Violence against women and girls
Forms, levels, consequences, causes & growing commitment to address it

Dr V Chandra-Mouli & Dr A Amin
Department of Reproductive Health & Research
World Health Organization
Any public or private act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women & girls, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty with the family or general community.

Violence against women & girls
Key messages

1. Violence against women & girls takes many forms – intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, early & forced marriage, trafficking, female genital mutilation & honour killings.
Violence against women & girls takes many forms

Intimate partner violence: the most common form of violence experienced by women & adolescent girls.
Experience of one or more acts of physical and/or sexual violence and/or emotional/psychological abuse by a current or former partner

Intimate Partner Violence
Being slapped, having something thrown at you that could hurt you, being pushed or shoved, being hit with a fist or something else that could hurt, being kicked, dragged or beaten up, being choked or burnt on purpose, and/or being threatened with or actually having a gun, knife or other weapon used on you.
Being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when you didn't want to, having sexual intercourse because you were afraid of what your partner might do and/or being forced to do something sexual that you found humiliating or degrading.

Sexual Violence
Being insulted or being made to feel bad about oneself; being belittled or humiliated in front of other people. The perpetrator has done things to scare or intimidate her, by yelling or smashing things; and/or has threatened to hurt someone she cares about.
Key messages

1. Violence against women & girls take many forms – intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, early & forced marriage, trafficking, female genital mutilation & honour killings.

2. Levels of violence against women & girls in Asia-Pacific region are comparable to global levels. Like elsewhere there is considerable underreporting to police & health/social service statistics.
35% of women globally, 38% in WHO's South East Asia region & 25% in WHO's Western-Pacific region have experienced physical &/or sexual violence by an intimate partner and/or non-partner.
7% of women globally, 5% in WHO's South East Asia & 7% in WHO's Western Pacific region have experienced non-partner sexual violence.
beaten in pregnancy, not punched or kicked in abdomen

beaten in pregnancy, including punched or kicked in abdomen

Source: Garcia-Moreno C et al. 2005, WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women: initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses.
Violence starts early in lives of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group, years</th>
<th>Prevalence, %</th>
<th>95% CI, %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15–19</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>26.8 to 32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>29.2 to 33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–29</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>30.0 to 34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–34</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>28.9 to 33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–39</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>30.0 to 43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–44</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>30.7 to 44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–49</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>26.9 to 31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–54</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>18.6 to 32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55–59</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>6.1 to 24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>9.6 to 29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65–69</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>12.8 to 31.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence by age group among ever-partnered women (WHO, 2013)
Prevalence of childhood sexual abuse girls below 15 years

Table 6.1: Percentage of respondents reporting sexual abuse before the age of 15 years, by site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Face-to-face report</th>
<th>Anonymous report</th>
<th>Best estimate^a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>Total no. of respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh city^b</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh province^b</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil city</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>1172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil province</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia province</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan city</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>1361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia city</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru city</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>1414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru province</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa^c</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia and Montenegro city</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand city</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand province</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Republic of Tanzania city</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Republic of Tanzania province</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1443</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Garcia-Moreno C et al. 2005, WHO multi-country study on women’s health and domestic violence against women: initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses.
Statistics reported to police, health or social services are under-estimates

Only 10%-30% of victims seek institutional support
Key messages

1. Violence against women & girls take many forms – intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, early & forced marriage, trafficking, female genital mutilation & honour killings.
2. Levels of violence against women & girls in Asia-Pacific region are comparable to global levels. Like elsewhere there is considerable underreporting to police & health/social service statistics.
3. Violence against women & girls has health, social & economic consequences for individuals, families, communities & societies.
Pathways & health effects of Intimate Partner Violence

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

PHYSICAL TRAUMA
- INJURY
  - musculoskeletal
  - soft tissue
  - genital trauma
  - other

PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA/STRESS
- MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
  - PTSD
  - anxiety
  - depression
  - eating disorders
  - suicidality
- SUBSTANCE USE
  - alcohol
  - other drugs
  - tobacco

FEAR AND CONTROL
- LIMITED SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE CONTROL
  - lack of contraception
  - unsafe sex
- HEALTH CARE SEEKING
  - lack of autonomy
  - difficulties seeking care and other services

NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES
- cardiovascular disease
- hypertension

SUMATOFORM
- irritable bowel
- chronic pain
- chronic pelvic pain

PERINATAL/MATERNAL HEALTH
- low birth weight
- prematurity
- pregnancy loss

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
- unwanted pregnancy
- abortion
- HIV
- other STIs
- gynaecological problems

DISABILITY

DEATH
- homicide
- suicide
- other
### Inter-generational & socio-economic consequences

| Effects on children of women who experience abuse | • Higher rates of infant mortality & mortality  
• Physical injury  
• Behavior problems  
• Anxiety, depression, suicide  
• Poor school performance  
• Increased likelihood of experiencing & perpetrating violence as adults |
| Effects on families | • Reduced ability to work  
• Lost wages  
• Impaired family function |
| Social and economic effects | • Costs of services incurred by victims & their families  
• Lost workplace productivity  
• Perpetuation of violence |
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3. Violence against women & girls has health, social & economic consequences for individuals, families, communities & societies.
4. Childhood abuse & gender inequality are the main risk factors for intimate partner & non-partner sexual violence. There is growing evidence of a number of predisposing factors at the individual, relationship, family, community & societal levels.
Childhood abuse & gender inequality are the main risk factors for violence against women & girls

**Society:**
- Gender & social norms accepting of violence & ideologies of male entitlement
- Women’s lack of access to education, employment & family resources
- Lack or poor enforcement of laws & policies on violence against women & girls

**Community:**
Unequal gender norms that condone violence against women & weak community sanctions

**Relationship:**
Men's control over women
Martial dissatisfaction
Multiple partners

**Individual:**
- Exposure to child maltreatment (& to sexual abuse in men)
- Low education, low income
- Young age, separated/divorced status (in girls/women)
- Acceptance of violence
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3. Violence against women & girls has health, social & economic consequences for individuals, families, communities & societies.

4. Childhood abuse & gender inequality are the main factors for intimate partner & non-partner sexual violence. There is growing evidence of a number of predisposing factors at the individual, relationship, family, community & societal levels.

5. There is widespread global consensus & commitment to end violence against women & girls.
World Health Assembly 2014 Resolution approved by WHO's member states on:
Strengthening the role of the health systems in addressing violence, in particular against women & girls and against children
Health sector's role in addressing violence against women & girls:

Provide
Comprehensive health services for survivors

Collect data
about prevalence, risk factors and health consequences

Inform
policies to prevent violence against women

Prevent violence
by fostering and informing prevention programs

Advocate
for the recognition of violence against women as a public health issue
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