

# A GENDERED APPROACH TO POSITIVE GIRL AND BOY DEVELOPMENT

Key Outcomes and Recommendations  
of the 2018 Gender 360 Summit

## Executive Summary

The following recommendations emerged from the 2018 Gender 360 Summit in Washington, DC, organized by FHI 360 and supported by 23 sponsor and partner organizations. They focus on the positive development of girls, boys and youth of diverse gender identities and highlight the intersections of education, health, economic empowerment, and GBV prevention and response. They are endorsed by 18 organizations and reflect a collective priority that builds on the Positive Youth Development approach that has been employed by stakeholders around the world.

Implicit in these recommendations is the idea that boys, girls and youth of diverse gender identities must participate fully in all stages of international development and be drivers and agents of change. This includes young people with intersectional identities, such as children living with a disability or LGBTQIA<sup>1</sup> youth. We recommend that they have an active and sustained voice in governance and accountability at both policy and program levels. Research and evaluation programs must also include age-, sex- and disability-disaggregated data to assess accessibility and efficacy for all.

**BOYS, GIRLS AND YOUTH OF DIVERSE GENDER IDENTITIES MUST BE DRIVERS AND AGENTS OF CHANGE.**

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<sup>1</sup> LGBTQIA stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual.

Below is a summary of the recommendations, with full details in the body of the document.

### **1. Support Education, Empowerment, and Leadership for All Children and Young People**

- Promote the voice and agency of girls, boys and youth of diverse gender identities.
  - > Support inclusive design, positive youth identity, safe spaces, and non-binary conforming gender roles
- Support education that expands life options for all children and youth.
  - > Invest in leadership development, soft skills, STEM<sup>2</sup>, comprehensive sexuality education, employability, disability inclusion, and social emotional learning (SEL).
  - > Use integrated curricula paired with gender-responsive pedagogical techniques to support enabling learning environments and more pertinent learning outcomes.

### **2. Advance Economic Empowerment and Equality for All Young People**

- Support an enabling environment for the economic empowerment of all young people.
  - > Prioritize safe, harassment-free, inclusive, gender-sensitive, decent work<sup>3</sup> and internships.
  - > Increase access to and agency over other income generating activities—including within the informal economy—and key inputs like savings, credit, financial literacy and social protections.

### **3. Provide Universal Health Care at all Stages of Child and Youth Development**

- Invest in age-appropriate health information, education, and care.
  - > Reinforce parent/care engagement and rights-based, inclusive and continuous services that are confidential and age-appropriate.
- Provide comprehensive health services to all children and young people.
  - > Support comprehensive sexuality education, inclusive health services,

preventative and mental health care, and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

### **4. Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (GBV)**

- Employ age-appropriate GBV prevention and response strategies.
  - > Ensure strategies are survivor-designed and include safe spaces, referral systems, gender-sensitive and trained providers and sufficient indicator sets.
- Create a GBV-free enabling environment in families, communities and institutions.
  - > Advance normative change and interpersonal dialogue, male engagement, child protection, prevention of early and forced marriage, GBV-free policies, and gender sensitive and socially inclusive staff and partner trainings.
- Integrate GBV prevention and response into all sectors to ensure awareness, prevention, accountability, and redress.

### **5. Transform Harmful Gender and Social Norms Among All Children and Young People**

- Deconstruct harmful, restrictive gender roles.
  - > Mainstream gender transformation, engage parents, and avoid gender binaries.
- Fully engage and address priorities of young people living with disabilities.
  - > Partner with Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), and collectively advance universal design and reasonable accommodation budgets for youth with disabilities.
- Reinforce norms of positive masculinity.
  - > Support norms of caring and engaged fathers/sons/brothers; engage traditional, community and faith leaders; set clear donor expectations; simultaneously reinforce girls' and young women's empowerment and joint household decision-making.

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<sup>2</sup> STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and math.

<sup>3</sup> According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), decent work involves opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace, social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.