



Being intentional about gender-transformative strategies

Reflections and lessons for UNICEF's
Gender Policy and Action Plan (2022-2025)

A compendium of papers

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Acronyms

AGYW	Adolescent girls and young women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRASSP	Gender-Responsive Age-Sensitive Social Protection
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex
LMICs	Low- and Middle-Income Countries
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEM	Socio-Ecological Model
SPIAC-B	Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAC/A	Violence Against Children and Adolescents
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

Glossary

Adolescent empowerment refers to “a personal journey during which an adolescent (aged 10-19), through increased assets and critical awareness develops a clear and evolving understanding of themselves, their rights and opportunities in the world around them, and through increased agency, and voice and participation, have the power to make personal and public choices for the improvement of their lives and their world” (UNICEF 2021). See [A Bolder Vision for and with Adolescent Girls: Advancing a Girl-Intentional Approach](#) and [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#)

Child maltreatment: Physical, sexual and psychological/emotional violence; and neglect of infants, children and adolescents by parents, caregivers and other authority figures, including violent discipline, most often in the home but also in settings such as schools and orphanages. (World Health Organization, 2018, *Inspire Handbook: Action for Implementing the Seven Strategies for Ending Violence against Children*. www.who.int/publications-detail/inspire-handbook-action-for-implementing-the-seven-strategies-for-ending-violence-against-children). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Children and adolescents The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and UNICEF define childhood as below the age of 18 years, adolescence as age 10-19 years, and adulthood as age 18 years and above.

Corporal punishment: Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006, *General Comment No. 8, The Right of the Child to Protection from Corporal Punishment and Other Cruel or Degrading Forms of Punishment*. www.refworld.org/docid/460bc7772.html). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Feminist approach Feminist approaches seek to transform patriarchal power structures and to empower those disadvantaged by them: most often girls and women, but in some cases, also men and boys and people of non-conforming gender identities. Feminist approaches are one of the key conceptual foundations upon which gender-transformative approaches are built. Contemporary feminist approaches are intersectional¹—they take into account the way people experience multiple forms of discrimination and oppression based on different aspects of their identity (e.g. race, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity). See [Gender-Transformative Programming](#)

Gender equality and equity Gender equality refers to equal outcomes for women, men, girls, boys and gender-diverse people². Gender equity refers to fairness: the process of levelling the playing field to achieve gender equality. Gender-transformative approaches are a way to operationalize gender equity, with the goal of achieving gender equality through intentional and additional measures. See [Gender-Transformative Programming](#)

Gender Integration Continuum *Gender integration can helpfully be viewed across a continuum, from gender-discriminatory, gender-blind, or gender-sensitive, to gender-responsive or gender-transformative.* Gender-sensitive programming acknowledges gender inequalities and may act on gender analysis insofar as needed to reach programme objectives but does not necessarily prioritize girls’ and women’s needs specifically or address structural causes of gender inequality. Gender-responsive programming deliberately responds to the needs of adults and children of different genders, assessing the gendered context and taking measures to actively address specific needs. Gender-responsive social protection interventions may aim to effectively reach girls, boys, women and men specifically to achieve gender equality outcomes. Gender-transformative programming actively aims to promote gender equality and women’s and girls’ outcomes as a primary objective,

¹ Crenshaw, K. 1989. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist politics.” University of Chicago Legal Forum 1989(1): article 8.

² Women’s Health West. 2019. “[What is the difference between gender equity and gender equality. What does this have to do with violence against women?](#)” Melbourne: Women’s Health West

by deliberately tackling discriminatory and harmful gender norms, roles, structures and institutions that perpetuate gender inequalities and gendered risks in the long-term. See [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#), [Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization](#) and [Gender-Equitable Masculinities: Working with Boys and Men to Achieve Gender Equality](#).

Gender mainstreaming A strategy for making the needs and interests of all genders an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, policies and organizational processes, so that everyone has the opportunity to benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated³. This is a potential route to transforming gendered outcomes at all levels, but in practice, there is a risk of it being reduced to a bureaucratic process, that avoids engaging with power inequalities⁴. See [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#)

Gender norms are deeply entrenched and widely held beliefs and expectations about gender roles that govern human behaviours and practices within a particular social context and at a particular point in time (John et al. 2017). See [Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization](#) and [Gender-Equitable Masculinities: Working with Boys and Men to Achieve Gender Equality](#).

Gender refers to the culturally defined roles, responsibilities, attributes, and entitlements associated with being (or being seen as) a woman or man in a given setting, along with the power relations between and among women and men.” Most gender systems are deeply patriarchal and ascribe greater value to things considered to be masculine than things considered to be feminine (Heise et al. 2019). See [Gender-Equitable Masculinities: Working with Boys and Men to Achieve Gender Equality](#).

Gender roles are the expected roles, including behaviours, activities, and responsibilities, associated with each sex. See [Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization](#).

Gender socialization processes by which individuals (especially children and adolescents) internalize gender norms. Internalization refers to a process of learning what norms are, understanding why they are of value or make sense, and accepting the norm as one’s own. It is a complex and ongoing process, which begins at birth, continues through childhood, and intensifies during adolescence until individuals have internalized traditional gender identities and begun to perpetuate them to future generations. Gender norms are learned early in life and evidence suggests that by age 3, children begin to develop a sense of gender identity (UNICEF 2018, unpublished). See [Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization](#).

Gender stereotypes are generalizations about the characteristics of a group of people based on gender. See [Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization](#).

Gender transformative approach: A transformative approach promotes gender equality by: fostering critical examination of inequalities and gender roles, norms and dynamics recognizing and strengthening positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment promoting the relative position of women, girls and marginalized groups and transforming the underlying social structures, policies, systems and broadly held social norms that perpetuate and legitimize gender inequalities. See: [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#)

Gender-based violence: An umbrella term for any harmful act... perpetrated against a person’s will... based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. The term ‘gender-based’... underscore[s] the fact that structural, gender-based power inequalities between males and females around the world place females at risk for multiple forms of violence. ...includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. The term is also used... to describe some forms of sexual violence against males and/or targeted violence against LGBTQI+

³ UNICEF and Apolitical. 2020. [How gender mainstreaming can help build back better from COVID-19](#). London: Apolitical.

⁴ Milward, K., Mukhopadhyay, M., and Wong, F.F. 2015. “Gender Mainstreaming Critiques: Signposts or Dead Ends?” IDS Bulletin, 27 July 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1759-5436.12160>.

populations... when referencing violence related to gender-inequitable norms of masculinity and/or norms of gender identity. (Adapted from: Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2015, *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery*. https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Intersectionality A framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different forms of discrimination and privilege. These identities include gender, race, ethnicity, ability, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, and age among other issues. See [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#)

Intimate partner violence: Physical, sexual or psychological acts by a current or former intimate partner that result or are likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm. For purposes of the SDG indicator, an intimate partner is generally defined as a husband, cohabiting sexual partner, or long-term, non-cohabiting, sexual partner, though some surveys include other romantic and 'dating' partners. 'Domestic violence' may refer to partner violence but may also encompass child or elder abuse, or abuse by any member of a household. (United Nations Children's Fund, 2018, *INSPIRE Indicator Guidance and Results Framework - Ending Violence Against Children: How to define and measure change*. www.unicef.org/media/66896/file/INSPIRE-IndicatorGuidance-ResultsFramework.pdf). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Masculinities are the patterns of behaviour and practice that reflect and reinforce the position of men and boys in the gender order (Connell n.d.). These patterns of behaviour and practice vary across cultural and social settings, within groups and networks, and across time (Council of Europe 2021). As part of the gender order, masculinity is defined in relation to femininity; indeed, rigidity about the binary distinction between masculinity and femininity and a resistance to greater fluidity is a core manifestation of patriarchy (The Lancet 2019). See [Gender-Equitable Masculinities: Working with Boys and Men to Achieve Gender Equality](#).

Sexual violence in childhood: All forms of sexual victimization of a girl or a boy under 18 years of age, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation... including forced, pressured, coerced, unwanted or unlawful sexual activity, or attempts to engage in such activity. Sexual activity may include sexual intercourse or other sex acts, contact or non-contact sexual abuse and harassment, as well as sexual exploitation, in person and online. (United Nations Children's Fund, 2018, *INSPIRE Indicator Guidance and Results Framework - Ending Violence Against Children: How to define and measure change*. www.unicef.org/media/66896/file/INSPIRE-IndicatorGuidance-ResultsFramework.pdf). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Social protection is broadly understood to refer to "a set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing or protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion throughout their life course, with a particular emphasis towards vulnerable groups." (SPIAC-B agreed definition) See [Gender-Responsive Social Protection](#).

Structural discrimination Structural or systemic discrimination occurs when an entire network of rules and practices disadvantages less empowered groups and serves to advantage the dominant groups. See [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#)

Violence against children: All forms of physical or mental [psychological] violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. (United Nations General Assembly, 1990, *Article 19, Convention on the Rights of the Child*. www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Violence against women [and girls]⁵: Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women [and girls], including threats

⁵ The 1993 Declaration did not mention girls, but girls should be mentioned when referring to women and girls aged 15 and above, based on CRC definitions.

of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (United Nations General Assembly, 1993, *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*. www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/violenceagainstwomen.aspx). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Violent discipline: Any physical (corporal) punishment and/or psychological aggression (such as shouting, yelling screaming, or calling a child offensive names such as 'dumb' or 'lazy') by a caregiver or authority figure. (United Nations Children's Fund, 2016, *Violent Discipline: Methodology*, <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/violent-discipline/>). See [Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents](#).

Introduction

Lauren Rumbleⁱ, Ramya Subrahmanianⁱⁱ and Rosanne Wongⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱ Associate Director, Gender Equality, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

ⁱⁱ Chief, Research on Child Rights and Protection, UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti

ⁱⁱⁱ Gender Planning and Programme Specialist, Gender Equality, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

In October 2021, the Executive Board of UNICEF endorsed UNICEF's new [Gender Policy 2021-2030](#) and [Gender Action Plan \(GAP\) 2022-2025](#), which represent the organisation's vision and commitment to continue strengthening and improving its work towards gender equality. These key guiding documents are ambitious, evidence-driven and rights-based and are the product of an extensive process of collaboration and co-creation with key stakeholders including UNICEF staff, civil society partners, young people, governments and other UN agencies. To inform their development, in addition to a [comprehensive situation analysis](#) and [independent evaluation](#), UNICEF commissioned a series of background papers on new and emerging gender-related priorities.

UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti and the Programme Group, UNICEF HQ are pleased to jointly present this collection of select background papers. Each of these papers engages with deepening understanding of the pressing challenges young people are facing today and how UNICEF might design a strategic framework more commensurate with these realities.

The six papers included in this collection were developed by UNICEF staff in collaboration with external partners to guide thinking and reflection on these issues. Detailed papers with recommendations for UNICEF were developed and made available to UNICEF staff and are being disseminated through webinars and other discussion platforms. In this collection, edited versions of the following papers are included to make available the broader ideas and evidence that informs organisational recommendations.

1. Gender-transformative programming

This paper describes key components and characteristics of gender-transformative approaches to programming, necessary to address gender inequality which is a key obstacle to the realization of children's rights and lasting improvements to their health and well-being.

2. Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization

Harmful, discriminatory gender norms, roles, stereotypes, and practices prevent achievement of gender equality and child rights. The paper recommends several strategies including promoting positive gender norms and socialization through gender-responsive parenting; ensuring programmes are tailored to address the intersections of gender and other aspects of identity and experience; and engaging boys and men in positive socialization programmes.

3. Gender-Equitable Masculinities

Dominant models of masculinity are widely recognized to subordinate women and girls, while both harming and benefiting boys and men. A "both-and" approach to improving the lives of girls and women alongside boys and men can catalyse better outcomes for all. Work on masculinities should reflect a feminist perspective that prioritizes addressing inequalities arising from restrictive gender norms.

4. A Bolder Vision for and with Adolescent Girls

This paper synthesises available evidence on adolescent girls' wellbeing and argues for increased investments in adolescent girls' rights, especially their leadership and agency. Several good practice examples of programming with and for adolescent girls are included as are gaps in multi-sectoral, inter-generational programming.

5. Gender Dimensions of Violence against Children

This paper explores the rationale for greater attention to links among different forms of violence across the lifespan, including ways in which violence against adult women, particularly intimate partner violence (IPV) affects children's and adolescents' health, well-being and risk of violence, and the implications of those intersections for violence prevention and response programming.

6. Gender-Responsive Social Protection

This paper defines the vision for gender-responsive and transformative social protection and proposes a purposive shift towards gender-responsive programming in social protection work, and, where tenable, moving towards gender-transformative approaches.

In conclusion, the background papers present a clear call for more ambitious actions to achieve gender-transformative change and accelerate progress towards gender equality for all children and adults. These actions include:

- Increased emphasis on advancing the rights and voices of girls, especially adolescent girls, including through more intentional efforts to promote multi-sectoral and collaborative programming that tackles the inter-connected challenges that girls face.
- Engaging with boys and men as partners for gender equality, especially in areas such as gender-responsive caregiving programming from early childhood through adolescence.
- Expanding partnerships with women's and girls' rights organizations and networks across all areas of work, especially in humanitarian settings.
- Greater investments in research and evidence, including implementation research, to guide programme action and prioritisation across multiple sectors, in order to advance intersectional programming that addresses, amongst others, violence against women and violence against children and effective interventions to advance more gender equitable social norms in early childhood and adolescence.

We are grateful to all the authors and reviewers of the papers for permitting edited versions to be made more widely available. We are also grateful to Collective Impact for editing the original papers and to Elena Camilletti and Angie Lee for support with publishing this compendium. While these papers were generated to stimulate discussion for UNICEF's strategic vision, planning and implementation with partners around the world, we hope they will further discussions and generate new ideas for all stakeholders working actively to accelerate investments and actions on gender-transformative strategies for gender equality.

Gender-Transformative Programming

Rachel Marcusⁱ, Fiona Samuelsⁱⁱ, Shoubo Jalalⁱⁱⁱ, and Helen Belachew^{iv}

ⁱ Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

ⁱⁱ Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

ⁱⁱⁱ Regional Gender Advisor, Middle East and North Africa Regional Office, UNICEF

^{iv} Gender & Development Specialist, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

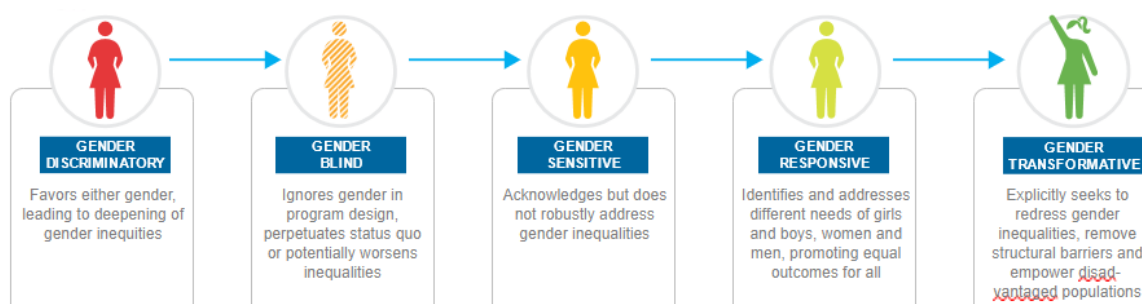
What constitutes a gender-transformative approach?^{6 7}

At their core, transformative approaches address root causes to achieve lasting change⁸. Gender-transformative approaches thus aim to address the structural and social root causes of gender inequality and thereby promote more equitable outcomes for children in all their diversity. In so doing, they aim both to change overall structures that underpin gender inequality and to contribute to lasting change in individuals' lives. The most popular definition comes from the Inter-agency Working Group for gender equality:

A transformative approach promotes gender equality by:

- *fostering critical examination of inequalities and gender roles, norms and dynamics*
- *recognizing and strengthening positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment*
- *promoting the relative position of women, girls and marginalized groups*
- *and transforming the underlying social structures, policies, systems and broadly held social norms that perpetuate and legitimize gender inequalities.*⁹

Figure 1: Gender integration continuum



Source: Adapted from World Health Organization (2011). Gender Mainstreaming Manual for Health Managers: A Practical Approach” <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241501057>

Transforming what?

A gender-transformative approach is concerned with redressing gender inequalities, removing structural barriers, such as unequal roles and rights¹⁰ and empowering disadvantaged populations.

⁶ UNICEF. 2019. [Realizing Potential: Evaluation of UNICEF’s Gender Action Plans. Final Report](#). New York, NY: UNICEF.

⁷ Not all organizations with a gender equality mandate frame their objectives this way. The terminology of gender transformation is more common in organizations undertaking or funding direct activities (programming) –for example, Plan International, Save the Children, USAID, and BGMF. Organizations whose primary focus is supporting feminist movements tend to frame their goals in terms of gender justice, or women’s empowerment. These include [Gender at Work](#), AWID, and GADN.

⁸ Save the Children. 2014. [Engendering Transformational Change: Save the Children Gender Equality Program Guidance & Toolkit](#). Ontario: Save the Children.

⁹ Interagency Gender Working Group. 2017. [The Gender Integration Continuum](#). Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau.

¹⁰ There are many ways to conceptualise structural barriers and ways to address them. The GRASSP conceptual framework suggests that they operate through three “gender inequality pathways”: Unequal gender roles in

In practice, as we detail in Section 2, this means working for change in: laws and policies; systems and services; distribution of resources; norms, beliefs and stereotypes; and behaviour and practices.

Many organizations including UNICEF make use of the Gender Integration Continuum¹¹ developed by the Inter-agency Working Group to distinguish different levels of action to promote gender equality (Figure 1). Many organizations use a variant of this continuum, but they use its terminology in various and different ways.¹²

Our consultations suggest that in practice, practitioners and project managers do not always find the continuum easy to apply, given the number and granularity of its distinctions. We caution against too strong a focus on categorizing where programmes fall on the continuum (which could become a rather technical and ‘tick-box’ exercise), rather than the actions and strategies different parts of UNICEF could take to promote gender equality more effectively, discussed in Section 2.

Strategies

Various organizations, including UNICEF and its partners, working to promote gender equality have articulated the key elements (change strategies) of gender-transformative programming.

a. Key change strategies for a gender-transformative approach

Work to challenge the structural barriers that uphold gender inequality. These include discriminatory norms, stereotypes and values; unequal gender roles; inequalities in access to and control of resources; discriminatory laws and policies, and unequal power.

Build the individual and collective agency of women, girls and people of diverse gender identities through targeted actions so that they are empowered with physical, social and financial assets to claim and exercise their rights. This can be done through strengthening their knowledge, confidence, skills, decision-making capacities, and access to and control over resources. Cultivating their agency and leadership as well as their critical perspectives, including on gender and power, are also key aspects of building agency. This places them at the centre of policy and programming efforts and ensures their needs and priorities area addressed.

Ensure that girls and women in all their diversity and people of non-conforming gender identity, especially marginalized groups have a voice in and can influence and/or lead programme implementation and measurement and evaluation as contextually relevant.

Work with boys and men to embrace gender equality and exercise positive and diverse masculinities. Neglecting boys and men can create backlash and may lessen positive impacts and sustainable change. Boys and men can be agents and champions in gender-transformative approaches and also key participants of programmes, especially where they are particularly vulnerable. At the same time, it is also critical to keep in mind that girls often bear the brunt of multiple vulnerabilities.

Work intersectionally. This entails taking into account other intersecting factors which may also increase vulnerabilities including those related to caste, class, religion, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, refugee or migration status etc. Ignoring these intersections will likely lead to only

the reproductive and economic domains; unequal power relations, and exclusion from rights, entitlements and opportunities. (UNICEF. 2020. "[Gender-Responsive Age-Sensitive Social Protection: A Conceptual Framework](#)," Innocenti Working Papers no. 2020-10. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research –Innocenti.).

¹¹ The Gender Integration Continuum was developed by the Inter-agency Working Group and is used as a tool to help identify the extent to which actions are likely to lead to change in the root causes of gender inequalities. Organisations using a variant of it include [ICRW](#), [UNFPA](#), USAID, [Save the Children US](#) and World Vision. However, many organisations that aim to promote transformative change towards gender equality do not centre their thinking around the Gender Integration Continuum. These include: Action Aid Oxfam, CARE and World Vision, for example.

¹² For example, [VVOB](#)'s description of gender-responsive pedagogy might be classified by others as gender transformative, since it includes actively challenging gender biases in the classroom and broader institutional environment.

partial success of programming and policy and may in fact undermine/result in any positive change being short-lived.

Take a life course and intergenerational perspective. Programming should focus on all periods of children's life course (from birth to adulthood) (also being aware of the critical differences as individuals move through early childhood into early and late adolescence), to acknowledge and redress cumulative disadvantage, as well as multiple entry points for potential change. Dialogue and communication between generations is also critical as lack of this is often a stumbling block to addressing discriminatory practices/norms and for lasting change.

Work at all levels - policies and laws, systems, services, communities, families and individual. When gender inequality is addressed at all these levels, actions can be mutually supportive, can contribute to impact at scale and to sustainability. [Figure 2](#) illustrates examples of gender-transformative programming outcomes across the socio-ecological framework when addressing violence against children. All these actions are complementary and support each other.

Work at multi-sectoral and intersectoral levels. Action at two or more levels or across sectors often adds up to more than the sum of its parts.

Focus on approaches that will have an impact at scale. Too often approaches are small scale with short lifespans. To achieve wider impact, it is important to focus on mainstreaming gender equality in key systems, make use of mass communication approaches and build partnerships and collaborations, including working with social movements, feminist, women's rights and youth-led movements, the private sector and with institutions that have a large-scale reach (e.g., religious institutions).

b. Gender-transformative programming across sectors

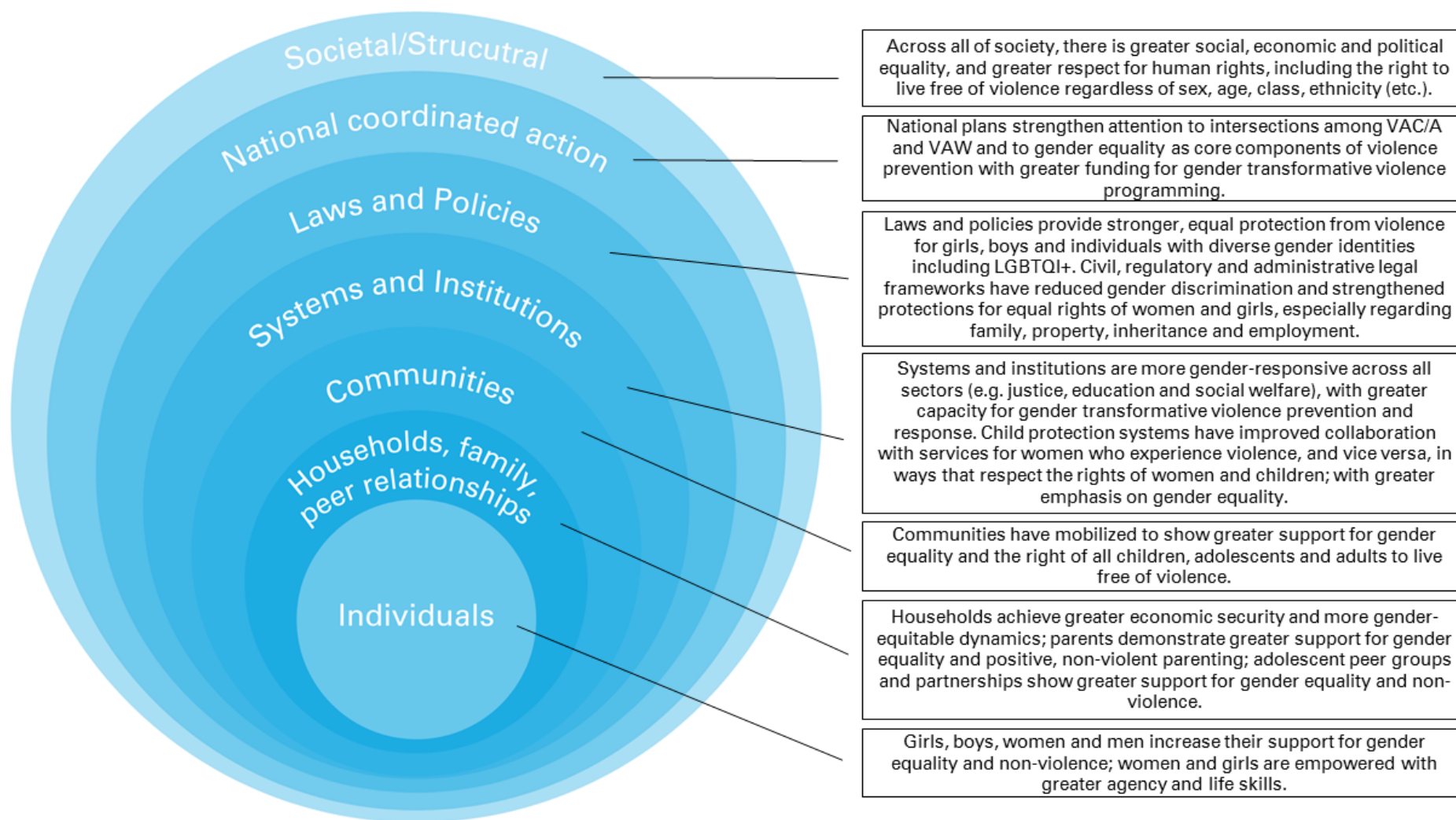
[Table 2](#) provides an overview of gendered challenges, and potential gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches by sector. It was not possible to find evaluated examples for all areas – for these we use examples of work in progress, with gender-transformative intent.

Actions described as gender-responsive often make substantial contributions to gender equal outcomes. Actions considered gender-transformative build on these outcomes and challenge the norms and stereotypes that uphold inequalities.

A gender-transformative approach can amplify the effectiveness of other programmes. For example an initiative that aims to reduce child mortality by increasing the use of bed nets would continue to support supply and distribution, while simultaneously working to enhance women's power to make independent decisions about the use and acquisition of bed nets, the financial resources they need to buy them, and the independent mobility they need to do so.¹³

¹³ WHO. 2007. [Gender, Health and Malaria](#). Geneva: WHO

Figure 2: Gender-transformative outcomes across the socio-ecological framework



Source: UNICEF. 2020. Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents. New York, NY: UNICEF <https://www.unicef.org/media/93986/file/Child-Protection-Gender-Dimensions-of-VACAG-2021.pdf>

Table 1: Strategies to achieve gender-transformative results in different sectors and programming areas

Thematic area	Some key gendered challenges	Gender-responsive approach	Gender-transformative approach	Example of gender-transformative initiatives
Early childhood development	<p>Care of young children primarily seen as a female responsibility (norm)</p> <p>Stereotypes and cultural values that see boys as more valuable, deserving of better care (emotional, food, health), stronger and more capable than girls.</p>	<p>Targeted support to mothers that recognizes their traditional caring role but does not challenge norms around who should undertake care.</p>	<p>Strengthening enabling environments through family-friendly policies, with a focus on: parental leave, breastfeeding support, affordable accessible quality childcare and child benefits.</p> <p>Shifting norms around gender divisions of labour in care of young children and gender-equitable treatment of young children (feeding, health care, interaction etc).</p>	<p>Radio series in Nepal and Tanzania (part of UNICEF gender socialization portfolio) aiming to change norms around fathers' involvement in care of children and treating girls and boys equally through edutainment.</p> <p>Training health workers to change norms around gender roles and encourage shared care and fathers' engagement in early childhood development in Kosovo, Nepal and Sri Lanka (part of UNICEF gender socialization portfolio)</p> <p>UNICEF Tanzania: dialogue to strengthen gender focus in national Responsible Parenting and Family Care policy</p> <p>UNICEF, International Labour Organization and UN-Women guidance for employers on family-friendly policies in the context of COVID-19 (2020)</p>
Education and skills	<p>Girls' educational participation levels (enrolment, completion) lags behind that of boys especially at primary level, in poor households, low-income countries, rural areas and contexts affected by conflict.</p> <p>In many middle-income and high-income countries, and especially at upper secondary</p>	<p>Addressing gender inequalities in access through cash transfers and fee waivers/abolition; targeted hardware and software support for remote learning; investments in improving the quality of education, increasing learning and reducing dropout levels to enhance educational outcomes for all and eliminate gender inequalities.¹⁴</p>	<p>Mainstreaming gender-sensitization in teacher training at all levels and gender equality in curricula and learning materials; instituting 'whole school' approaches to end school-related gender-based violence; policy reform to address bottlenecks for girls' access to quality learning and skills opportunities.</p> <p>Challenging gender stereotypes about capacities to study and excel in particular subjects.</p>	<p>Integrate comprehensive analysis of intersecting gender inequalities into national education plans, allocate budgets to actions and monitor gender equality results.¹⁵ Emerging lessons from UNGEI & GPE pilot projects in eight countries.</p> <p>Reform of curricula and learning materials</p> <p>Whole school approaches to gender equality – with high priority given to gender equality in all aspects of school</p>

¹⁴ Evans, D.K. and Yuan, F. 2019. [What We Learn about Girls' Education from Interventions that Do Not Focus on Girls](#). Washington, DC: Center for Global Development.

¹⁵ UNGEI and GPE. 2019. [Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning: A pathway to gender equality in education](#). Washington, DC: GPE.

	<p>and tertiary levels, boys' participation lags that of girls.</p> <p>Gender inequalities in education outcomes reflect diverse regional patterns; girls continue to be under-represented in many science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects.</p>	<p>Reduction of girl-specific barriers to education, such as menstruation management.</p>	<p>Create opportunities and support education to work transitions through effective private sector partnerships to address digital divides and generate employment / entrepreneurship opportunities, address stereotypes, mobility constraints and financial barriers to marginalized girls' and boys' participation.</p>	<p>organization, organization of learning, and changing norms and values to eradicate school-related gender-based violence.</p> <p>Community-level norm change campaigns to reduce gender inequalities in school enrolment, attendance, time to study etc.</p> <p>(see also adolescent empowerment below)</p>
<p>Health (including HIV and mental health)</p>	<p>In some contexts, norms may prevent girls and women from speaking to a male health provider or independently accessing health services. Women and girls may lack information, decision-making power or financial resources to seek health care, resulting in delays/ lack of health care.</p> <p>In relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights, gendered challenges include male control over female bodies and sexuality, also manifested in harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.</p>	<p>Employing sufficient female health providers; opening times to suit different social groups especially girls and women; ensuring providers and materials are in appropriate languages and accessible also to girls and women with lower levels of education; making services available closer to population (mobile services).</p> <p>Ensuring availability of family planning services.</p>	<p>Fostering community norm change programmes (including work with media) to address issues related to women and girl's independent mobility, decision-making power, value of girls and boys and priority to seek health care.</p> <p>Provide training and sensitization of health workers to gender-biased behaviour and norms which can influence who provides and how they provide health services.</p> <p>Comprehensive sexuality education with emphasis on gender norms and addressing gendered power relations.</p> <p>Gender-transformative social protection measures in support of health outcomes for children and mothers are critical for vulnerable populations in countries with high maternal or child mortality (see Social inclusion section below),</p>	<p>Reinvesting in Asia worked at various levels with different stakeholders to address barriers to maternal and child health, including norms around men's engagement in child health, and with communities to challenge barriers to women's mobility.</p> <p>Tackling the Taboo contains many examples of gender-transformative approaches to adolescent and young people's sexual and reproductive health. These emphasize opportunities for non-judgmental learning and dialogue around sexuality, working with adolescent girls as agents of change, and with families, communities, men and boys, grounding initiatives in local contexts, and taking intersectionality seriously. They also emphasize the critical importance of well-trained, reflective facilitators.</p>
<p>Nutrition</p>	<p>Gender norms that value men and boys above women and girls, that reserve the most nutritious food for men and/or boys, and norms that prohibit consumption of particular foods at certain times (e.g., when menstruating).</p>	<p>Distribution of food supplements e.g., Iron folate to all women and girls at risk of anaemia.</p> <p>Information and support services targeted at mothers to help them breastfeed and care for infants.</p> <p>Emergency feeding programmes that make efforts to reach under-</p>	<p>Behaviour and norm change initiatives focusing on who can eat what foods, who should have priority if certain foods are scarce. May be combined with group empowerment-focused activities.</p> <p>Norm change and empowerment activities around mothers' right to make decisions around breastfeeding and infant care.</p>	<p>United States Agency for International Development (USAID) example: In Burkina Faso and Vietnam, exclusive breastfeeding rates were higher in communities in which partners, mothers-in-law, and grandmothers received information on the benefits of breastfeeding.</p>

	<p>Mothers often lack decision-making power about infant care, which lies with spouses/ partners and in-laws.</p> <p>Constraints on women's mobility may limit their access to sources of nutritious food in emergencies.</p>	<p>represented groups if patterns of uptake are gender-biased.</p> <p>In contexts with underlying food insecurity, adopting universal nutrition support programmes or school nutrition programmes, ensuring that any gender-related barriers in access are addressed.</p>		
<p>Water and Sanitation for Hygiene (WASH)</p>	<p>Women and girls' health, education and social participation are compromised by challenges in managing menstruation including lack of affordable, safe water and sanitation facilities.</p> <p>In rural areas in low-income countries, women and girls devote substantial time and energy to obtaining and carrying water, lack of safe water and sanitation facilities exposes girls and women to the risk of sexual violence and in some cases, health risk from only defecating or urinating at certain times of day.</p>	<p>Education in menstrual hygiene; initiatives to increase availability of menstrual supplies; safe toilets and adequate water supplies.</p>	<p>Norm change activities to remove restrictions on mobility, diet and social mixing during menstruation</p> <p>Targeted menstrual health and hygiene programmes that tackle taboos and stigma around menstrual health and improve girls' access to learning.</p> <p>Social and behaviour change communications; enhanced implementation of laws against sexual violence; strengthening support and response mechanisms.</p> <p>In protracted humanitarian settings, Cash for Work in the WASH sector or supporting small businesses (soap, sanitary pads, masks) can provide economic opportunities for women. These may be transformative in terms of women's social position as well as their livelihood and health impacts.</p>	<p>Standard Chartered's Goal programme – successfully changing norms about menstrual restrictions through sport, life skills and parent outreach in India.</p> <p>Human rights and advocacy training for women and girls to enable them to play a leadership role in relation to water resources</p>
<p>Child protection (includes violence against children, gender-based violence, child marriage,</p>	<p>Gender norms intersect with factors such as poverty, limited educational opportunities, and wider social norms to contribute to violence, abuse and exploitation of children. Some forms of violence are gender-specific e.g., FGM or gender-biased sex selection;</p>	<p>Development and enactment of protective laws and policies.</p> <p>Training of police, social workforce and justice system to understand and respond sensitively to all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse.</p>	<p>Community-based norm change processes around gender-based violence; violence against children; child, early, and forcible marriage; and female genital mutilation. Mass media campaigns aimed at shifting norms of acceptable behaviour (perpetration of violence and reporting/ intervening to prevent violence).</p>	<p>SASA! and related interventions – started in Uganda and now implemented in 20 countries</p> <p>Spotlight initiative and the Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which combine mass media, community-based life skills programmes with system and policy reform.</p>

<p>FGM, and child labour)</p>	<p>others affect girls and boys in different ways based on prevailing norms: these include physical, sexual and emotional violence, child marriage, hazardous and exploitative child labour and trafficking.</p> <p>Violence against women and children are related: both are underpinned by norms that consider violence acceptable in certain circumstances; children who witness violence against their mothers are more likely to grow up to perpetrate intimate-partner violence and violence against children.</p>		<p>Initiatives mobilizing men and boys against violence against women, female genital mutilation, and child marriage.</p> <p>Investment in girls' secondary education and/or non-formal education and life skills programmes to reach out-of-school girls.</p> <p>Support community-based child protection mechanisms in developmental and emergency contexts that are sensitized to gender-based rights violations.</p> <p>Change discriminatory laws (e.g. age of marriage).</p>	<p>MenEngage Alliance Nigeria advocating for elimination of FGM and other gender-discriminatory norms and harmful practices.</p> <p>Communities Care – South Sudan and Somalia – combines community-level norm change with system strengthening activities</p>
<p>Adolescent empowerment and participation</p>	<p>Age-related norms that expect adolescents to obey their elders intersect with gender norms that limit girls' voices and agency.</p> <p>Marginalized adolescents of all genders are structurally disadvantaged by poverty, poor quality services and discriminatory norms that limit their access to quality education and skill development opportunities.</p>	<p>Empowerment programmes are intended to be transformative – they have an explicit focus on changing power relations. If facilitators are not fully on-board with gender equality goals, or implementation limit impact, they may achieve change but fall short of transformation.</p>	<p>Investment in high quality formal and non-formal education that includes “twenty-first century” skills: critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, digital skills, and mainstreams gender (and other forms of) equality within curricula.</p>	<p>Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial, in multiple Latin American countries</p> <p>Rupantaran life skills programme, Nepal, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Dominican Republic and many other similar empowerment and life skills programmes worldwide.</p> <p>Girls' leadership training programmes aiming to foster girls' self-confidence and negotiation skills, and to normalize girls' and young women's leadership e.g., Rise Up.</p>
<p>Social inclusion (primarily social protection)</p>	<p>Gender norms that limit women's mobility, allocate primary responsibility for care and domestic work to men, limit women's decision-making about use of resources.</p>	<p>Programmes providing support to targeted groups of girls, women, boys, or men in recognition of existing gender inequities (e.g., cash transfers or active labour-market programmes designed to address poverty or exclusion from the labour-market).</p>	<p>Social protection programmes that encourage shared care, and/ or build marginalized groups' agency.</p> <p>Initiatives that challenge norms around women's mobility, paid work, and decision-making around use of resources, and/or build 'hard' and 'soft' skills (including negotiation skills) alongside cash transfers.</p>	<p>Promundo training of Bolsa Familia officials in Brazil to include discussions of gender norms and care responsibilities as part of regular interaction with clients.</p> <p>Cash Plus in Tanzania. offers skill-building training to adolescents alongside cash transfers</p>

Conclusions

Recommendations for gender-transformative programming

Gender analysis should be carried out at all stages of a programme from planning, design, implementation, M&E, accountability and learning. This is vital to ensure activities are nuanced and tailored to context and are selected for maximum impact. For example, in a humanitarian context, integrating a gender-transformative lens into preparedness efforts, particularly in longer-term strategic planning may be more feasible than in phases of an emergency where immediate needs have priority. Much guidance exists for doing gender analysis. Examples include UNICEF ROSA¹⁶, Save the Children¹⁷, JHIEPO¹⁸, and the GenderPro resource library and toolkit.

Pay attention to different cultural/economic contexts as well as different geographies (rural, urban) different religions, etc. so that concepts and activities are developed and implemented in ways that are relevant to local realities. This is part of operationalizing an intersectional lens to ensure that gender-transformative activities benefit the most marginalized groups.

Develop intermediate objectives (and measures of results) to see pathways towards change and gender transformation. While gender equality is an outcome in and of itself, intermediate results which measure pathways towards change are also important. These could include changes in knowledge, in organizational capacity etc. as building blocks for changes, attitudes, norms and outcomes.

Tailor programming to starting points. For example, it may be necessary to start from scratch by bringing a gender lens to programmes that have a limited focus on gender and start to move along the continuum. For other programmes, it may be important to first support and strengthen gender-sensitive initiatives (e.g., non-discriminatory provision of services to all) before developing transformative elements. Effective transformation will often continue gender-sensitive elements while integrating additional elements that 'push the needle' further towards deep-seated change. At the same time, it is important to 'do no harm', as, for example, a blanket approach that is insensitive to context may lead to reasserting of negative gender stereotypes and harmful mindsets.

Programmes with a longer-term gender-transformative vision can run alongside those with short- or medium-term time horizons. Gender norm change, a key component of gender-transformative programming, takes time to develop, and often there are no immediate or medium-term results. Nevertheless awareness-raising activities can be built into programmes (such as skills-building programmes for girls and women) with more immediate benefits.

Foster flexible, adaptive, and co-designed approaches. If an aspect of, or an intervention linked to, a gender-transformative approach appears not to be working (e.g., there may be backlash, lack of uptake, the policy environment may become hostile to the intervention, resources are suddenly reduced, etc.), it is important to be able to change the intervention as it proceeds. Checks, including speaking to the programme participants, must be built into the programme in order to review and, if necessary, adapt the intervention.

Use human-centred design approaches and co-create with end users and others to improve programme uptake, ownership, and sustainability.

Pay attention to political contexts and dynamics. These have a critical impact on the feasibility of gender-transformative programming, which, by its very nature, is highly political as it can threaten

¹⁶ UNICEF South Asia Regional Office. 2018. [Gender Toolkit: Integrating Gender in Programming for Every Child in South Asia](#). Kathmandu: UNICEF

¹⁷ Save the Children 2014

¹⁸ JHPIEGO. 2020. "[Gender Analysis](#)." Gender Analysis Toolkit for Health Systems. Baltimore: JHPIEGO.

existing, often male-dominated, power hierarchies and structures and generate backlash against the programme and girls, women, and people with non-conforming gender identities. Programmers, therefore, need to identify supporters, influencers, and champions of all genders, and bring them along the way.

Build on a particular moment, either in time or policy development, as this can play a large role in galvanizing interest and investment in a topic area. COVID-19 has raised the profile of gender inequalities in all realms of life. As such, now would be a policy window and opportunity to further raise interest and resources to back up the growing awareness of the need for gender-transformative programming.

Institutional change

In this section we propose a number of strategies which can contribute to embedding gender-transformative approaches. Some of the challenges that need to be addressed are summarised in Table 3 below.

To institutionalize and build ownership at country and regional level, hold consultations. Such consultations should discuss, among other things: how gender-transformative approaches fit into country plans/action plans, priorities and contexts; whether there is political appetite and a window of opportunity within the country more broadly for these kinds of approaches; and whether there are champions within government structures who could work alongside and partner.

Allocate specific resources and budget for gender-transformative approaches to be included in programming. Without this resource commitment programmes will struggle to move this forward.

Include key country level partners in the training programmes if possible so that everyone can be at the same starting point. This would also ensure and allow for partnerships and collaborations to develop organically.

Embed processes linked to gender-transformative programming into existing systems and structures. This would include embedding programming into “key individual accountability and responsibility tools, including representative and other management performance plans; and key organizational functions (human resources, policy, field results, and monitoring and evaluation).”¹⁹

Develop a set of indicators to monitor progress towards gender-transformative programming across the organization and **report these to** governance or accountability entities on a regular basis. Gender markers or scoring of activity are one way relatively common way of monitoring progress within large development organizations (e.g., CARE, Plan International, BMGF) but there is no consolidated evidence yet as to how effective this approach is in institutionalizing a more transformative approach.

Establish a collaborative approach with both country governments as well as other organizations working on these issues. There is potential overlap in mandates of certain UN organizations (UNICEF, UNFPA, UN-Women) but also fertile ground for jointly delivering on gender transformation, e.g. Global Programme to End Child Marriage (UNICEF 2021) and through the Spotlight initiative (Spotlight Initiative 2021).

Continue to consult with and build relationships with communities and social movements, including young people as central constituents to this endeavour whose voices should have a stronger place in defining priorities and whose perspectives should be integral to developing responses.

¹⁹ All programming RFPs, proposal documents, etc. should clearly specify gender-transformative expectations and requirements.

Lead in developing new and strategic partnerships, including with national, regional and global feminist/women’s rights organizations, leveraging expertise in different areas and non-traditional sectors and identifying new funding modalities. These might include working with private and digital technology companies who often have a comparative advantage in carrying out advocacy and communication campaigns.

Table 2 outlines some possible challenges associated with institutionalizing gender-transformative programming in large organisations and potential solutions to them.

Table 2: Challenges and potential solutions in institutionalizing a gender-transformative approach in large organisations

Obstacle	Solution
Lack of understanding of gender-transformative programming and how to operationalize it	Make accessible and practical training at all levels mandatory; training to include addressing prevailing biases, mindsets, attitudes etc.
Perceptions that gender-transformative programming is not really an organizational mandate and/or that it competes with other agendas	In training and communications from the highest level, make clear how gender-transformative approaches link to all programming. Carry out a gender audit internally to understand ownership and/or its absence and address it through a long-term process of Human Resource Development.
Lack of momentum, interest and inertia to implement such approaches	Build ownership and leadership from the start at all levels (HQ, regional, country level) and within different programmes of an organisation.
Lack of institutional incentives to implement gender-transformative approaches	Ensure resources are allocated to support gender-transformative programming.
Lack of innovative/disruptive approaches and the tools to implement them that can facilitate flexible, adaptable work	Explore and build on approaches used in other sectors, including the digital sector, e.g., co-design, human-centred approaches.
Change is slow and is not likely to be seen in the usual life cycles of programmes	Some midterm/progress/intermediate outcomes/indicators can be identified which point towards change.
Scalability and replicability of such approaches are challenging	Work closely with government, civil society, and private sector partners to institutionalize gender-transformative approaches at different levels.
Political commitment is necessary at different levels in order to ensure its success	Build ownership at all steps of the process, through early engagement of political leaders and champions, especially at country level.

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Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization

Shreyasi Jhaⁱ, Sheeba Harmaⁱⁱ, Shelly Abdoolⁱⁱⁱ, Maha Muna^{iv}

ⁱ Senior Adviser, Gender, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

ⁱⁱ Regional Adviser Gender, Europe and Central Asia, UNICEF

ⁱⁱⁱ Regional Adviser Gender, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, UNICEF

^{iv} Regional Adviser Gender, South Asia, UNICEF

Gender equality rests on a rights-based principle.²⁰ Work on positive gender socialization also contributes to the United Nations common chapter²¹ commitment on gender equality led by UNICEF. Deliberate focus in advancing gender equality is necessary to achieving Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals – which in turn emphasize the importance of addressing discriminatory gender norms to achieve gender equality. The SDG 5 progress report for 2019 emphasized the insufficient progress on addressing structural issues at the root of gender inequality, such as legal discrimination and unfair social norms and attitudes.²²

Evidence

Gender socialization begins early in life and intensifies in individuals by the time they reach adolescence. Discriminatory norms, attitudes and behaviour can become more ingrained in adolescence and adulthood but can also change. In 2019 UNICEF conducted an external literature review and mapping of internal programmes on gender socialization.²³ The key findings and lessons-learned from the review and mapping include:

Socialization begins early: Gender socialization is a complex and ongoing process, which begins at birth, continues through childhood, and intensifies during adolescence until individuals have internalized traditional gender identities and begun to perpetuate them to future generations. Gender norms are learned early in life and evidence suggests that by age 3, children begin to develop a sense of gender identity.²⁴

There are multiple agents of socialization: The process of gender socialization is simultaneously and continuously perpetuated by individual and institutional agents of socialization. These agents include parents and caregivers; adolescents; peers; sibling; teachers; schools; faith leaders; media including social media; health care workers; cultural and sports icons; and governments.

The main influences of gender socialization evolve through the life course of an individual and the degree of influence by each agent varies over time. However, these ‘agents of socialization’ can also be essential partners in promoting positive gender norms and creating an enabling environment for individuals and communities to reach their full potential.²⁵ To be effective, programming must target

²⁰ See for instance the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/en/convention/elimination-discrimination-against-women)

²¹ UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women. 2019. [Working Together to Support Implementation of the 2030 Agenda: Joint annex on the Common Chapter of the Strategic Plans 2018-2021 of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women](#). New York, NY: UNICEF.

²² UNDESA. 2019. [Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls](#). New York, NY: UNDESA.

²³ UNICEF. 2019. “Global Mapping of Existing UNICEF Programming on Gender Socialization”, April 2019, unpublished.

²⁴ UNICEF. 2019. “Summary Note on Promoting Positive Gender Norms & Socialization. Examples from Global Mapping Report”, December 2019, unpublished.

²⁵ John, N.A., Stobenau, K., Ritter, S., Edmeades, J. and Balvin, N. 2017. “Gender Socialization during Adolescence in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Conceptualization, Influences and Outcomes.” *Innocenti Discussion Paper 2017-01*. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IDP_2017_01.pdf

multiple agents and institutional sites of socialization. The socio-ecological model (SEM) is a useful framework to understand the interplay of different actions by actors that influence gender socialization at the individual, community, institutional, and policy levels.²⁶

Potential negative impacts on girls, boys, and diverse gender identities: Gender socialization is not inherently negative. However, when gender socialization is based on underlying unequal societal norms, beliefs and power structures that prioritize one group over another or where men/boys are valued more than women/girls (or other gender identities), it leads to discriminatory outcomes. It shapes beliefs and practices about what girls and boys can and should do. Gender socialization that is based on the underlying unequal valuation of different genders, creates stereotypes, which most often disadvantage girls and women due to the pervading power structures in most societies.

For example, girls experience challenges such as dropping out of secondary school, limited employment and economic opportunities, child marriage and early unions, female genital mutilation, unpaid care and domestic work burden, among others. However, gender socialization also limits the possibilities for boys. Harmful gender norms or toxic masculinities have a negative bearing on boys' and men's lives, increasing the likelihood that they will engage in violence, abuse drugs and alcohol and commit suicide, and subject to recruitment of armed groups and militia,²⁷ decreasing the likelihood that they will seek help for mental health issues, among other negative outcomes.

Norms are sticky, but can change: Gender norms, as is the case with all social norms, are 'sticky' or difficult to change due to their socio-historical roots and require sustained effort and time, at times over generations, to affect change. The evolution of gender norms in societies over time is referred to as gender norm change, which can be caused by a complex mix of drivers such as economic change, policy or legislative reform, education and awareness, social mobilization and movements, and so on. It is also important to recognize that change can be influenced at multiple levels. For instance, changes at the macro policy level in South Korea, reforms in labour laws and employment opportunities for women throughout the 1990s were a key driver in eventually shifting norms around son preference.²⁸ Research shows that positive gender socialization is most effective during childhood and adolescence, though it is not impossible to achieve results among adults.

Gender norms are grounded in patriarchal structures but their manifestation varies by context: Gender norms are structural in nature and grounded in patriarchal beliefs that typically privilege 'masculine' over 'feminine' which is almost universal across contexts, but they may play out differently, and the terminology used to describe them vary within and across regions. While practitioners and social scientists may understand basic terms and concepts, most international development staff do not identify the concept of gender norms or confuse it simply with any work on gender equality. Moreover, norms themselves vary across regions: for example, gender norms related to female genital mutilation are region specific (UNFPA, UNICEF, & Dornisfe School of Public Health. 2020; UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation. 2019) There are many such examples. Therefore, gathering evidence on the gender norms specific to the context is critical for programme design.

Take an intersectional approach: For gender socialization work to be effective it must be sensitive to the unique social, cultural, political and historical dynamics at play in a particular region. Ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, disability, migration status and geography including urban versus rural among others are other axes of social difference that intersect with gender and inform processes of gender socialization. Targeted interventions should be based on rights-based principles and must

²⁶ UNICEF 2020(a).

²⁷ United Nations Security Council, Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. 2019. [Gender Dimensions of the Response to Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Research Perspectives](#). New York, NY: UNCTED.

²⁸ Malhotra, A., Amin, A., & Nanda, P. 2019. "Catalyzing Gender Norm Change for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health: Investing in Interventions for Structural Change." *Journal of Adolescent Health, Volume 64, Issue 4, Supplement, S13-S15*. Chicago: Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine.

account for the specific and differentiated gender norms and constraints that make children and youth vulnerable to discrimination, oppression or harm within their particular communities and country settings.

Norms change is a core area of programming: work on gender norms change is more effective when approached as a core and cross-sectoral area of programming, rather than as a complementary component. There is value in putting positive gender norms and socialization at the centre of health, education and development programming — in strategies, goals and interventions — in order to shore up resources and support for country and local-level programming that seeks to address discriminatory gender norms. The inclusion of gender socialization in UNICEF’s Gender Action Plan created a pathway for regional and country level alignment of programmes in this direction. For example, incorporating gender norms is important in reforming curriculum textbook reviews and teacher’s training. Additionally, it is important to have gender-responsive deliverables that relate to gender norms as a specific mandate for staff, as opposed to being an ‘add-on’ to a broader mandate.

Address limitations in technical capacity: Gender socialization programmes can be severely limited by the lack of technical capacity on gender analysis, gender research and programming, at the implementation level. Strong technical capacity is necessary to disentangle and target gender norms that are complex and highly nuanced in the way they are embedded in social, economic, and political contexts, to measure norms change and to engage men and boys in support to gender equality. Implementation requires technical capacity-building for teams without core gender expertise.

Funding cycles are a poor fit for long-term change: Due to the deep-rooted nature of gender norms, transformative change is slow and long-term. Funding cycles are typically less than five years, and frequently as short as one year, and do not reflect the nature of gender socialization. This does not allow for evidence generation, design of community - influenced interventions, and monitoring and evaluation over the long-term. Funding cycles must adapt to longer timelines needed for gender norms change.

Knowledge gaps

Gaps in knowledge lead to challenges in programming efforts. The following **five clusters of questions** illustrate the range of difficulties raised when the evidence is incomplete.

What works: What kind of programmatic interventions have the ability to significantly transform gender norms among prioritised groups? In general, all programmes can have such ability, and specifically, thematic areas such as parenting, early childhood development, education, edutainment, capacity-building for frontline workers, gender-based violence and harmful practices, adolescent empowerment, and gender portrayals in advertising and media. However, there is differing levels of evidence across these different areas. For instance, there is rigorous evidence on non-formal efforts to change norms around gender-based violence (as well as other issues) among adolescent girls and boys (Marcus et al. 2017).

Measuring change: What monitoring tools and frameworks can be easily and effectively used to track change in gender norms in the short and long terms? How can they be institutionalized in country data systems? What potential is there to support a compendium of population-based measures to track change, building on existing indicators such as beliefs and attitudes justifying wife-beating? There is a need to integrate a feminist perspective across all measurement, including the co-creation of monitoring tools and integration of programming.

Long-term versus short-term building blocks of ‘norms’ There is a need to distinguish short-term “building blocks” (attitudes, awareness, intended behaviors, policy and system shifts) from long-term measures of normative change, and to find less complicated ways of measuring the hold of norms.

Building capacity: What kind of capacity-building efforts are required to enable gender norms-based programming? What specific learning opportunities work best for practitioners (programme staff) and managers, based on a review of existing efforts? How can sectors better design, implement and measure gender norms change in cross-sectoral programmes?

Scaling up: How can effective strategic interventions be scaled up to enable positive gender socialization for a significant portion of the target population?

Sustaining change: How can effective interventions be sustained and institutionalized in countries at multiple levels? What kind of data and evidence is required to be regularly gathered to maintain financial sustainability of at-scale programmes? What sort of data can be integrated into the national administrative data systems?

Programming on gender socialization

Programming on gender socialization can cover a wide range of areas: early childhood development and parenting; capacity building for frontline workers; gender-responsive education; gender-based violence and harmful practices; empowerment of adolescent girls; and gender portrayals in media and advertising.

a. Early childhood development and parenting

Parents, caregivers and families are the primary agents of socialization in the early years of a child's development and often inadvertently, perpetuate discriminatory gender norms to future generations through differentiated messages and methods of care for girls, boys and other genders. Moreover, by age three a child already develops a sense of gender identity, which is further intensified through middle childhood and adolescence (John et al. 2017).

In order to break gender barriers early on and promote positive gender socialization particularly in the early years, it is important to promote nurturing care and recognise the important role of parents. Secure family environments are important for young children. It is, therefore, important to provide caregivers with time and resources to provide nurturing care, policies, services and community supports need to be in place. Strategies and resources that inform and support gender socialization programming include:

- Promoting positive and gender-responsive parenting and caregiving practices;
- [Nurturing Care Framework](#)
- Preventing violence at home
- [Care for Child Development](#)
- [Caring for the Caregiver](#)
- Promoting family-friendly workplace policies which recognizes men's caring roles, makes family responsibilities compatible with work and promotes a more equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women (ILO 2009).
- Encouraging engagement of fathers and male caregivers in childcare and sharing of household responsibilities.

b. Capacity-building for front-line workers

Workers at the frontlines of health, nutrition, education, child protection and early childhood development systems are key agents of socialization for children, parents and caregivers. Their influence is particularly critical in the child's early developmental years. Yet, very few front-line workers across regions are trained in providing gender-responsive support. For instance, UNICEF programming includes:

- Influencing national level policies strategies and legislations to institutionalize front-line worker training in gender equality;
- Developing competency frameworks related to gender equality for recruitment of front-line workers;
- Developing curriculum and training front-line workers in gender equality and gender-responsive support across sectors.

c. Gender-responsive education

Beyond the family, a child’s development is largely dependent on the school curriculum and environment. UNICEF programmes develop and disseminate gender-responsive pedagogy to create enabling gender-equal environments in schools.

- Revising school curriculum and textbooks to remove gender stereotypes and promote gender equality and empowerment
- Training of education professionals on gender equality and gender-responsive teaching methods;
- Girls’ education backed by economic incentives has had positive outcomes in delaying child marriage, albeit the risks of reinforcing marriage at 18 years, calling for the need of complementary interventions at building adolescent girls’ agency and strengthening support by families and community members²⁹
- Strengthen critical thinking in school curricula for adolescents to be able to identify gender stereotypes in everyday situation and online environment
- Training to children, particularly adolescent girls such as employability, entrepreneurship, digital and life skills, civics and human rights.

d. Gender-based violence and harmful practices

Most forms of gender-based violence are predicated on the belief that girls and women do not have the right or agency over their own bodies and sexuality, while boys and men are allowed to display violence as an expression of their masculinity.^{30, 31} Integrating norms-based thinking is needed in order to develop a preventive and transformative approach to programming on gender-based violence and harmful practices, including:

- Influencing national level policies, strategies and legislations to end gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation
- Gender-sensitization training and awareness-raising campaigns and workshops for communities, families, government agencies and implementing partners
- Adolescent girl and gender-responsive interventions to strengthen agency and decision- making e.g. life skills, alternative education and livelihood/ vocational building skills³²
- School-based interventions such as girls’ clubs to raise awareness on harmful practices
- Support to health systems to deliver adolescent and gender-responsive sexual reproductive health services
- Social and behavioural change communications through channels such as faith-based organizations, mass media and social media, community platforms, etc. to address gender-based violence and harmful practices.

²⁹ UNICEF 2020(a).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ UN Women. 2015. [A Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence Against Women](#). New York, NY: UN Women.

³² UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage. 2019. *Technical Note on Life Skills Programmes for Empowering Adolescent Girls: Notes for Practitioners on What Works*. New York, NY: UNFPA.

e. Empowerment of adolescent girls

As adolescence is a time of rapid physical and neurological changes, it also marks the intensification of barriers related to gender or other intersectional attributes such as sexual orientation, race or disability status. However, targeted investments during this period to dismantle interconnected barriers – and the restrictive gender norms reinforcing them – can break the cycle of discrimination and encourage girls to realize their full potential. Examples of relevant strategies include:

- Training for adolescent girls on topics such as employability, entrepreneurship, digital and life skills, civics and human rights
- Mentorship, internship, secondment and entrepreneurship opportunities targeted for adolescent girls to build employability skills and enable smooth transition from school to employment
- Training for adolescent girls on body confidence and self-esteem
- Parental education programmes related to caregiving of adolescents
- Strengthening adolescent girls' engagement in civic responsibilities and adolescence-related strategies and programmes
- Social protection programmes targeting discriminatory gender norms, such as cash plus programmes encouraging girls to remain in secondary education.

f. Gender portrayals in media and advertising

Children and adolescents are exposed to a barrage of media and marketing messages daily, including social media messages, which have the power to shape their perceptions on gender equality. Marketers often use stereotypical tropes to communicate quickly, and the expansion of the globalized digital world and the invasion of gadgets into the lives of children, adolescents and youth have magnified the impact of communication, with potential negative effects on their rights.

Evidence shows that children and adolescents are more likely than adults to believe advertising messages are true and to conform to perpetuated social norms and expectations³³. For example, promotion of stereotypical notions of beauty can lead to nutritional or mental health challenges for girls; and the depiction of fathers as irresponsible can perpetuate traditional social barriers preventing men from caregiving as well as aggravating mental health issues.

The power of media and advertising can also be used as a force of good to positively influence and transform perceptions for future generations, such as by:

- Developing research and evidence to add to global business case on the negative impact of gender stereotypes in media and advertising
- Using external advocacy and thought leadership in partnership with global, regional and national consortiums, regulatory bodies, award platforms and private sector companies
- Engaging with private and public organizations such as media platforms, etc. to influence corporate policies to promote positive gender portrayals in media and advertising.

³³ See for instance UNICEF 2020 Advancing Positive Gender Norms and Socialization through UNICEF Programmes: Monitoring and Documenting Change Final Report https://www.unicef.org/eca/media/16441/file/Advancing_Positive_Gender_Norms_and_Socialization_through_UNICEF_Programmes%3A_Monitoring_and_Documenting_Change.pdf

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on lessons learned from a documentation of ongoing programming at UNICEF related to promoting positive gender norms and socialization undertaken by Overseas Development Institute.

Figure 3: Key recommendations for promoting positive gender norms and socializations in programmes



Source: UNICEF and ODI. 2020. "Advancing Positive Gender Norms and Socialization through UNICEF Programmes: Monitoring and Documenting Change". Internal working paper.

constraint, increase efforts to change norms at the community level, via face-to-face dialogue (as in Communities Care) or via mass and social media.

- 1. Ensure programming is tailored to address the ways gender intersects with other aspects of identity and experience, and the diverse challenge that different groups of children face.** This requires attention to the specific norms that affect particular groups and the broader factors that sustain gendered and other forms of inequality. Some ways to achieve this include formative research with explicit attention to intersecting differences, and co-creating initiatives with marginalized girls and women, who should also be involved in review and evaluation processes.
- 2. Build work with families** more strongly into initiatives that aim to build children's and adolescents' agency, and to combat harmful practices. This is vital to shift constraining norms at the household level. Where community-level norms are a significant constraint, increase efforts to change norms at the community level, via face-to-face dialogue (as in Communities Care) or via mass and social media.
- 3. Engage men and boys in gender norms and socialization programming.** This is both an area of substantial gender socialization portfolio activity and an area with relatively little evidence globally. This information can both increase programme effectiveness and would be an important contribution to global evidence on changing harmful masculinities and promoting positive role models to advance gender equality.
- 4. Invest more to influence gender socialization in middle childhood.** One way to do this could be to focus more on gender sensitization of primary school teachers and embedding gender equality in primary education curricula.
- 5. Integrate programming and monitoring.** One example is to do this through simple participatory activities that can be integrated into programming and used for data collection, as with the Communities Care initiative in Sudan and Somalia, and the online feedback on *Rope Guna Fal* radio programme in Nepal. Another example is through embedding monitoring of gender socialization work in ongoing governments' data collection, as in work with the National Health Information System in Kosovo (gendered parenting), the Sri Lanka public health bureau (impact of public health worker training on gender sensitization) and the Ghana Education Service (regular classroom observation of gendered practices).

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- United Nations Security Council, Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. 2019. "Gender Dimensions of the Response to Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Research Perspectives". New York, NY: UNCTED. https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Feb_2019_CTED_Trends_Report.pdf

This interplay establishes hierarchies of power among boys, among girls, between girls and boys, and between girls and boys and the adults in their lives.

Dominant models of masculinity are widely recognized to subordinate women and girls and sustain patriarchy.^{41, 42} Dominant masculine norms (and complementary prescriptions for subordinate femininity) drive inequalities in educational and health outcomes and in economic and decision-making opportunities. These forms of masculinity give rise to and condone GBV and the harmful behaviours and practices that flow from it, including sexual violence, denial of access to school on the basis of gender, child marriage and early unions, FGM and others. Girls and women are also socialized under patriarchy and therefore often adhere to, justify and perpetuate dominant masculinities.

Dominant models of masculinity may harm boys and also confer benefits to them. On the one hand, they may reaffirm group identity, and reinforce boys' and men's power in ways that benefit them individually in the short term. On the other hand, these models increase boys' chances of perpetrating violence and taking risks to prove their masculinity, as two examples.

Patriarchal power is at the root of the inequitable ordering of gender-discriminatory societies. Boys' – and girls' – socialization and their adherence to harmful dominant masculinities reinforce power structures that advantage men and boys over women and girls (gender inequality) and also advantage some men and boys over some others (e.g., along lines of sexual and gender diversity, ethnic-racial groups, men living with disabilities, migrant or refugee men, and others).⁴³

Most boys are not violent. While it is true that most acts of gender-based violence are perpetrated by men, it is also true that the majority of men and boys do not perpetrate violence.⁴⁴ Boys are often socialized to tolerate or engage in violence to achieve socially acceptable versions of manhood⁴⁵ that exacerbate other gender inequalities within homes, families, and societies.

What is the issue?

Gender norms⁴⁶ often reflect and reinforce unequal gender relations, usually to the disadvantage of women and girls, and of men and boys who do not conform to prevailing expectations.⁴⁷ Gender norms reflect and reproduce underlying patriarchal relations of power, and male grip on political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of assets and property. The interwoven nature of these norms is fundamentally what makes them difficult to alter or transform. Though gender norms do change - and migration or forced displacement, for example, can open up opportunities for change as people are influenced by different cultural contexts and norms – certain aspects can remain entrenched because they serve powerful interests and tend to remain critically unexamined.⁴⁸

⁴¹ UNICEF's efforts to shift hegemonic masculinities will need to challenge patriarchy.

⁴² Hegemonic masculinity – why this term? In most societies, masculine norms uphold a hegemonic order in which all participants in the process contribute to an inequitable and oppressive distribution of status and power. Thus certain harmful masculine norms are often called hegemonic masculinities.

⁴³ Connell, R. W., and Messerschmidt, J. W. 2005. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender & Society* 19 (6): 829–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639>

⁴⁴ Fleming, P. J., McCleary-Sills, J., Morton, M., Levtov, R., Heilman, B., & Barker, G. 2015. "Risk factors for men's lifetime perpetration of physical violence against intimate partners: results from the international men and gender equality survey (IMAGES) in eight countries." *PloS one*, 10(3), e0118639. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0118639>

⁴⁵ E.g., "be a man" – Don't cry, asking for help is weak; be the financial 'bread-winner;'' promiscuity and sexual prowess are expected; risk-taking encouraged (substance consumption, driving fast with no seatbelt, unprotected sex, etc.)

⁴⁶ For a definition of gender norms and related concepts see the [Glossary](#).

⁴⁷ Ridgeway, C. 2009. "Framed Before We Know It: How Gender Shapes Social Relations," *Gender and Society* 23(2):145-160

⁴⁸ Heise, Greene et al. 2019.

Gender inequality and restrictive gender norms

Ensuring that every person achieves their full potential requires challenging the rigid “box” of gender norms that constrain each of us, reducing our choices and limiting our capacities and opportunities. Breaking cycles of gender inequality, subordination and violence for girls and boys require differentiated programming that holistically addresses the system of inequitable and rigid gender norms (see two other papers, this volume, [Gender-Transformative Programming and Institutional Change](#) and [Promoting Positive Gender Norms and Socialization](#)). The traditional focus on girls as a gender category directs resources to them, yet inadvertently puts the burden on girls to effect broader social change without engaging the males around them. This system of disparities favouring males cannot be dismantled without involving everyone in society, for everyone is trained to uphold and replicate its values and practices. It makes sense to distinguish the impact of gender inequality from that of restrictive gender norms.

*“Because of the historical legacy of gender injustice, the health-related consequences of gender inequality fall most heavily on women, especially poor women; by contrast, rigid gender norms undermine the health and wellbeing of all people, regardless of age, sex, gender, or income setting.”*⁴⁹ (Heise et al. 2019: 1)

For example: poor girls in rural area face threats to their health and well-being because they are kept out of school, carry out domestic chores, and marry at an early age as a consequence of discrimination based on gender inequality. Poor boys in rural areas may experience poor outcomes because they take risks, egged on by their peers, and may have to work in dangerous work to support the family, reflecting restrictive gender norms.

Key opportunities to addresses masculinities

There are five opportunities for work with children from infancy to early adulthood that stand out as areas ripe for further investment:

Early childhood (aged 0-5): As the [Nurturing Care Framework](#) makes clear, the first and most important providers of the nurturing care that children need to thrive and develop are parents and caregivers.⁵⁰ Yet gender stereotyping has meant that many parenting policies and programmes are gender blind, reinforcing men’s own reluctance to take up active parenthood, and overburdening mothers and female caregivers.⁵¹ Many men want to be more involved and want to improve their caregiving skills.⁵² By engaging men as fundamental partners and establishing their parenting responsibilities throughout pregnancy, birth, and through children’s development, parenting programmes contribute to increasing the number of caregivers with the skills and confidence to provide nurturing and responsive care and long-term involvement in the lives of their children.

Middle childhood (aged 6-10): This is when almost all of the world’s children are in school and being socialized through their exposure to lessons, teachers, school structures, and peers. Masculinities can be addressed through education programmes, school health, teacher training, amongst others.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development. 2020. “A Closer Look at the Nurturing Care Components”. Geneva: WHO, World Bank Group, and UNICEF. <https://nurturing-care.org/nurturing-care-components>

⁵¹ It is preferable not to use the term “exclude” here when discussing why men do not participate in parenting programmes or advocate for parenting policies. It implies that men are discriminated against due to gender stereotyping. It can be quite difficult to get men to participate in parenting programmes or to advocate for parental leave. There is much research on the significant gender differences in time spent on childcare and household work that result in second shifts for women.

⁵² Fesser, M.L. 2017. “Father from the beginning: Promoting early childhood development in Cuba.” New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/stories/father-from-the-beginning>

Children and adolescents spend a significant part of their time at schools, and the role that these institutions play in socialization is fundamental.

Adolescence (aged 10-19): Adolescence is a pivotal time for girls and boys, when the gender socialization under way since early childhood intensifies and the gender norms associated with masculinity and femininity are more intensely internalized or challenged.⁵³ Adolescence is a period when boys may first commit, and girls may first experience, acts of gender-based violence.⁵⁴ Social media and online sources can promote hatred towards women and girls and drive boys to behave in gender-stereotyped and violent ways, and girls may be conditioned to accept this as an intrinsic aspect of masculinity.⁵⁵ These gender norms reflect socially acceptable attitudes, behaviours, roles, and expectations of femininity and masculinity. Since many harmful aspects of these norms become fixed during adolescence, working with adolescent boys to promote positive masculinity is an opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of both girls and boys. Building solidarity between girls and boys of this age is also a way to break the cycle of lifelong gender-differentiated outcomes between boys and girls.⁵⁶

Gender-equitable parenting: Parental guidance that focuses on co-responsibility between parents and caregivers, regardless of sex or gender, across the life cycle thus stands out as an opportunity to establish skills in both mothers and fathers that contribute to gender equality in the longer term.⁵⁷

Men's greater involvement in parenting and other forms of unpaid caregiving is widely viewed as essential to achieving gender equality. One 2014 analysis shows that in 66 low- and middle-income countries with available data women spent more than three times longer on unpaid care and housework than men did.⁵⁸ During the COVID-19 pandemic at least 40 million children have lost the opportunity for childcare or did not enter school.⁵⁹ This is disrupting parents' ability to work, with especially harsh implications for women, who have disproportionately dropped out of the paid labour-force. Women make up 39% of global employment but account for 54% of overall job losses.⁶⁰

By age three a child already develops a sense of gender identity which is further intensified through middle childhood and adolescence. The intergenerational effect on young girls and boys of positive male role models is a further contribution of ensuring men are engaged in care work, paid and unpaid. Children are socialized early on by the choices they see adults around them making and the demonstration of masculine norms and what it means to be a boy or a man.

Community engagement: Young people are subject to community norms, and adults outside the family exert great influence on gender norms and on masculinities. As more attention has been directed to social norms in research and interventions, an appreciation has emerged for the need to mobilize various community subgroups to ensure the sustainability of behavioral and normative

⁵³ Basu, S., Zuo, X., Lou, C., Acharya, R., and Lundgren, R. 2017. "Learning to be gendered: Gender socialization in early adolescence among urban poor in Delhi, India, and Shanghai, China." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 61(4), S24-S29.

⁵⁴ Murphy, M., Jones, N., Yadete, W., and Baird, S. 2020. "Gender norms, violence and adolescence: Exploring how gender norms are associated with experiences of childhood violence among young adolescents in Ethiopia." *Global public health*, 1-14

⁵⁵ Friedlander, L. J., Connolly, J. A., Pepler, D. J., and Craig, W. M. 2013. "Extensiveness and persistence of aggressive media exposure as longitudinal risk factors for teen dating violence." *Psychology of Violence*, 3, 310-322.

⁵⁶ Gervais, C. 2012. "Boys meet girls' rights: Bolivian adolescent males' claims of commitment to gender equality." *Children & society*, 26(5), 356-367.

⁵⁷ Basu et al 2017.

⁵⁸ Moussié, R. 2016. "Childcare from the perspective of women in the informal economy: A policy brief". New York, NY: United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. http://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/WIEGO_childcare-informal-economy.pdf

⁵⁹ Gromada, A., Richardson, D., and Rees, G. 2020. "Childcare in a Global Crisis: The Impact of COVID-19 on work and family life," *Innocenti Research Briefs* no. 2020-18. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1109-childcare-in-a-global-crisis-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-work-and-family-life.html>

⁶⁰ Madgavkar, A., White, O., Krishnan, M., Mahajan, D. and Azcue, X. 2020. "COVID-19 and gender equality: Countering the regressive effects." Mumbai: McKinsey Global Institute. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/covid-19-and-gender-equality-countering-the-regressive-effects>

change⁶¹. Adolescent clubs organized to promote gender equality and life skills increasingly ask young people take action in their community, a reflection of the need to engage with those broader community norms. Broader community engagement work is essential to the effort to shift gender norms and harmful masculinities, including its partnerships to promote positive gender socialization and eliminate harmful gender stereotypes in media and advertising content.

Evidence

At a macro level, the associations between gender-related attitudes and behaviours among men, along with several other topics related to gender equality, have been explored in-depth. In addition to several context-specific studies, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), coordinated by the International Centre for Research on Women and Promundo, is one of the most comprehensive household studies on “men’s and women’s practices and attitudes as they relate to gender norms, attitudes towards gender equality policies, household dynamics including caregiving and men’s involvement as fathers, intimate partner violence, health, economic stress, and more.”⁶²

IMAGES and other sources provide considerable documentation of the associations between men’s attitudes and behaviours and several development outcomes of interest. These include how gender-related attitudes influence men’s likelihood of resorting to violence, of supporting girls’ education, of being engaged caregivers and caretakers, of condoning women’s agency and workforce participation, and of themselves seeking out health services.

The ways that harmful or “toxic” masculinities negatively affect boys themselves and their behaviours or health outcomes in adulthood have also been studied.⁶³ Dominant masculine norms in many countries are associated with poor mental and physical health outcomes for boys. Boys who hold rigid and traditionalist views of masculinity are more likely to engage in alcohol and drug abuse, violent behaviours, risk-taking of all kinds, and to commit suicide.⁶⁴ Taken together, these collective manly practices help to explain the disparities in health between men and women.^{65,66}

There are clear benefits of working with fathers and male caregivers. Research shows that fathers’ active involvement in caregiving can have beneficial effects for children’s physical and mental health as well as their social development.⁶⁷ Findings show that this matters not only in early childhood development but right through adolescence, varying across settings and

⁶¹ The Stepping Stones HIV prevention curriculum reflected this understanding early on: Jewkes, R., Nduna, M., Levin, J., Jama, N., Dunkle, K., Khuzwayo, N., ... & Duvvury, N. 2006. “A cluster randomized-controlled trial to determine the effectiveness of Stepping Stones in preventing HIV infections and promoting safer sexual behaviour among youth in the rural Eastern Cape, South Africa: trial design, methods and baseline findings.” *Tropical Medicine & International Health*, 11(1), 3-16.

⁶² Promundo Global. 2018. “Partners Share Findings From the International Men and Gender Equality Survey in 5 New Countries.” Washington, DC: Promundo Global. <https://promundoglobal.org/partners-share-findings-images-5-new-countries/>

⁶³ Connell and Messerschmidt 2005.

³⁸ Barker, G., and Loewenstein, I. 1997. “Where the boys are: Attitudes related to masculinity, fatherhood, and violence towards women among low-income adolescent and young adult males in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.” *Youth & Society*, 29(2), 166-196.

⁶⁴ Wells, S., Flynn, A., Tremblay, P. F., Dumas, T., Miller, P., and Graham, K. 2014. “Linking masculinity to negative drinking consequences: The mediating roles of heavy episodic drinking and alcohol expectancies.” *Journal of studies on alcohol and drugs*, 75(3), 510-519.

⁶⁵ Marcos, J. M., Aviles, N. R., del Río Lozano, M., Cuadros, J. P., and Calvente, M. D. M. G. 2013. “Performing masculinity, influencing health: a qualitative mixed-methods study of young Spanish men.” *Global health action*, 6(1), 21134.

⁶⁶ Heise, Greene et al 2019.

⁶⁷ Barker, G. 2015. “Why men’s caregiving matters for young children: lessons from the MenCare campaign.” *Early Childhood Matters*: 124: 51-53. Bernard van Leer Foundation.

between boys and girls. Another important finding is that caregiving appears to change men themselves, making them less likely to engage in violence.⁶⁸

Specifically, several studies and systematic reviews have found that witnessing violence against one's mother or experiencing violence in the household as children correlates with a strong likelihood of resorting to violence in adult relationships among boys, and the likelihood of victimization among girls.⁶⁹ Exposure to family violence in childhood and adolescence also contributes to children perceiving violence "as normal," and to boys linking male identity to violence.⁷⁰

Unfortunately, the quality and availability of evidence on the effectiveness of interventions is highly variable⁷¹. For example, for middle-income country implementation, the MICS module on violence against women and girls with men is deployed inconsistently. Strengthening programme data and analysis can contribute to more informative research on associations between norms, norm-changing efforts, and social outcomes. Better explication of the combination of interventions and strategies that can result in more equitable attitudes and behaviours – as well as to improved outcomes for women and girls (at scale) – can contribute to emerging models and evaluation.

Nevertheless, an early-life start to interventions on gender-transformative norms and masculinities is the best approach. Research indicates that engaging young boys up through adolescence is likely to be most effective and lasting. By the time boys are young men, this work becomes more time-consuming and change is harder to bring about.

Challenges to embracing masculinities programming

In order to be meaningfully transformative, programmes to empower girls must be accompanied by programmes addressing the masculine norms that prevent empowerment. There are, however, a number of challenges to fully embrace gender-equitable masculinities programming:

A high-level "mother-and-child" paradigm prevalent in the internal culture of many organizations, agencies, and government ministries makes it more challenging to find a new point of equilibrium that reflects gender equality for all and equity for girls and women. Child welfare systems in many countries reflect a fundamental gender traditionalism, with women positioned as the exclusive caretakers of children.

A better understanding of intersectional pressures and the complex composition of identity is needed to bring greater coherence to work on masculinities. A more relational understanding of gender would strengthen equity efforts and convey its reciprocal benefits for girls and boys, and women and men.

Evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to transform masculinities is incomplete, especially with regard to the combinations of strategies and programming that can contribute to sustainable, long-term change in boys' attitudes and behaviours.⁷² More information is needed on the added

⁶⁸ Stith, S.M., Rosen, K.H., Middleton, K.A., Busch, A.L., Lundeberg, K., and Carlton, R.P. 2000. "The Intergenerational Transmission of Spouse Abuse: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62 (3): 640–54

⁶⁹ Barker, G., Contreras, J.M., Heilman, B., Singh, A., Verma, R., and Nascimento, M. 2011. *Evolving Men: Initial Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)*. Washington, DC: International Center for Research on Women; Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Promundo.

⁷⁰ Gil-Gonzalez, D., Vives-Cases, C., Ruiz, M.T., Carrasco-Portino, M., and Alvarez-Dardet, C. 2008. "Childhood Experiences of Violence in Perpetrators as a Risk Factor of Intimate Partner Violence: A Systematic Review." *Journal of Public Health* 30 (1): 14–22.

⁷¹ Levy, JK, Darmstadt, GL, Ashby, C, Quandt, M, Halsey, E, Nagar, A, and Greene, ME. 2019. "Programmes targeting gender inequality and restrictive gender norms for the health and well-being of children, adolescents, and youth: A systematic review." *Lancet Global Health* December: e225–e236. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(19\)30495-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(19)30495-4)

⁷² Levy et al 2019.

value that working with boys and men brings to programmes focused on the empowerment of girls and women.

Because these emerging interventions tend to be newer and smaller in scale, it is difficult to analyse their relative effectiveness. However, creative and promising approaches include small group sessions for boys as part of an HIV intervention, group sessions for men associated with economic interventions for women, and parenting programmes with tailored sessions for fathers.⁷³

More nuance is needed in research on programmes for younger and older adolescent boys. Evidence reviews have largely collapsed their results under the umbrella of “boys and men.” Age-disaggregated data are needed to reveal differences in what works to achieve specific changes with boys in each age group.

A rigorous review by the Overseas Development Institute’s Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (ODI/GAGE) consortium documented evidence of the impacts, challenges, and potential of programmes that work with younger and older adolescent boys across 34 programmes in 22 low- and middle-income countries.⁷⁴ They found that group-based gender equality and positive masculinities programmes with adolescent boys show great promise across a number of areas.^{75,76}

Masculinities as a programme area is still viewed through a traditional lens as an intervention for boys that promotes recreation, bonding, social skills, and citizenship. The social construction of gender and the relational nature of gendered categories are not yet consistently integrated in programmes for boys and men.

The engagement of stakeholders in any intervention should clearly and explicitly demonstrate that it is mutually beneficial, and not simply as the means to improving outcomes for someone else. Programmes that engage boys in support of girls, for example, need to benefit boys in basic ways; likewise, programmes that engage girls or women to improve child health must also benefit those girls and women directly. Monitoring and evaluation systems need sharpening to capture the impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries of programmes that shift gender norms and reflect shifting, relational understandings of gender.

Recommendations

Focus on key opportunities for intervention

The programmatic recommendations that emerge from this research point to the need to prioritize five important opportunities for intervention: 1) early childhood development; 2) education and gender socialization of girls and boys in middle childhood; 3) socialization of adolescent boys; 4) gender-equitable parenting; and 5) community engagement and norm change.

Early childhood: Examples of opportunities to integrate masculinities and gender equality into early childhood development efforts include:

- *The Nurturing Care Framework*

⁷³ Heise, L. 2011. *What Works to Prevent Partner Violence? An Evidence Overview. Working Paper*. London: STRIVE Research Consortium, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London.

⁷⁴ Fleming, P., Barker, G., McCleary-Sills, J., and Morton, M. 2015. *Gender Equality in Development: Engaging men and boys in advancing women’s agency: Where we stand and new directions*. Washington DC: World Bank Group.

⁷⁵ Marcus 2018.

⁷⁶ For gender-equitable programme interventions with adolescent boys, Marcus (2018) identified the following seven recommendations for greater programme impact: Ensure programmes pay greater attention to boys’ concerns and priorities; Frame programme objectives and messages in aspirational and motivating ways; Build in opportunities for mixed gender discussion and activity; Build in opportunities for socializing, potentially including residential trips or outings; Ensure facilitators are well trained and have strong commitment to gender equality as well as conflict resolution skills; Explore options for scaling; Work more systematically with community decision makers, and public and private stakeholders and institutions

- *Care for Child Development* (details [here](#))
- Early childhood development in emergencies and humanitarian contexts (details [here](#))

Middle childhood: As noted earlier, middle childhood is the age at which the greatest proportion of children go to school. The opportunity to address gender inequality and restrictive gender norms in a consistent and comprehensive way through educational institutions represents a powerful opportunity. Entry-points include:

- Teacher training efforts
- Curriculum design and support
- Comprehensive sexuality education
- Advocacy for policy change within education systems

Adolescence: Adolescent boys' socialization and their emergence as nonviolent young adults, supportive peers, and informed sexual citizens represent more critical opportunities to address masculinities in a way that is synergistic with other priorities. Opportunities include:

- Integrate masculinities into work on gender-based violence risk mitigation as well as into life skills education and employability, as Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP) has done through the [Generation Unlimited](#) inter-agency partnership.
- A five-year learning agenda akin to GAGE for girls that would explore working with adolescent boys.
- Embed gender-equitable masculinities into comprehensive sexuality education and other curriculums and group session guides for boys. This is an age at which it is essential to support and discuss sexual diversity.
- Gender analysis exists around what girls learn, how they transition to upper grades, their engagement at school, and the reasons they drop out, but this analysis tends not to be applied to boys. This gap is particularly significant given the trend of boys performing poorly in school in Latin American and Caribbean countries and other regions.
- Adolescent club sessions now often conclude with an activity where adolescents take action to shift norms in their communities. [Upshift](#) is one example where a curriculum focused on youth entrepreneurship calls on them to make a difference in their communities.

Gender-equitable parenting: An emphasis on more equitable and mutually beneficial parenting is an important strategy to transform harmful gender norms across a child's life. This strategy must recognize the importance of socialization across all age groups and promote the role of more capable parents and caregivers in modeling positive gender roles and identities (while recognizing the power differentials that often exist between fathers and mothers). Specific tools that can support a holistic approach to parenting include:

- Highlight gender-transformative work with fathers and other caregivers involved in early childhood development and life cycle transfer of norms. The Chilean government's [Crece Contigo](#) model for parenting supports is very strong and accessible.
- Parenting of Adolescents programmes can build on the Parenting of Adolescents Guidelines developed by Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP).⁷⁷ Male parents play essential and distinct roles in the lives of their children, and model manhood for their sons and daughters.
- *Caring for the Caregiver* was inspired by research showing how little attention is given to the health and well-being of caregivers (details [here](#)).

Community engagement and norm change. Broader community engagement and norm change efforts reinforce all the other activities referenced here. This work can be expanded by:

- Promoting positive gender socialization through engagement of the private sector in transformative branding.

⁷⁷ UNICEF. 2018. "Parenting Adolescents: A Regional Study on Adolescents and Parenting Support Programmes in Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro and Romania". Geneva: UNICEF, 2018. <https://www.unicef.org/eca/media/8556/file/ECARO-study-parenting-adolescents.pdf>

- Establish gender-responsive family-friendly policies (details [here](#)). Create environments for families through family-friendly policies that provide parents and caregivers the time, resources, and services that enable them to practice positive gender socialization.
- Working with religious and tribal leaders in the Joint Programme on Child Marriage and female genital mutilation to create social movements by engaging in dialogue on social norms change, [such as this work taking place in Nepal](#).

Conclusion

Progress towards realizing gender equality and improving and respecting the well-being and rights of all children can be accelerated and enhanced by addressing aspects of masculinity that impede these outcomes. An alternative “both-and” approach to empowering and advancing the lives of girls and women alongside those of boys and men can catalyse results and change.

To advance this work, it is important that work on masculinities reflect a **feminist** perspective that prioritizes addressing the inequities that arise from gender inequality and restrictive gender norms. This will ensure that this work is not characterized as taking away from investments in girls and women but rightly as essential to achieving gender equality. The false trade-off described in this paper positions investment in programming for boys as a questionable use of resources that might otherwise be spent on disadvantaged girls.

Understanding the separate implications of gender inequality and restrictive gender norms would help move global actors to move beyond the perennial question, “what about boys?” and would provide a lever for support of subordinated groups of boys and men, including LGBTQI+ individuals. Building on the research and advocacy of key scholars and actors, a proactive feminist approach is needed that will enable the boys of today to develop and benefit from gender-equitable masculinities throughout childhood and adolescence and on into adulthood.

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A Bolder Vision for and with Adolescent Girls: Advancing a Girl-Intentional Approach

Prerna Banatiⁱ, Sagri Singhⁱⁱ

ⁱ Regional Adviser Adolescent Development, West and Central Africa Regional Office, UNICEF

ⁱⁱ Senior Adviser, Gender, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

Key social, cultural, and political entitlements are fundamental to transforming adolescent girls' lives, ensuring their safe and positive transition to adulthood, and achieving intergenerational progress and equitable societies. To realize this, we must have a 'bolder vision' to accelerate progress for adolescent girls, one that recognizes not only the historical disadvantages they face but also their pivotal role in social change.

A girl-intentional approach would centre the aspirations, realities, and agency of the adolescent girl, marked by her positive transition to adulthood^{zzz} and delivered on the platform of a universal basic minimum set of quality adolescent girl services operating at scale. Given the global scope of this paper, the authors recognize that the lived realities of girls vary geographically and contextually. This paper is not prescribing a perfect or one-size-fits-all model for girl-intentional programmes. Instead, it is a contribution to the evolving dialogue on how development agencies can advance results using localized adaptations of this approach.

A Positive Reframing of the 'Adolescent Girl' Narrative

There are 600 million adolescent (aged 10 to 19 years) girls in the world today. Almost 90 per cent live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).^{aaaa} Despite ongoing disadvantage, discrimination, and widespread neglect of their rights, more girls than ever are emerging as leading voices in social change movements. From Greta Thunberg's efforts to address climate change^{bbbb}, to the work of Binita Shrestha's and Pratiksha Panday to promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills for girls in Nepal, to Latifatou Compaoré efforts to end female genital mutilation in Burkina Faso, adolescent girls and young women are taking charge and leading change in communities all over the world.

To recognize their agency, secure their rights, and support them to reach their full potential and rising aspirations, the global community must step up investment in adolescent girls' empowerment and well-being as they transition through adolescence into adulthood.

Gaps in fulfilling the rights of adolescent girls still exist worldwide

- Every year 12 million girls are married before their 18th birthday. This means 23 girls lose their right to a childhood every minute.
- Approximately 12 million adolescent girls aged 15–19 give birth every year in low- and middle-income countries. An estimated 2 million girls give birth before age 15.
- Among girls aged 15–19 who want to avoid pregnancy, currently 4 in 10 are not using a modern method of contraception.
- There has been no decrease in the number of girls aged 15–19 who are moderately or severely underweight over the past two decades.
- There are 98 million girls who should be in secondary school but are not.
- Nearly one in four girls aged 15–19 are neither employed nor in education or training compared to 1 in 10 boys the same age.
- Girls account for two-thirds of all new HIV infections among youth aged 15--19. In sub-Saharan Africa, three out of four adolescents who are newly infected with HIV are girls.
- Thirteen million girls aged 15-19, or 1 in 20, have experienced forced sex.
- Globally at least 500 million girls and women lack adequate facilities for dignified menstrual health and hygiene.

Sources: UNICEF 2020; UNAIDS 2019; ILO/UNICEF 2018; UNFPA 2020; WHO 2020; UNFPA/Plan International 2020

^{zzz} Jejeebhoy, S. 2017.

^{aaaa} <https://social.un.org/youthyear/docs/fact-sheet-girl-youngwomen.pdf>

^{bbbb} See for instance [Greta Thunberg: Who is the climate campaigner and what are her aims? - BBC News](#)

Historically, public sector strategies have ignored adolescent girls by grouping them with either women or children. For example, adolescents feel capable of making informed choices in their political lives – as seen by the high youth turnout in the referendum on Scotland’s continued membership in the European Union – yet they are often treated as children in most political processes. Policy makers are only now starting to recognize the uniqueness of adolescent girls and develop policies that cater to them.^{cccc} For example, the same maternal care is offered to women and adolescent girls despite the differences in girls’ physiology, access, and experiences. This leads to poor acceptance of antenatal care and higher mortality rates compared to women over age 20. Where there are policies targeting adolescent girls categorically, they tend to be negatively framed, with a focus on protection and risk-mitigation^{dddd} and limited recognition of their agency and capability to interact with and inform policy-making processes.

One typical narrative positions girls as victims who are weak and in need of protection but an alternative approach is gaining ground. Policies should reflect and emphasize girls’ self-efficacy, resilience, and skills. For example, Kusma Kumari, who is 13 years of age, is part of a UNICEF programme that trains adolescents on children’s rights, so they can pass on the knowledge to their communities. Knowing she and her friends in Jharkhand, India, face a high risk of child marriage, Kusma has developed the confidence to speak at public forums and does so every chance she gets. “Child marriage is illegal,” she will repeat at a village community meeting, speaking directly to the fathers in the room. Among them is her own father, Mahto, a local mechanic, who has promised she can stay in school and will not be forced to marry early.^{eeee}

In recent years several United Nations agencies and development partners have advocated for approaches that augment existing protection, management, and risk-mitigation measures. Dedicated investments, policies, and strategies that engage and empower adolescent girls by emphasizing their competencies, assets, and agency are urgently needed. In addition to scaling up quality services, these approaches must facilitate girls’ acquisition of multiple assets,^{ffff} promote critical awareness, foster resilience, and strengthen their voice and participation in personal and public decisions. These are all vital elements in the journey of empowerment.⁹⁹⁹⁹

The role of the global community in standing behind adolescent girls and their rights

The human rights of adolescent girls are protected in international human rights law including in the CRC and the CEDAW. These instruments have been affirmed by the vast majority of governments and clarify with distinction the civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights of adolescent girls, as well as the responsibilities of duty bearers at all levels. In addition, these rights are tangibly represented and articulated in the SDGs, a 15-year global commitment to advance economic, social,

^{cccc} In 2019, UNICEF continued to support 52 *Every Newborn Action Plan* countries to provide quality maternal care for adolescent mothers (aged 15–19 years), contributing to 74 per cent of live births being attended by skilled health personnel (p 31). [[UNICEF Global Annual Results 2019: Gender Equality](#)] By 2018, 15 countries had costed national frameworks to operationalize plans, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks to support implementation of national action plans for ending child marriage (p. 37). [[UNICEF Gender Equality Global Annual Results 2018](#)]

^{dddd} Camilletti E. and Banati P. 2018. “Strategic Investments in Adolescents– a review of cost-effective interventions,” *Handbook of Adolescent Development Research and its Impact on Global Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

^{eeee} UNICEF. 2020. *Gender Equality Global Annual Results Report 2019*. New York: UNICEF.

^{ffff} Assets include many different forms: (i) Human assets refer to things that help protect an adolescent and those around them such as good physical and mental health; knowledge (i.e., about how to find a health clinic, sexual and reproductive health know-how); psychosocial assets (e.g., healthy self-esteem, confidence and resilience; etc. (ii) Social assets refer to networks and connections an adolescent can rely and draw upon such as social networks and relationships of trust and reciprocity with peers, community elders, and role models. (iii) Productive assets refer to assets that help adolescents manage the present and plan for the future such as financial resources, savings, access to credit, skills for learning, physical assets like mobile phones and work equipment, etc. (iv) Cognitive/developmental assets include a range of skills, including but not limited to numeracy, literacy, confidence, critical analysis, communication, and problem-solving skills. Source: UNICEF. 2020. *Technical Note on Adolescent Empowerment*. Draft under review. New York, NY: UNICEF.

⁹⁹⁹⁹ UNICEF. 2021.

and environmental development, with a focus on those most left behind.^{hhhh} Its 17 ambitious goal areas that include: ending poverty, inclusive and equitable education, health and well-being for all, gender equality and empowerment, decent work, and reducing inequality. Nevertheless, a wide range of social actors including governments, local communities, and families still fail to recognize, fulfil, protect, and promote the rights of adolescent girls largely because of gender-based discrimination justified by underlying gender norms and gendered power dynamics.ⁱⁱⁱⁱ

Return on Investments

Investments in adolescent well-being and health bring a triple dividend of benefits now, into future adult life, and for the next generation of children. (Lancet 2017)

Investing in interventions for the health and well-being of adolescents has many benefits: first and foremost, it keeps them alive and healthy; it also reduces poverty, stimulates economic productivity and growth, creates jobs and is cost-effective. (Every Woman Every Child 2016)

Researchers have estimated the costs and benefits of a package of 66 health care interventions – including sexual and reproductive health care, HIV prevention and treatment, improved nutrition in 40 LMICs; these services would only cost approximately about \$4.50 per capita per year (or \$360 billion between 2015 and 2030). Investments can have an unweighted mean benefit to cost ratio of more than 10:0. (Lancet 2017)

It is imperative that we meet these commitments by doubling down on investing in girls in order to level the playing field, accelerate results, and achieve gender equality. Importantly, these investments must reframe the narrative to recognize and value adolescent girls for their competencies, assets and agency.

For members of the international development community such as UNICEF, this requires greater institutional prioritization internally, and stepped up advocacy with funders and partners externally, around the levels of investment and potential for scale. For donors, this requires moving away from siloed sectoral funding streams, establishing longer financing horizons that monitor milestones of progress; and ensuring a foundation of strong gender analyses in assessment of proposals and deliverables. Of importance is the recognition that a gender-transformational approach – which seeks to address the causes of gender-based inequalities towards transforming harmful gender roles, norms and power imbalances – is central to improving the lives of adolescent girls.^{jjjj, kkkk}

Valuing girls' transition to adulthood

The transition from adolescence to adulthood poses particular challenges for girls. This is especially true when social and economic constraints place additional burdens on girls as a result of deeply embedded gender norms which determine girls' actions, opportunities, and how they interact with society.^{llll}

Transitions can be even more difficult for girls who live with disability, who are of ethnic or religious minorities, who embrace non-dominant sexual identities, who are displaced, or face other intersecting pressures. Boys and men also experience differential, intersecting pressures and opportunities based on prevailing social and gender norms.^{mmmm} Transgender, gay, and lesbian

^{hhhh} <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ UNICEF, UN-Women, and Plan International. 2020. A New Era for Girls: Taking Stock of 25 Years of Progress, New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-new-era-for-girls-taking-stock-of-25-years-of-progress/>

^{jjjj} UNFPA and UNICEF. 2020. "Technical Note on Gender-Transformative Approaches in the Global Programme to End Child Marriage Phase II: A Summary for Practitioners". New York, NY: UNICEF. https://ecmtechnicalnote_gendertransformation/

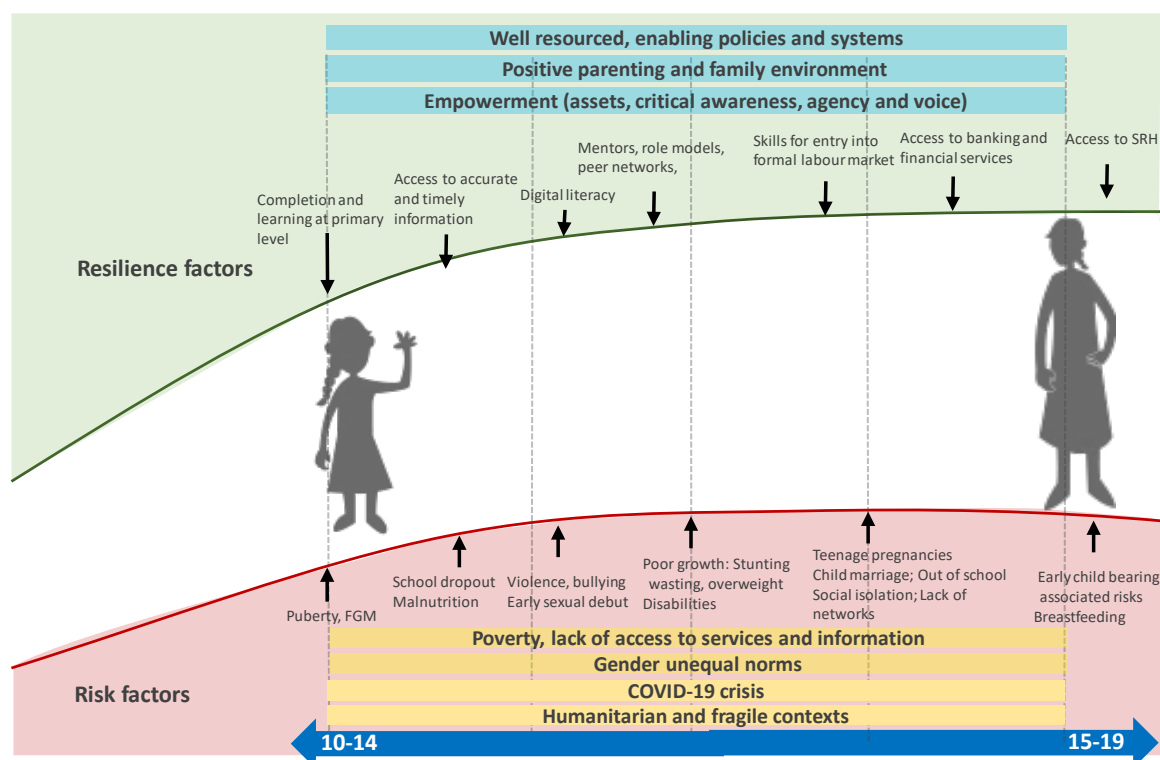
^{kkkk} Marcus, R and Samuels, F. 2021. *Gender Transformative Programming*. Draft under review. New York, NY: UNICEF.

^{llll} Harper, C., Jones, N., Marcus, R., Ghimire, A., & Bantebya, G. 2018. *Empowering Adolescent Girls in Developing Countries: Gender Justice and Norm Change*. London: Taylor and Francis.

^{mmmm} UNICEF and UNFPA. 2020. "Technical Note on Gender Norms". New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/media/65381/file/GP-2020-Technical-Note-Gender-Norms.pdf>

adolescents, as well as others who do not conform to idealized gender norms, face a heightened risk of bullying, violence, and stigma in the adolescent years.ⁿⁿⁿⁿ

Figure 2: Risk and Resilience for Girls through Adolescence



Source: developed by the authors based on initial design by UNICEF Ghana.

The majority of girls in LMICs live with multiple deprivations of their rights as children, and this contributes to the cumulative disadvantage they have as they transition through adolescence. Many, if not all, deprivations experienced by girls have similar root causes (e.g., patriarchal norms, control over sexuality, poverty) and common structural features (e.g., regressive policies or lack of progressive practices like quality social security programmes, and targeted investments).

The Figure above reflects the specifically gendered nature of risk and resilience factors for adolescent girls. It articulates the opportunities and risks presented by the socio-political and economic environment and the cumulative risks and/or opportunities faced by adolescent girls. Despite these risks, growing evidence suggests that adolescence can be a moment of positive development for girls.^{oooo} Neuroscientific advances^{pppp} clearly show the plasticity of the adolescent brain and its unique developments of the prefrontal cortex during this period of life. During adolescence, the brain undergoes a process of synaptic elimination or pruning, during which frequently used connections are strengthened while others are eliminated. This process ensures that the remaining synaptic circuits are more efficient. Adolescence is therefore a unique moment to acquire new skills. Similarly, health professionals are well aware of the lifetime benefits of positive health behaviours (e.g., physical activity and healthy eating) instilled during adolescence. This period of life presents numerous opportunities to ensure that girls enter adulthood resilient, capable, and empowered.

ⁿⁿⁿⁿ UNICEF. 2014. "Gender Action Plan 2014-2017". UNDOC E/ICEF/2014/CRP.12. New York, NY: UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/gender/files/UNICEF_Gender_Action_Plan_2014-2017.pdf

^{oooo} Banati, P. and Camilletti, E. 2018. "Three windows of opportunity: Using science to inform programming for adolescents and young people." UNICEF Evidence for Action blog. <https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/three-windows-of-opportunity-for-adolescents/>

^{pppp} Balvin, N. and Banati, P. 2017. "The Adolescent Brain: A second window of opportunity – A compendium". Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/933-the-adolescent-brain-a-second-window-of-opportunity-a-compendium.html>

Entering adulthood is increasingly complex today. New and emerging threats include the climate crisis, health epidemics, increasingly vulnerable and under-employment, rising forced displacement, insecurity, protracted conflicts, and growing violence.^{qqqq,rrrr,ssss} While tremendous gains have been made in the 25 years since the Beijing Declaration, these have been unevenly distributed both demographically and geographically. As a result, it is increasingly improbable that we will meet the SDG targets by 2030. In all of this, the impact on girls is disproportionately negative. Humanitarian crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbate pre-existing inequalities and increase the prevalence of child marriage, violence, school dropout, and restricted access to social services.^{tttt,uuuu}

However, the wide scale disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic also presents opportunities. As national governments roll out humanitarian and development response plans, there is an opportunity to deliver ambitious improvements in girls' lives by building on a universal basic minimum set of quality services that intentionally engage and empower them.

In summary, a girl-intentional approach is required to promote a safe and empowered transition to adulthood for adolescent girls. This would mean identifying intersectional gendered realities, acknowledging the unique opportunity to build resilience during adolescence, and targeting strategies accordingly to overcome barriers. It would also require leveraging opportunities (e.g., considering age and context-appropriate needs; building on investments) and both acknowledging and amplifying girls' aspirations and agency, while recognizing the need to build social and productive assets. Where quality girl-intentional services are readily available, where communities and families support girls and provide safe and protected environments, and where opportunities for voice and participation exist, girls can live empowered and fulfilling adolescent lives,^{vvvv,wwww} with positive gains for their communities and societies as a whole.

Advancing a Girl-Intentional Approach

Girl-intentional programming places the girl at the centre of programmes or policies; it is designed to respond to her realities and her aspirations, which promote her empowerment and agency as valued contributions. Girl-intentional programming brings key sectors together around a shared set of outcomes, and operates across levels of the social ecology, recognizing the central role of actors such as family, community and wider societal systems. It is delivered at scale on the platform of a universal basic minimum set of quality services for adolescent girls.^{xxxx}

Girl-intentional programming is necessarily interconnected and cuts across different sectors. For example, multisectoral girls' education programmes might target access to school (e.g., providing bursaries, or through social protection schemes); quality of learning (e.g., promoting positive and participatory pedagogy, digital skills-building, and so forth); safe and healthy school environments

^{qqqq} Jones, N., Devonald, M. and Guglielmi, S. 2019. *Leave no adolescent behind: the gender- and age-specific vulnerabilities of adolescent refugees and IDPs. Policy Note*. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.

^{rrrr} Gharabaghi, K. and Anderson-Nathe, B. 2018. "Children and youth in the era of climate change," *Child & Youth Services*, 39:4, 207-210, DOI: 10.1080/0145935X.2018.1557882.

^{ssss} Majeed, H. & Lee, J. 2017. "The impact of climate change on youth depression and mental health." *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 1(3), e94- e95.

^{tttt} Banati, P., Jones, N., and Youssef, S. 2020. "Intersecting vulnerabilities: Impact of COVID on the mental health and emotional lives of young people in low- and middle-income countries." *European Journal of Development Research*. October 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41287-020-00325-5>

^{uuuu} Jones, N., Matachowska, A., Guglielmi, S., Alam, F., Abu Hamad, B., Alheiwidi, S. and Yadete, W. 2020. *'I have nothing to feed my family...' Covid-19 risk pathways for adolescent girls in low- and middle-income countries. Report*. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.

^{vvvv} Banati, P. and Lansford, J.E. 2018. "Adolescence in Global Context," *Oxford Handbook of Adolescent Development Research and Its Impact on Global Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press and Society for Research on Child Development.

^{wwww} Jones, N., Presler-Marshall, E., and Lunin, L. 2018. *Accelerating adolescent girls' education and empowerment: a call for action to the G7*. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.

^{xxxx} A universal basic minimum set of quality adolescent-girl services will depend on national contexts and realities. Ideally it provides a minimum package of key services that taken together support adolescent girls to achieve a healthy, safe and productive transition to adulthood.

(e.g., youth-led anti-gender-based violence projects, promoting sex-segregated and functional WASH facilities, and linking to adolescent health services); as well as positive gender socialization to challenge harmful gender norms (e.g., removing gender stereotypes in curriculums, and encouraging girls to participate in traditionally male-dominated activities like sports, carpentry, and STEM clubs).

Listening to girls – central to girl-intentional programming

Programmes cannot expect to tailor their content, mode of delivery, and evaluation for adolescent girls without their input. Their meaningful engagement throughout the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes is a key element of a girl-intentional approach.^{yyyy.zzzz,aaaaa} For example, the Feminist Approach to Technology (FAT) has fixed programme topics (STEM, technology access, feminist rights), but no set curriculum. Girls decide what they want to learn and explore within the topics. There is also a leadership initiative to provide paid internships so that adolescents and young women can work alongside programme teams and voice their opinions about regular operations as well as longer-term strategic planning.

Programmes that engage girls in their design and implementation are more relevant and more effective than those that do not.^{bbbb,cccc} For example, Joyce Kekullah, 18, from Kakata City, Liberia, who often goes out with her fellow girls' club members to encourage other young girls to enrol or return to school. Outreach activities conducted by members of girls' clubs resulted in nearly 1,000 adolescent girls accessing remedial tutorials and returning to school, while 885 out-of-school adolescent girls joined formal schooling.

Multisectoral strategies as a means to deliver girl-intentional programming

A girl-intentional programming approach recognizes that the domains of adolescent girls' lives are inherently linked and, therefore, no single sectoral intervention provides sufficient investment meet their needs. Growing evidence from peer-reviewed literature examining programmes for adolescent girls in LMICs

Learning from the leadership, wisdom, and strategies of young feminist activists

The **Global Resilience Fund** is a partnership to leverage girls' and young women's activism and provide resources to amplify their solutions in the crisis. The Fund developed from a conversation between Purposeful, a feminist movement headquartered in Sierra Leone, and other adolescent girls initiatives and organizations, as the realities of the extra burdens on girls and young women were becoming apparent in the health and economic crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

By September 2020, the Fund had supported 120 groups from 67 countries with grants of up to \$5,000 USD that were determined in a process led by activist girls and women themselves. The grantees' work covers a wide range of areas crucial for girls' empowerment: from support for girls to live free from GBV and child marriage, to reintegration of girls who were kidnapped, and support for transgender women's rights. By the end of 2020, the Fund expects to have made at least 170 grants in 70 countries through an activist-led participatory process, leveraging close to \$1 million for girl and young women activists.

Read more about the Fund and the lessons learned from the girl-focused, participatory, and inclusive process of grant-making at scale and pace:

<https://www.theglobalresiliencefund.org/> and <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/tag/global-resilience-fund-reflects/>

^{yyyy} FHI360. 2020. Skills4Girls: Learning Agenda. New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/media/83876/file/S4G-Learning-Agenda.pdf>

^{zzzz} Green-Atchley, S. 2014. A Girls' Eye View: A literature review on girls' engagement. Washington, DC: Coalition for Adolescent Girls. <http://coalitionforadolescentgirls.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/A-Girls-Eye-View-CAG-Literature-Review-on-Girl-Engagement.pdf>

^{aaaaa} Coalition for Adolescent Girls. 2015. Partners and Allies Toolkit for Meaningful Girl Engagement. Washington, DC: Coalition for Adolescent Girls. https://coalitionforadolescentgirls.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/CAGPartnersandAlliesToolKit_10.compressed.pdf

^{bbbb} FHI360. 2020.

^{cccc} UNICEF. 2019. Engaged and Heard! Guidelines on Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement. New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/documents/engaged-and-heard-guidelines-adolescent-participation-and-civic-engagement>

supports the effectiveness of multisectoral action, which suggests combined programmes with multiple components may be more effective than those with a single component.^{dddd}

Success in one area of adolescent girl programming is often contingent on success in others (see text box 4). Major bottlenecks that exist outside a particular sectoral area can hamper or even derail programme implementation in another. For easily understood example is that feeling safe in school is a prerequisite for adolescent girls to capitalize fully on learning. If their school environment, or their journey to and from school, is dangerous, adolescent girls are more likely to struggle academically or drop out. Failure to address protection risks in and around the school environment (the province of one sector) directly impedes progress in another (girls' access to education).

While effective multisectoral action to advance outcomes for adolescent girls is still in its infancy in most countries, promising models of collaboration have emerged. For instance, UNICEF has prioritized support for collaborative initiatives, including investment to strengthen systems for quality service delivery. Take for example, the education, health and gender ministries in some countries working together to provide sex-separated WASH facilities and menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) services in schools and rolling out social and behaviour change communication campaigns to tackle taboos around menstruation. Importantly, a number of high-profile evaluations of UNICEF multisectoral efforts - such as the Global Programme to End Child Marriage - have recognized the value of sectors working together and have called for UNICEF and its partners to strengthen multicomponent models.

The role of men and boys in girl-intentional approaches

A girl-intentional approach recognizes that, given power relations, engaging boys and men to work towards gender equality is a key consideration in empowering adolescent girls and promoting their well-being.^{eeee,ffff}

Boys and men can be agents of change and key allies in championing gender-transformative programmes, provided care is taken to avoid replicating unequal power dynamics and norms by disproportionately emphasizing the perspectives and leadership of males at the expense of females.^{ggggg} Girl-intentional programming can link with or identify opportunities to support boys (and men) to help level the playing field for girls and women while simultaneously transforming harmful models of masculinity and practising accountability.

The domains of adolescent girls' lives are interconnected

- Girls with no education are three times as likely to marry by age 18 as those with secondary or higher education
- Married girls are more likely to be exposed to HIV and domestic violence
- Adolescent girls have an increased risk of iron deficiency anemia which during pregnancy is associated with mortality and morbidity in the mother and baby
- One in ten girls in Sub-Saharan Africa miss school during their menstrual cycle. By some estimates this may add up to 20% of a given school year
- School-related gender-based violence is a major obstacle to universal schooling and the right to education for girls. Girls are more likely than boys to experience psychological bullying

Sources: UNESCO 2019; UNESCO 2014; UNICEF 2020; Girls not Brides 2020; Plan International 2020

^{dddd} Haberland, N. A., McCarthy, K. J., and Brady, M. 2018. "A systematic review of adolescent girl programme implementation in low- and middle-income countries: Evidence gaps and insights." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 63(1), 18-31.

^{eeee} UNICEF. 2020. *Technical note on partnering with men and boys to end child marriage in the Global Programme to End Child Marriage*. New York, NY: UNICEF.

^{ffff} UNICEF South Asia Regional Office. 2019. "Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality," Pathways to Achieve Gender Equality in South Asia. Kathmandu: UNICEF. [https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/3196/file/Pathways to Achieve Gender Equality in South Asia_Address ing Gender Norms and Barriers.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/3196/file/Pathways%20to%20Achieve%20Gender%20Equality%20in%20South%20Asia_Address%20ing%20Gender%20Norms%20and%20Barriers.pdf)

^{ggggg} *ibid.*

Examples of girl-intentional programming

Below are examples of promising multi-component country efforts to improve outcomes for adolescent girls. They carry important lessons for defining and implementing features of effective girl-intentional models that can be replicated and scaled up. As stated earlier, no model can be one-size-fits-all and each must respond to its implementation context. These examples point to features of girl-intentional programming that may be usefully employed.

These features include girl-responsive content, building social and productive assets, engaging girls through their meaningful participation, ensuring safe spaces, and mentorship opportunities. A number of programmes were implemented with long duration and high intensity.^{hhhhh} Some programmes systematically engaged parents and community members. Most were delivered through more than one sector, sometimes by linking services. At the same time, few of these examples mention gender-responsive, adolescent-sensitive capacity-building or training for implementers. Only one example engaged boys in dialogue. While programmes were mindful of reaching scale and being sustainable, few were able to leverage systems to achieve both.

Bangladeshi Association for Life Skills, Income, and Knowledge for Adolescents (BALIKA)

Government of Bangladesh - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Population Council, PSTC, CIDIN, MPOWER

This programme was designed to address high rates of child marriage. Three different interventions were implemented over 18 months in 2014-2015:

1. Education support, where girls in school received tutoring in mathematics and English, while girls out-of-school received computing or financial skill training
2. Life skills training for girls on gender rights and negotiation, critical thinking, and decision-making
3. Livelihoods training for girls in entrepreneurship, cellular phone servicing, photography, and basic first aid

On a weekly basis, all participating girls met with mentors and peers in safe, girls-only locations. All participating girls received life skills training. In the safe spaces they were able to make friends, receive training in new technologies, and borrow books. The safe spaces were managed by locally recruited young women mentors (only slightly older than participants) with the assistance of a teacher. Girls who were single at the beginning of the study were 25% less likely to be married by the study's end, and 20% more likely to still be enrolled in school. Over 9,000 girls aged 12-18 living in 72 communities took part in the programme. In 2017, the Bangladesh Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and partners scaled up the BALIKA programme to reach additional districts in Bangladesh as part of a part of a broader programme to delay early marriage.

Lessons for a girl-intentional approach

- Developed girls' assets through skills-building component
- Safe spaces were provided through girl's only locations
- Female mentors allowed girls access to networking opportunities and safe spaces, and also showed girls that female perspectives are valuable and that women can be leaders and role models for other women
- Designed as multisectoral programme
- Well-evaluated programme
- Focused on adolescent girls aged 12-18 in their communities
- Plans to scale up were anticipated early

Safe and Smart Savings Products for Vulnerable Adolescent Girls

Population Council and MicroSave in Kenya and Uganda

^{hhhhh} UNICEF. 2019. *Technical Note for Life Skills Programmes for Empowering Adolescent Girls: Notes for Practitioners on What Works*. New York, NY: UNFPA and UNICEF.

The project provided girls with individual savings accounts in trusted institutions and a 16-week financial education course designated either for girls aged 10–14 or girls aged 15–25. They met in groups of 15 to 25 with a female mentor in a safe space to discuss health, setting of goals, and savings plans. All interventions included a component ensuring the girls received transferable skills in communication, resilience, self-management, negotiation, and leadership as well as additional content on entrepreneurship, gender, and power.ⁱⁱⁱⁱ The programme hosted fun days and parent meetings. Girls received workbooks tailored to each age group covering saving and planning for the future, personality traits, negotiation, and conflict resolution. The programme was evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively against a comparison group of girls. Results demonstrated expanded social networks and social relationships, increased self-esteem, increased community mobility, and increased savings among programme participants.^{mmmmmm,nnnnn}

Lessons for a girl-intentional approach

- Programme tailored to early and late adolescent girls
- Developed girls' assets through skills-building component, including leadership skills
- Safe spaces with a female mentor were provided
- Linked girls to formal institutions, building networks
- Parents intentionally engaged in programme
- Well-evaluated programme

Challenges to adopting girl-intentional approaches

The following are some practical challenges encountered in girl-intentional programming that can impact their implementation.

Scale – this is arguably the most significant challenge, as it requires systemic action. Considerations here include the embedding of programming within national systems to leverage resources, funding, reach and accountability tracking; and the importance of designing for scale already from the very outset of programme development and planning.

Scarcity mindset – development actors often assume dedicated adolescent-girl programming competes for attention with other funding (and sectoral) priorities. As a result, there is a lack of earmarked funding for these programme approaches, and sectoral investments are rarely designed with multisectoral actors in mind (Banati et al., 2021). One reason may be that government ministries tend to operate within sectors, and coordination can be costly. One solution could be the use of incentives for multisectoral collaboration, as well as the design of coordination mechanisms that seek to reduce costs.

Lack of systematic engagement of girls – especially in programme design and feedback. Where engagement exists, it still tends to be tokenistic displays designed to fulfil donor obligations. The table illustrates that girl-intentional programming can also be achieved through mixed-sex programming.

Limited capacity among development partners on how to deliver girl-intentional programmes – this is true also of UNICEF, especially at the country level. The recent GAP evaluation noted that implementation was “not matched by broad-based staff capacity development, with training to date reaching only a small proportion of staff.” (p.30) The evaluation also noted “There has been no concerted or consistent effort to build the capacity of external partners on gender equality.” (p.7)

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ UNICEF. 2019. Global Framework on Transferable Skills. New York, NY: UNICEF.

<https://www.unicef.org/media/64751/file/Global-framework-on-transferable-skills-2019.pdf>

^{jjjj} Amin, S., Saha, J.S., and Ahmed, J.A. 2018. “Skills-building programs to reduce child marriage in Bangladesh: a randomized controlled trial.” *Journal of Adolescent Health*; 63(3): 293–300.

^{kkkk} Bandiera, O., Buehren, N., Burgess, R., Goldstein, M., Gulesci, S., Rasul, I., and Sulaiman, M. 2020. “Women's empowerment in action: evidence from a randomized control trial in Africa.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 12(1):210–59.

^{llll} Decker, M.R., Wood, S.N., Ndinda, E., Yenokyan, G., Sinclair, J., Maksud, N., et al. 2018. “Sexual violence among adolescent girls and young women in Malawi: a cluster-randomized controlled implementation trial of empowerment self-defense training.” *BMC Public Health*; 18(1): 1341.

^{mmmmmm} Austrian, K., and Muthengi, E. 2013. Safe and smart savings products for vulnerable adolescent girls in Kenya and Uganda: Evaluation report. Nairobi: Population Council. <https://doi.org/10.31899/pgy11.1006>

ⁿⁿⁿⁿⁿ FHI360. 2020.

The Way Forward - Putting a Girl-Intentional Approach into Practice

Demonstrating a bolder vision for a girl-intentional approach

The table below proposes four shifts in programme design and implementation aligned with a bolder, girl-intentional vision. These four shifts point to a bolder vision for adolescent girl-intentional approach reflected in this section through two programme examples demonstrating a bolder vision of a girl-intentional approach, an accompanying logic model and illustrative indicators. Table 3 below provides two examples of programmes featuring elements of a girl-intentional approach at the individual, community, societal, and systemic levels.

The choice of programme elements needs to respond to country context and realities for girls. National governments bear the duty to fulfil the rights of adolescent girls. Working with them, UN agencies have a unique opportunity to scale effective interventions using existing, as well new, platforms. For example, schools provide a place to scale girl-intentional programming. For contexts where many girls are out-of-school, online programmes scaled through national universities, or social protection provide other opportunities to widen reach. Entry points to girl-intentional programming will differ depending on context. Services such as voucher systems or referrals can be added to existing programmes.

Table 3: Moving from business as usual to the bolder vision of a girl-intentional approach

Business as usual	Individual and Community levels	Societal and Systematic levels
Maternal quality of care regardless of age	Community outreach programme identifying pregnant adolescent girls where they are; Delivered by community health workers in safe community spaces and in respectful, dignified manner; Programme components informed by adolescent girls; Coupled with community education, counselling, mental health screening, negotiation skills training; Links to other asset-building opportunities including education and skills training.	Multisectoral country-level budget monitoring; Capacity development of national staff to deliver adolescent-sensitive and gender-responsive services; Advocacy programmes to raise minimum levels of investment, and ensure sustainable funding; Programmes scaled up through national systems e.g., social protection, education, health;
Off-the-shelf life skills programme for adolescents, including girls	Uses girl-centred design to facilitate engagement and define objectives, content, and approach; Content customized for girls' needs, by girls as much as possible; Girl-only space to learn and receive counselling and mentorship; Includes role models and provides opportunities for skills (additional assets) such as digital literacy etc. to be linked; Parent days including bringing role models/mentors to communities to talk about their pathways and lives; Linked to social entrepreneurship stipends; Consider innovative ways to get to girls who don't have access to online portals.	Accredited minimum package of high-quality services; Community engagement opportunities including engaging boys and men.

Four shifts in programme design

1. Systematically consider gendered vulnerabilities, gendered social norms, and the political economy of girls' lives

Current policies and programmes must go beyond a focus on access or coverage to address, over the longer-term, underlying systemic and structural elements of the political and socioeconomic environment of communities that place persistent barriers on adolescent girls' safe and empowered transition to adulthood. Identifying and challenging the deep-rooted gender norms and harmful stereotypes which perpetuate gender discrimination is an important example of this. Very few programmes systematically undertake a gendered analysis of the multiple deprivations and restrictions girls' face, nor use a gender lens to examine their experiences within the context of their surrounding socio-political economy. Systematic consideration of these issues will help identify potential entry points and opportunities to remove obstacles. An accompanying set of metrics to monitor progress must be integrated in the design of these programmes.

2. Systematically centre the role girls themselves must play in determining what empowerment and well-being means for them and in addressing the multi-faceted nature of their vulnerabilities

This necessitates identifying and reaching adolescent girls directly within their contexts; engaging them in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programmes to address their specific needs, deprivations, vulnerabilities, and aspirations; and, in consultation with them, providing safe spaces, mentoring opportunities, and leadership development (FHI 360, 2020). There have been several country efforts to integrate this approach in some form or another, but historically it has not been applied in an intentional and systematic way across UNICEF adolescent girl programming, and there is a corresponding lack of means to track key metrics and results. There is, however, growing interest in and movement towards designing programmes "with and for" girls, particularly in the context of building girls' skills and promoting innovation. For example, the Oky period tracker was co-created with more than 400 young girls in Mongolia and Indonesia to ensure that it works for them and their digital realities. Boys, parents, teachers, health care workers, and UNICEF education and medical experts were also consulted during the design stage. The app is open-source, light weight, has strong privacy protection and offline capabilities, is fun and modular, and is also a resource for information about puberty and reproductive health relevant to all genders (for more information see: <https://thecaseforher.medium.com/meet-oky-14207f86892>)

3. Crowd in investments to together achieve outcomes for adolescent girls

Some programmes have been more successful in recognizing interdependencies and applying cross-sectoral approaches to achieve results for girls such as the 12-country Global Programme on Ending Child Marriage working with education, gender, C4D, and social policy experts to overcome entrenched gender norms. Similarly, the menstrual health and hygiene programme collaborates with Ministries of Education as part of its WinS for Girls programme in 14 countries to promote a supportive and safer environment for girls. There are multiple large programmes addressing the Targeted Priorities for adolescent girls operating in specific countries, led by different sectoral teams, with sometimes large funding envelopes. For example, the Global Joint Programme to End Child Marriage, the Global Joint Programme to end FGM, the Spotlight Initiative to end Gender Based Violence, the Global Programme on Education, the Education Cannot Wait Initiative, Generation Unlimited, Safe to Learn, Stay Free initiative, WiNS for Girls, among others, together constitute significant financial and technical capacities focused on adolescent girls. Yet these programmes are managed independently, are often working in parallel, and do not always converge around the same groups of adolescent girls even when they operate in the same country. The result is fragmented and small scale, sometimes boutique-style programmes.

4. Design for scale, widen reach, and ensure no girl is left behind

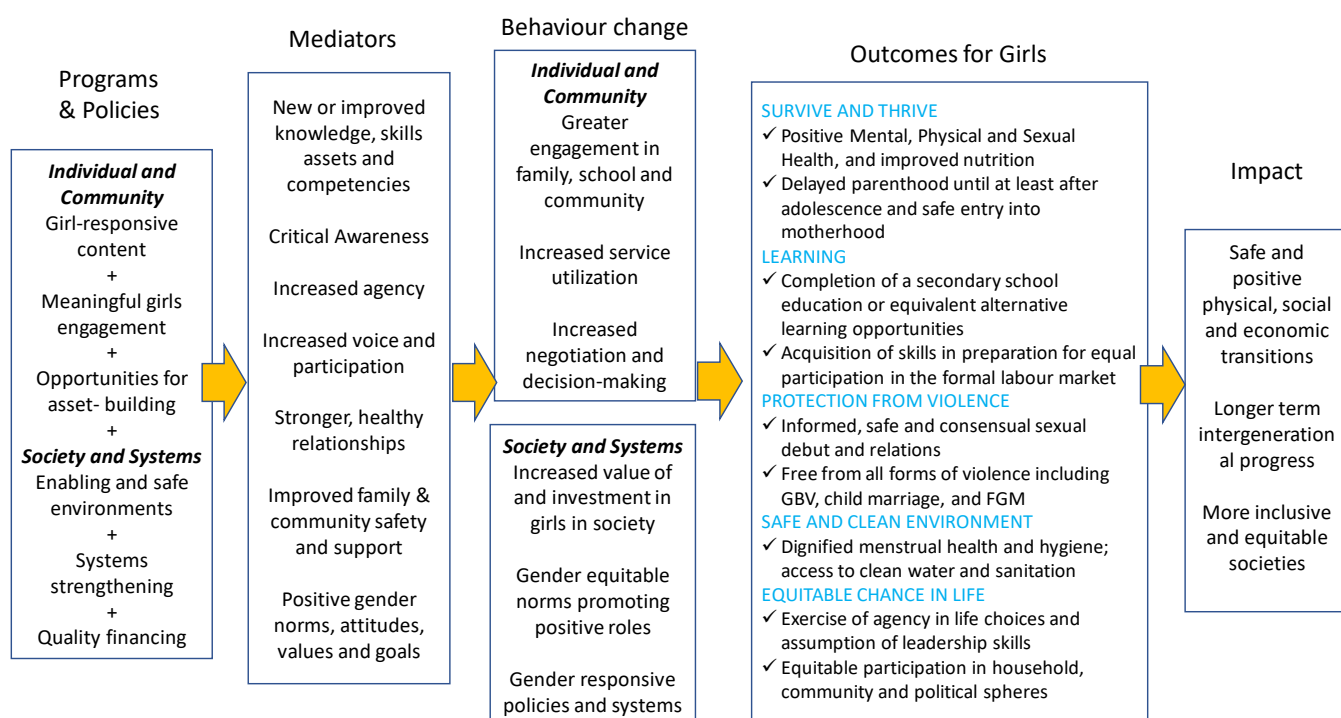
This shift acknowledges the breadth of the coverage and investments of national governments and related domestic finances. It involves strengthening the foundational elements of public sector delivery whether in education, nutrition, social protection, or health. Solutions will be required to address public sector systems constraints including underpaid and undertrained government personnel, limited fiscal space, and poor governance. Aspects of well-being and protection from harm can be instilled in schools and in all other institutions that support girls including progressive laws. Often, it is because these institutions do not work that fear of safety to girls' chastity pushes them into early marriage or school dropout. Applying a systems-thinking approach could result in reaching millions of girls in a sustainable way, potentially changing norms in a single generation. However, this would require broad agreement on the bundle of policies and services for transformative impact and adapting existing platforms and pathways for implementation. For example, school health education programmes could be designed to reach adolescent girls with a set of progressive, girl-designed and informed health and well-being curriculums and services, delivered in designated safe spaces with female mentors, covering a range of services such as HPV vaccinations, comprehensive sexuality education, and referrals for mental health and violence prevention services. Recognizing that not all programmes operating at scale reach every girl, especially those who are most vulnerable and discriminated against, operationalizing programmes to address outcomes across geographies, ethnicities, income levels, religion, abilities, and other dimensions should to be considered in the design.

A logic model with indicators for a girl-intentional approach to deliver transformational impact at scale

The logic model^{oooo} presented in the Figure below is an overarching frame that intends to capture a girl-intentional approach that would result in transformational impact at scale. The model operates at multiple levels, addressing the girl, her community, society more widely, and subnational and national systems, as well as interactions between these actors.

Six programme and policy dimensions are identified. Central components at the individual programme-level include girl-responsive content,^{ppppp} meaningful girls' engagement,^{qqqqq} and opportunities for asset building.^{rrrrr} Critical components at the societal and systems levels include providing enabling and safe environments,^{sssss} systems strengthening,^{ttttt} and targeted investments for girls through quality financing. The six policy and programme features contribute through mediators to girls' behaviour change and also wider social change. The first four mediators in the graphic -- new or improved knowledge, skills assets and competencies, critical awareness, increased agency, increased voice and participation – address girls' empowerment. The remaining three address community, societal, and system level mediators that play a critical role in inhibiting or enhancing the process of individual empowerment.^{uuuuu} The simplified nature of the diagram and box elements precludes a non-linear representation. Outcomes for girls are the result of interactions between individual behaviour change and the social and system levels change.

Figure 3: Logic model for a girl-intentional approach to deliver transformational impact at scale



Source: Authors' elaboration

^{oooo} Jejeebhoy, S. 2017.

^{ppppp} This could include gender-responsive curricula, pedagogy, programme content that responds to girls needs and aspirations and girl responsive mass media messaging and imagery.

^{qqqqq} This could include participatory design, delivery and monitoring, and outreach to reach girls where they are.

^{rrrrr} Examples include networking, internships, stipends, leadership opportunities and role modelling.

^{sssss} This could include safe spaces, peer counselling/mentors, girls' clubs, digital safety, family engagement, school safety, respectful health services, right based policy design and investment.

^{ttttt} Examples include capacity building for gender responsive adolescent friendly service design and delivery, governance mechanisms that engage adolescent girls, integrated multi-sectoral budget.

^{uuuuu} See the [Glossary](#) for UNICEF's definition of adolescent empowerment.

Table 4: Illustrative indicators aligned to the logic model

Output level	Outcome level	Impact level
<p># of consultation events hosted with girls to determine appropriate program content</p> <p>% of program participants who report that they have opportunities to decide “what program activities they do and how they do them”</p> <p># of girls consulted for feedback on program content, delivery and other aspects at mid-line and end-line monitoring and reporting</p> <p># of safe space locations identified and utilized</p> <p>% reporting access to girl-responsive services</p>	<p>% of girls who believe their input is valuable</p> <p>% girls who express confidence in themselves and what they have learned</p> <p>% of girls with increased awareness of rights for themselves</p> <p>% of girls who report feeling worthless</p> <p>% of parents reporting changing behaviours and attitudes</p> <p>% of service providers accredited to deliver adolescent-friendly, gender responsive services</p> <p>% of services delivery points that comply with established national gender-responsive adolescent friendly protocols</p> <p># of national policies directly addressing adolescent girls’ vulnerabilities</p> <p>% of national budgets earmarked for adolescent girls programming</p> <p># of national budgets cover</p> <p>% of district level budgets with dedicated line item for adolescent girls programming</p> <p>% of countries with nationally accredited minimum package of adolescent friendly services for girls</p>	<p>% girls reporting positive mental, physical and sexual health</p> <p>% girls delayed parenthood until at least 18</p> <p>% married before 18</p> <p>% completion of a secondary school education</p> <p>% participating in civic events</p> <p>% of girls participating in decisions in their family</p>

Source: Authors’ elaboration

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Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents

Sarah Bottⁱ, Alessandra Guedesⁱⁱ, Ramya Subrahmanianⁱⁱⁱ, Sumaira Chowdhury^{iv}, Lauren Rumble^v, Rocio Aznar Daban^{vi}

ⁱ Violence Research Consultant, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti

ⁱⁱ Gender & Development Manager (Research), UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti

ⁱⁱⁱ Chief, Child Rights and Protection, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti

^{iv} Senior Adviser Child Protection, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

^v Principal Adviser Gender, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF

^{vi} Chief Child Protection, UNICEF Mexico

Addressing violence as a human rights and development imperative

The international community recognizes violence against children and adolescents and violence against women (VAW) as global human rights and public health problems of critical importance. International agreements have called for countries and the UN system to act. For example:

Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)⁶:

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...

Similarly, the 1993 UN **Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women** called on Member States and the UN system to undertake strategies to end violence against women,⁷ building on the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).⁸ Calls for action have been repeated many times since, including by CEDAW General Recommendation 35, which acknowledged that gender-based violence affects girls as well as women – throughout the life cycle.⁹ In 2015, UN Member States agreed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, many of which address violence (or risk factors), and especially SDG 5.2 and 5.3 and SDG 16.2.¹⁰

Gender dimensions of violence against children and adolescents: Applying a feminist lens

UN declarations and agreements have long recognized violence against women and girls as both a **manifestation** of gender inequality and a **mechanism** by which unequal gender power differences are reinforced, including the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action¹¹ and the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.⁷ Similarly, the UN Study on Violence against Children concluded that: “virtually all forms of violence are linked to entrenched gender roles and inequalities, and... the violation of the rights of children is closely linked to the status of women.”¹²

Building on decades of work by researchers who have used a ‘feminist lens’, Namy et al. provided evidence that: “the patriarchal family structure creates an environment that normalizes many forms of violence, simultaneously infantilizing women and reinforcing their subordination (alongside

UN (1993) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

Recognizing that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men...

children).¹³ Restrictive social norms¹²⁶ about gender and sexuality also contribute to violence and discrimination against boys, men and individuals with diverse gender identity, gender expression and sexual characteristics, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and intersex (LGBTQI+) children and adolescents.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ As a result, both researchers and international agreements have called for violence prevention and response efforts to take a **gender-transformative** approach, meaning one that addresses the causes of gender-based inequalities and works to transform harmful gender roles, norms and power imbalances.

This paper endorses the concept of intersectionality premised on the idea that marginalized individuals often experience overlapping forms of oppression and discrimination, for example, based on gender, race, class, (etc.), that compound vulnerability to violence and cannot be understood in isolation from one another.¹⁷

Rationale for a gender-transformative approach to violence

By global consensus, confirmed in international rights instruments,^{7,9,10} a gender analysis is essential for understanding differences in levels, patterns, risk factors and consequences of violence – the first step in designing effective prevention and response strategies. For example:

A gender ‘aware’ (rather than gender ‘blind’) approach is essential for understanding patterns, perpetrators and contexts of violence.

An essential step towards a gender-transformative approach is to acknowledge that epidemiological data show clear sex differences in levels, patterns and risk factors of violence against children and adolescents. Globally, men comprise an estimated 80 per cent of homicide victims, but women are six times more likely to be killed by an intimate partner.²¹ This sex differential is echoed in studies of homicide against adolescent girls and boys.²² Women, girls and boys are more likely than adult men to experience violence by individuals with whom they have close personal relationships and financial interdependence.²³ Most research finds that girls experience higher levels of sexual violence than boys.^{24,25} Conversely, some but not all studies find higher levels of physical violence against boys than girls; for example, a UNICEF analysis found that in 16 of 33 countries with data, boys experienced higher levels of physically violent discipline by caregivers than girls.²⁶ Similarly, a global systematic review found that boys reported significantly higher levels of physical abuse than girls in some settings (i.e., Europe) but not others (e.g., the USA or Asia).²⁷

Gender inequality and violence are mutually reinforcing.

Research indicates that gender inequality increases women and girls’ vulnerability to violence, and that violence is often used to enforce gender inequality.²⁸ In other words, gender inequality and violence are mutually reinforcing. After examining evidence on violence against women and children in Uganda, Namy and colleagues (2017) concluded that gender inequality should be seen as a ‘root cause’ of violence against women and girls that must be centrally addressed in prevention programming.¹³

Unequal gender norms contribute to violence at individual and societal levels.

Patriarchal norms that devalue women and girls and reinforce male dominance and aggression are often used to justify violence, blame victims, re-victimize survivors, diminish the importance of women’s and girls’ autonomy and bodily integrity, and prioritize reputations of perpetrators, families and institutions over the well-being of those who experience abuse.¹⁸ For example, a multi-level analysis of data from 44 countries found that norms condoning wife-beating and male control of female behaviour were among the strongest predictors of physical and sexual IPV against women and girls at the national level.²⁹ After adjusting for all factors, IPV prevalence could not be predicted by national income (high, middle, low), and gross domestic product became non-significant when gender norms were included in statistical models.

¹²⁶ For the purposes of this paper, social norms are defined as unwritten rules, values and expectations within a community, which are often socially enforced.

Social norms that reinforce gender inequality are powerful risk factors for violence against children, adolescents and women.

At the individual level, research indicates that boys and men who espouse unequal gender norms and acceptance of violence against women have a higher likelihood of perpetrating violence against women and children.^{30,31} Restrictive social norms about gender identity and sexual orientation also contribute to violence and discrimination against LGBTQI+ children, adolescents and adults.^{14–16}

Structural (including social, legal and economic) gender inequalities increase vulnerability to violence.

Growing evidence indicates that structural social, legal and economic gender-based inequalities heighten the risk of violence against women and girls, but are often overlooked by studies focused on individuals. The multi-level analysis cited earlier found that one of the strongest correlates of levels of IPV (other than gender norms) was the extent to which implementation of laws disadvantaged women compared with men in terms of access to land, property and other economic resources.²⁹ This suggests a need to strengthen economic and legal rights of women and girls as a component of violence prevention.

Multiple forms of marginalization may compound vulnerability to violence.

As noted earlier, vulnerability to violence and discrimination based on gender may be compounded by overlapping forms of marginalization, for example, based on ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, immigrant status, etc.¹⁷ For example, researchers from India argue that sexual violence against Dalit and other lower caste girls (and the corresponding failure of the justice sector to hold perpetrators accountable) should be understood as both caste-based and gender-based violence.³² Similarly, researchers in Canada have documented what they describe as a crisis of rape, murder and missing indigenous women and girls, and the justice sector's failure to respond adequately.³³ Marginalization takes many forms, and the basis of discrimination varies by setting, but multiple, intersecting forms of vulnerability are a common phenomenon in most countries. Gender-transformative programming is more likely to be effective when overlapping forms of oppression are considered together, not addressed in isolation. This is an under-researched area that deserves more attention.

The need for a life course and intergenerational lens: Intersections between violence against children and violence against women

In 2016, Guedes and colleagues argued that research and programmes addressing violence against women and violence against children have followed parallel but distinct trajectories, leaving important gaps.¹⁸ They called for greater attention to intersections among different forms of violence across the life course, including intersections that are a focus of this paper: co-occurrence of IPV and violence against children in the same household, intergenerational effects and violence against adolescents as a point of intersection and an age group that often falls through the gaps.

Gendered intersections: Intimate partner violence and violent discipline in the home

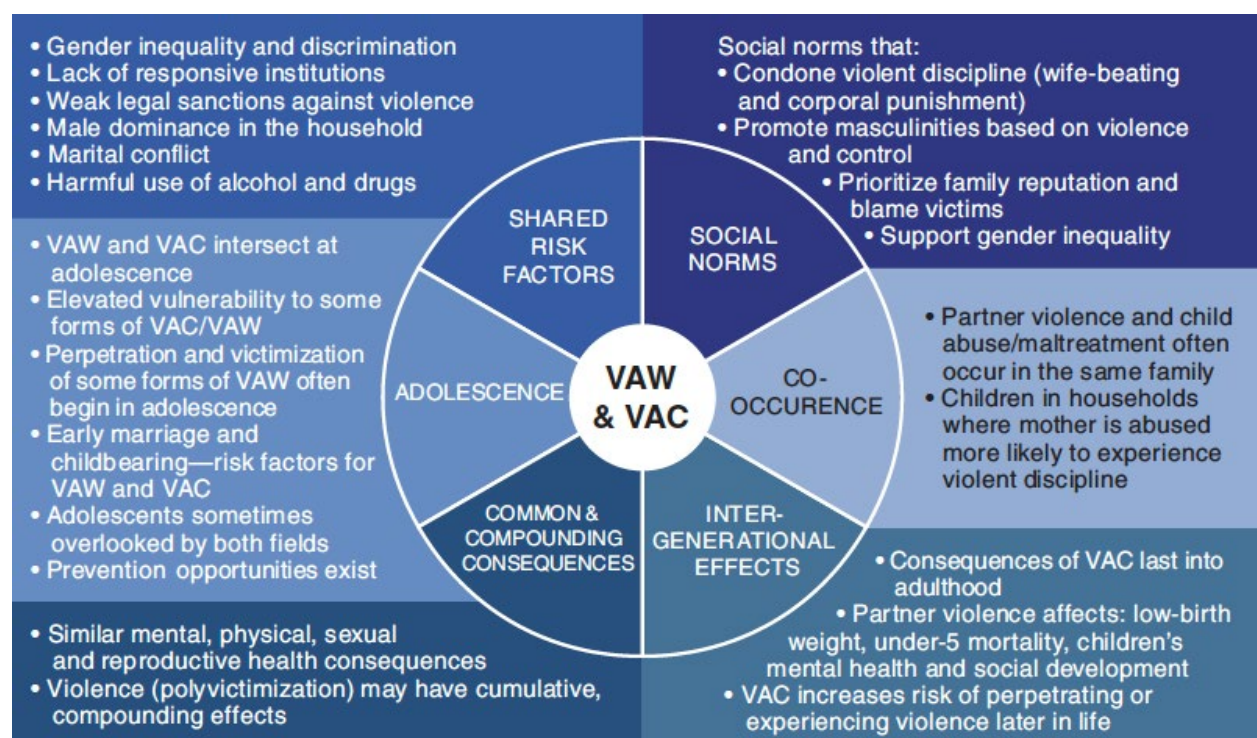
Evidence of intersections highlights a need for those working on violence against children and adolescents to pay greater attention to the interconnectedness of different forms of violence across the lifespan and the gender dimensions of violence, including IPV and violent discipline. Reasons include the following:

Both violent discipline of children and IPV against women and girls are widespread in all regions.

In 83 countries with SDG data (mostly from developing regions), nearly 8 in 10 children aged 1–14 years experienced regular violent discipline by caregivers in the home, including verbal aggression (e.g., being yelled at or called names) and physical punishment.³⁴ In 106 countries, SDG data suggest that 18

per cent of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15–49 experienced physical and/or sexual IPV in the previous 12 months, with prevalence highest (24 per cent) in the least developed countries.³⁴ Globally, WHO estimates that about 30 per cent of ever-partnered women have experienced lifetime physical and/or sexual IPV.²³ UNICEF estimates that about one in four (176 million) children under the age of five live with a mother who has experienced IPV.³⁵ In a WHO multi-country study, ever-partnered, adolescent girls aged 15–19 were significantly more likely to report past year IPV than older women (35+ years) in 10 of 15 sites.³⁶

Figure 6: Intersections between VAW and VAC18



Source: Guedes et al. 2016

IPV and violence against children often co-occur in the same household.

Evidence indicates that children in households affected by IPV are more likely than other children to experience violent discipline by both male and female caregivers.^{37,38} Studies document substantial levels of co-occurrence – when IPV against women and violence against children co-occur in the same household – including in Brazil,³⁹ China,⁴⁰ Egypt,³⁷ Peru⁴¹ and Uganda.⁴²

Exposure to IPV against women has negative consequences for children’s health, development and well-being, whether or not children experience violence directly.

IPV against women has been associated with lower rates of breastfeeding,⁴³ inadequate antenatal care,⁴⁴ child mortality,⁴⁵ malnutrition and stunting,⁴⁶ mental health disorders,⁴⁷ and aggression towards peers and siblings.³⁵ IPV has been linked to increased risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, pre-term delivery and low birth weight.^{23,48,49} Research from Uganda found that girls and boys who witnessed IPV *and* experienced violence directly had about twice the odds of mental health difficulties compared with children who experienced violence but did not witness IPV.⁴²

Both IPV and violence against children have gendered, intergenerational effects.

Violent discipline and exposure to IPV in the childhood home both appear to increase the risk of violence in adulthood, either as victims or perpetrators,^{50,51} which in turn elevates the risk of violence for the next generation of children, completing what researchers term an *intergenerational cycle of*

abuse.^{38,52-55} This intergenerational cycle of abuse has important gender dimensions. A multi-country study in Brazil, Chile, Croatia, India, Mexico and Rwanda found that men who experienced various forms of violence in childhood, including corporal punishment, were more likely to hold inequitable gender attitudes and perpetrate violence against female intimate partners as adults.^{54,55} Similarly, a six-country study from Asia and the Pacific found that among men, all forms of childhood trauma (including harsh parenting, neglect and exposure to IPV) were associated with all forms of IPV perpetration in adulthood; among women, all forms of childhood trauma were associated with a higher risk of experiencing physical and/or sexual IPV in adulthood.⁵⁶

IPV and violent discipline have common roots and risk factors, including gender inequality, unequal gender norms and acceptance of violence.

Population-based surveys from many countries suggest that social norms condoning violence and/or reinforcing patriarchal household power dynamics correlate with a higher risk of both IPV and violence against children, including norms that support wife-beating and norms such as 'A man should have the final word about decisions in his home'.^{30,31} Qualitative research from Uganda found evidence that the patriarchal family structure creates an environment that normalizes violence against women and children in the home.¹³ Other common risk factors for IPV and violent discipline include family stress, economic deprivation and disruption, harmful use of alcohol, male unemployment, mental health disorders, high levels of violence in the community, disadvantaged neighbourhood characteristics, lack of services for women, children and families, and weak legal sanctions against violence.¹⁸

Acceptance of wife-beating is high among adolescents and adult in many settings and is correlated with acceptance and use of violent discipline.

Worldwide, more than one in four (around 1.1 billion) caregivers are estimated to believe physical punishment of children is *necessary* for childrearing.³⁵ An analysis of data from 55 countries (representing 40 per cent of the world's population) found that four of ten women agreed that wife-beating was justified under at least one circumstance,⁵⁷ as did four in ten adolescent girls from 94 countries and four in ten adolescent boys from 67 countries.⁵⁸ An analysis from 25 LMICs found that agreement with wife-beating predicted women's endorsement and use of violent discipline of children in the home.⁵⁹ This quantitative evidence supports qualitative research that suggests normalizing violence in the home against one group (e.g., women) is linked to normalizing violence against another (e.g., children).¹³

The challenging implications of intergenerational intersections

A number of complex and gendered implications of intersections between violence against women and violence against children in the home pose challenges that should be considered within programming.

Pathways by which IPV affects children are complex, gendered and often contested.

Some researchers theorize that poor child outcomes result from abused mothers' reduced maternal functioning or harsh parenting, due to stress, anxiety or depression.^{60,61} Other studies find no significant relationship,⁶² produce mixed findings⁶³ or even conclude that caring maternal relationships are an important protective factor for children living in households affected by partner violence.⁶⁴ Some argue that existing research has produced a biased and incomplete understanding of pathways by systematically failing to consider the effects of harsh parenting on children by fathers who abuse their partners.^{18,62} Moreover, other evidence suggests that men's controlling behaviour of abused women contributes to poor child outcomes by undermining their mothers' economic security, financial independence, social support and access to health care.^{65,66} Links between patriarchal gender norms and both violence against women and children may also play a role, as noted below.

Women living with IPV often face difficult decisions about how to protect children, especially when separating from an abusive partner.

Research suggests that women living in situations of IPV often face difficult dilemmas about how to protect children's safety. Abusive partners often threaten to harm or take away children.^{67,68} In fact,

threatening to separate women from their children has been recognized as an important component of spousal abuse in the 'Power and control wheel'¹²⁷ conceptual model for more than 35 years.⁶⁹ Concern for children is a reason why many women in abusive relationships stay and a reason why many others leave.^{70,71} Conflicts over children often escalate when women attempt to leave a violent male partner – known as a time of heightened risk for both women and children.⁷² Research from the USA found that more than one in five homicides of children aged 2–14 were related to IPV, often triggered by conflicts over divorce and child custody.⁷³

Gendered biases about mothers and fathers affect the way researchers, policymakers, programmes and legal systems approach IPV against women with children.

Because IPV against women has serious, negative consequences for children,³⁵ some researchers^{52,74} and legal systems¹⁸ have categorized exposure to IPV as a form of child maltreatment. Such definitions risk labelling (and in some settings prosecuting) women who experience IPV as 'child abusers', based solely on their 'failure to protect' children from witnessing violence committed against them (women) by male partners. These policies sometimes produce serious adverse consequences for both women and children, including incarcerating women and/or separating children from non-offending parents.¹⁸ A related, but distinct pattern is to hold women responsible for violence committed by men against *both* women and children in the home when women themselves are being abused.⁷⁵

Critics argue that these policies reflect a gendered bias that holds mothers 'solely' responsible for the health, safety and well-being of children, while failing to acknowledge fathers' responsibilities or hold male perpetrators accountable for violence.⁷⁶ Policymakers often assume that women can easily leave an abusive partner, when in fact, barriers to divorce and separation are often high, especially in low-resource settings. Such assumptions also ignore the well-documented pattern of many abusive partners to isolate women from family and friends and/or prevent them from studying, working or having access to money or property – making separation even more difficult.⁷⁷ As noted earlier, IPV survivors often have to make difficult assessments about whether staying or leaving is more likely to keep their children safe. Separating from an abusive partner can actually heighten danger for both women and children, at least in the short run.⁷⁸ Again, as noted earlier, studies from some settings (e.g., the USA) have found that a substantial portion of child homicides occur when mothers try to separate from abusive partners.⁷³

These are complex issues that require further discussion; however, a number of points seem clear. Living in a household affected by IPV is detrimental to children's well-being whether or not children witness violence directly. However, children's services should not reinforce norms that reflexively blame women for male violence or assume that women always have resources to leave an abusive relationship.⁷⁷ On the other hand, experiencing IPV does not preclude the possibility that a woman *also* abuses or neglects her children. Both women and men can mistreat children, although data on patterns and levels are incomplete. Child protection services need to recognize that both parents have responsibility for children's safety and well-being, and this should be informed by an evidence-based, gender-responsive understanding of the dynamics of IPV against women.

A life course lens: Gendered dimensions of violence against adolescent girls and boys

Understanding violence against adolescents requires a life course and gender analysis. Adolescents often experience forms of violence common among younger children (e.g. violent discipline, sexual abuse and exploitation) as well as violence common in adulthood (e.g. IPV). Violence against adolescent girls belongs within the traditional domains of both VAC and VAW, but in practice, it is often overlooked by those working on both issues.¹⁸ For example, while SDG 16.2.1 was designed to monitor violent discipline against children aged one to 17, almost all available data are limited to children younger than 15 years old, leaving an important gap in knowledge for adolescents aged 15-17.⁷⁹ Similarly, most

¹²⁷ www.ncdsv.org/images/PowerControlwheelNOSHADING.pdf

national IPV estimates are limited to women and girls who are *already married or cohabiting*, excluding violence within informal romantic partnerships common among adolescents. As a result, most IPV research does not capture the full range of sexual abuse that adolescents experience, including violence by informal partners, attempted (not just completed) forced sex, non-physical sexual coercion, and cyber abuse (i.e. by text or online). Studies specifically designed to study violence in adolescent partnerships tend to be highly diverse and difficult to compare across sites,⁸⁰ although the [Violence against Children and Youth Survey \(VACS\) programme](#) is working to change that.

What a gendered analysis reveals about intimate partner and sexual violence against adolescents

Evidence suggests that, among adolescents, there are important, gendered differences in patterns, prevalence, consequences and help-seeking for IPV and sexual violence – differences that require attention lest prevention programmes and services default to designs suitable for the needs of girls but not boys (or vice versa) or overlook the existence and needs of LGBTQI+ adolescents.

Adolescent girls almost always report higher levels of sexual abuse than boys.

Most (although not all) studies find higher rates of sexual violence against adolescent girls than adolescent boys,^{25,81} as did 12 of 14 national VACS surveys,²⁴ with greater gender differentials for penetrative abuse.⁸² Worldwide, an estimated 1 in 20 (13 million) adolescent girls aged 15–19 years have experienced lifetime forced sex (i.e., rape), including nine million in the past year.⁸³ Levels of other forms of sexual abuse are likely to be even higher. A UNICEF analysis concluded that girls become particularly vulnerable to sexual violence after puberty; in 20 countries with comparable data, nearly nine in ten adolescent girls who reported forced sex said it first occurred in adolescence rather than earlier in childhood.³⁵

Data on sexual violence against adolescents are fragmented, with gendered gaps.

As noted earlier, a growing number of countries have [VACS](#) data on sexual violence gathered among adolescents using a similar instrument. Globally, however, comparable data on sexual abuse and exploitation of children and adolescents remain limited by lack of consensus about definitions and heterogeneity of research methods.^{80,84} Most SDG estimates of child sexual abuse are limited to forced intercourse, while surveys such as VACS include a wide range of acts. Research from South Africa found that reported levels of abuse varied widely by data collection method (e.g., face-to-face vs. self-administered questionnaires) and location (e.g., home vs. school) especially among males, highlighting problems with cross-survey comparability.⁸⁵ Globally, more data are available for girls than boys. For example, as of September 2020, only 11 of 58 countries had SDG estimates for sexual violence in childhood against boys.⁸⁶ A UNICEF review noted that, data on sexual abuse and exploitation of boys remain severely limited, plagued by: “underreporting, definitional ambiguities and inconsistencies, misconceptions, . . . social stigma and, simply, a lack of research.”¹⁴ That report noted that most studies on sexual abuse and exploitation of boys come from select regions (Europe, North America and Southeast Asia), and called for expanding research on boys as “a critical step in ensuring that all children’s rights can be protected.”

Adolescent girls face greater risks of IPV than adolescent boys.

Girls face a higher risk of IPV violence than boys, in part because they are more likely than boys to marry or cohabit as adolescents and/or before age 18.⁸⁷ Despite global progress, a 2020 UNICEF analysis estimated that one in five women aged 20–24 married before age 18.⁸³ In comparison, an analysis of data from 89 countries (primarily LMICs) estimated that the proportion for men was one in 21.⁸⁷ Norms justifying wife-beating are widely accepted by adolescents and adults.⁵⁸ In 62 countries with comparable data, prevalence of past year IPV among ever-partnered girls aged 15–19 ranged from two per cent in Ukraine to more than 50 per cent in Namibia and Equatorial Guinea, with regional estimates in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia as high as one in five.⁸³

Rates and patterns of adolescent homicide vary widely by sex.

UNICEF estimates that globally, homicide rates are four times higher among adolescent boys than girls.³⁵ The WHO found higher rates of homicides among adolescent boys than girls in every region,

with the highest differential (more than seven times) in Latin America and the Caribbean,⁸⁸ likely due to male vulnerability to (and engagement in) gang violence and organized crime in that part of the world.⁸⁹ On the other hand, adolescent girls are more likely than boys to be killed by an intimate partner and more likely to be raped before they are killed; for example, a study from South Africa found that while homicide rates were more than three times higher among adolescent males than females, girls were more likely than boys to be raped before they were killed (38.1 per cent vs. 1.3 per cent) and more likely to be killed by an intimate partner (22.6 per cent vs. 1.5 per cent).²² In some regions, adolescent girls are sometimes killed in the name of ‘family honour’ when they are perceived to violate rigid gender roles, highlighting another gendered pattern of violence across the life course.⁹⁰

Girls face reproductive health consequences from sexual violence that boys do not.

In addition to sexual health consequences experienced by both boys and girls (e.g., STIs, including HIV), girls experience a number of consequences from sexual violence that boys do not, including gynaecological conditions, unplanned pregnancy, miscarriage, unsafe abortion and birth complications.⁹¹ Sexual abuse and exploitation of girls can result in early pregnancy, leading to disrupted schooling and/or pressure to marry as children, known to have lifelong consequences, including diminished opportunities for education and work.⁹² As noted earlier, in some settings, sexual violence can place girls at risk of being killed by family members for so called reasons of ‘honour’.⁹⁰

Adolescent boys and girls face gendered barriers to help-seeking.

Help-seeking for sexual violence is low for both girls and boys; by some estimates only one to two per cent of victims try to access assistance.^{25,35} Barriers to care are often gendered. Adolescent girls often turn to health services designed for adult women, unequipped for their needs.⁹³ Widely held gender norms often blame girls for sexual violence they experience, posing barriers to help-seeking or even disclosure. On the other hand, boys often confront a lack of services for male victims, lack of awareness that boys can be victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, failure of communities and service providers to recognize that sexual abuse of boys causes harm, and a fear of having their masculinity questioned.^{14,94} As a result, evidence suggests boys may be even less likely than girls to seek help or receive services.²⁵

LGBTQI+ youth face a heightened risk of violence, including sexual exploitation.

Researchers¹⁶ and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights¹⁵ have documented high levels of violence and discrimination against LGBTQI+ individuals on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity worldwide. In many countries, the situation is exacerbated by legal frameworks that fail to protect LGBTQI+ children and adolescents from violence or increase the risk of harassment and violence by criminalizing same-sex relationships.^{15,95,96} A UNICEF report noted evidence that LGBTQI+ individuals are often rejected by their families and forced into homelessness, placing them at even greater risk of various types of violence, including sexual exploitation.¹⁴

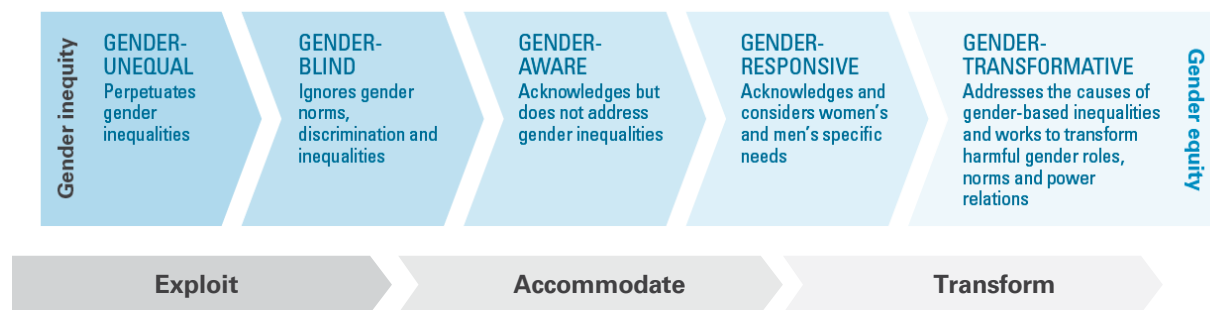
The socio-ecological framework

The socio-ecological framework, a central concept within both violence prevention⁹⁷ and gender-transformative programming,⁹⁸ posits that long-term, sustainable social change requires action at all levels of society – including changes within national plans, legal and policy frameworks, systems and institutions, communities, households, interpersonal relationships, and individual girls, boys, women and men. The socio-ecological framework harmonizes with the eight elements of a Protective Environment Framework for children from UNICEF’s 2008 Child Protection Strategy⁹⁹: 1. Governmental commitment to fulfilling protection rights (including appropriate policies and budgets); 2. Legislation and enforcement; 3. Attitudes, traditions, customs, behaviour and practices; 4. Open discussion, including the engagement of media and civil society; 5. Children’s life skills, knowledge and participation; 6. Capacity of those in contact with the child; 7. Basic and targeted services; 8. Monitoring and oversight.

A gender continuum of programming approaches

As articulated in lessons learned from UNICEF's work on child marriage, gender-transformative approaches fall at one end of a continuum of programming approaches to gender equality (See the Figure below).⁹⁸ Such approaches aspire to tackle root causes of inequality and reshape unequal power relations. They include:

- Critically examining inequalities, power imbalances, norms and dynamics based on gender, with attention to intersections with race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc.;
- Strengthening norms that support gender equality and inclusive, enabling environments;
- Promoting the relative position of girls, women and marginalized groups;
- Transforming underlying social structures, policies and norms that perpetuate and legitimize gender inequalities.



Source: UNICEF (2019) Technical note on gender-transformative approaches in the global programme to end child marriage phase ii: a summary for practitioners.⁹⁸

Generally, these approaches aim to move beyond self-improvement of individual girls and women towards redressing power imbalances within social structures, policies and norms that reinforce inequalities based on gender, race, ethnicity, etc. Such efforts often require participation and leadership by local actors at community levels. As noted at the beginning of this paper, evidence and human rights instruments call for programming that is at least gender-responsive, but at best gender-transformative, to increase effectiveness, protect human rights and ensure sustained progress towards long-term gender equality goals.

Frameworks for violence prevention: INSPIRE and RESPECT

International partnerships have created technical packages designed to translate evidence into more effective violence prevention and response. Created by a partnership of ten agencies including UNICEF, INSPIRE aims to end violence against children and adolescents; it includes an original framework,¹⁰⁰ a Handbook for implementation⁸⁴ and an Indicator Guidance and Results Framework.⁸⁰ Similarly, a group of UN agencies and other international partners developed 'RESPECT Women: Preventing violence against women',¹⁰¹ building on a previous 2015 UN Women Framework.¹⁰²

Both packages have seven 'core' strategies and additional strategies, called 'cross-cutting' in INSPIRE and 'guiding principles' or components of 'an enabling environment' in RESPECT (Box 2).

The two packages have some differences. INSPIRE focuses on violence against children and adolescents, whereas RESPECT focuses on violence against women. RESPECT places greater emphasis on women's empowerment, calls for investing in women's organizations and more consistently emphasizes the concept of gender equality rather than gender equity, which appears frequently in INSPIRE. INSPIRE (especially the Handbook) places a greater emphasis on empowering adolescents, especially girls, as well as on child and adolescent participation.

Both INSPIRE and RESPECT recognize the importance of gender equality for violence prevention and highlight intersections between VAC/A and VAW.

INSPIRE: Ending violence against children

Implementation and enforcement of laws
 Norms and values
 Safe environments
 Parent and caregiver support
 Income and economic strengthening^a
 Response and support services
 Education and life skills
Multisectoral collaboration^b
Monitoring and evaluation^b

RESPECT: Preventing violence against women

Relationship skills strengthened
 Empowerment of women
 Services ensured
 Poverty reduced
 Environments made safe
 Child and adolescent abuse prevented
 Transformed attitudes, beliefs, and norms
Facilitate enforcement of laws and policies^c
Coordination and partnerships across sectors^d
Strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems^d

a. This strategy includes a strong focus on strengthening gender equality and preventing IPV within the household, even though that is not reflected in the name. b. 'Cross-cutting strategy.' c. Component of 'an enabling environment'. d. 'Guiding principle for effective programming.'

Nonetheless, the two frameworks have striking commonalities. As illustrated in Box 2, when both 'core' and additional strategies are considered, almost all INSPIRE and RESPECT strategies overlap. Both affirm the need to reduce gender inequality and transform gender norms and power imbalances as core strategies, integral to violence prevention. INSPIRE acknowledges that reducing violence against adult women is key to preventing violence against children, and RESPECT acknowledges the converse. Even the programmes they profile as effective (or promising) overlap. Both highlight programmes designed to transform gender norms and reduce violence against women (SASA!, IMAGE microfinance and Stepping Stones); and both include 'whole school' programmes for adolescents and younger children.

What we know about gender-transformative violence programming

a. State of the evidence

Global evidence about effective, or at least promising strategies to prevent and respond to violence against children, adolescents and women is growing rapidly. One important conclusion emerging from the evidence is that *violence against children and adolescents and violence against women are preventable*.⁸⁴

Recent systematic reviews have examined the effectiveness of strategies relevant for this paper, including interventions to improve parenting among IPV survivors,¹⁰³ parenting interventions to prevent violence against children,¹⁰⁴ cash transfer programmes to decrease IPV,¹⁰⁵ and programmes for boys and men to prevent sexual, dating and IPV.¹⁰⁶ The knowledge base has also benefited from a number of *global research initiatives* working to synthesize what is known about effective (or at least promising) violence prevention and response, with attention to gender, including [Know Violence in Childhood](#),¹⁰⁷ [Together for Girls](#),²⁴ [What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls](#),¹⁰⁸ the [Sexual Violence Research Initiative](#) and [The Prevention Collaborative \(Annex A\)](#).

The evidence base has important limitations, however.¹⁰⁹ Most systematic reviews note the dearth of high-quality evaluations from LMICs, the heterogeneity of interventions and weaknesses in evaluation designs.^{105,110–113} There are also knowledge gaps about how to measure the impact of social and behaviour change communication interventions focused on gender, violence and harmful practices.¹¹⁴

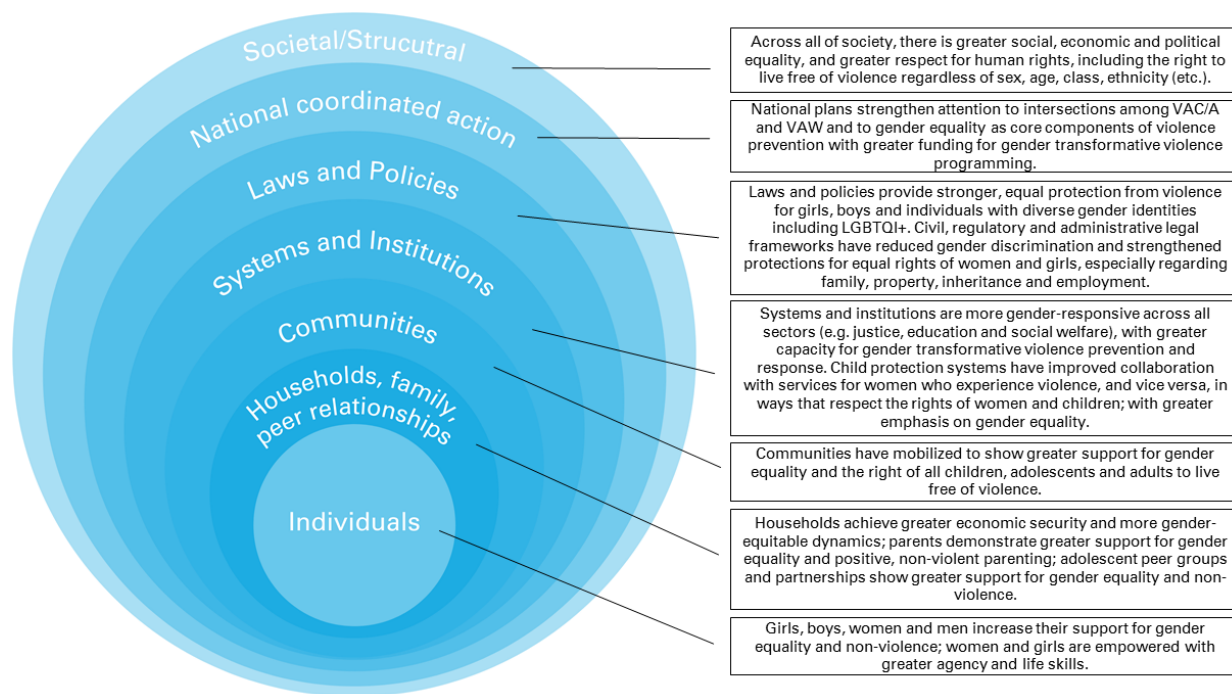
While some studies make an explicit commitment to a ‘feminist lens’,¹³ examine how to transform gender power imbalances as a core focus¹¹¹ or at least an important dimension,¹¹⁵ others mention gender only in passing.¹⁰⁴ Similar diversity is noted in the extent to which they examine other inequalities (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.). Evidence also reflects a publication bias common across many fields in favour of evidence from certain settings, notably English-speaking countries.¹¹⁶

Another limitation is the disproportionate number of evaluations of strategies targeting low levels of the ecological framework, such as individual-level change.¹¹¹ This may reflect an over-reliance on RCTs as the ‘gold standard’ for evidence generation.¹¹⁷ RCTs are a powerful tool for evaluating change among units that can be randomized, for example, individuals, schools^{118,119} and villages.^{120,121} Unfortunately, RCTs are not usually appropriate or feasible for evaluating long-term change across high levels of the ecological framework (e.g., national action, policy reform, multisectoral collaboration, whole system strengthening) or multiple levels at once – precisely the strategies that many,^{84,122,99} argue are essential for long-term, sustainable change. The resulting distortion of the evidence has been noted by those working on VAC/A,^{122–124} VAW¹¹⁷ and gender norm transformation.¹¹¹

Policy reforms, whole system strengthening and community or nationwide initiatives are often best evaluated through quasi-experimental studies that use ecological methods to compare outcomes in regions over time with time-series data or panel studies (a type of longitudinal study design), with statistical analyses eliminating confounders, and – when possible – comparison groups.¹²⁵ Mixed method and participatory designs that consider perspectives of children, adolescents, young people and survivors are also important elements. As Goodman and colleagues argue: “Identifying more appropriate and meaningful alternatives to the RCT is not simply an academic exercise; it is essential for building an evidence base... valid and reliable enough to improve the lives of victims and survivors”.¹¹⁷

Ecological, time-series evaluation designs are an underdeveloped area of research both in violence prevention and in research on gender equality, posing barriers to evidence-based policymaking.

Figure 4: Gender-transformative outcomes across the socio-ecological framework



Source: Guedes et al. 2021. Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents. Discussion Paper 04/2020 <https://www.unicef.org/media/93986/file/Child-Protection-Gender-Dimensions-of-VACAG-2021.pdf>

b. Strengthening gender-transformative violence programming: Considerations for strategic planning

The section is organized by level of the socio-ecological framework and aligned with UNICEF's Theory of Change.⁹⁸ Each subsection describes the importance of that area of work, and gaps in gender-transformative programming in relation to the types of outcomes illustrated in the Figure below.

c. National, coordinated, multisectoral action

In keeping with CRC and CEDAW obligations, bolstered by recommendations of the UN study on violence against children, the UN General Assembly has called on Member States to “develop a multifaceted and systematic framework... integrated into national planning processes, to respond to violence against children” (page 13, paragraph 52).¹²⁶ Strengthening regional, national, multisectoral coordinated action is a key component of virtually all comprehensive approaches to violence prevention and response.^{2,84,101} When adequately funded, national plans of action for violence prevention and response have built political commitment, encouraged multisectoral collaboration, and increased resources for violence prevention and response in the fields of both VAC/A¹²⁷ and VAW.¹²⁸ National action plans can focus specifically on violence against children and adolescents, or integrate attention to violence against children, adolescents and women in a single plan.¹²² *Ways to strengthen attention to gender within national actions and planning mechanism* include:

- Involve national and local women's, youth and children's organizations in planning processes for addressing violence against children, adolescents and women;
- Include strategies for achieving gender equality targets under SDG Goal 5.2, such as reducing gender discrimination within civil legal codes;
- Ensure that plans for violence prevention and response include strategies for changing social norms (at all levels of society) that support gender inequality, discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation or gender identify, and/or condone violence;
- Encourage governments to include gender mainstreaming benchmarks in their plans for violence prevention and response⁵;
- Ensure that national actions and plans on VAC/A and/or VAW address the age- and sex-specific needs of girls and boys from early childhood through adolescence;
- Build networks that encourage collaboration between organizations working on child protection and organizations working on women's rights and violence against women (discussed in further detail later);
- Encourage the wider community of practice and donors to shift away from short-term, project-based funding towards significant investments in long-term violence prevention and gender-transformation efforts.

d. Building the evidence base and research for action

Building the evidence base can increase awareness of the magnitude and consequences of violence, identify ways to improve programmes and policies, build political will, ensure that policies and programmes are evidence-informed, prevent unintended harm, and improve programming through monitoring and evaluation.^{2,84,101,130} Understanding gender dimensions and overlapping forms of vulnerability are a critical component of evidence-informed violence programming.

Examples of evidence gaps related to gender and violence

Gender dimensions of intersections between IPV and violent discipline:

- What are levels, correlates and risk factors of IPV against women and violent discipline of children in the same household (data not currently available from most MICS or DHS surveys)? How do these vary according to whether violent discipline is carried out by mothers/women versus fathers/men?
- What are gendered pathways between violence against girls and boys in childhood and IPV later in life (both as victims and perpetrators)?
- How does the social, legal and economic status of women intersect with violence in the home (IPV against women and violence against children)?
- What strategies are effective at preventing and mitigating both IPV and violence against children in the home in LMIC (including in humanitarian contexts)?

Gender dimensions of violence against adolescents:

- What do we know about levels and types of violence experienced by adolescent girls and boys within informal romantic partnerships (i.e., before cohabitation)?
- What strategies are effective for promoting non-violent, gender-equitable, empowered relationships in adolescence in LMIC (including in humanitarian settings)?
- How can researchers improve operational definitions and the safety, ethics and scientific quality of data collection on sexual violence against children and adolescents, including girls and boys and LGBTQI+ individuals, bearing in mind possible gender differences in disclosure and experiences?

Strengths and gaps in child protection systems:

- To what degree have child protection systems mainstreamed attention to gender inequality and discrimination (both institutional and among the population of children and adolescents) in each country? What are the key opportunities for reform?
- How well do child protection systems meet the needs of adolescents (including girls, boys and individuals with diverse gender identity/expression, including LGBTQI+) who experience violence?
- How well do child protection systems address the needs of children living in households affected by IPV, and how can they improve coordination with services for adult women who experience violence?

Finally, what do we know about how to improve gender-transformative violence programming in all these areas?

e. Legal and policy frameworks

Strong legal and policy frameworks (e.g., criminal and civil legislation, family codes, administrative laws, policies, regulations and codes of conduct) are an essential component of a protective environment for children and adolescents.^{2,99} Nonetheless, an analysis of SDG data from 53 countries found that more than one-quarter had gaps in legal protections for violence against women and girls.³⁴ The 2020 'Out of the Shadows' index noted that in almost half (27) of 60 countries studied, child rape legislation failed to include legal protection for boys.¹³² And in many countries, civil and criminal legal codes either lacked protection for LGBTQI+ individuals and/or put them at greater risk of harassment and violence through discriminatory laws, including those criminalizing consensual same-sex relationships.^{15,95,96}

In many LMICs, women and girls have unequal rights to marriage, divorce, child custody, property division and inheritance.¹¹ By 2018, in 53 countries with SDG data, almost one-third had legal and policy frameworks that discriminated against women and girls; one-quarter to one-fifth had discriminatory policies related to employment, economic benefits, and marriage or family law.³⁴ As discussed earlier, gender discriminatory *civil legislation* and policies can increase vulnerability of women and girls to violence.²⁹

Opportunities to strengthen gender-transformational work in legal and policy reform may include helping Member States:

- Meet obligations under the CEDAW, including removing gender discrimination from civil legal codes related to marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance, workplaces, citizenship, etc.
- Achieve legal and policy targets delineated under SDG Goal 5 (Box 4), including:
 - End sex discrimination within legal frameworks (Target 5.1)
 - Give women equal rights to economic resources and property (Target 5.A)
 - Adopt laws and policies that promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls (Target 5.C).
- Strengthen legal protection for harmful practices such as child marriage and FGM.
- Ensure that legal frameworks provide all children and adolescents – including boys, girls and LGBTQI+ individuals – equal protection from sexual violence and exploitation, and do not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation gender expression or sex characteristics.
- Reform legal codes and other policies that put LGBTQI+ youth at risk of violence and harassment, including those that criminalize consensual same-sex relationships.
- Help countries strengthen policy and legal responses to emerging forms of sexual violence against children and adolescents, including production, possession and distribution of electronic child sexual abuse material.¹³³

f. Strengthening capacities of whole systems and institutions

Evidence from virtually all sectors – including justice, social welfare, health and education – suggests that long-term, sustainable improvements in violence prevention and response require changes across *whole systems* and *whole institutions*.^{84,134}

Gender-responsive policies, reforms, training (etc.) – one component of systems strengthening – are particularly important for preparing systems and institutions to address violence. Institutions characterized by gender discrimination in hiring and management, impunity for sexual harassment, misogyny, homophobia and failure to respect the dignity of all individuals are not only unprepared to protect the rights of girls, boys and women, but also risk doing harm when interacting with those who have experienced abuse.¹³⁶ Recognizing that mainstreaming attention to gender throughout institutions is challenging,⁴

Opportunities include:

- Continue to make systems strengthening a priority, given evidence that this is key to long-term, sustainable progress towards gender-responsive institutions, violence prevention and strong child protection systems;
- Ensure collaboration and partnerships with governments, UN agencies and other partners given intersections among different forms of violence across the lifespan;
- Carry out comprehensive mapping of whole systems and institutions that includes attention to gender and violence, both within each sector and across the child protection system as a whole;
- Move away from short-term, vertical projects on specific issues and seek ways to help countries finance long-term, whole system reforms;
- Invest in innovative ways to measure complex, sustainable, system-wide changes; do not just count numbers of children reached with services or numbers of individuals trained;
- Integrate greater attention to gender mainstreaming as a key component of preparing whole institutions to address violence against children and adolescents;
- Help countries mitigate the challenges that COVID-19 is likely to pose for gender-responsive systems strengthening, with rising levels of violence and budgets under strain;
- Promote opportunities for individuals, institutions and whole systems to critically examine harmful gender norms that normalize violence;

- While all sectors are important reform whole education systems to provide safe learning environments and empower children and adolescents to build a world free of violence and gender inequality. UNGEI's minimum standards and monitoring framework are an important resource in that effort.

g. Services for girls, boys and women who experience violence

Expanding services for girls, boys and women who experience violence is a subset of systems strengthening. Three gender-related gaps merit attention in this area, described below.

Services for gender-based violence in and outside of humanitarian settings

Recommendations for strengthening this area of work include:

- Invest in helping maternal and newborn health services respond to IPV against pregnant women and new mothers, given evidence that it is a risk factor for physical and mental health of mothers and their children.
- Strengthen attention to violence prevention and response within health programming and health services for children and adolescents (who often fall through the gaps). This applies to health services generally, and to sexual and reproductive health and mental health services in particular. Key elements include preparing service providers to recognize links between a) VAC/A and child and adolescent health (both physical and mental health); and b) understanding implications of IPV for children's health and well-being.

Collaboration between child protection and services for women who experience IPV

Researchers have noted that in many countries there is a need for better collaboration between child protection and services for women who experience IPV, sensitive to concerns of women's advocates that child protection systems sometimes put women's rights and safety at unnecessary risk by failing to understand the dynamics of violence in the home, by assuming women can easily leave an abusive situation, and/or by blaming women for their inability to prevent or control the abusive behaviour of men.^{18,76,146} In particular, researchers describe risks associated with:

- Mandatory reporting policies for IPV that discourage women from seeking help;
- Service providers who do not take adequate steps (such as confidentiality) to protect women (and children) from violent retaliation by abusive partners;
- Unnecessary separation of children from non-abusive parents.

A UNICEF report from the Pacific observed that services for adult women survivors of IPV are often geared toward *short-term* assistance and helping women *leave* abusive relationships, while child protection often emphasizes *family preservation* and long-term follow-up.¹⁴⁷ That report suggests several *recommendations for building constructive collaboration between child protection systems and services for women survivors of violence, including:*

- Professionals who care for children should be prepared (i.e., trained, equipped, institutionally supported and willing) to respond appropriately to cases of IPV against mothers, including provision of non-judgemental [first-line support](#) using the 'LIVES' approach¹²⁸ and referral services, as recommended by WHO.¹⁴⁸
- Conversely, professionals who provide services to women and adolescents girls should be prepared to understand the needs of children whose mothers experience IPV. This includes laws about reporting, how to refer to and interact with child protection authorities, and how to help survivors and their children access services, including parenting support.

¹²⁸ LIVES stands for Listen, Inquire about needs and concerns, Validate, Enhance safety and Support.

- Child protection systems should provide clear guidance, training and support to professionals so they can respond appropriately to children at risk of harm in situations of family violence and be prepared to intervene in ways that minimize separation of children from non-abusing parents. In some settings there is a need to reform discriminatory policies that prosecute survivors for 'failing to protect' their children from witnessing violence that they (survivors) experience while failing to hold perpetrators of said violence accountable.
- Increase investment and develop evidence-based guidance for practical and effective ways forward, tailored to each country or local setting.

Services for adolescent girls and boys who experience sexual violence

As noted earlier, adolescent help-seeking for sexual violence is low, and barriers to care are gendered. Victims may need services from multiple sectors, but the health sector plays a particularly critical role. International organizations have developed substantial guidance in recent years to strengthen health systems' and providers' capacity to respond to violence against children and adolescents.^{94,149} However, this remains an area that needs attention, as noted in a regional analysis of health system capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁵⁰

Gender-responsive services for adolescents could be strengthened by:

Helping all sectors strengthen their service responses to violence against all adolescents in ways that are gender- and age-appropriate. There is a particular need to ensure that health services conform with WHO clinical guidelines for responding to children and adolescents who have been sexually abused⁹⁴ and the WHO Global plan of action to strengthen health system responses to violence against women, girls and children.¹⁴⁹ There is also a need to ensure that child protection systems collaborate with services for adult survivors to ensure that *adolescent girls and boys* receive services appropriate for their age and are not lost within the gaps between adult and child-centred services. Strengthening the capacity of and supporting the health and well-being of health-care providers to offer a first-line response is a key component of such efforts.¹⁵¹

Finally, it should be noted that SDG 3.7 calls on Member States to provide universal access (which includes adolescents) to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes. Attention to gender and violence within these services is particularly important.

h. Community mobilization and social norms change

Recent reviews on evidence about changing social norms in the context of violence prevention highlight the need to move beyond individuals to address structural inequalities.¹⁵² A 2020 systematic review of programmes targeting gender inequality and restrictive gender norms noted that: "programmes most frequently focused on improving the individual power of the beneficiaries, rather than working on broader systems of inequality."¹¹¹ Meanwhile, that same review noted that the programmes showing the greatest potential were those that *transcended individual change strategies, included multiple stakeholders, implemented diversified strategies, and fostered critical awareness and participation across the community.*¹¹¹

Examples of ways to strengthen gender-transformative work in this area include:

- Ensure that community mobilization and social norms programming reflect up-to-date lessons learned about effective gender transformation and violence prevention.
- Prioritize initiatives working at multiple levels of the ecological framework and across multiple sectors, targeting institutions and power structures that shape and maintain gender norms.
- Increase coordination/integration among social change initiatives focusing on gender transformation, violence against children and adolescents and violence against women.

i. Economic empowerment of women and girls

Economic empowerment of women and girls, originally designed to reduce poverty and gender inequality, has gained attention for potential to prevent violence. Researchers have explored potential for microfinance to reduce IPV^{155–157} and for cash transfers to households with children or adolescents to reduce IPV, violent discipline and/or violence against adolescent girls.¹⁵⁸ Economic empowerment of women and girls alone does not always reduce violence, however; and in some cases has been found to provoke a violent backlash.^{105,155–158} Researchers have, therefore, called for combining economic empowerment with gender-transformative strategies.¹⁰⁸

Examples of opportunities to strengthen gender-responsive and gender-transformative social protection and economic empowerment programmes:

- Increase investment in programmes that combine gender-transformative strategies within social protection and economic empowerment programmes.
- Continue building the evidence base on integrating attention to gender and violence within social protection programming.
- Build partnerships across different sectors that include women’s organizations and even the private sector to improve gender equality and family-friendly workplaces.
- Ensure that social protection initiatives designed to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 integrate attention to VAW and VAC/A within programme designs and evaluations.

j. Gender-responsive caregiver support

Improving the quality of parent–child relationships and promoting positive (rather than violent) discipline is an important emerging area of prevention, through strategies such as home visits for new parents, community-based parenting support programmes for mothers and fathers, and multi-level strategies that include behaviour change communication.^{2,160,161} Evidence about effective programming in this area is growing,^{104,162} but is still limited, as is the number of parenting programmes that explicitly address violence, much less gender transformation.¹¹⁵ Many questions remain about how to support adult and adolescent mothers who are parenting children in the context of IPV, particularly in low-resource settings, although researchers have begun exploring this question.^{61,103} IPV against adolescent girls who have begun childbearing is an area that often falls between the gaps in the fields of child protection and VAW, even though it is essential for protecting the health and rights of children and adolescents.¹⁶³

Opportunities to contribute to this area of work include:

Staying abreast of evolving evidence and helping turn research into action at the country level as lessons emerge about how caregiver support programmes can strengthen attention to:

- gender transformation;
- gender socialization of children;
- IPV prevention and response; and d) ways to meet the needs of adolescent parents and women who are parenting in the context of IPV.

k. Gender-transformative programming for adolescents

Knowledge about effective gender-transformative programming among adolescent girls and boys is still limited, particularly from LMICs, highlighting a need for more rigorous research.^{110,111} A 2020 systematic review of what works to prevent VAW/G assessed programmes aimed at individual norms and behaviour change and concluded that school-based interventions to prevent dating or sexual violence showed evidence of effectiveness when well designed and executed; working with men and boys (alone) produced conflicting evidence; and brief ‘bystander’ interventions had no effect.¹⁰⁸ Many programmes have integrated gender-transformative programming for girls into other strategies (e.g., cash-transfer programmes), with emerging evidence of effectiveness, as noted earlier.¹⁵⁹

Strengthening individual knowledge, skills, economic and educational opportunities appears to empower girls and women and contribute to greater gender equality in society.⁵⁷ However, a long-standing feminist critique of violence prevention targeted at individual girls or women (alone) argues that such approaches (explicitly or unwittingly) place the “onus for prevention on potential victims, possibly obscuring the responsibility of perpetrators.”¹⁶⁴ This is not only philosophically problematic, but likely to be ineffective.¹⁶⁵

As noted throughout this paper, systematic reviews of the evidence suggest that programmes aiming to change harmful gender norms seem to work best when they address multiple levels of the ecological framework, including not only individuals, but also multiple stakeholder groups, whole systems and the broader structural contexts of inequality.^{111,152,166}

Opportunities to strengthen this area of work include:

- Monitoring emerging lessons learned from the peer-reviewed evidence and helping countries integrate best practices in gender-transformative work as they emerge.
- Integrating individual change interventions into strategies targeting other levels of the ecological framework.

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Annex A. Global research initiatives working to synthesize what is known about effective (or at least promising) violence prevention and response

Know Violence Against Children	A global learning initiative that examined causes, consequences, and evidence-based strategies to prevent childhood violence, including intersections between violence against children and violence against women; findings are available from peer reviewed articles and a global report: <i>Ending Violence in Childhood: Overview, Global Report 2017</i> .
Together for Girls	A global partnership of governments, UN entities (including UNICEF) and private sector organizations working on violence against children and adolescents, with priority focus on sexual violence against girls. They build the knowledge base through national surveys and publications such as: <i>What works to prevent sexual violence against children</i> .
What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls	A global programme working to expand evidence on violence against women and girls in low- and middle-income countries. They aim to synthesize what is known about effective interventions, test innovations and mobilize effective global responses. In 2020, they published: <i>A rigorous global evidence review of interventions to prevent violence against women and girls</i> .
Sexual Violence Research Initiative	The world's largest research network on VAW and VAC/A provides a space to connect, share research, influence policies and improve lives of those who have experienced violence. SVRI funds research, builds research capacity and promotes partnerships. Their website (www.svri.org) provides a large body of programming guidance.

Gender-Responsive Social Protection

Ruth Graham-Goulderⁱ

ⁱ *Social Protection Expert, Programme Group (PG), UNICEF*

What is gender-responsive social protection?

Social protection is strongly associated with protecting people as they face idiosyncratic or covariate shocks. Idiosyncratic shocks are the result of changes specific to individuals and their households. They may be the result of an individual transitioning to a new stage in their life cycle (such as pregnancy or old age) or a change in employment status. Covariate shocks affect communities or societies on a larger scale; examples include catastrophic floods and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social protection tends to refer to four key domains of practice: social transfers (which may be universal or targeted cash transfers or in-kind support); social insurance (such as health insurance); labour-market policies and programmes (such as employment guarantee schemes); and the provision of non-cash social welfare services.¹²⁹

Social protection interventions are not only a tool for addressing economic risks, but also social vulnerability, including social exclusion, discrimination, and human rights. In addition to its protective, preventative, and promotive functions, social protection is also considered a tool for transformation as it supports multisectoral and, in some contexts, transformative outcomes.¹³⁰

Gender-responsive social protection addresses sets of specific gendered needs and risks that children and adults face. Achieving these goals will require a progressive approach in different contexts. While progress has been made, there is not yet a sector-specific global target or quantifiable metrics to assess the success of this work.

Delivering the Sustainable Development Goals for all

Social protection – its policies, programmes and systems – is essential to delivering results on many of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the first (“to end poverty in all its forms, everywhere”). It has been identified as a key accelerator for delivering results for children and women at different ages and stages of the lifecycle, and it is critical to promoting gender equality.

If well-designed and implemented, social protection programmes can address gendered lifecycle transitions, such as a girl’s transition from primary to secondary school status, or adolescents transitioning to adulthood and accessing labour markets and income-generating activities, becoming pregnant, or experiencing the redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work (which is globally and in every country undertaken disproportionately by women).¹³¹

Social protection interventions can increase girls’ and women’s access to key education, health, and SRHR services; gender-based violence prevention and support; and social and multiple care services.¹³² They can also contribute to enhancing and making more visible women’s economic and social roles at an individual and community level. This includes addressing financial barriers to

¹²⁹ UNICEF. 2019. *Global Social Protection Framework*. New York, NY: UNICEF.

¹³⁰ Devereux, S., and Sabates-Wheeler, R. 2004. *IDS Working Paper 232: Transformative Social Protection*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

¹³¹ ILO. 2018. *Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work*. Geneva: International Labour Organization. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_633135.pdf

¹³² Bastagli, F., Hagen-Zanker, J., Harman, L., Barca, V., Sturge, G., and Schmidt, T. with Pellerano, L. 2016. *Cash transfers: what does the evidence say?: A rigorous review of programme impact and of the role of design and implementation features*. London: ODI. <https://www.odi.org/publications/10505-cash-transfers-what-does-evidence-say-rigorous-review-impacts-and-role-design-and-implementation>

access through cash transfers, health insurance coverage or other social protection interventions, and enhancing demand through other aspects of social protection programmes, including messaging and integrated behaviour change components.

Evidence increasingly points to the role that social protection can play in increasing women's empowerment, decision-making, and labour-market participation; reducing IPV; supporting improvements in adolescent girls' mental health; recognizing, supporting, and even redistributing care work; and addressing some of the drivers of harmful practices such as child marriage.^{133, 134,}

^{135, 136} The scale and nature of impacts varies by context and quality of implementation – a critical and often overlooked aspect of programming.

Potential to deliver more at scale

Importantly, national social protection systems can produce results at scale. Social protection represents a significant share of national government spending – for developing countries, an average of 1.5 per cent of GDP is spent on social assistance programmes alone.¹³⁷ UNICEF supports governments and individuals in over 115 countries to develop, adapt, and evaluate these systems in the following ways:

- Systems strengthening through policy, strategy, legislation, coordination, and financing in 95 countries;
- Evidence, research, and analysis, in 87 countries;
- Design and implementation of cash transfer programmes, in 56 countries;
- Social welfare workforce strengthening, in 56 countries;
- Management Information System development and integration for better identification and outreach, in 53 countries;
- Shock-responsive social protection, in 52 countries;
- Cash plus, including integrated cash programming with education, health, nutrition, and child protection components, in 51 countries.

UNICEF Innocenti's [conceptual framework](#) for gender-responsive age-sensitive social protection (GRASSP) offers an integrated view of the interlinkages between gender and social protection by mapping out opportunities and mechanisms through which social protection can contribute intentionally to girls' and women's needs and address some of the drivers of vulnerability, gender inequality, and poverty.¹³⁸ [UNICEF's GRASSP research programme](#)¹³⁹ will generate important findings that UNICEF can draw on to shape new social protection interventions. Three GRASSP research streams

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Buller, A. M., Peterman, A., Ranganathan, M., Bleile, A., Hidrobo, M., and Heise, L. 2018. "A Mixed-Methods Review of Cash Transfers and Intimate Partner Violence in Low and Middle-Income Countries." *The World Bank Research Observer*, 33(2), 218-258. <https://academic.oup.com/wbro/article/33/2/218/5091868>

¹³⁵ For evidence briefs, working papers, etc., on gender and gender-based violence from The Transfer Project see: <https://transfer.cpc.unc.edu/gender-gender-based-violence/>

¹³⁶ Hagqvist, E., Nordenmark, M., Pérez, G., Trujillo Alemán, S., and Gillander Gådin, K. 2017. "Parental leave policies and time use for mothers and fathers: a case study of Spain and Sweden." *Society, Health & Vulnerability*, 8:1, DOI: [10.1080/20021518.2017.1374103](https://doi.org/10.1080/20021518.2017.1374103).

¹³⁷ World Bank Group. 2019. "World Bank Social Protection Overview." Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialprotection/overview#:~:text=The%20World%20Bank%20Group's%20Social,works%2C%20and%20school%20feeding%20programs>

¹³⁸ UNICEF. 2020. Gender-Responsive Age-Sensitive Social Protection: A conceptual framework, *Innocenti Working Papers* no. 2020-10, Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1116-gender-responsive-age-sensitive-social-protection-a-conceptual-framework.html>

¹³⁹ GRASSP aims to improve the conceptualization, measurement and analysis of gender equality outcomes, including around gender norms and empowerment; unpack change pathways by exploring design and implementation features within social protection programmes; and investigate how to institutionalize gender into social protection systems. More information can be found on the programme website <https://www.unicef-irc.org/research/gender-responsive-and-age-sensitive-social-protection/>

are exploring what gender and social protection interventions work, and how and why they work, and closing gaps in knowledge around the impacts of design features of social protection on gender equality outcomes. This builds on important work led by UNICEF and key partners, including through the Transfer Project. The research pipeline represents a significant opportunity to shift practice in social protection and gender equality programmes.

COVID-19: urgency and opportunity

The socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is threatening a decade or more of progress for child rights.¹⁴⁰ The pandemic is likely to have a devastating impact on the lives of millions of girls and boys, affecting everything from poverty, food insecurity and access to education, to child protection outcomes and job prospects as they reach adulthood – culminating in long-lasting deterioration of human capital investment and development.¹⁴¹ It is thought that 140 million additional children fell into monetary poverty by the end of 2020.¹⁴²

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a deep crisis of care facing millions of girls and women who continue to carry the burden of unpaid care work in households and communities.¹⁴³ Before the pandemic adolescent girls were less likely than boys to attend secondary school, transition to work or be involved in skills or training opportunities, and spend more time performing household chores than boys their age. Their risk of gender-based violence including child marriage, intimate partner violence, and sexual exploitation has deepened, and expanded dedicated efforts are needed in response.^{144, 145} With countries and territories across the globe introducing or scaling up over one thousand social protection measures in responses to these urgent needs,¹⁴⁶ the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of recognizing the need for social protection to be established as a fundamental right and core sectoral area.

Current evidence

The available evidence demonstrates the many gains that social protection can deliver for girls, women, and families.^{147, 148, 149} Much of this evidence comes from cash transfer or cash plus programming in particular, notably in stable or fragile contexts rather than humanitarian crises. The positive effects of cash transfer programmes include:

¹⁴⁰ <https://data.unicef.org/resources/rapid-situation-tracking-covid-19-socioeconomic-impacts-data-viz/>

¹⁴¹ Silwal, A.R., Engilbertsdottir, S., Cuesta, J., Newhouse, D., and Stewart, D. 2020. Poverty & Equity Discussion Paper. Global Estimate of Children in Monetary Poverty: An Update. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Global-Estimate-of-Children-in-Monetary-Poverty-An-Update.pdf>

¹⁴² UNICEF and Save the Children. 2020. Children in Monetary Poor Households and COVID-19: Technical Note. New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-in-monetary-poor-households-and-covid-19/>

¹⁴³ UN Women. 2020. Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women. New York, NY: UN Women. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women>

¹⁴⁴ UNICEF. 2020. Gender-Responsive Social Protection During COVID-19: Technical Note. New York, NY: UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/documents/gender-responsive-social-protection-during-covid-19c>

¹⁴⁵ UNFPA with Avenir Health, Johns Hopkins University, and Victoria University. 2020. Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage. New York, NY: UNFPA. <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/impact-covid-19-pandemic-family-planning-and-ending-gender-based-violence-female-genital>

¹⁴⁶ Gentilini, U., Almenfi, M., Orton, I., and Dale, P. 2020. Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33635>

¹⁴⁷ Bastagli, F. et al. 2016

¹⁴⁸ Camilletti, 2020, Social Protection and Its Effects on Gender Equality: A literature review, Innocenti Working Papers no. 2020-16. <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1120-social-protection-and-its-effects-on-gender-equality-a-literature-review.html>

¹⁴⁹ 'Cash plus' refers to regular cash transfer programming delivered in combination with other integrated components that seek to target and augment results across a range of outcomes (particularly beyond monetary poverty).

- Reducing monetary poverty at the household level, with important benefits for women. These benefits include increasing women’s savings and access to productive assets and, in some cases, improving women’s intra-household decision-making and bargaining power (including increased decision-making power of expenditure within the household as well as use of contraception).^{150, 151, 152}
- Improving school enrolment and attendance, including for girls, and improving health-service utilization. The evidence is less clear on learning outcomes.¹⁵³
- Reducing risky sexual behaviours, such as early sexual debut and unsafe sex; and transactional sex, with promising but mixed evidence, varying by gender and context.^{154, 155, 156}
- Reducing intimate partner violence (with greater evidence in some regions and stable contexts).¹⁵⁷
- Improving psychosocial and well-being outcomes, such as a decrease in depression and improvement in mental health.¹⁵⁸
- Reducing monetary poverty as a key driver, alongside social norms, of many aspects of multidimensional deprivations that girls may face. For example, there is limited but promising evidence of integrated social protection programmes contributing to addressing some of the socioeconomic drivers of child marriage, and research is being done to better understand the pathways that lead to positive change.^{159, 160}

In order to maximize these impacts and sustain the gains over time, cash plus programming has been identified as an area of social protection systems which may be particularly promising for producing results in the key overlapping areas of child poverty, adolescent well-being, and gender equality. As a critical first step to ensure integrated approaches and in recognition of the multiple drivers of certain outcomes, these programmes integrate cash transfers alongside other components such as life skills, parenting, behaviour change, social norms, and age-appropriate and tailored health and education interventions to deliver stronger and more transformative long-term results than a stand-alone intervention could achieve on its own.

There is critical evidence relating to the importance of design and implementation choices. For example, evidence suggests that cash transfer programmes can be more effective when the transfer size is appropriate, the transfer is regular and predictable, and the transfers are delivered over a longer period of time. There is less available evidence for these choices relating specifically to gender

¹⁵⁰ FAO. 2015. Policy Brief: The Impact of Cash Transfers on the Economic Advancement, Decision-Making and Capacity of Women. Rome: FAO. <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cedac5f4-8d33-43f0-8c8a-7fec6661e9ea/>

¹⁵¹ Natali, L., Handa, S., Peterman, A., Seidenfeld, D. and Tembo, G. on behalf of the Zambia Cash Transfer Evaluation Team. 2016. Making money work: Unconditional cash transfers allow women to save and re-invest in rural Zambia, *Innocenti Working Papers* no. 2016-02. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IWP_2016_02.pdf

¹⁵² Bastagli, F. et al. 2016

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Handa, S., Halpern, C., Pettifor, A., and Thirumurthy, H. 2014. “The Government of Kenya’s Cash Transfer Program Reduces the Risk of Sexual Debut Among Young People Age 15-25.” *PLOS ONE* 9(1):1-9. <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0085473>

¹⁵⁶ Gavrilovic, M. and Palermo, T. 2019. “Enhancing adolescents’ capabilities through adolescent- and gender-responsive social protection.” Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. <https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/1951-how-to-enhance-adolescent-lives-through-age-and-gender-responsive-social-protection.html>

¹⁵⁷ Buller, A.M. et al.

¹⁵⁸ Angeles, G., de Hoop, J., Handa, S., Kilburn, K., Milazzo, A., and Peterman, A. 2019. “Government of Malawi’s unconditional cash transfer improves youth mental health.” *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 225, pp. 108-119.

¹⁵⁹ Gavrilovic, M., Palermo, T., Valli, E., Viola, F., Vinci, V., Heissler, K., Renault, M., Guerrero Serdan, A. G., and Mussa, E. C. 2020. “Child Marriage and Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Program: Analysis of protective pathways in the Amhara region.” *Innocenti Research Report*. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

¹⁶⁰ See also summary of expert panel event on social protection and child marriage during COVID-19: evidence, emerging practice and opportunities: <https://socialprotection.org/discover/blog/social-protection-and-child-marriage-during-covid-19-evidence-practices-and>

outcomes. It is worth noting that programmes that have been rigorously evaluated were often not originally or intentionally designed with specific gender outcomes, outputs, or measurement and evaluation questions in mind.

However, when not designed or implemented with gender equality objectives in mind, and depending on context, social protection programmes may also risk contributing mixed or even negative effects for girls and women such as increased time spent in unpaid care and domestic work, especially for girls, and increased paid work, especially for boys¹⁶¹, or in some cases an increase in some forms of gender-based violence such as emotional abuse.¹⁶² Evidence must be understood in context. What is known strongly reinforces the need for the design, implementation, and measurement and evaluation of social protection programming to be gender-responsive in order to do no harm as well as to pursue the more transformative potential of social protection for girls and women. There are also lessons learned from humanitarian contexts, such as, for example, GBV risk mitigation in emergencies. Policymakers and practitioners are increasingly advising governments to design and implement programmes that are responsive to gendered needs and equity-driven, including adopting gendered risk mitigation measures to protect girls and women and investing in long-term sustainably financed programmes to deliver results.

Knowledge gaps

Greater investment is needed to close the many research gaps, particularly in the area of specific design and implementation features to better support gender equality objectives. For example, further research is needed on the benefits and risks of making transfers conditional on certain behaviours versus focused messaging and “labelling” of cash transfers related to particular objectives.¹⁶³ Evidence gaps also remain regarding the sustainability and longevity of these programmes, what impact graduation approaches may have on gender equality outcomes,¹⁶⁴ and how to effectively and sustainably scale up gender-responsive approaches. At present, cash plus programming is largely undertaken in the form of small-scale pilot programmes and they are not always evaluated through rigorous, mixed-methods research. More evidence is needed to understand what combinations of components and modalities are likely to be most effective in driving gender-responsive or transformative results in cash plus, and to better understand effective models to inform scale up at the national level.

There is need for a better understanding of the relationship between social protection and gendered poverty;¹⁶⁵ gender-based violence; psychological well-being; gender-responsive working arrangements; intra-household distribution of caretaking and domestic work; and links with other sectors such as child protection and health. Cross-cutting priority research areas with significant gaps in knowledge also include the impact of social protection on gender norms and practices; appropriate measures of empowerment across the lifecycle; and evidence on gender in social protection programming in conflict and humanitarian contexts.¹⁶⁶ There is a strong case for investing in more research to address the gaps in knowledge for different forms of social protection beyond social assistance, where there has been less investment to date.

¹⁶¹ See Dammert, Ana C., Jacobus de Hoop, Eric Mvukiyeye, and Furio C. Rosati. 2018. “Effects of Public Policy on Child Labor: Current Knowledge, Gaps, and Implications for Program Design.” *World Development* 110: 104–23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.05.001>. When public policies such as public works programmes or cash transfers are designed to increase productive investments by household, this may unintentionally increase the risk of child labour, especially for boys who support their households in undertaking such productive activities, and unpaid care and domestic work, especially for girls.

¹⁶² Bastagli, F. et al. 2016

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Graduation approaches’ refer to programmes that aim to move individuals out of extreme poverty and onto sustained livelihoods by providing an intensive and holistic package of support. Experts emphasize that this cannot be driven by short-term objectives to withdraw support from programme participants as soon as they reach a minimum threshold.

¹⁶⁵ Including further exploration of the impact of social transfers on poverty in different types of households.

¹⁶⁶ Results of the survey can be found at <https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/can-social-protection-be-a-driver-of-gender-equality/>

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UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti

Via degli Alfani, 58 – 50121

Florence, Italy

Tel: (+39) 055 20 330

Fax: (+39) 055 2033 220

florence@unicef.org

www.unicef-irc.org

@UNICEFInnocenti

facebook.com/UnicefInnocenti

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