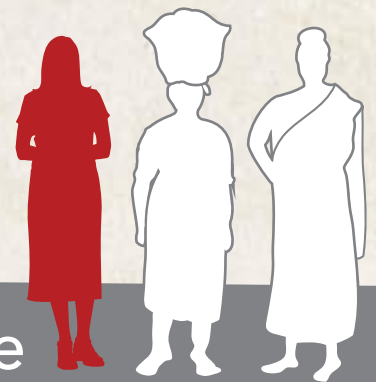


# Violence against Women

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.

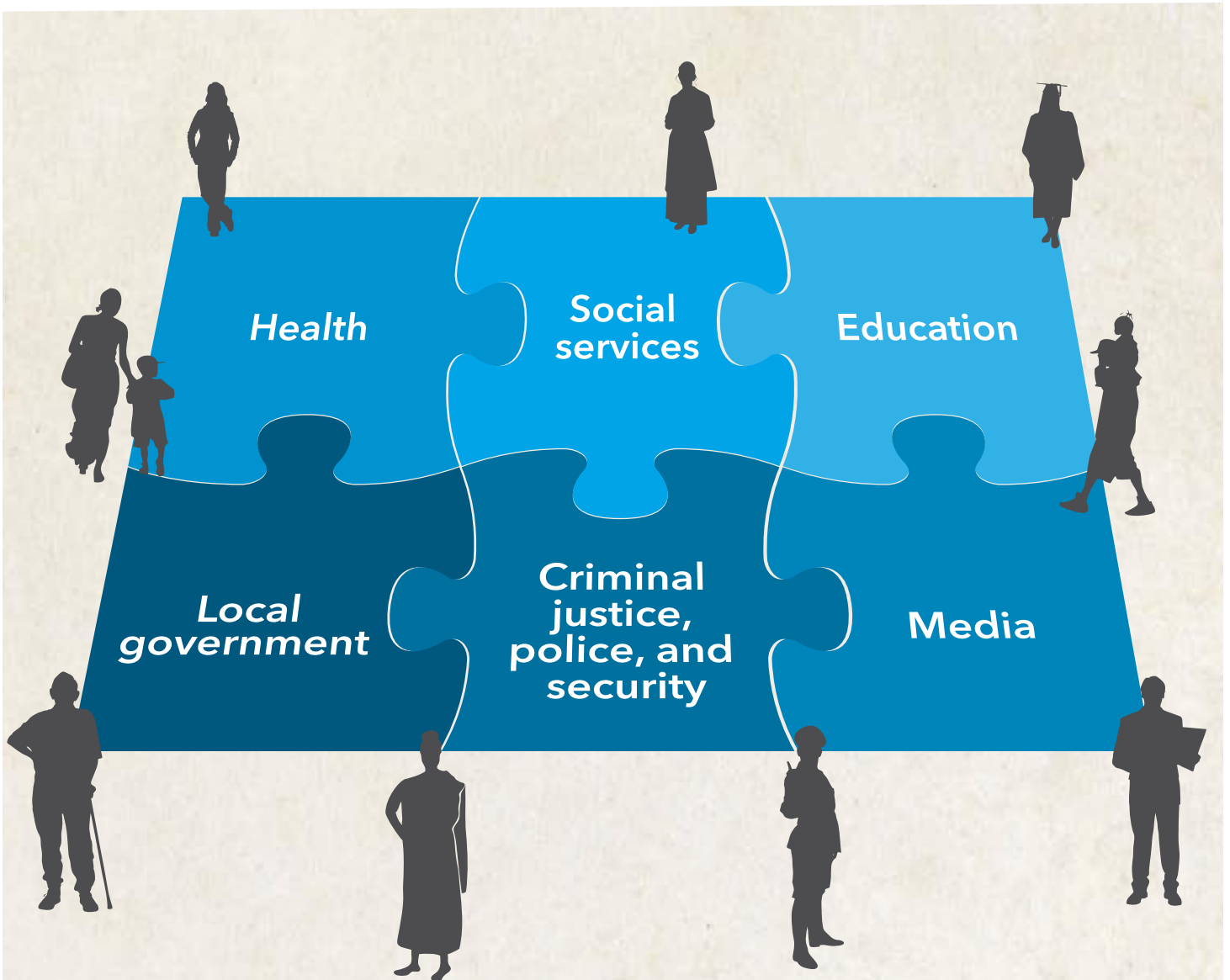
Violence against women is **rooted in gender inequality**.

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

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