

# The Power of Data to Action

Country experiences and lessons following Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys

2022



**USAID'S HEALTH EVALUATION AND APPLIED RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT (HEARD) PROJECT**

# About the landscape analysis

This presentation consolidates findings from a landscape analysis prepared by the University Research Co., LLC (URC) and The City of New York Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy.

The report was authored by Kathleen Cravero, Steve Whittaker, and Samantha Ski. The analysis of survey results was led by Diana Romero with support from L. Ansley Hobbs.

For more information and to view the report, visit: [togetherforgirls.org/the-power-of-data-to-action](https://togetherforgirls.org/the-power-of-data-to-action)



An aerial photograph of a residential area, likely in a developing country, showing a long, straight road running through the center. The houses are mostly single-story with corrugated metal roofs. There are trees and greenery interspersed among the buildings. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the table of contents text.

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# **Part 1: The VACS and the Data to Action process**

# Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS)

- Nationally representative population-based household surveys
- 13- to 24-year-old males and females\*
- Led by national governments and carried out by local organizations with technical assistance and support from the CDC and TfG partners.

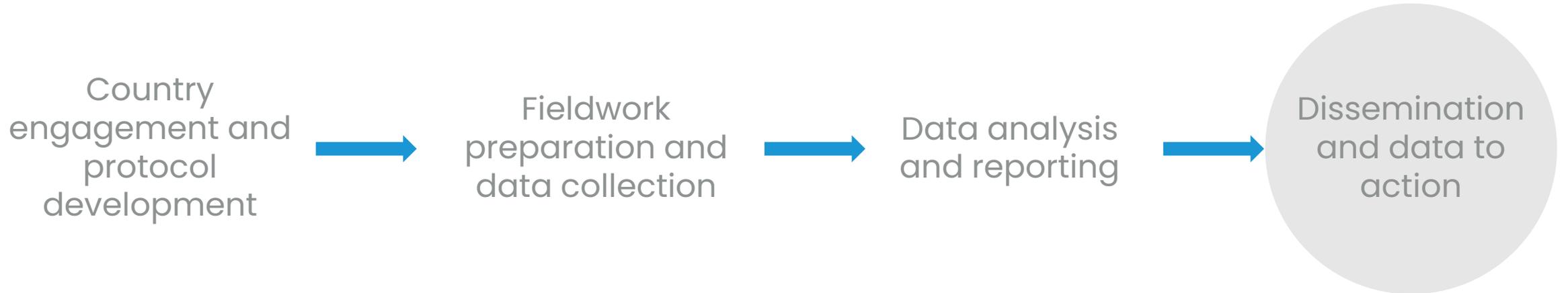
\*Swaziland included females only



To date, VACS have been or are being conducted in 23 countries, providing data on 12% of the world's children, adolescents and youth.

# What is the VACS process?

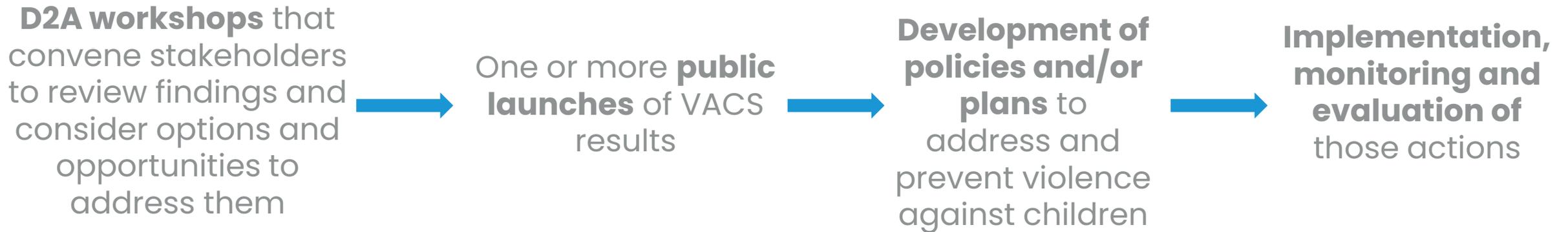
The VACS process is led by national governments with technical assistance led by the CDC and additional support from country-based Together for Girls Partners, including UNICEF. It includes all the steps necessary to design, implement and use VACS data. It is generally described in terms of four phases:



The landscape analysis is focused on the final phase (dissemination and data to action)

# What are post-VACS efforts?

Post-VACS efforts include any actions taken to understand, implement or integrate VACS results into policies and programs aimed at preventing or ending violence against children. For example:



Each of these phases is guided by a **Multisectoral Coordination Mechanism (MSCM)** established by the government to coordinate efforts across the sectors, critical to enacting a comprehensive strategy to address and end violence against children. The CDC, UNICEF and other TfG partners provide technical assistance and support throughout the process.

# Part 2: About the analysis

# What was the landscape analysis?

- The first comprehensive review of post-VACS efforts in each country in which a VACS has been undertaken
- Synthesizes the views of 225 stakeholders across 20 VACS countries

**225**  
STAKEHOLDERS  
**20**  
COUNTRIES





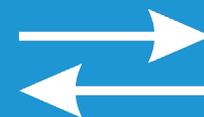
Multisectoral partners attended the Data to Action workshop in Côte d'Ivoire in 2019. Photo courtesy of Chrissy Hart, Together for Girls.

## Who are the 225 participants in the landscape review?

- **177 stakeholders** across 15 countries responded to a written survey. They represented government ministries and departments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, international NGOs and local civil society groups.
- **48 key informants** participated in an in-depth interview, nine working at global level and 39 working at country level.



Government ministries and departments



Bilateral and multilateral agencies



International non-governmental organizations



10 Local civil society groups

# Part 3: Key findings

## Key finding:

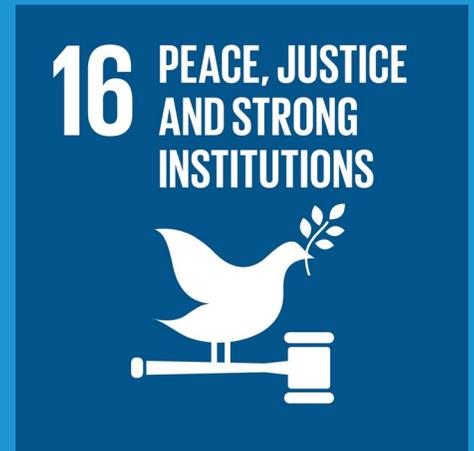
**The VACS data, and associated processes to use the data, provide evidence that violence against girls and boys is a knowable, solvable problem.**

VACS data provide the foundation for developing interventions that work and measuring progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Target 5.2 and Target 16.2.



**Target 5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

**Target 16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children



*Violence against children is more than pervasive and unacceptable; it is preventable.*

# Key finding:

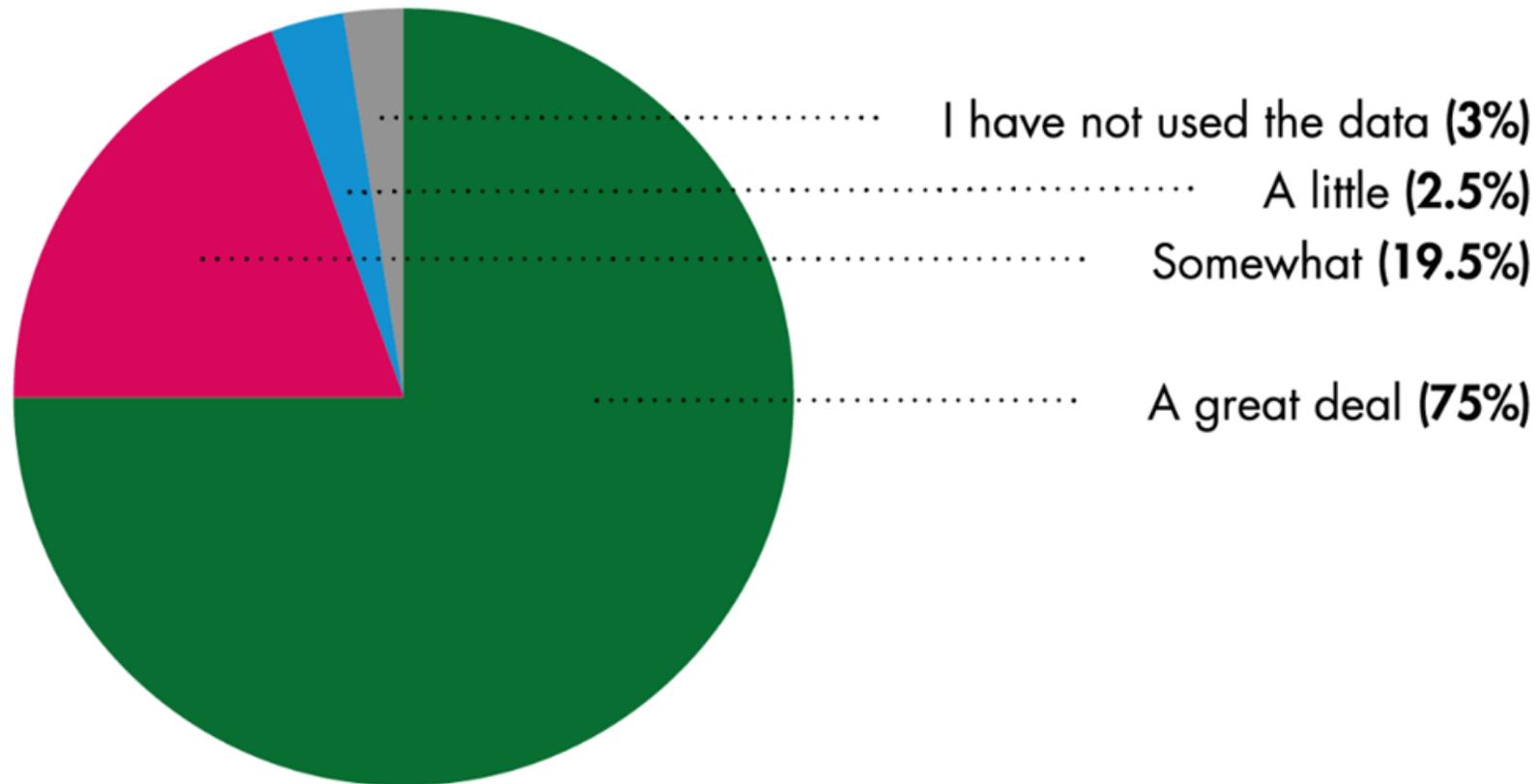
## VACS data drive change.

The VACS data inform and influence programs and policy reform. These reforms drive broad-based, multisectoral systems change to address violence against children and youth and gender-based violence.



Cambodia Deputy Prime Minister, H.E. Mrs. Men Sam An, spoke at the launch of Cambodia's VACS report in 2014. Photo courtesy of Sofia Ollvid, UNICEF Cambodia.

The extent to which VACS data informs the design of national plans, policies and programs to end violence against children, as reported by survey respondents (n = 165)





Multisectoral partners at the Data to Action workshop in Rwanda in 2018. Photo courtesy of Begoña Fernandez, Together for Girls.

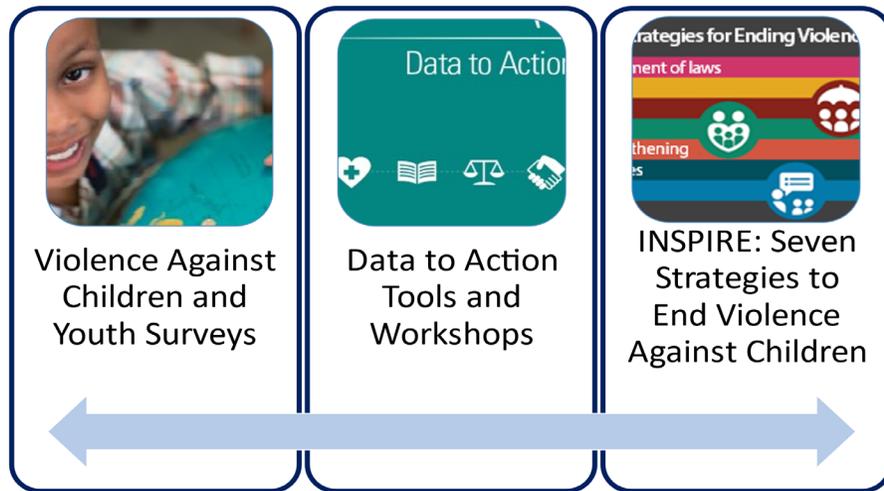
## Key finding:

**Coordination across sectors is critical to driving change.**

Strong, government-led multisectoral coordination is the single most important factor in translating VACS results into positive action for children.

Multisectoral coordination plays a role in every step of the VACS process.

# Using data to inform action



Data to Action workshops use VACS data and the INSPIRE framework to drive the coordination that is critical to action and success.

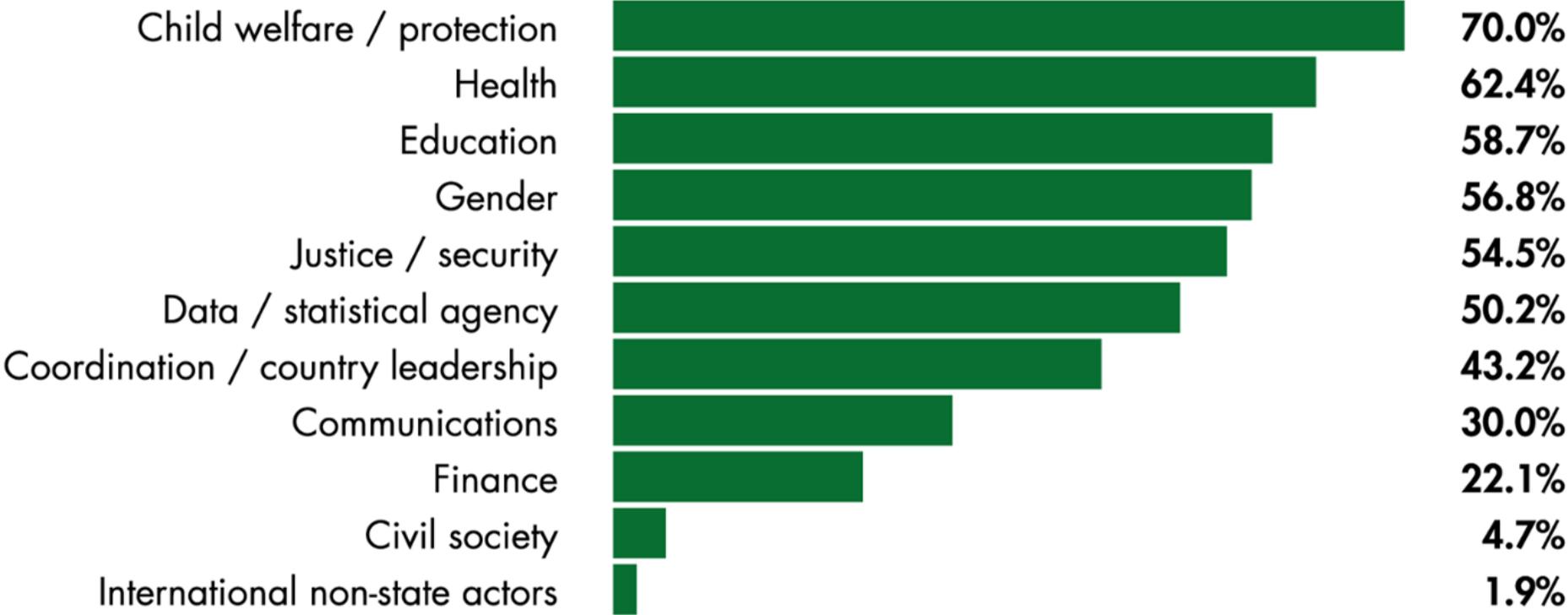
## INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children



INSPIRE is a framework which details a group of seven strategies distilled from the best available evidence with the greatest potential to prevent and respond to violence against children. It guides action at the country level.

INSPIRE was developed by WHO and CDC in partnership with 10 international agencies.

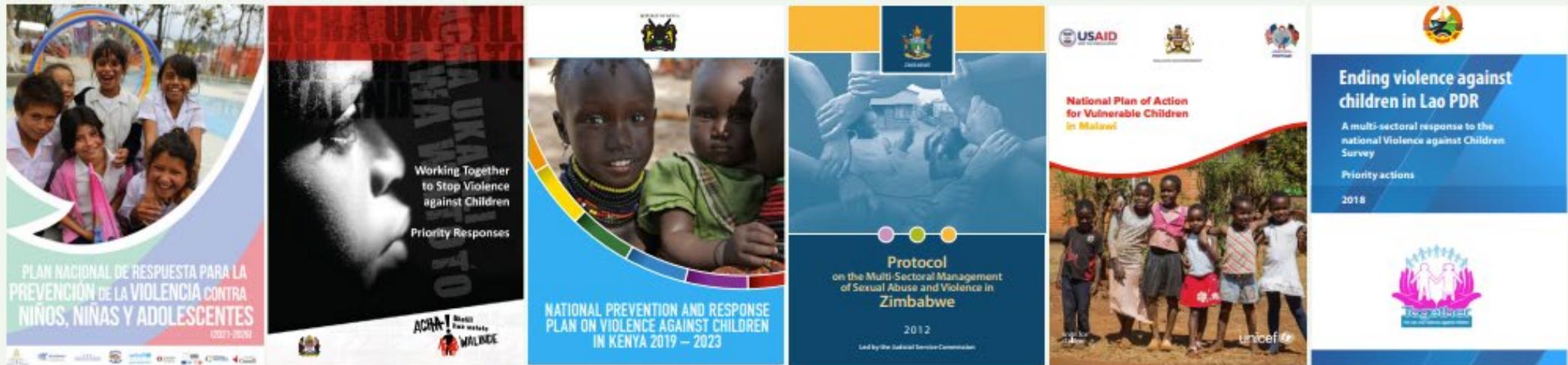
# Survey respondents' indication of sectors engaged in MSCM



# Key finding:

## VACS data generate learning and action.

VACS data and associated capacity-building processes generate learning and action, build capacity and inform national responses to end violence against children.



Covers of National Action Plans from six countries: Honduras, Tanzania, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Lao PDR.

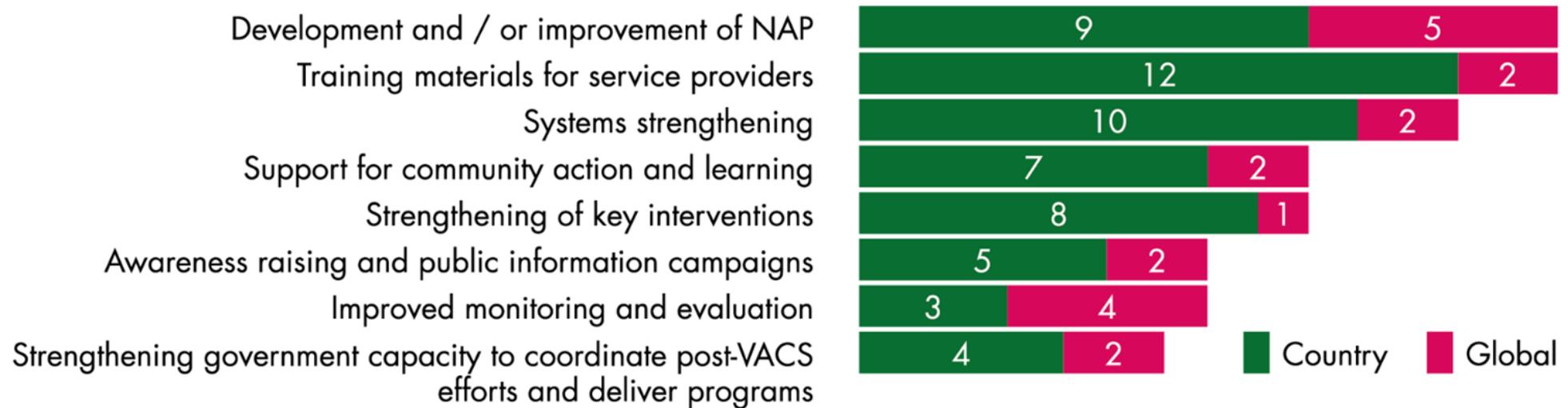
## VACS data and post-VACS efforts propel policy reform and strengthen programs

							
Country	Adding/ amending existing child safety laws/ regulations	Banning child marriage	Banning corporal punishment	Improved staff capacity	New initiatives addressing the safety of girls	VACS questions/ indicators in national statistics	
 Botswana	●						
 Cambodia	●		●	●		●	
 Colombia	●	●	●				
 Côte d'Ivoire	●	●	●	●	●		
 El Salvador	●	●	●				
 Honduras	●					●	
 Kenya 2010			●				
 Kenya 2019	●	●	●	●	●	●	
 Lao PDR		●					
 Lesotho		●					
 Malawi	●	●	●	●			
 Nigeria	●			●			
 Rwanda	●		●		●		
 Uganda	●	●	●			●	
 Zambia	●		●	●		●	
 Zimbabwe 2011		●	●		●		
 Zimbabwe 2019	●	●	●		●		

# Key finding:

## All areas of VAC need more funding.

Gaps in funding is a barrier in all aspects of prevention and response to VAC beginning with the survey itself, to post-VACS efforts. Almost 90% of survey respondents cite inadequate funding as a barrier to post-VACS efforts.



Key informants' ratings of VACS-related programs in need of funding

## Key finding:

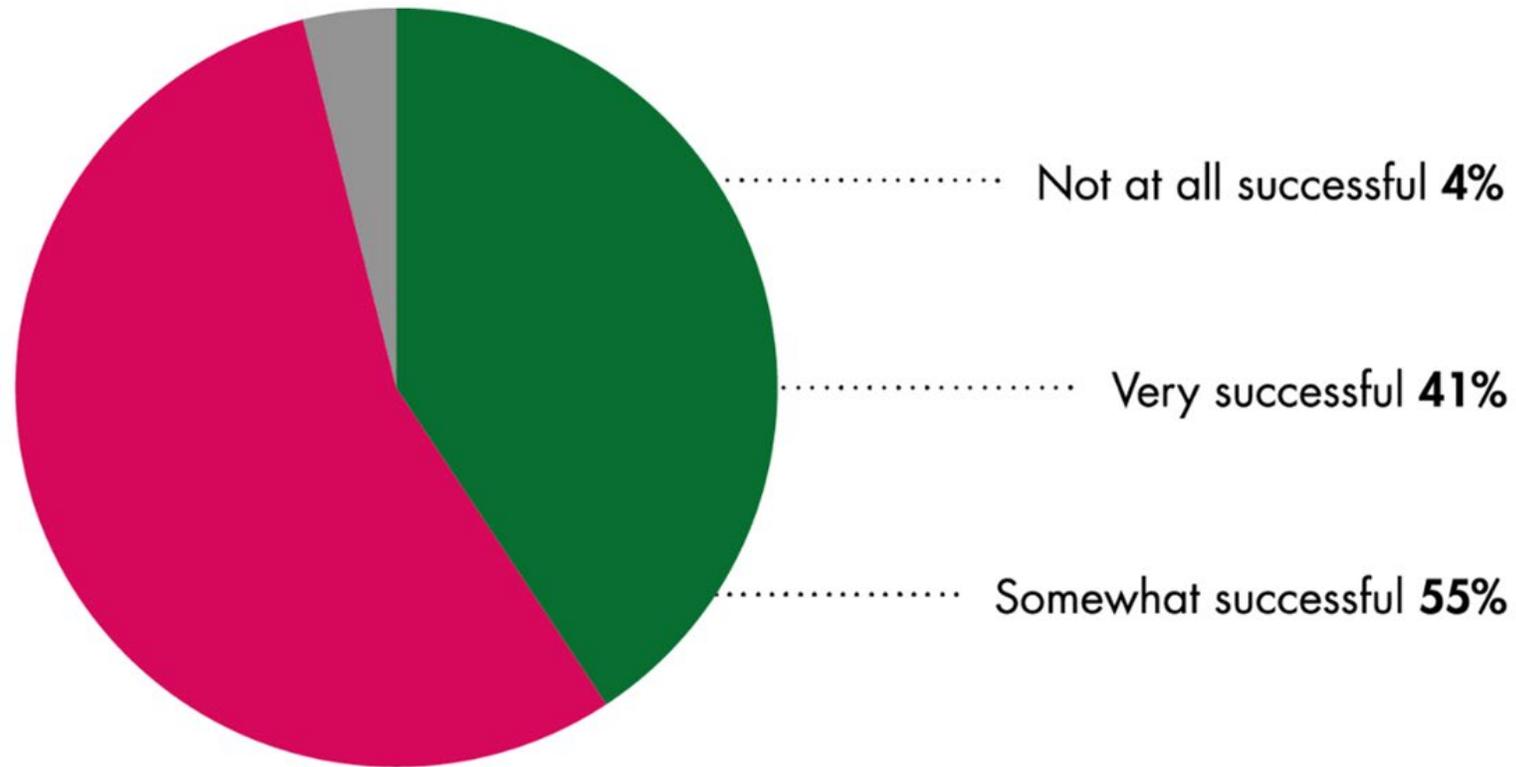
VACS launches are key to raising awareness and commitment.

More than 90% of survey respondents believe that VACS launches are successful in raising awareness about violence against children.



Joseph Triikka Beugre (CDC Côte d'Ivoire), Dr. Solange Amethier (PN-OEV), Bibola Ngalamulume (PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire), and Manuela Balliet (Together for Girls) at the high-level launch of the Côte d'Ivoire VACS report in 2020. Photo courtesy of Manuela Balliet, Together for Girls.

Survey respondents' ratings of the success of VACS report launches in raising awareness about violence against children, n = 170



# Part 4: Recommendations

# Recommendations

## 1. VACS data is an important tool to inform and drive systems-based actions across sectors to prevent and respond to violence against girls and boys.

- Develop context-specific and user-friendly materials and tools to end violence against children (e.g. training of front-line workers, non-violent discipline)
- Strengthen capacity in a range of technical and operational areas
- Address wide disparities among national and subnational levels in designing, implementing and monitoring the quality of programs and services
- Integrate VACS indicators into national surveys and data collection efforts



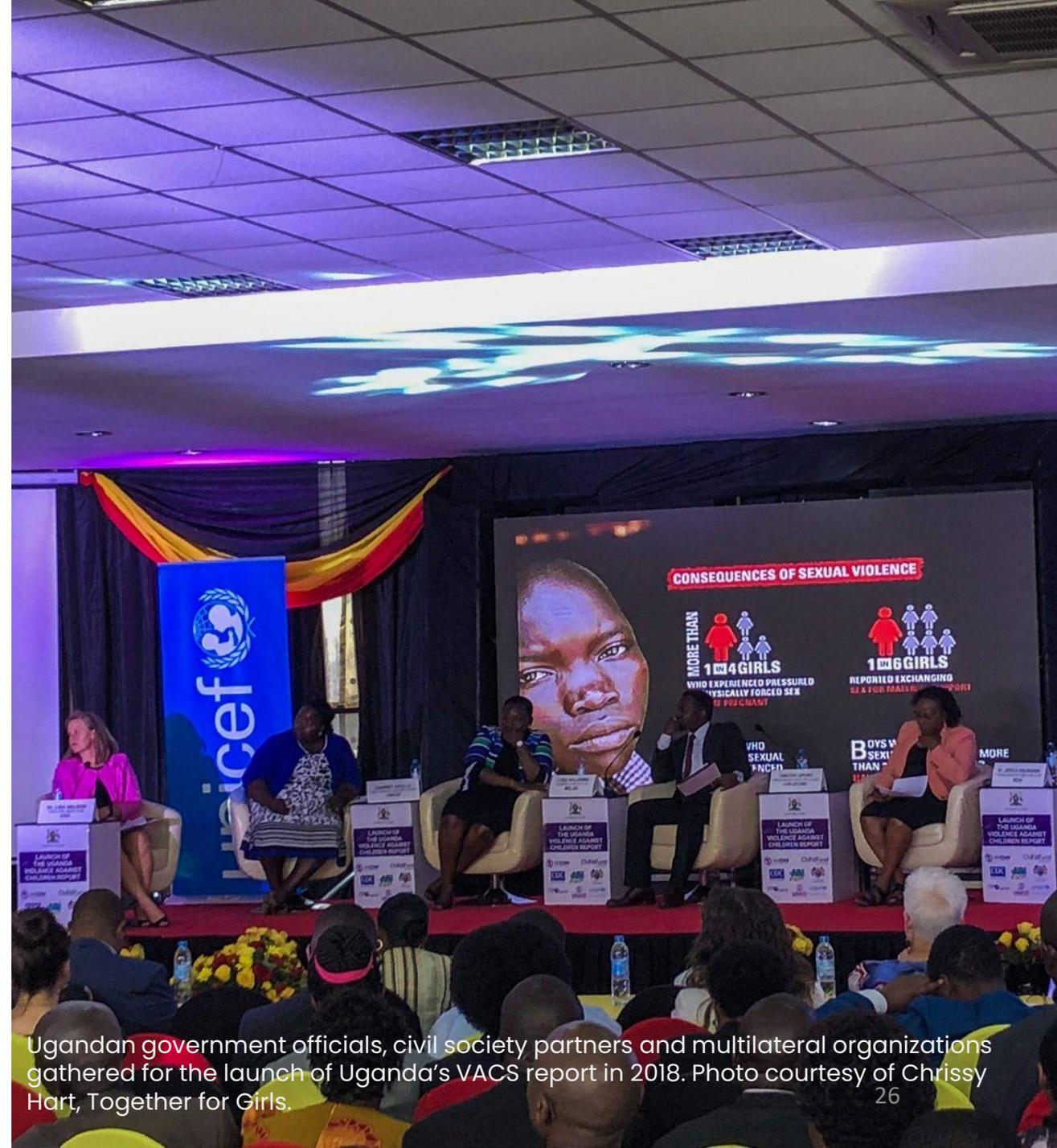
## 2. Strong government leadership and coordination across sectors is needed to lead to national and/or subnational plans or policies, building on existing systems.

- Civil society, including survivor-led and -centered organizations, can be more consistently and meaningfully engaged
- Accountability measures with benchmarks should be included
- Give special consideration to age, sex, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability status



### 3. There is an urgent need for more funding for ending violence against children and youth and gender-based violence.

- Funding for VACS and post-VACS actions should increase in scale, flexibility and duration, and be included in national and sub-national budgets
- Advocacy with both governments and donors should be strengthened to ensure that efforts to end violence against children are prioritized



Ugandan government officials, civil society partners and multilateral organizations gathered for the launch of Uganda's VACS report in 2018. Photo courtesy of Chrissy Hart, Together for Girls.



**History will judge us by the difference  
we make in the everyday lives of children.**

*Nelson Mandela*

# Thank you

To learn more and read the full report  
of the landscape analysis, visit  
**[togetherforgirls.org/the-power-of-  
data-to-action](https://togetherforgirls.org/the-power-of-data-to-action)**