out of the Shadows Index and its update to build political will and ensure that inaction is not an option. It represents the action-oriented, advocacy-driven component of TfG’s strategy, working to translate insights and evidence into concrete policy changes and societal shifts.

As a genuine movement, Brave creates pathways for active engagement, allowing the establishment of advocacy priorities at local, national, and regional levels through Brave national and regional platforms. These efforts are steered by survivor leaders and allies who are actively engaged in their respective communities, ensuring that the movement is responsive and relevant to the needs and experiences of those it aims to support.
06 Strategic objectives 2024–2030
Solution

Generate high-quality, comprehensive data on violence against children

Objective 1.1:
National governments will spearhead the implementation of additional Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS) through multisector steering committees, integrating inputs from national authorities, civil society, survivor leaders, and development partners.

Tactics: Implement VACS
- Support the implementation of VACS, promoting meaningful engagement from TfG partners — including local civil society — from the outset through the TfG Data to Action process.
- Assist in fundraising for countries committed to conducting or repeating VACS by mobilizing domestic resources and leveraging funding from sectors that have not traditionally funded VACS (e.g., education, humanitarian assistance), focusing on those ready to utilize survey results for action against violence.

Objective 1.2:
Research initiatives, primarily led by local researchers, will generate deeper insights into the dynamics, consequences, and drivers of violence against children, enhancing both national and global expertise in violence prevention and response research.

Tactics: Build research expertise and document learning
- Collaborate with researchers, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, to enhance expertise in violence research through training, mentorship, and collaboration.
- Support and document learning from VACS, Data to Action processes, and National Action Plan development and implementation in select countries.

Solution

Sharing existing solutions through the Safe Futures Hub

Objective 2.1:
Key stakeholders, including advocates, practitioners, and decision-makers, will have access to the latest and most effective evidence and practice-based knowledge on preventing and responding to childhood sexual violence through the Safe Futures Hub.

Tactics: Accessibility and use of data on solutions
- Develop and strengthen the Safe Futures Hub, aiming to transform it into a leading resource for effective prevention and response strategies against child sexual violence. This hub will serve as a central point for evidence-based interventions and innovative solutions.
- Foster collaborations with stakeholders to identify, showcase, and promote effective interventions that have successfully combated sexual violence against children and adolescents, ensuring these practices are widely recognized and implemented.

Objective 2.2:
Tailored gender-responsive data from VACS and other research will be made accessible to diverse audiences at the national, regional, and global levels, promoting informed policymaking and program development.

Tactics: Increase VACS data accessibility and use
- Prioritize making detailed data on violence against children, particularly focusing on sexual violence, accessible to diverse audiences and sectors. This will involve using various communication channels and forming strong partnerships with key stakeholders to enhance visibility and understanding of the issue.
Solution
Data-driven, survivor-led activism and advocacy

Objective 3.1:
We will mobilize broad awareness and the political will to act, especially across sectors.

Tactics: Deploy advocacy, policy influence, and public survivor engagement
- Utilize data and evidence for specific policy and investment outcomes in national and global contexts, with a focus on the education, health, and justice sectors.
- Focus on the common goal of protecting children, positioning this issue as a powerful platform for collaboration and understanding among diverse political groups.
- In the US, engage with policy-focused coalitions for child protection and gender-based violence prevention for both foreign assistance and domestic efforts, raise awareness of VACS, and support the Brave USA platform (Keep Kids Safe).

Objective 3.2:
The Brave Movement will see significant expansion globally, elevating the voices of survivors and allies to break the stigma around sexual violence, fostering political will and influencing policy and program actions.

Tactics: Deploy advocacy, policy influence, and survivor engagement
- Focus on broadening the Brave Movement, with an emphasis on advocacy campaigns aimed at achieving key policy victories. Additionally, prioritize amplifying the voices of public survivor leaders and survivor-centered grassroots organizations in policy debates, ensuring their experiences and perspectives shape relevant discussions and decisions.
- Create and execute influential global campaigns that resonate with members worldwide, rallying them around shared goals. These campaigns will be instrumental in fortifying the movement by bringing together members from diverse backgrounds united by a common cause.
- Support the growth of the movement by increasing membership (of both individuals and organizations of all sizes) and providing various avenues for member involvement. Additionally, facilitate increasing collaboration with like-minded organizations and individual leaders through engagement in coalitions, task forces, working groups, and joint campaigns. Also establish a membership hub offering resources like training and forums for experience sharing and community building, thereby fostering an engaged and supportive network.
- Encourage the development of regional and national platforms that set their own political agendas and operate autonomously, yet maintain appropriate connections with the global Brave Movement. This approach aims to enhance the movement’s collective power and influence while respecting the unique contexts and priorities of various regions and countries.

Objective 3.3:
Out of the Shadows - an updated index will be used extensively to monitor progress and drive accountability, encouraging transformative actions worldwide.

Tactics: Track progress for accountability
- Launch a comprehensive update index, ensuring it is user-centered and tailored to effectively advocate for policy changes and increased funding in addressing childhood sexual violence. This updated index will serve as a pivotal tool for driving both global transformation and accountability.
Solution

Enhance locally led cross-sector collaboration

Objective 4.1:
Through collaborative and transformative partnerships, especially with local actors, we will leverage data and evidence, to inform multi-sectoral policies and boost political commitment across sectors for action on violence against children.

Tactics: Connect national and global efforts across sectors
- Globally, engage in collaborative efforts with sector-specific groups, focusing on shared priorities and engaging low- and middle-income country partners, particularly in advancing safe and equitable education, health (especially HIV and mental health), and the connections between violence against children and violence against women.
- Across all levels, tell the story of post-VACS impact and evidence-based solutions, contribute to thought leadership, and mobilize resources to address violence against children, with a special focus on sexual violence prevention, healing, and justice.

Objective 4.2:
Government and civil society groups, with input from survivors, will actively develop and implement comprehensive, gender-transformative, and multisectoral national and sub-national plans and strategies to address violence against children, supported by TfG partners.

Tactics: Support local coordination efforts and leadership, particularly by civil society and survivors
- At the national level, provide support to local nongovernmental organizations and civil society with advocacy, visibility, and resources, as well as make linkages with global advocacy efforts, emphasizing local leadership and power shifts.
Solution
Adapt to meet the moment

Objective 5.1:
We will adapt the VACS and other research methodologies to effectively understand and address the challenges posed by digital threats as well as displacement, ensuring we are responsive to emerging new threats.

Tactics: Implement HVACS
- Track the implementation of HVACS (VACS for use in humanitarian settings), supporting meaningful engagement from TfG partners and civil society in the Data to Action process.
- Assist in fundraising for countries committed to conducting or repeating HVACS, focusing on those ready to utilize survey results for action against violence.

Objective 5.2:
We will develop new initiatives, programs, and partnerships to protect children from emerging threats, particularly in digital spaces and displaced populations (due to conflict, climate, and natural disasters), with an emphasis on prevention and response mechanisms.

Tactics: Campaigns and special initiatives to address emerging threats
- Expand and strengthen Brave Movement campaigns focused on online safety.
- Remain nimble and flexible to meet the moment, creating space for rapid learning, adaptation, and response.