



Evidence based strategies for the prevention and response to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children - what is known

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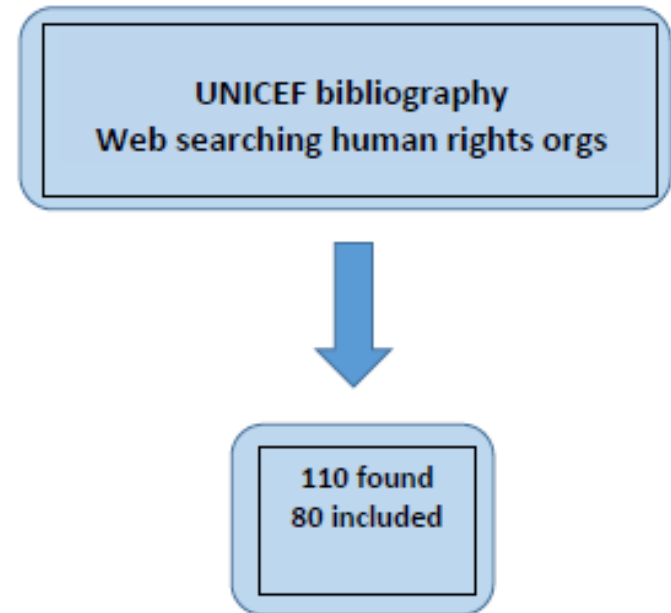
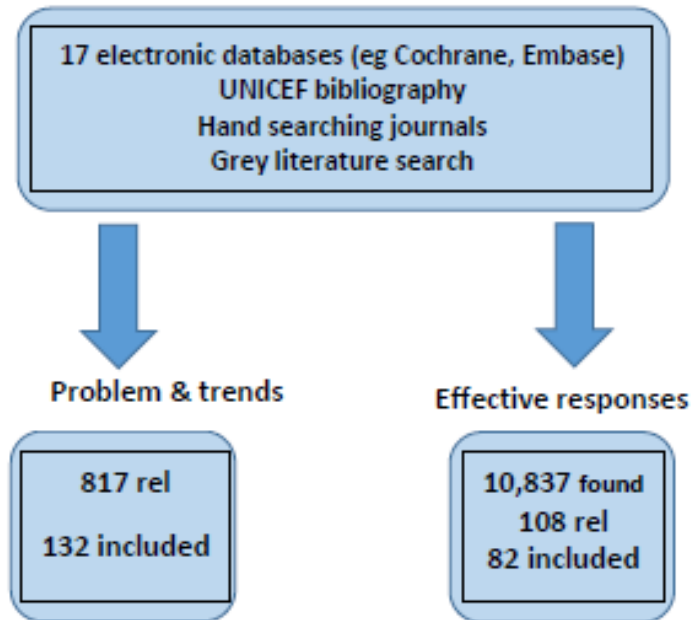
- Need for consolidated, global guidance outlining effective strategies for prevention and response to child sexual exploitation and abuse in development and emergency contexts, to support UNICEF country, regional and headquarters offices and partners.
- Desk based research to review evidence on effective prevention and protection/response strategies, not full systematic review, narrative analysis methods used.
- Desk based research to review and consolidate existing guidelines.





EVIDENCE REVIEW

GUIDANCE REVIEW





- Very broad area covered by child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Research bias to interventions in HICs and poor state of evidence in LMIC context.
- Lack evidence on outcomes (prevalence rates over time).
- Limited research on 'scaling up' to national level - what supports this?
- Limited research on policy and system change for child protection.
- Poor levels of child participation in child protection systems.
- Acknowledging practitioner & field based experience.
- Few studies with sexual violence to children as the main focus – 4 major themes of GBV/VAWG; HIV & sexual health; economic development; child protection.
- Similar and different issues GBV/VAWG and sexual violence to children – vulnerabilities (eg age, gender, etc), sector focus (crime or child protection), partnerships (families).





- Tested effective – rigorously evaluated experimental design; +ve impact attitudes AND behaviour; formalised for replication.
- Promising – formalised programme information with impact on attitudes or behaviour but evaluation was not experimental design; OR experimental design but limited impact or mixed results from several studies.
- Emerging promising – ltd evidence because new programme and evidence just emerging OR evaluation difficult but some monitoring data exists OR strong field based consensus (emergency contexts).
- Pioneering – identified in reviews as an example of what can be done but evidence is still poor.
- Low – no evidence can be found/intervention may be harmful.





- National systems context, legislation, policies, planning, resources and coordination.
- Prevention.
- Recognition & child protection responses – safety of child victim and stopping perpetrators.
- Recovery & reintegration.
- Cross cutting issues equity/non-discrimination and children's participation.





- Strong recommendations made and helpful child protection systems model but **pioneering to poor evidence** on effective strategies.
- **Pioneering** examples child participation scope to develop.
- Evidence (**emerging promising**) on *what does not work* e.g poor coordination and multi-sectoral approaches; poor child, community or service participation; lack of focus on sustainability and *what is harmful* e.g. criminalising child victims.
- Problem of plans not implemented or monitored, lack of resources and political will – problem identification **pioneering** e.g. national prevalence surveys.
- **Poor evidence** on mobilising forces for social policy and social change historically & cross culturally (TOC models GBV, eco model child protection, need TOC SEA).
- Assumptions about ‘childhood’ and ‘progress’ for children in child protection system.
- Methodologies for measuring system change – eg readiness factors **emerging promising**.





- Mobilisation, changing attitudes and behaviour by preventive education
 - Universal or targeted e.g. at men and boys (eg White Ribbon, Soul City,) promising to effective in changing attitudes but impact on behaviour over time not shown; **indirect effective** e.g Stepping Stones, Safe Dates
 - child sexual abuse education in schools many positive outcomes but impact in LICs and on victimisation rates HICs unclear, eg Safe Schools **promising**
- Situational prevention – mostly humanitarian crisis context (safe spaces for children; WASH and camp design; Codes of Conduct regulating known offenders etc) **emerging promising** scope to develop
- Reducing risks and vulnerabilities – HIC effective home visiting and targeted parenting support but relevance to LIC context and to sexual abuse/exploitation outside the family not shown; Conditional Cash Transfers **low evidence on sexual abuse and exploitation** but scope to develop





- Protection = actions to make children safe and actions to stop perpetrators.
- More emphasis in practice on reaction to child victim but in research emphasis on perpetrators.
- Poor child participation.
- Many recommendations made from assumptions in HIC child protection systems e.g. risk based, registration and identification vs child welfare (Gilbert et al, 2012); mandatory reporting.
- Identifying those at risk – emphasis on health settings. Recommendations include law reform, training, child friendly reporting, child helplines, screening, outreach, common assessments, protocols, information sharing, mapping referral pathways, one stop shops, **pioneering to low evidence**.
- Coordinated responses – case management, specialist multi agency teams, family support or alternative care **emerging promising to low evidence**.
- Community based child protection – high recommendations and effective in right circumstances **pioneering to low evidence SEA**.
- Perpetrator focus – adult or peer? end perpetrator impunity by prosecution and behaviour management HICs evidence of increased criminalisation and surveillance, **mixed results**, scope for research in context.





- Greater focus HICs on CSA, LMICs on child sexual exploitation and on interventions in a humanitarian crisis, shift from ‘rescue’.
- Immediate safety and wellbeing – e.g Transit Homes, shelters **pioneering to low evidence LMICs** scope to develop.
- Psychological support for recovery – assessment and care planning, parent/caregiver role strong predictor e.g. Healers Package South Africa; peer support **pioneering**; TFcbt **promising HICs**; play & creative therapies **pioneering LMICS**, scope to develop.
- Social needs – education, employment, social support etc **pioneering**, scope to develop.
- Reintegration, follow up and reducing risks of further victimisation **mixed evidence**; restorative justice & peace building e.g. Circles of Support **pioneering**.





- Relevance of TOC for child sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Collaboration GBV and child protection work.
- Gather evidence on problem and current responses (context specific)
- Strengthen an enabling national framework (planning, legal and policy reform, coordination, resources)
- Reduce risks of SEA and develop protective factors at interacting levels of child, family, community and society
- Strengthen capacity of child protection systems, professionals and all adults to prevent, intervene early, protect & undo harm





- Address social norms and behaviours that support SEA of children and GBV and support establishment of protective norms and behaviours
- Special measures to prevent and respond to SEA of children in emergency context and humanitarian crises (including armed conflict)
- Enable children to participate to influence design, delivery and evaluation of responses
- Evaluate impact and use evidence from research to improve responses in context





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Connect Research Centre website

http://www.uclan.ac.uk/research/environment/groups/connect_centre_int_research_new_approaches_prevent_violence_harm.php

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