Caring for Child Survivors Initiative: Addressing the Needs of Boy and Girl Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

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Presented by:
Leora Ward, Women’s Protection and Empowerment Technical Advisor
International Rescue Committee
1 in 6 girls report sexual abuse before the age of 18 globally.

1 in 10 boys report sexual abuse before the age of 18 globally.

In 2010, 45% of GBV incidents reported to IRC were perpetrated against children. 38% of these cases were sexual violence.

Boys and girls are most often abused by someone they know and depend on for care. Children knew the perpetrator in 91% of GBV incidents reported to IRC in 2010.
Caring for Child Survivors Initiative Goal:
Humanitarian field staff have the technical expertise to deliver child friendly, age appropriate case management, psychosocial & mental health, and clinical care interventions to children and families affected by sexual abuse.

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Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse

What we found in the pilot

- **Huge knowledge gap** – Humanitarian field staff require specialized training and skills to respond to the specific needs of children and families.

- **Lack of clarity on response procedures**: Different understanding and practice in providing care including mandatory reporting, informed consent, and confidentiality.

- **Troubling attitudes** – Across all sectors, harmful beliefs about child sexual abuse were discovered.

- **Poor coordination** – Lack of information sharing agreements and trust across service providers for coordination of care for children exists.
Elements to Quality Care for Children

Knowledge → Attitude → Skills

Guiding Principles
for working with sexually abused children
Training on core knowledge and attitudes of sexual abuse.

What is Child Sexual abuse?
Boys may see themselves as powerless and flawed

The perpetrator is most often a man (or older boy) and previously known to the child

Boys do not always prefer to speak with male service providers

Boys may fear becoming homosexual as a result of the abuse
Training on how to use toys, dolls and other materials to develop interviewing skills
“THE HOW TO”

- How to communicate
- How to provide care
- How to apply the guiding principles
- How to provide case management
- How to provide psycho or healing education
- How to monitor and supervise care
All CCS materials were vetted through an internal and external review process and piloted in the field.

World Health Organization
IRC Child & Youth Protection and Development
IRC Women’s Protection & Empowerment
IRC Health Technical Unit
UNICEF
Johns Hopkins University
Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse
Recommendations and Key Considerations

Key Issues to Build Upon

- Child protection and GBV service providers need to be *trained on the minimum standards* for working with child survivors of sexual abuse.

- Further analysis and assessment should be done to *understand the barriers* for boys seeking care and treatment.

- Continued dialogue around the level of attention or resources that should be put into *understanding men ‘s and boys’ experience* of violence and related responses.

- Develop comprehensive standards for *assessing organizational readiness* to start up or implement case management for child survivors of sexual abuse.

- Develop *mental interventions* that are specific to male and female child survivors of sexual abuse.
THANK YOU!
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