

**International Rescue Committee**

[**En f****rançais**](https://rescue.app.box.com/file/883214648899?s=snvnobqsdfg8p1hlpuehsvjwjy9ep592)[**En es****pañol**](https://rescue.app.box.com/file/883214306753?s=f0w1gpqsy7ov3f7e93oqgthd7mo9tu1r)

**Whilst we celebrate the Convention on the Rights of the Child, girls and boys are yet to fully enjoy their rights.**

**Critical gaps in child protection services remain which place the lives of millions of children at risk**

**What we know?**

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) works with **children at risk or exposed to violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation in over 32 countries around the world.** In all these countries IRC and other Child Protection actors work with children themselves, and their caregivers and communities to improve safety. Humanitarian actors are however only able to reach a fraction of the children in need of protection services due to shortfalls in donor funding for the child protection sector. We know that Covid-19 pandemic has made the situation worse for boys and girls.

**Evidence on cycles of violence from IRC and other studies:**

* Experiences of violence as a child are associated with both perpetration of violence and experience of violence in adulthood.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) for women is also linked to use of harsh parenting behaviors.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* An IRC study found that physical abuse as a child was associated with greater odds of recent co-occurring IPV and child maltreatment.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Conflict and the fragility of social and economic conditions caused by conflict can also worsen inequitable gender norms and increase violence within the home. [[4]](#footnote-4)
* The **prevalence of IPV against women and child maltreatment are staggeringly high within conflict and humanitarian settings.[[5]](#footnote-5)**
* Evidence from IRC’s programs shows that parenting interventions can lead to reduced harsh punishment and promote improved child-parent relationships, which is vital for child development.[[6]](#footnote-6)

**IRC Fact/Myth**

* **#Fact: This year, the IRC provided individualized support to over** 9,151 thousand children in case management, many of whom are experiencing abuse, humiliation, severe neglect, exploitation, sexual abuse, distress, finding it hard to concentrate, connect or feel safe.
* **#Myth:** Globally, Child protection programs are sufficiently funded
* **#Fact**: To improve MHPSS, IRC supported 73, 491 boys and girls in 2020-2021 through Psychosocial Support interventions
* **#Fact:** On average, 33% participants in parenting program at the IRC are male, 67% are female

**Funding Situation:**

The Inter Agency Global Child Protection Alliance reports that whilst funding for Child Protection has actually increased, **the needs in 2021 increased so significantly, widening the gap in funding for life saving child protection services**.

* Alarmingly the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CPAoR) saw a 40% increase in humanitarian caseload of children in need of protection in 2021
* IRC COVID monitoring data revealed that children were vastly affected by the impact of COVID. We know that when schools’ close children are at risk, when health facilities are inaccessible and overwhelmed children are affected, when livelihoods are lost, children pay the price.

**How can you help?**

* **Education:** The most vulnerable children could often be the first to drop out of school. Child Protection agencies can support Education actors to reach the hardest to reach children who are out of school. Without protection of children, we cannot achieve meaningful access to education.
* **Livelihoods**: Humanitarian situations impact the livelihood of caregivers, at times resulting in harmful coping mechanisms. Livelihood’s agencies need to partner with Child Protection agencies to provide comprehensive support to children, including children in worst forms of child labour.
* **Gender-based violence Prevention & Response**: Intimate partner violence means that children are exposed to violence in the home. Child protection services can be integrated into programs addressing gender-based violence to ensure children are receiving the support they need to be safer in the home.
* **Local Partners and Children are experts in their own Protection**: Children must be meaningfully consulted, and their decisions respected in design until program closure. The knowledge and skills of local actors as partners cannot be undermined.
* **Donor community: By 2021, the Child Protection sector remained under funded - this has** a direct impact on the safety of children and on communities’ wellbeing for years to come. To prevent and respond to millions of children at risk, child protection services can no longer be an afterthought.

Donors Must:

1. Increase funding for standalone child protection programming
2. Fund programming **that provides individualized support to children through child protection case management**, this is one activity that is life saving for children.

**We must recognize that one child’s suffering is enough for us to act.**

**When children are safe and well, communities thrive.**

1. Guedes et al.,2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Fulu et al., 2017](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28395846/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Falb et al., (*In press*). Co-occurring intimate partner violence and child abuse in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: the influence of early life experiences of abuse. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [Mootz et al., 2019](https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-019-0200-6); [Rubenstein & Stark, 2017](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28395846/); [Falb et al., 2020](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32438884/). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [Hossain et al.,2014](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3939650/); [Guedes et al.,2016](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27329936/) ; [Rubenstein & Stark, 2017](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28395846/) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [Puffer et al. (2015).](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28596863/) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)