

# INSPIRE Implementation Working Group Meeting

28 February 2024  
Virtual Meeting



**INSPIRE**

Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children



## Acronyms

<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organisation
<b>CDC</b>	The Center for Disease Control and Prevention
<b>ISS</b>	Institute for Security Studies
<b>IWG</b>	Implementation Working Group
<b>PEPFAR</b>	President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
<b>SRSF-VAC</b>	UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAC</b>	Violence Against Children
<b>VACS</b>	Violence Against Children Surveys
<b>VAW</b>	Violence Against Women
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



The Implementation Working Group (IWG), established to support the roll-out of *INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children*, held its first quarterly meeting of 2024 on 28 February (see Appendix 1 for a list of participants). The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) convened and facilitated the meeting.

## Purpose and objectives

The meeting had the following objectives:

- For IWG members to reconnect with one another at the start of 2024
- To track progress on the five priority areas of 2023–2024
- To develop a plan on how the IWG can best support the upcoming Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children, hosted by the governments of Colombia and Sweden, in partnership with WHO, UNICEF and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children



# Working Group member updates

Five members of the IWG provided brief presentations about key developments in their organisations that have occurred since the December 2023 meeting. Following is a selection of updates from the five members.

## Joining Forces



**JOINING FORCES**  
*For All Children*

The [presentation](#) highlighted three key developments:

- Joining Forces published a quick-start guide [for the adaptation and scale-up of VAC programmes](#). A webinar series on how to support programme implementors in adapting and scaling up interventions to end VAC will be launched this year. The webinars are intended to capacitate implementors and will be available online for ongoing use.
- In April 2024, it will launch a call to action, advocating for governments to strengthen child participation in their child policies and activities. The call encourages inclusive and meaningful participation for children.
- Joining Forces will participate in the Ministerial Conference and encourage civil society engagement in the run-up to and at the event. The development of a civil society organisation (CSO) engagement framework for the Ministerial Conference is underway and will be shared with IWG.

## Universidad de los Andes



The [presentation](#) highlighted four ongoing and proposed projects that the Universidad de los Andes is actively involved in:

- A study on positive and adverse childhood experiences (PACES) and its impact on children and young people's health in Colombia. The study aims to identify context-specific PACES in Colombia and

their physiological impacts on the stress response system and mental health in a group of children and young people between 10–24 years old. This will be achieved through a mixed methods approach with three components: a national survey (on a representative sample), hair cortisol measures (on a subsample) and qualitative interviews (on a subsample).

- In partnership with NiñezYa, a network of more than 200 civil society organisations working in the children and youth sphere, the university is embarking on a massive direct message campaign with mayors and governors. The campaign involves an eight-week direct WhatsApp and SMS messaging campaign to provide the incoming 1 102 mayors and 32 governors with information and guidelines to include strategies to promote the well-being of children and youth in their local development plans. The intention is to highlight VAC prevention interventions and the appropriation of the National Action Plan to end VAC.
- #SafeSigns, an open-source tool-kit delivering a WhatsApp chatbot to help young women navigate intimate relationships, will be adapted to adolescent girls (15–18 years of age) in Colombian school-based settings. The tool-kit's content will be adapted through qualitative research and end-user engagement. It will be evaluated through a stepped-wedged cluster randomised controlled trial in 30 schools.
- A proposal has been submitted for a study on Sibling-Support for Adolescent Girls. The proposed study aims to expand the reach, impact, and evidence base of a promising, whole-family, gender-transformative intervention. Specifically, this project seeks to adapt the Sibling Support for Adolescent Girls in Emergencies intervention for the Colombian context to prevent mental health disorders among newly arrived Venezuelan adolescent girls.



## University of Oxford

This update highlighted three pieces of research that are near completion:



- A paper investigating the global and regional cost-effectiveness of the INSPIRE programmes. Preliminary results indicate the programmes are extremely cost-effective.
- The university will shortly receive the results of three randomised-control trials on hybrid digital parenting progress.
- A partner of the university, based in Sudan, has recently completed studies overlaid with satellite data, analysing violence against children in five southern and eastern African countries. Preliminary findings show double the rates of sexual violence in the context of severe drought.

Caribbean Public Health Agency under the theme 'Violence in the Caribbean: A Public Health Crisis' will be held in St Lucia on 25–27 April 2024. There are planned parliamentary inputs from several islands. The conference is an opportunity to promote the Ministerial Conference in Colombia.



- The Jamaican Violence Against Children Survey (VACS) is complete. The report will be launched in June or July 2024. The data from the VACS is being used to inform the national response. The 211 Child Abuse hotline through the National Children Registry is now providing geographic monitoring and reporting to better support interventions.

## Child Protection Network

- The Child Protection Network (CPN) has signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Health, recognising the CPN data on VAC and VAW as the official country data of the Philippines.
- The CPN has found a telecommunication partner on the telehealth project that allows virtual child protection and mental health services. The development of an agreement between CPN and the US-based telecommunication service provider is underway.



## The University of Edinburgh

- An evaluation of the Impact and Innovations



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Development Centre's (IIDC) Learning Initiative across seven NGOs in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya has been completed. The initiative focuses on six years of invested funding in building VAC capacities and improving documentation with an explicit focus on practice. The evaluation applies a contributions analysis and process tracing to demonstrate use, uptake and impact.

The analysis is underway, but initial results suggest a powerful model for South–South capacity building, especially around robust monitoring and evaluating systems to generate evidence. There has also been very clearly documented social and gender norm change across the agencies. The report will focus on documenting the impact of the initiatives.

## Violence Prevention Alliance, Jamaica

- The Violence Prevention Alliance Jamaica update focuses on VAC-related developments within Jamaica and the Caribbean. The 68<sup>th</sup> Annual



# The INSPIRE evidence update

Oxford University [reported progress](#) on the INSPIRE evidence update, a project co-led with the WHO and CDC.

The INSPIRE evidence updates is a systematic review of reviews and has three objectives:

- To systematically identify evidence reviews on the impact of INSPIRE interventions published from 2010.
- To provide clear recommendations on which interventions should be prioritised for scale-up.
- To identify evidence gaps and areas where higher quality evidence is necessary.

Since the IWG meeting in December 2023, 1 200 studies have been assessed in full text. A total of 250 reviews meets the evidence review's selection criteria for inclusion in the update. Nearly half of the included reviews focused on interventions within the 'education and life skills' strategy, followed by the 'response and support services strategies' and 'parenting and caregiver support'.

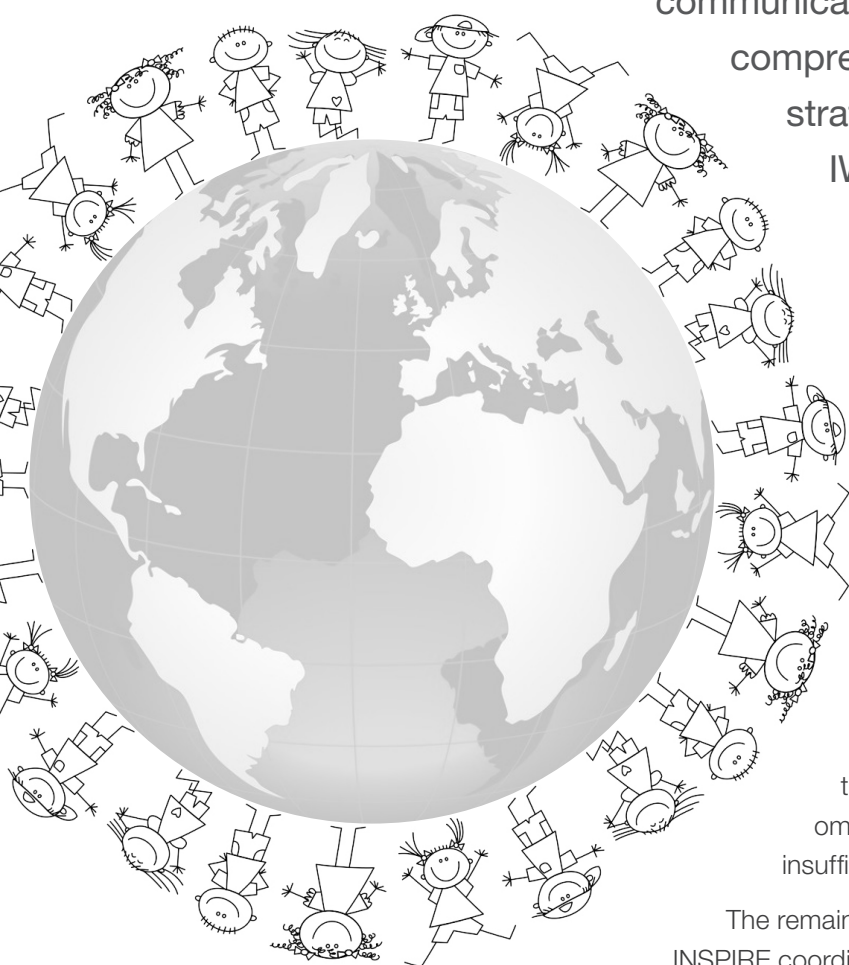
The next step in the evidence update is to complete the data extraction process over six to eight weeks. Thereafter, analysis will begin to identify effectiveness and gaps in the evidence. Preliminary findings will be presented at the next IWG meeting.





# The INSPIRE communications strategy

The ISS provided a short [presentation](#) on the INSPIRE communications strategy. The first draft of a comprehensive INSPIRE communications strategy was presented at the previous IWG meeting



The approach adopted in the strategy is one that:

- Contributes to the goals and priorities of INSPIRE
- Is aligned with the capacity and resources available for public communication without limiting what is feasible in the future
- Focuses on sustainability, strengthening regional and global engagements

The INSPIRE secretariat has since reviewed the draft strategy. Some activities have been omitted from the communication strategy due to insufficient budget.

The remaining activities have since been incorporated into the INSPIRE coordinator's 2024 work plan.

# Strengthening INSPIRE engagements

The ISS provided a brief update on strengthening INSPIRE engagements.

It remains important to continue strengthening INSPIRE engagements at national, regional and global levels to maintain visibility and promote the adoption of the INSPIRE package. This is particularly important in the run-up to the Ministerial Conference, including the regional preparatory meetings.

In order to track the progress of this goal, it will be valuable to be aware of any INSPIRE-related events the IWG plans to host in 2024.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the University of Oxford, the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the ISS have met to develop communications materials on the purpose and roles of the IWG. An intern at USAID is leading the drafting of the materials.

USAID has drafted a one-pager on the IWG and an accompanying slide deck. The materials will be completed in time for the June IWG meeting.

The proposed purpose of materials:

- is to raise awareness of the INSPIRE IWG in the build-up to and at the Global Ministerial Conference
- is for general communications at events, conferences and VAC-related engagements
- is to build networks
- could also be a way to support fundraising for INSPIRE coordination

The next draft of the materials will be circulated to the INSPIRE secretariat for review.

## Current key events for 2024 include:

**ISPCAN Congress**  
18–21 August, Uppsala, Sweden



**Summit of the Future**  
22–23 September New York City, United States



**SVRI Forum**  
21–25 October, Cape Town, South Africa



**The Global Ministerial Conference**  
7–8 November, Bogotá, Colombia





# Introducing Cornerstone Economic Research

The coordinator introduced Simon Halvey, a senior economist at Cornerstone Economic Research, to the IWG. Cornerstone Economic Research specialises in developing costing models for policies and legislation. In addition, Cornerstone conducts economics research and policy work in the child protection sector.

Simon delivered a [presentation](#) on their work and the economics of VAC to the IWG. The presentation highlighted the following:

- A paper presenting the economic case for preventing VAC was produced for the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (SRSG-VAC).
- Subsequent to global engagements by the SRSG-VAC and appetite from government partners, this work is being reviewed with a view to developing a model protocol and tool-kit to support Member States and partners to establish or strengthen the integrated child- and gender-sensitive violence prevention services. The plan is to launch the tool-kit at the Ministerial Conference. It is envisioned that this tool-kit will enable relevant stakeholders to develop their own economic cost of VAC and return-on-investment studies, develop advocacy around the key data points that emerge from such studies, cost implementation, and scale-up of child protection interventions.
- Cornerstone has begun conducting a series of key informant interviews to discuss existing and incipient research in the economics of VAC space and to understand the needs of stakeholders in this field. Cornerstone requested that IWG members participate in the key informant interviews. Several IWG members indicated interest in participation. Cornerstone has since connected with the IWG members and begun the interviews.

# IWG strategising on the Global Ministerial Conference on VAC

The World Health Organization (WHO) delivered a brief [presentation](#) on the upcoming Ministerial Conference, which provided an overview of the background, objectives and outcomes.

A brainstorming session followed on how the IWG can best support the Ministerial Conference. Some initial recommendations include the following:

- The Ministerial Conference is an opportunity to bring INSPIRE to a new audience of ‘unusual suspects’.
- If the IWG intends to host side events that need to be hosted by the most suitable people and include representatives from lower-to-middle-income countries.
- INSPIRE needs to be mainstreamed throughout the event and framed as a different way to think about what governments are already doing. It is essential to demonstrate how governments have already integrated INSPIRE into their existing policies and programmes.
- To exemplify the existing stakeholders in the INSPIRE ecosystem, including those who won’t be at the event but ensuring their voices are captured.
- Each strategy is used as a hook to bring creative thinking about INSPIRE, e.g. film or video testimonials, such as youths talking about that statute of limitations under “implementation of the law”.
- It is an opportunity to share what has been learnt at the national and regional levels. For example, a case study on where INSPIRE has had an impact on reducing VAC on a local level.
- Even though the conference itself is important, what happens after will be essential. The IWG will need to be strategic in managing what happens afterwards.
- To create links between INSPIRE and other critical topics in the VAC world, e.g. substance abuse, mental health, climate change and the intersections between VAC & VAW.
- The IWG must also play a role in the preparatory meetings since they are an ideal opportunity for strategising the Ministerial Conference.
- It’s an opportunity to highlight how INSPIRE can address multiple risks simultaneously, which can be appealing to governments with competing priorities.
- A top priority will be ensuring the IWG’s key messages are compelling. Strong communication will be essential.



While these are initial ideas, the consensus was that the IWG is strategically placed to support the Ministerial Conference. A key goal of the IWG is to maintain the centrality of INSPIRE as a readily available evidence-based package for countries. The INSPIRE secretariat will review the suggestions. The coordinator will facilitate ongoing conversations on these suggestions between now and the June meeting. The June meeting will be used to solidify and prepare for the Ministerial Conference.



## Appendix 1: List of participants



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