Violence against women and girls in LAC and recent health system mandates

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Pan American Health Organization
World Health Organization
Americas

Outline of the presentation

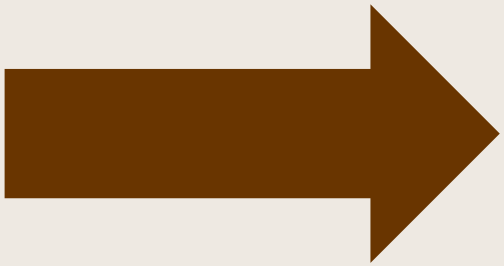
- Violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean
  - ✓ Magnitude
  - ✓ Consequences
  - ✓ Intersections with violence against children

- Mandates approved by health ministers regionally and globally
  - ✓ PAHO Regional Strategy and Plan of Action
  - ✓ WHO Global Plan of Action
  - ✓ Risk and protective factors

Violence is on the development map…

Millennium Development Goals

NO TARGETS or INDICATORS related to violence in the MDGs



Sustainable Development Goals

Gender Equality

SDG Target 5.2

Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls

SDG Target 5.3

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation

Peaceful and inclusive societies

SDG Target 16.1

Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

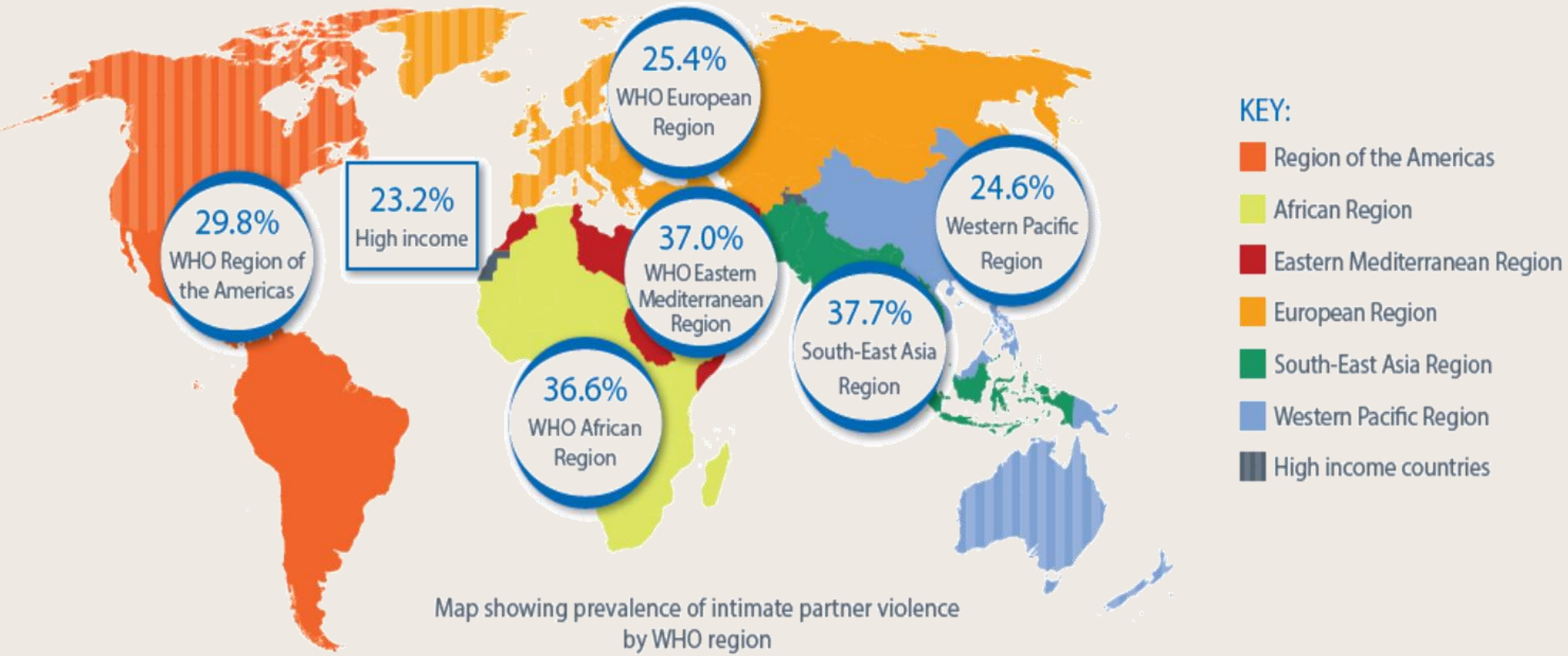
SDG Target 16.2

End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children

Prevalence of VAW globally

1 in 3 women

throughout the world will experience physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner



Map showing prevalence of intimate partner violence by WHO region

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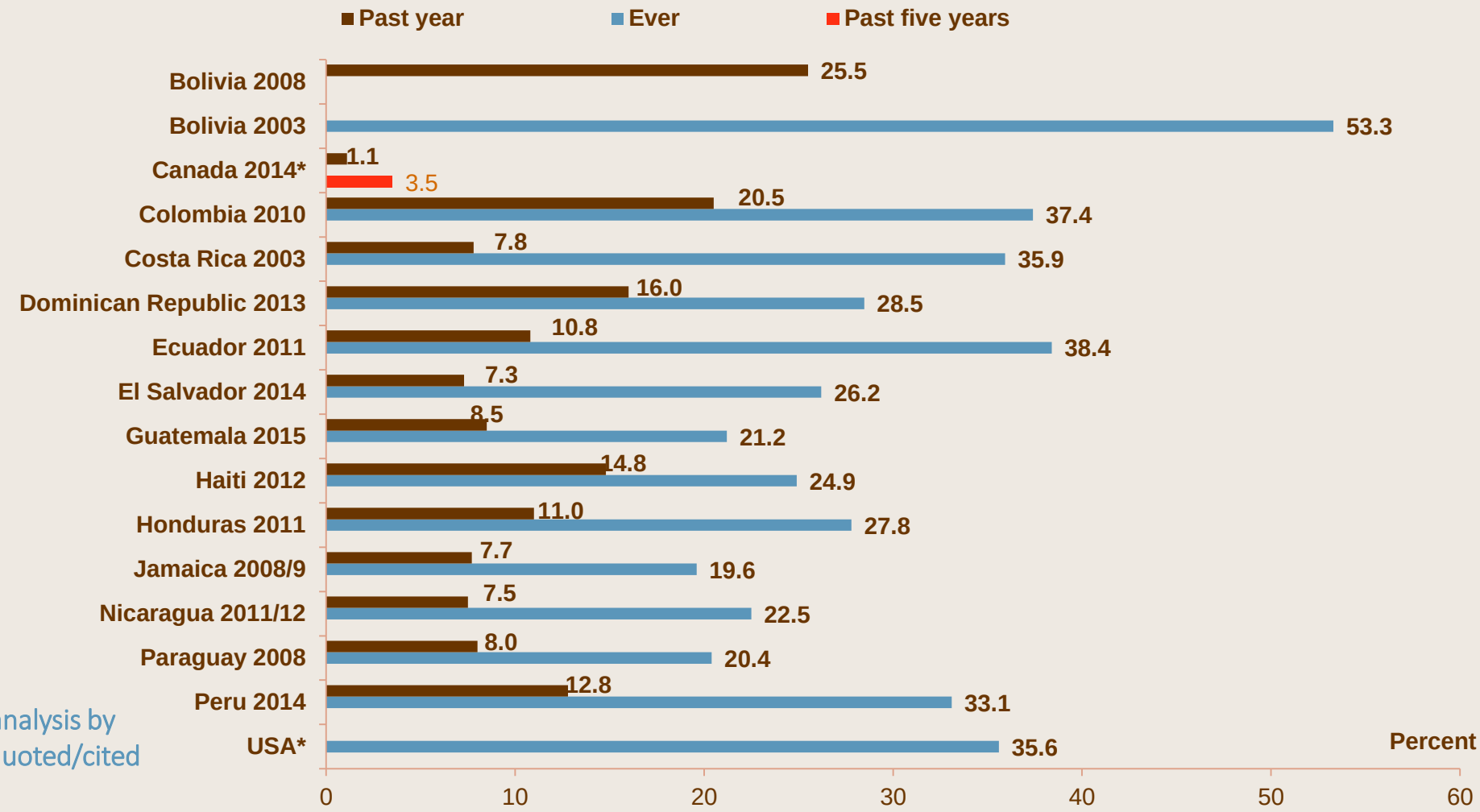
Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever, past 5 years, and past year, recent national population-based surveys



Source: ongoing analysis by PAHO, not to be quoted/cited

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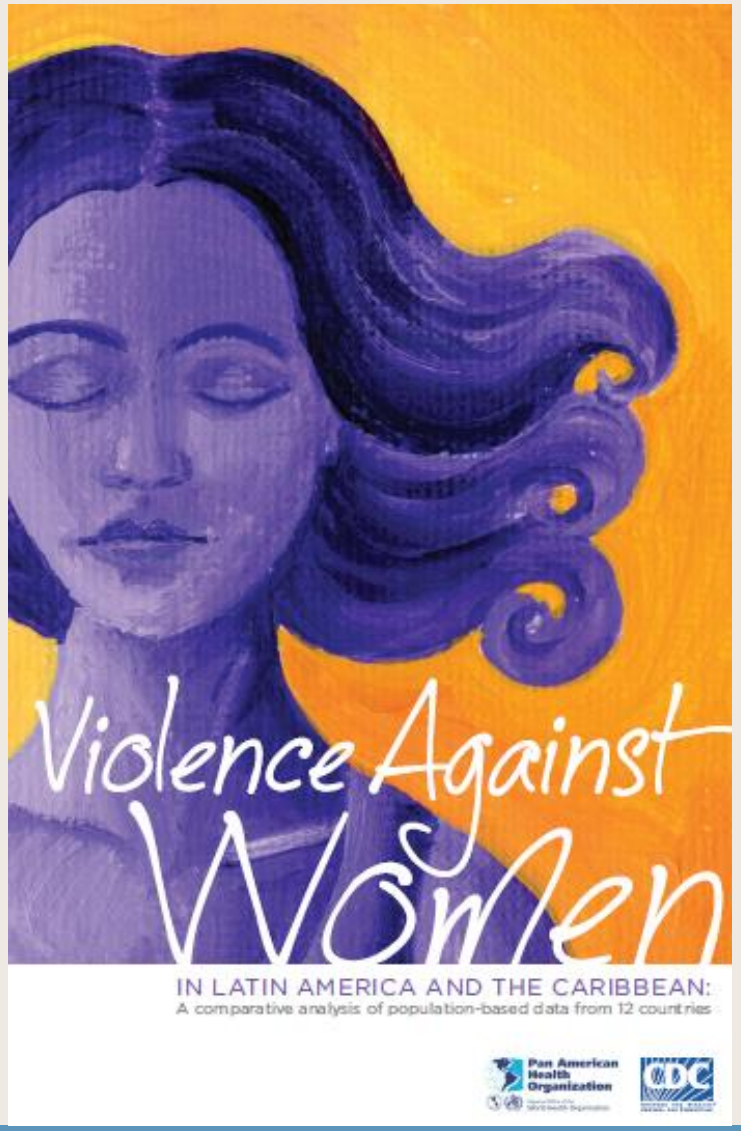
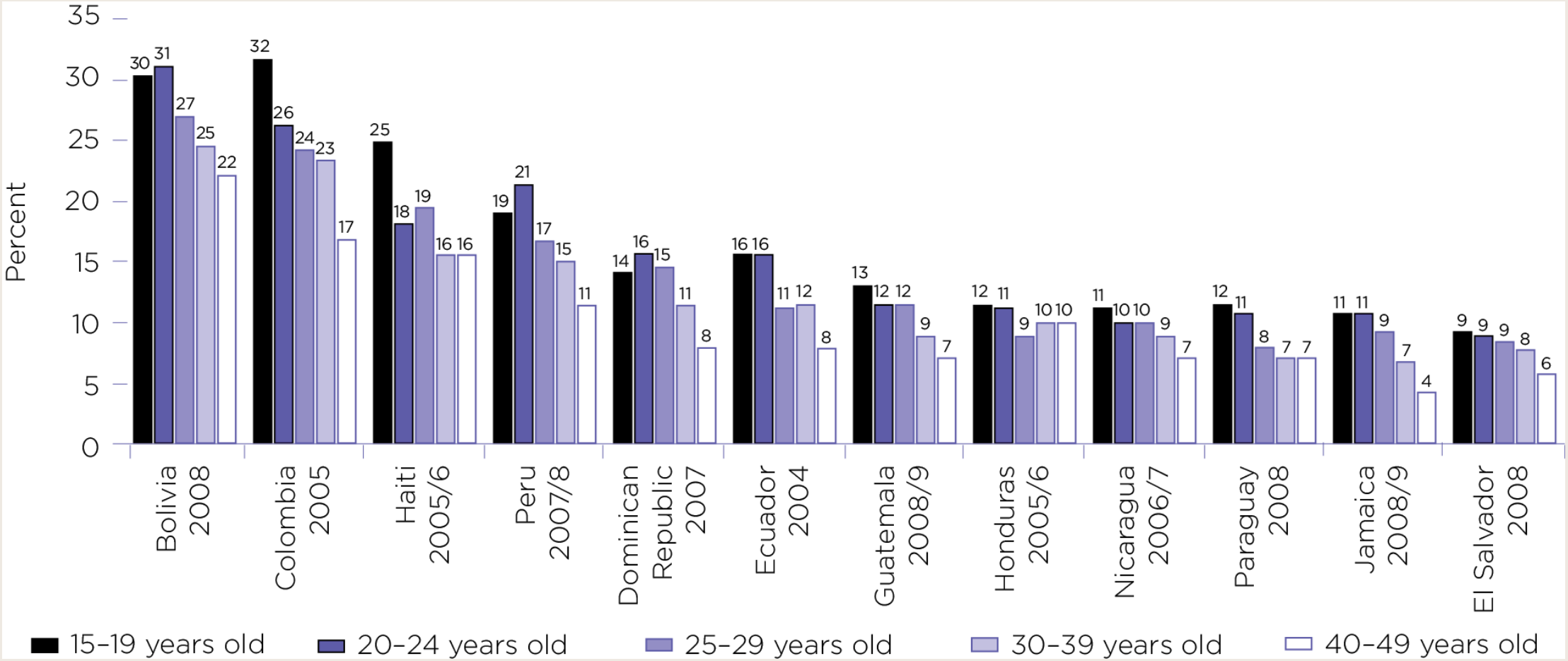
Source of most data in this presentation



- ✓PAHO and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- ✓First comparative analysis of national violence against women data from LAC
- ✓Demographic Health Surveys and Reproductive Health Surveys from 12 countries
- ✓Currently being updated
- ✓Available in English and Spanish from www.paho.org/violence

Young women have greater risks of experiencing physical & sexual intimate partner violence



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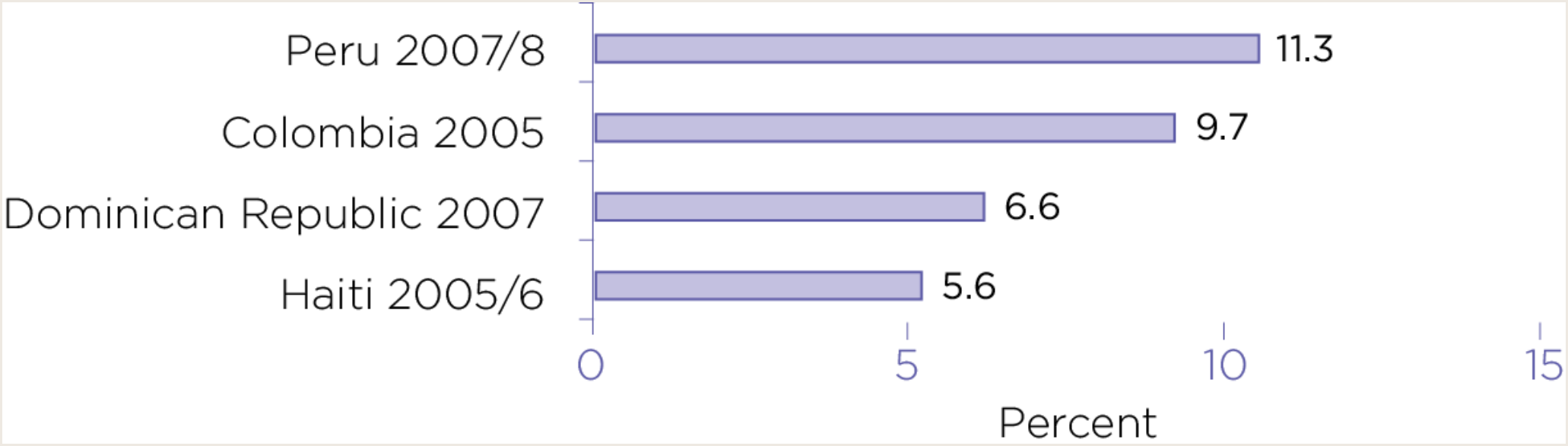
Pregnancy does not protect women from violence:

% of women who report intimate partner violence during pregnancy



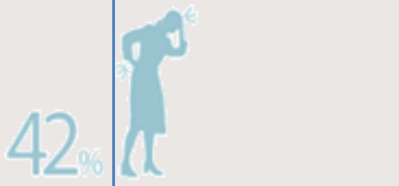
Health effects of intimate partner violence

Physical trauma

Psychological trauma

Fear & control

Injuries:
Musculo-esqueletal
Soft tissue
Genital
Other



Mental health problems:
PTSD
Anxiety
Depression
Eating disorders
Suicidality

Substance abuse

Non-common. diseases
Cardio-vascular
Hypertension

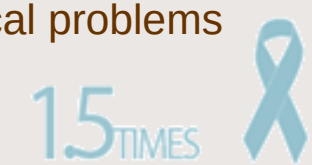
& Somatoform
Irritable bowel
Chronic pain
Pelvic pain

Reproductive coercion
Lack of contraception
Unsafe sex

Poor health care seeking
Lack of autonomy
Difficulties seeking services

Poor maternal outcomes:
Low birth weight
Prematurity
Pregnancy loss

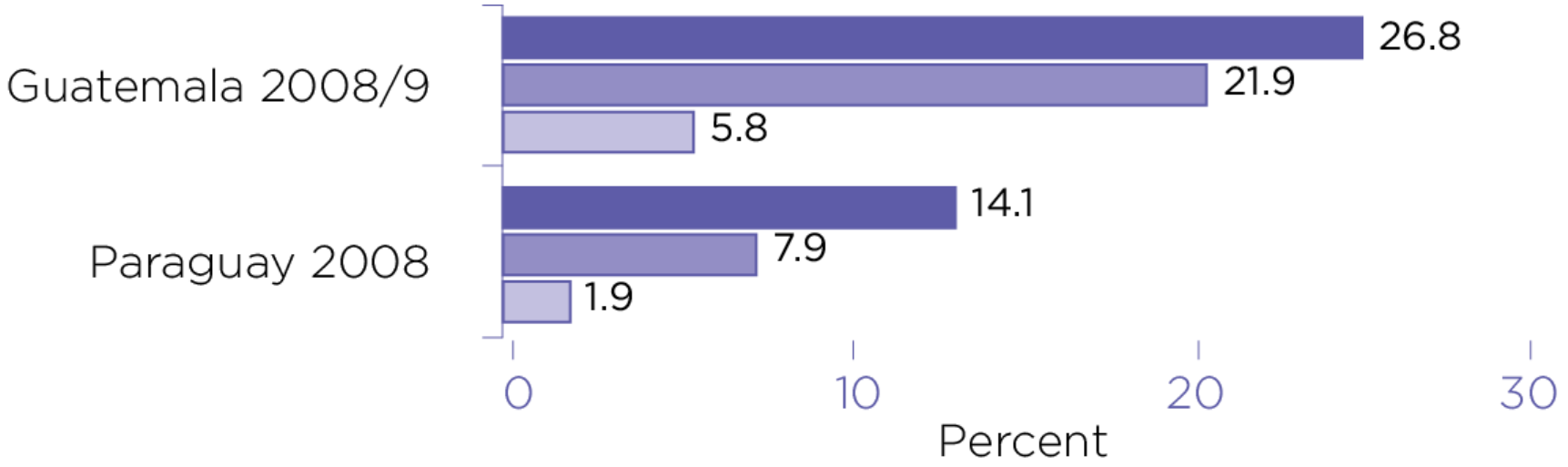
S&R Health problems:
Unwanted pregnancy
Abortion
Gynecological problems
HIV
STIs



DISABILITY & DEATH

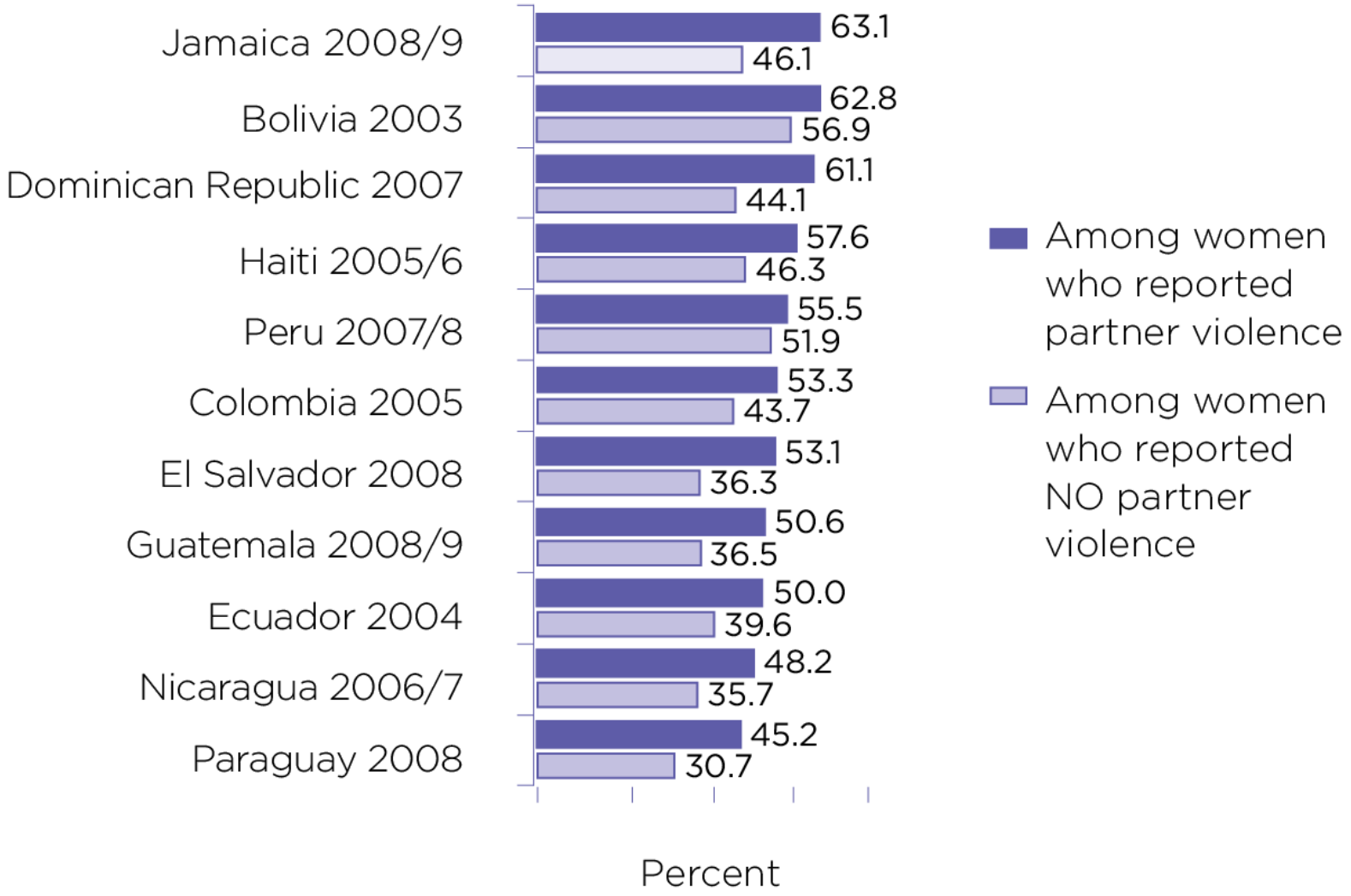
Intimate partner violence is associated with suicide

% women who considered or attempted suicide in the past 4 weeks, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence



Intimate partner violence is associated with unintended pregnancies

% women who reported an unintended pregnancy in the past 5 years, according to experience of partner violence ever

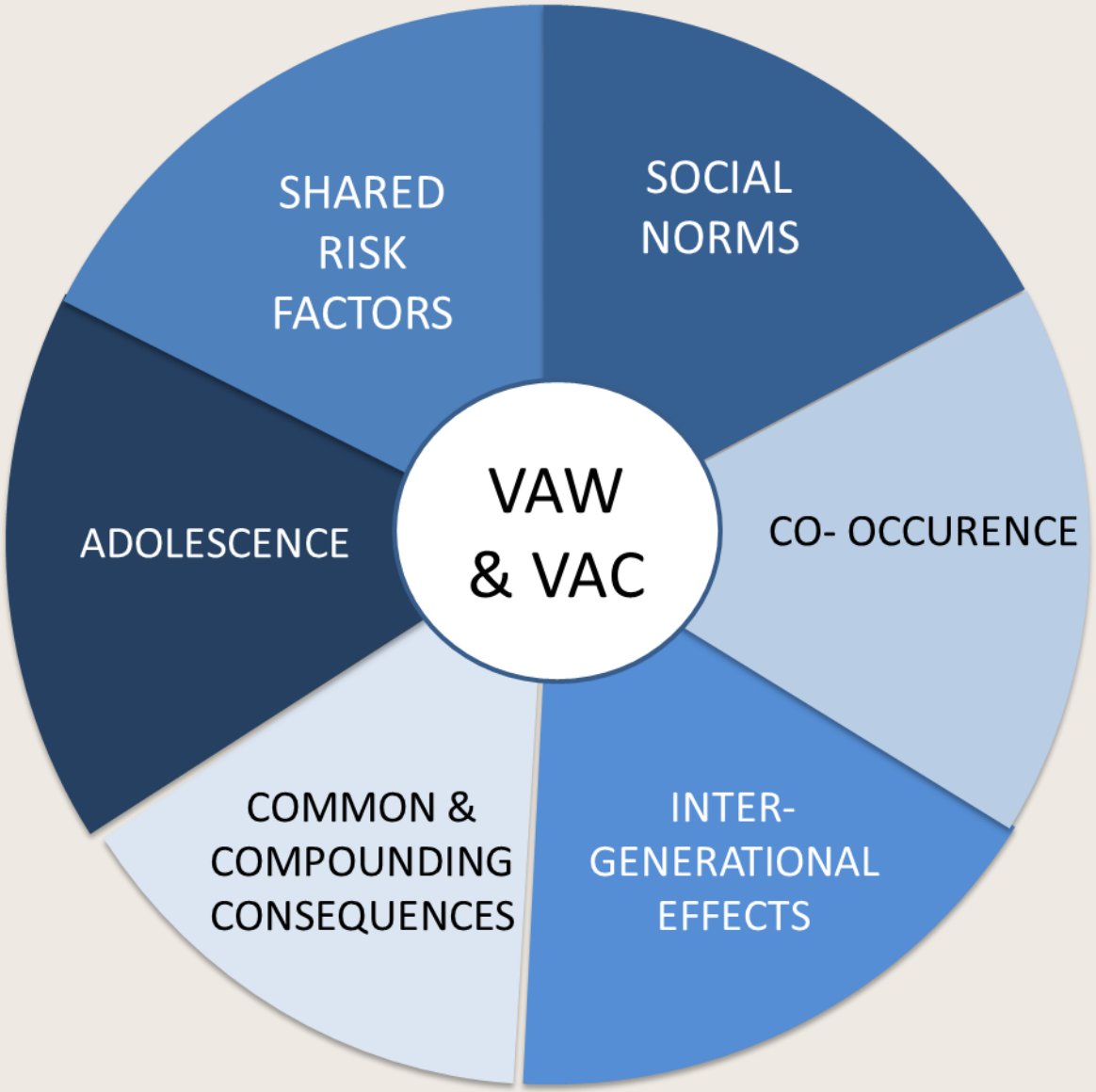


Consequences of violence against women go beyond survivors themselves

Effects on children of women who experience abuse	• Higher rates of infant mortality • Behavior problems • Anxiety, depression, attempted suicide • Poor school performance • Physical injury or health complaints • Experiencing or perpetrating violence as adults
Effects on families	• Inability to work • Lost wages and productivity • Housing instability

Social and economic effects	• Costs of services incurred by victims and families (health, social, justice)
	  • 42% higher health care expenditures in US
	• Lost workplace productivity and costs to employers
	  • 3.7% of GDP in Peru
	• Perpetuation of violence

Intersections between violence against women and violence against children



Adapted from: Guedes et al. (2016). Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children. Global Health Action.

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Why are health systems key to addressing violence against women?

1. Women exposed to violence **seek health care more frequently**
2. Health care providers are often women's **first point of professional contact**
3. **All women** are likely to seek health services at some point in their lives

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Recent mandates agreed by Health Ministries

PAHO Directing Council 2015:

Strategy and Plan of Action on strengthening the health system to address violence against women

World Health Assembly 2016:

Global Plan of Action to strengthen the role of the health system to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children

Key lines of action:

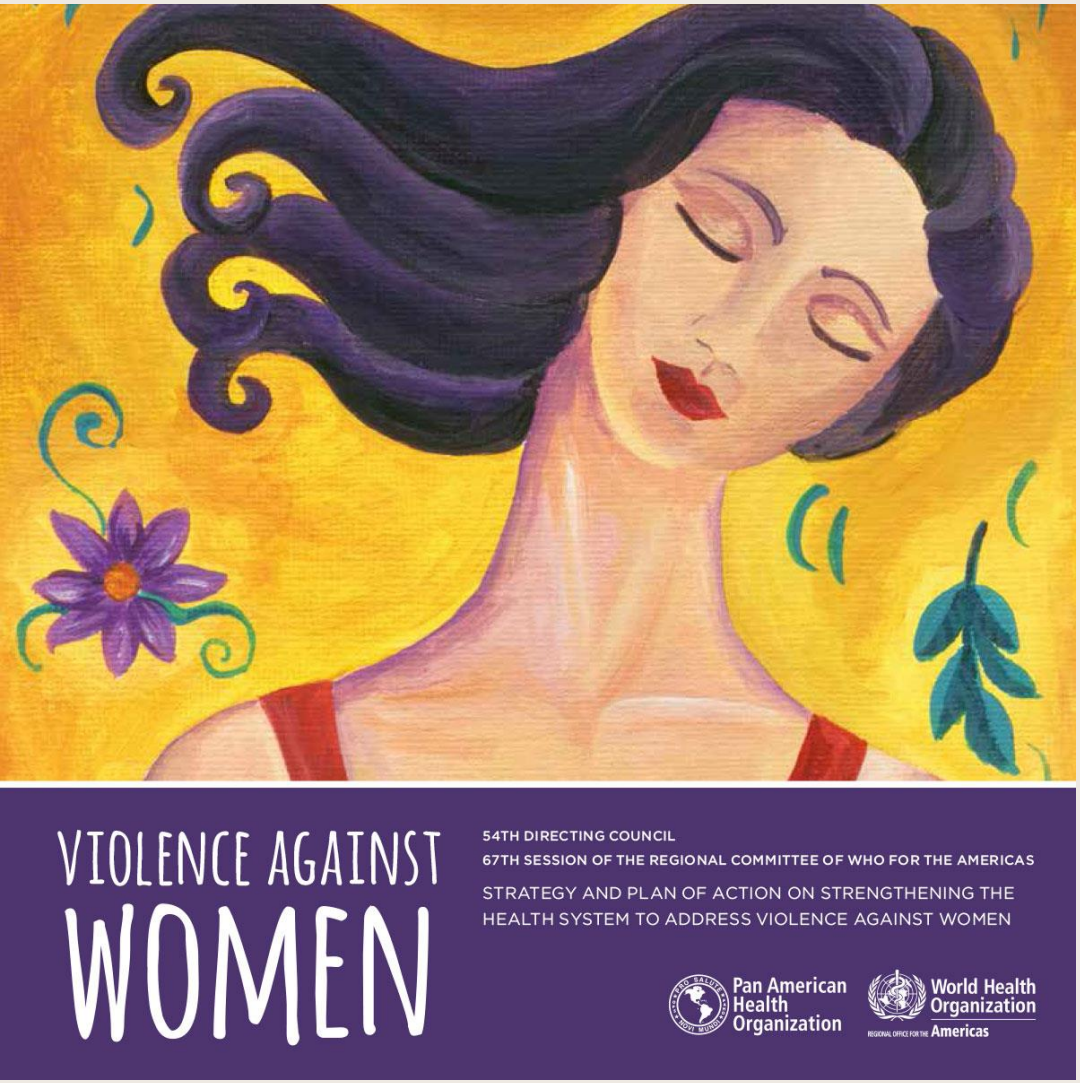
Strengthen the **availability and use of evidence**

Strengthen **political and financial commitment**

Strengthen the **capacity** of health systems to provide **effective care and support**

Strengthen the role of the health system in **prevention**

How was the Regional Strategy and Plan of Action developed?



- 4 virtual consultations (in multiple languages)
- 1 in-person consultation
- Additional consultations with organizations representing indigenous and afrodescendant communities
- Reviewed and approved at PAHO's Directing Council by Ministers of Health from 38 countries from the Americas
- In total, 100 colleagues from 19 countries participated (Governments, CSOs, academic institutions, multi-laterals, UN agencies)

Objective 1.1: Increase the collection and availability of epidemiological and service-related data on violence against women

Indicators

1.1.1 – Number of countries that have carried out national studies on violence against women within the past 5 years

1.1.2 – Number of countries whose studies include an analysis of violence against women across different ethnic/racial groups

1.1.3 – Number of countries whose homicide data is disaggregated by age, sex, and relationship of victim to perpetrator

Objective 2.1: Strengthen national and subnational policies and plans to address violence against women within the health system

Indicators

2.1.1 – Number of countries that included violence against women in national health plans and policies

2.1.2 – Number of countries whose national health budget has one or more dedicated budget lines to support violence against women

2.1.3 – Number of countries that have a unit or focal point within health ministry responsible for violence against women

Objective 2.2: Increase the health system's participation in multisectoral plans, policies and coalitions to address violence against women

Indicators

2.2.1 – Number of countries that have a national or multisectoral plan addressing violence against women that includes the health system

Objective 3.1: Strengthen national standard operating procedures (protocols, guidelines) for providing safe and effective care and support for women experiencing intimate partner and/or sexual violence

Indicators

3.1.1 – Number of countries that have a national standard operating procedures for the health system response to intimate partner violence, consistent with WHO guidelines

3.1.2 – Number of countries that provide comprehensive post-rape care in emergency services, consistent with WHO guidelines

Objective 3.2: Increase the capacity of health professionals to respond to violence against women

Indicators

3.2.1 – Number of countries that have included violence against women in their continuing education processes for health professionals

Objective 4.1: Strengthen the participation and commitment of the health system in efforts to prevent violence again

Indicators

4.1.1 – Number of countries that have a coalition/task force in place for coordinating prevention of violence against women that includes participation from the Ministry of Health

4.1.2 – Number of countries that have a national violence against women plan that proposes at least one strategy to prevent violence against women

How can the Strategy and Plan of Action be useful to you?

- Offers a road map of health systems' priorities for the Americas
- Provides indicators to monitor progress
- Can be used as an advocacy tool to promote action

Gracias!
Obrigada!
Thank you!

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