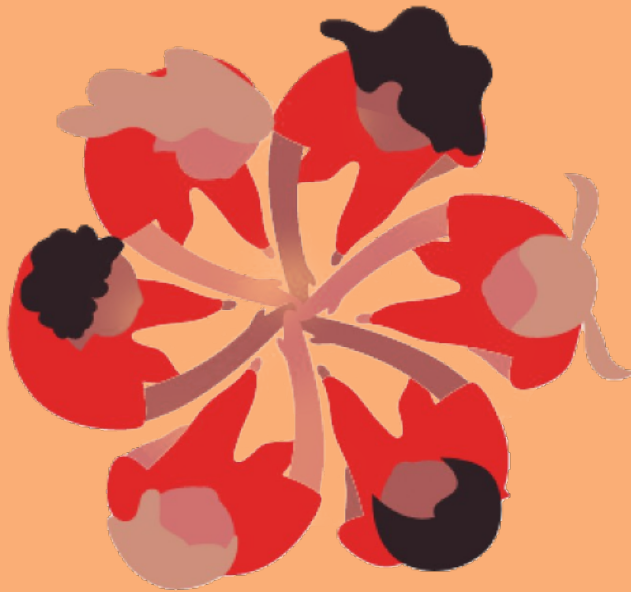




ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

RESPOND - ADVOCATE - PREVENT



Guidance and practical tools on how to take action

New York, May 2021

The information in this booklet is not designed to replace expert advice on any topic covered. While every care has been taken to ensure the information is accurate at the time of publication, IPA takes no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

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FOREWORD

The International Presentation Association (IPA) is an NGO with Economic and Social Status at the United Nations (ECOSOC) since 2000.

As a network of Presentation Sisters and Presentation People present in twenty countries, Presentation Ministries focus on ensuring human rights through advocacy and direct service to people. Our unique mission is *"to channel our resources, so that we can speak and act in partnership with others for Global Justice from a contemplative stance, in a spirit of oneness with the whole of creation"*. The IPA's Goal is: *"to honour and advance the rights of women and children, indigenous and tribal people and the Earth"*.

In early 2020 IPA identified **"Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children"** as its UN specific Advocacy Focus. The focus emerged from the IPA Priority Action "Women and Children", intersecting with IPA's Priority Actions to "Honour and Advance the rights of indigenous and tribal people and the rights of the Earth" as well as linking the Advocacy Focus with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

Our IPA work was almost derailed by the irruption of the Covid -19 global pandemic, until we realised this only made the IPA Goal and IPA UN Advocacy Focus even more relevant: *"the pandemic has functioned as an eye-opening disruption laying bare everything that is already broken in our social and economic system"* (Otto Scharmer). The latest available data from the World Health Organisation (WHO) confirms that *"Violence against women is causing harm to millions of women and their families and has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Violence against women cannot be stopped with a vaccine"* (Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Chief).

I warmly welcome the production of this **"Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children – Respond – Advocate – Prevent"** booklet, written and designed by the IPA's UN Representative at the UN, Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki. This Guidance and practical tools will certainly make an important contribution to addressing the issue of Violence Against Women and Children through effective actions.

May we continuously be awakened with a global consciousness, to the darkness, woundedness and pain of our world, present and active, standing with people in their struggles, while speaking and acting for justice, healing and hope for all.

Sincerely,



Ann Marie Quinn PBVM, Executive Director
International Presentation Association

Violence against women and children is a serious human rights violation that occurs at alarming rates worldwide. Available data indicate that women's and children's experience of violence is widespread and takes different forms. The COVID-19 pandemic and the confined living conditions of lockdown, with severe health, economic and social impacts, have amplified existing inequalities and have worsened the existing crisis of violence against women and children worldwide. The empowerment of women and children is essential in eliminating gender-based violence.

Members of the International Presentation Association (IPA) are leaders in their missions and professions, working in partnerships with women, children and their communities to educate and empower them with skills in all aspects. In countries of their presence, the Presentation Sisters, along with Presentation People, empower women and children in indigenous and non-indigenous communities, in rural and urban areas, to take action against their human rights' violations such as human trafficking, domestic and sexual violence, kidnapping and murder, by engaging them in leadership programs, community education, home-based counseling, advocacy and networking initiatives. They also support women and children seeking migrant, refugee and asylum status by building skills that help them to integrate and participate in future roles in host communities. In collaboration with other partners in local contexts, IPA further builds capacities to raise awareness about putting an end to forced marriages and about the necessity of establishing emergency and long-term accommodation support to young women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Presentation Sisters and People, have actively engaged in various projects for minimizing violence against women and children.

Women and children of all ages and backgrounds must not be seen only as victims, but as agents of change and equal partners in eliminating violence. Formal and informal education is a powerful tool not only in responding to and advocating against violence, but also in dismantling gender stereotypes, hence preventing violence from occurring before it even starts.

With this in mind, the International Presentation Association developed this booklet as a guiding document which provides information and tools, a helpful resource to be used in your work on the elimination of violence against women and children. Ending violence against women and children includes primary responding to violence, advocating for eradicating violence, and preventing violence before it even occurs. The information and activities recommended below can be used on their own or together as a step-by-step guide to any project design. The booklet has been designed for individuals, groups, organizations and institutions across different spheres and at all levels that are actively working to end violence against women and children. It can be used as a toolkit to support projects and initiatives of all types and sizes, since it consists, inter alia, of a number of tools and tips that can be put together responding to a specific situation.

We hope that you will find this booklet useful and that you will further build upon the ideas presented to strengthen your work on the elimination of violence against women and children and on achieving gender equality.

Elimination of violence against women and children can provide substantial health, social, and economic benefits, both nationally and globally, as well as for subsequent generations, in order for everybody to experience healthy and prosperous lives free from violence.

Despoina Afroditi Milaki

Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki, NGO Representative at the UN,
International Presentation Association

ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
EVAWC	Elimination of violence against women and children
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GBV	Gender-based violence
IPA	International Presentation Association
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization

I. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and children is a serious and complex human rights violation requiring urgent action. Violence affects women's and children's ability to enjoy their rights and freedoms. Women and children experience violence in a variety of contexts: the family, school, community and broader society. Violence against women and children has devastating lifelong effects, including on their physical and mental health. Beyond its impact on individuals, violence against women and children has serious and negative consequences upon families, communities, societies and entire countries, carrying severe economic and social costs.

It is an issue that occurs at alarming rates worldwide. Available data indicate that women's and children's experience of violence is widespread and takes different forms. To name few, almost 1 in 3 women, an estimated 736 million women, have experienced intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at some point in their lifetime.¹ An estimated 650 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday.² About half the world's children are subjected to physical punishment at home, as well as 1 in 3 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 have been victims of intimate partner violence.³

Discrimination against women and children and inequality in the distribution of power are the main root causes of violence. Such divisions in societies are formed and further reinforced through social norms and gender stereotypes that promote acceptance of violence. Such gender norms generate discrimination which then leads to violence. In turn, violence reinforces discrimination and gender stereotypes and norms, while at the same time it may further develop attitudes and beliefs on gender relations. It is a perpetual cycle. Addressing its drivers and structural causes is the only way of putting an end to violence against women and children.

Since its outbreak, the COVID-19 global pandemic has only intensified and worsened the existing crisis of violence against women and children. The confined living conditions of lockdown, with severe health, economic and social impacts, have amplified existing inequalities and power imbalances and have disproportionately affected women and children worldwide. The physical distancing measures imposed in response to the pandemic have greatly increased the risk of domestic violence and online abuse. With 90 countries in lockdown by early April 2020, four billion people were sheltered at home meaning that many women were trapped at home with their abuser. According to respective data from the UN Women Shadow Pandemic report (2020), domestic violence cases have increasingly been reported globally.⁴ The UN Women has

described the increase in domestic abuse as a *shadow pandemic of violence against women* that was growing amidst the COVID-19 crisis. It has also been acknowledged that domestic violence cases have been widely under-reported, and the COVID-19 pandemic has been making reporting even harder, because of limitations on women's access to phones and helplines and disrupted public services like police, justice and social services.⁵

In addition, the movement restrictions and stay-at-home orders have increased the internet use by children and women as well, which consequently resulted to an increase in online abuse and harms, including sexual exploitation and cyber-bullying. Further, quarantine measures, isolation and loss of income within the family have increased the levels of stress and anxiety in parents resulting to heightened risk of violence against children, as well as to increased violence between the parents witnessed by the children. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced more than 1.5 billion children and youth out of school. School closures have not only widened the learning inequalities, but have also seriously impacted children by cutting them off from one of their usual sources of support. According to a WHO report, spikes in calls to helplines about child abuse have been observed alongside declines in the number of child abuse cases referred to child protection services.⁶ Still, the phenomenon of violence against children remains largely under-reported due to many reasons, including the fact that many children victims are unable or unwilling to share their experiences either because they are too young or too vulnerable to do so.

As of May 2021, it is relatively soon to identify how the new reality, post-COVID, will be by the ending of lockdowns and the re-opening of all societies worldwide; Hence it is challenging to point out what the long-term impact on the issue of violence against women and children will be. It may take years to respond to and overcome the economic recession and social fallout resulted by the pandemic, a fact that could exacerbate poverty, inequalities and insecurity. These effects could potentially have a severe impact on the factors that increase the likelihood that violence against women and children will occur.

Many advances for women and children have been achieved. However, progress in strengthening women's and children's rights has not gone far or fast enough. Much more needs to be done collectively and worldwide, to prioritize addressing violence against women and children in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts and meeting the promise of gender equality.

II. WHAT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Violence against women is *'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life'*, according to article 1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993). (A/RES/48/104)

Violence against children is *'all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse'*, according to article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). (A/RES/44/25). The World Health Organization, in its World Report on Violence and Health, used as the definition of violence against children *'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity'* (2002).

Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. While women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted.⁷ When directed against girls or boys because of their biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, any of these types of violence can also constitute gender-based violence.

III. FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Types of violence against women⁸

In a variety of contexts and in diverse spheres, women experience violence which manifests itself in many forms.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence, also called domestic abuse or intimate partner violence, is any pattern of behaviour that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. It encompasses all physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women globally.

Domestic violence can include the following:

Economic violence

Economic violence involves making or attempting to make a person financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money, and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment.

Emotional violence

Emotional violence includes undermining a person's sense of self-worth through constant criticism; belittling one's abilities; name-calling or other verbal abuse; damaging a partner's relationship with the children; or not letting a partner see friends and family.

Psychological violence

Psychological violence involves causing fear by intimidation; threatening physical harm to self, partner or children; destruction of pets and property; "mind games"; or forcing isolation from friends, family, school and/or work.

Physical violence

Physical violence involves hurting or trying to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, burning, grabbing, pinching, shoving, slapping, hair-pulling, biting, denying medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use, or using other physical force. It may include property damage.

Sexual violence

Sexual violence involves forcing a partner to take part in a sex act when the partner does not consent.

Femicide

Femicide refers to the intentional murder of women because they are women, but may be defined more broadly to include any killings of women or girls. Femicide differs from male homicide in specific ways. For example, most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners, and involve ongoing abuse in the home, threats or intimidation, sexual violence or situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partner.



Honor killing

Honor killing is the murder of a family member, usually a woman or girl, for the purported reason that the person has brought dishonor or shame upon the family. These killings often have to do with sexual purity, and supposed transgressions on the part of female family members.

Sexual violence

Sexual violence is any sexual act committed against the will of another person, either when this person does not give consent or when consent cannot be given because the person is a child, has a mental disability, or is severely intoxicated or unconscious as a result of alcohol or drugs.

Sexual violence can include the following:

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment encompasses non-consensual physical contact, like grabbing, pinching, slapping, or rubbing against another person in a sexual way. It also includes non-physical forms, such as catcalls, sexual comments about a person's body or appearance, demands for sexual favors, sexually suggestive staring, stalking, and exposing one's sex organs.

Rape

Rape is any non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of another person with any bodily part or object. This can be by any person known or unknown to the survivor, within marriage and relationships, and during armed conflict.

Corrective rape

Corrective rape is a form of rape perpetrated against someone on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is intended to force the victim to conform to heterosexuality or normative gender identity.

Rape culture

Rape culture is the social environment that allows sexual violence to be normalized and justified. It is rooted in patriarchy and fueled by persistent gender inequalities and biases about gender and sexuality.

Human trafficking

Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means such as force, fraud, coercion, or deception. This heinous crime ensnares millions of women and girls worldwide, many of whom are sexually exploited.

Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is classified into four major types, and both the practice and the motivations behind it vary from place to place. FGM is a social norm, often considered a necessary step in preparing girls for adulthood and marriage and typically driven by beliefs about gender and its relation to appropriate sexual expression. It was first classified as violence in 1997 via a joint statement issued by WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA.

Child marriage

Child marriage refers to any marriage where one or both of the spouses are below the age of 18. It is a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses." Girls are more likely to be child brides, and consequently drop out of school and experience other forms of violence.



Online or digital violence

Online or digital violence against women refers to any act of violence that is committed, assisted or aggravated by the use of information and communication technology (mobile phones, the Internet, social media, computer games, text messaging, email, etc.) against a woman because she is a woman.

Online violence can include the following:

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the sending of intimidating or threatening messages.

Doxing

Doxing involves the public release of private or identifying information about the victim.

Non-consensual sexting

Non-consensual sexting involves the sending of explicit messages or photos without the recipient's consent.

Types of violence against children⁹

Most violence against children involves at least one of six main types of interpersonal violence that tend to occur at different stages in a child's development. When directed against girls or boys because of their biological sex or gender identity, any of these types of violence can also constitute gender-based violence. (World Health Organization, June 2020)

Maltreatment (including violent punishment) involves physical, sexual and psychological/emotional violence; and neglect of infants, children and adolescents by parents, caregivers and other authority figures, most often in the home but also in settings such as schools and orphanages.

Emotional or psychological violence includes restricting a child's movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.

Bullying (including cyber-bullying) is unwanted aggressive behaviour by another child or group of children who are neither siblings nor in a romantic relationship with the victim. It involves repeated physical, psychological or social harm, and often takes place in schools and other settings where children gather, and online.

Sexual violence includes non-consensual completed or attempted sexual contact and acts of a sexual nature not involving contact (such as voyeurism or sexual harassment); acts of sexual trafficking committed against someone who is unable to consent or refuse; and online exploitation.

Intimate partner violence involves physical, sexual and emotional violence by an intimate partner or ex-partner. Although males can also be victims, intimate partner violence disproportionately affects females. It commonly occurs against girls within child marriages and early/forced marriages. Among romantically involved but unmarried adolescents it is sometimes called “dating violence”.

Online or digital violence

Online or digital violence against children refers to any act of violence that is committed, assisted or aggravated by the use of information and communication technology (mobile phones, the Internet, social media, computer games, text messaging, email, etc.) against a child.

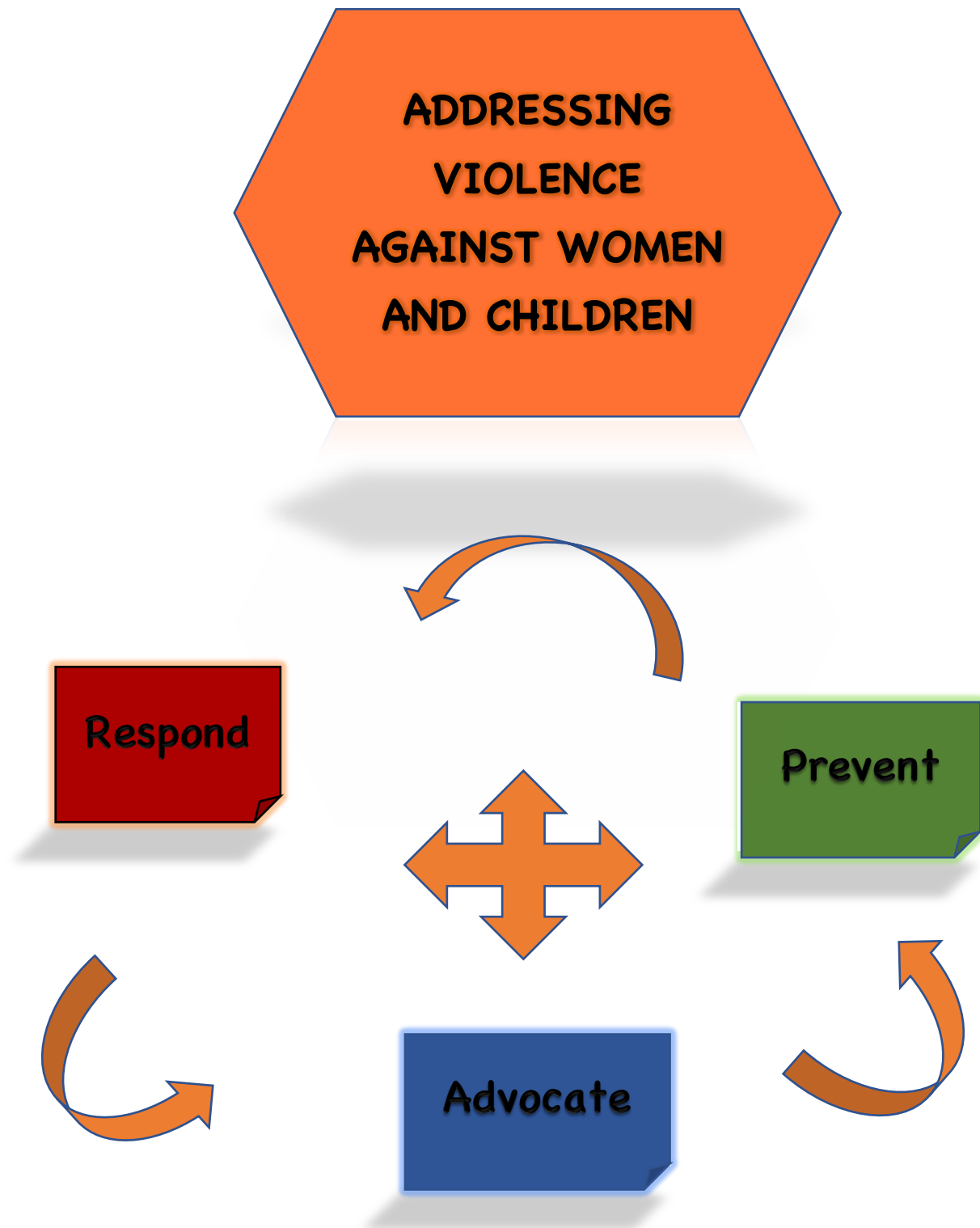


IV. Know the facts

- In 2019, 243 million women and girls aged 15–49 have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner.¹⁰
- Globally, an estimated 736 million women, almost one in three, have been subjected to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life (30% of women aged 15 and older).¹¹
- Approximately 1 billion children (half the world's children) each year are affected by physical, sexual or psychological violence, suffering injuries, disabilities and death.¹²
- About half the world's children are subjected to physical punishment at home; roughly 3 in 4 children or 300 million children between the ages of 2 and 4 years receive violent discipline by parents and other primary caregivers; half of students aged 13 to 15 experience peer violence in and around school; and 1 in 3 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 have been victims of intimate partner violence.¹³
- An estimated 750 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday.¹⁴
- Globally between 38%–50% of murders of women are committed by intimate partners.¹⁵
- The majority (55–95%) of women survivors of violence do not disclose or seek any type of services.¹⁶
- In the European Union, 45% to 55% of women have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15.¹⁷
- Worldwide, 1 in 4 (176 million) children under age 5 live with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence.¹⁸
- Every 7 minutes, somewhere in the world, an adolescent is killed by an act of violence. In 2015 alone, violence took the lives of around 82,000 adolescents worldwide.¹⁹

- In the United States, the homicide rate among non-Hispanic Black adolescent boys aged 10 to 19 is almost 19 times higher than the rate among non-Hispanic White adolescent boys.²⁰
- Women and girls represent 72% of all trafficking victims globally. In 2016, 83% of detected women victims and 72% of girl victims were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. At the same time, 50% of detected boy victims were trafficked for forced labour.²¹ The 2018 findings indicate that adult women are becoming, in proportion, less commonly detected, and the share of children has increased to over 30% of detected victims. The share of boys detected has risen significantly when compared to girls.²²
- Female genital mutilation has been performed on at least 200 million girls and women in 31 countries across three continents, with more than half of those cut living in Egypt, Ethiopia and Indonesia. Over 4 million girls are at risk of undergoing FGM annually.²³
- Cyber- bullying was found to affect 1 in 10 children. Over the past year, a third of students (36%) aged 13–15 years were involved in a physical fight with another student, and almost one in three (32%) had been physically attacked at least once.²⁴
- School-related gender-based violence is a major obstacle to universal schooling and the right to education for girls. Globally, 1 in 3 students, aged 11–15, have been bullied by their peers at school at least once in the past month, with girls and boys equally likely to experience bullying. While boys are more likely to experience physical bullying than girls, girls are more likely to experience psychological bullying.²⁵
- Globally, emotional abuse is estimated to impact the lives of millions of children all over the world, with an estimated global prevalence of 363 per 1000 children aged under 18 years, or just over 1 in every 3 children.²⁶
- Across five regions, 82% of women parliamentarians reported having experienced some form of psychological violence while serving their terms.²⁷

V. WAYS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN



1. Respond

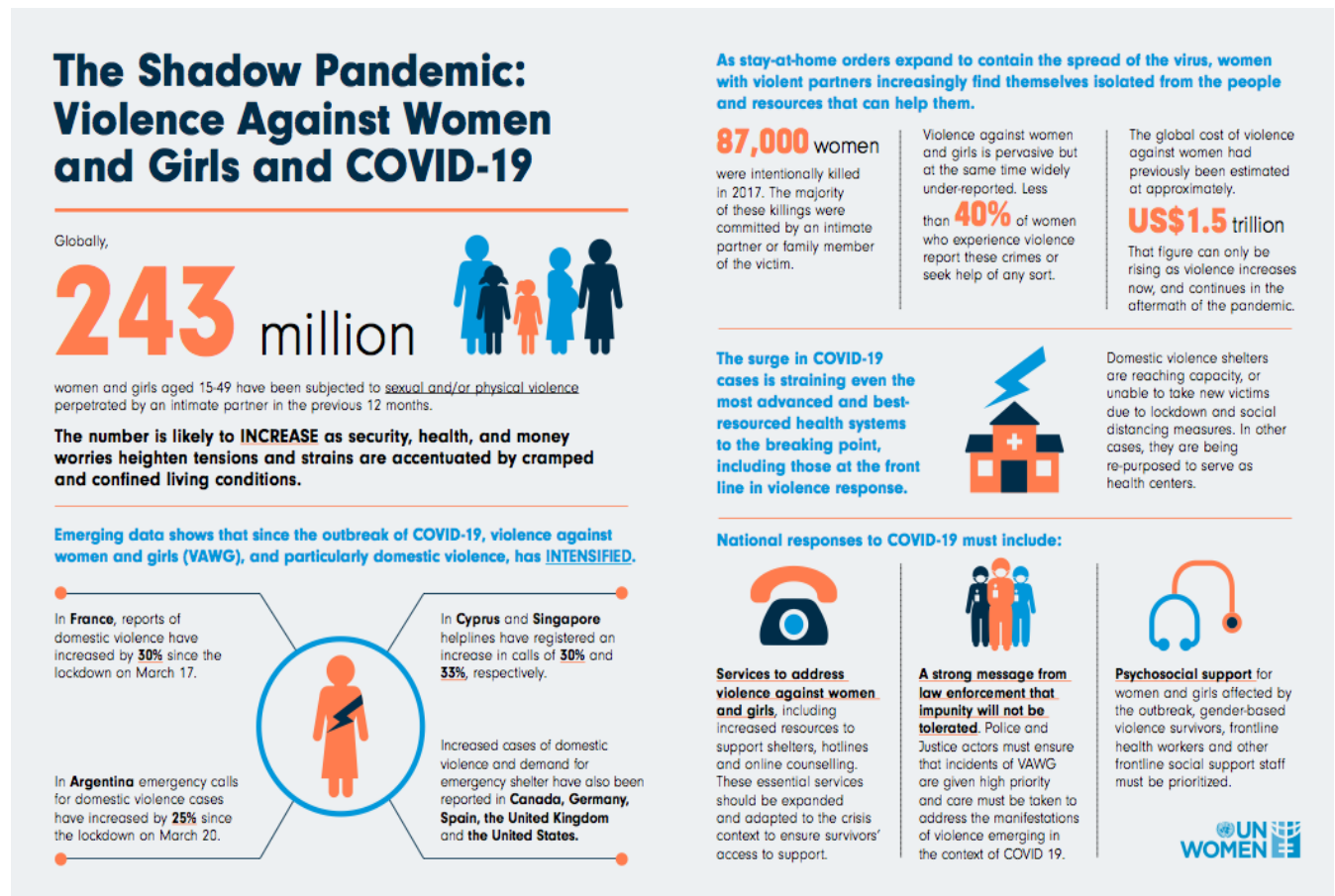
One of the most important ways to address violence against women and children is by providing the survivors who have experienced violence with immediate access to quality services. Such response services must be based upon survivors' needs and safety. Certain examples of quality and support services include:

- ✓ Health and medical services that address the immediate physical and psychological injuries resulting from violence.
- ✓ Safe houses and shelters for women and children who are escaping violence.
- ✓ Online and offline trauma counseling and psychosocial support for women and children who have experienced violence.
- ✓ Channels to assist survivors, in areas such as health, social welfare, police reporting and justice.
- ✓ Legal aid and legal literacy training for women.
- ✓ Capacity-building of 'first responders' (police, social and health care workers) to address effectively cases of violence against women and children.
- ✓ Behavioral change programmes for men for boys.



To protect the safety of a woman or a girl you believe is experiencing violence, you must seek her consent before taking action and keep her identity and experiences confidential. Only act with her permission, unless lives are in danger!

Violence against women and girls is rising globally since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Physical distancing and lockdowns help the world contain COVID-19, but it isolates women and girls from the support of family and friends when they experience violence at home. Since May 2020, UN Women has launched the *Shadow Pandemic* public awareness campaign, focusing on the global increase in domestic violence amid the COVID-19 crisis. Here is a brief UN Women infographic:



2. Advocate

There are many ways of describing and conducting advocacy. Advocacy represents a set of strategic actions that will influence the decisions, practices and policies of others. In order to eliminate violence against women and children in the long term, it is essential to advocate for policy development and legislative change.



Raise Your Voice
END VIOLENCE

What is Advocacy?

For the purpose of this booklet, one simple, overarching definition could be that advocacy is the deliberate process, based on demonstrated evidence, to directly and indirectly influence decision makers, stakeholders and relevant audiences to support and implement actions that eliminate violence against women and children, and achieve gender equality.



In other words, advocating for the elimination of violence against women and children means to raise your voice, to speak up for women's and children's rights, and to bring about changes in laws, policies, and practices that will make a positive and lasting difference to the lives of all.

PLANNING FOR ADVOCACY

Organizing your advocacy work, involves setting goals, activities and outcomes. For an effective advocacy, you need to have a good advocacy plan.

HOW DO WE BEGIN?



The advocacy goal is the long-term vision, the one that will bring the ultimate impact and will make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of women and children i.e. the elimination of violence against women and children.

The advocacy outcomes are the short-term results that must be achieved in order to reach the advocacy goal. Advocacy plans usually have multiple outcomes that need to be achieved on the way to the advocacy goal.

Certain examples of advocacy activities that you might undertake include:

- ✓ Lobbying and relationship building with decision-makers.
- ✓ Awareness raising and public campaigning.
- ✓ Networking and building partnerships with different stakeholders.
- ✓ Influencing legislation or policies to prevent, respond to and punish all forms of violence against women and children.
- ✓ Online and offline media campaigning.
- ✓ Attending and engaging in conferences and forums at a national, regional and international level.

There are many different ways to plan your advocacy work. In this toolkit, we are suggesting the implementation of the 'seven-questions model' for shaping your advocacy plan. The steps that this model indicates will help you identify where you are, where you want to go and how you will get there. It can be applied at every level, whether that would be a local, national, regional or an international one. These steps, even though are provided below in sequence, may not always occur in exactly the same order. In the end, advocacy is not a linear process, it is a cycle. There is a list of questions that every advocate must ask when planning for advocacy. These key steps are outlined in the diagram below.

STRATEGIC ADVOCACY PLANNING

Q.1: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?

Analyze the context/reality, collect evidence and identify your priorities.

Q.2: WHO CAN MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN?

Identify key targets as audience, potential allies and opponents.

Q.3: WHAT WILL BE YOUR ASKS?

Develop your advocacy message(s) for key audience.

Q.4: WHOM WILL THE AUDIENCE RESPOND TO?

Determine who will be most effective messenger(s) for your advocacy.

Q.5: HOW DO YOU GET IT TO THE AUDIENCE?

Decide how your message(s) will be delivered.

Q.6: WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Consider any challenges or potentially negative situations.

Q.7: HOW DO YOU EVALUATE YOUR IMPACT?

Monitor your advocacy, assess progress and lessons learned.

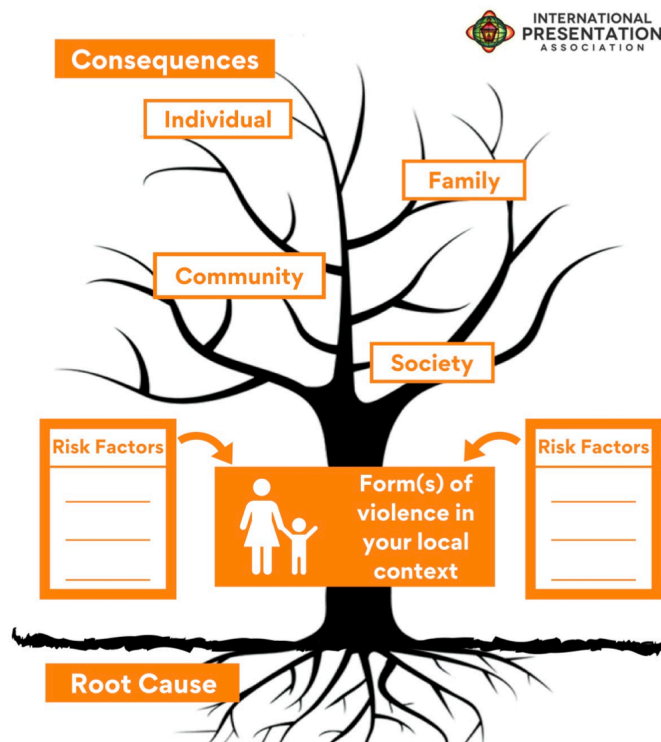
As you draw up a specific action plan and implement your advocacy work for the elimination of violence against women and children, you will need to find answers to each of the seven questions above and to constantly revisit them, even though you do not have to go through them in exactly the same order. These questions can be used for planning a long-term advocacy strategy, but also as a checklist for making a quick advocacy response. Detailed guidance and tips to assist your work through your advocacy planning process are provided below.

Q.1 WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?

While developing your advocacy plan, either at the local, national, regional or global level, it is important to analyze the situation, identify the context and prioritize external barriers and their policy-related solutions. In the process of defining more clearly what changes you want to accomplish in your own realities and contexts, it is fundamental to determine what your longer-term goal, as well as your short- and medium-term objectives, would be. Advocacy strategies may have to change as new opportunities arise or adapt to a changing external environment such as a hostile

political context. Gathering solid evidence is also important because it will provide you with legitimate arguments during your advocacy work. Credible evidence will make the key target audience more likely to take what you have to say seriously.

The 'problem and solutions' tree approach, recommended below, is a useful tool that will not only help you gain a deeper understanding of the root causes and risk factors that influence violence against women and children, but it will also help you gather information to conduct a thorough situational analysis, as well as identify possible areas where you could advocate for change.



In the problem tree, the main form or forms of violence against women and children identified in your local, national, regional or global context will be placed in the center of the tree. The roots of the tree represent the underlying causes of the identified form(s) of violence. Gender inequality, for example, and the unequal distribution of power between women and men, or girls and boys, are one of the main root causes of all forms of violence that women and children experience in their lifetime.

The risk factors are different to the root causes. Risk factors are called those that increase the likelihood that the identified form of violence against women and children will occur. It would be useful to list as many risk factors of the problem you have chosen as you can think of. The more risk factors women and children experience, the

higher the possibility will be for them to experience any form of violence. Following is a non-exhaustive list of certain examples of risk factors:

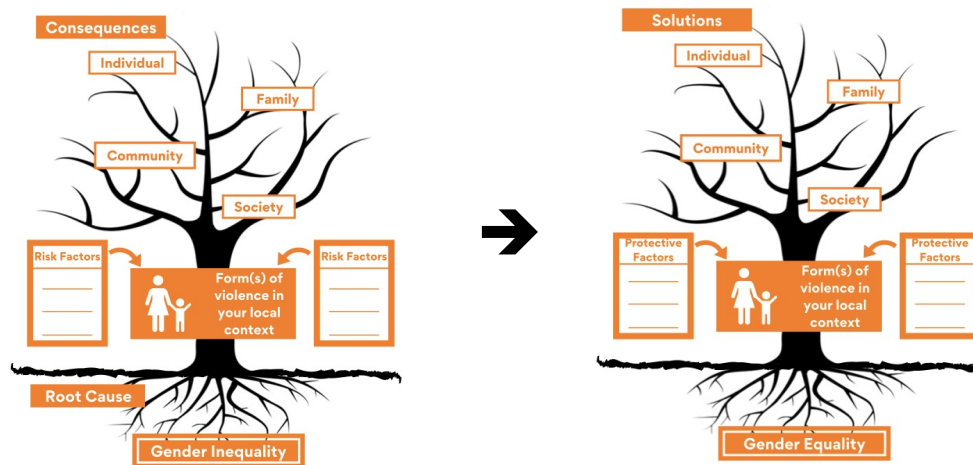
- alcohol and/or drug abuse
- poor education
- poverty
- weak legal and justice system
- harmful traditional, cultural or religious practices
- high levels of unemployment
- being forced into marriage
- witnessing or experiencing violence as a child
- migration or displacement
- conflict or post-conflict
- homelessness
- lack of awareness about violence against women and children

As a next step, you need to list the impact or the consequences of the main form(s) of violence you have chosen to examine. It will be further useful if you separate your responses into the effects at the individual, family, community and country level. Following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of consequences or impacts of violence against women and children:

- physical injuries and increased risk of diseases
- mental health issues (depression, low self-esteem)
- breakdown of the family unit or creation of a family violence cycle
- loss of productivity
- increased costs of medical and support services
- intergenerational trauma
- disrupted community cohesion and well-being
- reduced social and educational opportunities

To reverse the problem tree into a solutions tree you will have to replace the risk factors and consequences of the identified form(s) of violence against women and children with possible solutions which you could advocate for. For example, if the risk factor you pointed out is 'inadequate laws around forced child marriage', then a

possible solution will be 'developing a law provision to criminalize child marriage' or 'engaging men and boys into relevant awareness programmes'. A solutions tree reflects an overview of the interventions that need to occur to solve the identified problem.



Although it would be ideal to advocate for all the issues reflected in the problem and solutions tree analysis, to ensure better success and focused results your advocacy work should prioritize one issue at a time depending on the context and situation that you are functioning.

Q.2 WHO CAN MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN?

Determining your key target audience (potential allies and opponents) involves identifying all the partners and stakeholders that are engaged in or have the power to influence your advocacy priorities, and ultimately resolving the problem of the specified form or forms of violence against women and children in your context. Analyzing and understanding how decision-making processes work, will influence the impact and effectiveness of your advocacy plan. In some cases, you may decide to target important stakeholders outside your local or national context, such as international actors (e.g. UN agencies) that may influence a policy in your own country.

After determining your target audience, it might be useful to deepen the analysis by profiling the key stakeholders according to what their knowledge on the issue is; their interests and benefits resulting from your advocacy work; and if they support or oppose your advocacy agenda and efforts. The diagram below indicates some examples of individuals, organizations or entities that you might consider working in partnership with.



Q.3 WHAT WILL BE YOUR ASKS?

Developing the right advocacy message(s) for your target audience is important if you seek to inform and persuade people to act. To begin, you need to develop one clear primary message, which summarizes your advocacy priority and evidence-based position. It is very useful to be able to summarize your key message in three or four concise sentences. This is known as 'the one-minute message'.

Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea of your message
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the statement with few figures and easily understandable facts
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you want to achieve
Desired action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you want your key audience to do

The diagram on the left indicates what this 'one-minute message' consists of.

This primary message will then guide you to the development of further specific messages tailored to different key audiences, perhaps on different aspects of the core message.

You need to keep the message(s) clear, simple and

brief; Use precise, powerful language and active verbs; Use clear facts and numbers creatively; Encourage the audience to take action; Present a possible solution.

Q.4 WHOM WILL THE AUDIENCE RESPOND TO?

Determining an effective messenger for your advocacy matters just as much as the advocacy message itself. It can be further effective if you have two or more messengers who complement one another. It would even be more effective if you identify a messenger or messengers that will be the most credible sources in the eyes of your key audience. *"Effective advocacy delivers the right message to the right audience by the right messenger at the right time."*²⁸ Here are a few ideas for advocacy messengers:



Q.5 HOW DO YOU GET IT TO THE AUDIENCE?

There are a great variety of ways and activities in which you may get your message(s) across, based on your local context, political situation, culture or the risks that you may face when speaking out about the identified issue related to violence against women and children. One or more of these ways are as follows:



❖ Public campaigning

Public campaigning means engaging the public to support your advocacy work for the elimination of violence against women and children. Raising public awareness campaigns that promote and encourage zero tolerance attitude to any form of gender-based violence is one of the most effective ways to deliver your advocacy message. In this way, you can put pressure on and motivate the decision-makers to act on your advocacy goal and objectives. There are many appropriate and effective ways of implementing a public campaign on the elimination of violence against women and children. The most popular of these are indicated in the diagram on the left. You can select your preferred approach for mobilizing popular support based on your own context, circumstances, related risks and advocacy priorities. Many advocates today

prefer to use a mix of both offline and online campaigns to promote their message(s) towards ending violence against women and children.

❖ Online campaigning

Running an online campaign involves using digital communication platforms and tools (such as social media, websites, e-mails, mobile phones) to further your advocacy goal of eliminating violence against women and children, as well as specific advocacy objectives related to this goal.

❖ Working with the media

Engaging with the media in promoting your advocacy goal involves using (offline and online) media means such as newspapers, magazines, newsletters, posters, leaflets, pamphlets, letters to editors, opinion editorials, radio, television, videos etc. There are several media tools that you can use to this end. You can select the tool(s) you will use depending on the resources you have available and partly on the nature of your identified issue. The diagram on the right



indicates the most popular media tools. Media can not only be an advocacy tool, but also an advocacy key target as well. They can play a significant role in supporting and promoting the broader advocacy goal of ending violence against women and children, as well as more narrow relevant advocacy objectives.

❖ Lobbying

The lobbying process involves the targeted efforts to influence the decision-makers and those that have the power to change a policy towards advancing your advocacy goals and objectives. Building good long-term relationships and alliances in the political arena is essential to effectively advocate for a policy change relevant to the elimination of violence against women and children. You can approach and lobby the policy-makers either informally or formally. However, a policy change is possible to require more than one (formal and/or informal) meeting to educate and convince an official or a politician to support your ending gender-based violence agenda. Engaging partners with a previous experience in approaching and lobbying decision-makers is important as they can advise you on the best way to move forward and deliver your advocacy message(s).

Q.6 WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Every advocacy effort that pressures for any kind of policy change can lead to risk. Although all effective advocacy campaigns require some risk-taking, identifying and analyzing potential risks in your advocacy work is essential and needs to start at an early stage of your planning based on your own political environment, the target audience and the specific identified issue. Considering challenges and potentially negative situations in advance may help you select advocacy activities accordingly that minimize the impact of these risks on your organization, your colleagues or your community. Some pertinent questions that may help you discover any risks and challenges are as follows:

- ✓ What major things might go wrong?
- ✓ How could people's lives in the wider community or country be endangered?
- ✓ Could your activities put your organization and the people you work with in danger?
- ✓ What is the nature of these risks and are they different for various stakeholders implicated by your advocacy action?

After you have identified the potential risks, you need also to consider the level of

their potential impact. Then, you need to consider how likely it is for these risks to actually occur. For risks with high impact and high likelihood it is required to develop respective advocacy activities that minimize certain risks and relevant repercussions.

Q.7 HOW DO YOU EVALUATE YOUR IMPACT?

Process monitoring and impact assessment are both essential parts of your advocacy work to check effectiveness and progress, as well as to make sure key lessons are learned that will improve future endeavors. There are many ways to measure progress and evaluate your impact in advocacy. Different methods have been followed and applied by different organizations. Generally, these require an often revisit of the seven questions and respective answers of your advocacy plan to check if actions are going as planned, how effective your advocacy has been so far or to make the necessary changes. Although indicators need to be linked to specific activities and objectives, some examples of possible advocacy indicators measuring both the progress and impact of your activities, outcomes, goals and objectives towards eliminating violence against women and children, are provided below.

- ✓ Number of meetings and changes in the content of conversations with target audiences about gender-based violence.
- ✓ Types of media partnerships developed that promote gender equality.
- ✓ Policy guidelines developed on ending gender discrimination.
- ✓ Improved access to health and support services for women and children experiencing violence.
- ✓ New relationships with unlikely partners.

UN global campaigns to link your own advocacy campaign on eliminating violence against women and children

Five UN global public campaigns and projects on gender equality and elimination of violence against women and children are selectively provided below. These indicate certain examples that you can link your own advocacy campaign to, thus further supporting and advancing your own advocacy work.



The UN Secretary-General's UNiTE by 2030 to End Violence against Women campaign (UNiTE campaign), managed by UN Women, is a multi-year effort aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls around the world. It calls on governments, civil

society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, the media, and the entire UN system to join forces in addressing the global pandemic of violence against women and girls.

The UNiTE campaign has proclaimed day 25th of every month as the 'Orange Day' – a day to take action to raise awareness and prevent violence against women and girls.

The UNiTE campaign also uses the opportunity of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (November 25–December 10) to 'Orange the World'.



Since May 2020, UN Women (the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women) has launched the *Shadow Pandemic* public awareness campaign, focusing on the global increase in domestic violence amid the COVID-19 crisis. The Shadow Pandemic campaign gives specific advice on

domestic violence with a clear call to action to shine a light on the surge of domestic violence that has accompanied COVID-19 lockdowns around the world.

The Shadow Pandemic campaign consists of a comprehensive suite of social assets, including advice from experts on the ground and a Public Service announcement (PSA) film sitting at the heart of the campaign.



The HeForShe movement is a global 'solidarity campaign' that engages men and boys as agents of change for the achievement of gender equality. Young men and boys can be a part of the solution for achieving gender equality. It is based on the idea that gender inequalities weaken families, societies, nations, and the world as a whole; therefore, achieving gender equality is everyone's responsibility and all will benefit from this equality.

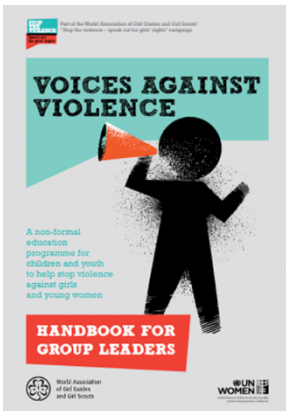
HeForShe uses online, offline, and mobile phone technology to identify and activate men and boys in every city, community, and village around the world.



Planet 50-50 by 2030
Step It Up for Gender Equality

"Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality" asks governments to make national commitments to address the challenges that are holding women and girls back from reaching their full potential by 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a comprehensive roadmap for the future of people and planet. Empowering women and girls is central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Passing new laws or strengthening existing ones is one way to Step It Up. Other actions might include creating programmes to eradicate violence against women and girls, encouraging women's participation in decision-making, investing in national action plans or policies for gender equality, creating public education campaigns to promote gender equality, and many more.



"Voices against Violence" is a co-educational curriculum designed for various age groups, from 5 to 25 years. UN Women, in partnership with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts has developed a global non-formal education curriculum to engage young people in efforts to prevent and end violence against girls and women. It provides young people with the tools and expertise to understand the root causes of violence in their communities, to educate and involve peers and others in the community to work to prevent such violence, and helps them to learn where they can access support, if they experience violence.

The youngest groups may start out with storytelling and games that prompt them to think about gender bias and stereotypes, while older age groups can organize poster competitions, visit and volunteer with local shelters, or develop local community-based campaigns and projects to address specific forms of violence against girls and women.

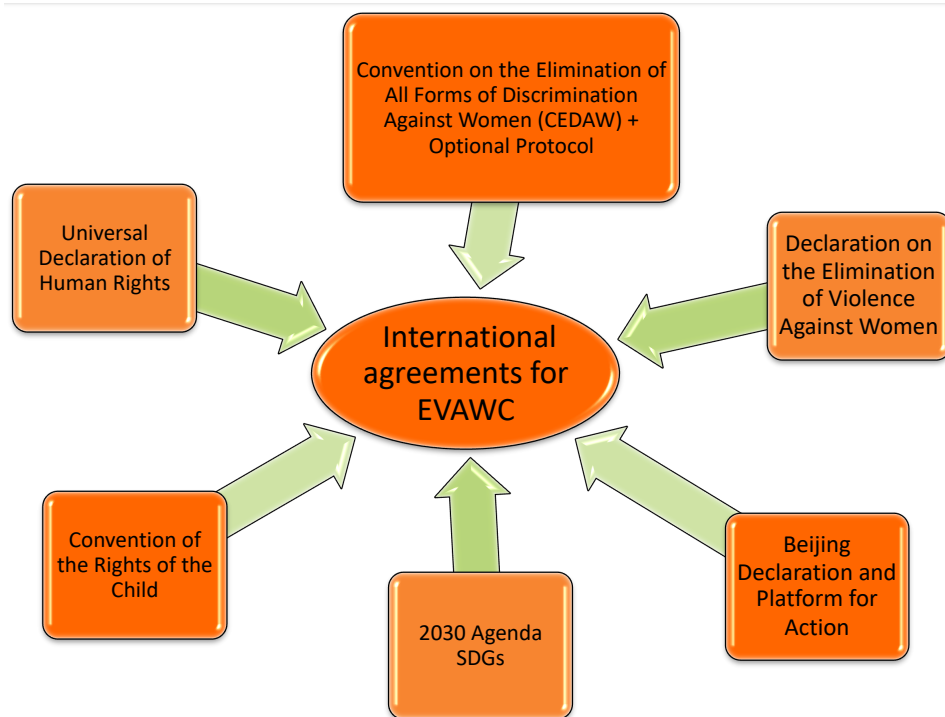


The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. The Initiative demonstrates that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in gender equality and ending violence can make a transformative difference in the lives of women and girls.

The Spotlight Initiative supports concrete measures to end violence. It gives prominence to prevention, protection and the provision of services, alongside broader efforts to ensure women's economic empowerment and participation in all aspects of society.

UN agreements for the elimination of violence against women and children (EVAWC)

There are a number of global agreements developed by the United Nations that deal with the issue of ending violence against women and children. Some of them are as follows:



- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), also known as CEDAW, was the first United Nations document to mention gender equality as a human rights issue. When it was written, CEDAW did not include a specific Article regarding Violence Against Women, however, in 1992 the CEDAW Committee developed General Recommendation 19, which makes specific recommendations for Member States. In 2000, an Optional Protocol was added to CEDAW that allows the United Nations to legally prosecute states for failing to protect women's and girls' human rights. It lets girls and women make a complaint to the CEDAW Committee (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) if their rights have been violated. The CEDAW Committee, with its international group of experts is also responsible for monitoring governments who ratify CEDAW. These governments have to submit reports to the CEDAW Committee every four years to show what they have done to end discrimination

against girls and women in their countries.

- The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) is the most significant international instrument that directly mentions violence against women as an abuse of human rights.
- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) is a visionary roadmap for gender equality. It remains the most comprehensive global agreement on women's empowerment. It calls for state parties to take direct action to address a range of continuing barriers to women's and girl's equality, including violence against women and girls.
- Many other international human rights instruments, such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1985) also prohibit gender-based discrimination.

You may additionally incorporate in your advocacy planning some research on the international conventions and agreements related to the elimination of violence against women and children that your country has or has not ratified. Then, you can advocate for ratification and implementation of these treaties or for removal of the reservations that your countries might have expressed for any of these global agreements. In partnership with other NGOs, you may also prepare 'shadow reports' to be submitted to the CEDAW Committee, showing the gaps in implementing CEDAW that may not be mentioned in their country's official report. You can also make a complaint to the CEDAW Committee if women's or girls' rights have been violated, provided that your country has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, together with the other international agreements and treaties, create a human rights foundation, to help countries achieve gender equality, empower all women and children, and eliminate all forms of gender discrimination. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are all interconnected and all 17 of them are relevant for achieving gender equality. However, the SDG 5 'achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls', specifically and directly addresses the issue of violence against women and girls, including trafficking, child marriage, sexual and other types of exploitation. Of course, achieving gender equality requires going beyond SDG 5 and its specific-gender related targets. Achieving gender equality is a necessary precondition for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. So, there may exist some fruitful opportunities to influence governments while planning their SDGs policies and priorities towards the elimination of violence against women and children.

3. Prevent

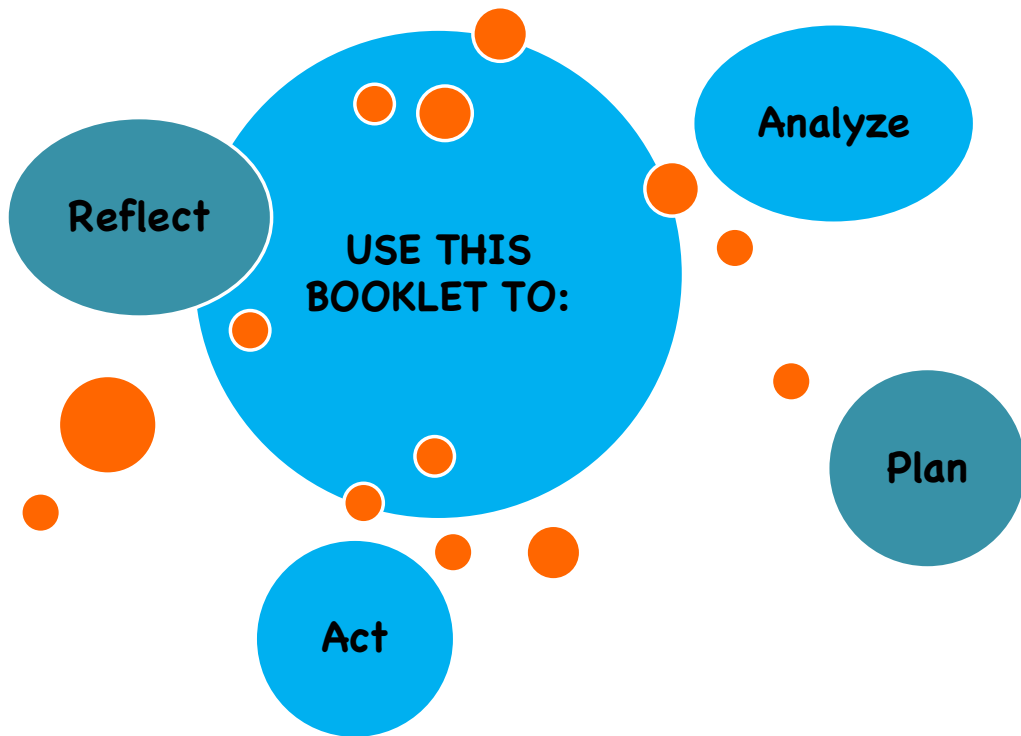
Preventing violence against women and children from occurring before it even starts is the most difficult way to stop gender-based violence, yet the most effective one towards eliminating violence against women and children completely. Transforming gender stereotypes and social norms, addressing the structural causes associated with violence in any society is not only the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do for a long-term development and stability. Gender roles can establish and promote tolerance or acceptance of violence against women and children. In certain communities and societies, women and girls grow up by learning to accept violence or further by not being able to recognize that they actually experience violence. In turn, men and boys grow up with specific ideas on what it means to be a man, which often allows them to perpetrate violence. In an endless cycle of violence, unequal gender stereotypes and roles may be further enforced through violence. Certain examples of prevention measures and projects include:

- ✓ Awareness raising through advocacy public campaigns that promote a zero-tolerance attitude to violence against women and children.
- ✓ Empowerment of women's and girls' leadership skills for increased participation in decision-making at all levels, including at home, in school, in workplaces and within society.
- ✓ Economic empowerment of women and girls through capacity-building programmes and training sessions.
- ✓ Men's and boys' engagement in all stages for eliminating all forms of gender-based violence.
- ✓ Formal and informal education for children and youth against gender discrimination and towards equal and respectful relationships.

Violence against women and children remains pervasive across the world, despite the significant efforts that have been made to respond to gender-based violence and advocate for its elimination in all its forms. A total elimination though can only be achieved through prevention. Successful prevention requires:²⁹

- political commitment and leadership,
- implementing laws and policies that promote gender equality,
- investing in women's organizations,
- allocating resources to prevention, and
- addressing the multiple forms of discrimination women face daily.

Considering and assessing the context (current laws, policies and practices addressing gender-based violence) in which prevention strategies are to be implemented is an essential aspect of the planning process. Preventing violence against women and children before it occurs is fundamental to ensuring that women and children are truly able to live a life free from violence.



**ON YOUR PROJECT
TO END VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN
AND CHILDREN**

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