

Violence against Women

The Health Sector Responds



1 in **3**

women will experience
physical and/or sexual violence
by an intimate partner at some point in her life.



World Health
Organization

Violence against women takes many forms, including:



The most common type of violence experienced by women is **intimate partner violence**.



Violence against women **is widespread.**

It occurs in all countries of the world
...but prevalence varies from country to country.

Prevalence also varies **within** countries.

Studies from **different countries** show that the percentage of women 15 to 49 years old who've **experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner** in their lifetime ranges from

15% to **71%**

This variation shows that violence against women **is preventable.**

Violence against women has **serious health consequences.**

Death



Physical injuries



Unintended pregnancies, induced abortions



Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV



Depression, post-traumatic stress disorder



Harmful use of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol



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Economic Impact

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Costs of intimate partner and sexual violence for countries are very high. They include the provision of **health, social, and legal services** and **costs of lost earnings.**

Violence against women affects the whole family.

Children exposed to intimate partner violence in the home are more likely to:

- Be abused themselves
- Not receive healthcare
- Have behavioural, emotional, and schooling problems



As adolescents, they are more likely to:

- Use alcohol and drugs in harmful ways
- Smoke
- Have unsafe sex



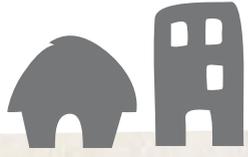
Adults who grew up with violence in the home are more likely to **perpetrate or experience intimate partner violence.**



Violence against women is preventable.

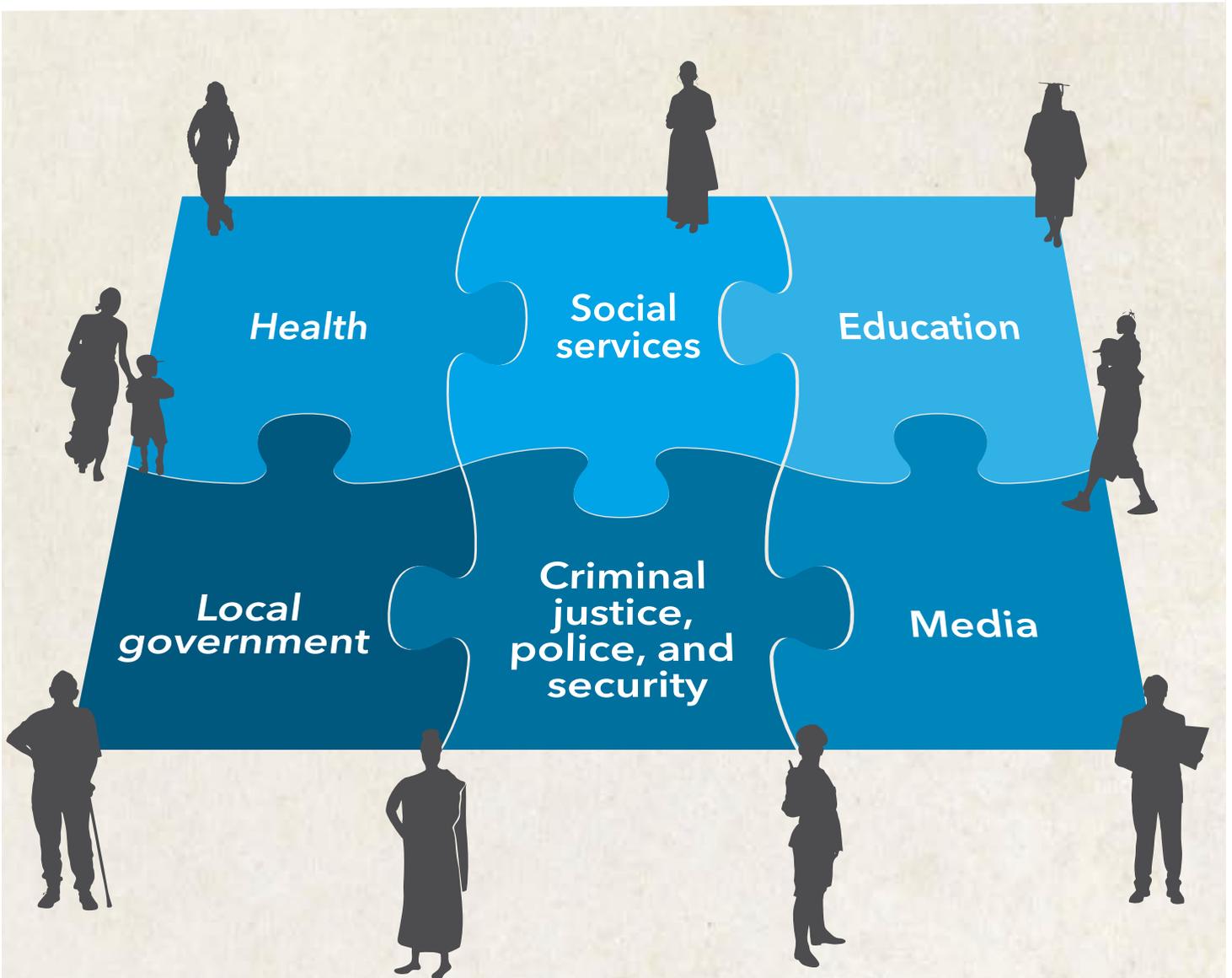
Violence against women is **rooted in gender inequality**.

Programs to reduce intimate partner violence
need to **address risk factors at multiple levels**.

Level	Risk Factor	Intervention
 Individual	 History of violence in childhood	Parenting programmes to prevent child maltreatment 
 Relationship	 Male control over women	Programmes targeting men and boys to promote gender equitable attitudes and behaviours 
 Community	 Unequal gender norms that condone violence against women	Programmes promoting equitable gender norms through media, community mobilization, schools, and religious institutions 
 Societal	 Male partner's harmful use of alcohol	Reducing availability and access to alcohol 
	 Women's lack of access to education and employment	Laws, policies, and programmes that promote women's access to employment and microcredit, girls' access to education, and that ban or prohibit violence against women 

Everyone has a role to play in addressing violence against women.

To prevent and respond to violence against women, multiple sectors of society must work together.



The health sector plays a key role in preventing and responding to **violence against women**.



Stop violence against women.

A **role** for the health sector:

- ✓ **Provide**
comprehensive health services
for survivors
- ✓ **Collect data**
about prevalence, risk factors,
and health consequences
- ✓ **Inform policies**
to address violence against women
- ✓ **Prevent violence**
by fostering and informing
prevention programmes
- ✓ **Advocate**
for the recognition of violence against
women as a public health problem



Web Resources

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/
<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/en/>

WHO Resources

WHO (2005). Multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women.
http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/en/

WHO (2010). Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence.
http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/activities/intimate/en/

WHO (2013). Responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women. WHO clinical and policy guidelines.