

Ending Violence Against children

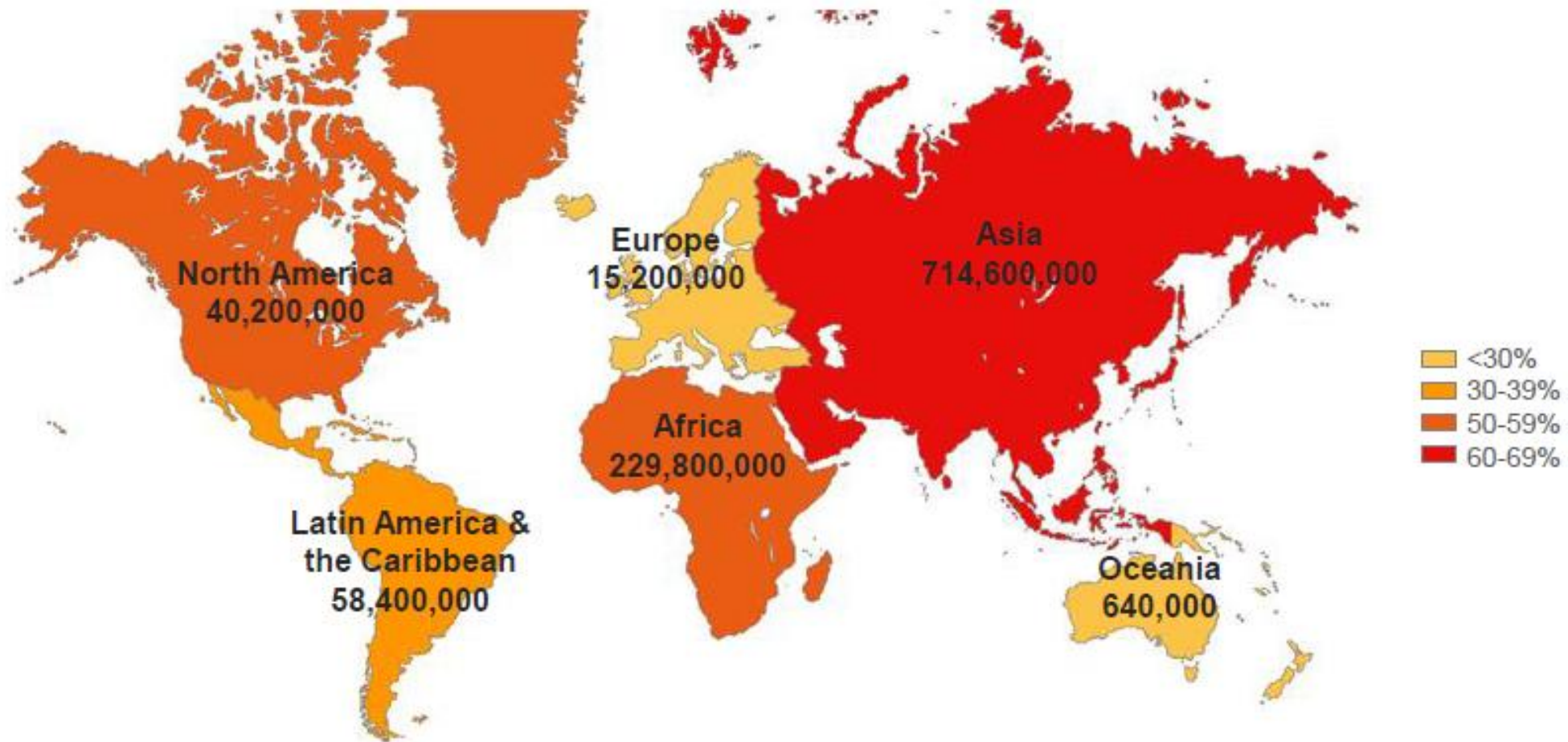
NURTURING THE FUTURE
Technical Meeting to Enhance Nurturing
Care for Early Childhood Development in
the Health Sector

27 February 2025

Speaker: Binta Sako
Violence Injuries and Disability Unit



African Region



Source: Hillis S, Mercy JA, Amobi A, Kress H. Global prevalence of past-year violence against children: A systematic review and minimum estimates. *Pediatrics* 2016;137(3): e20154079



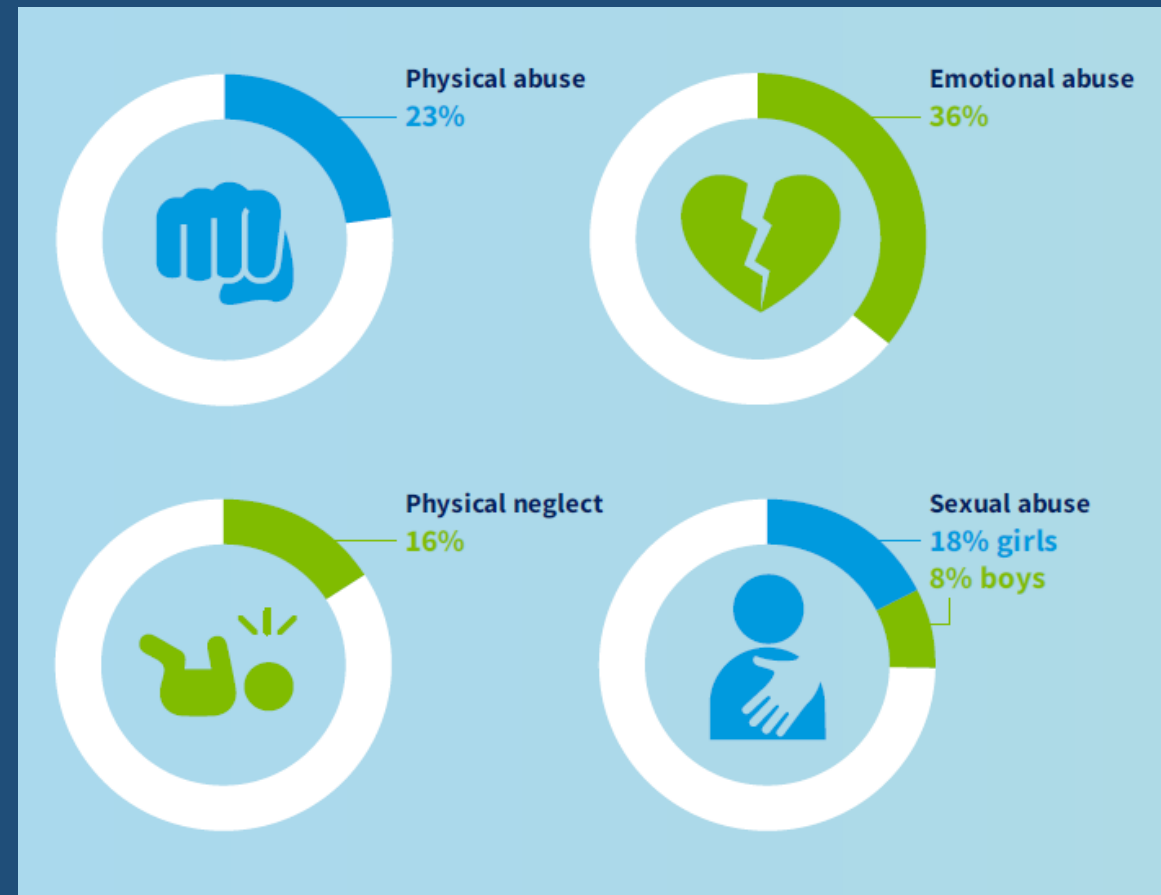
Introduction

Each year, 1 billion children 2-17 experience violence

Each year 1 in 100,000 children under 14 **die** as a result of violence. That is one child every 5 minutes.

VAC is as all forms of **physical**, **emotional**, **sexual abuse**, **neglect**, and **exploitation** against individuals **under 18 years**.

Occurs in homes, schools, institutions, workplaces, and communities.



A Hidden undertreated epidemic

75%

don't tell anyone. Less than 1/4 of children disclose abuse.

10%

Less than 10% of children and adolescents receive formal help

- Disclosure is often delayed for many years
- Disclosure is even more rare, if parents are involved
- Younger children are less likely to disclose abuse

Younger children are at a higher risk – and have fewer opportunities to seek help

Children in the age group of birth to 1 year have the highest rate of victimization. The rate declines as children's ages increase.

Nearly three-quarters of the children who died due to child abuse or neglect were younger than 3 years old.



Child maltreatment can have severe immediate consequences

Perpetrating
or becoming
a victim of
violence



Depression



Obesity



High-risk
sexual
behaviours



Unintended
pregnancies



Harmful use of
tobacco, alcohol
and drugs



Response to VAC

INSPIRE

Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children



Implementation and enforcement of laws



Norms and values



Safe environments



Parent and caregiver support



Income and economic strengthening



Response and support services



Education and life skills



- **Family strengthening programs** to promote positive parenting
- **Community-based interventions** for awareness and support
- **Health sector policies** integrating VAC prevention in maternal and child health services
- **Multi-sectoral collaboration** between health, education, and child protection services

The Role of the Health Sector

Health professionals encounter children that experienced violence in their day-to-day practice

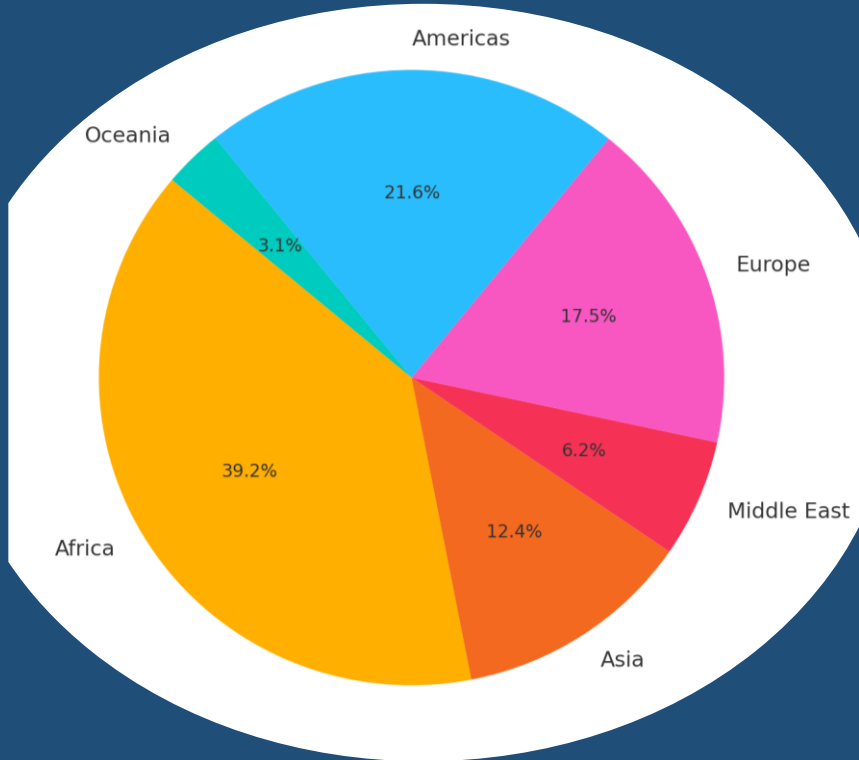
- Early identification and intervention by healthcare professionals
- Routine screening for VAC in pediatric and maternal health services
- Providing support and referrals for affected children and families
- Parenting support: home visitation

Health professionals are often the first point of contact

If child maltreatment goes unnoticed, it may increase future risk of repeated victimization resulting in more severe outcomes, and

Prevent the victimized child from receiving support

101 Country pledges



Counties making Pledges to end VAC



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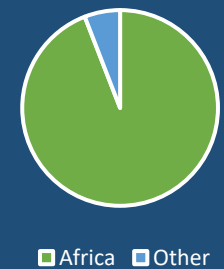
Parenting & Caregiver support



Response & Support services



Addressing harmful practices



Interconnections between NCF and VAC

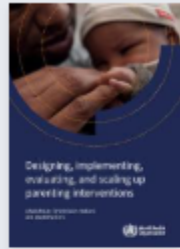
The **Nurturing Care Framework (NCF)** and **Violence Against Children (VAC)** are deeply interconnected, as VAC directly undermines the five components of nurturing care that are essential for a child's healthy development.

- Safe and Secure Environments → [Protection from Violence](#)
- Responsive Caregiving → [Reducing Risk of VAC](#)
- Good Health → [Preventing Physical and Psychological Harm](#)
- Adequate Nutrition → [Addressing the Impact of Neglect](#)
- Opportunities for Early Learning → [Breaking the Cycle of Violence](#)



Resources

<https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/violence-prevention>



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EN 7

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<https://shorturl.at/trYyu>



Responding to child maltreatment:

a clinical handbook for health professionals



Designing, implementing, evaluating, and scaling up parenting interventions

A handbook for decision-makers and implementers



Call to Action

- The importance of **prioritizing VAC prevention** in early childhood policies
- Strengthening the role of **health professionals** in addressing VAC
- Encouraging **cross-sectoral collaboration** for a holistic approach

Thank you

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