

PREVENTION FOUNDATIONS—REFRESHER

CAUSES

Gender inequality and
violence against women

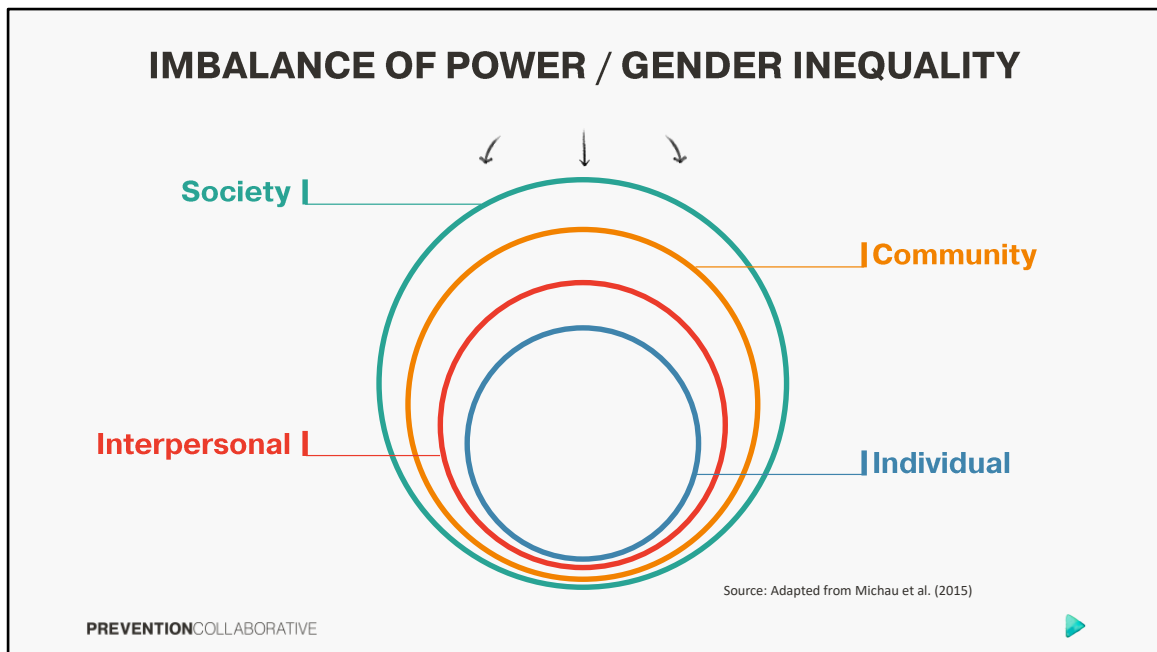


PREVENTIONCOLLABORATIVE



In this topic, we will cover how gender inequalities are created and reinforced at every level of the socio-ecological model.

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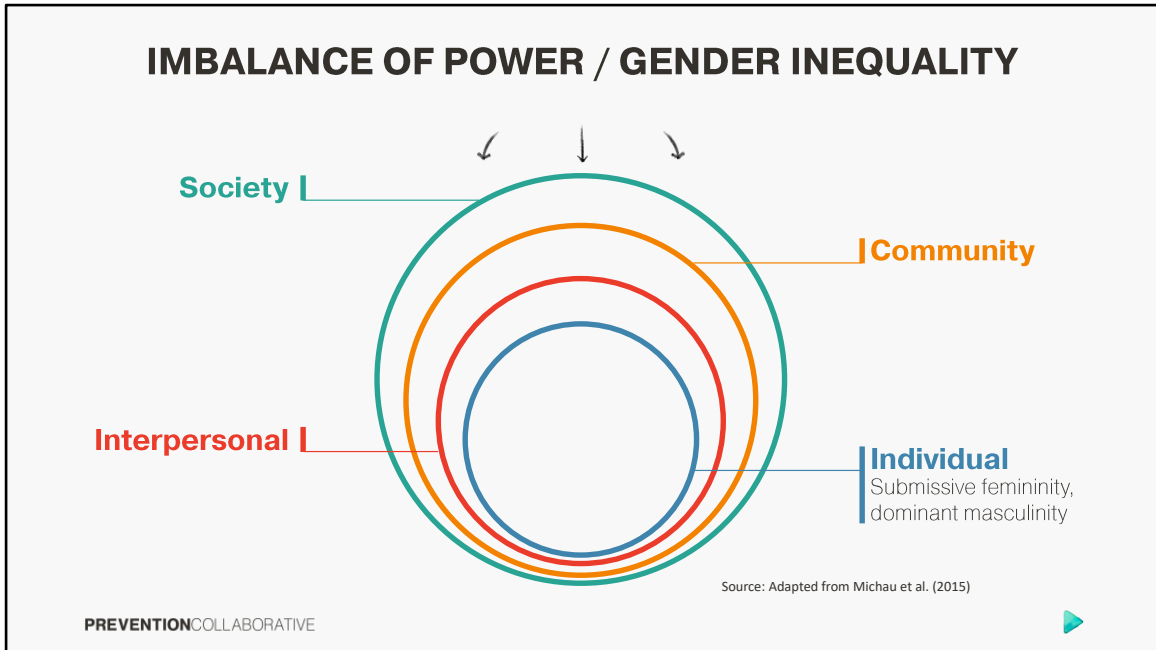
It is important to understand how the wider structural environment can enable violence against women.

Systemic gender inequality, which exists in societies across the world, is a powerful driver of men's violence against women.

In most societies, men have greater access to power and resources than women. These gender inequalities are created and reinforced through discriminatory social norms, practices, and structures within families, communities, and institutions.

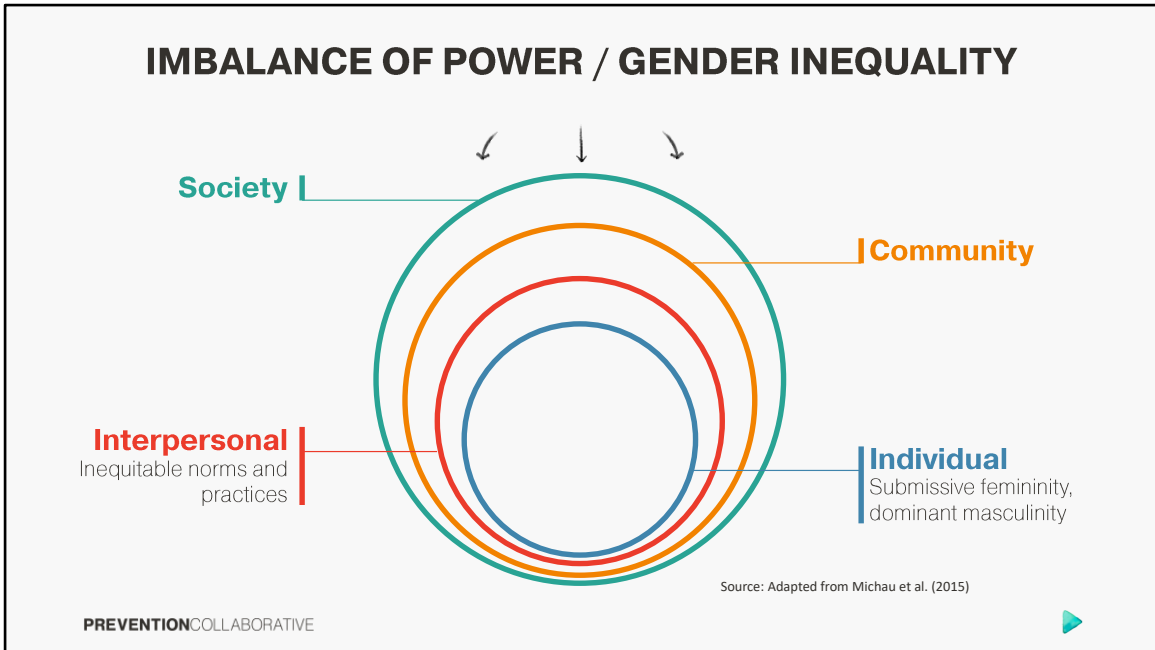
This version of the socio-ecological model shows how imbalances of power between men and women and gender inequalities permeate all levels of society.

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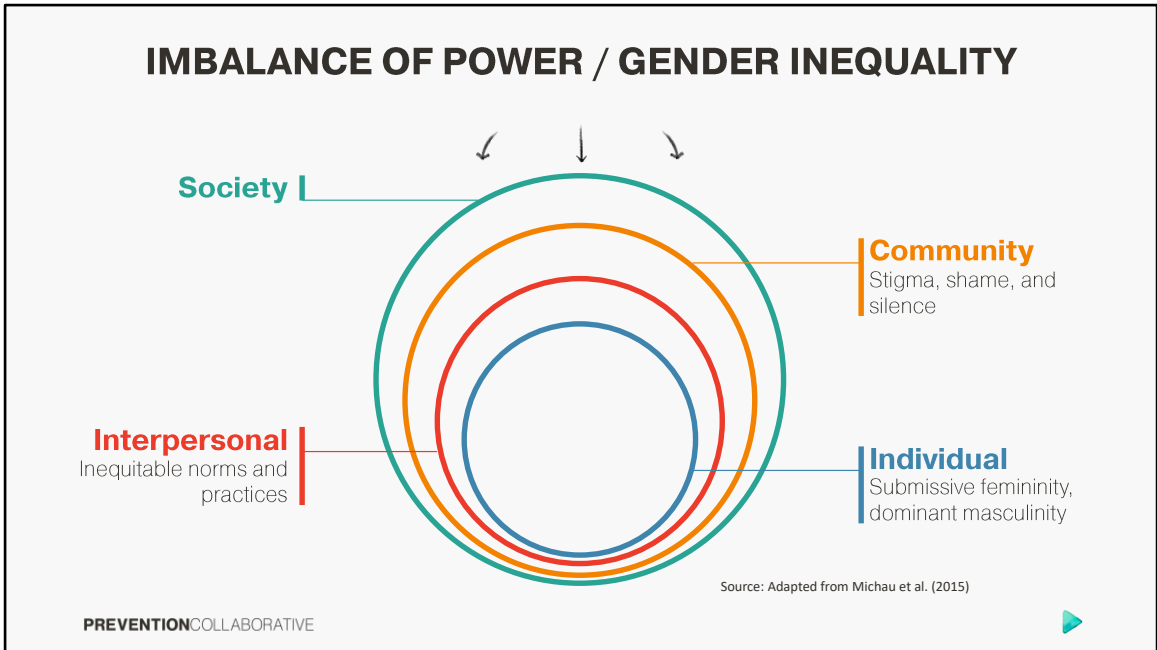
When we look at the **individual level**, individual men and women may subscribe to particular beliefs about their expected roles and behaviours as men and women. In many parts of the world, men are expected to exercise authority over women and resources, and women are expected to obey their husbands and their fathers.

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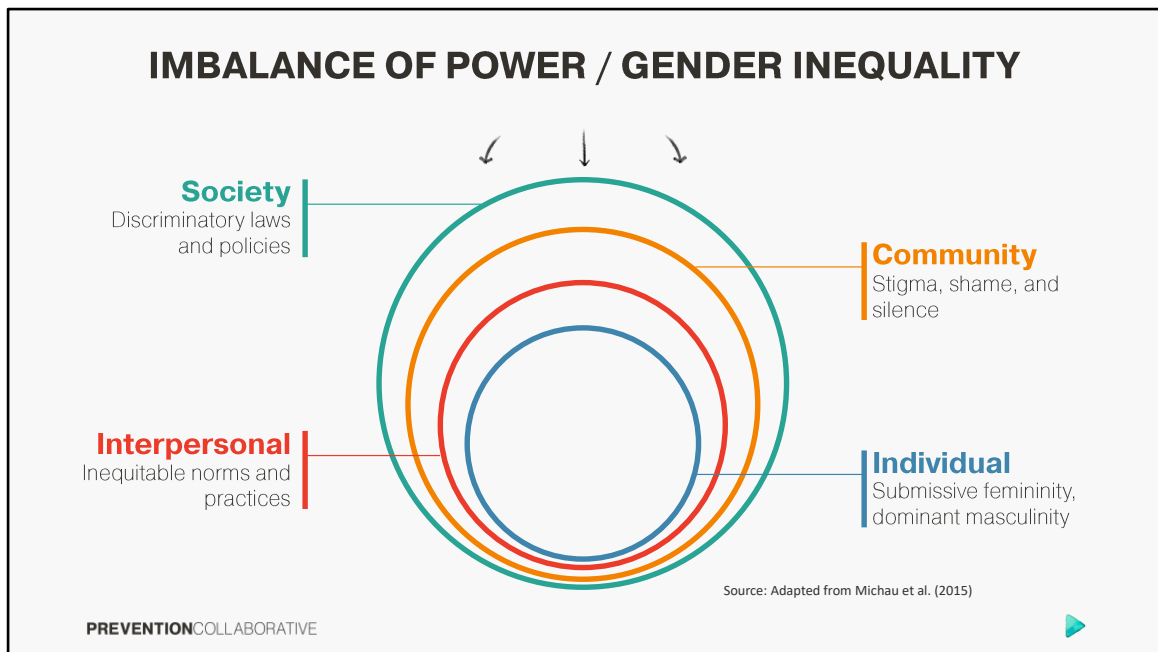
At the **interpersonal level**, for example, the institutions of marriage and the family, ideas around privacy and honour as well as the expected roles for men and women in domestic labour, childcare, and income generation will affect the way men and women are treated.

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At the **community level**, predominant norms and practices around expected roles for women and men may also reinforce and propagate gender inequality. For example, this might include the jobs men and women are expected to do or who can speak at community meetings.

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At the **level of society** or the nation as a whole, laws and policies often legitimate or reinforce gender inequalities. This might include laws on property ownership, inheritance, marriage, and divorce, which discriminate against women.

In this way, we can see how gender inequalities are embedded and reinforced through formal and informal institutions, structures, and norms at all levels of society.

It's important to note that while violence against women is rooted in gender inequalities and unequal power relations between men and women in patriarchal systems, there is no single cause of violence, nor is there a single pathway to perpetration. Therefore, preventing violence requires interventions to address gender inequalities AND other factors.

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