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## A Theory of Change for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls

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### Principles

**The seven key principles underlying the Theory of Change are that:**

- 1. Context is critical:** successful interventions are those that are tailored and based on rigorous analysis of the particular factors affecting violence against women and girls in a specific context, including setting, form of violence and population affected by the violence.
- 2. The state has primary responsibility for action on violence against women and girls:** national governments hold the ultimate responsibility for implementing laws, policies and services around violence against women and girls and can achieve change on violence against women and girls.
- 3. Holistic and multi-sectoral approaches are more likely to have impact:** coordinated interventions operating at multiple levels, across sectors and over multiple time-frames are more likely to address the various aspects of, and therefore have greater impact on, tackling violence against women and girls.
- 4. Social change makes the difference:** sustained reduction in violence against women and girls will only occur through processes of significant social change, including in social norms, at all levels.
- 5. Backlash is inevitable but manageable:** resistance to tackling violence against women and girls, which may include increased risk of further violence against women and girls, is inevitable where root causes are being addressed but can, and should, be managed.
- 6. Women's rights organisations create and sustain change:** supporting women's rights organisations, especially those working to tackle violence against women and girls, to make change and build strong and inclusive social movements is the most effective mechanism for ensuring sustainable change in the lives of women and girls.
- 7. Empowering women is both the means and the end:** focusing on the rights of, and being accountable to, women and girls is the most effective way of tackling gender inequality as the root cause of violence against women and girls.

For more information please visit: [www.actionaid.org.uk/womensrights](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/womensrights)

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