

ANNEX B. Risk and protective factors associated with violence against girls and boys, including adolescents

Factors associated with physical, sexual and emotional abuse of girls and boys, including adolescents, documented in reviews of the global and regional evidence, with particular attention to evidence from low- and middle-income countries.^{139–149}

Level	Risk factors	Protective factors
Macro/ structural contexts such as humanitarian and emergency situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed conflict, natural disaster, high levels of criminal/gang violence • Emergencies that undermine systems and institutions • Displacement (forced or voluntary) • High rates of family separation, unaccompanied minors • Fragile states (political, economic, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong humanitarian programmes that mitigate the risks that children face in emergency situations • Risk-informed policies and programmes across all sectors
Legal frameworks, systems and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak legal frameworks (criminal codes, policies and regulations) that do not provide strong protection from violence against children • Lack of legal and regulatory protections for children's rights more generally • Justice sector systems and institutions that lack capacity or resources to uphold the rule of law, reduce impunity and protect children from harm • Lack of accessible, high-quality services and reporting mechanisms • Weak institutional capacity to respond to violence against children within the justice, health, education and social welfare sectors • Lack of comprehensive or integrated services • Professionals who lack awareness of violence against children or the preparation or attitudes to support victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong legal and policy frameworks that protect children's rights • Systems and institutions with capacity to address physical and sexual violence against girls and boys • Institutional commitment to address violence against children as a human rights and public health issue
Community/ society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of societal/community awareness (invisibility) of violence against children • Social norms that support or tolerate violence and stigmatize or blame victims • Social norms that prioritize family privacy or family or perpetrator reputation above victim well-being • Social norms that support gender inequality • Social norms that support discrimination against girls and boys in situations of vulnerability • High levels of social, economic, legal and political disempowerment based on generation, gender or other social or economic disadvantage • High levels of violence in the community, including criminal activity and armed conflict • Proliferation of arms in the community • High levels of alcohol and other substance abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of violence against children as a human rights and public health problem • Social norms that support gender equity and equal rights; respect for the rights of all boys and girls, regardless of disability or social or economic disadvantage • Community engagement in protecting girls and boys from violence and discrimination • Community access to legal protection and services • Strong legal and policy frameworks • High levels of social inclusion

Level	Risk factors	Protective factors
Households and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty-related household stress Destitution; food insecurity Family disruption, disintegration and separation Presence of a non-biological caregiver Gender inequality in the family Marital conflict/exposure to violence against women in the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social welfare systems that support families Informal social support networks Economic security Stable, supportive family relationships Gender equity, nonviolent family environments Family support for education and postponing marriage and childbearing until adulthood (especially for girls)
Mothers, fathers and caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental stress; lack of social and service support Mental health conditions including substance abuse and depression Attitudes that support violent discipline and other harmful practices Harsh parenting practices Lack of positive parenting knowledge/skills Lack of awareness about violence against children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close, nurturing parent-child relationships Awareness, skills and support for nonviolent childrearing Access to social support and services for mothers, fathers and other caregivers Supportive (belief) response from mothers and fathers when violence is disclosed Gender-equitable norms
Individual girls and boys including adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age and sex History of earlier violence victimization Extreme poverty; food insecurity Living with a disability Loss of a parent; family separation Living in institutional care, deprived of liberty; other social or economic disadvantage Exposure to violence against mother Child marriage (before age 18) Involvement in child labour Stigmatized sexual orientation or gender identity Migrant or refugee status, especially if unaccompanied by parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender-equitable norms Knowledge and skills about sexuality and healthy relationships Access to safe, inclusive education and life skills Skills, attitudes and psychosocial support needed to postpone early sexual debut, marriage and childbearing Awareness of violence and knowledge of how/where to seek help Close, supportive relationships with mothers, fathers and other caregivers Personal resilience (for recovering after abuse has occurred, including coping skills and self-esteem)
Individuals (as actual or potential perpetrators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substance abuse and mental health disorders Exposure to violence or neglect in childhood (as a victim or a witness to violence against the mother) Attitudes about male entitlement to sex and right to control women and girls Involvement with gangs/organized crime Support for social norms that condone violent discipline at home or school, partner violence against women or harmful practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to early intervention for adverse events Access to mental health and substance abuse services