Determinants of Partner violence in Low and Middle Income Countries

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Things we knew in 2005

- Partner violence is the most common form of victimization among women globally

- Women are more likely to be assaulted by a male intimate than any other perpetrator

- Levels of partner violence vary greatly within and between settings

- Partner violence increases a woman's risk of experiencing a host of negative health outcomes

- The health consequences of violence can persist long after the violence ends
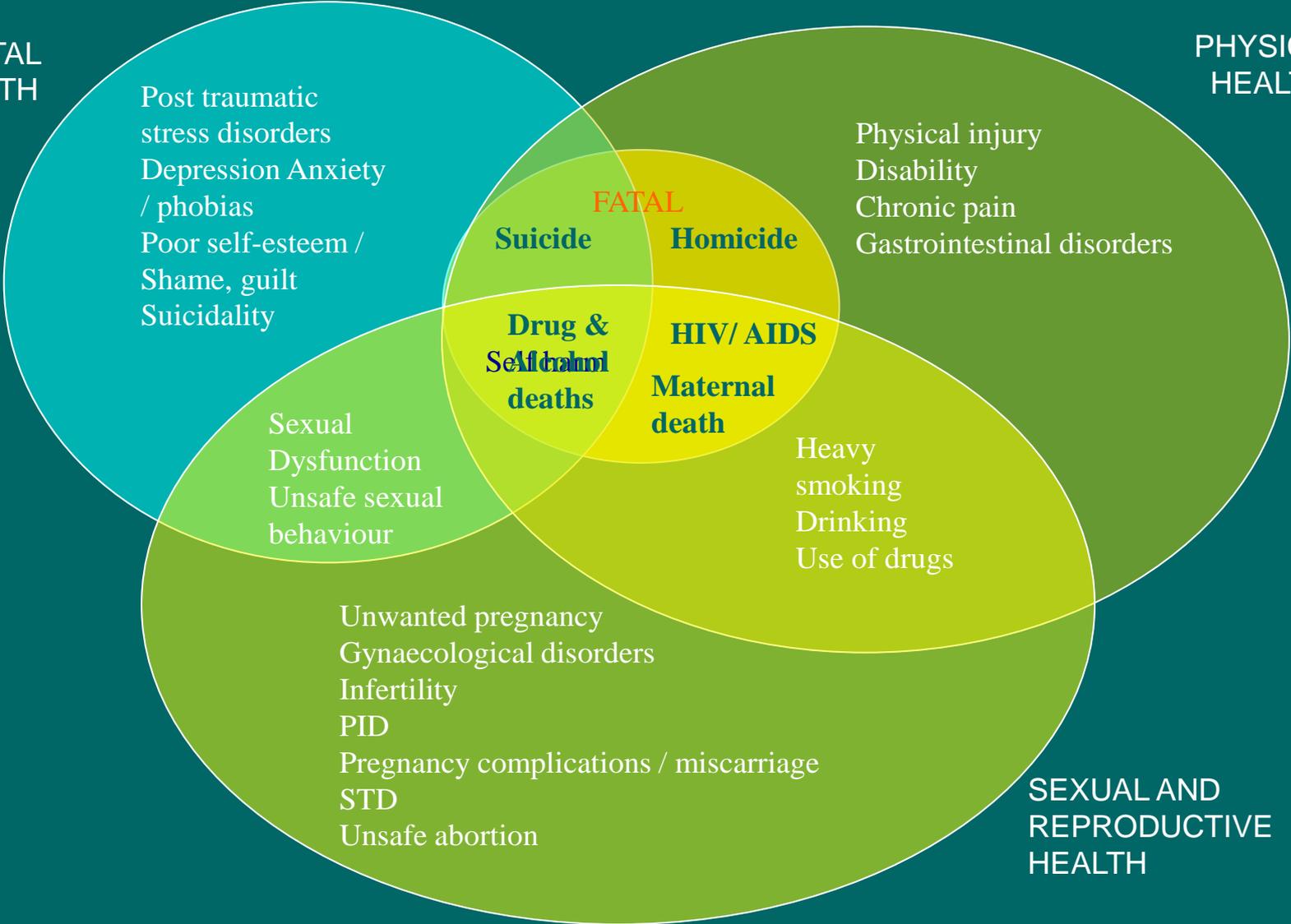
Levels of violence can vary widely among settings

Percentages of married men reporting wife abuse in Uttar Pradesh India, 1995-6 (N=6,695)

Abuse Type	Aligarth	Bandha	Gonda	Nainital
Physical abuse	28	45	31	18
Sexual abuse				
Nonconsensual sex	24	40	26	18
Forced sex	07	07	09	04

12-month prevalence of physical and/or sexual partner violence

WHO Multi-country Study on Domestic Violence & Women's Health
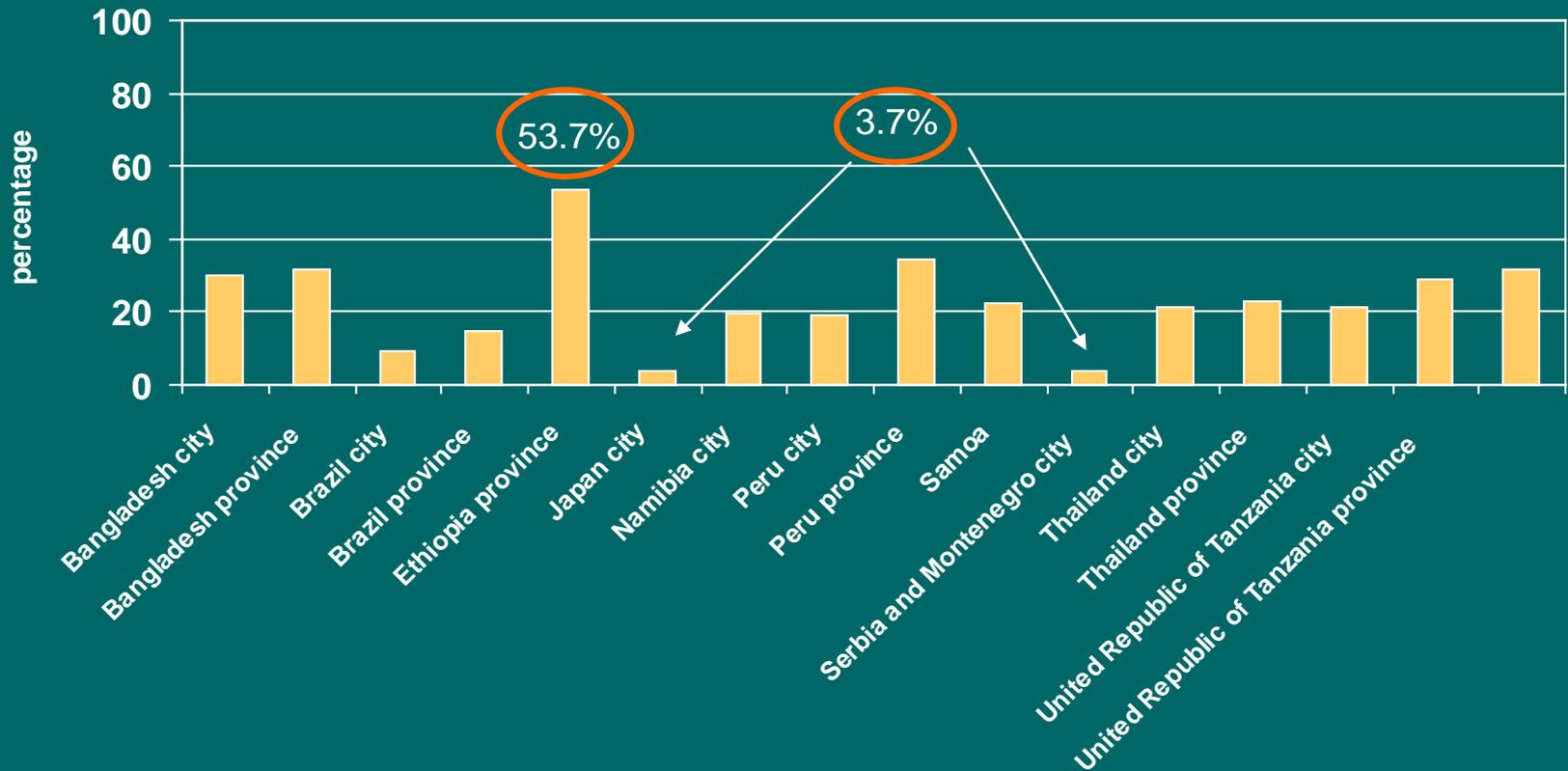
Some factors influence risk differently depending on context

●Appears especially relevant for measures of women's empowerment (e.g. economic variables, female autonomy)

●In conservative settings violating gender norms (by seeking employment, for example) appears to increase risk, whereas it is protective where women's employment has become normative (Koenig, 2003 in Bangladesh)

What accounts for the differences in levels and risk of partner violence?

Primary study aims

- To identify and model individual- and relationship-level factors that affect the odds that a woman will experience partner violence, with a special emphasis on her risk of experiencing severe abuse [Phase I].

- To explore what community and macro-level factors are associated with the population-level distribution of partner violence across different geographic settings [Phase 2]

Ecological Model of Partner Violence

The Woman

Macrosocial

Community

Male Partner

Relationship

Conflict Arena

IPV

Woman
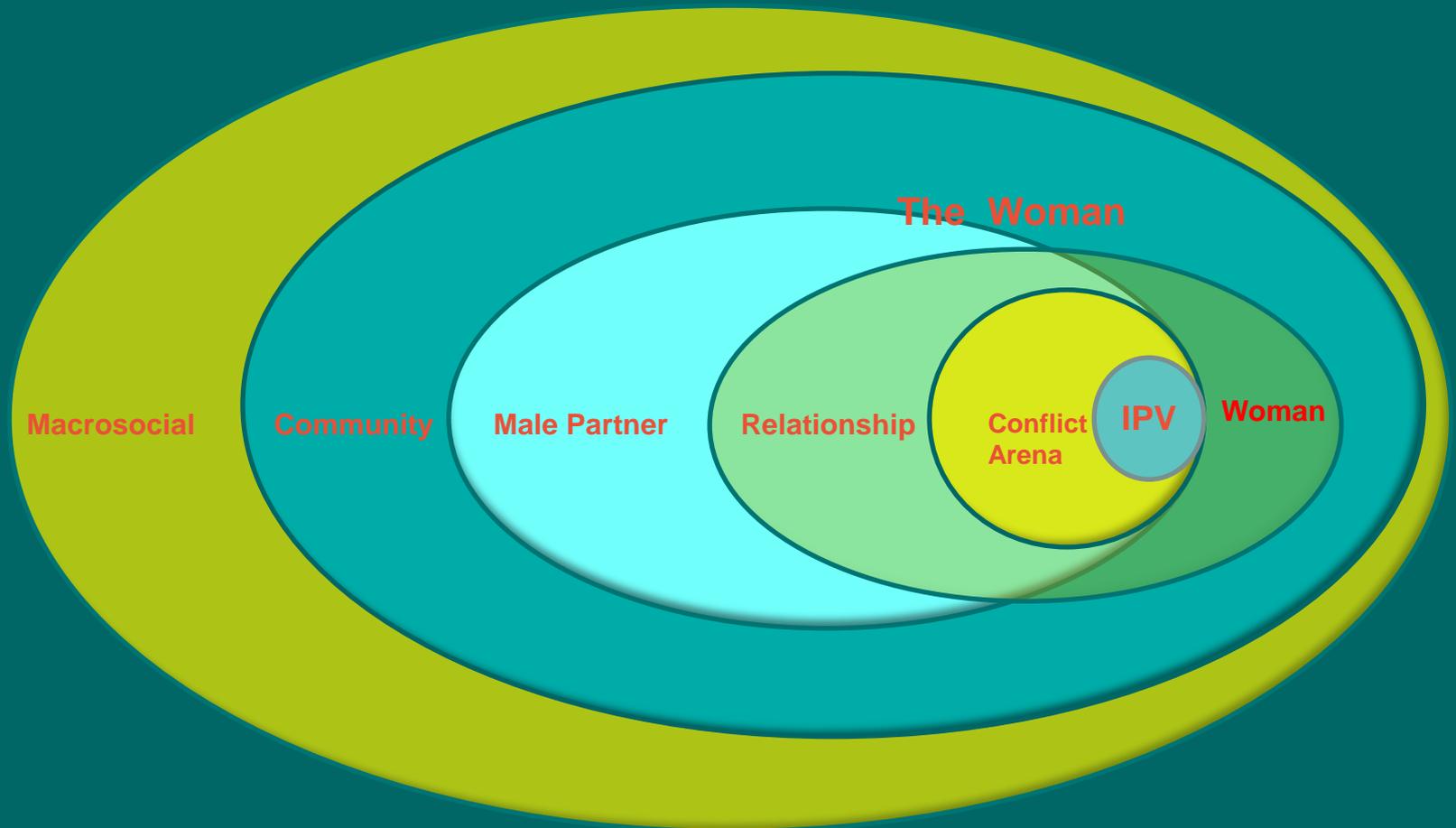
"*The field appears to be developing toward an integrative, meta-theoretical model of violence that considers multiple variables operating at different times in a probabilistic fashion*"

Analytic Strategy

- Descriptive analysis of the patterning of violence across settings [Phase 1]

- In-depth analysis of the individual, relationship and community level factors affecting individual women's risk of violence, using multi-level analysis in four sites in Peru and Brazil   [Phase 2]

- Ecological analysis of the community and macro level factors that predict variations in levels of partner violence among settings   [Phase 3]

Data Source Phase 1

WHO Multi - country study on women's health and domestic violence

Lima Peru   7.5 million inhabitants
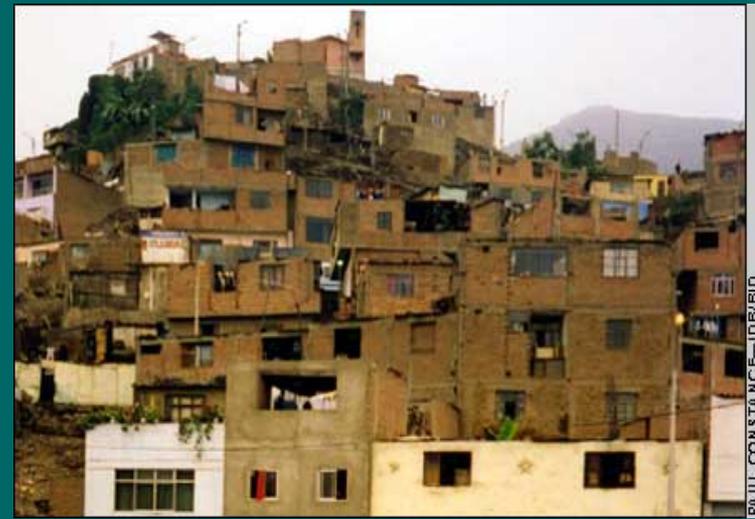
1414 women ages 15 to 49 successfully interviewed

91.8% response rate

Department of Cusco, Peru

1837 women interviewed

96.8% response rate
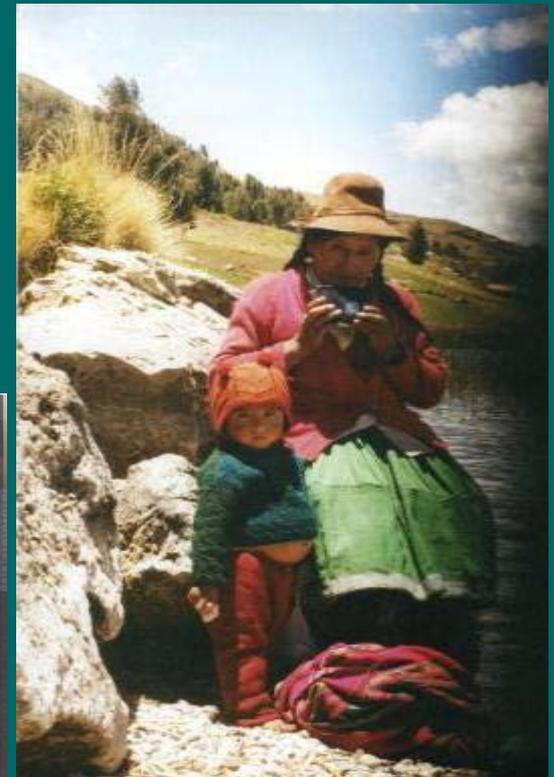
Brazil

Sao Paulo 1172 women interviewed

89.9% response rate

Department of Pernambuco

1473 women interviewed

95.7% response rate

Defining our outcome variable

What exactly constitutes "partner violence?"
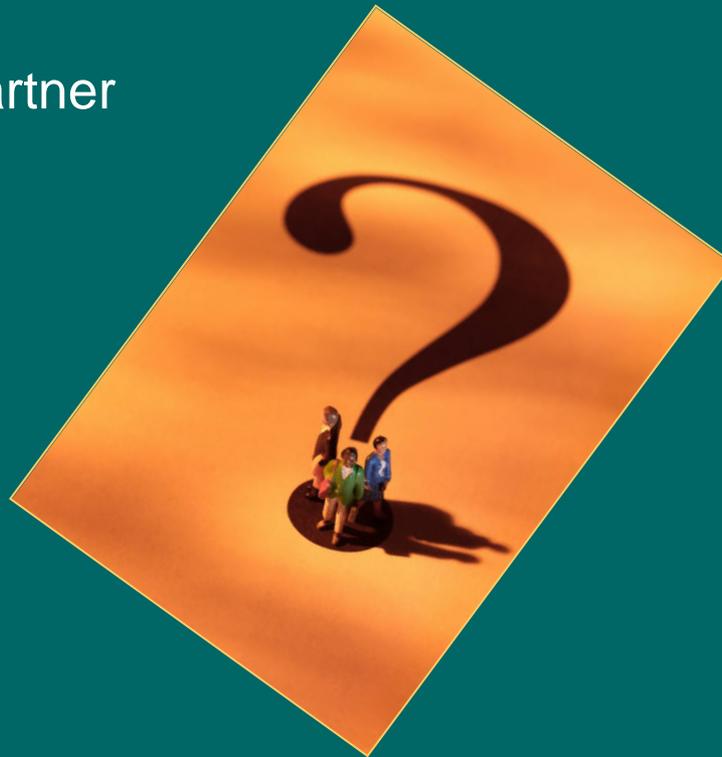
How do you operationalise it?

# Approaches to defining a "case" of partner violence

- Any act of [*violence type*] ever or within past 12 months

- Any act of physical and/or sexual violence ever or within past 12 months (WHO-IPV)

- Any combination of acts that meet a predetermined definition of severity

  - e.g. any severe act and any moderate act that occurs with sufficient frequency

- A scale with a cut off

- A derived measure (using Latent class analysis)

Role of controlling behaviours?

Latent Class Analysis: a next generation approach

- "Person-centered approach" that identifies people with similar experiences
  - User inputs a series of indicator variables hypothesized to describe the underlying phenomena
    - e.g. which acts experienced; frequency of different types of violence; presence of controlling behaviors; consequences of abuse
  - Method identifies smallest number of classes that adequately explains the associations among variables
  - Method moves us toward definitions of a "case" of IPV that includes multiple, overlapping types of abuse

How was physical partner violence measured in the WHO study?

- Slapped or threw something at that could hurt you?
- Pushed or shoved you?

Moderate

- Hit with his fist or with something else that could hurt you?
- Kicked, dragged or beat you up?
- Choked or burnt you on purpose?
- Threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against you?

Severe

How was sexual partner violence measured?

- Women were asked:

  - Has your current partner (or any other partner) ever physically forced you to have intercourse when you did want to?

  - Have you ever had sexual intercourse you did not want because you were afraid of something he might do?

  - Has he forced you to do something sexual that you found degrading or humiliating

Emotional abuse and controlling behaviours

- **Emotional abuse**

  – Insulted you or made you feel bad about yourself?

  – Belittled or humiliated you in front of other people?

  – Done things to scare or intimidate you on purpose (e.g. by the way he looked at you, by yelling and smashing things)?

  – Threatened to hurt you or someone you care about

  – ignores you and treats you indifferently

- **Controlling behaviors**

  – tries to keep you from seeing your friends

  – tries to restrict contact with your family of birth

  – insists on knowing where you are at all times

  – gets angry if you speak with another man

  – is often suspicious that you are unfaithful

Outcomes chosen for the study

- Physical and/or sexual violence ever or in the past 12 months (WHO-IPV)

- LCA-derived "systematic violence"

  - LCA yielded 4 class solution

    - No violence, infrequent emotional

    - Physical violence (with or without emotional)

    - Sexual dominant

    - Systematic

Secondary aims of study

- To examine the patterning of violence across setting using different case definitions of partner violence (LCA versus WHO-IPV)

- To assess the ability of WHO-IPV (the traditional WHO case definition of partner violence) to identify and estimate accurately the factors that increase a woman's risk of experiencing severe partner violence

Patterning of Violence and Factors Affecting Individual-Level risk

PHASES 1 & 2

Methods Phase 1 -- Patterning

- Descriptive analysis

  - In depth look at how different types of violence (physical, sexual, emotional) relate and overlap

  - Exploration of how WHO-IPV case definition compares to that defined by LCA

Key findings

- Single incidents of moderate only violence are relatively common

  – 28% of physical IPV in Peru and Brazil (except Cuzco), involved a slap or shove once or twice

  – the proportion of physical violence cases that represent one or two acts of moderate physical violence varies from 10.9% in Peru's Cuzco province to 33.9% of cases in Yokihama Japan, and 45% of cases in Belgrade, Serbia.

  – Within the full WHO database, reported prevalence of IPV would decline between 2.3 to 8.7 percentage points, if isolated incidents of moderate physical aggression were excluded.

- Raises question of whether we should eliminate these acts from definition of abuse

Insights from patterning analysis

- Sexual violence alone is rare

  – In all Peru and Brazil sites combined, 83.3% of women who experienced sexual violence also experienced physical violence

- Most physical violence is severe

  – More than half of all physical violence experienced qualified as severe, with the proportion ranging from 52.5% in Lima Peru to 83.8% in rural Cuzco.

- LCA yields a four fold solution in most settings

  – No violence or occasional acts of moderate emotional aggression

  – Systematic abuse (severe emotional, physical, sexual many times)

  – Moderate physical with moderate emotional

  – Sexual dominant with emotional

Comparison of IPV-WHO and LCA

- LCA divides the universe of cases differently than the WHO case definition

- WHO case definition identifies similar risk factors for severe violence but substantially underestimates their effect size

- Systematic abuse shows the strongest relationship to key health outcomes:

  - suicidal thoughts in the last 4 weeks, lifetime suicide attempts, perceived poor health, problems performing one's usual activities in the last 4 weeks and unwanted pregnancy.

Methods **phase 2**, individual-level model

Block 1: Childhood

Block 3
Partner Current Situation

Outcome variables: Lifetime experience of IPV-WHO vs. systematic abuse (LCA)

Respondent

Child sex abuse
First sex <15 yrs
Mother beaten

Partner
Age
Education*
Fights with other men
Controlling behaviour
Alcohol use
Relationships with other women
Unemployment

Block 5: Relationship

Relationship Factors

Relationship duration
Poor communication
Marital conflict

IPV

Block 2: **Childhood**

Block 4
Respondent Current Situation

Partner

Beaten as a child
Mother beaten

Respondent
Age*
Education
Partnership status
Problem drinking
Acceptance of wife beating
Number of living children
No contact with family
Moral support from family
Earns income
Contribution to HH income
Property ownership

Model Building Strategy
Blocks1 + 2
Blocks2 + 3
Blocks1 + 4
Blocks   (1+ 2 +3 + 4) +/- 5

*control variable

Key Findings:
women's individual risk

- Partner-related factors emerge as the most predictive of a woman's lifetime risk of partner violence
    - exposure to violence as a child
    - level of controlling behavior
    - frequency of drunkenness
    - history of fights with other men
    - having outside sexual partners

- Virtually all the childhood factors (male and female) emerge as highly predictive in both crude and adjusted analysis

- In both countries and all models, having a partner who was exposed to violence in childhood roughly *doubles* a woman's odds of systematic violence, in fully adjusted models

Key Findings -- pathways

- Mediation analysis demonstrates that childhood sexual abuse affects later risk of IPV via early (forced) sex, which in turn increases the number of children a woman has

- The adjusted odds ratios for key covariates (having many children, problematic alcohol use, men's extramarital affairs and controlling behavior) all decline when marital conflict is added to the model.

- This suggests that these factors influence risk of IPV in part by providing ready fodder for arguments.

Key findings – economic variables

- Household SEP is not linked to risk of violence in fully adjusted analysis

- Women who independently own assets or contribute more than their husband to household maintenance are at increased risk of abuse, even more so in households where men hold traditional gender attitudes.

- These findings are consistent gendered resource theory which argues that men—especially those with traditional gender ideologies—who cannot live up to their "breadwinner" role, may use violence as a way to reassert their masculine identity.

Factors affecting geographic distribution of partner violence

PHASE 3

Methods phase 3 – ecological analysis

- Asks: "Why does this population have this particular level of partner violence?" as opposed to asking, "Why did this particular woman get beaten?

- Aggregates risk factors across a geographic area and compares the average level of the factor to the average level of violence in that setting

- As British epidemiologist Geoffrey Rose observed in his now classic article, "*Sick Individuals and Sick Populations*":

  The determinants of variations between individuals within a population may be different from the determinants of variations between populations.

Cluster-level prevalence of lifetime physical and/or sexual partner violence *BRAZIL*

Percent of communities/clusters (y-axis)

Categories: None, <20, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+

Legend: Brazil city, Brazil province

Percent of women in cluster reporting partner violence

Cluster-level prevalence of lifetime physical and/or sexual partner violence *PERU*

Explanatory variables – Macro-level ecological analysis

- Women's achieved status
  - Secondary school completion
  - Rate of child marriage
  - Access to political power
- Level of gender inequality
  - E.g., ratio of male to female completion of secondary school
  - SIGI ownership index
- Male drinking levels
- Log GDP

- Norms
  - Acceptability of wife beating
  - Male control of female behavior
- Women's access to economic rights and entitlements
  - WECON measure of CIGI Human Rights Database
  - Proportion of women in formal waged employment
- Ease of leaving relationship
  - Acceptability of divorce (WVS)
  - Inequality in family law

Factors significant in bi-variate analysis using quantile regression

- GDP**
- Women's status
  - Secondary school completion
  - Early marriage
- Women's economic rights
  - Participation in formal waged labor**
  - Women's economic entitlements by law
- Norms
  - Approving of wife beating**
  - Male control of female behavior**

- Gender inequality
  - Ratio M/F secondary school completion and tertiary enrollment
  - Inequality in ownership rights (land, property credit**
  - Discriminatory family law
- Ease of leaving
  - Stigmatization of divorce
  - Discriminatory family law**

*** Strongest factor in relevant domain*

Strong negative association with level of socio-economic development (ln GDP)

National IPV data
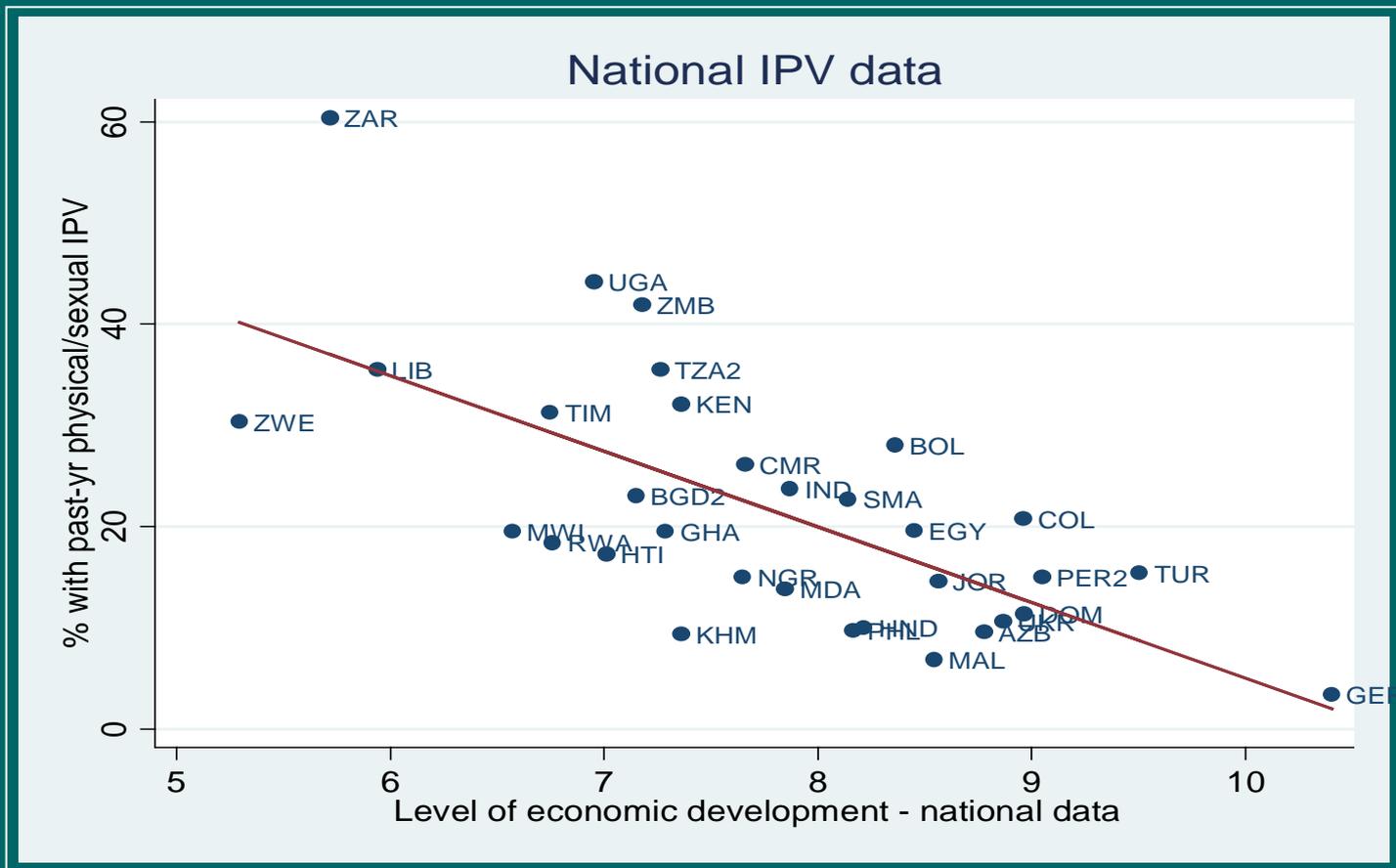
	Age-adjusted crude coef.	Model 1	Model 2
Social norms	B (p value)	B (p value)	B (p value)
Acceptability of wife beating	11.4 (0.001)	6.7 (0.006)	6.7 (0.008)
Male control of female behavior	0.70 (≤0.001)	0.37 (0.028)	0.38 (0.028)
Women's economic power			
Percent women in formal salaried employment	-0.27 (0.001)		-0.06 (0.61)
Gender inequality			
Women's ownership index (1=high inequality; 0 = low inequality)	22.8 (0.003)	8.8 (0.25)	
Level of Development			
GDP per capita (nat log)	-5.5 (0.007)	-0.45 (0.81)	-0.34 (0.89)
Constant	----	6.9 (0.7)	10.7 (0.58)

Conclusions

- Gender-related variables strongly associated with the geographic distribution of IPV

- Field must begin to explore and document pathways throughout which factors act and interact at different levels of ecological model

- LCA could be promising methodological advance but requires standardization of indicator variables

- Must move on to longitudinal studies

Macro-level factors

- Gender Regime

  – Lack of economic rights & entitlements for women

  – Acceptability of divorce for women

  – Inequality in access to higher education

  – Discriminatory Family Law

- Cultural Factors

  – Collectivist versus individual cultural orientation

  – Emphasis on women's purity and family honour

- Economic Factors

  – Country's level of economic development

  – Women's access to formal wage employment

Includes only factors shown through research to be associated with partner violence

Community-level factors

- Norms
  - Acceptance of wife beating
  - Right to discipline and control female behaviour
  - Tolerance of harsh physical punishment of children
  - Stigma for divorced/single women

- Lack of sanctions
  - Lack of legal or social sanction
  - Failures of others to intervene

- Community disadvantage
  - High male unemployment
  - Community violence
  - Low social capital
  - Poverty

Individual Level factors

- The woman
  - Previous victimization
  - Tolerance of wife beating
  - Young age (current only)
  - Completion of secondary school (protective)
  - Low social support

- Her partner
  - Witnessing or experiencing violence in childhood
  - Acceptance of wife beating
  - Alcohol abuse
  - Young age
  - Low educational attainment
  - Gender role conflict
  - Personality dysfunction
  - Low SES /unemployment (?)

Partner-related factors

Violence in childhood
Harsh physical punishment
Witnessing parental violence
Other childhood traumas

Psychological dysfunction
Anti-social behaviour
Adult attachment issues

Attitudes/beliefs
Accepting of violence as a means to resolve conflict
Acceptance of wife beating

Alcohol Abuse

Gender role dislocation

Delinquent peers

Socio-demographic
Young age
Low educational attainment

Figure: 3.1 Developmental paths to perpetration by men
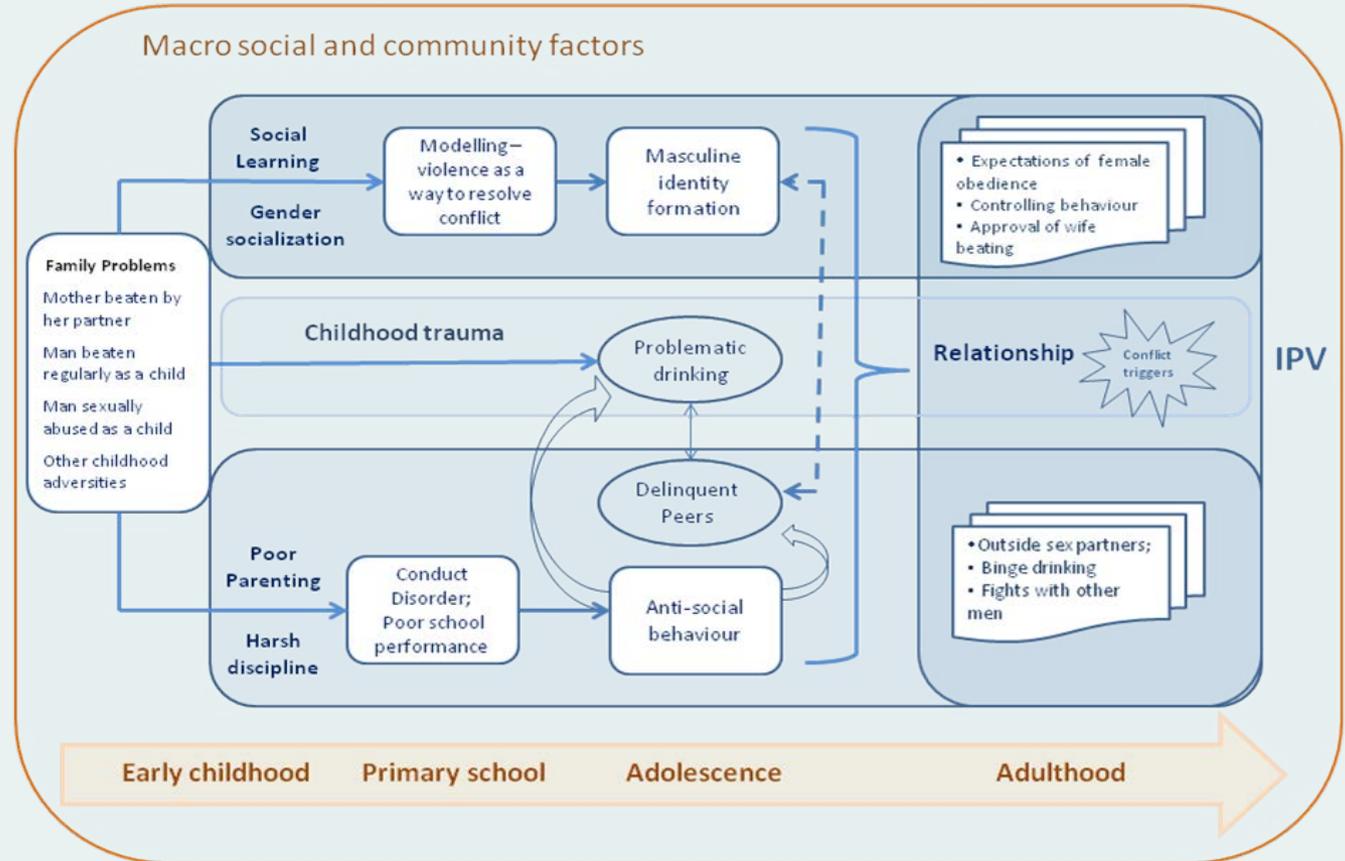
Relationship factors

- Interaction
  - Non-equalitarian decision-making
  - Poor communication
  - High relationship conflict

Conflict Arena

Situational Triggers

Sex/infidelity

Money/distribution of resources

Children or in-laws

Division of labor

Patriarchal Triggers

Female challenge to male authority

Failure to meet gender role expectations

Crisis in masculine identity

Assertions of female autonomy