BACKGROUND
Violence against children (VAC) and violence against women and girls (VAWG) are significant human rights violations of the highest magnitude, and a growing body of evidence indicates the impacts and consequences of this problem. Data gathered through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-led Violence Against Children surveys (VACS), supported by Together for Girls, indicate that at least 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 7 boys experience some form of sexual violence and over half of all children report experiencing physical violence. Globally an estimated 35% of women have experienced either physical or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence, which often begins in adolescence. The violence has immense short- and long-term negative consequences for individuals, communities and countries.

While our understanding of the epidemiology, consequences, prevention and response to VAC and VAW is growing, there are still critical gaps in learning and implementation, especially at the intersection of the two epidemics. To address these gaps, the data is then used to catalyse and inform development and implementation of a national-strategy for prevention and response to violence against children and adolescents. Because the VACS interviews 12-24 year olds, examining emotional, physical and sexual violence as well as circumstances and outcomes, it is a meaningful tool to better document and understand how VAC and VAWG interact. This can help inform policy and programming on the most effective ways to prevent both. Focused analyses of individual datasets could have major impacts of evidence-based policy, surveillance and response strategies. The data is then used to catalyse and inform development and implementation of a national-strategy for prevention and response to violence against children and adolescents.

This project will build national capacity for analysing VACS data and further understanding of VAC and VAW in Nigeria and Rwanda. This project seeks to accomplish the following:

1. Build in-country capacity for analysing VACS data, and further understand the intersections of VAC and VAW in Nigeria and Rwanda.
2. Create a statistical narrative of intimate partner violence (IPV) and VAW across Nigeria and Rwanda, focused on adolescence and young adulthood.
3. Contribute to global and national understanding of how violence and gender interact across the lifespan, targeting young adulthood.

METHODS
Together for Girls (TfG), in close collaboration with CDC, PEPFAR and national governments, will use this project to pilot two post-graduate fellowships each (one senior fellow, one junior fellow) in Nigeria and Rwanda. TfG will work with both local and global institutions to mentor fellows and support them in their research and analysis of violence-related research capacity in the partner country. The selection of fellows will be conducted through a competitive process, which will include a call for applications and a formal selection committee. The fellows will work on violence and gender research at associated in-country universities. CDC’s partnership with Rwanda and Nigeria, will provide the foundation for scaling up national research capacity and conducting research on gender-based violence and VAC.

PROPOSED TIMELINE
May 2017: Fellowship arrangements with government, university partners
June–July 2017: Announcements and applications; fellow selection criteria
July 2017–August 2017: TfG Fellowships, with mentorship by CDC at the national and global level and with academic partners, (2) Analyses in both countries, working with fellows and national leadership
November 2017: CDC headquarters mentorship visit. CDC and TfG conduct short courses in partnership with universities in two countries
January–March 2018: Policy briefs, reports and other output for processes
April 2018: Report launch/event, review of Year 1 and action planning for VAC research capacity sustainability/growth. Pending funding, select fellows for Year 2

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE
This project will build national capacity for analysing VACS data and further understanding of VAC and VAW in Nigeria and Rwanda. The work of the project will seek to: (1) produce evidence-based practice focused on adolescence and young adulthood, contributing to global and national understanding of gender and the gender interface and targeting key decision-makers to inform both policies and programs to improve the prevention and response to gender-based violence. Through collaboration with global and national TfG partners this work will align with ongoing gender-based violence prevention and response work.

Fellowships, mentorship, coursework and coordination will be led and evolved through an iterative analysis of data and conduct research on violence, and strengthen links to response to violence through the multi-sectoral task forces that coordinate response to VAC in TfG countries. Coordination between fellows and key institutions with national priorities for responses to VAC and VAW, producing products with direct implications for national understanding of violence to shape policy and response. Emphasis on scaling up national research capacity on VAC and VAW and translating evidence through policy coherence and advocacy to catalyse and inform development and implementation of evidence-based policies. The work of the project will align with ongoing gender-based violence prevention and response work.

Together for Girls (TfG) is a collaboration between the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Bank. TfG is led by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and implemented in collaboration with UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, and the World Bank. TfG is a global platform to support partnerships between donors and countries to invest in programming that supports girls’ development and rights. The goal of TfG is to foster a culture of change to bring about systemic change towards realizing girls’ rights and their full potential by 2030. TfG is a collaboration between the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Bank. TfG is led by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and implemented in collaboration with UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, and the World Bank. TfG is a global platform to support partnerships between donors and countries to invest in programming that supports girls’ development and rights. The goal of TfG is to foster a culture of change to bring about systemic change towards realizing girls’ rights and their full potential by 2030.