

PREVENTION FOUNDATIONS—REFRESHER

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Focus on intimate partner violence

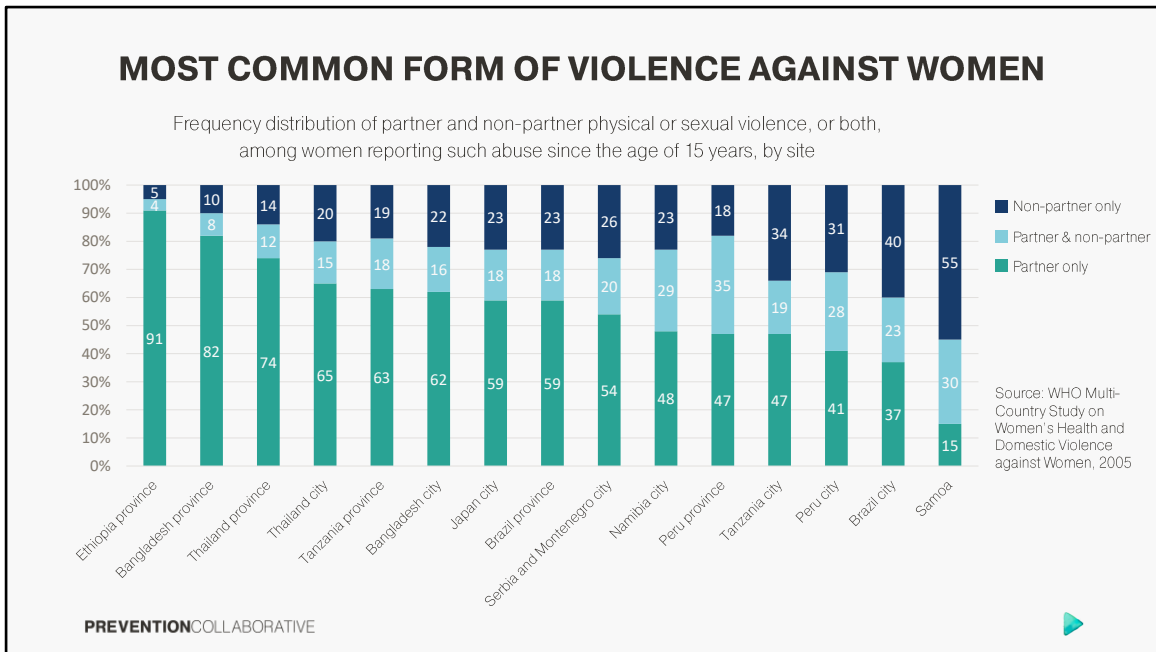


PREVENTIONCOLLABORATIVE



In this topic, we will cover data on intimate partner violence in heterosexual relationships.

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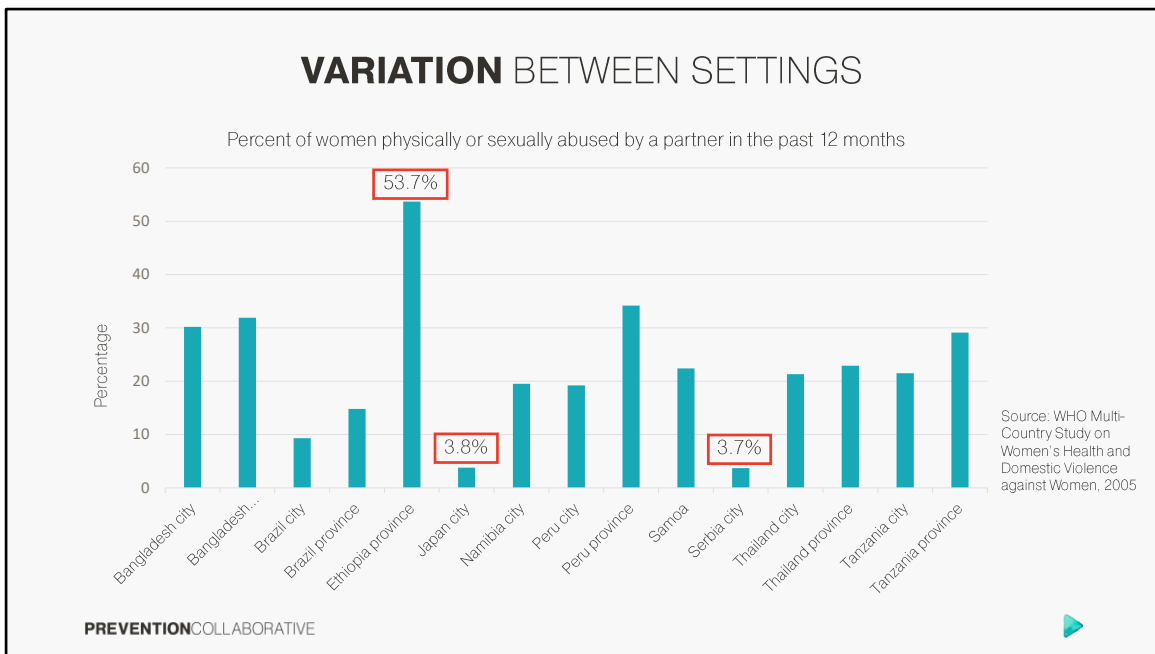
If we look at global data on women who reported physical or sexual violence by anyone, and we break down the violence by perpetrator, it is clear that women’s greatest risk of violence is from intimate partners.

This graph displays data from the World Health Organization Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women. This was a 10-country, 15-site study. The lower green bars show the proportion of reported physical and sexual violence against women that was perpetrated by intimate partners only, the middle light blue bars are violence by both a partner and someone else, and the top dark blue bars are violence by non-partners only.

It shows that, globally, women are more likely to be physically and/or sexually violated by their partners or husbands than by any other person. In all sites, except one, between 60 and 95 percent of abused women reported that the perpetrator was their current or former husband or intimate partner.

The only setting that departs from this pattern is Samoa, which is on the far righthand side of the graph. In Samoa, more violence is perpetrated by non-partners than by partners. In addition to shouldering a high burden of non-partner violence, 46 percent of Samoan women also reported physical and/or sexual abuse by an intimate partner.

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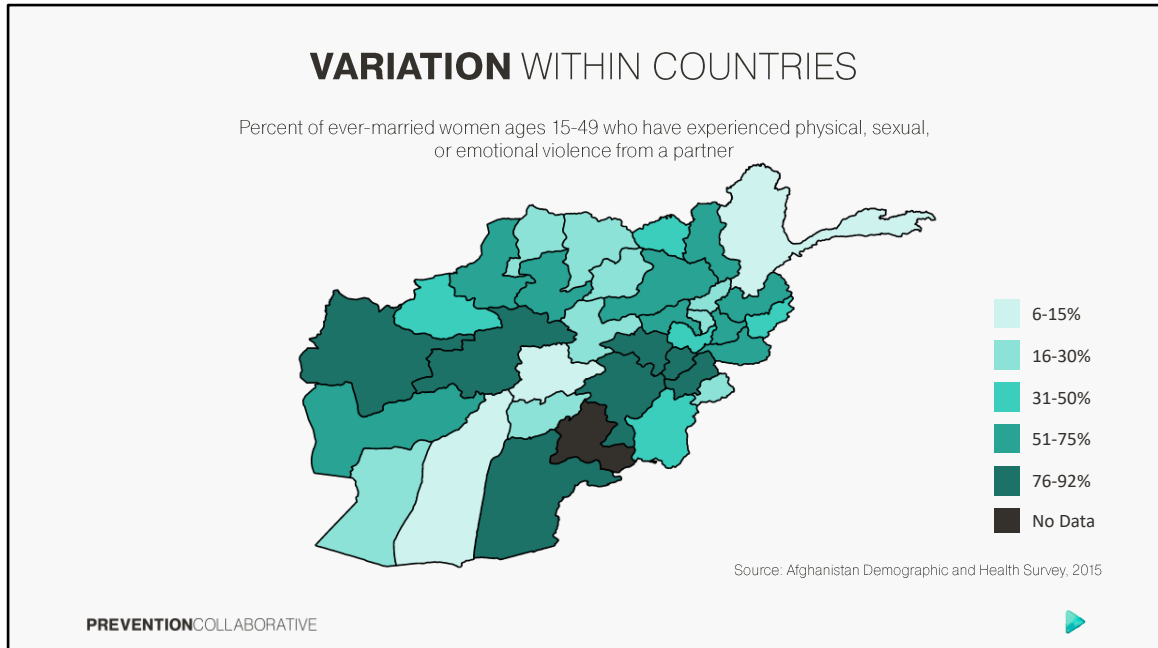
This next graph shows prevalence data of physical or sexual intimate partner violence in the past 12 months. We see significant differences in average levels of violence between settings.

In Ethiopia province (Butajira), 53.7 percent of women reported being physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner in the past 12 months compared to 3.7 percent and 3.8 percent in Japan city (Yokohama) and Serbia and Montenegro city (Belgrade), respectively.

This is similar to the difference you see between higher income and lower income countries. For example, in Australia, the United States, and Canada, about 3 percent of women in any year are physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner. In many other parts of the world, levels of intimate violence are an order of magnitude higher.

While some of this variation may reflect cultural differences in women's comfort in discussing violence, this study went to enormous lengths to use similar methods across settings to encourage disclosure. The differences are too large to attribute solely to measurement differences.

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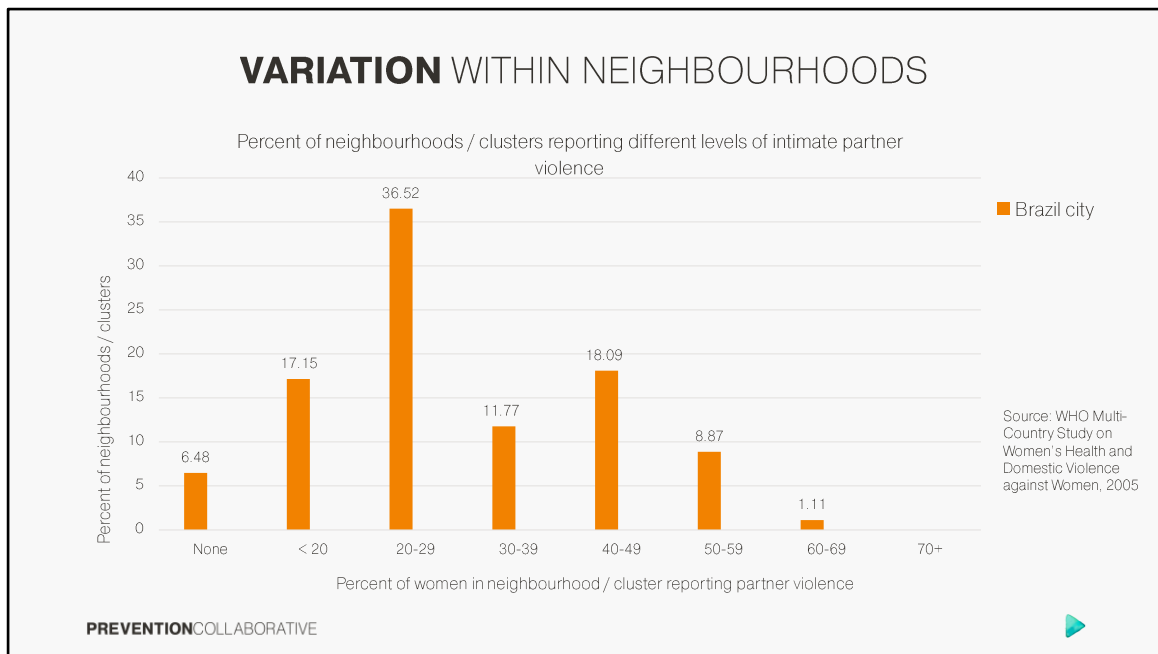


Importantly, the variation in levels of intimate partner violence we see between countries is also reproduced *within* countries. This is evident in this map from Afghanistan, which demonstrates that rates of violence against women vary widely between different regions of the same country.

The map uses data from the 2015 Afghanistan Demographic and Health Survey to show the percentage of ever-married women ages 15 to 49 who have ever experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from an intimate partner. This varies between the lowest prevalence range of 6 to 15 percent in some provinces to a very high prevalence range of between 75 and 92 percent in other provinces.

Levels of intimate partner violence vary as much within countries as between countries, and this variation is even greater when graphing intimate partner violence in the past 12 months.

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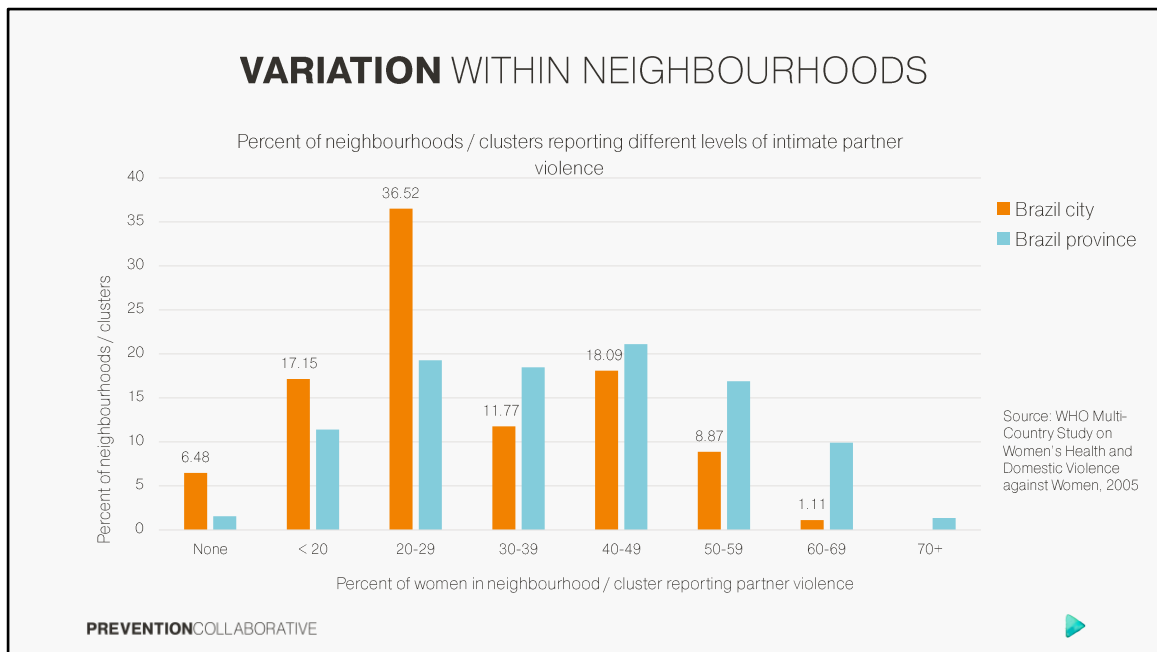
Indeed, variation is profound even within neighbourhoods.

This graph shows the percent of clusters, which you can think of as neighbourhoods, reporting different levels of intimate partner violence in Brazil city (São Paulo) in orange bars.

Each increment on the x axis represents a larger proportion of women who report violence, and the y axis is the percent of neighbourhoods sampled that fell in that range.

In São Paulo, you see a great degree of variation. In about 6.5 percent of neighbourhoods, none of the women reported violence in the past 12 months. Whereas in 36.5 percent of neighbourhoods, 20 to 29 percent of women reported violence.

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If you go to the rural Brazil province of Pernambuco in light blue, you see a similar distribution curve but it shifts to the right.

You have far fewer neighbourhoods where no women reported violence, and in 21 percent of neighbourhoods, 40-49 percent of women reported violence.

The variation in levels of intimate partner violence from country to country, region to region, and community to community is important because it shows us that intimate partner violence is not inevitable, even in a context with high prevalence rates. It prompts us to investigate:

- Why are levels of violence so low in some settings and so much higher not that far away?
- What can we learn from this to design programmes to help us bring down violence everywhere?

Understanding these differences can help us direct our efforts more effectively.

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