



# Strategies Addressing Violence Against Children (VAC) Across the East and Southern African Region (UNICEF/ESARO)

SGBV Network Meeting  
Lusaka, Zambia  
7 February 2010

Catherine Maternowska  
UNICEF consultant

# VAC: Prevalent and Pervasive in Homes & Schools<sup>1</sup>

- **HOMES:**

- Regionally, 80 to 90 per cent of children suffer physical punishment in homes, with 30% more experiencing severe physical punishment resulting from the use of implements (UNSG Regional)



- **SCHOOLS:**

- Botswana secondary school students, 67 percent of respondents, experienced unwanted touching, pressure for dates and other forms of sexual harassment
- Swaziland & T Tanzania < 50% of all children have suffered some form of physical abuse during their primary and secondary schooling year

1, References to studies in the next three slides can be found in *Eastern and Southern Africa Region, UNICEF Mapping & Gap Analysis of Violence Against Children and Women, 2011.*

# VAC: . . .in Legal Institutions & Labour<sup>2</sup>

- **LEGAL INSTITUTIONS:**

- Zimbabwe, the age of criminal responsibility is 7, children who commit crimes, particularly boys, are subject to corporal punishment and imprisonment.

- **CHILD LABOUR**

- 1 in 3 children are involved in child labour with boy/girl comparisons as follows—Ethiopia (59% boys and 46% girls), Rwanda (36% and 35%), Somalia (45% and 54%), Uganda (37% and 36%) and Tanzania (37% and 34%).

# VAC . . .through social norms, health<sup>3</sup>

- **EARLY MARRIAGE:**

- Malawi and Mozambique over 50% girls, now 20-24, were married before the age of 18.
- Kenya and Zambia HIV infection rates among married girls are 48 to 65 percent higher than among sexually active unmarried girls.



- **HEALTH:**

- Studies suggest that HIV/AIDS and violence against children (VAC) have a dangerous, complex relationship and may each increase the risk and impact of the other.

# Emerging Trends in ESAR



- At least one in three female children experience sexual violence
- Men/boys, boyfriends, husbands and male relatives are primary perpetrators
- Exposure is associated with STDS, unwanted and pregnancy complications, and depression
- Physical violence from parents and authority figures is common experience=homes and schools are high-risk & dangerous
- Under-reporting—children don't know what is/isn't violent
- Inadequate or non-existent service access

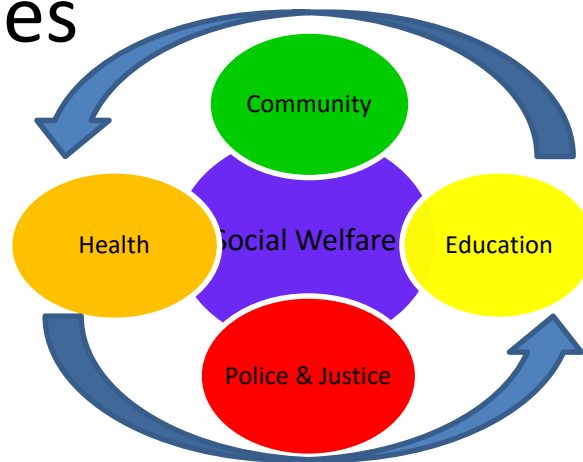
# UNICEF/ESARO: VAC Prevention, Response & Child Protection



# UNICEF/ESARO

## VAC Prevention & Response Framework

- Builds on a national response system focusing on Child Protection writ large
- Requires multi-sectoral planning and implementation
- Links essential child-friendly and accessible services through a strong referral system
- Nat'l help lines



# VAC Prevention & Response Referral System

Prevention

- Community mobilization
- Behavioural change
- Social norms
- Awareness raising & advocacy
- 'Safe space' promotion

Referrals

- Police child friendly (CF) services
- Courts & CF victim units
- Health CF care & treatment
- SW risk assessments & re-integration

Response



# ESAR: Addressing VAC

- Eight (8) ESAR countries are focusing on VAC:
  - Swaziland, Tanzania, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Mozambique and Uganda
- ESAR partnerships:
  - CDC, ECSA-HC, PEPFAR, UNAIDS, Population Council
- ESAR regional leadership:
  - Mapping of programme experiences & evidence
  - Regional funding strategies for prevention & response that build on existing infrastructure and partnerships
  - Regional TA for research and planning

# 2011 : Building Evidence of VAC & Systems Response

- CDC/UNICEF VAC Study
  - Completed: Swaziland (2007), Tanzania (2009)
  - On-going: Kenya (2010), Zimbabwe (2011)
  - Planned: Malawi (2012)
- Alternatives to large scale VAC Studies
  - Pop Council Adolescent Data Guides
  - Joint smaller studies: OSC
  - Literature reviews
- Improved impact and outcome-oriented evaluations in both prevention and services
- Social norms participatory and action-oriented research

# VAC Prevention & Response: Emerging ESAR Models

- Sector-by-sector organic development: ***Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malawi***
- Media and social norms focus: ***Mozambique & Uganda***
- Developing a national CP/multi-sectoral response: ***Tanzania***





# Challenges to ESAR

- National coordination, building State institutions, inclusive of public & private sector
- Building on & integrating VAC with the Region's HIV/AIDS superstructure
- Expanding GBV infrastructure/practice to include child sexual abuse
- Tackling social norms: defining, understanding their dynamics and applying findings in prevention and service
- Integrating child-friendly services across *all* sectors