

Strengthening Child Protection Systems: A Framework for Action

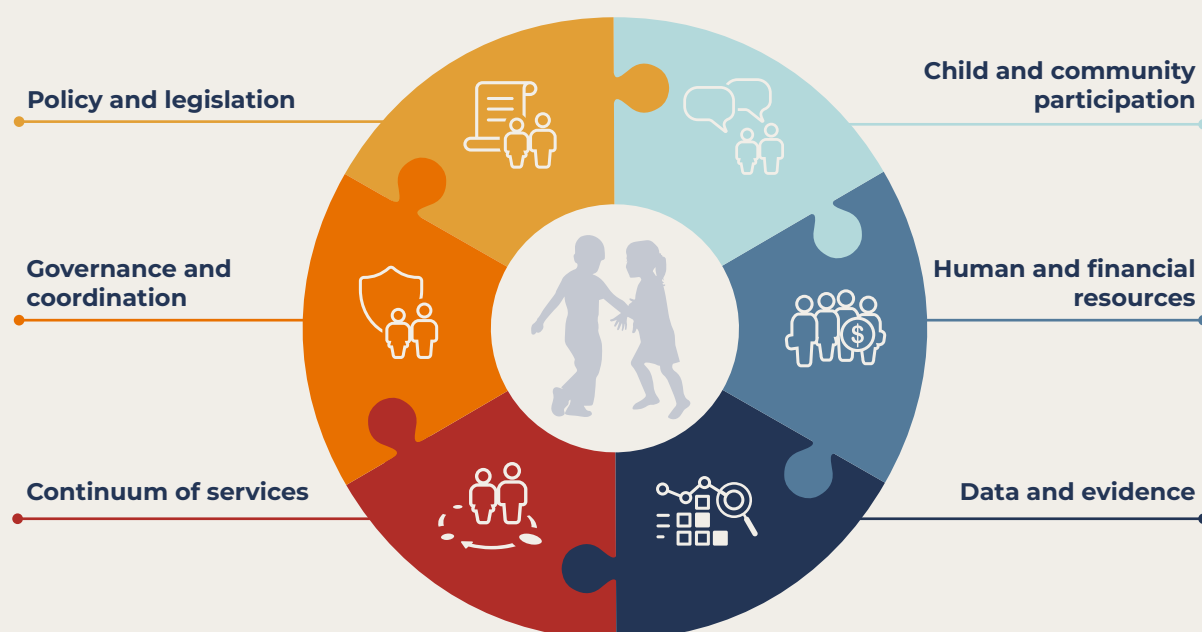
The urgency to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against children has never been greater. Each year, over 1 billion children experience violence, with an economic impact estimated at \$7 trillion.¹

Unsafe migration and displacement, armed conflict, climate change, pandemics, technology-facilitated exploitation, and rising inequality are among the factors that exacerbate the risks to children. Preventing and responding to violence against children is a human rights obligation with a social and economic imperative that is essential to the well-being, prosperity, and peace of societies.

Strong and inclusive child protection systems are one of the most cost effective and sustainable ways to prevent violence against children while also ensuring that those who have been harmed can be supported to thrive. Robust child protection systems can also provide the architecture to scale implementation of the INSPIRE strategies for violence prevention, reduction and response.

1. Hillis, S., Mercy, J., Amobi, A., & Kress, H. (2016). Global prevalence of past-year violence against children: a systematic review and minimum estimates. *Pediatrics*, 137(3); Pereznieta, P., Montes, A., Routier, S., & Langston, L. (2014). The costs and economic impact of violence against children. *Richmond, VA: ChildFund and ODI*.

We call upon states, donors, civil society organisations, and other key stakeholders to take the following actions to strengthen child protection systems for ALL children in ALL contexts.



Policy and legislation

Adopt and implement laws and policies that protect all children from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and harmful practices in all contexts.

Review policies and legal frameworks to ensure that they are child rights compliant and address violence prevention, early intervention and response.

Governance and coordination

Establish and invest in a dedicated lead government agency for child protection with authority to coordinate child protection across sectors at national, subnational, and local levels.

Ensure that this lead agency coordinates with civil society to establish child protection structures and mechanisms at all levels and that together they are prepared for humanitarian crises and scale-up, including across borders. Establish clear accountabilities and oversight mechanisms including age, gender, and disability monitoring.

Continuum of services

Provide a continuum of child protection prevention, early intervention and response services.

Support parents and caregivers to care for their children and prevent unnecessary separation. Empower families, communities and schools to prevent violence. Connect children who have experienced violence to protection services, such as mental health and psychosocial support and access to justice. Eliminate child institutionalization and provide quality family and community-based alternative care services. coordinates with civil society to establish child protection structures and mechanisms at all levels and that together they are prepared for humanitarian crises and scale-up, including across borders. Establish clear accountabilities and oversight mechanisms including age, gender, and disability monitoring.

Child and community participation

Engage children and communities in decisions and actions aimed at eliminating violence against children.

Meaningfully engage children and communities in the development and implementation of child protection laws, policies, and services. Link community-based mechanisms to the formal child protection system, and establish child-friendly feedback, complaint, and response mechanisms.

Human and financial resources

Establish and invest in a diverse, qualified and well-supported child protection social service workforce.

Allocate adequate public resources for the workforce to manage and deliver child protection services across sectors, strengthen the resilience of families through prevention, early identification and intervention strategies, and promote social and gender norms which challenge harmful practices.

Data and evidence

Enhance government data systems to improve planning, programming and policies to prevent and respond to violence against children.

Invest in comprehensive data collection that captures measurement indicators such as through the International Classification of Violence against Children. Strengthen data through information management systems, such as CPIMS+/PRIMERO, interoperability with ProGRES when needed, to improve case management and evidence-based programming. Incorporate violence indicators in national public health surveillance systems and ensure all data can be disaggregated by gender, age, disability, migration status and other relevant domains.