

# Violence Against Women

IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:  
A comparative analysis of population-based data from 12 countries

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A collaboration between the Pan American Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with technical input from MEASURE DHS, ICF International

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>ACRONYMS</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES</b>	<b>xxi</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Violence against women as a public health problem and a violation of human rights	1
1.2 International and regional evidence about violence against women	1
1.3 Rationale and purpose of this comparative analysis	2
<b>CHAPTER 2. METHODS</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Surveys in this report: which surveys were selected and why?	5
2.2 Survey designs	5
2.3 Sample design and procedures	7
2.4 Ethical and safety considerations	9
2.5 History of the DHS and RHS violence modules	10
2.6 Constructing standardized indicators for this comparative analysis	10
2.7 Measures and definitions of intimate partner violence	12
2.8 Measures and definitions of other experiences of violence	15
2.9 Data analysis tools and techniques	15
2.10 Presentation of results: managing limits to comparability	17
<b>CHAPTER 3. PREVALENCE OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY INTIMATE PARTNERS</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Physical violence by intimate partners	19
3.2 Physical violence by intimate partners by severity and act	20
3.3 Sexual violence by intimate partners	21
3.4 Physical or sexual violence by intimate partners	24
<b>CHAPTER 4. FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE</b>	<b>29</b>
4.1 Prevalence of intimate partner violence by women's background characteristics	29
4.2 Intimate partner violence according to ethnicity	36
4.3 Factors associated with intimate partner violence: multivariate logistic regression	38

<b>CHAPTER 5. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH.....</b>	<b>45</b>
5.1 Intimate partner violence and unintended pregnancy.....	45
5.2 Violence against women and reproductive health .....	47
<b>CHAPTER 6. TRIGGERS, CONSEQUENCES, AND HELP-SEEKING.....</b>	<b>51</b>
6.1 Situations that triggered intimate partner violence.....	51
6.2 Physical consequences of intimate partner violence .....	53
6.3 Mental health, emotional, and work-related consequences .....	55
6.4 Help-seeking by women who experienced violence.....	57
6.5 Reasons why women did not seek help for intimate partner violence.....	62
<b>CHAPTER 7. EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND CONTROLLING BEHAVIORS BY INTIMATE PARTNERS .....</b>	<b>65</b>
7.1 Emotional abuse by intimate partners.....	65
7.2 Controlling behaviors by the current or most recent partner.....	68
<b>CHAPTER 8. SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY ANY PERPETRATOR.....</b>	<b>73</b>
8.1 Circumstances of sexual debut .....	73
8.2 Lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator.....	75
8.3 Perpetrators of lifetime sexual violence.....	79
<b>CHAPTER 9. HISTORY OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CHILDHOOD.....</b>	<b>81</b>
9.1 History of sexual abuse in childhood .....	81
9.2 History of physical abuse in childhood.....	83
9.3 History of their father (or stepfather) beating their mother (or stepmother) .....	85
9.4 Punishment of children in the current home .....	85
<b>CHAPTER 10. GENDER NORMS AND VIOLENCE .....</b>	<b>89</b>
10.1 Acceptability of wife-beating.....	89
10.2 Agreement that a wife has the right to refuse sex with her husband.....	94
10.3 Agreement with other gender norms and attitudes .....	94
<b>CHAPTER 11. OTHER SOURCES OF DATA ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE REGION .....</b>	<b>99</b>
11.1 Other sources of data on violence against women in the Region .....	99
11.2 Men's perspectives on violence.....	101
<b>CHAPTER 12. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>105</b>
12.1 Discussion of findings.....	105
12.2 Limitations of this comparative analysis.....	115
<b>CHAPTER 13. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS .....</b>	<b>119</b>
13.1 Recommendations for future research.....	119
13.2 Policy and program implications .....	120
13.3 Promising strategies for preventing and responding to violence against women .....	120

<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>123</b>
List of individual survey country final reports.....	123
References cited in the text.....	124
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>139</b>



## PREFACE

Violence against women is a human rights violation with important public health ramifications. Evidence from across the globe documents that such violence is widespread and that women and girls bear the overwhelming burden of violence by intimate partners and sexual violence by any perpetrator.

The consequences of such violence can be long-lasting and extensive, making violence against women an important cause of morbidity and in some cases death. Studies suggest that violence against women has negative health consequences that include physical injury, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted infections (including HIV/AIDS), maternal mortality, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and suicide, among others. When the cumulative impacts on morbidity and mortality are assessed, the health burden of violence against women is often higher than that of more frequently recognized public health priorities. In Mexico City, for example, rape and intimate partner violence against women was estimated to be the third most important cause of morbidity and mortality for women, accounting for 5.6% of all disability-adjusted life years lost in the years 1994-1995.<sup>1</sup> As a result of a growing body of global evidence, the international community has begun to give violence against women a greater priority in the public health agenda and to recognize that efforts to improve women's health and well-being will be limited unless they take into account the magnitude and consequences of such violence for women's lives.

Violence against women also poses intergenerational consequences: when women experience violence, their children suffer. Growing evidence suggests that when children witness or suffer violence directly, they may be at increased risk of becoming aggressors or victims in adulthood. Furthermore, violence against women and violence against children often co-occur in the same households. Therefore, initiatives to address violence against women must also consider how to prevent and respond to violence against children and vice-versa.

In addition to the human costs, research shows that violence against women drains health and justice sector budgets with expenditures for treating survivors and prosecuting perpetrators. Costs also result from productivity losses and absenteeism. Studies from the Inter-American Development Bank estimated that the impact of domestic violence on gross domestic product from women's lower earnings alone was between 1.6% in Nicaragua and 2.0% in Chile.<sup>2</sup>

Responding to violence against women requires a multi-sectoral and coordinated effort that spans multiple disciplines, including the health sector, law enforcement, the judiciary, and social protection services, among others. The health sector's role includes improving primary prevention of violence as well as the ability of health services to identify survivors of abuse early and provide women with compassionate and appropriate care. The health sector must also contribute to improving the evidence base regarding the nature of violence against women, including the magnitude, consequences, and risk and protective factors.

*Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A comparative analysis of population-based data from 12 countries* is the first report to present a comparative analysis of nationally representative data on violence against women from a large number of countries in the Region. It is the sincere hope of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) that this report will contribute to increasing knowledge about violence against women in the Region and, more importantly, that it will motivate policy makers and programmers to grant this issue the political attention that it deserves by designing and implementing evidence-based initiatives and policies that can contribute to eliminating violence against women.

Dr. Mirta Roses Periago—Director, Pan American Health Organization





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This report was authored by Sarah Bott, Alessandra Guedes, Mary Goodwin, and Jennifer Adams Mendoza, all of whom participated in the design, analysis, writing, and editing. Alessandra Guedes and Mary Goodwin conceived the original idea for this comparative analysis. Sarah Bott took a lead role in writing and editing. Jennifer Adams Mendoza carried out the bulk of the statistical analysis.

The MEASURE DHS project and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided the raw data from the original 13 surveys. Sunita Kishor and Yuan Cheng carried out initial statistical analyses of DHS (Demographic and Health Survey) data, while Kanako Ishida and Alicia Ruiz carried out some initial analysis of RHS (Reproductive Health Survey) data. Jennifer Adams Mendoza completed the analysis of the DHS data, analyzed most of the RHS data, and took a lead role in designing and analyzing the multivariate logistic regression models.

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## ACRONYMS

<b>AECID</b>	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
<b>CDC</b>	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<b>CSA</b>	Child sexual abuse
<b>CTS</b>	Conflict Tactics Scale
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic and Health Survey
<b>DRH</b>	Division of Reproductive Health
<b>IPV</b>	Intimate partner violence
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>NGO</b>	Nongovernmental organization
<b>PAHO</b>	Pan American Health Organization
<b>PSU</b>	Primary sampling unit
<b>PTSD</b>	Post-traumatic stress disorder
<b>RHS</b>	Reproductive Health Survey
<b>SAS</b>	Statistical Analysis Software
<b>STI</b>	Sexually transmitted infection
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAW</b>	Violence against women
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



## GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

**Childhood.** Most surveys defined childhood as before age 15, with a few exceptions. For example, when asking about physical abuse in childhood, El Salvador 2008 asked women about experiences before age 18. Note that this comparative analysis refers to respondents aged 15-49 as ‘women’, despite some international definitions that consider women under age 18 to be children rather than adults.

**Intimate partner.** A husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, with a few exceptions. Jamaica 2008/9 also included ‘visiting partners’. (A ‘visiting partner’ is a regular male sexual partner who lives apart, but often has children with the woman as well as some financial obligations to his partner and their child/ren.<sup>3</sup>) Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6 also included boyfriends and lovers. In this report, ‘partner’, ‘intimate partner’, and ‘regular partner’ are used synonymously.

**Ever married or in union.** Women were considered ‘ever married or in union’ if they had ever married or cohabited with a male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported ever having a ‘visiting partner’.

**Violence against women.** The United Nations has defined violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.<sup>4</sup>

**Lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence.** Violence by any current or former partner in a woman’s lifetime. This indicator was measured by Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS), but not by Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). DHS surveys produced estimates of intimate partner violence ever experienced during women’s relationship with their current or most recent partner only, not ever during their lifetime.

**Physical violence.** Any of the following acts: slapped (hit with a hand), shook, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted her arm, or pulled her hair; hit with a fist or something that could cause injury; kicked, dragged, or beat her; choked or burned (actual or attempted); threatened or wounded with a knife, gun, or other weapon.

**‘Moderate’ acts of physical violence.** Any of the following acts: slapped, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted her arm, or pulled her hair.

**‘Severe’ acts of physical violence.** Any of the following acts: hit with a fist or something that could cause injury; kicked, dragged, or beat her; choked or burned her (actual or attempted); threatened or wounded her with a knife, gun, or other weapon.

**Sexual violence.** Any of the following acts: forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse or to perform unwanted ‘sex acts’, had unwanted sexual intercourse for fear of what a partner might do if she refused.

**Emotional abuse.** Any of the following acts: insulted, belittled, or humiliated her; scared or intimidated her (e.g. by destroying her personal things); threatened to harm her or someone she cared about; threatened to abandon her, take her children away, or withhold economic support. In this report, emotional abuse is considered a synonym for terms such as ‘emotional violence’ and ‘psychological violence’.<sup>5</sup>

**Controlling behavior by an intimate partner.** Any of the following acts: prevents her from seeing friends; tries to limit her contact with family; insists on knowing where she is at all times; gets jealous/mad if she talks to another man; often suspects her of being unfaithful; insists that she ask permission to seek medical care; doesn’t trust her with or let her have money, or controls money she earns or receives.



**Sexual abuse in childhood.** Any of the following acts: forced sexual intercourse that was unwanted/against her will before age 15; forced to do something such as undress, touch someone or be touched, kiss, embrace, or do any other unwanted sexual act before age 15.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Over the past 30 years, the international community has increasingly recognized violence against women as a public health problem, a violation of human rights, and a barrier to economic development.<sup>6-9</sup> In 1993, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly formally recognized women's right to live free of violence in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,<sup>4</sup> as did the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará) in 1994.<sup>10</sup>

Both the 1993 UN Declaration and the Convention of Belém do Pará used the phrase “gender-based” violence to acknowledge that the risk factors, consequences, and community responses to violence against women are heavily influenced by women's subordinate social, economic, and legal status in many settings.<sup>7,9</sup> For example, women's vulnerability to violence may be heightened by gender inequality within relationships and economic dependence on intimate partners. Certain forms of violence against women, such as physical violence against women by husbands, are often tolerated or even condoned by laws, institutions, and community norms. And, some researchers argue that violence against women may be not just a manifestation of gender inequality, but also a way of enforcing it.<sup>9,11</sup>

In fact, evidence indicates that the patterns, risk factors, and consequences of violence against women are different than those of violence against men. Worldwide, men are more likely than women to experience violence in the context of armed conflict and criminal activity, while women are more likely than men to experience violence and injury inflicted by people close to them, such as intimate partners.<sup>12</sup> Girls and women are also more likely than boys or men to experience sexual violence generally.<sup>13</sup> In addition, physical and sexual violence against women and girls has a host of reproductive health consequences that are different than the consequences of violence against men.

### Rationale and objectives of this comparative analysis

There is a substantial body of research on violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean

(LAC), but studies have defined and measured violence in such diverse ways that it has often been difficult to compare findings across studies and settings. A number of multi-country studies have gathered comparable data on violence from multiple settings using a standardized questionnaire, including the World Health Organization Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women and the GENACIS (Gender, Alcohol, and Culture) study. These studies have made important contributions to the field. They have certain geographic limitations, however. The WHO Multi-country Study included just two countries from the Region, Brazil and Peru, and both the WHO and the GENACIS studies gathered data from one or two sites per country rather than using national samples.

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS) were originally designed to investigate demographic and reproductive health issues, but have increasingly included brief modules on the prevalence, correlates, and consequences of violence against women in the LAC Region. This report presents a comparative reanalysis of data on violence against women from national, population-based DHS and RHS surveys conducted between 2003 and 2009 in 12 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean. These nationally representative data were gathered using face-to-face interviews with women in the household setting. Sample sizes for the violence modules ranged from 3,568 women aged 15-49 in Haiti 2005/6 to 37,597 women aged 15-49 in Colombia 2005. While these DHS and RHS surveys did not use identical questionnaires, their measures of violence against women were similar enough to allow a comparative reanalysis of the data using standardized indicators.

The overall purpose of this comparative analysis is to raise awareness of violence against women at national and regional levels. Specific objectives are to:

- Make comparative data from DHS and RHS surveys from the LAC Region easier to access and disseminate among researchers, policy makers, and program managers.

- Increase knowledge about the prevalence, risk factors, consequences, and attitudes towards violence against women in the LAC Region.
- Catalyze change by motivating policy makers and programmers to design and implement evidence-based strategies to prevent and respond to violence against women in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.

### Findings:

- ***Intimate partner violence against women is widespread in every Latin American and Caribbean country where these DHS and RHS surveys were conducted, though prevalence varies by setting.***

In all 12 Latin American and Caribbean countries, large percentages of women ever married or in union reported **ever** experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, ranging from 17.0% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to slightly more than half (53.3%) in Bolivia 2003. Most surveys found that between one-fourth and one-half of women reported **ever** experiencing intimate partner violence. In each country, the percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **recently** (i.e. **in the past 12 months**) was lower than the percentage who reported it **ever**, but the prevalence of recent partner violence was still substantial, ranging from 7.7% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 25.5% in Bolivia 2008.

- ***Intimate partner violence ranges from occasional experiences of moderate acts to long-term, chronic situations of abuse, sometimes called ‘battering’.***

Intimate partner violence includes a wide range of types, acts, and severity of abuse. Many women in these surveys experienced moderate physical violence by intimate partners, such as slapping or shoving; but in all surveys in this analysis, a majority of women who experienced any physical violence **ever** reported experiencing ‘severe’ acts of physical violence, such as being hit with a fist, or threatened or wounded with a knife or other weapon. In addition, women often reported having been forced by a partner to have sex.

- ***Emotional abuse and controlling behaviors are also widespread in these countries.***

Emotional abuse by intimate partners, such as insults, humiliation, intimidation, and threats of harm, was widespread in these Latin American and Caribbean countries. The proportion of women ever married or in union who reported emotional abuse by a partner **ever** ranged from one-sixth (17.0%) in Haiti 2005/6 to nearly one-half (47.8%) in Nicaragua 2006/7. The prevalence of emotional abuse by a partner **in the past 12 months** ranged from 13.7% of women in Honduras 2005/6 to 32.3% in Bolivia 2008. Similarly, large proportions of women in the Region reported that their current or most recent partner used three or more controlling behaviors, such as trying to isolate them from family or friends, insisting on knowing where they were at all times, or limiting their access to money.

- ***Emotional abuse and controlling behaviors are closely linked to physical violence by partners.***

In all countries, a majority of women who experienced physical violence **in the past 12 months** also reported emotional abuse, ranging from 61.1% in Colombia 2005 to 92.6% in El Salvador 2008. Similarly, the percentage of women who reported three or more controlling behaviors by their partner was typically two to three times higher among women who reported physical or sexual partner violence **ever**, compared with those who did not. In contrast, emotional abuse was relatively uncommon—ranging from 7.0% in Haiti 2005/6 to 18.9% in Bolivia 2008—among women who reported no physical partner violence **in the past 12 months**. These findings support evidence that emotional abuse and controlling behaviors often accompany physical violence and are important dimensions of intimate partner violence.<sup>14</sup>

- ***Substantial percentages of women from all socioeconomic groups report intimate partner violence, but sociodemographic factors associated with violence vary by country.***

Substantial proportions of women from **all** socioeconomic backgrounds in these Latin American and Caribbean countries reported having experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Nonetheless, in many countries, the prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** or **in the past 12 months** was significantly higher among urban compared with rural women, among divorced

or separated women compared with married women, among women who were currently or recently employed compared with those who were not, and among women in the lowest wealth or education categories compared with those in the highest. However, differences in prevalence by women's socioeconomic characteristics were not always large, statistically significant, or consistent across countries. After controlling for other factors, the strongest and most consistent factors associated with intimate partner violence were: being separated or divorced, high parity (number of live births), and a history of their father beating their mother.

- ***The prevalence and odds of intimate partner violence are not always highest among those with the least wealth or education.***

While the prevalence of intimate partner violence was usually, but not always, lowest among women with the highest levels of wealth and education, it did not always consistently decline as education or wealth quintile increased. In some countries, the highest levels of intimate partner violence were reported by women at intermediate, not the lowest, levels of wealth or education. Similar findings have been reported from other places in the world,<sup>15</sup> and Jewkes (2002) argues that women may be at particular risk of violence by intimate partners in settings where women's increasing education and employment are challenging traditional gender roles—a possibility worth considering in the LAC Region, where important shifts in women's roles and empowerment are underway.

- ***Women cite many different situations that 'trigger' intimate partner violence, but in nearly all settings, partners' alcohol consumption plays an important role.***

Women who experienced intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months* cited many situations that triggered their partner's violence, but in almost all surveys, a partner's drunkenness or drug use was the single most commonly cited situation, mentioned by 29.8% of such women in Guatemala 2008/9 to more than half (53.4%) in Ecuador 2004. This finding corresponds with a large body of evidence that men's alcohol abuse increases women's risk of experiencing intimate partner violence,<sup>16, 17</sup> including an analysis of WHO Multi-country Study data.<sup>18</sup>

- ***Intimate partner violence often has serious physical and mental health consequences.***

In all 12 countries, large proportions of women who experienced partner violence *ever* and/or *in the past 12 months* reported being physically injured as a result, including 'minor' injuries such as bruises and pain as well as more 'severe' injuries such as broken bones, burns, and knife wounds. These findings support a large body of global evidence that intimate partner violence is a public health problem with serious consequences for women's physical health, including physical injury, disability, and chronic pain.<sup>9, 12, 19, 20</sup>

This comparative analysis also documented widespread emotional and mental health consequences of intimate partner violence, including fear, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. In the five surveys that measured this indicator, between one-half and more than two-thirds of women who experienced partner violence *in the past 12 months* said they had experienced anxiety or depression severe enough that they could not carry out their usual work as a result of the violence. Two surveys (Guatemala 2008/9 and Paraguay 2008) gathered data that allowed an examination of suicidal thoughts according to history of intimate partner violence. In those surveys, women who had experienced physical or sexual partner violence *in the past 12 months* were significantly more likely to have contemplated or attempted suicide in the past four weeks compared with those who had never experienced partner violence. These findings support growing evidence that violence against women contributes to the burden of mental ill health among women both globally and within the LAC Region,<sup>20-23</sup> and that it takes a heavy toll on women's economic productivity in the Region.<sup>24</sup>

- ***Intimate partner violence is closely linked to a number of key reproductive health indicators.***

In almost all countries, the prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence *ever* or *in the past 12 months* was significantly higher among women who reported a younger age at first birth, among women who had higher parity (number of live births), and among women whose last live birth was unintended or unwanted. Similarly, in all surveys except Haiti 2005/6, unintended and unwanted pregnancy was significantly more common among women who reported partner

violence **ever** compared with those who did not. In the four DHS surveys that asked ever-pregnant women whether they had ever experienced physical violence during any pregnancy, between 5.6% of ever-pregnant women in Haiti 2005/6 and 11.3% of ever-pregnant women in Peru 2007/8 reported such violence. These percentages fall within the range of 3-13% of women reporting intimate partner violence during pregnancy from global literature reviews,<sup>25-27</sup> as well as from studies on violence during pregnancy from countries in LAC such as Brazil,<sup>28</sup> Mexico,<sup>29-32</sup> and Peru.<sup>33, 34</sup>

- ***Help-seeking behaviors by women who experience violence vary widely by country.***

The proportion of women who sought help for intimate partner violence, either by telling someone close to them or by seeking institutional help, varied widely by country. Among women who experienced intimate partner violence ***in the past 12 months***, the proportion who told family or friends ranged from less than one-third (29.3%) in Honduras 2005/6 to almost two-thirds (65.5%) in El Salvador 2008. The percentage of women who sought help from any institution ranged from 8.2% in Ecuador 2004 to 36.0% in El Salvador 2008, and in all countries was lower than the percentage who sought help from family or friends. Women cited many different reasons for not seeking help, including shame, fear of retaliation, not knowing where to go, and not believing that anyone would help.

- ***Large proportions of women in Latin America and the Caribbean report sexual violence in their lifetime, perpetrated mostly by men known to them.***

Substantial proportions of women in Latin American and Caribbean countries with recent DHS or RHS surveys reported experiencing sexual violence at some point in their lifetime, either by an intimate partner or by someone else. Among ever-partnered women, the percentage of women who reported sexual violence by any perpetrator (including forced sex, forced sex acts, forced sexual debut, and/or sex out of fear) ranged from 10.3% in Paraguay 2008 to 27.2% in Haiti 2005/6. In most surveys, the majority of these women had experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner.

- ***Forced and unwanted sexual initiation occurs at early ages for many young women and girls in the LAC Region.***

Small but substantial proportions of young women in all surveys reported that their first intercourse was 'forced'. Husbands, partners, and boyfriends were the most commonly reported perpetrators in those surveys that measured this indicator. These results almost certainly represent the tip of the iceberg of the broader problem of child sexual abuse and unwanted sexual debut. When researchers gave young women the option of reporting that their first sexual intercourse was unwanted without having to call it 'forced', large proportions of women reported unwanted sexual debut in the RHS survey from Jamaica 2008/9 and the WHO Multi-country Study surveys in Brazil and Peru. These findings suggest that many young women feel pressured to have sexual intercourse before they are ready, and that asking women to report their sexual debut either as 'forced' or as 'wanted' does not adequately measure the sexual coercion that many young women experience. Better research tools are needed to understand the circumstances of first sexual intercourse and the experience of other coerced sexual activity at early ages.

- ***Exposure to violence in childhood raises the risk of other forms of violence later in life and has important negative intergenerational effects.***

This comparative analysis produced a number of findings that suggest exposure to violence in childhood may have long-term and intergenerational effects. For example, after controlling for other factors, the most consistent risk factor for experiencing physical or sexual intimate partner violence against women across all countries was a history of 'father beat mother'. Similarly, the prevalence of intimate partner violence was significantly higher (usually around twice as high) among women who reported having experienced physical abuse in childhood compared with those who did not. Partner violence was also significantly higher (usually more than twice as high) among women who reported experiencing sexual abuse in childhood compared with those who did not. In addition, children living in households where women had experienced intimate partner violence were significantly more likely than other children to be punished with hitting, beating, spanking, or slapping (note that surveys did not always identify who punished the children).

- ***The acceptability of violence against women by partners is widespread but varies by setting.***

Agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating for at least one reason varied widely by country, ranging from 2.9% of women in Jamaica 2008/9 to 38.2% in Ecuador 2004. Support for wife-beating was significantly higher among rural than among urban women, and among women who had experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence ***in the past 12 months***, compared with those who had not. In each of the five countries where data from more than one survey are available (Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Paraguay), women's agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating was lower in the more recent survey than it was in the earlier survey. Two data points are not enough to demonstrate a trend, but other researchers have also suggested that support for wife-beating may be declining in some countries in the Region, as did authors of a longitudinal study from Nicaragua,<sup>35</sup> for example.

- ***There is widespread agreement in the Region with norms that reinforce gender inequality, discourage women from seeking help, or downplay the duty of bystanders to intervene in situations of abuse, with wide variations both among and within individual countries.***

In many countries, large proportions of women supported norms that reinforce gender inequality or discourage families and communities from helping women who experience violence, though levels of agreement with these norms varied widely among and within countries. In RHS surveys, the proportion of women who agreed that a wife should obey her husband even if she disagreed with him ranged from just over one-fourth of women in urban Paraguay 2008 to nearly three-fourths of women in rural Guatemala 2008/9. In addition, substantial proportions of women in these surveys did not agree that outsiders should intervene to help a woman who was being abused by her husband or that family problems should be discussed with those outside the family.

### Recommendations for future research

This comparative analysis highlights the need for research on violence against women to incorporate

lessons learned about how to measure such violence in scientifically rigorous and ethically sound ways, as well as in ways that will maximize comparability across different settings. Specific recommendations include:

- To increase comparability with other surveys around the world, prevalence surveys should measure intimate partner violence both ***ever in life*** and ***in the past 12 months*** by any current or former partner—not just the current or most recent partner.
- More methodological work is needed to improve and standardize nearly all types of measures of sexual violence, including sexual violence by partners, sexual abuse during childhood, and forced and unwanted sexual debut.
- More research is needed to understand risk factors associated with violence against women—not just individual background characteristics of women, but also those of partners and communities.
- Surveys should follow international ethical and safety recommendations for researching violence against women, including interviewing only one woman per household.

### Recommendations for programs and policies

- Policy makers and programmers in Latin America and the Caribbean should address violence against women and children, given the widespread prevalence and the significant negative health, economic, and human rights consequences that result from such violence.
- Evidence suggests that violence against women can be prevented. While violence against women was reported by substantial proportions of women in all settings, prevalence varied by setting, indicating that high levels of violence against women are not an inevitable feature of human society. Work by WHO and others<sup>24, 36-38</sup> documents examples of strategies that have shown evidence of the potential for preventing violence against women.
- There is a need to improve the response to violence against women by key institutions across all sectors. Women who experience violence in Latin America and the Caribbean do not always seek help, often because they do not know where



to go or do not have confidence that they will receive effective, compassionate, and confidential assistance.

- The close link between different types of violence, including evidence that violence has strong intergenerational effects, suggests there might be value in comprehensive strategies that address multiple types of violence and multiple generations simultaneously.
- Policy makers and programmers should address norms and attitudes in the Region that support gender inequity or that view violence against women as a 'private' matter. These norms are still widespread in many parts of the Region, and they may discourage women from seeking help or families and community members from assisting women who experience abuse. Changing these norms and attitudes may contribute both to prevention and response to violence against women, as well as to promoting gender equality more broadly.

#### Promising strategies for preventing and responding to violence against women

In 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the global campaign called UNiTE to End Violence against Women,<sup>39</sup> which calls on governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, the media, and the entire UN system to support strategies to address violence against women and girls. In recent years, a number of international reviews have synthesized what is known about how to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.<sup>7, 24, 36-38, 40, 41</sup> These

reviews suggest a need for investment in both prevention and response, and for comprehensive, multi-sectoral, long-term actions that involve collaboration between governments and civil society at different levels of society. These reviews have also identified a number of specific strategies as effective or at least promising, including the following:

- Reform both criminal and civil legislation.
- Carry out media and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about existing legislation.
- Strengthen women's ability to exercise their civil rights related to divorce, property, child support and custody, employment, and freedom from sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Build coalitions and networks of government and civil society institutions that can collaborate to develop and implement comprehensive approaches to addressing violence against women.
- Use community mobilization and mass communication to achieve social change.
- Work to transform whole institutions in every sector using a gender perspective; in particular, integrate attention to violence against women into sexual and reproductive health services.
- Promote social and economic empowerment of women and girls.
- Engage men and boys to promote nonviolence and gender equity.
- Provide early intervention services to at-risk families.

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

### Chapter 2

Figure 2.1	Map of countries in which the DHS and RHS surveys analyzed in this report were carried out. ....	6
Table 2.1	DHS and RHS surveys included in this comparative analysis: countries, dates, and organizations .....	7
Table 2.2	Characteristics of the samples: unweighted numbers of women interviewed, response rates, and eligibility criteria for the general surveys and violence modules .....	8

### Chapter 3

Figure 3.1	Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	20
Figure 3.2	Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner ever, by severity, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	22
Table 3.1	Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner ever, by act, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	22
Figure 3.3	Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	23
Table 3.2	Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by a partner by act, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	23
Figure 3.4	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	26
Table 3.3	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	26
Figure 3.5	Percentage of women who reported physical but not sexual intimate partner violence ever, both physical and sexual intimate partner violence ever, or sexual but not physical intimate partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	27
Figure 3.6	Percentage of women in Peru who reported physical violence by a partner ever, by geographic area, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS and WHO surveys .....	28
Figure 3.7	Percentage of women in Peru who reported forced sexual intercourse or any sexual violence by a partner ever, by geographic area, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS and WHO surveys .....	28

### Chapter 4

Table 4.1	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by women's background characteristics, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union ...	30
Table 4.2	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	31
Figure 4.1	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by residence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	32

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 4.2	Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner in the past 12 months, by women's age, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	32
Figure 4.3	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever, by years of education completed, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys ....	34
Figure 4.4	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever, by years of education, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys. ....	34
Figure 4.5	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by wealth quintile, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys ....	34
Figure 4.6	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by wealth quintile, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys. ....	34
Figure 4.7	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by marital status, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 ....	35
Figure 4.8	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by age at first marriage or union, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	35
Figure 4.9	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to women's current or recent employment, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	36
Figure 4.10	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, by language spoken in the home, among women ever married or in union aged 15-44, Paraguay 2008 ....	37
Table 4.3	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, according to language spoken in the home, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 ....	37
Figure 4.11	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, by self-identified ethnicity, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, Ecuador 2004 ....	38
Table 4.4	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, according to self-identified ethnicity, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 ....	38
Table 4.5	Adjusted odds ratios from multivariate logistic regression: associations between women's background characteristics and the experience of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys. ....	40
Table 4.6	Adjusted odds ratios from multivariate logistic regression: associations between women's background characteristics and the experience of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys ....	41

## Chapter 5

Table 5.1	Percentage of women who reported an unintended, unwanted, or mistimed pregnancy resulting in a live birth in the past five years, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years ....	46
-----------	--	----

Figure 5.1	Percentage of women who reported an unintended pregnancy resulting in a live birth in the past five years, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years . . . . .	46
Figure 5.2	Percentage of women who reported an unwanted pregnancy resulting in a live birth in the past five years, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years. . . . .	46
Table 5.2	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by intendedness of the last live birth, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years, RHS surveys. . . . .	47
Figure 5.3	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to age at first live birth, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who ever had a live birth at any time in their life . . . . .	48
Figure 5.4	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months, according to age at first live birth, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who ever had a live birth at any time in their life. . . . .	48
Figure 5.5	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by number of live births, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	49
Figure 5.6	Percentage of women who reported physical violence during pregnancy by any perpetrator (a partner or any other person) ever in life, among all women aged 15-49 who had ever been pregnant, DHS surveys . . . . .	49
 Chapter 6		
Figure 6.1	Percentage of women who reported that their partner's drunkenness or drug use had triggered his use of violence against them, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months, RHS surveys . . . . .	52
Figure 6.2	Percentage of women who reported that specific situations had triggered their partner's violence against them, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, RHS surveys . . . . .	52
Figure 6.3	Percentage of women who reported severe injury and any injury (minor or severe) as a result of partner violence in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months. . . . .	54
Table 6.1	Percentage of women who reported minor, severe, or any physical injury, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever or in the past 12 months . . . . .	54
Figure 6.4	Percentage of women who reported anxiety or depression severe enough that they could not complete their work or had to stop or miss money-earning work as a result of partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months. . . . .	56
Figure 6.5	Percentage of women who said they lived in constant fear or feared additional violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months . . . . .	56

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 6.6	Percentage of women who considered or attempted suicide in the past four weeks according to experience of physical or sexual intimate partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	57
Figure 6.7	Percentage of women who said they had wanted to kill themselves as a result of partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever or in the past 12 months . . . . .	57
Figure 6.8	Percentage of women who told someone or sought institutional help for partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months . . . . .	59
Table 6.2	Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months, according to whether they told someone or sought institutional help, did not tell anyone or seek institutional help, or did not respond or remember . . . . .	59
Figure 6.9	Percentage of women who told someone or sought institutional help for violence by any perpetrator, among all women aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator (a partner or any other person), ever in life . . . . .	60
Table 6.3	Percent distribution of all women aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator ever, according to whether they told someone or sought institutional help, did not tell anyone or seek institutional help, or did not respond or remember . . . . .	60
Table 6.4	Percentage of women who sought institutional help, by type of institution, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months . . . . .	61
Table 6.5	Percentage of women who sought institutional help, by type of institution, among all women (ever and never married or in union) aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator ever . . . . .	61
Figure 6.10	Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported partner violence in the past 12 months but did not seek help, according to the most important reason why they did not seek help. . . . .	63
Table 6.6	Percentage of women who cited specific reasons for not seeking help for partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months but did not seek help . . . . .	63

## Chapter 7

Figure 7.1	Percentage of women who reported emotional abuse by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	66
Figure 7.2	Percentage of women who reported specific acts of emotional abuse by a partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, selected RHS surveys . .	66
Figure 7.3	Percentage of women who reported that a partner threatened to harm them or someone they cared about, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	67
Figure 7.4	Percentage of women who reported that their current or most recent partner threatened to abandon them, take away their children, or withhold economic support, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, Colombia 2005 . . . . .	67

Figure 7.5	Percentage of women who reported any act of emotional abuse by a partner in the past 12 months, according to whether or not they reported physical violence by a partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	68
Figure 7.6	Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49, according to the number of controlling behaviors they reported by their current or most recent partner. ....	70
Table 7.1	Percentage of women who reported specific controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	70
Figure 7.7	Percentage of women who reported three or more controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner, according to their experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	71
Table 7.2	Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49, according to the number of controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner and their experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever .....	71

## Chapter 8

Figure 8.1	Percentage of women who reported that their first sexual intercourse was 'forced' or 'rape', among all women aged 15-24 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse .....	74
Table 8.1	Percent distribution of women aged 15-24 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse, according to the circumstances that led to their first sexual intercourse .....	74
Figure 8.2	Percentage of women who said that their first sexual intercourse was wanted, unwanted but not forced, or forced/rape, among women aged 15-24 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse, Jamaica 2008/9 .....	75
Figure 8.3	Percentage of women who said their first sexual intercourse was wanted, unwanted but not forced, or forced/rape, among women aged 15-49 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse, one urban and one rural site in Peru and Brazil, WHO Multi-country Study .....	75
Figure 8.4	Percent distribution of women aged 15-49 who reported that the first time they had sexual intercourse it was forced, according to the perpetrator, DHS surveys in the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6 .....	76
Figure 8.5	Percentage of women who reported forced sexual intercourse in response to two different questions: a general question about lifetime forced sex by any perpetrator and a specific question about forced sex by an intimate partner, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	77
Figure 8.6	Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner and by any perpetrator ever in their life, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	78
Figure 8.7	Percentage of women who reported that sexual violence was committed by a current or ex-husband or partner, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who reported sexual violence at any time in life .....	80
Table 8.2	Percentage of women who reported that sexual violence was committed by specific types of perpetrators, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who reported sexual violence at any time in life .....	80

## Chapter 9

Figure 9.1	Percentage of all women aged 15-49 who reported childhood sexual abuse before age 15, by type of abuse, RHS surveys .....	82
------------	---	----



## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 9.2	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever, by history of childhood sexual abuse, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys. . .	82
Figure 9.3	Percentage of women who reported being beaten or physically abused in childhood, among all women aged 15-49, RHS surveys. . . . .	84
Figure 9.4	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to their experience of physical abuse in childhood, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys . . . . .	84
Figure 9.5	Percentage of women who reported that their father beat their mother (DHS surveys) or that they saw or heard their father or stepfather beat or physically abuse their mother or stepmother (RHS surveys), among all women aged 15-49. . . . .	86
Figure 9.6	Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to whether or not they reported that their mother (or stepmother) was beaten, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. . . . .	86
Table 9.1	Percentage of women who reported that children in their home are punished, by type of punishment, among all women aged 15-49 with children in the home. . . . .	88
Figure 9.7	Percentage of women who reported that their children are punished with hitting, beating, spanking, or slapping, according to their experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 with children . . . . .	88

## Chapter 10

Figure 10.1	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	90
Table 10.1	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified, by reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	90
Figure 10.2	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified, by reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys . . . . .	91
Figure 10.3	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified, by reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys . . . . .	91
Figure 10.4	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, by rural or urban residence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	92
Figure 10.5	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, according to their experience of physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	92
Figure 10.6	Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, among all women aged 15-49, by year of survey, earlier and more recent surveys . . . . .	93
Figure 10.7	Estimated prevalence of physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months by survey, according to the proportion of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	93
Figure 10.8	Percentage of women who agreed that a wife has an obligation to have sexual intercourse with her husband, even if she doesn't want to, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys . . . . .	95
Figure 10.9	Percentage of women who did not agree that it is justified for a wife to refuse sexual intercourse with her husband just because she is tired, doesn't feel like it, or doesn't want to, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys. . . . .	95

Figure 10.10	Percentage of women who agreed that a wife should obey her husband, even if she does not agree with him, by rural and urban residence, among all women aged 15-49 . . . . .	97
Figure 10.11	Percentage of women who agreed that a man needs to show his wife that he is the boss, by rural and urban residence, among all women aged 15-49 . . . . .	97
Table 10.2	Percentage of women who agreed with traditional attitudes about gender relations, according to residence (total, urban, rural), among all women aged 15-49 . . . . .	97
Figure 10.12	Percent distribution of all women aged 15-49 who agreed, disagreed, or didn't know/didn't respond that outsiders should intervene if a man abuses his wife . . . . .	92
Table 10.3	Percentage of women who agreed with norms about family privacy and the duty of outsiders to intervene if a man abuses his wife, according to residence (total, urban, rural), among all women aged 15-49 . . . . .	98

## Chapter 11

Table 11.1	WHO Multi-country Study findings from Latin America: percentage of women who reported intimate partner violence ever and in the past 12 months, according to type of violence, among ever-partnered women aged 15-49 . . . . .	99
Table 11.2	Other selected population-based studies on violence against women in the LAC Region . . . . .	100
Table 11.3	Selected school- or university-based studies of violence against women in the LAC Region . . . . .	101
Table 11.4	Selected facility-based studies of violence against women from the LAC Region . . . . .	101
Figure 11.1	Percentage of men who reported ever using physical violence against a female intimate partner, and percentage of women who reported ever experiencing physical violence by a male intimate partner, among men and women aged 18-59 . . . . .	102
Figure 11.2	Percentage of men who reported ever forcing an intimate partner to have sexual intercourse, and percentage of women who reported ever being forced to have sexual intercourse by an intimate partner, among men and women aged 18-59 . . . . .	102

## Appendix Tables

Table A1	Numbers (unweighted) of women ever married or in union who completed the violence modules, by women's background characteristics . . . . .	139
Table A2a	Percent distribution of women by background characteristics, among all women and among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who completed the violence module, DHS surveys . . . . .	140
Table A2b	Percent distribution of women by background characteristics, among all women and among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who completed the violence module, RHS surveys . . . . .	141
Table A3	Percentage of women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner ever, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. . . . .	142
Table A4	Percentage of women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 . . . . .	143

# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table A5	Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	144
Table A6	Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	145
Table A7	Percentage and number (weighted and unweighted) of women who reported physical, sexual, or either type of partner violence, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	146
Table A8	Percentage of women who reported emotional abuse by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, by act, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	147
Table A9	Percentage of women who reported that a partner ever threatened to harm them or someone they cared about, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	148
Table A10	Percentage of women who reported that a partner threatened to harm them or someone they cared about in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	149
Table A11	Percentage of women who reported being beaten or physically abused in childhood, by women's background characteristics, among all women aged 15-49, RHS surveys .....	150
Table A12	Percentage of women who reported that their father or stepfather beat their mother or stepmother, by women's background characteristics, among all women aged 15-49. ....	151
Table A13	Percentage of women who agreed that wife-beating is acceptable for at least one reason, by women's background characteristics, among all women aged 15-49. ....	152
Table A14	Percentage of women who said that a wife should not refuse sex/has an obligation to have sex with her husband, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	153
Table A15	Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	154
Table A16	Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	154
Table A17	Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	155
Table A18	Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	155
Table A19	Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 .....	156
Table A20	Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49. ....	156

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

### 1.1 Violence against women as a public health problem and a violation of human rights

Over the past 30 years, researchers, women's organizations, governments, and the broader international community have increasingly recognized violence against women as a public health problem and a barrier to economic development.<sup>6-9</sup> Evidence indicates that violence against women:<sup>12, 13, 20</sup>

- is a leading cause of injury and disability for women in many parts of the world, as well as a risk factor for other physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health problems;
- has long-term, intergenerational consequences for the health, development, and well-being of children of women who are abused; and
- has negative social and economic consequences for the whole society.

Many international agreements have recognized violence against women as a violation of human rights—both globally and within the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) Region. In 1993, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly formally recognized women's fundamental human right to live free of violence in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,<sup>4</sup> as did the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará) in 1994.<sup>10</sup> In the 1993 Declaration, the United Nations defined violence against women broadly as:

*... any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.—UN General Assembly 1993*

Both the 1993 UN Declaration and the Convention of Belém do Pará used the phrase “gender-based” violence to acknowledge that the risk factors, consequences, and community responses to violence against women are heavily influenced by women's subordinate social, economic, and legal status in many settings.<sup>7,9</sup> For example, women's vulnerability to violence may be heightened by gender inequality within relationships and economic dependence on intimate partners. In addition,

certain forms of violence against women, such as physical intimate partner violence or sexual violence against marginalized groups of women such as sex workers, are often tolerated or even condoned by laws, institutions, and community norms. Finally, some researchers argue that violence against women may be not just a manifestation of gender inequality, but also a way of enforcing it.<sup>9, 11</sup>

Moreover, the patterns, risk factors, and consequences of violence against women are different than those of violence against men. Worldwide, men are more likely than women to experience violence in the context of armed conflict and criminal activity, while women are more likely than men to experience violence and injury inflicted by people close to them, such as intimate partners.<sup>12</sup> Girls and women are also more likely than boys or men to experience sexual violence generally.<sup>13</sup> In addition, physical and sexual violence against women and girls has a host of reproductive health consequences that are different than the consequences of violence against men.

### 1.2 International and regional evidence about violence against women

Researchers have carried out a growing number of studies on the prevalence, risk factors, and consequences of violence against women in many regions of the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean. Many studies in the Region have used small-scale convenience samples. Some have been school- or university-based studies among students, including from Chile,<sup>42-45</sup> El Salvador,<sup>46</sup> Mexico,<sup>47</sup> and nine countries in the Caribbean.<sup>48-50</sup> Many studies have been facility-based among users of health care, such as studies from Brazil,<sup>28</sup> Jamaica,<sup>51, 52</sup> Mexico,<sup>29-32, 53-60</sup> and Peru.<sup>33, 34</sup> Some surveys have gathered data on violence against women as part of larger studies on alcohol consumption using subnational samples, such as the GENACIS (Gender, Alcohol, and Culture) study.<sup>61</sup> A smaller number of studies have been nationally representative, population-based surveys, including the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS) included in this comparative report, as well as others from Chile,<sup>62</sup> Costa Rica,<sup>63</sup> and the National Survey of Relationship Dynamics in the Home (ENDIREH) 2003 and 2006 in Mexico.<sup>64, 65</sup>

## Comparability of existing data on violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean

One challenge for those seeking a regional understanding of violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean is that many studies have measured violence against women in such different ways that it is often difficult to compare data from one study to another. Moreover, reports and articles do not always provide enough information about how researchers defined and measured their indicators to allow readers to assess comparability. To achieve comparability across different settings, some researchers have carried out multi-country studies of violence against women using standard questionnaires.<sup>61, 63, 66, 67</sup> Most notably, the World Health Organization (WHO) Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women gathered data among more than 24,000 adult women (aged 15-49) using the same questionnaire in 10 countries, including Brazil and Peru.<sup>5</sup> The WHO Multi-country Study contributed to the field by providing high quality, comparable data from countries around the world, and by developing improved research instruments for measuring violence against women. For those seeking data from the Latin American and Caribbean Region, however, the WHO Multi-country Study had some limitations, as it included only two countries from the Region (Brazil and Peru) and gathered data from one urban and one provincial site per country rather than using national samples.

## Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS) as a source of data on violence against women

DHS and RHS surveys provide an important source of population-based data on violence against women in many parts of the world, including the LAC Region. Over the past 25 years, more than 75 DHS and RHS surveys have gathered national data on maternal and child health in 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Local research organizations carry out the national surveys with technical assistance from the MEASURE DHS project (for DHS surveys) or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (for RHS surveys), with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other donors. In many surveys, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) participated on executive committees and provided input into the

content, in-kind or financial support, and assistance with the dissemination of findings.

The core purpose of DHS and RHS surveys is to gather national data on key reproductive health issues, such as fertility, contraceptive use, infant mortality, use of maternal and child health services, and nutrition. Their findings have been used for many purposes, including for evaluating maternal and child health and family planning programs and for improving health policies, programs, and planning. Beginning in the 1990s, however, DHS and RHS surveys began to include brief modules on violence against women that typically focused on intimate partner violence, but also captured information on associated behaviors, gender attitudes, childhood experiences, and violence by other perpetrators.

As sources of data on violence against women, DHS and RHS surveys have strengths and limitations. Probable underestimation of the true prevalence of violence is a challenge for all research on violence, but large health surveys that include a brief module on violence—such as RHS and DHS surveys—have sometimes produced lower prevalence estimates than studies focused primarily on measuring violence against women, as was documented in Nicaragua.<sup>68</sup> Studies dedicated primarily to measuring violence against women may be able to invest greater resources in strategies to enhance disclosure, such as questionnaire design and interviewer training, compared with large health surveys.<sup>69</sup> Nonetheless, DHS and RHS surveys have incorporated methodological lessons learned over the years, and in some settings have produced prevalence estimates that correspond closely to surveys focused primarily on violence, as did the Cambodia DHS survey in 2000.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, in many countries, DHS and RHS surveys are the only sources of nationally representative data on violence against women, and because they use similar questionnaires, many of their indicators are comparable across countries. Thus, despite some limitations, DHS and RHS surveys offer an important source of data on violence against women for many countries, including those in the LAC Region.

## 1.3 Rationale and purpose of this comparative analysis

To date, no publication has provided a comparative analysis of RHS or DHS findings on violence

against women in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), though some data have appeared in global comparative reports<sup>16, 17, 27</sup> or in articles on particular topics such as child abuse.<sup>71, 72</sup> As a result, researchers, programmers, and policy makers seeking an overview of DHS or RHS data on violence against women in LAC must rely on final country reports or on articles that focus on individual countries, such as those from Colombia,<sup>73-75</sup> Ecuador,<sup>76</sup> Haiti,<sup>77, 78</sup> and Paraguay.<sup>22</sup>

From the perspective of comparability, DHS and RHS final country reports have some limitations. First, most do not present all the data on violence against women that surveys gathered, since violence is only one of many topics that the reports address. Second, final reports vary widely with regard to which data they present and how. Final country reports often construct indicators of violence differently from one another, even when the original survey questions about violence were similar. For example, they do not always use the same denominators for certain indicators or the same approach when classifying specific acts into different types of violence<sup>a</sup>. These differences often make it difficult to use final RHS and DHS country reports to compare data across countries, even for the purposes of composing relatively simple comparative tables.

To address these challenges, the authors of this comparative report carried out a secondary analysis of data from 13 DHS and RHS surveys conducted between 2003 and 2009 in Latin America and the Caribbean, using standardized indicator definitions. This effort was a collaboration between the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Reproductive Health (CDC/DRH), with technical input from the MEASURE DHS project.

The overall purpose of this comparative analysis is to raise awareness of violence against women at national and regional levels. Specific objectives of this publication are to:

- Make comparative data from DHS and RHS surveys from the LAC Region easier to access and disseminate among researchers, policy makers, and program managers.
- Increase knowledge about the prevalence, risk factors for victimization, consequences, and attitudes towards violence against women in the LAC Region.
- Catalyze change by motivating policy makers and programmers to design and implement evidence-based strategies to prevent and respond to violence against women within the LAC Region.

<sup>a</sup> For example, the Colombia 2005 and Peru 2007/8 final reports classified forced sexual intercourse as a form of physical violence, which the other reports did not. Similarly, reports varied in terms of which acts were classified as emotional abuse as opposed to controlling behavior.





## CHAPTER 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Surveys in this report: which surveys were selected and why?

This comparative analysis included 13 DHS and RHS surveys from 12 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, selected according to the following criteria:

- Nationally representative surveys that gathered data on violence against women.
- Population-based, household surveys that used face-to-face interviews.
- Studies with questionnaires sufficiently similar to allow a comparative analysis.
- The most recent DHS and RHS surveys in the Region at the time this comparative analysis began.
- Surveys that collected data between 2003 and 2009.

As illustrated by the map in Figure 2.1, the 13 surveys in this comparative analysis do not cover the entire Region. Nor are they the only sources of population-based estimates of violence against women in the LAC Region. The WHO Multi-country Study gathered highly comparable data in Brazil and Peru, but did not use national samples so they were not included, although some of their findings are discussed for the sake of comparison. A number of important national, population-based household surveys from the Region, such as the ENDIREH surveys from Mexico,<sup>64, 65, 79, 80</sup> were not included because their survey instruments were too different from those of the DHS and RHS to allow a comparative analysis. Readers seeking a more complete view of what is known about violence against women in the LAC Region are encouraged to look at the other sources of data discussed in Chapter 11.

Table 2.1 lists the 13 surveys included in this comparative analysis, along with information about dates of data collection, implementing organizations, and other characteristics. This comparative analysis included two surveys from Bolivia (2003 and 2008)

because they gathered complementary sets of indicators that were both important<sup>b</sup>. While the Peru DHS is a continuous survey, the data set in this analysis was limited to 2007 and 2008 so that it would correspond to the data set analyzed in an existing final country report.<sup>81</sup> All surveys in this list were carried out from 2003 through 2009 so that data collection occurred within a reasonably narrow period of time across all countries. Thus, this comparative analysis does not always include the most recent national estimates available for all countries. For example, data sets from 2010 DHS surveys in Colombia and Peru are already available,<sup>82, 83</sup> and new survey data on violence against women in LAC will continue to emerge.

The remainder of this chapter reviews the sample designs, data collection procedures, survey content, and ethical considerations applied in the 13 surveys included in this comparative analysis. In addition, it describes how the authors of this report standardized indicator definitions across the surveys, analyzed the data, and presented findings, with a particular emphasis on strategies used to maximize the comparability of the data.

### 2.2 Survey designs

All 13 DHS and RHS surveys included in this comparative analysis gathered nationally representative, population-based data through household surveys using face-to-face interviews among women of reproductive age (aged 15-49<sup>c</sup> in most surveys). The surveys were primarily designed to gather data on key demographic and reproductive health indicators, such as fertility, contraceptive use, infant mortality, and use of maternal and child health care services. All 13 surveys also included brief modules on violence against women that gathered the data used in this comparative analysis.

As Ellsberg and Heise (2005) point out, prevalence research on violence against women is methodologically and ethically challenging.<sup>69</sup> Surveys must use carefully designed questionnaires.

<sup>b</sup> Bolivia 2003 asked women about intimate partner violence *ever*, but not specifically *in the past 12 months*, while Bolivia 2008 asked women about intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months*, but not *ever*.

<sup>c</sup> Most DHS and RHS surveys interviewed women aged 15-49, except for Paraguay 2008, which interviewed women aged 15-44, and Colombia 2005, which interviewed women aged 13-49.

Figure 2.1. Map of countries in which the DHS and RHS surveys analyzed in this report were carried out



Table 2.1 DHS and RHS surveys included in this comparative analysis: countries, dates, and implementing organizations

Country	Survey year	Fieldwork dates	Local survey acronym	Implementing organization
Demographic and Health Surveys, with technical assistance from the MEASURE DHS project				
Bolivia	2003	8/2003-1/2004	ENDSA	Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE); National Statistics Institute
Bolivia	2008	2-6/2008	ENDSA	Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE); National Statistics Institute
Colombia	2005	10/2004-6/2005	ENDS	Profamilia
Dominican Republic	2007	3-8/2007	ENDESA	Centro de Estudios Sociales y Demográficos (CESDEM); Center for Social and Demographic Studies
Haiti	2005/6	10/2005-6/2006	EMMUS	Institut Haïtien de l'Enfance (IHE); Haiti Child Health Institute
Honduras	2005/6	10/2005-5/2006	ENDESA	Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE); National Statistics Institute
Peru	2007/8	1-10/2007, 2-6/2008	ENDES	Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI); National Statistics and Informatics Institute
Reproductive Health Surveys, with technical assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention				
Ecuador	2004	3-10/2004	ENDEMAIN	Centro de Estudios de Población y Desarrollo Social (CEPAR); Center for the Study of Population and Social Development
El Salvador	2008	4-9/2008	FESAL	Asociación Demográfica Salvadoreña (ADS); Salvadoran Demographic Association
Guatemala	2008/9	10/2008-6/2009	ENSMI	Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, Centro de Estudios en Salud; University del Valle of Guatemala, Center for Health Studies
Jamaica	2008/9	6/2008-5/2009	RHS	National Family Planning Board (NFPB) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN)
Nicaragua	2006/7	9/2006-4/2007	ENDESA	Instituto Nacional de Información de Desarrollo (INIDE); National Institute of Information for Development
Paraguay	2008	6-10/2008	ENDSSR	Centro Paraguayo de Estudios de Población (CEPEP); Paraguayan Center for Population Studies

Interviewers must ensure privacy, earn women's trust, and be prepared to provide emotional support and referrals when asking women about experiences of violence. Women may under-report violence due to shame or fear of reprisals, and evidence indicates that disclosure rates are heavily influenced by how well interviewers are trained.<sup>84</sup> Ideally, prevalence data should be gathered through population-based household surveys among a sample of respondents who are representative of the community or country, although school- and facility-based studies are appropriate if either students or health care clients are the specific populations of interest. While computer assisted interviewing techniques that allow anonymous reporting have been found to be useful for studying certain kinds of sensitive sexual experiences,<sup>5, 85</sup> other studies have found that women disclose experiences of intimate partner violence at higher levels during face-to-face interviews, possibly because of the emotional support provided by human interaction with interviewers.<sup>69, 86</sup>

## 2.3 Sample design and procedures

These DHS and RHS surveys collected data that were representative at national and subnational (usually regional or departmental) levels using multi-stage, probability sampling designs. In the first stage, primary sampling units (PSUs) were selected from a sampling frame, generally a recent census or master sample obtained from a national statistics agency. In the second stage, households were randomly selected within each PSU. In the third stage, one or more eligible women in sampled households were selected to be interviewed, with eligibility defined as being a woman of reproductive age (generally 15 to 49 years). For the general survey, RHS surveys randomly selected one eligible woman in the household to participate, while DHS surveys interviewed all eligible women in the household. Three DHS surveys (the Dominican Republic 2007, Haiti 2005/6, and Peru 2007/8) randomly selected only one eligible woman in the household to participate in the violence module,

while the other four DHS surveys administered violence questions to all eligible women in the household. Those surveys that randomly selected one woman per household for the general survey (RHS) and/or the violence module did so to increase privacy and confidentiality.

All survey sample designs captured sufficient numbers of respondents to produce nationally

representative estimates of key health indicators, including those related to violence against women. Survey sample sizes varied widely, however, depending on the sample design. The need for larger sample sizes in some countries was driven by the goal of obtaining point estimates that were representative at the provincial or departmental levels. Table 2.2 presents sample sizes and eligibility

Table 2.2 Characteristics of the samples: unweighted numbers of women interviewed, response rates, and eligibility criteria for the general surveys and violence modules [1-4]

	General survey			Violence module		
	Number of women interviewed (unweighted)	Individual response rate %	Eligibility criteria	Number of women interviewed (unweighted)	Eligibility criteria	Eligible women not interviewed due to lack of privacy % (number)
<b>DHS surveys</b>						
Bolivia 2003	17,654	95.5	All women in the household aged 15-49	14,679	All women aged 15-49 in the household who reported ever having had a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover	na
Bolivia 2008	16,939	95.9	All women in the household aged 15-49	14,900	All women aged 15-49 in the household	12.0 (2,039)
Colombia 2005	41,344	92.4	All women in the household aged 13-49	40,791	All women aged 13-49 in the household	1.4 (546)
Dominican Republic 2007	27,195	93.1	All women in the household aged 15-49	10,140	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in a subset of households	0.4 (42)
Haiti 2005/6	10,757	98.8	All women in the household aged 15-49	3,568	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in a subset of households	0.0 (1)
Honduras 2005/6	19,948	92.2	All women in the household aged 15-49	19,948	All women aged 15-49 in the household	na
Peru 2007/8	25,645	97.7	All women in the household aged 15-49	16,648	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in a subset of households	0.2 (29)
<b>RHS surveys</b>						
Ecuador 2004	10,814	97.0	One randomly selected woman in the household aged 15-49	9,576	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in the household	11.4 (1,238)
El Salvador 2008	12,008	90.1	One randomly selected woman in the household aged 15-49	9,717	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in the household	19.1 (2,291)
Guatemala 2008/9	16,819	95.5	One randomly selected woman in the household aged 15-49	16,582	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in the household	1.4 (237)
Jamaica 2008/9	8,259	96.7	One randomly selected woman in the household aged 15-49	8,259	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in the household	na
Nicaragua 2006/7	14,221	95.8	One randomly selected woman in the household aged 15-49	14,165	One randomly selected woman aged 15-49 in the household	0.4 (56)
Paraguay 2008	6,540	93.6	One randomly selected woman in the household aged 15-44	6,526	One randomly selected woman aged 15-44 in the household	0.2 (14)

**Notes:** [1.] Individual response rates were calculated based on the percentage of eligible women selected who were actually interviewed. [2.] In the violence module, Colombia 2005 interviewed 40,791 women aged 13-49. For the sake of comparability, this report excludes 13- and 14-year-olds and presents data for the 37,597 women aged 15-49. [3.] Women in Bolivia 2003 who had never married, lived with a partner, or had a boyfriend or lover were not included in the violence module, but were asked a few questions about child punishment at the end of the instrument. [4.] Bolivia 2003, Jamaica 2008/9, and Honduras 2005/6 did not gather comparable data on the numbers or percentages of women not interviewed due to a lack of privacy, but rather the number of interviews that encountered a lack of privacy (without indicating whether or not all those issues were resolved).

requirements for the general surveys and for the violence modules in each country. Numbers of women interviewed in the violence modules varied widely, ranging from 3,568 women aged 15-49 in Haiti 2005/6 to 40,791 women aged 13-49 (37,597 women aged 15-49) in Colombia 2005.

In some surveys, the number of women interviewed in the violence module was identical to the number interviewed in the general survey, but in others, it was much lower. In three DHS surveys (the Dominican Republic 2007, Haiti 2005/6, and Peru 2007/8), it was lower because all women in the household were eligible for the general survey, but only one woman in each household was randomly selected to participate in the violence module, and because only a subset of households from the general survey were selected for the violence module. In Bolivia 2003, the sample size for the violence module was substantially lower than for the general survey because it was limited to women who had ever had a husband, cohabiting partner, or informal partner. In other surveys, sample sizes were lower because privacy requirements were more stringent for the violence module than for the general survey.

Most surveys collected comparable data on the numbers of women who were not interviewed due to a lack of privacy, except for Bolivia 2003, Honduras 2005/6, and Jamaica 2008/9, which collected data on the numbers of interviews interrupted or delayed due to a lack of privacy. In most cases, the percentage of eligible women not interviewed due to privacy was less than 2%, except in Bolivia 2008 and Ecuador 2004, where it was around 11-12%, and in El Salvador 2008, where it was 19.1%. More details about sample designs, methods, and procedures for each survey in this analysis can be found in the individual final country reports.<sup>3, 81, 87-95</sup>

## 2.4 Ethical and safety considerations

When DHS and RHS surveys initially began to incorporate questions about violence, researchers raised concerns about the ethical and methodological challenges of including small violence modules within larger health surveys.<sup>68, 69</sup> Since then, DHS and RHS surveys have strengthened attention to safety and ethics<sup>16, 17</sup> based on WHO ethical and safety recommendations for research on domestic violence against women.<sup>96</sup>

These recommendations include measures such as:

- Protecting confidentiality as an essential way to ensure women's safety and data quality.
- Careful selection, specialized training, and support for all research team members.
- Actions aimed at reducing any possible distress caused to the participants by the research.
- Training fieldworkers to refer women requesting assistance to local services and sources of support, and short-term support mechanisms in settings where few other resources exist.

For example, the DHS and RHS surveys in this analysis provided specialized training on the topic of violence against women for interviewers and field supervisors, although the length and content of this training varied. All women were interviewed by female interviewers. In addition, all surveys instructed interviewers to administer the violence module in private, meaning without other adults or children present or within earshot. Interviewers were trained to stop or skip the module if they could not obtain privacy or were interrupted during the interview by the presence of another person. All survey questionnaires clearly instructed interviewers that privacy was required, except for Bolivia 2003, which said it was 'recommended'. All questionnaires included reminders and filter checks at the beginning of each violence module to reconfirm privacy, except for Jamaica 2008/9 (although privacy was required by that survey as noted in instructions and questionnaire items elsewhere on the questionnaire).

In addition, most surveys prepared interviewers to provide women who disclosed violence with information about services where they could seek help for violence, though availability and accessibility of such services varied both among and within countries. More information about where and how this was done for each survey can be found in individual final country reports.

It should be noted that WHO recommends that only one eligible woman in each household should be interviewed about violence, in order to protect women's confidentiality and safety, as well as to minimize under-reporting.<sup>96</sup> Four surveys (Bolivia 2003, Bolivia 2008, Colombia 2005, and Honduras 2005/6) interviewed all eligible women

in the household during the violence module—an approach that is not ideal, both for methodological and ethical reasons.

## 2.5 History of the DHS and RHS violence modules

DHS surveys began asking about violence in 1990,<sup>17</sup> and RHS surveys first included questions about violence in 1995. Early DHS surveys typically used a small number of questions to ask about violence. Some used what is called ‘a single-question threshold approach’, whereby women were asked a single question about whether they had ever experienced violence in their life (either by any perpetrator or by an intimate partner specifically). Women who said yes to this question were then asked more detailed questions, including questions about the perpetrator.

Influenced by emerging research on how to measure violence more effectively, the DHS program used a modified Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) approach<sup>97, 98</sup> when it developed a standard Domestic Violence Module in 2000.<sup>17</sup> RHS surveys began using a modified CTS approach as well in the late 1990s. This approach eliminated gateway questions, gave women multiple opportunities to disclose, asked about violence by intimate partners specifically, and mentioned behaviorally specific acts, such as slapped, hit with a fist, choked, etc. Around 2004, RHS questionnaires were revised to incorporate lessons learned from the WHO Multi-country Study.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to measuring the prevalence of intimate partner violence, most DHS and RHS violence modules asked about situations that triggered violence, physical and emotional consequences of violence, and help-seeking behaviors. Almost all surveys asked women about violence by perpetrators other than intimate partners. In addition, most surveys also gathered information about childhood experiences of violence, gender norms and attitudes, and intimate partners’ controlling behavior. Some surveys collected information about childhood punishment (both physical and non-physical). The following section describes in greater detail the variables related to violence that were included in this report, as well as the sociodemographic and health variables that were used in the bivariate and multivariate analyses to examine the characteristics of women who experienced violence.

## 2.6 Constructing standardized indicators for this comparative analysis

The 13 DHS and RHS surveys in this report gathered data on violence against women that were sufficiently similar to allow for a comparative analysis; nonetheless, they had many differences. For example, in survey questions specifically about violence by intimate partners, RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former intimate partner in their lifetime, while most DHS surveys asked women about violence by their current or (if they had no current partner) most recent partner only. RHS surveys typically gathered more information on childhood experiences of violence, both physical and sexual, than DHS surveys. The two groups of surveys also gathered somewhat different types of data with regard to gender norms and attitudes.

In addition, individual country questionnaires often differed with regard to variables measured, wording and order of questions, and filters used to determine which subsamples of women were asked certain questions and not others. The DHS violence module is considered optional, and country research teams sometimes adapt it substantially. RHS surveys also gave country survey committees some flexibility in adapting the module to local interests and circumstances. Generally, however, the modules of the seven DHS surveys included in this analysis were more heterogeneous than those of the six RHS surveys.

To carry out a comparative analysis of data across these 13 surveys, it was necessary to go through a process of constructing standardized indicators within the limits of the available data. The authors of this report took the following specific steps:

1. First, authors reviewed all survey instruments in the original languages (11 survey instruments were in Spanish, one was in English, and one was in French) and developed an initial list of indicators to include in this analysis.
2. For each indicator (e.g. the prevalence of physical violence by intimate partners), authors developed a spreadsheet that included verbatim questionnaire items from each survey instrument, along with detailed information about the characteristics and numbers of women asked each question or set of questions.



3. Authors then expanded the spreadsheets to identify points of similarity and difference, including definitions of key terms (e.g. who constituted a partner or a perpetrator), which acts were measured, denominators, and time frames.
4. Next, authors refined operational definitions and denominators for each indicator to maximize comparability within the limits of the data gathered by the original survey instruments. Refinements included which acts to include in each indicator, whether to limit denominators to certain subsamples of women, and which sociodemographic variables to include for the purposes of bivariate analyses (e.g. residence, age, etc.).
5. Authors then used the spreadsheets to evaluate which surveys had yielded data that were sufficiently similar to include in comparative tables and charts. Data were deemed comparable if differences among the surveys were relatively minor (e.g. small differences in item wording or denominators) and could be clearly identified in footnotes, titles, and data labels. When differences were more substantial, data from some surveys were often divided into separate indicators with their own tables or charts, or excluded from the report altogether.
6. Finally, it is important to note that while indicators in this report were standardized across the 13 surveys as much as possible, many comparability challenges could not be overcome by reanalyzing the data. The report has addressed all these limits to comparability through detailed notes throughout the text, tables, and charts.

The result of the process described above was a comparative analysis of the following groups of indicators:

***Indicators related to physical and sexual intimate partner violence, including:***

- Prevalence, acts, severity, and combinations by type
- Associations with selected sociodemographic factors
- Associations with unintended pregnancy and other reproductive health indicators and outcomes

- Situations that triggered intimate partner violence
- Consequences
- Help-seeking

***Indicators related to emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by intimate partners, including:***

- Prevalence
- Associations with other types of violence

***Indicators related to sexual violence by any perpetrator, including:***

- Forced sexual debut (and the circumstances of sexual debut more broadly)
- Lifetime experience of sexual violence by any perpetrator
- Perpetrators of forced sexual debut and lifetime sexual violence

***Indicators related to a history of violence during childhood as reported by women aged 15-49, including:***

- History of sexual and physical violence in childhood
- History of their father (or stepfather) beating their mother (or stepmother)
- Punishment of children in the current home (including physical and non-physical punishment)

***Indicators related to gender norms and attitudes, including:***

- The acceptability of wife-beating
- Women's attitudes about wives' right to refuse sex with their husband
- Agreement with other norms about gender and violence

Many of the 13 surveys gathered data on other dimensions of violence against women, including physical violence by any perpetrator, help-seeking for other types of sexual violence, and medical care sought for injuries resulting from intimate partner violence. These results can be found in individual final country reports but were not included in this comparative analysis, largely because of limits to comparability.



## 2.7 Measures and definitions of intimate partner violence

To produce standardized indicators related to intimate partner violence, it was necessary to address many comparability challenges. Detailed descriptions of how each indicator was constructed are included in the 'Measures and definitions' sections for each chapter in this report and in notes that accompany tables and charts. A few broad comparability issues apply to many indicators of intimate partner violence, including the need to define different types of intimate partner violence and denominators used to calculate prevalence. Each of these issues is discussed below.

### How did this comparative analysis classify acts into different types of intimate partner violence?

All 13 surveys in this analysis measured physical, sexual, and emotional intimate partner violence, as well as controlling behaviors, by asking women whether they had experienced behaviorally specific acts. Surveys varied in terms of which specific acts they measured, however. Detailed notes about which surveys measured which acts are described in the chapters, but in general terms, whenever specific acts of intimate partner violence were measured, this comparative analysis classified them into three different types of violence as listed below. These classifications were based on what has been done in other multi-country studies, including other comparative analyses of DHS data<sup>17</sup> and the WHO Multi-country Study.<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that the classifications listed below do not always correspond to those used in the individual country final reports (see Box 2.1).

#### Physical violence by an intimate partner

*Any of the following acts:*

- Slapped (hit with a hand), shook, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted her arm, or pulled her hair
- Hit with a fist or something that could cause injury
- Kicked, dragged, or beaten
- Choked or burned (actual or attempted)
- Threatened or wounded with a knife, gun, or other weapon

### Box 2.1 Differences between indicators in this comparative report and those in individual country final reports

Because the indicators in this report had to be standardized to allow a comparative analysis, they are sometimes constructed differently than those used in individual country final reports. As a result, figures presented for similar indicators may be different because of differences in operational definitions. These differences may include:

- Which acts were classified as which types of violence
- Which types of intimate partner violence were included in a composite indicator of 'partner violence'
- Which denominators were used to construct each indicator (e.g. whether or not the denominator was restricted to women who had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner)
- Time frames in which the violence occurred (i.e. ever or in the past 12 months)

#### Sexual violence by an intimate partner

*Any of the following acts:*

- Forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse
- Forced to perform unwanted 'sex acts'
- Had unwanted sexual intercourse for fear of what a partner might do if she refused

#### Emotional abuse by an intimate partner

*Any of the following acts:*

- Insulted her
- Belittled or humiliated her
- Scared or intimidated her (e.g. by destroying her personal things)
- Threatened to harm her or someone she cared about
- Threatened to abandon her
- Threatened to take her children away
- Threatened to withhold economic support

### Controlling behavior

*Any of the following acts:*

- Prevents her from seeing friends
- Tries to limit her contact with family
- Insists on knowing where she is at all times
- Gets jealous/mad if she talks to another man
- Often suspects her of being unfaithful
- Insists that she ask permission to seek medical care
- Doesn't trust her with or let her have money/controls money she earns or receives

### Which denominators were used to construct indicators related to intimate partner violence?

To maximize comparability, indicators related to intimate partner violence were constructed using denominators that were similar across surveys—to the greatest extent possible—with regard to age, partnership history, and other characteristics, as noted below.

- **Age:** Most surveys interviewed women<sup>d</sup> aged 15–49. However, Colombia 2005 also gathered data among women aged 13–14, which were excluded from this analysis. In addition, Paraguay 2008 limited eligibility to women aged 15–44, and thus data from women aged 45–49 were not available from that survey for any indicator in this report.
- **Marital status and partnership history:** Most surveys limited questions about intimate partner violence to women ever married or in union. However, two surveys (Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004) asked all women about intimate partner violence if they reported **ever** having a husband, cohabiting partner, 'boyfriend' ("*novio*"), or 'lover' ("*enamorado*"). And two other surveys (Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6) asked women about intimate partner violence as long as they reported having a husband, cohabiting partner, 'boyfriend' ("*novio*"), or 'lover' ("*enamorado*") ***in the past 12 months***. To maximize comparability, this analysis excluded women who had never married or been in union from all indicators of intimate partner violence.

Some differences in denominators could not be addressed by reanalyzing the data. As noted above, Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 data on intimate partner violence were limited to **recently** partnered women (i.e. ***in the past 12 months***) rather than **ever** partnered women. In addition, Haiti 2005/6 did not ask widows about intimate partner violence ***in the past 12 months***, although the survey did ask widows about intimate partner violence **ever**.

**Definition of ever married or in union:** In all 13 surveys, women were defined as ever married or in union if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported ever having a 'visiting partner'. (A 'visiting partner' is a regular male sexual partner who lives apart, but often has children with the woman as well as some financial obligations to her partner and their child/ren.<sup>3</sup>)

- **Types of violence experienced:** In this report, many indicators of help-seeking, consequences, or associated factors are constructed according to whether or not women had experienced intimate partner violence. In most cases, this comparative analysis limited the denominators for these indicators to women who reported physical or sexual partner violence rather than women who had experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence.

### Which types of sexual partners were included in measures of intimate partner violence?

The original 13 DHS and RHS survey instruments used similar but not identical wording to describe partners when asking women questions about intimate partner violence. Specifically, in questionnaire items about intimate partner violence:

- **Which types of partners were mentioned?** All 13 survey instruments asked about violence by husbands or cohabiting male sexual partners. In addition, Jamaica 2008/9 also mentioned 'visiting partners', and four surveys (Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6)

<sup>d</sup> Note that this comparative analysis refers to respondents aged 15–49 as 'women', despite some international definitions that consider women under age 18 to be children rather than adults.

also asked women about violence by 'boyfriends' ("novios") and 'lovers' ("enamorados").

- **Did surveys ask about violence by any current or former intimate partner in women's lifetime or by their current/most recent partner only?** In questions about intimate partner violence, DHS surveys asked women about violence by their current or most recent partner only, except for Honduras 2005/6, which asked about any partner **in the past 12 months** and did not measure intimate partner violence **ever**. In contrast, RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former intimate partner in their lifetime, and did not include follow-up questions to identify whether violence was perpetrated by the current/most recent versus a previous partner.

**Examples of wording used to refer to partners in original survey questions about intimate partner violence:**

**El Salvador 2008 RHS**

*su esposo/compañero de vida o cualquier otra pareja con la que estuvo casada o acompañada*

your husband/life partner or any other partner with whom you were married or in union

**Ecuador 2004 RHS**

*su esposo, compañero, pareja, novio o enamorado. Esto incluye ex-maridos o ex-compañeros, ex-novios o ex-enamorados*

your husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover. This includes ex-husbands, ex-partners, ex-boyfriends or ex-lovers

**Peru 2007/8 DHS**

*su (último) esposo (compañero)*

your (last) husband (partner)

**Time frames: when did intimate partner violence occur?**

Most surveys asked women about intimate partner violence that occurred during two time frames: **ever** and **in the past 12 months** (meaning the 12 months prior to the interview). Bolivia 2008 and Honduras

2005/6 asked women about partner violence **in the past 12 months** but not **ever**, however, and Bolivia 2003 asked about partner violence **ever**, but not **in the past 12 months**. Because Bolivia 2003 and 2008 measured violence that occurred during two different time frames, both surveys were included in this comparative analysis.

**Which surveys in this report measured lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence?**

All six RHS surveys collected data needed to produce lifetime prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence, but DHS surveys did not. RHS surveys asked about violence by any current or former intimate partner **ever**, and most used language such as 'ever in your lifetime' ("*alguna vez en su vida*"). In contrast, DHS survey questions about intimate partner violence asked women specifically about violence by their current or most recent partner only, rather than by any current or former partner in their lifetime. Many women in these DHS surveys had more than one partner in their lifetime, including nearly four in 10 women in both the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6. In DHS surveys, women who experienced violence by a former partner but not by their current or most recent partner were therefore not counted as **ever** having experienced intimate partner violence.

**Construction of a summary measure for any physical or sexual intimate partner violence**

This comparative analysis created a summary measure of any **physical or sexual intimate partner violence** for two time frames, namely: **ever** and **in the past 12 months**. This indicator included three groups of women, namely: women who reported any act of physical (but no sexual) partner violence, those who reported both physical and sexual partner violence, and those who reported sexual (but no physical) partner violence. Acts of emotional abuse were not included in this summary measure in part because measures of emotional abuse were so diverse across the 13 surveys. In addition, other researchers have found that composite indicators that combine physical, sexual, and emotional abuse can be challenging to interpret in multi-country analyses because both patterns

and perceptions of emotionally abusive acts often vary widely by setting.<sup>5, 14, 69</sup>

This summary measure of physical or sexual intimate partner violence was chosen for various reasons. First, it has been widely used in the field by other researchers, including by the WHO Multi-country Study<sup>5</sup> and other comparative DHS reports.<sup>16, 17</sup> Second, in most countries, there is a large overlap between physical and sexual partner violence. Third, it limited the scope of the analysis of risk factors, as time limitations made it difficult to carry out analyses for physical and sexual partner violence separately. And finally, this summary indicator facilitated an analysis of variables such as help-seeking and consequences, since DHS and RHS surveys frequently directed follow-up questions on these issues to women who had experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence. Readers who wish to see physical intimate partner violence separate from sexual intimate partner violence according to women's background characteristics can find these data in Appendix Tables A3-A6.

## 2.8 Measures and definitions of other experiences of violence

In addition to intimate partner violence, this comparative analysis explored other experiences of violence including:

- Forced sexual debut
- Lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator
- History of sexual abuse in childhood
- History of physical abuse in childhood
- History of physical abuse against mother (or stepmother)
- Physical punishment of children in the current home

While some of these indicators were very comparable across the surveys, others presented more of a challenge. For example, this comparative analysis produced estimates of the lifetime

prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator for 11 surveys<sup>e</sup>. As described in detail in Chapter 8, section 8.2, these surveys took very different approaches to measuring sexual violence by any perpetrator. To produce these estimates, it was necessary to create a composite indicator that combined all women who reported any act of sexual violence<sup>f</sup>, however it was measured, including: forced sexual debut; forced sexual intercourse by partners, non-partners, or all perpetrators (depending on the original questionnaire); forced 'sex acts'; and unwanted sex that a woman felt forced to have for fear of what her partner might do if she refused. The denominator for this indicator was limited to women ever married or in union, primarily because this group of women figured most prominently throughout the rest of this comparative report, but also because it allowed a comparison of the prevalence of sexual violence by intimate partners with the prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator ever. More details about these indicators can be found in the 'Measures and definitions' section of each chapter.

## 2.9 Data analysis tools and techniques

For this comparative analysis, access to raw data for the DHS and RHS surveys was obtained from the CDC and the MEASURE DHS project, through a collaborative arrangement among these organizations and PAHO. RHS data were analyzed with Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) 9.1. Stata 11 was used to analyze the DHS data and to run the logistic regressions. Survey sample weights that adjust for sampling design and non-response differentials were applied. Weighted estimates are thus nationally representative of the population of women of reproductive age for a given country. More details about weighting can be found in the original individual survey country reports. All tables and figures in this report show weighted percentages and unweighted denominators. Standard errors and confidence intervals for key indicators in this analysis were calculated using Stata, and are shown in Appendix Tables A15-A20 for physical or sexual intimate partner violence,

<sup>e</sup> Bolivia 2008 and Peru 2007/8 data could not be used to produce estimates of the lifetime prevalence of sexual violence, since Bolivia 2008 did not ask about sexual violence by intimate partners **ever**, and Peru 2007/8 did not ask about sexual violence by someone other than the current/most recent partner.

<sup>f</sup> This composite indicator did not include data from a question in four RHS surveys that asked women whether they had ever been forced to do something such as undress, touch someone or be touched, kiss, embrace, etc., because comparable data were not available from most surveys.

physical partner violence, and sexual partner violence, **ever** and **in the past 12 months**.

Most tables and charts in this report provide national-level estimates for key indicators. However, bivariate analyses were performed to explore associations between intimate partner violence and women's sociodemographic characteristics, such as residence, education, and age. In addition, multivariate logistic regression analysis was conducted to explore associations between various factors and the odds of experiencing physical or sexual partner violence **ever** and **in the past 12 months**, while controlling for potential confounding factors.

The specific variables selected for inclusion in the bivariate and multivariate analyses were chosen based on prior research findings about which factors were significantly associated with intimate partner violence, including the WHO Multi-country Study<sup>5, 18, 99</sup> and other comparative analyses of DHS data.<sup>16, 17</sup> The selection of variables was limited somewhat by the availability of comparable data across the 13 surveys. For example, there is growing evidence that an analysis of risk factors focused on women's individual characteristics is incomplete without an analysis of partner characteristics such as partner's exposure to violence in childhood and partner's alcohol consumption.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, the inclusion of partner characteristics was beyond the scope of this analysis, due to a lack of comparable data across DHS and RHS surveys.

The selected sociodemographic variables used in this report were measured by the 13 surveys in comparable ways with a few exceptions. When necessary, some variables (e.g. marital status and education) were recoded for comparability and therefore may differ from those used in individual country reports. Notes about these indicators are provided below:

**Residence:** Women were classified as urban or rural based on residence at the time of the interview, using criteria developed by the governmental statistics office in each country.

**Education:** All surveys asked women how many years of education they had completed. In this report, the number of years of schooling completed is presented according to ranges (0-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-11 years, and 12+ years). This

approach differs from some final country reports that presented education according to categories such as primary, secondary, etc.

**Age of the woman:** Age at the time of the interview was presented in five-year ranges for younger women (aged 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29) and 10-year ranges for older women (aged 30-39 and 40-49). This was done to provide more disaggregated findings for younger women.

**Wealth quintile:** Wealth quintiles were based on a household wealth index adapted to each country and used by the original survey teams.<sup>100</sup> This index uses household asset data, including consumer items (e.g. televisions, bicycles) and dwelling characteristics (e.g. roofing, sanitation facilities, etc.). Each asset is assigned a weight generated through principal components analysis. Within each country, the sample is divided into quintiles, from one (poorest) to five (wealthiest). This wealth index has been validated in a large number of countries and has been found to be consistent with expenditure and income measures.

**Current marital status:** All surveys used comparable measures of current marital status (i.e. married, in union, separated/divorced, and widowed), with a couple of exceptions. Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows into a single category of 'previously partnered' along with women who were separated or divorced, so disaggregated data on widowed women are not available from that survey. In addition, Haiti 2005/6 did not ask widows about intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months**, although that survey did ask them about violence **ever**.

**Number of unions:** This variable refers to the number of marriages or cohabiting unions that women had in their lifetime (except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included unions with 'visiting partners').

**Parity:** Parity refers to the number of live births women had in their lifetime by the time of the interview.

**Age at first union:** This variable refers to women's age at the time they first married or lived with a man (except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included unions with 'visiting partners').



**Employment (current or recent):** Two RHS surveys (Guatemala 2008/9 and Nicaragua 2006/7) and all DHS surveys measured recent employment (i.e. in the 12 months prior to the interview), while all other RHS surveys measured current employment (i.e. at the time of the interview).

**Ethnicity:** Five countries gathered information on ethnicity, using various approaches. This report includes data on two types of measures of ethnicity, namely: language used in the home (Guatemala 2008/9, Paraguay 2008, and Peru 2007/8) and self-identified ethnicity (Bolivia 2003, Bolivia 2008, and Ecuador 2004).

**‘Father beat mother’:** This variable included women who reported that their father beat their mother (DHS surveys) or that they saw or heard their father or stepfather beat their mother or stepmother (RHS surveys). This variable was included in the multivariate logistic regression model for all surveys except Honduras 2005/6, which did not measure it. More details about how it was constructed can be found in the ‘Measures and definitions’ section in Chapter 9.

(Note that Appendix Tables A2a and A2b present the percent distributions of women who participated in the violence modules by sociodemographic characteristics of all women and women ever married or in union.)

In addition to exploring associations between sociodemographic variables and intimate partner violence, bivariate analyses were also conducted to explore associations between the experience of physical or sexual intimate partner violence and other variables, including:

- **Other types of violence:** such as emotional abuse, controlling behavior, a history of sexual or physical abuse in childhood, having a father (or stepfather) who beat their mother (or stepmother), attitudes about the acceptability of wife-beating, and physical punishment of children in the current home.
- **Reproductive health indicators:** such as unintended, unwanted, and mistimed pregnancy.

For all bivariate analyses presented in the main body of this report, the Pearson’s chi squared was used to test for significance. Multivariate models were estimated in Stata 11, and regressions were

estimated with Stata’s svy command to account for sampling design. Significance levels are indicated by asterisks (\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \* $p < 0.05$ ). Data are not reported for cell sizes less than 25, which are marked in tables with a double dash.

## 2.10 Presentation of results: managing limits to comparability

This report took various steps to address differences among surveys that could not be overcome by reanalyzing the data, including the following:

- **Surveys that did not have comparable data for certain indicators are not included in tables and charts.** When surveys did not measure specific variables, or did so in ways that were fundamentally different than other surveys, those data do not appear in tables and charts. For example, Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask women about intimate partner violence experienced *ever*, so those surveys do not appear in tables and charts devoted specifically to physical or sexual violence *ever*.
- **When groups of surveys measured variables in fundamentally different ways, findings are reported separately.** In some cases, one group of surveys gathered data on a specific indicator in fundamentally different ways than another group of surveys. For example, all RHS surveys and two DHS surveys asked women about help-seeking for violence by an intimate partner *in the past 12 months*, while most DHS surveys asked women about help-seeking for violence by any perpetrator *ever*. Therefore, this report presents findings about help-seeking for partner violence separate from findings about help-seeking for violence by any perpetrator.
- **Minor comparability issues are explained in the ‘Measures and definitions’ section for each indicator.** Most tables and charts present data with at least some differences among the surveys, including differences in question wording and denominator characteristics, and these differences are explained in footnotes at the bottom of each page.
- **Examples of survey questions used to measure each indicator are provided in each chapter.** Examples of the wording and structure of original

survey questions are shown in the ‘Measures and definitions’ sections throughout this report. Since the majority of surveys were conducted in Spanish, original Spanish-language versions are

provided alongside English translations. However, readers who wish to see all questionnaire items used may wish to consult the original instruments available in individual survey final reports.



## CHAPTER 3. PREVALENCE OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY INTIMATE PARTNERS

### 3.1 Physical violence by intimate partners

#### i. Measures and definitions

The 13 surveys in this comparative analysis measured **physical** partner violence in similar ways. All surveys asked women ever married or in union whether they had experienced behaviorally specific acts of physical violence by an intimate partner. Most surveys asked about a similar list of 12-14 acts of physical violence, except for Bolivia 2003, Bolivia 2008, and Honduras 2005/6, which asked about a smaller list of 7, 7, and 4 acts, respectively. Most surveys asked about physical violence that occurred during two time frames: **ever** and **in the past 12 months** (prior to the survey interview).

#### Physical intimate partner violence

*Any of the following acts:*

- Slapped (hit with a hand), shook, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted her arm, or pulled her hair
- Hit with a fist or something that could cause injury
- Kicked, dragged, beat her
- Choked or burned (actual or attempted)
- Threatened or wounded with a knife, gun, or other weapon

#### ii. Findings: prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union:

- In all 12 countries, a substantial percentage of women reported physical violence by an intimate partner **ever**, though reported prevalence varied widely, ranging from 13.4% in Haiti 2005/6 to 52.3% of women in Bolivia 2003. In four countries the prevalence was less than 20%, in six countries it fell between 20% and 40%, and in Bolivia 2003, it exceeded one-half (52.3%). (Figure 3.1)

#### Examples of questions used to measure physical intimate partner violence ever

##### Dominican Republic 2007 DHS:

*Su (último) esposo (marido) alguna vez:*

- ¿La empujó, sacudió o le tiró algo?
- ¿La abofeteó?
- ¿Le torció el brazo o le jaló el pelo?
- ¿La golpeó con el puño o con algo que pudo hacerle daño?
- ¿La ha pateado o arrastrado?
- ¿Trató de estrangularla o quemarla?
- ¿La amenazó o agredió con un cuchillo, pistola u otro tipo de arma?

*Did your (last) husband (spouse) ever:*

- Push, shake you or throw something at you?
- Slap you?
- Twist your arm or pull your hair?
- Hit you with his fist or with something that could cause harm?
- Kick or drag you?
- Try to choke or burn you?
- Threaten you with a knife, gun or other weapon?

##### El Salvador 2008 RHS

*Quisiera que me dijera si alguna vez en su vida su esposo/compañero de vida o cualquier otra pareja con la que estuvo casada o acompañada, le han hecho alguna de las siguientes cosas:*

- ¿Abofeteado o tirado cosas que pudieran herirla?
- ¿Empujado, arrinconado o jalado el pelo?
- ¿Golpeado con su puño o con alguna otra cosa que pudiera herirla?
- ¿Pateado, arrastrado o dado una golpiza?
- ¿Intentado ahorcarla o quemarla a propósito?
- ¿Amenazado con usar o ha usado una pistola, cuchillo u otra arma en contra suya?

*I would like to ask you if at any time in your life your husband/life partner or any other partner with whom you were married or in a relationship with has ever done any of the following things:*

- Slapped you or threw something at you that could hurt you?
- Pushed you, shoved you or pulled your hair?
- Hit you with his fist or with something else that could hurt you?
- Kicked you, dragged you or beat you up?
- Tried to choke or burn you on purpose?
- Threatened to use a gun, knife, or another weapon against you?

- The reported prevalence of physical intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** ranged from 6.5% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 24.5% in Bolivia 2008, with a majority of countries falling within the 6-11% range. (Figure 3.1)

Among women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner **ever**:

- In three DHS surveys (Colombia 2005, the Dominican Republic 2007, and Haiti 2005/6), a majority of women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner **ever** also reported physical violence **in the past 12 months**. Haiti 2005/6 was a particular outlier, with approximately nine out of 10 women who reported physical partner violence **ever** also reporting violence **in the past 12 months**. (When considering these data, however, note that these DHS surveys asked specifically about violence by the current or most recent partner only, whereas RHS surveys asked about violence by any partner in their lifetime.)

### 3.2 Physical violence by intimate partners by severity and act

#### i. Measures and definitions

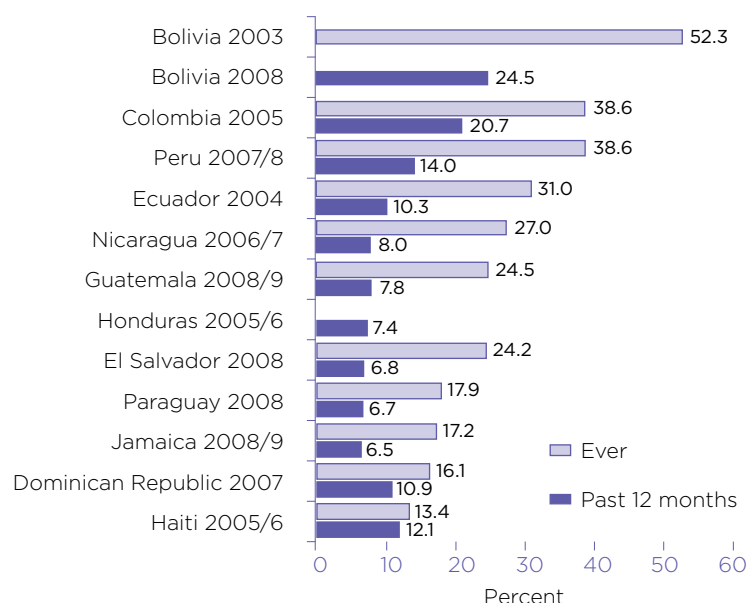
In this comparative analysis, acts of physical violence by intimate partners were classified according to severity, based on classifications used in other studies, including the WHO Multi-country Study,<sup>5</sup> as follows:

**‘Moderate’** acts of physical violence included: slapped (hit with a hand), shook, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted her arm, or pulled her hair.

**‘Severe’** acts of violence included: hit with a fist or something that could cause injury, kicked, dragged, beaten, choked or burned (actual or attempted), or threatened or wounded with a knife, gun, or other weapon.

#### Physical partner violence, ever and past 12 months:

Figure 3.1 Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]



Surveys from all 12 countries asked women whether they had experienced acts of physical violence by a partner **ever** or **in the past 12 months**. Surveys asked women about a similar but not identical list of behaviorally specific acts of physical violence, such as slapped, kicked, choked, etc.

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past 12 months.

## ii. Findings: severity of physical violence by an intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union:

- In most countries, the most common forms of physical intimate partner violence **ever** were ‘moderate’ acts, such as being pushed, shoved, having an arm twisted, or hair pulled—reported by between 12.5% of women in Haiti 2005/6 and 37.9% of women in Colombia 2005. (Note that comparable severity data were not available from either survey from Bolivia.) (Table 3.1)
- Among women ever married or in union, the percentage of women who reported ‘severe’ physical violence **ever** ranged from 7.4% in Haiti 2005/6 to 25.5% in Peru 2007/8. In half of the countries, the percentage exceeded 15%, and in several countries (Colombia 2005, Ecuador 2004, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8) it approached or exceeded 20%. (Figure 3.2 and Table 3.1)
- The percentage of women who reported specific ‘severe’ acts varied by country. While the percentage of women who reported **ever** being hit with a fist or something that could cause injury ranged from 6.2% in Haiti 2005/6 to 21.9% in Peru 2007/8, the percentage who reported **ever** being threatened or wounded with a weapon ranged from 2.1% in Haiti 2005/6 to 8.3% in Colombia 2005. (Note that neither survey from Bolivia measured being threatened with a weapon.) (Table 3.1)
- The reported prevalence of ‘severe’ physical violence by an intimate partner **in the past 12 months** varied within a narrower range than **ever** (since the former is a subset of the latter), ranging from 4.6% in Paraguay 2008 to 9.7% in Colombia 2005.

Among women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner **ever**:

- In each country, women who experienced any physical violence by an intimate partner **ever** reported ‘moderate’ acts with greater frequency than ‘severe’ acts. Nonetheless, ‘severe’ violence was reported by a majority of women who experienced any physical partner violence **ever** in all countries. In Jamaica 2008/9 and Nicaragua 2006/7, nearly four-fifths of women who experienced physical violence by a partner **ever** reported ‘severe’ violence. In countries such as Colombia 2005 and Haiti 2005/6, the proportion was closer to one-half.

## 3.3 Sexual violence by intimate partners

### i. Measures and definitions

Surveys from all 12 countries measured **sexual** violence by intimate partners. Most surveys asked about specific acts of sexual violence that occurred within two time frames: **ever** and **in the past 12 months** (prior to the survey interview). All surveys asked women whether an intimate partner had forced them to have unwanted sexual intercourse, describing force with words that varied from “*le obligó*” (forced or made you), to “*le ha forzado*”

#### Examples of survey questions used to measure sexual intimate partner violence:

##### Peru 2007/8 DHS

*Su (último) esposo (marido), alguna vez:*

- *¿ha utilizado la fuerza física para obligarla a tener relaciones sexuales aunque usted no quería?*
- *¿La obligó a realizar actos sexuales que usted no aprueba?*

Did your (last) husband (spouse) ever:

- use physical force to make you have sexual intercourse even though you didn’t want to?
- make you perform sex acts that you did not approve of?

##### El Salvador 2008 RHS

*Quisiera que me dijera si alguna vez en su vida su esposo/compañero de vida o cualquier otra pareja con la que estuvo casada o acompañada le han hecho alguna de las siguientes cosas:*

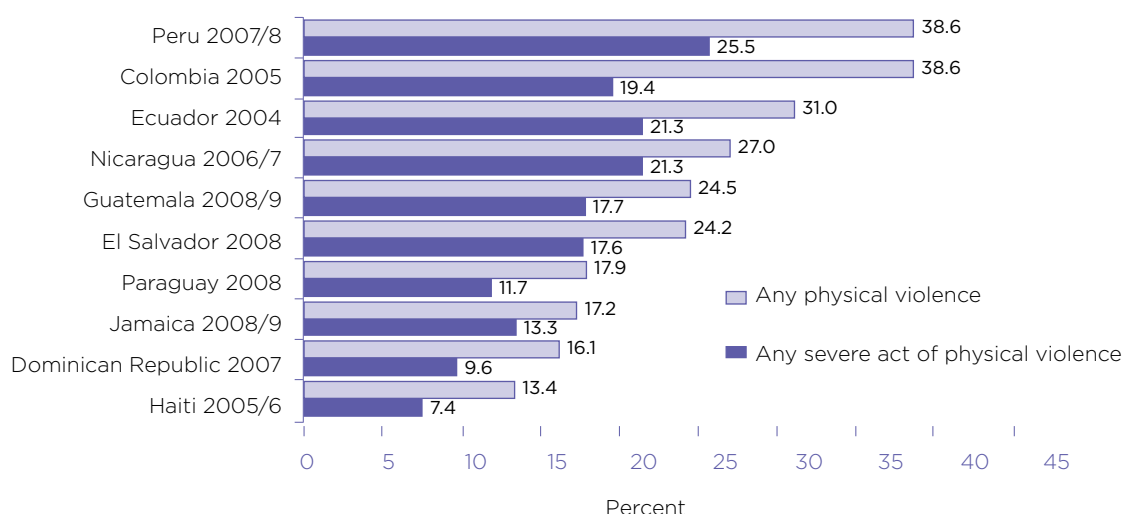
- *¿Usted se sintió obligada por miedo (a su pareja) a tener relaciones sexuales sin desearlas?*
- *¿La ha(n) obligado a la fuerza a tener relaciones sexuales que usted no quería?*

I would like you to tell me whether at any time in your life your husband/life partner or any other partner that you were married to or lived with has done any of the following things:

- Did you ever feel forced because of fear (of your partner) to have unwanted sexual intercourse?
- Did he (they) ever use force to make you have sexual intercourse when you did not want to?

### Severity of physical partner violence, ever:

Figure 3.2 Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner ever, by severity, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-4]



### Physical partner violence ever, by act:

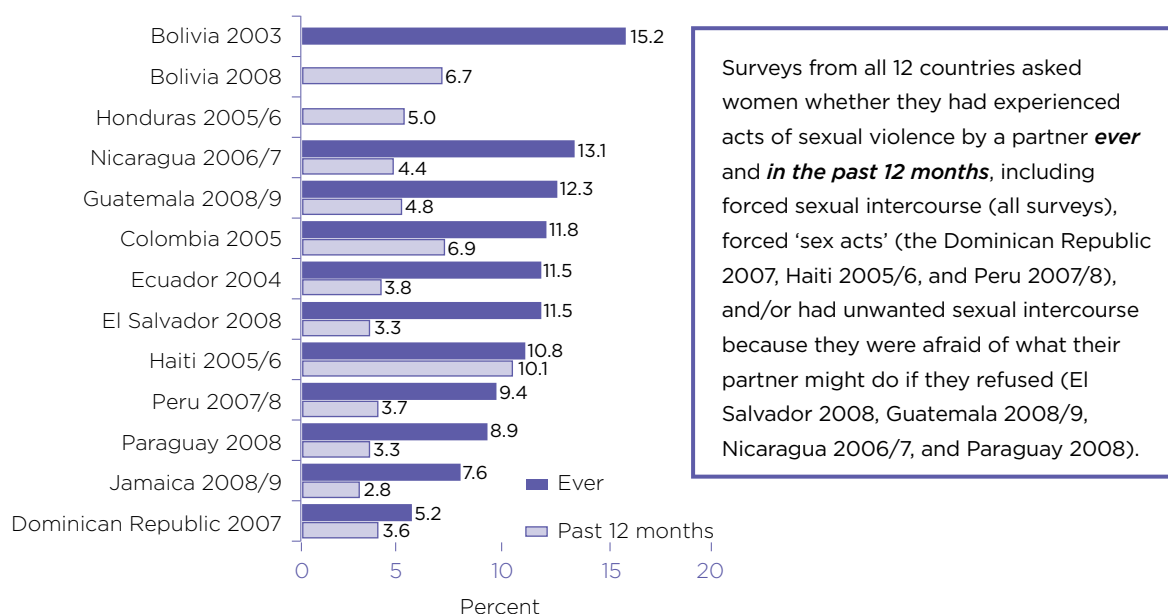
Table 3.1 Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner ever, by act, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

	Moderate acts, ever	Severe acts, ever					Total
	Slapped (hit with hand), shook, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted arm, pulled hair	Hit with fist or something that could cause injury	Kicked, dragged, or beaten	Tried to choke or burned	Threatened or wounded with knife, gun, other weapon	Any severe act	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>	By the current or most recent partner only:						
Bolivia 2003	na	11.3	na	8.2	na	na	12,054
Colombia 2005	37.9	9.5	13.7	5.1	8.3	19.4	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	15.4	8.1	3.3	2.6	3.6	9.6	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	12.5	6.2	3.7	2.2	2.1	7.4	2,680
Peru 2007/8	35.5	21.9	16.3	4.1	3.6	25.5	12,572
<b>RHS surveys</b>	By any current or former partner in life:						
Ecuador 2004	27.4	18.3	14.3		7.9	21.3	7,217
El Salvador 2008	21.9	14.9	8.6	5.2	6.5	17.6	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	22.0	15.4	10.4	4.1	4.9	17.7	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	14.9	11.7	6.0	3.1	4.3	13.3	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	24.8	19.2	11.3	7.3	7.8	21.3	11,393
Paraguay 2008	16.7	9.3	6.2	4.2	4.7	11.7	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Bolivia 2003 asked about slapping (a 'moderate' act) and kicking (a 'severe' act) in the same question, so it was not possible to distinguish between 'moderate' and 'severe' violence. In that survey, 52.1% of women reported being hit with a hand or kicked. [6.] Ecuador 2004 did not ask about burning and used a single question to ask about choked, kicked, or beaten. [7.] All percentages are weighted but numbers are unweighted.

### Sexual violence by a partner, ever and past 12 months:

Figure 3.3 Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]



### Specific acts of sexual violence by a partner, ever and past 12 months:

Table 3.2 Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by a partner by act, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-9]

	Forced to have sexual intercourse		Forced to perform other unwanted sexual acts		Unwanted sexual intercourse out of fear		Any act of sexual violence		Total
	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b> By the current or most recent partner only:									
Bolivia 2003	15.2	na	na	na	na	na	15.2	na	12,054
Bolivia 2008	na	6.8	na	na	na	na	na	6.8	8,982
Colombia 2005	na	na	na	na	na	na	11.8	6.9	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	4.6	3.2	2.8	2.2	na	na	5.2	3.6	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	9.1	8.4	6.0	5.6	na	na	10.8	10.1	2,680
Peru 2007/8	8.4	3.2	4.9	2.0	na	na	9.4	3.7	12,572
By any current or former partner:									
Honduras 2005/6	na	5.0	na	na	na	na	na	5.0	12,701
<b>RHS surveys</b>									
Ecuador 2004	11.5	3.8	na	na	na	na	11.5	3.8	7,217
El Salvador 2008	9.0	2.6	na	na	10.1	2.8	11.5	3.3	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	8.9	3.2	na	na	10.3	3.9	12.3	4.8	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	7.6	2.8	na	na	na	na	7.6	2.8	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	9.1	2.8	na	na	11.3	3.8	13.1	4.4	11,393
Paraguay 2008	5.0	1.7	na	na	7.8	3.0	8.9	3.3	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also asked about violence by 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also asked about violence by boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not specifically ask about the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [8.] Colombia 2005 used a single question to ask about forced sexual intercourse or other sex acts, so it was not possible to disaggregate these items. [9.] All percentages are weighted but numbers are unweighted.

(forced you), to “*le ha forzado físicamente*” (physically forced you). In addition, some DHS surveys asked women whether they had been forced to perform unwanted ‘sex acts’, and some RHS surveys asked women whether they had (or felt forced to have) unwanted sex because they were afraid of what their partner might do if they refused. In four countries, surveys asked about forced sexual intercourse only (see Table 3.2). In this report, sexual intimate partner violence is broadly defined to include any of these acts, as noted below.

### Sexual violence by an intimate partner

*Any of the following acts:*

- Forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse (all surveys)
- Forced to perform unwanted ‘sex acts’ (3 DHS surveys)
- Had unwanted sexual intercourse for fear of what a partner might do if she refused (4 RHS surveys)

#### i. Findings: prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union:

- The reported prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever** varied by country and ranged from 5.2% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 15.2% in Bolivia 2003. (Figure 3.3)
- The reported prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner **in the past 12 months** also varied by country, ranging from 2.8% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 10.1% in Haiti 2005/6. (Figure 3.3)
- The narrower but more comparable measure of forced sexual intercourse **ever** by a partner ranged from 4.6% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 15.2% in Bolivia 2003. (Table 3.2)
- In the three DHS surveys (the Dominican Republic 2007, Haiti 2005/6, and Peru 2007/8) that asked, the percentage of women who reported forced ‘sex acts’ by an intimate partner **ever** ranged from 2.8% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 6.0% in Haiti 2005/6. (Table 3.2) In all three countries, the majority of women who reported forced ‘sex acts’ by a partner **ever** also reported forced sexual intercourse **ever**.

- In the four RHS surveys that asked, the percentage of women who reported unwanted sexual intercourse with a partner out of fear of what he might do if they refused **ever** ranged from 7.8% in Paraguay 2008 to 11.3% in Nicaragua 2006/7. In all four countries, a majority of women who reported unwanted sex out of fear **ever** also reported forced sexual intercourse **ever**. (Table 3.2)

Among women who reported any act of sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever**:

- Similar to physical partner violence, in three DHS surveys (Colombia 2005, the Dominican Republic 2007, and Haiti 2005/6), a majority of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever** also reported sexual violence **in the past 12 months**, including more than nine out of 10 women in Haiti 2005/6 who reported sexual intimate partner violence **ever**. In contrast, in RHS surveys, fewer than four in 10 women who reported sexual violence **ever** also reported it **in the past 12 months**. (Again, note that these three DHS surveys asked specifically about sexual violence by the current or most recent partner only, while RHS surveys asked about sexual violence by any current or former partner in life.)

### 3.4 Physical or sexual violence by intimate partners

#### i. Measures and definitions

Using women’s responses to all questionnaire items about physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner, this comparative analysis created a combined indicator of any **physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner**, constructed for two time frames—**ever** and **in the past 12 months**. In this comparative analysis, the reported prevalence of any physical or sexual partner violence includes any and all acts of physical or sexual partner violence measured by each survey, even though surveys did not all measure the same acts (as noted in sections 3.1-3.3). Women who reported any physical or sexual violence by a partner included three groups of women, namely: those who reported physical violence only (with no sexual violence), those who reported both physical and sexual violence, and those who reported sexual violence only (with no physical violence).



## ii. Findings: prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union:

- The reported prevalence of any physical or sexual partner violence **ever** varied widely, ranging from 17.0% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 53.3% in Bolivia 2003. (Figure 3.4 and Table 3.3)
- The reported prevalence of any physical or sexual partner violence **in the past 12 months** also varied by country, ranging from 7.7% in Jamaica 2008/9 and El Salvador 2008 to 25.5% in Bolivia 2008. (Figure 3.4 and Table 3.3)

Among women who reported any physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever**:

- In three DHS surveys (Colombia 2005, the Dominican Republic 2007, and Haiti 2005/6), a majority of women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever** also reported it **in the past 12 months**. (Again, note that these data need to be considered in light of the fact that these three DHS surveys asked specifically about violence by the current or most recent partner only, while RHS surveys asked about violence by any partner in life.)

## iii. Findings: overlap between physical and sexual intimate partner violence

Among women ever married or in union:

- The percentage of women who reported physical but not sexual intimate partner violence **ever** ranged from 11.8% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 38.1% in Bolivia 2003. The percentage of women who reported **both** sexual and physical violence **ever** ranged from 4.4% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 14.2% in Bolivia 2003. Sexual partner violence alone without any physical partner violence was relatively rare, typically reported by 1%-3% of women ever married or in union, except in Haiti 2005/6, where 5.9% of women ever married or in union reported sexual but not physical intimate partner violence **ever**. (Figure 3.5)

Among women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever**:

- In all surveys except Haiti 2005/6, the majority of women who reported intimate partner violence **ever** reported physical violence **only** (with no sexual violence).
- Most women who reported sexual partner violence **ever** also reported physical partner violence.
- As noted above, sexual violence alone (with no physical violence) was relatively uncommon, except in Haiti 2005/6, where about one-third of women who reported any partner violence **ever** reported sexual violence only.



### Physical or sexual partner violence ever and in the past 12 months:

Figure 3.4 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]

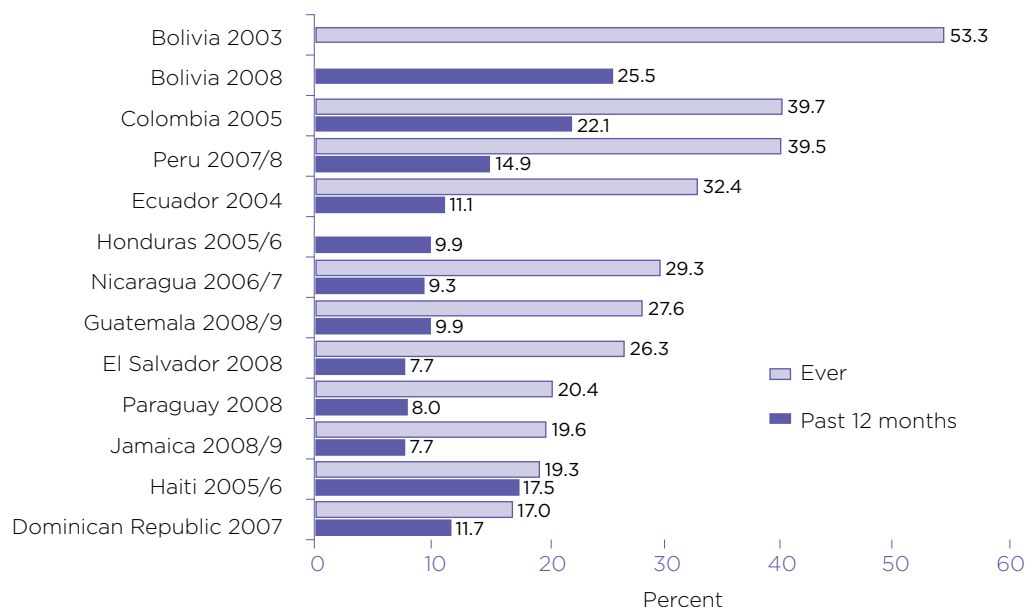


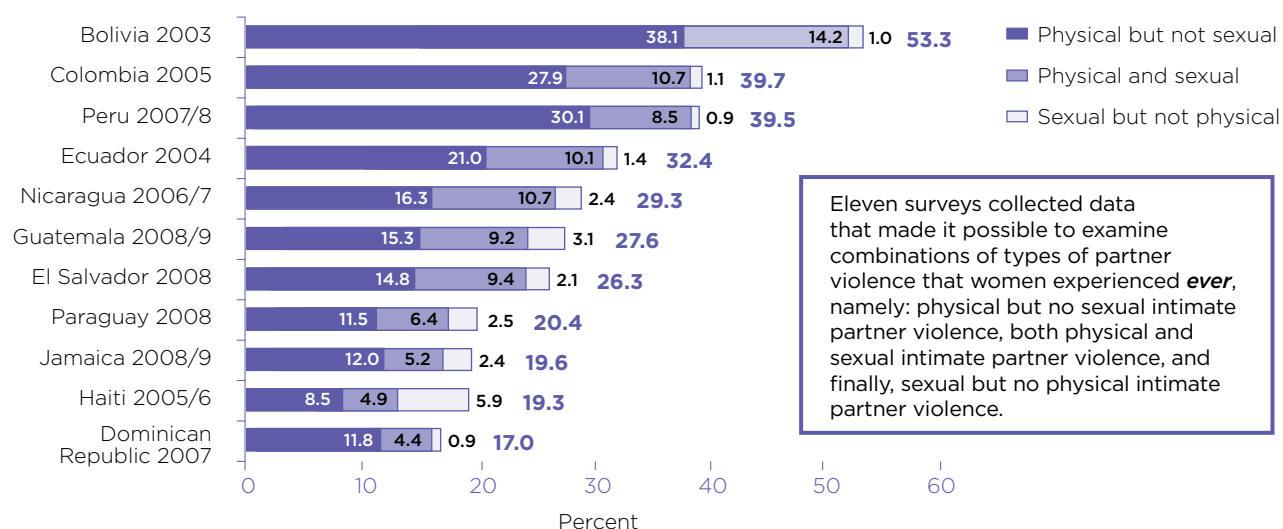
Table 3.3 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-8]

	Physical or sexual partner violence		Total
	Ever	Past 12 months	
	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>	By the current or most recent partner only:		
Bolivia 2003	53.3	na	12,054
Bolivia 2008	na	25.5	8,982
Colombia 2005	39.7	22.1	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	17.0	11.7	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	19.3	17.5	2,680
Peru 2007/8	39.5	14.9	12,572
	By any current or former partner:		
Honduras 2005/6	na	9.9	12,701
<b>RHS surveys</b>			
Ecuador 2004	32.4	11.1	7,217
El Salvador 2008	26.3	7.7	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	27.6	9.9	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	19.6	7.7	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	29.3	9.3	11,393
Paraguay 2008	20.4	8.0	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not specifically ask about the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [8.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

### Overlap between physical and sexual violence by intimate partners, ever:

Figure 3.5 Percentage of women who reported physical but not sexual intimate partner violence ever, both physical and sexual intimate partner violence ever, or sexual but not physical intimate partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-4]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

### BOX 3.1 Prevalence of intimate partner violence in Peru: a comparison of estimates from the 2007/8 DHS and the 2000 World Health Organization (WHO) Multi-country Study

The WHO survey measured violence by:



The DHS survey measured violence by:

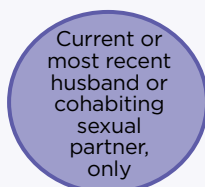


Figure 3.6 Percentage of women in Peru who reported physical violence by a partner ever, by geographic area, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS and WHO surveys [1-6]

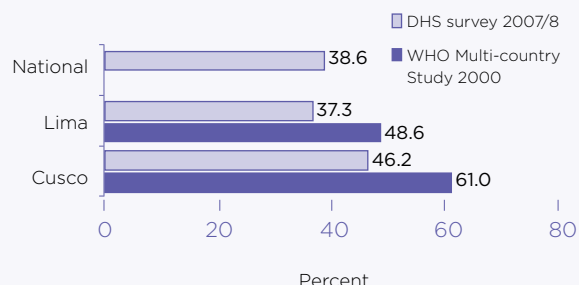
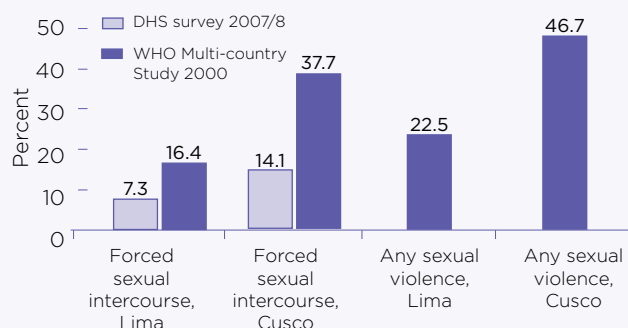


Figure 3.7 Percentage of women in Peru who reported forced sexual intercourse or any sexual violence by a partner ever, by geographic area, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS and WHO surveys [1-6]



Estimates of sexual partner violence varied according to which acts were measured, where, and how. It is likely that these estimates reflect some of the methodological issues mentioned in notes 1-6.

#### Differences between the WHO and DHS surveys in Peru

- 1. Year of data collection.** The WHO survey collected data in 2000, while these DHS data were collected in 2007/8. It is possible that prevalence and/or willingness to report violence have changed during that time.
- 2. National versus subnational samples.** The DHS survey collected nationally representative data, while the WHO survey collected data that were representative of one rural and one urban department (Cusco and Lima).
- 3. Definition of an intimate partner.** In Peru, WHO defined a partner as any regular male sexual partner, including a boyfriend. DHS defined a partner as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner and excluded boyfriends or lovers who had not lived with or married the woman.
- 4. Measures of violence by all current and former partners in life versus violence by the current or most recent partner only.** WHO's estimates of the prevalence of intimate partner violence **ever** included violence by all current and former partners in life, while DHS prevalence estimates included just one partner: the current or most recent partner only. In the DHS survey, women who were beaten by a former partner but not their current/most recent partner were not counted as having experienced intimate partner violence ever.
- 5. Primary focus of the survey.** The WHO survey in Peru focused primarily on violence against women, while the DHS was a broader health survey with a brief module on violence. Because violence was the central focus of the WHO survey, they may have invested more resources than the DHS in interviewer training and questionnaire design focused specifically on violence against women.
- 6. Wording of questionnaire items used to measure sexual intimate partner violence.** Both surveys asked women about forced sexual intercourse, but WHO also asked women whether they had ever had unwanted sexual intercourse because they were afraid of what their partner might do; they also asked about other forced sex acts that women found degrading or humiliating.

## CHAPTER 4. FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

### 4.1 Prevalence of intimate partner violence by women's background characteristics

#### i. Measures and definitions

Bivariate analyses were carried out to examine associations between key sociodemographic characteristics of women and two summary indicators of violence, physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever** and physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **in the past 12 months**. This summary measure included three groups of women: women who reported any act of physical (but no sexual) partner violence, those who reported both physical and sexual partner violence, and those who reported sexual (but no physical) partner violence. As noted in Chapter 2, this summary measure of any physical or sexual intimate partner violence was chosen in part because there is a large overlap between the two types of abuse in most countries, and because it has been used widely in other research on violence against women, including by the WHO Multi-country Study<sup>5, 99</sup> and other comparative DHS reports.<sup>16, 17</sup> Readers who wish to see background characteristics of women who reported physical intimate partner violence separate from those who reported sexual intimate partner violence can find those data in Appendix Tables A3-A6, however.

All sociodemographic variables were selected on the basis of what previous research suggests may be important correlates, as well as what variables were measured by these 13 surveys. As noted in Chapter 2, they included the woman's residence, education, age, wealth quintile, marital status, number of marital unions, parity, age at first union, and current employment. All 13 surveys measured these variables in comparable ways, with a few exceptions (noted in Chapter 2 and in footnotes underneath relevant tables and figures). When necessary, variables such as marital status and education were recoded from the original stratifications used in individual country reports to achieve comparability among countries.

#### ii. Findings: prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence by women's background characteristics

Among women ever married or in union:

- **Residence:** The prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** was significantly greater among urban women compared with rural women in the majority of surveys. The Dominican Republic 2007 was the only survey in which rural women reported a higher prevalence of partner violence than urban women, but this difference was not significant. (Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1)
- The prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** was significantly greater among urban compared with rural women in only four countries, namely: Guatemala 2008/9, Jamaica 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8. (Table 4.2)
- **Education:** In all countries except Haiti 2005/6, Paraguay 2008, and Peru 2007/8, women with the least education reported the highest prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever**. And generally, the percentage of women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** tended to decline as education increased, but the relationship was not always consistent. In seven surveys, the reported prevalence of intimate partner violence **ever** was higher among women who had completed 7-11 years of schooling compared with those who had completed 4-6 years of schooling, and then fell among women with 12+ years of schooling. Differences in the reported prevalence of partner violence **ever** by education were significant in all countries except Haiti 2005/6. (Table 4.1, Figures 4.3 and 4.4)
- The prevalence of intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** varied by education in ways that were similar to intimate partner violence **ever**. In a majority of surveys, women with 7-11 years of education reported higher levels of partner violence than women with 4-6 years. Nonetheless, in all surveys, the proportion of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner **in the past 12 months** was lowest among women with 12+ years of education. (Table 4.2)
- **Women's age:** Generally, the reported prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** tended to increase with women's age. However, in over half of the surveys (Colombia 2005, the

**Physical or sexual partner violence ever, by women's background characteristics:**

Table 4.1 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by women's background characteristics, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union [1-9]

	DHS surveys						RHS surveys				
	Bolivia 2003	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Residence</b>	**	***	ns	*	***	ns	***	***	*	***	***
Urban	54.5	40.3	16.6	20.3	41.0	33.7	29.5	29.9	19.9	32.6	23.1
Rural	51.0	37.7	17.9	18.5	36.4	30.4	22.3	25.7	19.1	25.1	16.1
<b>Education</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
0-3 years	57.4	42.8	20.0	20.9	41.3	40.8	28.6	29.0	--	32.5	24.9
4-6 years	54.6	42.8	19.8	22.6	38.5	33.7	26.0	27.0	31.0	29.0	18.8
7-11 years	54.9	39.6	18.2	15.8	43.7	35.6	26.9	28.2	20.4	29.1	25.0
12+ years	46.1	31.0	12.5	7.6	32.6	25.2	23.0	21.4	14.8	22.8	17.9
<b>Age of woman</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	***	***	***	*
15-19	43.9	37.6	18.2	25.3	26.1	23.2	13.4	19.9	12.7	16.0	16.1
20-24	49.6	37.3	21.3	19.7	34.7	30.6	17.7	22.8	17.4	22.9	17.5
25-29	50.6	37.3	19.2	22.5	35.1	29.9	24.4	26.0	22.4	28.5	18.4
30-39	55.1	41.8	16.7	17.8	42.9	35.7	28.7	28.5	20.9	32.0	23.5
40-49	56.3	39.9	13.5	16.6	40.7	32.7	32.0	32.9	19.3	37.2	19.9
<b>Wealth quintile</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	***	***	***	ns
Lowest	49.0	37.8	21.8	17.3	31.7	37.3	25.2	25.0	25.7	25.9	21.1
Second	56.7	43.3	20.1	16.7	38.0	32.6	23.0	28.3	24.9	29.2	22.5
Third	56.4	42.2	19.3	24.9	45.2	33.3	27.1	29.6	18.4	32.5	20.5
Fourth	57.4	40.0	12.8	21.5	44.8	32.3	32.4	30.7	15.1	31.3	20.4
Highest	45.9	34.5	11.6	15.9	33.6	24.9	23.1	23.7	13.0	27.7	16.9
<b>Current marital status</b>	***	***	***	*	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Married or in union	51.9	34.3	14.5	18.7	36.0	29.2	21.6	24.4	19.3	25.8	17.0
-Married	51.0	31.4	10.0	19.1	33.1	26.0	18.7	21.5	13.3	22.0	12.8
-In union	54.0	36.4	16.1	17.5	38.5	34.6	24.0	29.3	21.0	28.4	22.1
Separated/divorced	65.1	59.0	24.7	25.0	64.3	53.5	41.7	53.3	20.7	41.2	45.7
Widowed	55.8	44.8	17.8	15.7	34.9	25.2	35.3	38.2	na	43.5	28.2
<b>Number of unions</b>	ns	*	***	*	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
1	53.5	39.6	15.4	17.3	38.6	29.0	21.1	24.5	11.5	23.6	16.7
2+	51.5	40.2	19.4	22.3	45.7	53.7	44.6	52.7	23.7	46.2	49.0
<b>Parity (Live births)</b>	***	***	***	*	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
0	36.4	22.4	10.6	13.2	22.2	15.9	12.1	17.6	11.5	13.2	14.5
1-2	48.7	36.9	16.3	19.2	36.7	28.3	21.8	22.6	18.5	24.2	17.1
3-4	55.0	45.1	18.1	23.5	43.7	34.2	33.2	31.0	23.0	34.2	25.0
5+	60.1	48.8	20.5	18.6	45.9	45.0	34.4	32.4	33.8	41.4	29.5
<b>Age at first union</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
<15	52.9	49.3	24.0	32.9	44.6	44.3	39.8	37.7	30.9	38.5	27.2
15-19	56.7	43.8	18.3	19.1	44.1	34.4	28.3	29.0	20.9	29.3	22.7
20-24	50.1	37.4	11.4	19.2	37.9	25.4	20.2	22.6	13.6	24.1	18.8
25+	49.2	29.2	9.9	9.1	30.0	27.2	19.8	18.1	12.9	19.2	14.5
<b>Employment</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	***	ns	***	***
No	46.5	33.0	15.8	20.2	32.3	30.0	22.5	23.6	20.3	35.0	16.8
Yes	55.9	43.1	18.0	18.8	41.5	35.2	31.7	32.2	18.9	22.3	23.9
<b>Total (%)</b>	53.3	39.7	17.0	19.3	39.5	32.4	26.3	27.6	19.6	29.3	20.4
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	12,054	25,620	8,438	2,680	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; ns = not significant. [2.] A double dash (--) indicates that the cell size was less than 25. [3.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [4.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [5.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [6.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [7.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [8.] Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and all DHS surveys measured employment in the past year. All other RHS surveys measured employment at the time of the interview. [9.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

**Physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months, by selected characteristics:**

Table 4.2 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-10]

	DHS surveys							RHS surveys				
	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Honduras 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Residence</b>	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*	ns	ns	**	***	***	ns
Urban	26.2	22.3	11.4	17.7	10.2	15.2	11.4	8.1	10.7	8.4	10.5	8.2
Rural	24.4	21.2	12.3	17.4	9.6	14.3	10.7	7.2	9.2	6.7	7.8	7.6
<b>Education</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	**	*	***	**	**
0-3 years	26.4	23.6	14.6	19.8	13.0	14.2	12.7	8.3	9.7	--	10.1	10.5
4-6 years	25.9	23.0	13.2	19.0	9.3	14.6	12.6	8.1	10.5	13.3	9.6	7.5
7-11 years	28.7	23.0	12.9	13.7	9.3	17.0	12.0	8.3	11.2	8.2	9.6	10.4
12+ years	22.4	16.0	7.9	7.7	6.4	12.5	8.0	5.9	8.0	5.0	5.9	6.2
<b>Age of woman</b>	***	***	***	ns	ns	***	***	*	***	***	***	*
15-19	30.2	31.5	14.1	24.8	11.7	18.8	15.7	9.3	13.2	10.7	10.8	11.8
20-24	31.1	26.1	15.9	18.2	10.5	21.3	15.5	9.1	11.8	10.5	10.1	10.9
25-29	27.0	24.2	14.6	19.5	9.1	16.7	10.5	8.6	11.6	9.4	10.3	7.6
30-39	24.6	23.2	11.0	15.7	9.5	14.9	11.7	7.8	9.1	6.9	9.5	7.0
40-49	22.1	16.8	8.0	15.8	10.1	11.3	7.6	5.9	7.5	4.4	7.1	6.6
<b>Wealth quintile</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	**	**	***	*	**
Lowest	26.5	23.1	17.5	15.8	11.2	14.4	13.7	8.2	9.8	10.0	8.4	10.9
Second	25.9	25.9	14.7	15.5	10.2	15.9	11.4	8.4	10.4	11.2	9.8	7.0
Third	28.8	23.9	13.2	21.0	12.0	18.1	11.3	7.3	10.5	8.1	11.1	9.3
Fourth	27.7	21.3	7.7	20.9	9.1	15.6	10.3	9.3	10.7	4.9	10.3	5.7
Highest	18.3	16.0	6.2	14.1	7.4	10.9	6.7	5.0	7.6	3.9	6.9	6.4
<b>Current marital status</b>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Married or in union	25.0	18.4	11.0	17.1	9.3	15.2	10.7	7.3	10.3	8.0	9.8	7.2
-Married	23.0	13.4	6.7	17.0	7.1	10.8	8.6	5.2	8.3	4.3	7.9	5.1
-In union	28.5	22.0	12.4	17.2	11.0	18.9	14.2	9.2	13.7	9.1	11.2	9.7
Separated/divorced	45.7	36.6	13.9	21.1	16.3	13.8	14.7	9.6	8.8	6.1	7.9	14.0
Widowed	23.0	17.0	9.9	na	3.1	1.4	2.7	3.2	0.6	na	3.4	5.0
<b>Number of unions</b>	**	***	**	*	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
1	25.1	21.1	10.3	15.3	9.1	14.2	10.3	6.8	9.3	5.2	8.5	7.5
2+	30.0	26.5	13.5	21.0	12.7	20.5	16.0	10.9	14.7	9.0	11.8	11.6
<b>Parity (Live births)</b>	ns	***	*	*	***	ns	***	*	ns	***	*	ns
0	25.6	14.9	8.4	12.7	8.8	14.9	7.2	6.4	8.5	6.6	6.6	7.8
1-2	24.9	21.5	11.0	16.6	8.5	14.7	10.6	7.2	10.2	7.6	9.4	7.5
3-4	25.5	23.5	12.6	22.8	10.2	15.3	11.4	8.5	10.3	7.8	9.4	7.7
5+	26.4	25.5	13.6	16.8	12.2	15.0	13.1	8.6	9.4	10.1	10.3	10.6
<b>Age at first union</b>	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	**
<15	32.7	31.0	16.2	30.6	13.0	18.8	14.5	12.2	13.3	14.7	12.4	12.1
15-19	26.7	25.0	12.7	17.9	10.5	16.6	12.6	8.3	10.1	8.4	9.7	8.7
20-24	24.8	19.7	7.8	16.6	7.6	14.4	8.9	6.1	8.4	4.1	6.9	7.2
25+	20.5	15.3	6.8	8.2	5.8	11.0	8.3	4.5	7.8	4.1	4.4	6.1
<b>Employment</b>	***	***	**	ns	***	ns	ns	**	***	**	***	ns
No	22.2	18.0	11.2	18.4	8.9	13.9	11.1	6.8	9.1	9.0	10.0	7.5
Yes	26.7	24.1	12.1	17.1	11.0	15.2	11.1	9.1	10.8	6.3	8.5	8.5
<b>Total (%)</b>	25.5	22.1	11.7	17.5	9.9	14.9	11.1	7.7	9.9	7.7	9.3	8.0
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	8,982	25,620	8,438	2,605	12,701	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; ns = not significant. [2.] A double dash (--) indicates that the cell size was less than 25. [3.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [4.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [5.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [6.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [7.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [8.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [9.] Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and all DHS surveys measured employment in the past year. All other RHS surveys measured employment at the time of the interview. [10.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

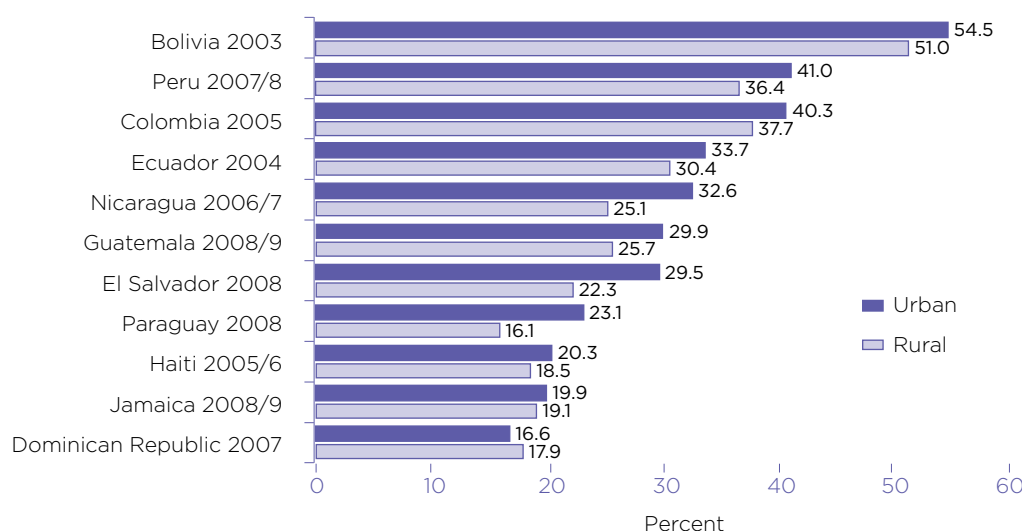
Dominican Republic 2007, Ecuador 2004, Haiti 2005/6, Jamaica 2008/9, Paraguay 2008, and Peru 2007/8), the highest reported levels of intimate partner violence **ever** were found among women aged 25-29 or aged 30-39, with lower levels reported by women aged 40-49. Differences in reported prevalence of partner violence **ever** by age were significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) in all surveys except Haiti 2005/6 and Paraguay 2008. When

interpreting these data, it is relevant to consider that as age increases, so does the number of years of exposure; on the other hand, recall errors may also influence reporting by age. (Table 4.1)

- The association between age and the prevalence of partner violence **in the past 12 months** was generally the opposite of that found for partner violence **ever**. The prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **in the past**

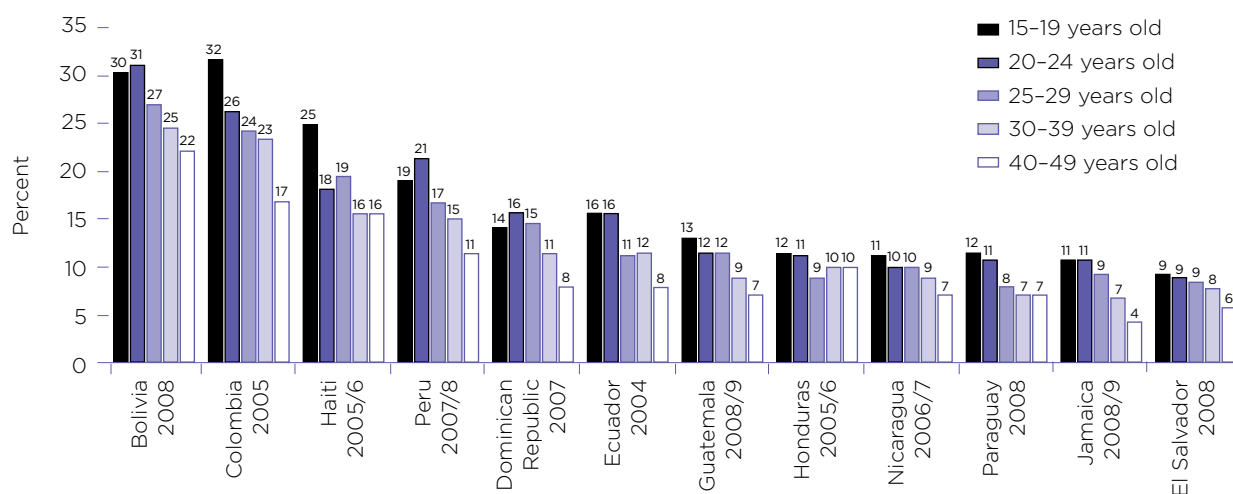
### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, by urban or rural residence:

Figure 4.1 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by residence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]



### Prevalence of intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, by age:

Figure 4.2 Percentage of women who reported physical violence by a partner in the past 12 months, by women's age, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers.



**12 months** was highest among the youngest women (aged 15-19) in all countries except the Dominican Republic 2007 and Peru 2007/8, where prevalence was highest among the second youngest group of women (aged 20-24). In the majority of countries, prevalence reported by women in younger age groups was almost twice as high as prevalence reported by older women. Differences in the prevalence of violence *in the past 12 months* according to age were highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) in eight countries, significant ( $p<0.05$ ) in El Salvador 2008 and Paraguay 2008, and not significant in Haiti 2005/6 or Honduras 2005/6. (Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2)

- **Wealth quintile:** In most surveys, the proportion of women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence *ever* was lowest among women in the highest wealth quintile. However, the prevalence of intimate partner violence did not consistently decline as wealth increased in most countries. In six countries (Bolivia 2003, El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, Haiti 2005/6, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8), the highest prevalence of partner violence *ever* was reported by women in the third or fourth highest wealth quintiles. Partner violence declined consistently as wealth increased in only three countries, namely the Dominican Republic 2007, Jamaica 2008/9, and Paraguay 2008. (Table 4.1, Figures 4.5 and 4.6)
- In most countries, the reported prevalence of partner violence *in the past 12 months* by wealth quintile followed a pattern similar to that of partner violence *ever*, with women in middle wealth quintiles reporting a higher prevalence than those in the lowest or highest wealth quintiles. Only in three countries (the Dominican Republic 2007, Ecuador 2004, and Paraguay 2008) was partner violence *in the past 12 months* most prevalent among women in the lowest wealth quintile. (Table 4.2)
- **Marital status:** In all surveys, separated or divorced women reported the highest prevalence of physical or sexual violence *ever*, followed by women currently in a consensual union, and then by currently married women. Differences between currently married and separated/divorced women were highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) in all countries except Haiti 2005/6, where the difference was somewhat less significant ( $p<0.05$ ). In the Dominican Republic 2007, Ecuador 2004, El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, and Paraguay 2008, prevalence among separated/divorced women was at least twice as high as among currently married women. The relative prevalence of violence reported by widowed women varied, but the numbers of widowed women were small in most surveys, and point estimates are not as precise. (Table 4.1 and Figure 4.7)
- In all but four countries, women who were separated or divorced reported the highest levels of partner violence *in the past 12 months* even though they were no longer living with an intimate partner at the time of the interview. (Note that surveys did not gather systematic data needed to determine whether this violence occurred before or after the divorce/separation, and it is likely that it included both.) In four surveys, Guatemala 2008/9, Jamaica 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8, the highest prevalence was reported by women in consensual union. Differences in the prevalence of intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months* according to current marital status were significant ( $p<0.001$ ) in all countries except Haiti 2005/6. (Table 4.2)
- **Number of unions:** In all RHS surveys and two DHS surveys, women who had more than one marriage or union in their lifetime reported significantly higher ( $p<0.001$ ) levels of intimate partner violence *ever*, compared with those who had only one, and in most RHS surveys, reported levels were about twice as high. DHS surveys did not measure intimate partner violence by more than one partner, however, which must be considered when examining the prevalence of intimate partner violence *ever* according to the number of unions in these surveys. (Table 4.1)
- Similarly, in all countries, the proportion of women who reported intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months* was higher among women who had multiple marriages/unions in their lifetime compared with those who had only one, and this difference was highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) in all countries except the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6, where the difference was somewhat less significant ( $p<0.01$  and  $p<0.05$ , respectively). (Table 4.2)

### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, by education:

Figure 4.3 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever, by years of education, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-5]

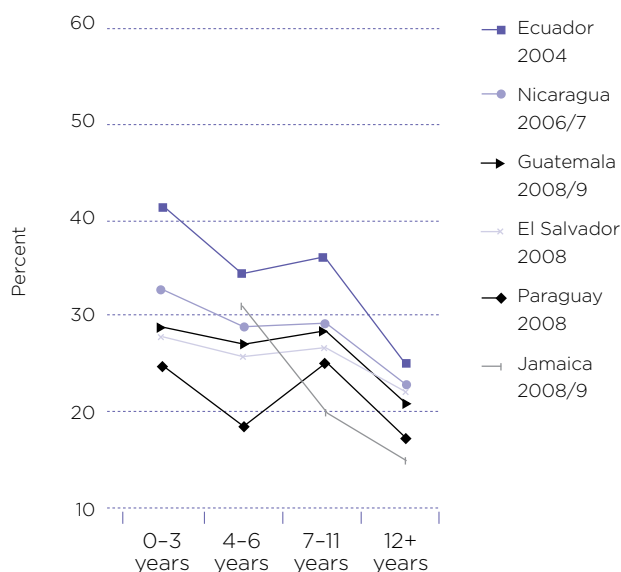
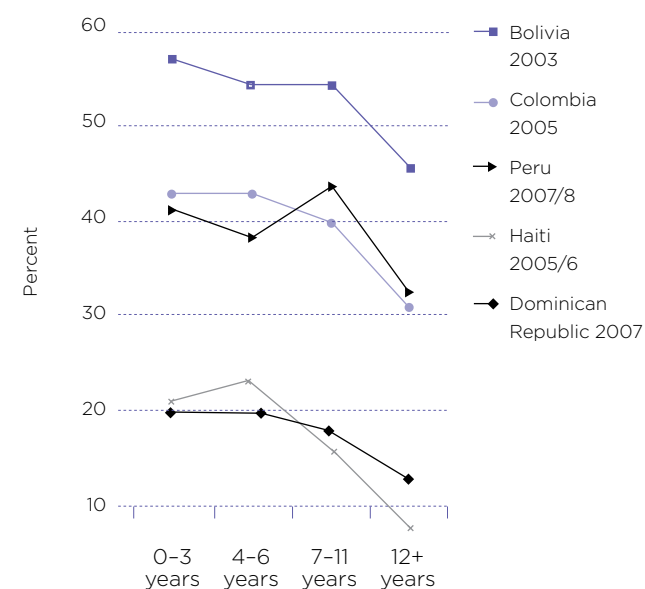


Figure 4.4 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever, by years of education, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys [2-4]



### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, by wealth quintile:

Figure 4.5 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by wealth quintile, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-4]

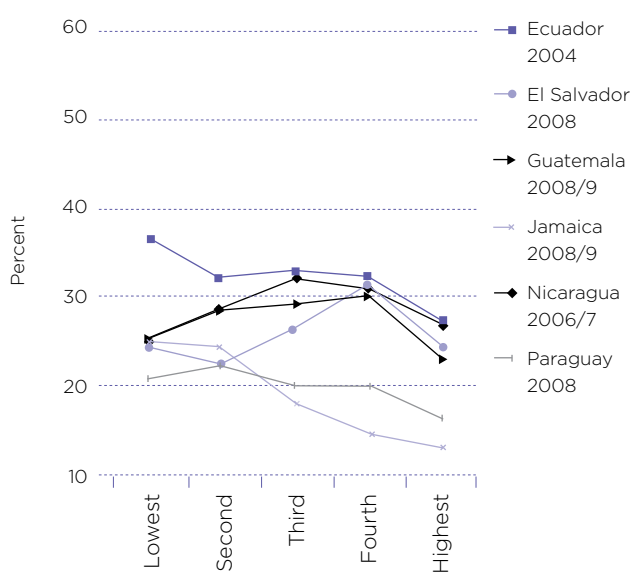
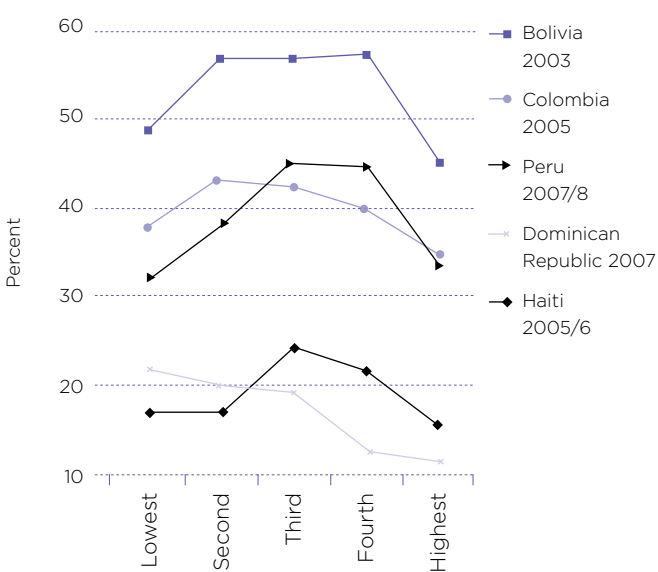


Figure 4.6 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by wealth quintile, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys [2-4]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 does not include a data point for women with 0-3 years of education because only 6 women fell into that category.

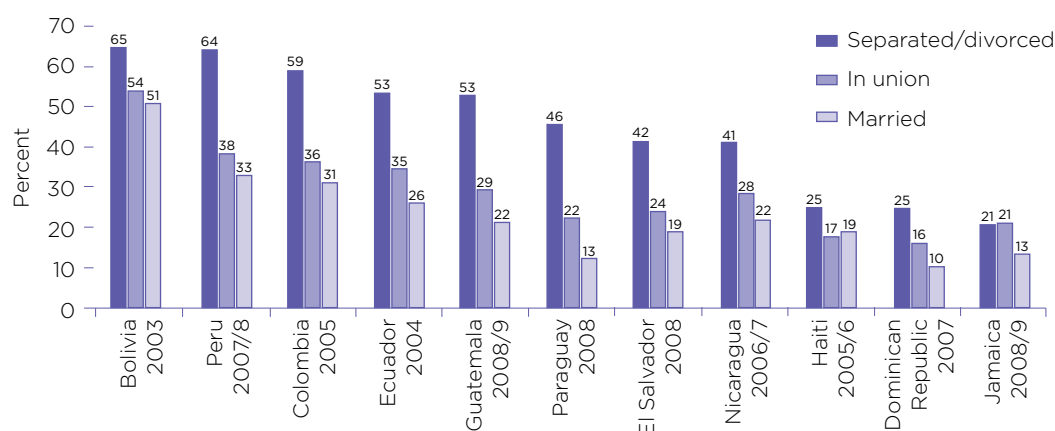
- **Age at first union:** The reported prevalence of intimate partner violence *ever* and *in the past 12 months* declined consistently as age at first marriage/union increased in all surveys (except Bolivia 2003). The association between age at first marriage/union and intimate partner violence both *ever* and *in the past 12 months* was highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) in all countries except in Paraguay 2008, where the association with partner violence *in the past 12 months* was

not as significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). (Tables 4.1 and 4.2, Figure 4.8)

- **Employment (current or recent):** The proportion of women who reported intimate partner violence *ever* was significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) higher among women who were currently or recently employed in all surveys except for Haiti 2005/6, Jamaica 2008/9, and Nicaragua 2006/7. Nicaragua 2006/7 was the only survey in which the prevalence of partner violence *ever* was

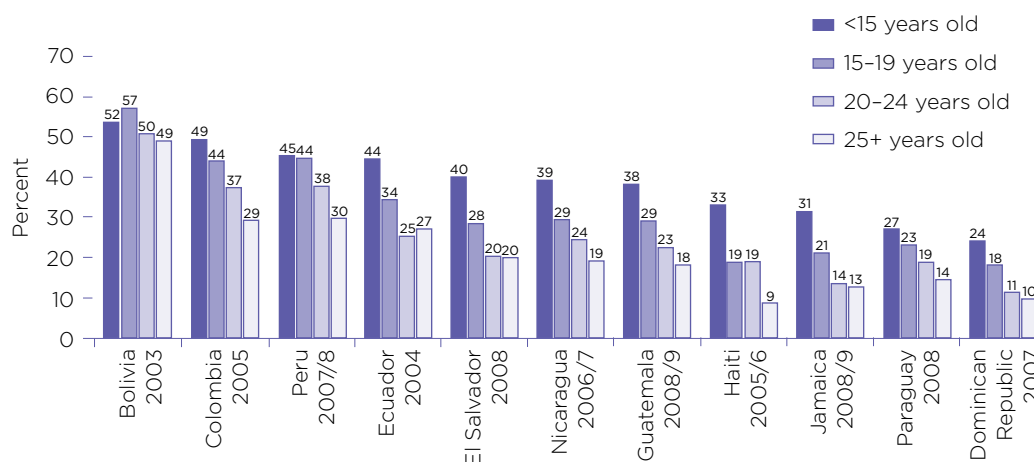
### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, by current marital status:

Figure 4.7 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by marital status, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-4]



### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, by age at first union:

Figure 4.8 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by age at first marriage or union, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-4]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) for women who were not employed compared with those who were. (Table 4.1 and Figure 4.9)

- Patterns of intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months* according to employment were less consistent across the surveys than for partner violence *ever*. In six countries, women who were currently or recently employed reported significantly higher prevalence levels of partner violence *in the past 12 months* compared with those who were not ( $p < 0.001$  in four surveys and  $p < 0.01$  in two others). In two surveys (Jamaica 2008/9 and Nicaragua 2006/7), the reverse was true, with women who were not employed reporting significantly higher levels of partner violence. Finally, in four countries, there was no significant association between employment and partner violence *in the past 12 months*. (Table 4.2)

## 4.2 Intimate partner violence according to ethnicity

### i. Measures and definitions

Five countries included in this comparative report gathered information on women's ethnicity.

However, since surveys measured ethnicity differently, the ability to compare countries in a standard way was limited. In this report, data on ethnicity measured by language in the home are presented for Guatemala 2008/9, Paraguay 2008, and Peru 2007/8, while data on self-identified ethnicity are presented separately for Bolivia 2003, Bolivia 2008, and Ecuador 2004.

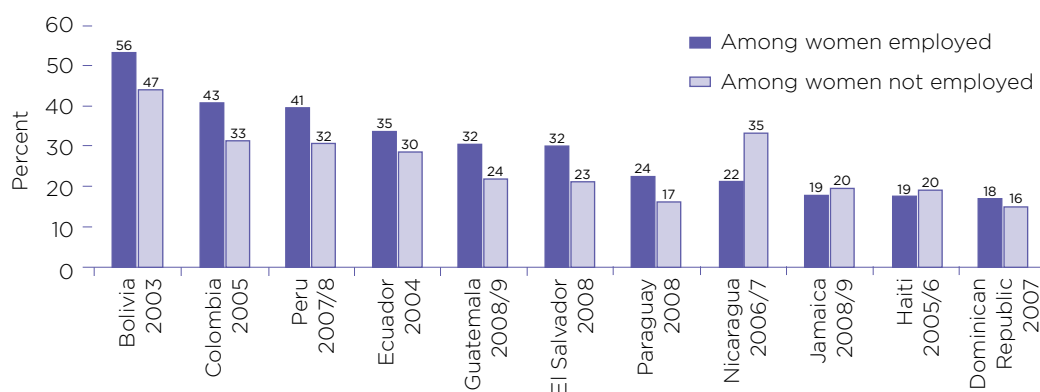
### ii. Findings: physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner according to women's ethnicity

Among women ever married or in union:

- In the three countries where surveys measured ethnicity using language spoken in the home, the proportion of women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence *ever* was higher among Spanish-speakers compared with women who reported speaking an indigenous language. The prevalence of partner violence varied highly significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) by ethnicity in Paraguay, but was less significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) in Guatemala 2008/9 and Peru 2007/8. (Table 4.3 and Figure 4.10)
- In those same three countries, physical or sexual partner violence *in the past 12 months*

### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, by women's employment:

Figure 4.9 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to women's current or recent employment, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and all DHS surveys measured employment in the past year. All other RHS surveys measured employment at the time of the interview.

## Prevalence of intimate partner violence by ethnicity (language spoken in the home):

### PARAGUAY 2008 RHS

Figure 4.10 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, by language spoken in the home, among women ever married or in union aged 15-44 [1-4]

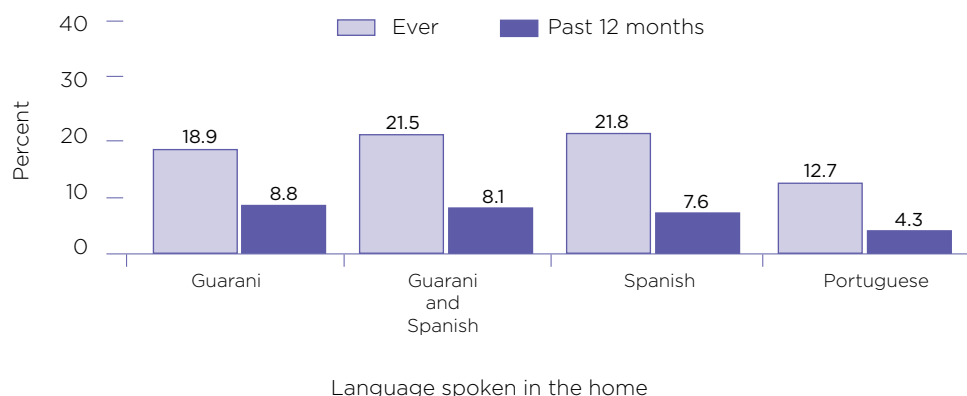


Table 4.3 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, according to language spoken in the home, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]

	Language spoken in the home	Reported physical or sexual violence by a partner				Total
		Ever		Past 12 months		
		%		%		Number (unweighted)
DHS surveys	By the current or most recent partner only:					
Peru 2007/8	Indigenous	37.6	*	15.6	ns	1,588
	Spanish	39.7		14.9		10,969
RHS surveys	By any current or former partner:					
Guatemala 2008/9	Indigenous	24.3	*	8.6	*	2,953
	Spanish	28.7		10.3		9,793
Paraguay 2008	Guarani	18.9	**	8.8	ns	1,628
	Guarani and Spanish	21.5		8.1		1,568
	Spanish	21.8		7.6		1,008
	Portuquese	12.7		4.3		189

Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$ ; ns = not significant.

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [3.] Guatemala 2008/9 and Paraguay 2008 asked about violence by any current or former partner in life. Peru 2007/8 asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner. [4.] In Guatemala 2008/9, 12 women selected 'other' as the language spoken in the home, as did 21 women in Paraguay 2008, and 11 women in Peru 2007/8. [5.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

did not vary significantly by ethnicity, except in Guatemala 2008/9, where the prevalence among women who spoke an indigenous language was significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) lower compared with women who spoke Spanish in the home. (Table 4.3 and Figure 4.10)

- In the two surveys that measured self-identified ethnicity, women who identified themselves as indigenous reported slightly higher levels of physical or sexual violence *ever* and *in the past 12*

*months* compared with women who self-identified as not indigenous in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, and with women who identified themselves as 'white' in Ecuador 2004. Women who identified as "*mestiza*" in Ecuador 2004, the largest self-reported ethnic category, reported prevalence levels in between those of 'indigenous' and 'white' women. In all three surveys, the association between partner violence and ethnicity was significant ( $p < 0.001$  in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, and  $p < 0.01$  in Bolivia 2008). (Table 4.4 and Figure 4.11)

## Prevalence of intimate partner violence by self-identified ethnicity:

### ECUADOR 2004 RHS

Figure 4.11 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, by self-identified ethnicity, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-3]

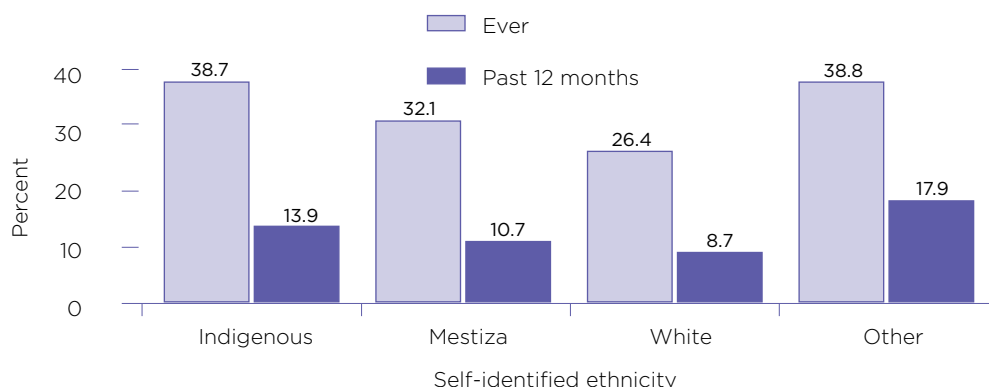


Table 4.4 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months, according to self-identified ethnicity, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]

	Self-identified ethnicity	Reported physical or sexual violence by a partner				Total
		Ever		Past 12 months		
		%		%		Number (unweighted)
DHS surveys		By the current or most recent partner only:				
Bolivia 2003	Indigenous	55.3	***	na		6,694
	Not Indigenous	50.3		na		5,351
Bolivia 2008	Indigenous	na		24.6	**	5,481
	Not Indigenous	na		21.2		4,542
RHS survey		By any current or former partner:				
Ecuador 2004	Indigenous	38.7	***	13.9	***	613
	Mestiza	32.1		10.7		5,776
	White	26.4		8.7		484
	Other	38.8		17.9		344

Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01.

**Notes:** [1.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [2.] Ecuador 2004 asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Bolivia 2003 and 2008 asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband, cohabiting male sexual partner, a boyfriend, or a lover. [3.] In Ecuador 2004, 'other' included 276 women who self-identified as 'black' ('*negra*') and 68 women who self-identified as 'other' ('*otro*'). [4.] Bolivia 2008 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past 12 months. [5.] Bolivia 2008 asked women about intimate partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

## 4.3 Factors associated with intimate partner violence: multivariate logistic regression

### i. Measures and definitions

Multivariate logistic regression analyses were conducted to explore associations between selected background characteristics of women and the risk of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever** and **in the past 12 months**, while controlling for potential confounding factors. To do so, the sample was limited to women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who had completed the domestic violence

module. Widows were excluded. The objective of the analysis was to look broadly at common factors associated with intimate partner violence across the countries included in the comparative analysis.

The models included the following sociodemographic variables: women's residence (urban/rural), education, age, wealth quintile, current marital status, number of unions, parity (number of live births), age at first union, current/recent employment, and whether their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother). Except for 'father beat mother', these are the same



variables included in the bivariate analysis, and more detail about how they were measured and constructed can be found in Chapter 2. As noted in Chapter 2, these variables were selected in part because they had been found to be significantly associated with increased odds of intimate partner violence in previous research.<sup>16-18</sup> In addition, to present a harmonized analysis, the models were limited to variables available for all countries, except for ‘father beat mother’, which was measured by all surveys except Honduras 2005/6. Past research indicates that ‘father beat mother’ is an important risk factor,<sup>16,17</sup> hence it was included, even though this meant that the model for Honduras 2005/6 was slightly different than the others as a result. Partner characteristics were not included in the models, in part because of a lack of comparable data across DHS and RHS surveys, and also because partner characteristics were unavailable for past partners of women who were currently separated or divorced.

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 present the adjusted odds of experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner according to women’s background characteristics, after controlling for potential confounding factors. For each factor, authors selected a reference category based on what previous research had found to be associated with a lower risk of intimate partner violence. Cases with missing values were excluded, and in all countries these numbers were negligible. All models were estimated in Stata 11, and steps were taken to account for sampling design using Stata’s svy command.

## ii. Findings: factors associated with intimate partner violence, results of multivariate logistic regression

Among women ever married or in union:

- **Residence:** After controlling for other factors, urban residence was significantly associated with increased odds of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner either *ever* or *in the past 12 months* in most countries. A highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) association was found between residence and intimate partner violence *ever* in Ecuador 2004 and Nicaragua 2006/7. Similarly, the association between partner violence *in the past 12 months* and urban residence was highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) in Honduras 2005/6 and Nicaragua 2006/7, where urban women had

almost 45% and 74% higher odds (respectively) compared with rural women. More generally, the odds of experiencing partner violence (either *ever* or *in the past 12 months*) were between 11% and 30% higher for urban women compared with rural women in most surveys. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)

- **Education:** Education was not consistently associated with intimate partner violence *ever* or *in the past 12 months* after adjusting for other factors. Less education was significantly associated with an increased likelihood of intimate partner violence *ever* only in Bolivia 2003, Colombia 2005, Ecuador 2004, and Peru 2007/8. In most surveys, education was not significantly associated with the risk of intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months*, except in Ecuador 2004, Honduras 2005/6, and Paraguay 2008. In Ecuador, women with 0-3 and 4-6 years of schooling had significantly ( $p<0.05$ ) greater odds compared with women with 12+ years of schooling, as did women in Paraguay 2008 with 7-11 years of schooling. Honduras 2005/6 was the only survey in which women with the least education had a highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) increased risk of intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months*, net of other factors. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- **Women’s age:** The association between women’s age and risk of violence by an intimate partner was markedly different for partner violence *in the past 12 months* compared with partner violence *ever*. Net of other factors, younger age was significantly ( $p<0.001$ ) associated with higher odds of experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner *in the past 12 months* in the majority of countries. In most surveys, younger age (15-19 years old and 20-29 years old) was associated with a two- to three-fold increased risk of partner violence *in the past 12 months* compared with women aged 40-49. In contrast, the association between age and the risk of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner *ever* was not as pronounced, and the association was often—though not always—in the reverse direction. For example, in four countries (El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8) younger women had significantly lower odds of having experienced intimate partner *ever* than women aged 40-49. It



### Factors associated with intimate partner violence, ever and past 12 months, DHS surveys:

Table 4.5 Adjusted odds ratios from multivariate logistic regression: associations between women's background characteristics and the experience of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys [1-7]

	Bolivia 2003	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005		Dominican Republic 2007		Haiti 2005/6		Honduras 2005/6		Peru 2007/8
	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months
<b>Residence (r: rural)</b>											
Urban	1.28**	1.50**	1.12*	1.22**	1.08	1.26*	1.13	0.90	1.45***	1.24*	1.32*
Rural	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Education (r: 12+ years)</b>											
0-3 years	1.30***	1.03	1.18	1.11	1.30	1.43	2.41	2.23	1.74***	1.05	0.82
4-6 years	1.17	0.96	1.24**	1.09	1.28	1.25	2.06	1.62	1.20	0.99	0.80
7-11 years	1.18*	1.13	1.19*	1.15	1.17	1.26	1.65	1.30	1.23	1.25**	0.99
12+ years	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Age of woman (r: 40-49)</b>											
15-19	0.72	1.74**	0.98	2.85***	1.60	2.29**	2.00	2.39	1.57*	0.49***	1.58*
20-24	0.86	1.74***	1.01	2.11***	2.04***	2.71***	1.52	1.55	1.40*	0.68**	1.80***
25-29	0.89	1.43***	1.00	1.818***	1.64**	2.19***	1.61	1.52	1.10	0.74**	1.39**
30-39	1.07	1.21*	1.17**	1.63***	1.40*	1.60**	1.15	1.05	1.00	1.03	1.23*
40-49	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Wealth quintile (r: highest)</b>											
Lowest	1.00	1.87***	1.00	1.40**	1.56	2.64***	0.84	0.68	1.37	0.83	1.44
Second	1.34**	1.68***	1.18*	1.42***	1.39	2.06**	0.87	0.73	1.22	1.09	1.62**
Third	1.27**	1.58***	1.09	1.23*	1.43	1.98*	1.40	1.05	1.32*	1.34**	1.49**
Fourth	1.39***	1.47***	1.11	1.20*	0.95	1.15	1.22	1.28	1.02	1.26*	1.22
Highest	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Current marital status (r: married)</b>											
Married	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
In union	1.34***	1.10	1.26***	1.41***	1.24	1.32	0.80	0.87	1.44***	1.37***	1.55***
Separated/divorced	2.06***	2.22***	3.23***	3.30***	2.44***	1.70*	1.20	1.10	2.33***	3.91***	1.13
<b>Number of unions (r: 1)</b>											
1	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2+	0.57***	1.18	0.67***	1.05	0.96	1.03	1.26	1.38	1.07	0.82*	1.37**
<b>Parity (Live births) (r: 1-2)</b>											
0	0.62***	0.92	0.52***	0.55***	0.63	0.72	0.64	0.68	0.86	0.55***	0.92
1-2	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
3-4	1.30***	1.17	1.44***	1.37***	1.37*	1.43*	1.34	1.54	1.37**	1.29***	1.16
5+	1.58***	1.30*	1.73***	1.63***	1.47*	1.47	1.07	1.07	1.61***	1.44***	1.30*
<b>Age at first union (r: 25+)</b>											
<15	1.09	1.27	2.27***	1.49***	1.55	1.11	2.76**	2.58*	1.42	1.93***	1.24
15-19	1.29**	1.05	1.83***	1.32***	1.34	1.05	1.58	1.53	1.31	1.83***	1.14
20-24	1.06	1.10	1.46***	1.20*	1.04	0.96	1.99*	1.79*	1.17	1.39***	1.10
25+	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Employment (r: no)</b>											
No	1.000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Yes	1.350***	1.37***	1.41***	1.35***	1.20	1.22	0.88	0.93	1.33***	1.36***	1.21*
<b>Father beat mother (r: no)</b>											
Yes	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	na	1.00	1.00
No	1.76***	1.52***	1.81***	1.62***	2.15***	2.02***	2.52***	2.91***	na	2.22***	1.95***
Don't know	na	1.05	1.42***	1.18	1.66	1.69	1.89	2.17	na	1.63***	1.54*
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	10,744	8,916	23,605	23,605	8,070	8,070	2,597	2,597	12,619	12,467	12,467

**Notes:** [1.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6, which included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past year. [6.] Honduras 2005/6 was the only DHS survey that did not ask whether father beat mother. [7.] All DHS surveys measured employment in the past year.

### Factors associated with intimate partner violence, ever and past 12 months, RHS surveys:

Table 4.6 Adjusted odds ratios from multivariate logistic regression: associations between women's background characteristics and the experience of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-7]

	Ecuador 2004		El Salvador 2008		Guatemala 2008/9		Jamaica 2008/9		Nicaragua 2006/7		Paraguay 2008	
	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months
<b>Residence (r: rural)</b>												
Urban	1.40***	1.31*	1.36**	1.31*	1.20*	1.30**	1.30*	1.71**	1.37***	1.74***	1.36*	1.25
Rural	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Education (r: 12+ years)</b>												
0-3 years	1.81***	1.66*	0.82	1.08	1.01	0.91	--	--	1.19	1.48	0.84	1.27
4-6 years	1.35**	1.47*	0.80	1.01	1.05	0.98	1.11	1.53	1.18	1.30	0.83	1.10
7-11 years	1.47***	1.31	1.02	1.05	1.19	1.10	0.96	1.06	1.26	1.26	1.31	1.53*
12+ years	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Age of woman (r: 40-49)</b>												
15-19	1.02	3.41***	0.50***	2.30	0.71*	2.28***	1.06	3.48***	0.62**	2.44***	0.95	2.01
20-24	1.44*	2.96***	0.66**	2.12***	0.81	1.94***	1.21	2.93***	0.85	1.92***	1.06	1.96*
25-29	1.24	1.63**	0.87	1.80***	0.87	1.71***	1.56**	2.65***	0.96	1.76***	1.02	1.26
30-39	1.40***	1.74***	0.93	1.43*	0.86	1.18	1.20	1.62*	0.93	1.47**	1.14	1.02
40-49	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Wealth quintile (r: highest)</b>												
Lowest	1.35*	1.47	1.37	1.72*	1.22	1.48	1.67*	2.51**	1.06	1.30	1.12	1.33
Second	1.06	1.22	1.25	1.79**	1.40*	1.51*	1.72**	2.65**	1.05	1.32	1.10	0.77
Third	1.12	1.40	1.27	1.41	1.39*	1.43*	1.23	1.94*	1.09	1.37*	1.03	1.13
Fourth	1.26	1.25	1.67***	1.82**	1.34*	1.29	1.08	1.22	1.00	1.28	1.04	0.70
Highest	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Current marital status (r: married)</b>												
Married	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
In union	1.19*	1.35**	1.30**	1.51**	1.36***	1.49***	1.46**	1.29	1.37***	1.21	1.50***	1.57**
Separ./div.	2.99***	1.71**	2.89***	1.61***	4.10***	0.94	1.78***	1.15	2.23***	0.80	5.10***	2.50***
<b>Number of unions (r: 1)</b>												
1	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2+	2.28***	1.49**	1.99***	1.31*	2.37***	1.45***	1.73***	1.48*	1.80***	1.22	3.34***	1.14
<b>Parity (Live births) (r: 1-2)</b>												
0	0.53***	0.66	0.67*	0.85	0.82	0.76	0.57***	0.73	0.60***	0.59*	0.77	0.81
1-2	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
3-4	1.26**	1.38**	1.36***	1.30	1.42***	1.26*	1.21	1.20	1.40***	1.09	1.66***	1.24
5+	1.75***	1.52*	1.44**	1.50*	1.54***	1.38*	2.12***	1.68*	1.79***	1.35	2.16***	1.82*
<b>Age at first union (r: 25+)</b>												
<15	1.14	0.86	2.50***	1.70*	2.28***	1.18	1.60	1.35	2.00***	1.94*	1.26	0.98
15-19	1.04	1.02	1.48**	1.29	1.66***	0.97	1.05	0.91	1.55**	1.69*	1.26	0.90
20-24	0.92	0.96	0.95	1.11	1.32*	0.93	0.82	0.67	1.26	1.44	1.22	1.04
25+	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Employment (r: no)</b>												
No	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Yes	1.28***	1.24*	1.23**	1.53***	1.25***	1.32***	1.04	0.89	0.71***	0.81*	1.34**	1.29
<b>Father beat mother (r: no)</b>												
Yes	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
No	2.34***	1.91***	2.40***	2.13***	2.03***	1.76***	2.23***	1.92***	2.30***	1.91***	2.82***	2.71***
Don't know	2.02	2.61*	0.46	0.55	0.97	0.89	0.99	0.66	1.89*	2.00	1.75	1.47
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	6,563	6,563	7,131	7,131	12,445	12,445	6,830	6,830	11,225	11,225	4,374	4,374

**Notes:** [1.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05. [2.] A double dash (--) indicates that cell size was less than 25. [3.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [4.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [5.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [7.] Guatemala 2008/9 and Nicaragua 2006/7 measured employment in the past year. All other RHS surveys measured employment at the time of the interview.

is important to note that older women may have had more years of cumulative exposure to the risk of intimate partner violence than younger women, which should be considered when interpreting the association between age and intimate partner violence **ever**. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)

- Wealth quintile:** After controlling for other factors, the association between wealth quintile and the odds of physical or sexual violence by a partner **ever** or **in the past 12 months** was highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) in six countries (Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Colombia 2005, the Dominican Republic 2007, El Salvador 2008, Jamaica 2008/9, and Peru 2007/8), but only marginally or not significant in the other half. In half of the countries, women in the lowest wealth quintile had significantly higher odds of intimate partner violence **ever** or **in the past 12 months** compared with women in the highest quintile. However, the odds of experiencing violence did not always decrease consistently with each step up in wealth quintile, and in a majority of countries where wealth was significant, the highest odds of partner violence were found among women in the intermediate wealth quintiles rather than among those in the lowest. Moreover, in two countries, Bolivia 2003 and El Salvador 2008, women in the fourth highest wealth quintile had the highest odds of experiencing intimate partner **ever**, and in both surveys the association was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- Marital status:** After adjusting for all other factors, women who were separated or divorced had significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) higher odds of having experienced intimate partner violence **ever** than those who were married in all countries except for Haiti 2005/6 (where the association was not significant). And, in more than half of the countries, women who were separated or divorced also had a significantly greater risk of intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** than those who were married, even though they were no longer living with a partner at the time of the interview. In most surveys, being separated or divorced was associated with a two- to three-fold increase in the odds of intimate partner violence **ever** compared with being married, and in Paraguay 2008 and Peru 2007/8, the risk was four to five times greater. Living in a cohabiting
- union was also associated with increased odds of experiencing physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** and **in the past 12 months** compared with being married in all surveys except for Haiti 2005/6, although the association was not always significant. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- Number of unions:** After controlling for other factors, the association between the number of unions (including both marriages and cohabiting unions) and the risk of intimate partner violence varied by country. In all six RHS surveys, having had two or more unions was associated with a significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) increased risk of experiencing physical or sexual partner violence **ever**, net of other factors. In RHS surveys, multiple unions were also associated with an increased risk of partner violence **in the past 12 months**, but the association was less consistent across countries, and was not significant in Nicaragua 2006/7 or Paraguay 2008. In contrast, all DHS surveys (except Haiti 2005/6) found that women who had more than one union in their life had lower odds of reporting intimate partner violence **ever** by their current/most recent partner. It is essential to note, however, that because these DHS surveys did not measure violence by any former partner(s) before their current or most recent partner, it was not possible to determine the association between the number of unions and the risk of lifetime intimate partner violence from DHS surveys. Having more than one union did increase the odds of experiencing physical or sexual partner violence **in the past 12 months** in all DHS surveys, but this association was not significant except in Peru 2007/8. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- Parity (number of live births):** After controlling for other factors, parity was significantly associated with experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner both **ever** and **in the past 12 months** in all countries except Haiti 2005/6, where sample sizes were notably smaller. Though not universal, having had no live births was generally associated with lower odds of experienced intimate partner violence, while having three or more live births was associated with an increase in the odds of partner violence. For example, in Jamaica 2008/9, having five or more births doubled the odds of experiencing

intimate partner violence **ever**, compared with having one or two. In general, the association between parity and intimate partner violence tended to be stronger for partner violence **ever** compared with partner violence **in the past 12 months**. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)

- **Age at first union:** After controlling for other factors, younger age at first union (age <15 or 15-19) was associated with highly significantly ( $p<0.001$ ) greater odds of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** in five countries (Colombia 2005, El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8) and significantly ( $p<0.01$ ) greater odds in two others (Bolivia 2003 and Haiti 2005/6). Colombia 2005 was the only survey in which there was a highly significant association between age at first union and intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months**. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- **Employment (current or recent):** After controlling for other factors, employment (current or recent) was associated with a greater likelihood of experiencing intimate partner violence, both **ever** and **in the past 12 months**, in all surveys except for the Dominican Republic 2007, Haiti 2005/6, Jamaica 2008/9, and Nicaragua 2006/7. Nicaragua 2006/7 was the only survey in which employment was significantly associated with lower odds of partner violence both **ever** and **in the past 12 months**, and in that survey, recently employed women had almost 30% lower odds of violence **in the past 12 months**. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- **‘Father beat mother’:** Women who reported that their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother) had approximately twice the odds of experiencing physical or sexual intimate partner violence, both **ever** and **in the past 12 months**, after controlling for other factors. This association was strong and significant and was the only explanatory variable to hold across every survey (except Honduras 2005/6, which did not measure it). (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)
- **Summary:** The strongest and most consistent predictors of experiencing physical or sexual intimate partner violence in this analysis were being separated or divorced, having a higher number of live births, and a history of their father (or stepfather) beating their mother (or stepmother). (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)



## CHAPTER 5. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

### 5.1 Intimate partner violence and unintended pregnancy

#### i. Measures and definitions

A central objective of DHS and RHS surveys is to gather data on family planning and maternal and child health indicators, which made it possible to explore associations between intimate partner violence (physical and/or sexual) **ever** and selected reproductive health indicators. This chapter explores the associations between physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner and unintended pregnancy. It is important to reiterate that cross sectional data such as these may show evidence of correlation, but not causation.

The specific indicators in this section include intimate partner violence according to the experience of unintended, unwanted, or mistimed pregnancy that resulted in a live birth in the past five years (11 surveys), and the intendedness of the last live birth (four RHS surveys). The denominators for all these indicators were women ever married or in union who reported a live birth in the past five years. Pregnancies that resulted in a live birth were classified as intended, unintended, mistimed, or unwanted, according to standard technical definitions used by DHS and RHS surveys around the world,<sup>101</sup> as noted below.

#### DHS and RHS definitions of intended, mistimed, unwanted, and unintended pregnancy:

- **Intended pregnancy:** The woman wanted to be pregnant at that time.
- **Mistimed pregnancy:** The woman wanted to wait and have a child at a later time.
- **Unwanted pregnancy:** The woman did not want to be pregnant then or in the future.
- **Unintended pregnancy:** Pregnancy was either mistimed or unwanted.

#### Example of a question used to measure unintended pregnancy

##### Jamaica 2008/9 RHS

*Just before you got pregnant, did you want to get pregnant then, did you want to get pregnant later, or did you not want to get pregnant then or any time in the future?*

#### ii. Findings: violence against women and unintended pregnancy

Among women ever married or in union who reported a live birth in the past five years:

- In all surveys except Haiti 2005/6, the percentage of women who reported an **unintended pregnancy** (unwanted or mistimed) and the percentage who reported an **unwanted pregnancy** (did not want to be pregnant then or any time in the future) in the past five years were significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported having experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** compared with those who did not report partner violence. (Table 5.1, Figures 5.1 and 5.2)
- In some countries, levels of unwanted pregnancy were two to three times higher among women who reported partner violence **ever** compared with women who did not. For example, the percentage of women who reported unwanted pregnancy in the past five years was nearly twice as high among women who reported partner violence **ever** compared with those who did not in El Salvador 2008 (30.7% compared with 16.4%) and almost three times as high in Paraguay 2008 (17.6% compared with 6.0%). Ratios in other surveys were not as large. (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1)
- Similarly, the percentage of women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women whose last live birth was unintended compared with those whose last live birth was intended. (Table 5.2)

## Unintended pregnancy according to experience of intimate partner violence, ever:

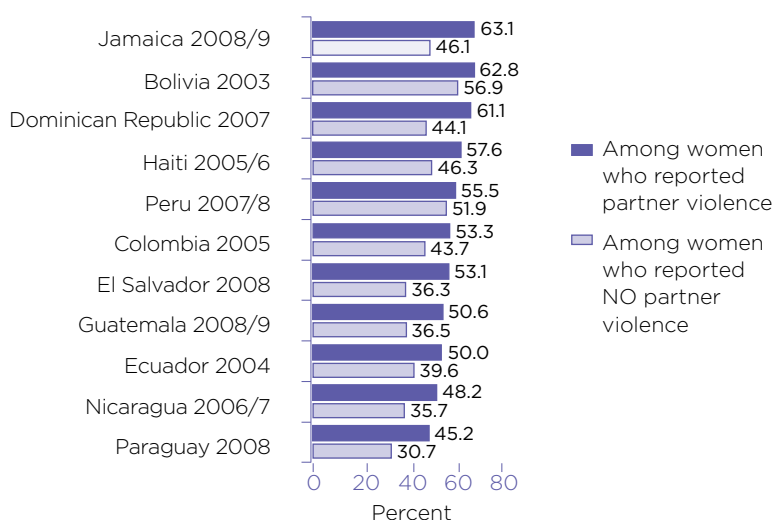
Table 5.1 Percentage of women who reported an unintended, unwanted, or mistimed pregnancy resulting in a live birth in the past five years, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years [1-4]

	DHS surveys					RHS surveys					
	Bolivia 2003	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Unwanted pregnancy (woman did not want to be pregnant then or any time in the future)</b>											
<i>Among those who reported:</i>	***	***	***	ns	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Partner violence	42.8	31.3	18.2	28.7	30.2	30.9	30.7	27.9	23.6	21.2	17.6
No partner violence	36.3	22.4	15.0	26.1	23.6	18.1	16.4	17.2	15.4	12.1	6.0
<b>Mistimed pregnancy (did not want to be pregnant then, but wanted to have a child later)</b>											
<i>Among those who reported:</i>	ns	*	***	ns	ns	ns	ns	***	**	***	*
Partner violence	23.7	24.8	45.0	31.0	27.7	21.4	23.7	25.3	41.6	28.3	29.1
No partner violence	23.5	23.3	30.2	22.7	31.1	23.3	20.5	20.6	32.4	24.1	25.2
<b>Unintended pregnancy (either mistimed or unwanted)</b>											
<i>Among those who reported:</i>	***	***	***	*	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Partner violence	62.8	53.3	61.1	57.6	55.5	50.0	53.1	50.6	63.1	48.2	45.2
No partner violence	56.9	43.7	44.1	46.3	51.9	39.6	36.3	36.5	46.1	35.7	30.7
<b>Total number unweighted (with live birth past 5 years)</b>	7,353	11,704	3,649	1,726	6,124	3,634	3,094	6,957	2,484	5,806	2,180

Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; ns = not significant.

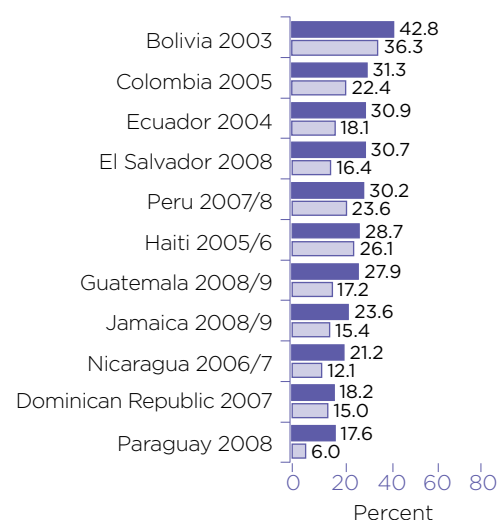
### Unintended pregnancy:

Figure 5.1 Percentage of women who reported an **unintended pregnancy** resulting in a live birth in the past five years, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years [1-3]



### Unwanted pregnancy:

Figure 5.2 Percentage of women who reported an **unwanted pregnancy** resulting in a live birth in the past five years, according to experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years [1-3]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [4.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.



## Intimate partner violence ever according to intendedness of last live birth:

Table 5.2 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by intendedness of the last live birth, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported a live birth in the past five years, RHS surveys [1-6]

	El Salvador 2008		Paraguay 2008		Ecuador 2004		Guatemala 2008/9	
	Physical or sexual partner violence ever	Total	Physical or sexual partner violence ever	Total	Physical or sexual partner violence ever	Total	Physical or sexual partner violence ever	Total
	%	Number (unweighted)	%	Number (unweighted)	%	Number (unweighted)	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>Among women ever married or in union with a live birth, past five years</b>	22.1	3,094	20.4	2,180	32.1	3,634	25.8	6,797
<b>Among those whose last live birth was:</b>	***		***		***		***	
Intended	17.5	1,936	16.9	1,512	28.6	2,171	21.4	4,298
Unintended	29.3	1,158	27.8	668	37.3	1,463	32.4	2,497

**Notes:** [1.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ . [2.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [3.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Ecuador 2004, which included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] No response was available for the intendedness of last live birth for two women in Guatemala. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

## 5.2 Violence against women and reproductive health

### i. Measures and definitions

Many surveys in this report gathered data that allowed additional exploration of the associations between violence against women and other selected reproductive health indicators and outcomes, including the following:

- Prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **ever** and **in the past 12 months** by:
  - Age at first live birth, among women ever married or in union who ever had a live birth
  - Parity (number of live births) among women ever married or in union
- Reproductive health consequences that women said had resulted from physical or sexual partner violence, such as:
  - Pregnancy as a result of partner violence **in the past 12 months** (1 DHS survey)
  - Pregnancy loss as a result of partner violence **ever** (2 DHS surveys)
  - Had a 'problem' in pregnancy as a result of partner violence **in the past 12 months** (1 DHS survey)

- Physical violence **ever** by any perpetrator during pregnancy (4 DHS surveys)

Some of these indicators (e.g. number of live births) were measured in comparable ways across all surveys, while others were measured by relatively few, or even just one or two surveys. Again, it is important to note that cross sectional data such as these may show evidence of correlation, but not causation.

### ii. Findings: violence against women and reproductive health indicators and outcomes

Among women ever married or in union who ever had a live birth:

- In all surveys, the prevalence of physical or sexual violence **ever** and **in the past 12 months** was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who had their first live birth before age 17 compared with those who gave birth at later ages. In most surveys, the reported prevalence of partner violence was two to three times greater among women whose first birth occurred before age 17 (or age 15) compared with those whose first live birth occurred after age 24. (Figures 5.3 and 5.4)

Among women ever married or in union:

- All surveys gathered data that allowed an analysis of the association between parity (number of live

births) and the prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence. In all countries, the prevalence of intimate partner violence **ever** increased with parity (number of live births), and the association was highly significant ( $p<0.001$ ) in all surveys except Haiti 2005/6. (Table 4.1 and Figure 5.5)

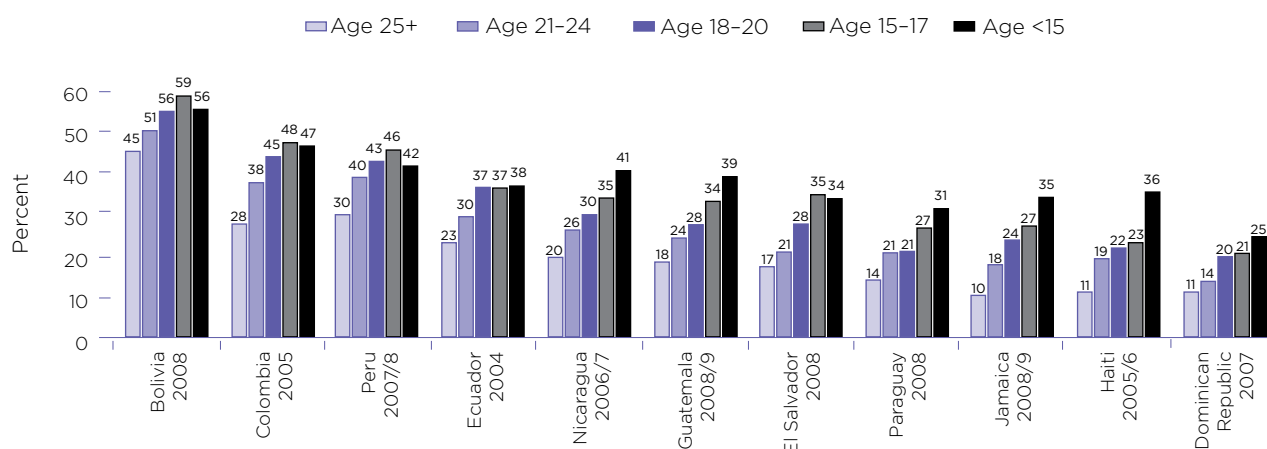
- In contrast, while the prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** also tended to increase with parity, the significance of the association was not as consistent. Highly significant ( $p<0.001$ )

differences by parity were found in four countries (Colombia 2005, Ecuador 2004, Honduras 2005/6, and Jamaica 2008/9). Significant ( $p<0.05$ ) differences were found in another four, and the rest were not significant. (Table 4.2)

- These results are consistent with findings presented in Chapter 4 that in some settings, younger women (who may have lower parity) may be at greater risk of partner violence **in the past 12 months** compared with older women. However, in the logistic regression, after

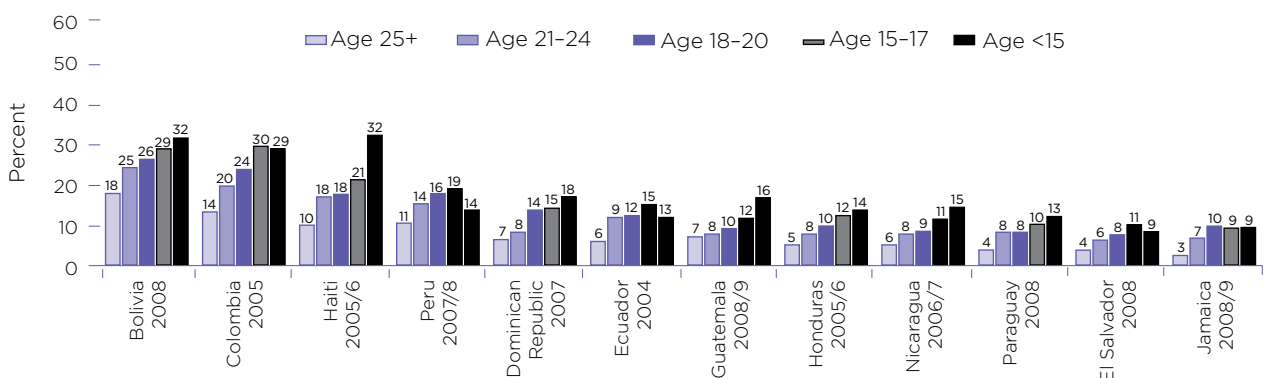
### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, according to age at first live birth:

Figure 5.3 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to age at first live birth, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who ever had a live birth at any time in their life [1-4]



### Prevalence of intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, according to age at first live birth:

Figure 5.4 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months, according to age at first live birth, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who ever had a live birth at any time in their life [1-6]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [6.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months.

controlling for age and other factors, higher parity was significantly associated with higher odds of experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner both **ever** and **in the past 12 months** in all countries except Haiti 2005/6. (Tables 4.5 and 4.6)

Among women ever married or in union who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner **ever** or **in the past 12 months**:

- Three DHS surveys asked women whether they had experienced pregnancy-related consequences as a result of physical or sexual violence by a partner. In Bolivia 2008, 4.0% of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence **in the past 12 months** said that they had become pregnant as a result, and 8.0% said they experienced a ‘problem’ during pregnancy

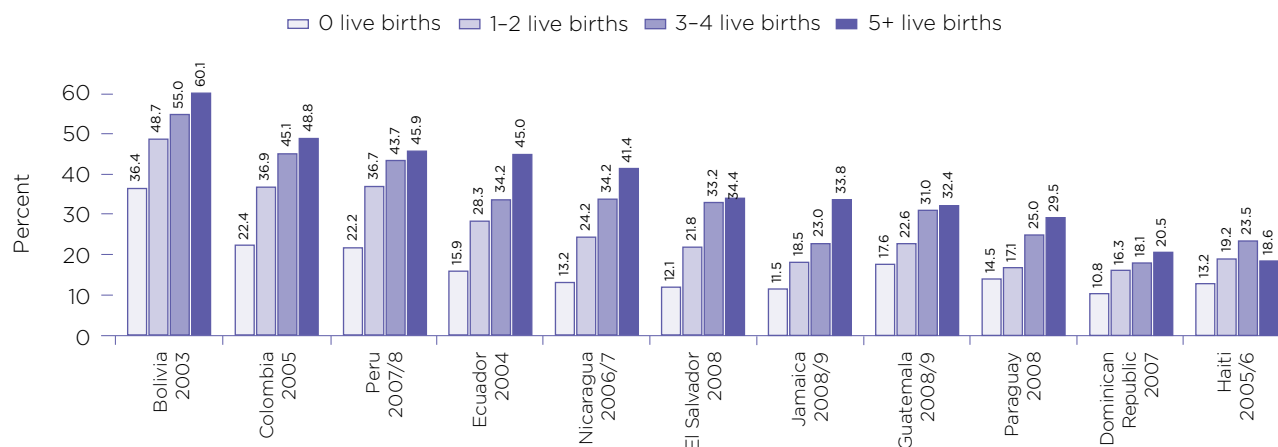
(“*tuvo algún problema en su embarazo*”) as a result. Among women who reported physical or sexual partner violence **ever**, 3.3% in Bolivia 2003 and 1.7% in Colombia 2005 reported losing a pregnancy as a result.

Among all ever-pregnant women:

- In each of the four countries where DHS surveys measured violence during pregnancy, a small but substantial percentage of ever-pregnant women reported experiencing physical violence during pregnancy at some time in their lives, ranging from 5.6% of ever-pregnant women in Haiti 2005/6 to 11.3% of ever-pregnant women in Peru 2007/8. Note that this measure included physical violence by any perpetrator, not just violence by intimate partners. (Figure 5.6)

### Prevalence of intimate partner violence ever, according to number of live births:

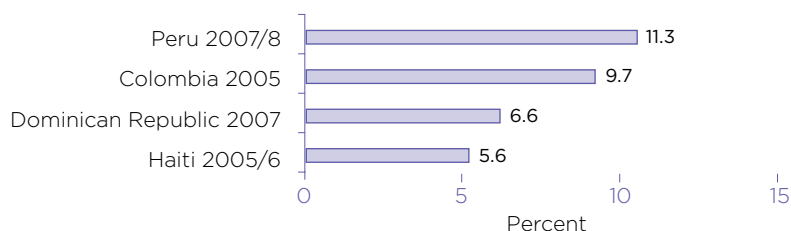
Figure 5.5 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, by number of live births, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-4]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as ‘ever married or in union’ if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a ‘visiting partner’. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included ‘visiting partners’, and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

### Prevalence of physical violence during pregnancy ever, by any perpetrator:

Figure 5.6 Percentage of women who reported physical violence during pregnancy by any perpetrator (a partner or any other person) ever in life, among all women aged 15-49 who had ever been pregnant, DHS surveys





## CHAPTER 6. TRIGGERS, CONSEQUENCES, AND HELP-SEEKING

### 6.1 Situations that triggered intimate partner violence

#### i. Measures and definitions

All RHS surveys except Jamaica 2008/9 asked women what situations had triggered their partner's violence. Paraguay 2008 asked this question among women who reported physical partner violence in the past 12 months (regardless of whether or not they reported sexual violence). The other four surveys asked this question among women who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months. In Ecuador 2004, interviewers read women a list of situations, but in the other four surveys, interviewers asked women an open-ended question and coded women's spontaneous answers. All surveys allowed women to cite multiple situations that triggered the violence. Three surveys (El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, and Nicaragua 2006/7) coded the same list of 13 situations, while Ecuador 2004 and Paraguay 2008 asked women about a slightly different but overlapping set of 8-9 situations. DHS surveys also asked about situations that triggered violence, including partner's alcohol use, but their measurement approaches were too diverse to allow a comparative analysis.

#### ii. Findings: situations that triggered physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union who reported physical or sexual partner violence *in the past 12 months*:

- Women reported more than 15 different situations that 'made' their partner become violent, including: when he was drunk or on drugs, he was jealous, he had problems with work, she refused to have sex, family problems, money problems, and no particular reason. (Figure 6.2)
- In all countries except Paraguay 2008, the most commonly reported situation that women said triggered their partner's violence was his drunkenness or drug use, reported by between 29.8% of women in Guatemala 2008/9 and 53.4% of women in Ecuador 2004. In Paraguay 2008, the partner's drunkenness or drug use was the

second most commonly reported situation, after partner's jealousy (47.6% and 53.1%, respectively). (Figures 6.1 and 6.2)

- Partner's jealousy was the second most commonly cited situation that women said triggered their

#### Example of an RHS survey question used to measure situations that triggered intimate partner violence

##### El Salvador 2008

*¿Cuáles son las situaciones particulares que lo ponen/ponían violento? ¿Alguna otra situación?*

ENTREVISTADORA: NO LEA LAS RESPUESTAS.

CIRCULE TODAS LAS RESPUESTAS MENCIONADAS:

- NO HUBO RAZÓN (POR GUSTO)
- CUANDO ÉL ESTA BORRACHO O DROGADO
- PROBLEMAS DE DINERO
- PROBLEMAS CON SU TRABAJO
- CUANDO ÉL ESTÁ DESEMPLEADO
- CUANDO NO HAY COMIDA EN CASA
- PROBLEMAS CON LA FAMILIA DE ELLA O DE ÉL
- CUANDO ELLA ESTÁ EMBARAZADA
- ÉL ESTÁ CELOSO DE ELLA
- ELLA SE NIEGA A TENER SEXO
- ELLA LE DESOBEDECE
- ELLA LE RECLAMA
- OTRA

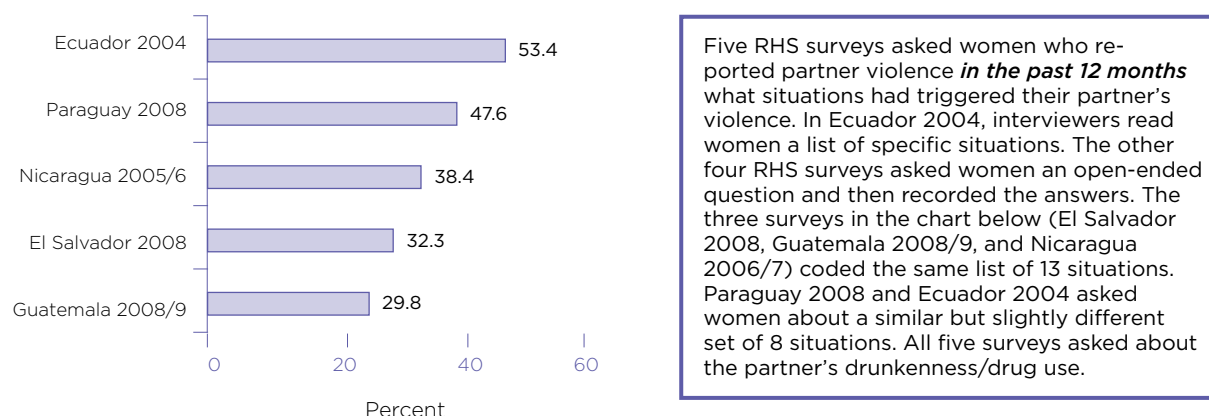
What particular situations make/made him violent? Any other situation?

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ RESPONSES. CIRCLE ALL RESPONSES MENTIONED:

- NO PARTICULAR REASON (FOR PLEASURE)
- WHEN HE IS DRUNK OR USING DRUGS
- PROBLEMS WITH MONEY
- PROBLEMS WITH HIS WORK
- WHEN HE IS UNEMPLOYED
- WHEN THERE IS NO FOOD IN THE HOUSE
- PROBLEMS WITH HER FAMILY OR HIS
- WHEN SHE IS PREGNANT
- HE IS JEALOUS
- SHE REFUSES TO HAVE SEX
- SHE DISOBEYS
- SHE COMPLAINS
- OTHER

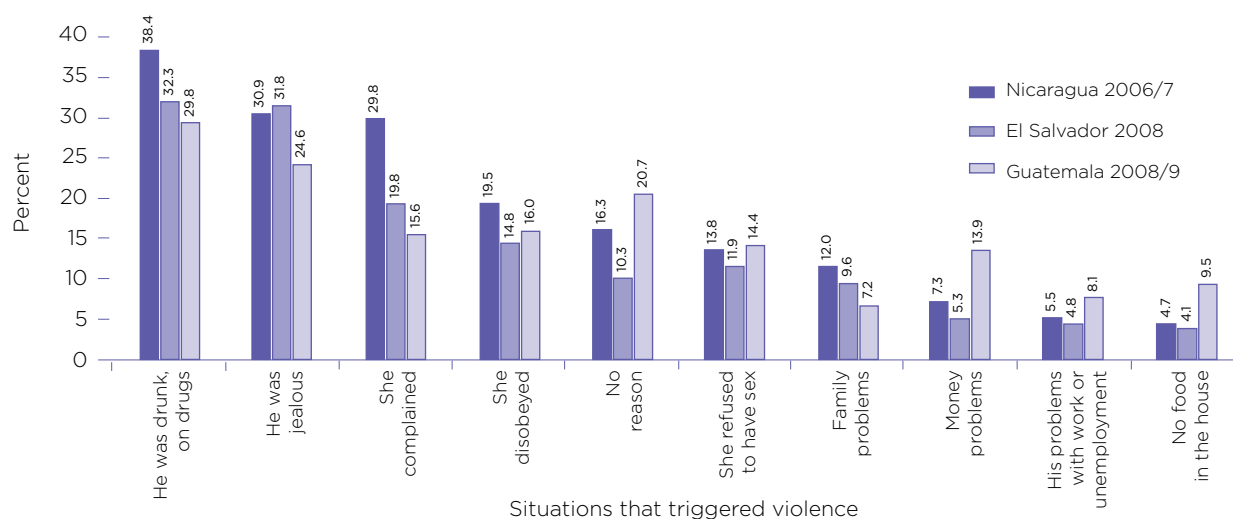
## Situations that triggered intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, partner's drunkenness or drug use:

Figure 6.1 Percentage of women who reported that their partner's drunkenness or drug use had triggered his use of violence against them, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months, RHS surveys [1-4]



## Other specific situations that triggered partner violence in the past 12 months:

Figure 6.2 Percentage of women who reported that specific situations had triggered their partner's violence against them, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, RHS surveys [2-3]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [4.] Paraguay 2008 asked women about triggers if they reported physical intimate partner violence in the past 12 months; the other surveys asked women about triggers if they reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months.

partner's violence in all five surveys except Paraguay 2008, where as noted above, it was the most frequently cited response. (Figure 6.2)

- In the three surveys that coded the same 13 situations (El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, and Nicaragua 2006/7), the most commonly

cited situations that women said triggered violence included (listed generally in order of frequency): he was drunk or on drugs, he was jealous, she complained, she disobeyed him, no particular reason, and she refused to have sex. (Figure 6.2)

## 6.2 Physical consequences of intimate partner violence

### i. Measures and definitions

All 13 surveys asked women who reported intimate partner violence whether they had been physically injured as a result. Ten surveys asked about injury from partner violence *in the past 12 months*, while five surveys asked about injury from partner violence *ever*. Surveys from only two countries (Bolivia 2003 and 2008 and the Dominican Republic 2007) asked about both time frames. All surveys asked about injury among women who reported either *physical or sexual* partner violence or both (making it difficult to distinguish between the two), except for Paraguay 2008, which asked about injury only if women reported *physical* partner violence.

Surveys used differently worded questions to measure physical injury by a partner. For example, Paraguay 2008 asked about four specific physical consequences, the Dominican Republic 2007 asked about nine, and Nicaragua 2006/7 asked about more than 17. Some items were unique to a single survey (such as ‘became physically ill’ in Colombia 2005), or were asked by only a few surveys (such as three surveys that asked about miscarriage, namely: Bolivia 2003, Bolivia 2008, and Colombia 2005).

This analysis classified pain as a type of injury, because DHS surveys asked about bruises and pain in the same questionnaire item, and they could not be disaggregated. This approach differs from the one taken by many researchers (including some individual RHS final reports) that do not classify “pain” as an injury. It should be noted that estimates of injured women that include pain as a type of injury (such as those in this report) will be higher than those that do not—by definition. In addition, eight surveys gathered data that made it possible to distinguish between ‘minor’ and ‘severe’ injuries, so the categories were operationally defined as follows:

- **‘Minor’ injuries:** Bruises, aches, pain in the body or head, cuts, punctures, bites, scratches, abrasions, became physically ill.
- **‘Severe’ injuries:** Dislocated limbs, sprains, burns, deep penetrating stab or knife wounds or punctures, wounds or injuries to the body, broken ear drums, eye injuries, fractured or broken bones or

teeth, lost function of organ or body part, permanently disabled, miscarriage.

### Example of a question used to measure physical injury by an intimate partner

#### Dominican Republic 2007 DHS

*Favor dígame si le ha sucedido algo de lo siguiente como resultado de algo que su esposo (marido) le hizo,*

- *¿Tuvo moretones y dolores?*
- *¿Tenía usted serias lesiones en los ojos, torceduras, dislocaciones o quemaduras?*
- *¿Tenía usted heridas profundas, dientes rotos o alguna otra lesión grave?*

Please tell me whether any of the following things happened to you as a result of something that your partner (husband) did:

- Did you have bruises and pain?
- Did you have serious injuries to your eyes, sprains, dislocations, or burns?
- Did you have deep wounds, broken teeth, or any other serious injury?

### ii. Findings: physical injury by an intimate partner

Among women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner *ever*:

- In the five surveys that asked women who had experienced intimate partner violence *ever* whether they had been physically injured as a result, the proportion of women who reported being injured by their partner ranged from one-third (33.0%) of women in Haiti 2005/6 to two-thirds (66.5%) of women in Colombia 2005. In three of the five countries (Bolivia 2003, Colombia 2005, and Peru 2007/8), a majority of women who had experienced intimate partner violence *ever* reported being physically injured as a result. (Table 6.1)

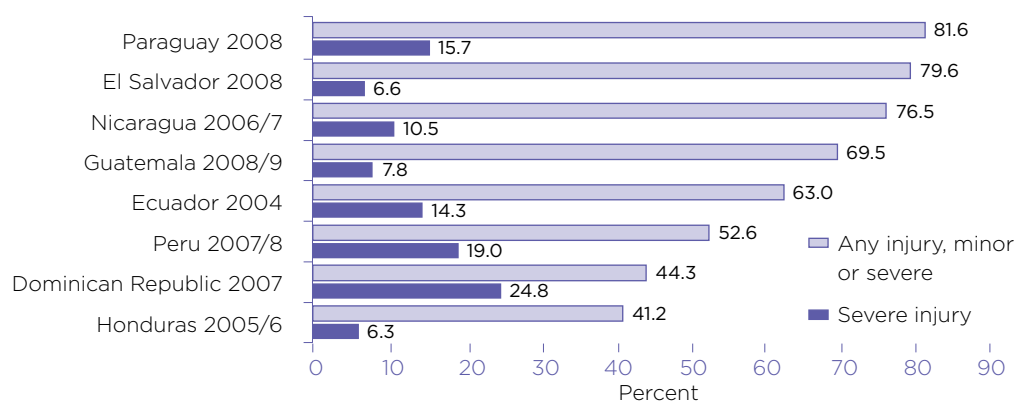
Among women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner *in the past 12 months*:

- In the 10 surveys that asked women who had experienced intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months* whether they had been injured as a result, the proportion of women who reported being injured by their partner ranged from



### Physically injured by a partner, past 12 months, by severity:

Figure 6.3 Percentage of women who reported severe injury and any injury (minor or severe) as a result of partner violence in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months [1-6]



All surveys asked about physical consequences of partner violence. Some asked about as few as four items while others asked about as many as 17. In this report, injuries were categorized as 'minor' or 'severe' according to the following definitions:

**Minor injuries:** Bruises, aches, pain in the body or head, cuts, punctures, bites, scratches, abrasions, became physically ill.

**Severe injuries:** Dislocated limbs; sprains; burns; deep, penetrating, stab, or knife wounds or punctures; wounds or injuries to the body; broken ear drums; eye injuries; fractured or broken bones or teeth; lost function of organ or body part; permanently disabled; miscarriage.

### Physically injured by a partner ever or in the past 12 months:

Table 6.1 Percentage of women who reported minor, severe, or any physical injury, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner, ever or in the past 12 months [1-9]

	Among women who reported partner violence:			Total  Number (unweighted)
	Minor injury or pain: cuts, bruises, scratches, etc.	Severe injury: broken bones or teeth, burn, loss of an organ, etc.	Any physical injury or pain	
	%	%	%	
<b>DHS surveys</b>	As a result of violence by the current or most recent partner <i>ever</i> :			
Bolivia 2003	59.1	17.3	60.1	6,363
Colombia 2005	65.9	14.8	66.5	10,155
Dominican Republic 2007	44.3	28.9	48.6	1,406
Haiti 2005/6	28.4	23.3	33.0	475
Peru 2007/8	60.7	24.9	62.5	5,082
	As a result of violence by any current or former partner <i>in the past 12 months</i> :			
Bolivia 2008	na	na	49.2	2,386
Dominican Republic 2007	41.1	24.8	44.3	1,014
Peru 2007/8	49.1	19.0	52.6	1,984
Honduras 2005/6	40.4	6.3	41.2	1,285
<b>RHS surveys</b>				
Ecuador 2004	62.4	14.3	63.0	809
El Salvador 2008	78.8	6.6	79.6	590
Guatemala 2008/9	68.5	7.8	69.5	1,309
Jamaica 2008/9	na	na	67.6	563
Nicaragua 2006/7	75.7	10.5	76.5	1,031
Paraguay 2008	81.6	15.7	81.6	289

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Paraguay 2008 asked women about physical injury if they reported physical partner violence. [7.] Three surveys asked about miscarriage as a result of violence: Bolivia 2003, Bolivia 2008, and Colombia 2005. [8.] It was not possible to disaggregate survey data by severity from Bolivia 2008 and Jamaica 2008/9 because they asked about minor and severe injuries in the same question. Bolivia combined broken bones with bruises, and Jamaica combined burns and sprains with cuts. [9.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

two-fifths (41.2%) in Honduras 2005/6 to four-fifths (81.6%) in Paraguay 2008. In seven of the 10 surveys, a majority of women who experienced intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months* reported being injured as a result. In three countries, more than three-fourths of women who experienced partner violence *in the past 12 months* reported being injured as a result, including 79.6% of women in El Salvador 2008, 76.5% of women in Nicaragua 2006/7, and 81.6% of women in Paraguay 2008. (Figure 6.3 and Table 6.1)

- In the eight surveys that asked about the severity of injury among women who had experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months*, the percentage of women who reported ‘severe’ injury by a partner (such as broken bones, teeth, or deep wounds) ranged from 6.6% in El Salvador 2008 to 24.8% in the Dominican Republic 2007. (Figure 6.3)

Among women who reported being injured by a partner *in the past 12 months*:

- The percentage of all injured women who reported any ‘severe’ injury varied widely, ranging from 8% of injured women in El Salvador 2008 to over half (56.0%) of injured women in the Dominican Republic 2007.
- The vast majority of women who reported any injury by a partner *in the past 12 months* experienced ‘minor’ injuries such as bruises, cuts, or pain, ranging from 92.8% of women injured in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 100% of women injured in Paraguay 2008. Similarly, the majority of injured women (over 80%) in all surveys who reported any ‘severe’ injury also reported some kind of ‘minor’ injury as well.

### 6.3 Mental health, emotional, and work-related consequences

#### i. Measures and definitions

Three DHS surveys and all six RHS surveys asked women about mental health, emotional, or work-related consequences of intimate partner violence *ever* or *in the past 12 months*. These measures were diverse, however, and only some were amenable to a comparative analysis. Comparable data were available for the following consequences of partner violence *ever* or *in the past 12 months*:

- Anxiety, depression, or feelings of worthlessness (3 surveys)
- Anxiety or depression severe enough that women could not complete their work or other obligations (5 surveys)
- Had to miss or stop money-earning activities (4 surveys)
- Feared additional violence or lived ‘in constant fear’ *in the past 12 months* (7 surveys)
- Suicidal thoughts (wanted to kill themselves) as a result of the violence (2 surveys)

In addition, Guatemala 2008/9 and Paraguay 2008 asked all women (regardless of whether or not they reported partner violence) whether they had considered or attempted suicide in the past four weeks. This made it possible to examine levels of contemplating or attempting suicide among women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner compared with those who had not.

#### ii. Findings: mental health, emotional, and work-related consequences of partner violence

Among women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence:

- Three surveys asked about anxiety, depression, or feelings of worthlessness generally. More than two-thirds (69.9%) of women in Bolivia 2008 and more than three-fourths (77.9%) of women in Guatemala 2008/9 who experienced partner violence *in the past 12 months* reported anxiety or depression as a result of the violence. Nearly half (49.6%) of women in Colombia 2005 who experienced partner violence *ever* reported feelings of worthlessness as a result.
- In five surveys that asked, large proportions of women who experienced partner violence *in the past 12 months* reported anxiety or depression so severe as a result of their partner’s aggression that they could not complete their work or other obligations, ranging from nearly one-half (49.0%) of women in Ecuador 2004 to more than two-thirds (68.5%) of women in Paraguay 2008. (Figure 6.4)
- In four countries, among women who experienced physical or sexual partner violence *in the past 12 months*, the percentage who reported having to miss or stop money-earning work as a result

ranged from 15.8% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 19.9% in Nicaragua 2006/7. (Figure 6.4)

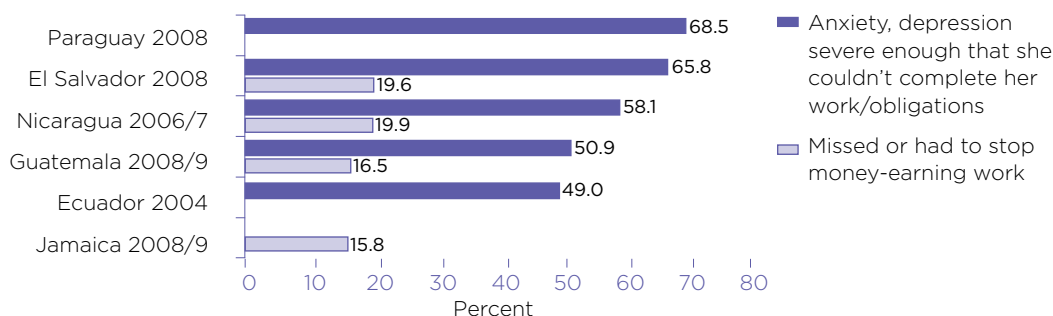
- In the seven surveys that asked about fear, among women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months**, large proportions reported living in fear of additional violence, ranging from nearly one-third (32.5%) of women in Paraguay 2008 to three-fourths (75.5%) of women in Bolivia 2008. It is noteworthy that in Bolivia 2008, women were asked not just whether

they feared additional violence, but whether they lived ‘in constant fear’ of their partner’s reactions. (Figure 6.5)

- In both Guatemala 2008/9 and Paraguay 2008, women who had experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner—both **ever** and **in the past 12 months**—were significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) more likely to have contemplated or attempted suicide in the past month compared with women who had never experienced partner violence. In Paraguay 2008,

### Depression and missed work as a result of partner violence in the past 12 months:

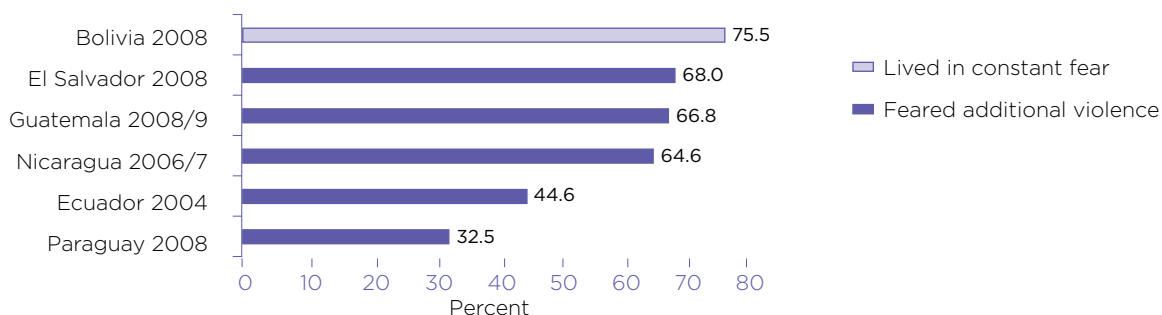
Figure 6.4 Percentage of women who reported anxiety or depression severe enough that they could not complete their work or had to stop or miss money-earning work as a result of partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months [1-5]



Six RHS surveys measured depression or missed work as a result of partner violence **in the past 12 months**. Five of these six surveys asked women whether they had experienced anxiety or depression severe enough that they were not able to complete their work. Four of these six surveys asked women whether they had to miss or stop money-earning activities as a result of the violence.

### Lived in fear as a result of partner violence in the past 12 months:

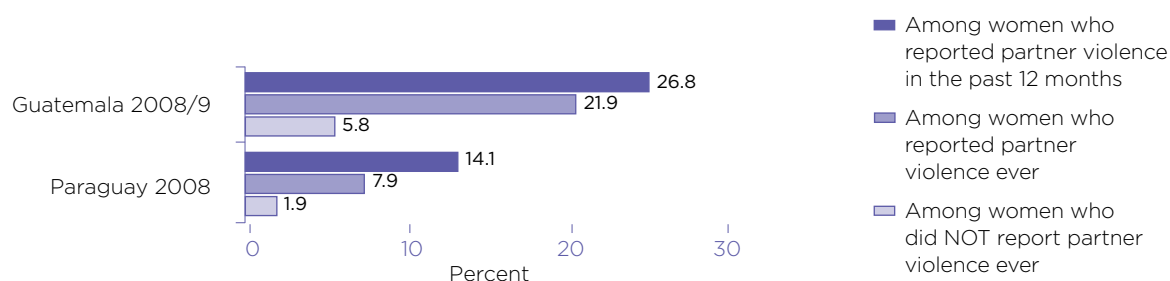
Figure 6.5 Percentage of women who said they lived in constant fear or feared additional violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months [1-6]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as ‘ever married or in union’ if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a ‘visiting partner’. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included ‘visiting partners’, and in Bolivia 2008 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Paraguay 2008 did not ask about fear, depression, or anxiety among women who reported sexual but not physical partner violence. [6.] Bolivia 2008 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union.

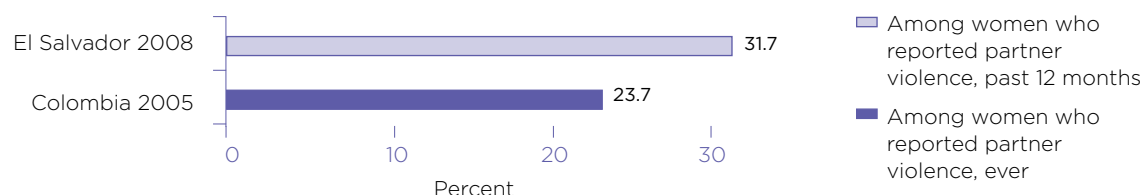
### Considered or attempted suicide according to experience of intimate violence:

Figure 6.6 Percentage of women who considered or attempted suicide in the past four weeks according to experience of physical or sexual intimate partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-3]



### The woman wanted to kill herself as a result of violence by her partner:

Figure 6.7 Percentage of women who said they had wanted to kill themselves as a result of partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever or in the past 12 months [1-2]



**Notes:** [1.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [2.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner. [3.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44.

women who had experienced partner violence **in the past 12 months** reported considering or attempting suicide at four times the rate as those who had never experienced partner violence, and in Guatemala 2008/9, there was more than a seven-fold difference. (Figure 6.6)

- Two surveys asked women who had experienced intimate partner violence whether they had wanted to kill themselves as a result. They found that 23.7% of women in Colombia 2005 who reported partner violence **ever** and 31.7% of women in El Salvador 2008 who reported partner violence **in the past 12 months** told interviewers that they had wanted to kill themselves as a result of the partner violence they experienced. (Figure 6.7)

## 6.4 Help-seeking by women who experienced violence

### i. Measures and definitions

Most surveys asked women who reported violence whether they had sought help by telling family or

friends or by seeking help from an institution. Six RHS and two DHS surveys asked about help-seeking by women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner **in the past 12 months**. Four DHS surveys asked about help-seeking by women who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator **ever**—including intimate partners and non-partners. All questionnaires provided space to record multiple types of help-seeking. In other respects, measurement methods varied by survey, however. Some surveys used a single question to ask about both telling family/friends and seeking institutional help, while others measured these items separately. Pre-coded options for types of institutions varied widely by country, depending on what types of services and organizations existed in each setting.

To enable a comparative analysis, this report presents findings on help-seeking by women who reported partner violence **in the past 12 months** separately from help-seeking by women who reported violence by any perpetrator **ever**. In addition, institutions were grouped into five categories, namely:

- Law enforcement and protection agencies
- Health facilities
- Women's organizations/nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
- Religious institutions
- Other

It is important to note that these surveys were not able to measure the availability of services, which certainly varied both among and within the countries included in this comparative analysis. In addition, in some countries, the number of women who sought institutional help was too small to make meaningful comparisons of institutional help-seeking by type; for example, only 61 women in Ecuador 2004 and 38 women in Paraguay 2008 sought institutional help. Comparisons of institutional help-seeking by type from these surveys should be interpreted with caution.

**Example of a question used to measure help-seeking by women who reported partner violence in the past 12 months**

**Paraguay 2008 RHS**

*Cuando ésta(s) persona(s) le ha(n) agredido durante los últimos 12 meses, ¿a quién o a quienes ha acudido?*

NO LEA LAS ALTERNATIVAS. ANOTE TODAS LAS ALTERNATIVAS: NADIE, FAMILIA DE ELLA, FAMILIA DE ÉL, LA COMISARIA, JUZGADO DE PAZ, CENTRO/ PUESTO DE SALUD, AMIGA/O, VECINOS, IGLESIA, SECRETARIA DE LA MUJER, ONG, KUÑA ATY, OTRO

When this (these) person (people) assaulted you during the past year, to whom did you go for help?

DON'T READ THE OPTIONS. MARK ALL OPTIONS: NO ONE, HER FAMILY, HIS FAMILY, COMMISSIONER, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, HEALTH CENTER OR POST, FRIEND, NEIGHBOR, CHURCH, SECRETARIAT FOR WOMEN, NGO, KUÑA ATY, OTHER

ii. Findings: help-seeking by women who reported violence

Among women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months**:

- The proportion of women who sought any help (from family, friends, or an institution) varied widely, ranging from just over one-third (34.3%) of women in Honduras 2005/6 to almost three-quarters (72.2%) of women in El Salvador 2008. (Table 6.2)
- In all eight surveys, the proportion of women who told family or friends was substantially higher than the proportion who sought institutional help, in some cases by a factor of three (e.g. Paraguay 2008) or even four (e.g. Ecuador 2004). The proportion who told family or friends ranged from just under one-third (29.3%) in Honduras 2005/6 to about two-thirds (65.5%) of women in El Salvador 2008, while the percentage of women who sought institutional help ranged from 8.2% in Ecuador 2004 to 36.0% in El Salvador 2008. (Figure 6.8)
- The most commonly reported institutions where women sought help were the police or other protection agencies, ranging from 6.5% in Ecuador 2004 to 26.5% in El Salvador 2008. In two surveys, Jamaica 2008/9 and Paraguay 2008, health facilities were the second most commonly cited institution where women sought help, but this percentage did not exceed 10% in any survey. (Table 6.4)
- Religious institutions were the third most commonly cited type of institution where women sought help, but the percentage of women who said they sought this type of help did not exceed 12.5%, as reported in El Salvador 2008. (Table 6.4) When expressed as a proportion of women who sought any type of institutional help **in the past 12 months**, however, it is noteworthy that nearly half (45.7%) of 229 women in Honduras 2005/6 turned to a church or other religious institution—twice as many as those who turned to a health facility.

Among all women who experienced physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator **ever**:

- In three of the four surveys that measured help-seeking for physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator **ever**, around one-half (or more) of women who experienced this type of violence neither told anyone nor sought any institutional help, including 57.7% of such women in Haiti 2005/6, 52.8% of such women in Colombia 2008,

### Help-seeking for intimate partner violence in the past 12 months:

Figure 6.8 Percentage of women who told someone or sought institutional help for partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months [1-6]

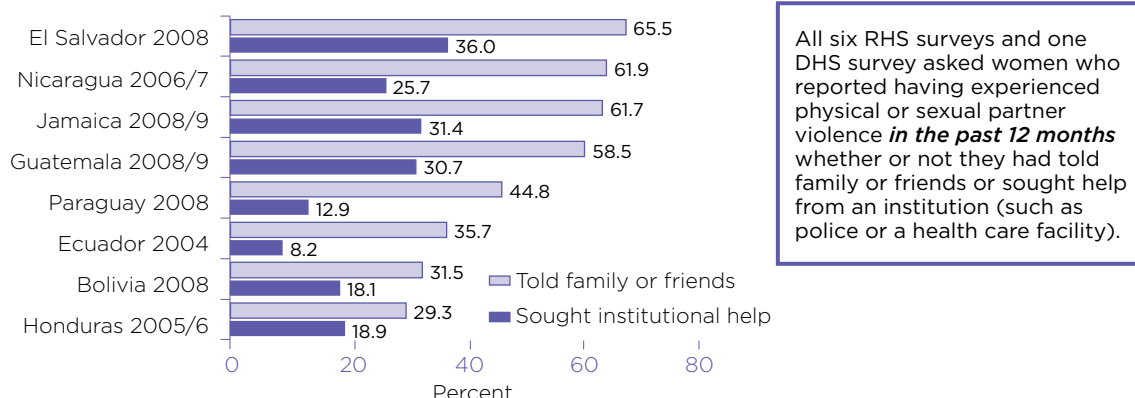


Table 6.2 Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months, according to whether they told someone or sought institutional help, did not tell anyone or seek institutional help, or did not respond or remember [1-7]

Among women who reported partner violence in the past 12 months:					
	Told someone or sought institutional help	Neither told anyone nor sought institutional help	Did not respond or did not remember	Total: women who reported partner violence	
	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>					
Bolivia 2008	37.9	62.1	<0.1	100.0	2,036
Honduras 2005/6	34.3	64.3	1.5	100.0	1,285
<b>RHS surveys</b>					
Ecuador 2004	46.5	53.2	0.3	100.0	809
El Salvador 2008	72.2	27.8	0.0	100.0	590
Guatemala 2008/9	61.9	38.1	0.0	100.0	1,309
Jamaica 2008/9	63.4	36.4	0.2	100.0	563
Nicaragua 2006/7	66.4	33.6	0.0	100.0	1,031
Paraguay 2008	58.5	41.5	0.0	100.0	289

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Paraguay 2008 did not ask about help-seeking by women who reported sexual but not physical partner violence. [6.] Bolivia 2008 asked about help-seeking only if women reported a physical or mental health consequence, and the question about institutional help-seeking asked about 'denouncing the violence' ("para denunciar la agresión"). [7.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

and about half (50.2%) of such women in Peru 2007/8. In the Dominican Republic 2007, the percentage of women who said they did not tell anyone or seek help was less than half (41.1%), but it is noteworthy that in that survey, nearly one in five (18.1%) women either said they did not remember whether they sought help or did not respond to the question about help-seeking. (Table 6.3)

- In three of the four surveys, one-fifth to one-fourth of women who experienced such violence sought help from an institution, including 24.3% in Colombia 2005, 19.9% in the Dominican Republic 2007, and 26.2% in Peru 2007/8. The percentage of women who sought institutional help for violence in Haiti 2005/6 fell far below this range, however, reported by just 2.6% of women who reported violence *ever*. (Figure 6.9)



- In each of the four surveys, the percentage of women who sought help from family or friends was substantially higher than the percentage who sought help from an institution. In Haiti 2005/6, the former was higher than the latter by a factor of more than 10 (32.0% compared with 2.6%). In other countries, the difference was not as great; for example in Colombia 2005, 37.5% of women told someone close to them, while 24.1% sought institutional help. (Figure 6.9)
- In all four surveys, most women who sought any institutional help for violence went to the police or another protection agency, while the percentage who sought help at a health facility or a women's organization/NGO was lower than 2% in all four surveys. (Table 6.5)
- In all four surveys, the second most common category of institution where women sought institutional help was 'other', which included local leaders, private or governmental (but not NGO) legal or social services, and possibly religious institutions. (It is noteworthy that among these four DHS surveys, only Haiti 2005/6 assigned a code for religious institutions, while the other three surveys coded religious institutions as 'other', so it is not possible to disaggregate the proportion of women who sought help from religious institutions from these surveys.) (Table 6.5)

### Help-seeking for physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator:

Figure 6.9 Percentage of women who told someone or sought institutional help for violence by any perpetrator, among all women aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator (a partner or any other person), ever in life [1-2]

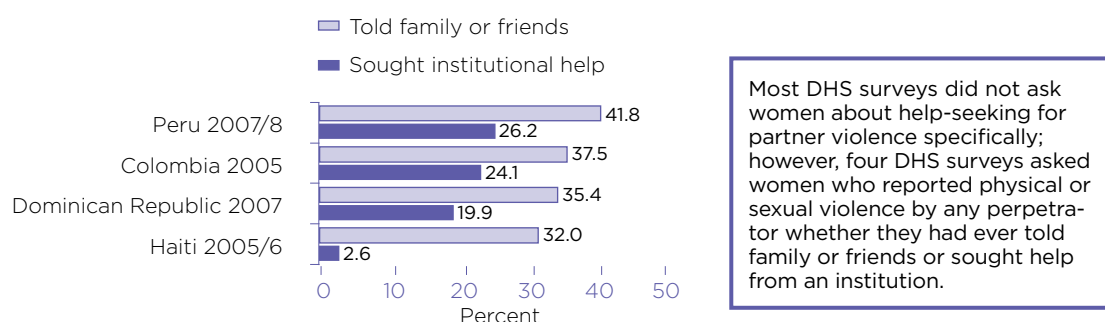


Table 6.3 Percent distribution of all women aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator ever, according to whether they told someone or sought institutional help, did not tell anyone or seek institutional help, or did not respond or remember [1-3]

	Among women who reported having experienced physical or sexual violence ever by anyone, including partners and non-partners:				Number (unweighted)
	Told someone or sought institutional help	Did not tell anyone or seek institutional help	Did not respond or did not remember	Total: women who reported violence by any perpetrator	
	%	%	%	%	
<b>DHS surveys</b>					
Colombia 2005	47.2	52.8	0.0	100.0	14,368
Dominican Republic 2007	40.8	41.1	18.1	100.0	2,508
Haiti 2005/6	33.5	57.7	8.8	100.0	1,002
Peru 2007/8	50.2	48.5	1.3	100.0	7,004

**Notes:** [1.] Colombia 2005 asked specifically about help-seeking for physical violence (*"maltrato físico"*) among women who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator. [2.] Peru 2007/8 asked about help-seeking for physical but not sexual violence by non-partners, as well as physical and sexual violence by partners. [3.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.



### Types of institutions where women sought help for violence in the past 12 months:

Table 6.4 Percentage of women who sought institutional help, by type of institution, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner in the past 12 months [1-7]

	Percentage of women who sought help from the following types of institutions:						Total women who reported partner violence
	Police, court, or other protection agency	Hospital or health center	Women's organization/ NGO	Church or other religious institution	Other	Any institutional help	Number (unweighted)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>							
Bolivia 2008	17.0	0.5	0.5	na	1.5	18.1	2,036
Honduras 2005/6	11.0	4.5	0.1	8.6	4.6	18.9	1,285
<b>RHS surveys</b>							
Ecuador 2004	6.5	0.3	0.2	1.3	4.5	8.2	809
El Salvador 2008	26.5	9.7	0.9	12.5	3.2	36.0	590
Guatemala 2008/9	22.1	7.4	2.0	10.1	2.7	30.7	1,309
Jamaica 2008/9	27.1	6.8	0.4	3.3	5.2	31.4	563
Nicaragua 2006/7	17.1	6.9	2.3	2.9	6.2	25.7	1,031
Paraguay 2008	12.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	12.9	289

### Types of institutions where women sought help for violence by any perpetrator:

Table 6.5 Percentage of women who sought institutional help, by type of institution, among all women (ever and never married or in union) aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator ever [6-9]

	Percentage of women who sought help from the following types of institutions:						Total women who reported violence by any perpetrator
	Police, court, or other protection agency	Hospital or health center	Women's organization/ NGO	Church or other religious institution	Other	Any institutional help	Number (unweighted)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>							
Colombia 2005	20.3	0.5	0.0	na	4.8	24.1	14,368
Dominican Republic 2007	18.7	na	0.1	na	1.5	19.9	2,508
Haiti 2005/6	1.9	na	na	na	0.6	2.6	1,002
Peru 2007/8	21.8	1.5	0.1	na	5.6	26.2	7,004

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Bolivia 2008 asked about help-seeking only if women reported a physical or mental health consequence, and asked specifically in regards to 'denouncing the violence' ("para denunciar la agresión"). [6.] 'Other' included local leaders and other legal or social services provided by governments and the private sector other than NGOs. [7.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [8.] Colombia 2005 asked about help-seeking for physical violence ("maltrato físico") among women who reported physical or sexual violence. [9.] Peru asked about help-seeking for physical but not sexual violence by non-partners, as well as physical and sexual violence by partners.

## 6.5 Reasons why women did not seek help for intimate partner violence

### i. Measures and definitions

Eight surveys asked those women who did not tell anyone or seek institutional help for partner violence *in the past 12 months* why they did not seek help. Ecuador 2004 and Paraguay 2008 asked women about the most important reason only, while the other six surveys simply asked women why they did not seek help and recorded *all* reasons mentioned. All eight surveys used open-ended questions and a similar, but not identical, list of pre-coded response options.

### ii. Findings: why women did not seek help for partner violence *in the past 12 months*

Among women who reported intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months*:

- Women cited many different reasons for not telling anyone or not seeking institutional help for partner violence *in the past 12 months*. In general, however, the five most commonly cited reasons included: women thought they could solve it alone; they considered help ‘unnecessary’ or violence to be ‘normal’ or ‘not serious’; they were afraid of retaliation from their partner; they were ashamed; and they didn’t trust anyone. Additional reasons included: they did not know where to go; they believed it would not happen again or that he would change; they did not believe anyone would help; and they were afraid it would end the relationship, they would lose their children, they would be disbelieved, blamed, or criticized, or they would damage the family’s reputation. (Figure 6.10 and Table 6.6)
- The most common reason for not telling anyone or seeking institutional help varied by country. In three surveys, the most common reason was that women considered help ‘unnecessary’ or that violence was ‘normal’ or ‘not serious’, cited by 45.4% of women in El Salvador 2008, 35.5% in Honduras 2005/6, and 67.6% in Jamaica 2008/9. In Ecuador 2004 and Paraguay 2008, the most important reason for not seeking help was that women thought they could solve the problem alone (30.0% and 33.7%, respectively). In Bolivia 2008, the most common reason was shame (21.6%). In Guatemala 2008/9 and Nicaragua

### Example of a question used to measure reasons why women did not seek help for violence

#### Guatemala 2008/9 RHS

*¿Por qué no acudió a nadie o a ningún servicio?*

MARCAR TODAS LAS RESPUESTAS MENCIONADAS.

*¿Alguna otra razón?*

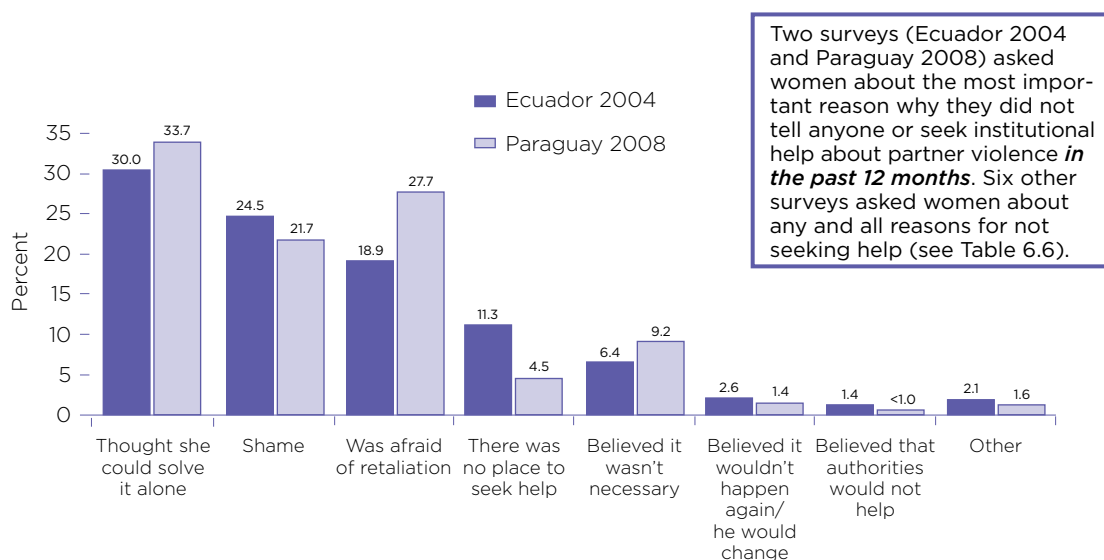
- NO CONFIA EN NADIE
- NO SABIA DONDE IR
- TEMOR A AMENAZAS/CONSECUENCIAS/MAS VIOLENCIA
- NO ERA GRAVE/NO ERA NECESARIO
- VERGÜENZA
- POR FALTA DE DINERO
- CREÍA QUE NO LE AYUDARÍAN /SABE DE OTRA MUJER QUE NO FUE AYUDADA
- TEMOR QUE SE TERMINARA LA RELACIÓN
- TEMOR A PERDER A LOS HIJOS
- TEMOR A MANCHAR EL NOMBRE DE LA FAMILIA
- LA RELIGIÓN LO PROHÍBE
- LE PROMETIÓ QUE NO VOLVERIA A PASAR
- OTRO (ESPECIFIQUE)
- NO SABE/NO RESPONDE

*Why didn't you seek help from anyone or any service? MARK ALL THE RESPONSES MENTIONED. Any other reason?*

- DIDN'T TRUST ANYONE
- DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO GO
- FEAR OF THREATS OR THE CONSEQUENCES OF MORE VIOLENCE
- IT WASN'T SERIOUS/IT WASN'T NECESSARY
- SHAME
- LACK OF MONEY
- BELIEVED IT WOULDN'T HELP/KNEW ANOTHER WOMAN WHO WAS NOT HELPED
- FEAR THAT IT WOULD END THE RELATIONSHIP
- FEAR OF LOSING THE CHILDREN
- FEAR OF STAINING THE FAMILY NAME
- RELIGION PROHIBITS IT
- HE PROMISED IT WOULD NOT HAPPEN AGAIN
- OTHER (SPECIFY)
- DON'T KNOW/NO RESPONSE

### Most important reason why women did not seek help for partner violence:

Figure 6.10 Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported partner violence in the past 12 months but did not seek help, according to the most important reason why they did not seek help [1-5]



### All reasons for not seeking help for partner violence:

Table 6.6 Percentage of women who cited specific reasons for not seeking help for partner violence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who reported physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months but did not seek help [3-8]

	Why did you not tell anyone or see help? (Women could select more than one reason)											Total
	Considered it unnecessary, not serious, or normal	Afraid of retaliation or additional violence	Didn't trust anyone	Shame	Didn't know where to go	Afraid it would end relationship	Afraid of losing her children	Didn't believe that anyone would help	Afraid of being disbelieved or criticized	Believed it wouldn't happen again	Afraid of staining family reputation	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>												
Bolivia 2008	17.6	16.1	na	21.8	11.0	10.3	na	na	na	15.0	na	1,643
Honduras 2005/6	35.5	27.3	na	17.1	6.9	na	na	5.7	na	na	na	830
<b>RHS surveys</b>												
El Salvador 2008	45.4	25.7	8.7	5.1	4.2	4.8	3.3	2.4	6.0	na	2.6	382
Guatemala 2008/9	17.4	15.7	40.0	24.5	6.3	2.7	1.8	1.6	na	4.0	3.6	494
Jamaica 2008/9	67.6	13.6	12.9	26.0	1.3	5.0	0.1	10.5	0.8	na	2.3	204
Nicaragua 2006/7	17.7	26.1	30.4	21.5	7.1	7.5	4.5	1.8	3.1	na	2.4	766

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Paraguay 2008 did not ask about injury among women who reported sexual but not physical partner violence. [3.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [7.] Bolivia 2008 asked about seeking help to 'denounce' the partner, and only if women reported a physical or mental health consequence. [8.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

2006/7, the most common reason was that they did not trust anyone (40.0% and 30.4%, respectively). (Figure 6.10 and Table 6.6)

- The percentage of women who reported specific reasons for not seeking help also varied by country, in some cases widely. For example, nearly five times as many women cited shame as a reason for not seeking help in Ecuador 2004, Guatemala 2008/9, and Jamaica 2008/9 compared with those in El Salvador 2008 (24.5%, 24.5%, and 26.0% compared with 5.1%, respectively). (Figure 6.10 and Table 6.6)
- The three reasons with the widest variation by country all related to the perception that help was not available or trustworthy, such as: she did not trust anyone, did not know where to go, or did not believe that anyone would help. For example, while 40.0% of women in Guatemala 2008/9 and 30.4% of women in Nicaragua 2006/7 said that they did not trust anyone, this was reported by only 8.7% of women in El Salvador 2008, more than a four-fold difference. Similarly, while only 1.3% of women in Jamaica 2008/9 said that they did not know where to go, this was reported by 11.3% of women in Ecuador 2004 and 11.0% of women in Bolivia 2008—nearly a 10-fold difference. (Table 6.6)

## CHAPTER 7. EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND CONTROLLING BEHAVIORS BY INTIMATE PARTNERS

### 7.1 Emotional abuse by intimate partners

#### i. Measures and definitions

All 13 surveys measured emotional abuse; however, the specific acts measured by each survey varied greatly. Surveys measured as few as one act (e.g. Honduras 2005/6, which asked about humiliation only) and as many as five (e.g. Guatemala 2008/9). All surveys asked about insults, belittlement, and/or humiliation. Nine surveys asked about threats of harm. Five surveys asked about intimidation, and five asked about other threats, such as threats to abandon her, take away her children, or withhold economic support. Appendix Table A8 illustrates which specific acts of emotional abuse were measured by each survey and presents the prevalence of each act **ever** and **in the past 12 months**. For the purposes of this comparative analysis, emotional abuse by a partner included the following acts whenever they were measured:

#### Emotional abuse by an intimate partner

*Any of the following acts:*

- Insulted her
- Belittled or humiliated her
- Scared or intimidated her (e.g. by destroying her personal things)
- Threatened to harm her or someone she cared about
- Threatened to abandon her
- Threatened to take her children away
- Threatened to withhold economic support

This approach differs from the way that some final country reports classified certain acts as emotional abuse versus controlling behaviors. For example, this comparative analysis classified 'threatened to withhold economic support' and 'destroyed her personal things' as acts of emotional abuse, but the El Salvador 2008 final report classified these acts as controlling behavior.<sup>87</sup>

Similar to measures of physical and sexual intimate partner violence, most DHS surveys asked about

emotional abuse by women's current or most recent partner only, while RHS surveys asked about abuse by any current or former partner in their lifetime. In addition, most surveys asked women about emotional abuse within two time frames, **ever** and **in the past 12 months**. Appendix Tables A9 and A10 present the percentage of women who reported threats of harm by a partner (measured by nine surveys), according to women's background characteristics.

#### Example of a survey question about emotional abuse

##### Guatemala 2008/9 RHS

*Quisiera que me diga si alguna vez en su vida algún esposo/pareja o expareja le ha hecho alguna de las siguientes cosas:*

- *¿La ha insultado o la ha hecho sentir mal con usted misma?*
- *¿La ha menospreciado o humillado frente a otras personas?*
- *¿Él ha hecho cosas a propósito para asustarla o intimidarla (por ejemplo de la manera como la mira, como le grita o rompiendo cosas)?*
- *¿La ha amenazado con lastimarla a usted o a alguien que a usted le importa?*
- *¿La ha amenazado con quitarle los hijos/as?*

I would like to ask you to tell me whether at any time in your life, any husband, partner or ex-partner has done any of the following things:

- Insulted you or made you feel bad about yourself?
- Belittled or humiliated you in front of other people?
- Done something on purpose to scare or intimidate you (for example, by the way he looks at you, yells, or destroys things)?
- Threatened to harm you or someone important to you?
- Threatened to take away your children?

## ii. Findings: prevalence of emotional abuse by an intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union:

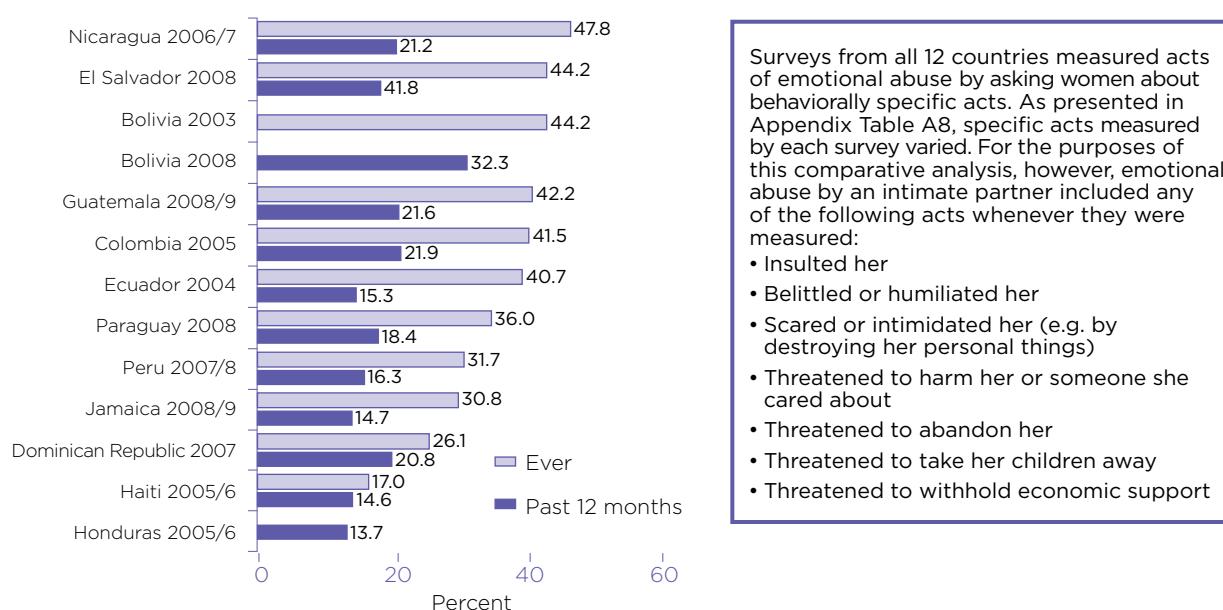
- Substantial proportions of women ever married or in union reported emotional abuse by a partner **ever**, ranging from about one-sixth (17.0%) in Haiti 2005/6 to nearly half (47.8%) in Nicaragua 2006/7. The percentage of women who reported emotional abuse by a partner **in the past 12**

**months** ranged from 13.7% in Honduras 2005/6 to 32.3% in Bolivia 2008. (Figure 7.1)

- Women reported many different acts of emotional abuse by intimate partners. Within each individual country, the most common were acts such as insults, belittlement, and humiliation, while more serious acts, such as threats of harm, were less commonly reported. (Figure 7.2 and Appendix Table A8)

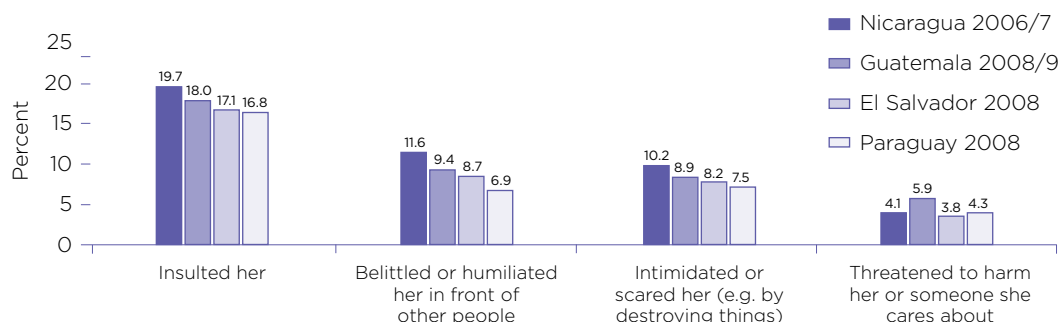
### Emotional abuse by a partner, ever and in the past 12 months:

Figure 7.1 Percentage of women who reported emotional abuse by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]



### Specific acts of emotional abuse by a partner in the past 12 months:

Figure 7.2 Percentage of women who reported specific acts of emotional abuse by a partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, selected RHS surveys [4-7]

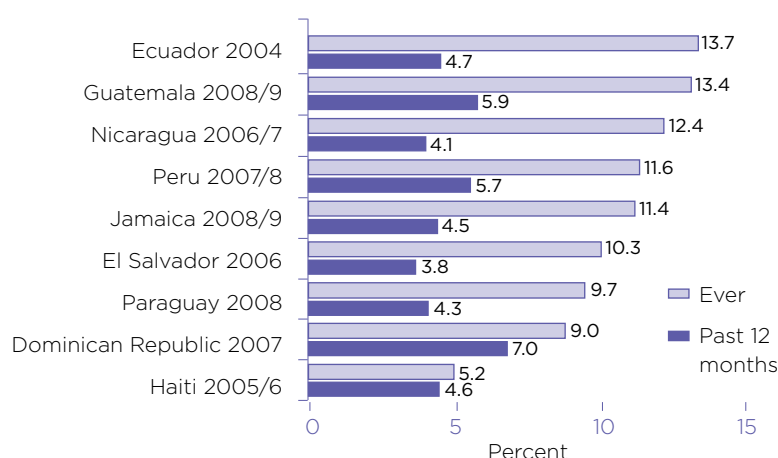


**Notes:** [1.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [2.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past 12 months. [4.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [5.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [6.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [7.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

- In nine surveys that measured this indicator, the percentage of women who reported that their partner **ever** threatened to harm them or someone they cared about ranged from 5.2% of women in Haiti 2005/6 to 13.7% of women in Ecuador 2004. The percentage of women who reported threats of harm **in the past 12 months** ranged from 3.8% in El Salvador 2008 to 7.0% in Dominican Republic 2007, but fell between 4-6% of women in most surveys. (Figure 7.3)
- Colombia 2005 asked women whether their partner had threatened to abandon them, take away their children, or withhold financial support, both **ever** and **in the past 12 months**. Each of these threats was reported by approximately one in 10 women **in the past 12 months**. (Figure 7.4)
- In all countries except Bolivia 2003 and 2008, the prevalence of emotional abuse by a partner exceeded the prevalence of physical violence by a partner, both **ever** and **in the past 12 months**. For example, in Paraguay 2008, the percentage of women who reported emotional abuse by a partner **ever** was twice as high as the percentage who reported physical partner violence **ever** (36.0% compared with 17.9%). (Figures 3.1 and 7.1)
- In all surveys, the prevalence of emotional abuse was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported physical partner violence **in the**

### Threats of harm by a partner ever and in the past 12 months:

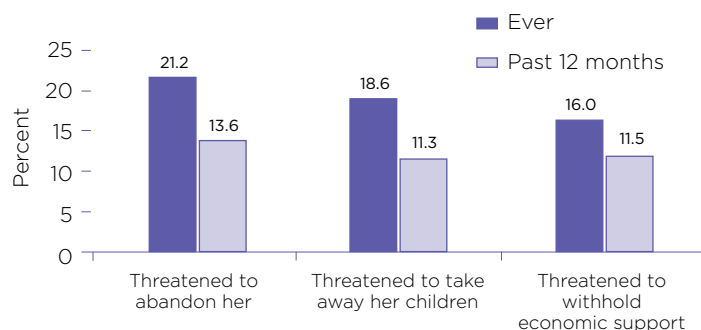
Figure 7.3 Percentage of women who reported that a partner threatened to harm them or someone they cared about, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-4]



Nine surveys asked women whether their partner had threatened to harm them or someone they cared about, **ever** and **in the past 12 months**.

### Threatened to abandon her, take her children, or withhold economic support, Colombia 2005:

Figure 7.4 Percentage of women who reported that their current or most recent partner threatened to abandon them, take away their children, or withhold economic support, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, Colombia 2005 [2-3]



Five surveys asked women whether a partner had threatened to abandon them, take their children away, or withhold economic support **ever** or **in the past 12 months**, but only one survey (Colombia 2005) asked about these three items in separate questions, as shown in Figure 7.4.

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [4.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months.



**past 12 months** compared with those who did not. In fact, the vast majority of women who reported **physical violence** by a partner **in the past 12 months** also experienced **emotional abuse** during that time period, ranging from 61.0% of women in Colombia 2005 to 92.6% of women in El Salvador 2008. In contrast, among women who reported **no** physical partner violence **in the past 12 months**, the prevalence of emotional abuse ranged from fewer than one in five (18.9%) in Bolivia 2008 to fewer than one in 15 (7.0%) in Haiti 2005/6. (Figure 7.5)

## 7.2 Controlling behaviors by the current or most recent partner

### i. Measures and definitions

Nine surveys measured controlling behaviors by women's current or most recent intimate partner. For the purposes of this comparative analysis, controlling behaviors were defined as any of the following:

### Controlling behavior

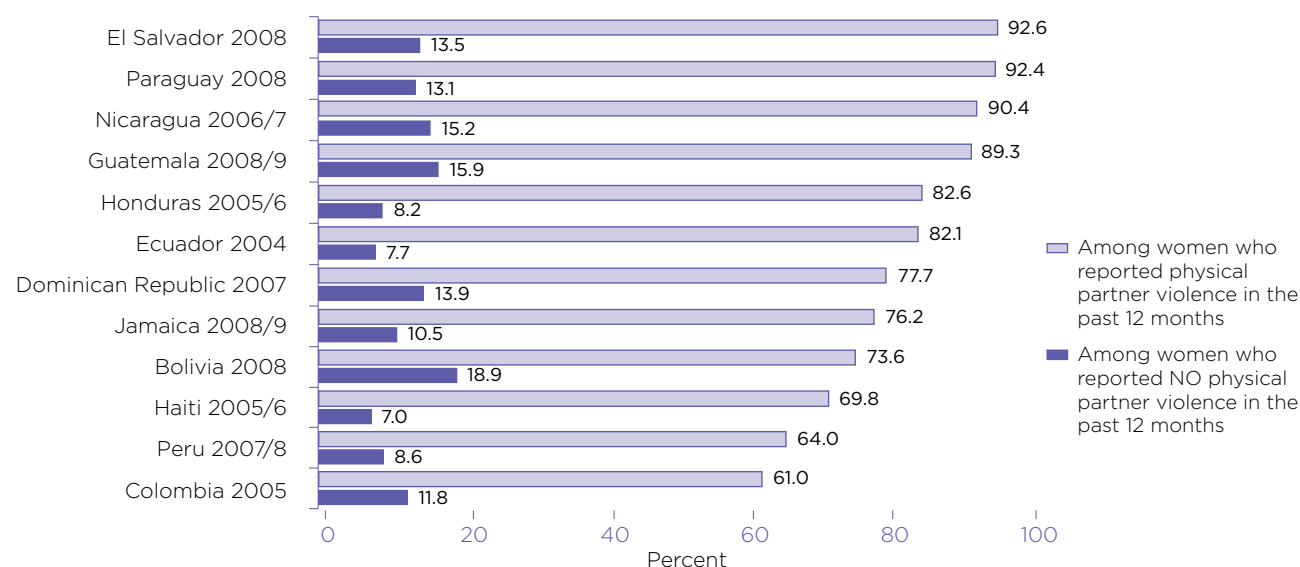
Any of the following acts:

- Prevents her from seeing friends
- Tries to limit her contact with family
- Insists on knowing where she is at all times
- Gets jealous/mad if she talks to another man
- Often suspects her of being unfaithful
- Insists that she ask permission to seek medical care
- Doesn't trust her with or let her have money/controls money she earns or receives

Most surveys asked about six of these items, but Colombia 2005 asked about five, El Salvador 2008 asked about four, and Bolivia 2008 asked about three. For this comparative analysis, authors also created a summary indicator of the number of controlling behaviors exerted by the current or most recent partner. This type of summary indicator has been used widely in previous analyses, including the

### Emotional abuse by a partner, according to experience of physical partner violence:

Figure 7.5 Percentage of women who reported any act of emotional abuse by a partner in the past 12 months, according to whether or not they reported physical violence by a partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [5.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [6.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

WHO Multi-country Study<sup>5</sup> and a DHS comparative study.<sup>17</sup> Data from Bolivia 2008 were not included in this indicator because that survey asked about only three controlling behaviors.

It is noteworthy that when RHS surveys measured controlling behaviors, they asked about controlling behaviors by the woman's current or most recent partner, but when they measured intimate partner violence, they asked about violence by any current or former partner in life (without follow-up questions to disaggregate violence by the current/most recent partner). Therefore, in RHS surveys, the partner who exerted the controlling behavior may not have been the partner who committed the violence, but the likelihood that they were the same is greater for measures of intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** than for measures of intimate partner violence **ever**.

## ii. Findings: controlling behaviors by the current or most recent intimate partner

Among women ever married or in union:

- While the proportion of women who reported specific controlling behaviors varied by country, across all countries, the two most commonly reported behaviors were insisting on knowing where she was at all times and getting jealous or mad if she spoke to another man, with one-third to one-half of women reporting these behaviors. These were followed in frequency by behaviors such as often suspecting her of being unfaithful and limiting her contact with friends or family. (Table 7.1)
- In four DHS surveys that asked women whether their partner didn't trust them with or let them have money, the percentage of women who reported this controlling behavior ranged from 8.6% of women in the Dominican Republic 2007 to nearly one-third (30.8%) of women in Haiti 2005/6. (Table 7.1)
- The percentage of women ever married or in union who reported three or more controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner ranged from 15.4% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 32.9% in Haiti 2005/6. Conversely, the proportion of women who reported no controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner ranged from about one-fourth (25.8%) in Haiti 2005/6

### Example of a question used to measure controlling behaviors

#### Peru 2007/8 DHS

*Ahora voy a preguntarle sobre situaciones por las que pasan algunas mujeres. Por favor dígame si las siguientes frases se aplican a la relación con su (último) esposo (compañero):*

- *¿Su esposo (compañero) se pone (ponía) celoso o molesto si usted conversa (conversaba) con otro hombre?*
- *¿Él la acusa (acusaba) frecuentemente de ser infiel?*
- *¿Él le impide (impedía) que visite o la visiten sus amistades?*
- *¿Él trata (trataba) de limitar las visitas/contactos a su familia?*
- *¿Él insiste (insistía) siempre en saber todos los lugares donde usted va (iba)?*
- *¿Él desconfía (desconfiaba) de usted con el dinero?*

Now I am going to ask you about situations that happen to some women. Please tell me whether the following statements apply to your relationship with your (last) husband (partner):

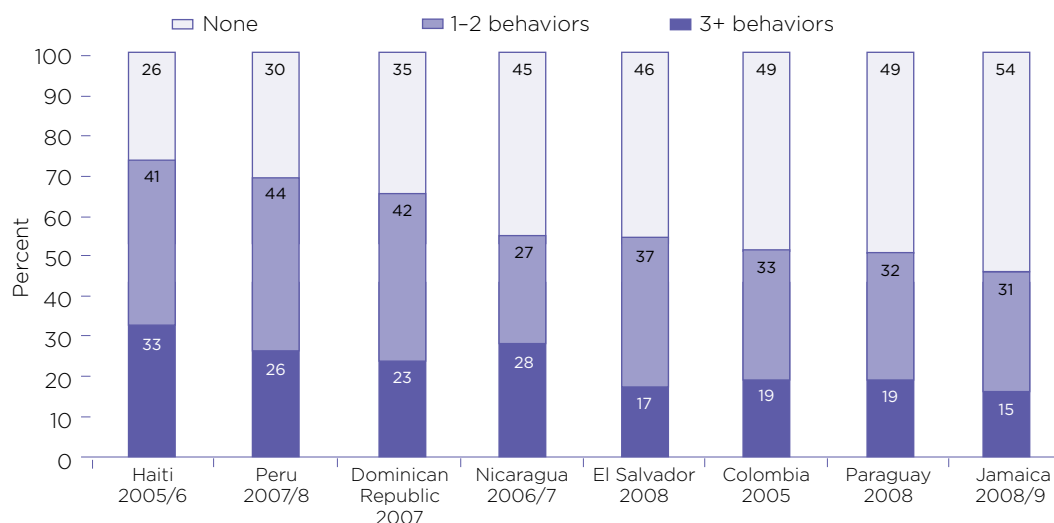
- Does (did) your husband (partner) get jealous or mad if you talk(ed) with another man?
- Does (did) he frequently accuse you of being unfaithful?
- Does (did) he prevent you from visiting or receiving visits by your friends?
- Does (did) he try to limit your visits/contact with your family?
- Does (did) he insist on knowing where you go (went) at all times?
- Does (did) he not trust you with money?

to just over one-half (54.0%) in Jamaica 2008/9. (Figure 7.6)

- In all surveys, the proportion of women who reported three or more controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported having experienced physical or sexual partner violence both **ever** and **in the past 12**

### Number of controlling behaviors by the current or most recent partner:

Figure 7.6 Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49, according to the number of controlling behaviors they reported by their current or most recent partner [1-3]



Nine surveys measured controlling behaviors by women's current or most recent intimate partner. For the purposes of this comparative analysis, controlling behaviors included any of the following:

- Prevents her from seeing friends
- Tries to limit her contact with family
- Insists on knowing where she is at all times
- Gets jealous/mad if she talks to another man

- Often suspects her of being unfaithful
- Insists that she ask permission to seek medical care
- Doesn't trust her with/let her have money/control money she earns or receives

Most surveys measured five or six acts, but Bolivia 2008 measured only two, so that survey is not included in Figure 7.6.

### Specific acts of controlling behavior by partners:

Table 7.1 Percentage of women who reported specific controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]

	Controlling behaviors by the current or most recent partner:							Total
	Insists on knowing where she is at all times	Gets jealous or mad if she talks to another man	Often suspects her of being unfaithful	Prevents her from seeing friends	Tries to limit her contact with family	Insists that she ask permission to seek medical care	Doesn't trust her with/let her have money	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>								
Bolivia 2008	na	25.2	19.8	na	14.8	na	na	8,982
Colombia 2005	37.2	na	26.2	26.2	17.2	na	19.4	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	49.9	46.6	17.5	18.7	12.5	na	8.6	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	46.2	53.9	22.8	24.2	9.9	na	30.8	2,680
Peru 2007/8	53.5	44.8	19.4	18.8	16.2	na	16.1	12,572
<b>RHS surveys</b>								
El Salvador 2008	35.6	42.4	na	19.6	12.5	na	na	7,349
Jamaica 2008/9	34.7	30.2	19.9	7.2		4.2	na	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	38.0	41.0	19.5	26.4	20.8	14.8	na	11,393
Paraguay 2008	33.2	34.7	15.2	15.3	8.1	12.0	na	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 asked about only 2 controlling behaviors, so it was not included in the analysis of the summary measure of number of controlling behaviors. [4.] Bolivia 2008 asked women about partner violence and controlling behavior only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 used a single question to ask women whether their partner prevents/prevented them from seeing friends and family. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

### Partner's controlling behavior, according to a history of intimate partner violence ever:

Figure 7.7 Percentage of women who reported three or more controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner, according to their experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]

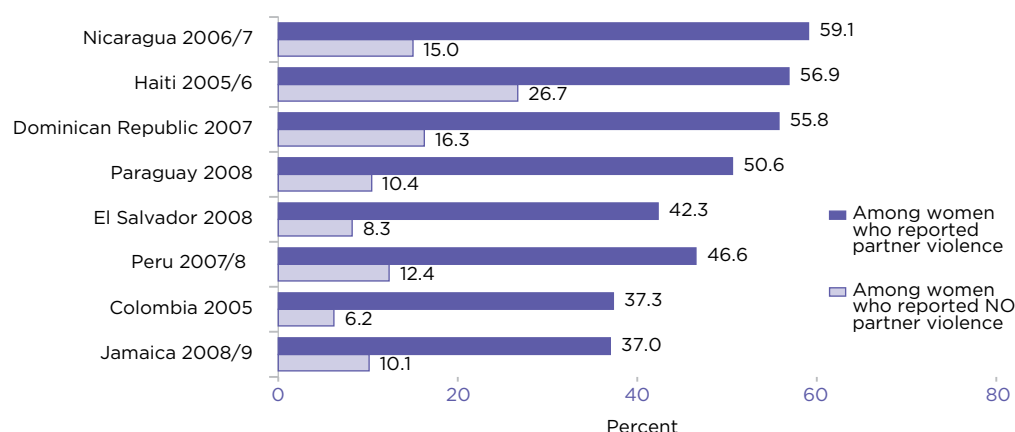


Table 7.2 Percent distribution of women ever married or in union aged 15-49, according to the number of controlling behaviors by their current or most recent partner and their experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever [1-7]

	Reported physical or sexual partner violence, ever	Number of controlling behaviors				Total	
		None	1-2	3 or more		%	Number (unweighted)
		%	%	%		%	
<b>DHS surveys</b>							
Colombia 2005	Reported no violence	65.6	28.2	6.2		100.0	15,465
	Reported violence	23.1	39.6	37.3	***	100.0	10,155
Dominican Republic 2007	Reported no violence	39.3	44.4	16.3		100.0	7,032
	Reported violence	13.2	31.0	55.8	***	100.0	1,406
Haiti 2005/6	Reported no violence	30.2	43.1	26.7		100.0	2,205
	Reported violence	10.2	32.9	56.9	***	100.0	475
Peru 2007/8	Reported no violence	39.9	47.7	12.4		100.0	7,490
	Reported violence	15.3	38.1	46.6	***	100.0	5,082
<b>RHS surveys</b>							
El Salvador 2008	Reported no violence	54.7	37.0	8.3		100.0	5,459
	Reported violence	20.0	37.7	42.3	***	100.0	1,890
Jamaica 2008/9	Reported no violence	60.2	29.7	10.1		100.0	5,676
	Reported violence	28.9	34.1	37.0	***	100.0	1,546
Nicaragua 2006/7	Reported no violence	56.4	28.6	15.0		100.0	8,219
	Reported violence	17.5	23.5	59.1	***	100.0	3,174
Paraguay 2008	Reported no violence	56.3	33.3	10.4		100.0	3,560
	Reported violence	20.3	29.0	50.6	***	100.0	854

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as ever married or in union if they ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners'. [5.] RHS surveys did not ask women whether the violence was committed by the current or most recent partner as opposed to an earlier partner; therefore, in RHS surveys, it is possible that the partner who perpetrated the violence reported was different than the partner carrying out the controlling behavior. [6.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001. [7.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

*months*, compared with those who did not. And, in some countries (Colombia 2005, El Salvador 2008, and Paraguay 2008), the proportion of women who reported three or more controlling

behaviors was about five times as great (or more) among women who reported physical or sexual partner violence *ever* compared with those who did not. (Figure 7.7 and Table 7.2)

## CHAPTER 8. SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY ANY PERPETRATOR

### 8.1 Circumstances of sexual debut

#### i. Measures and definitions

Seven surveys asked women detailed questions about the circumstances of the first time they ever had sexual intercourse. All seven surveys asked women whether their first sexual intercourse was ‘forced’ or ‘rape’, but in other respects, questions about the circumstances of sexual debut varied. Two DHS surveys, the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6, asked women whether their first sexual intercourse was ‘wanted’ or ‘forced’. Four RHS surveys asked each woman whether she convinced her partner, he convinced her, they decided together, he ‘made’ or ‘forced’ her (“*le obligó*”), or it was ‘rape’ (“*violación*”). Some surveys also allowed women to spontaneously describe their sexual debut as something that ‘simply happened’. Jamaica 2008/9 RHS was unique in that it asked women whether their first sexual intercourse was ‘wanted’, unwanted but ‘happened anyway’, or ‘forced’. In addition, Jamaica 2008/9, Ecuador 2004, and Paraguay 2008 pre-coded an option for ‘rape’ in a separate question about the woman’s partner at sexual debut. (Ecuador 2004 was not included in the analysis of this indicator, however, because it did not gather comparable data on the circumstances of first sexual intercourse.)

For the purposes of determining which experiences were considered forced sexual debut, this comparative analysis included all questions about ‘forced’ sexual intercourse (“*le obligó*” or “*fue forzada*”) or ‘rape’. RHS surveys limited questions about the circumstances of sexual debut to women aged 15-24; therefore, to maximize comparability, this comparative analysis limited DHS data on sexual debut to women aged 15-24 as well, even though these questions were asked of all women aged 15-49 who responded to the general survey.

A number of surveys gathered some information about the woman’s male partner at the time of first sexual intercourse, but only two surveys (the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6) gathered detailed and comparable data on the perpetrator of forced sexual debut.

#### Examples of questions used to ask about the circumstances of sexual debut

##### Dominican Republic 2007 DHS

*¿La primera vez que tuvo relaciones sexuales, diría usted que lo hizo porque lo deseaba, o porque fue forzada a tenerlas en contra de su voluntad?*

The first time you had sexual intercourse, would you say that you did it because you wanted to or because you were forced to have it against your will?

##### Jamaica 2008/9 RHS

*What was your relationship with the person you first had sexual intercourse?* (INCLUDED AN OPTION FOR RAPE)

*How would you describe the first time you had sexual intercourse? Would you say that you wanted to have sex, you did not want to have sex but it happened anyway, or were you forced to have sex?*

##### Paraguay 2008 RHS

*¿Y tu primera relación sexual ocurrió porque Ud. y su pareja decidieron juntos, usted le convenció, le convenció su pareja o le obligó su pareja, o usted fue violada?*

And did your first sexual intercourse occur because you and your partner decided together, you convinced him, he convinced you or your partner made you, or you were raped?

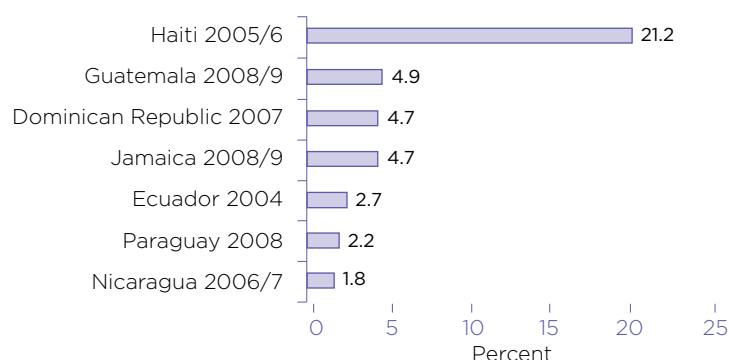
#### ii. Findings: circumstances of sexual debut

Among women aged 15-24 who had ever had sexual intercourse:

- The percentage of women aged 15-24 who reported that their first sexual intercourse was forced ranged from 1.8% in Nicaragua 2006/7 to more than one in five (21.2%) in Haiti 2005/6. In all surveys except Haiti 2005/6, the reported prevalence of forced sexual debut was 5% or less. (Figure 8.1)

### First sexual intercourse was forced or rape:

Figure 8.1 Percentage of women who reported that their first sexual intercourse was 'forced' or 'rape', among all women aged 15-24 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse [1]



Seven surveys asked women about the circumstances of their sexual debut. All seven asked whether it was 'forced' or 'rape'. In other respects, however, surveys asked about the circumstances of sexual debut in different ways. The Dominican Republic 2007 DHS and Haiti 2005/6 DHS asked women whether it was 'wanted' or 'forced'. Four RHS surveys asked whether 'she convinced him', 'he convinced her', or 'they decided together'. The Jamaica 2008/9 RHS asked women whether their first sex was 'wanted', 'unwanted' but not 'forced', 'forced', or 'rape'.

### Circumstances of first sexual intercourse:

Table 8.1 Percent distribution of women aged 15-24 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse, according to the circumstances that led to their first sexual intercourse [1-2]

	Wanted	Decided together or she convinced him	Just happened	He convinced her	Unwanted but not forced	Forced or rape	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>							
Dominican Republic 2007	95.3	na	na	na	na	4.7	2,174
Haiti 2005/6	78.8	na	na	na	na	21.2	818
<b>RHS surveys</b>							
Ecuador 2004	na	78.8	4.6	13.8	na	2.7	1,728
Guatemala 2008/9	na	81.8	na	13.3	na	4.9	3,189
Jamaica 2008/9	50.3	na	na	na	44.9	4.7	1,579
Nicaragua 2006/7	na	85.3	1.2	11.7	na	1.8	3,553
Paraguay 2008	na	79.3	3.7	14.8	na	2.2	1,731

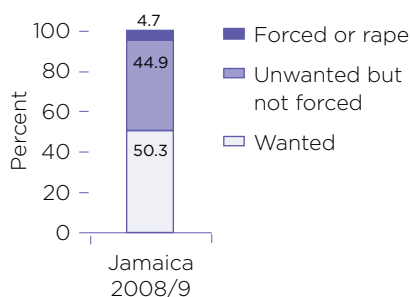
**Notes:** [1.] DHS surveys asked these questions among all women aged 15-49 who had ever had sexual intercourse, but but for the sake of comparability with RHS surveys, these data have been limited to women aged 15-24. [2.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

- In the four RHS surveys that asked who made the decision to have sexual intercourse at the time of sexual debut, most women reported having decided together with their partner, ranging from 77.8% in Ecuador 2004 to 84.8% in Nicaragua 2006/7. In each of these countries, a smaller percentage of women reported that their partner had convinced them, ranging from 11.7% in Nicaragua 2006/7 to 14.8% in Paraguay 2008. In all four surveys, 1% or less said that they had convinced their partner. (Table 8.1)
- In the two DHS surveys that asked women whether their first sexual intercourse occurred because they 'wanted' it or because they were 'forced' to do it against their will, most reported that their sexual debut was 'wanted', including 95.3% of women in the Dominican Republic 2007 and 78.8% of women in Haiti 2005/6. However, 4.7% of women in the Dominican Republic 2007 said that their first sexual intercourse was 'forced', as did more than one in five (21.2%) women in Haiti 2005/6. (Figure 8.1 and Table 8.1)
- Jamaica 2008/9 was the only DHS or RHS survey that asked women whether their first sexual intercourse was **unwanted**. In that survey, a small



### Wantedness of first sexual intercourse, Jamaica 2008/9:

Figure 8.2 Percentage of women who said that their first sexual intercourse was wanted, unwanted but not forced, or forced/rape, among women aged 15-24 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse, Jamaica 2008/9



percentage (4.7%) of young women aged 15-24 said that their first sexual intercourse was 'forced', but nearly half (44.9%) said that their first sexual intercourse was unwanted. Just over half (50.3%) of the women said that their sexual debut was wanted. (Table 8.1 and Figure 8.2)

Among women aged 15-49 who reported that their first sexual intercourse was 'forced':

- In the two DHS surveys that gathered comparable data on the perpetrator of forced

sexual debut, women's responses differed greatly. In Haiti 2005/6, two-thirds of women (66.7%) reported that they were forced to have first sexual intercourse by a current or former husband or partner, compared with 16.7% of women in the Dominican Republic 2007. In both countries, about one in five women reported forced sexual debut by a boyfriend or ex-boyfriend, including 18.4% in the Dominican Republic 2007 and 20.1% in Haiti 2005/6. And, while 20.2% of women in the Dominican Republic 2007 said their first experience of sexual intercourse was forced by a friend or acquaintance, this was the case for less than 3% of women in Haiti 2005/6. (Figure 8.4)

- When women in the Dominican Republic 2007 were asked about the perpetrator of forced sexual debut, their most common response was that they did not want to talk about it, accounting for 26.8% of women, compared with 6.0% in Haiti 2005/6. (Figure 8.4)

### 8.2 Lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator

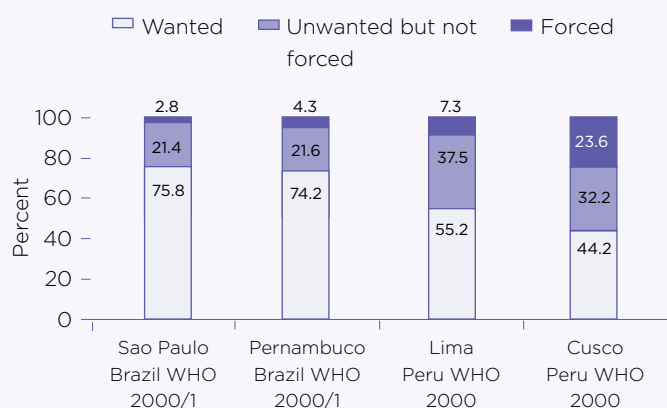
#### i. Measures and definitions

All surveys in this analysis, except Peru 2007/8, asked women about sexual violence by intimate

### Box 8.1 WHO Multi-country Study findings on sexual debut in Brazil and Peru

Wantedness of first sexual intercourse, WHO Multi-country Study, Brazil and Peru:

Figure 8.3 Percentage of women who said their first sexual intercourse was wanted, unwanted but not forced, or forced/rape, among women aged 15-49 who reported ever having had sexual intercourse, one urban and one rural site in Peru and Brazil, WHO Multi-country Study

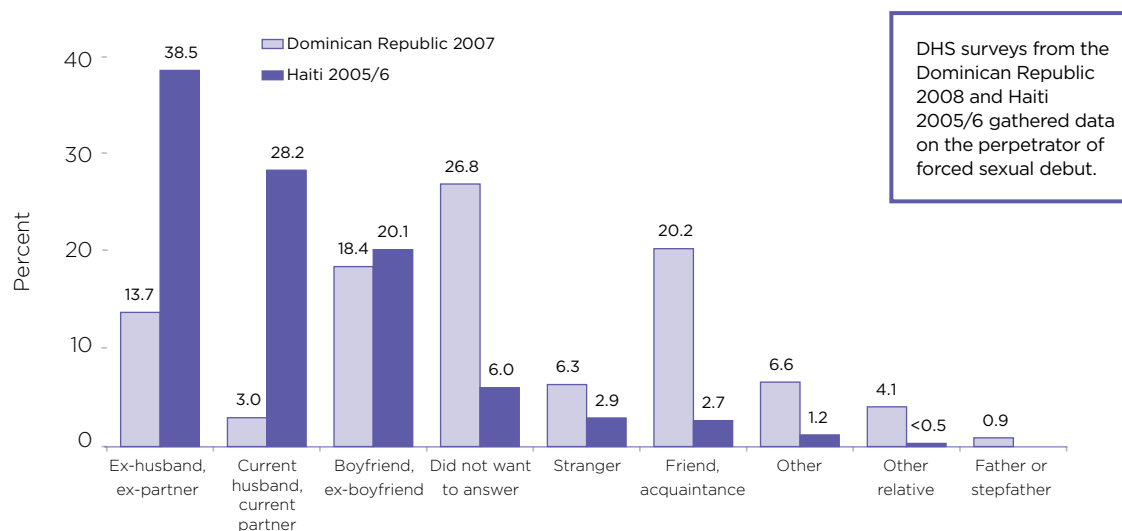


Similar to Jamaica 2008/9, WHO Multi-country Study surveys in Brazil and Peru also asked women whether their first sexual intercourse had been 'wanted', 'unwanted but not forced', or 'forced'. Those surveys also found high levels of unwanted sexual debut, reported by about one-fifth of women in Sao Paulo, Brazil, to nearly one-third of women in Cusco, Peru.

Source: WHO Multi-country Study. Personal communication from Lori Heise.

**Perpetrator of forced sexual debut, Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6:**

Figure 8.4 Percent distribution of all women aged 15-49 who reported that the first time they had sexual intercourse it was forced, according to the perpetrator, DHS surveys in the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6 [1]



**Notes:** [1.] These data included all women who reported forced sexual debut in the general survey and were not limited to women who participated in the violence module.

partners and by other perpetrators. Approaches to measuring sexual violence by perpetrators other than intimate partners varied widely across the surveys in terms of the questions asked, the subsamples of women asked each question, and the wording of specific questionnaire items. All RHS surveys tried to measure lifetime forced sexual intercourse by any perpetrator with a single question, while some DHS surveys (e.g. Bolivia 2003 and Colombia 2005) attempted to use a single question to measure lifetime sexual violence by someone other than the current or most recent partner. Other surveys asked multiple questions about different perpetrators or time frames.

All these approaches had limitations that made it challenging to estimate the total prevalence of lifetime sexual violence by any perpetrator using a single-question approach (see Box 8.2). Therefore, for this comparative analysis, a comprehensive, composite indicator of lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator (including intimate partners and any other perpetrator) was created for 11 of the 12 countries<sup>9</sup>. This indicator was created by combining affirmative answers to all questions about sexual violence throughout

the questionnaires<sup>h</sup>. In other words, women who answered “yes” to any question about sexual violence were counted as having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. The specific questionnaire items included in this indicator varied by survey depending on which items were available, but included the following items whenever they were measured:

**Sexual violence by an intimate partner**

*Any of the following acts:*

(Note: for RHS surveys this included any current or former partner in the woman’s lifetime, but for DHS surveys it was limited to the current or most recent partner only)

- Was forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse
- Was forced to perform unwanted ‘sex acts’
- Had unwanted sexual intercourse for fear of what a partner might do if she refused

**Sexual violence by any perpetrator**

*Any of the following acts:*

- Any act of sexual violence by an intimate partner from the list above

<sup>9</sup> Bolivia 2008 and Peru 2007/8 data could not be used to produce estimates of lifetime prevalence of sexual violence, since Bolivia 2008 did not ask about sexual violence by intimate partners *ever*, and Peru 2007/8 did not ask about sexual violence by someone other than the current/most recent partner.

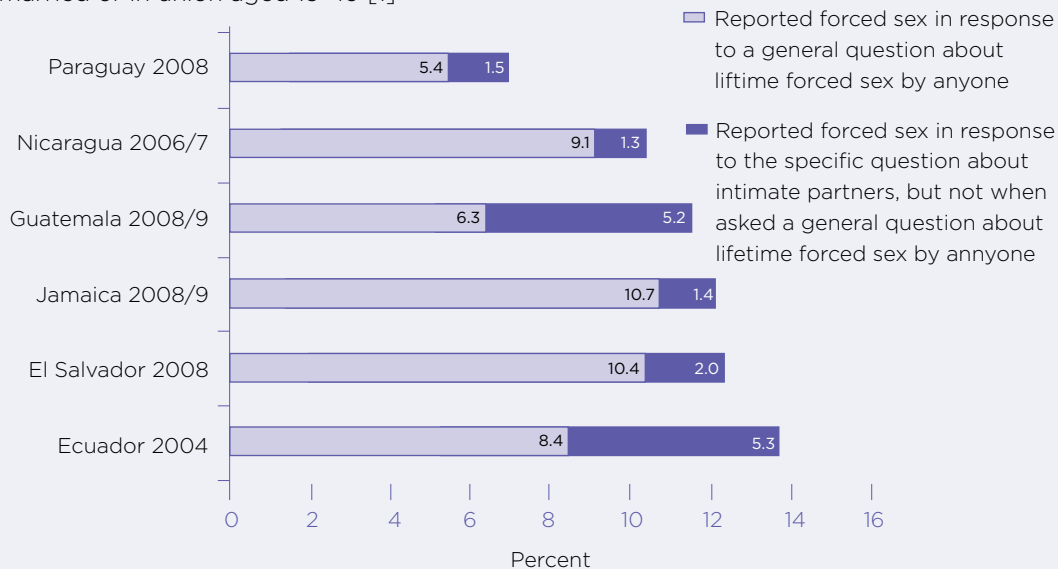
<sup>h</sup> This composite indicator did not include data from a question in four RHS surveys that asked women whether they had ever been forced to do something such as undress, touch someone or be touched, kiss, embrace, etc., because comparable data were not available from most surveys.

### Box 8.2 Limitations of trying to measure lifetime forced sexual relations with a single question

Six RHS surveys tried to use a single question to measure lifetime experiences of penetrative sexual violence, such as: **Jamaica 2008/9 RHS**: *At any time in your life, did anyone ever force you to have sexual intercourse (with penetration) against your will?*

The problem with this type of question was that in all six RHS surveys, a substantial proportion of women who said “no” to this **general** question about lifetime forced sexual relations by any perpetrator had previously said “yes” when asked a **specific** question about forced sexual relations by an intimate partner, even though the general question was meant to include intimate partners, and despite written instructions on the questionnaire for interviewers to check for internal consistency (Figure 8.5).

Figure 8.5 Percentage of women who reported forced sexual intercourse in response to two different questions: a general question about lifetime forced sex by any perpetrator and a specific question about forced sex by an intimate partner, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1]



Notes: [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44.

The degree of inconsistency between responses to the general and specific questionnaire items varied by survey. In four studies, the percentage of women missed by the general question about lifetime forced sex by any perpetrator ranged from 1% to 2% when expressed as a percentage of women ever married or in union, compared with two surveys in which this proportion was greater than 5% (Guatemala 2008/9 and Ecuador 2004). However, when these data are expressed as a percentage of ever-partnered women who reported sexual violence at any point in the interview, the general question about lifetime sexual violence by any perpetrator missed nearly four in 10 women (38.5%) in Guatemala 2008/9 who disclosed forced sex at some point during the course of the full interview, and nearly one-half (45.5%) of women who disclosed forced sex in Ecuador 2004. These data reinforce the limitations of using the single-question approach—either for physical or sexual violence—that have been noted by other researchers.<sup>68</sup>

- Forced sexual debut ('forced' to have sexual intercourse; first sexual intercourse was 'rape')
- Forced sexual intercourse at any time in life (or in Honduras 2005/6—after age 12) by any perpetrator
- Forced sexual intercourse or other unwanted sexual acts that women were made to perform by someone other than the current or most recent partner

The composite indicator of the prevalence of lifetime sexual violence was limited to women ever married or in union in part because this was the group of women of primary interest in the rest of the report, and also because it facilitated an analysis of different types of perpetrators.

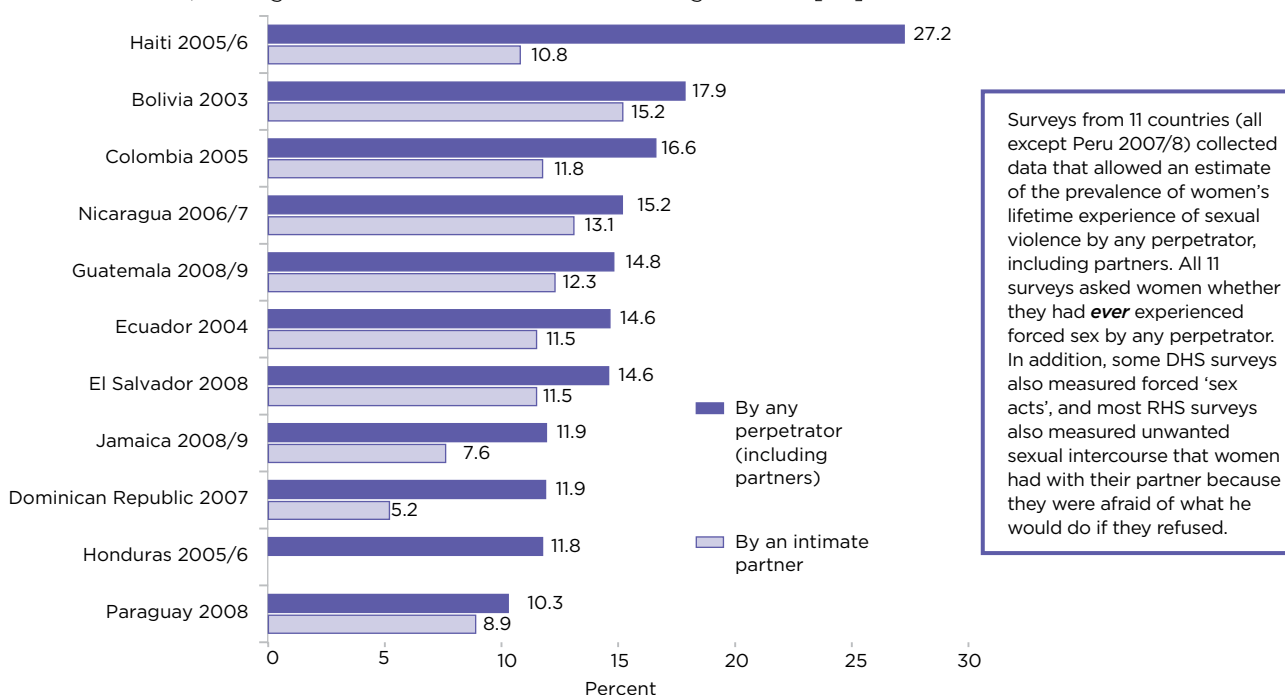
## ii. Findings: lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by any perpetrator

Among women ever married or in union:

- When questions about sexual violence were combined into a composite indicator, the reported prevalence of lifetime sexual violence against women by any perpetrator varied widely by country. In Paraguay 2008, approximately one in 10 (10.3%) women reported experiencing sexual violence in their lifetime, whereas in Haiti 2005/6, more than one in four (27.2%) women did so. (Figure 8.6)
- In most surveys (except the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6), the majority of women who reported any lifetime sexual violence had experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner, either exclusively or in addition to violence by other perpetrators. (Figure 8.6)
- There were only two surveys in which less than half of the women who experienced lifetime sexual violence reported sexual violence by an intimate partner, including 43.7% of women in

## Lifetime sexual violence reported by women ever married or in union:

Figure 8.6 Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner and by any perpetrator ever in their life, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] DHS surveys asked about forced 'sex acts' in addition to forced sexual intercourse, except Bolivia 2003 and the Dominican Republic 2007. [6.] RHS surveys asked about unwanted sexual intercourse because women feared what their partner might do as well as 'forced' sexual intercourse, except in Ecuador 2004 and Jamaica 2008/9, which asked about forced sexual intercourse only. [7.] Honduras 2005/6 did not ask a specific question about forced intercourse by an intimate partner ever, though partners were implicitly included in a question about forced sexual intercourse or sex acts by any perpetrator ever, after age 12.

the Dominican Republic 2007 and 39.6% in Haiti 2005/6. It is important to note, however, that both of these were DHS surveys in which measures of intimate partner sexual violence were limited specifically to women's current or most recent partner only, and therefore, sexual violence by any former partner other than the current/most recent was not counted as 'intimate partner violence'. Furthermore, in both these surveys, nearly four in 10 women ever married or in union had previous intimate partnerships before their current or most recent partner (37.2% in the Dominican Republic 2007 and 38.8% in Haiti 2005/6). This limitation almost certainly resulted in an underestimation of the proportion of lifetime sexual violence perpetrated by intimate partners. (Figure 8.6)

### 8.3 Perpetrators of lifetime sexual violence

#### i. Measures and definitions

Most surveys gathered some data on the perpetrators of forced sexual intercourse. These measures were highly diverse, both in terms of the wording of questions and the subset of women who were asked these questions. For example, three RHS surveys and two DHS surveys asked women who forced them to have sexual intercourse the first time this ever occurred; three RHS surveys asked who forced them to have sex ever in their lifetime; and three DHS surveys asked who—other than their current or most recent partner—had ever forced them to have sex. Given that none of the surveys was able to gather these data using just a single question, it was necessary to combine responses to several questions in order to construct an indicator for the perpetrator of lifetime sexual violence.

Roughly comparable data were available for three RHS surveys (El Salvador 2008, Guatemala 2008/9, and Nicaragua 2006/7) and two DHS surveys (Bolivia 2003 and Colombia 2005). All five of these surveys collected data on the perpetrator of sexual violence among all women who reported sexual violence and allowed women to name multiple perpetrators of sexual violence.

*(Note that more limited data on the perpetrators of forced sexual intercourse the first time it occurred were available from the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6, and some of these data were presented earlier in findings about the circumstances of sexual debut.)*

#### Example of a question used to ask about the perpetrator of lifetime sexual violence

##### El Salvador 2008 RHS

*¿Quien(es) la ha(n) obligado a tener relaciones sexuales? ¿Y alguien más?*

*ESPOSO/COMPAÑERO, EX-ESPOSO/EX-COMPAÑERO, PADRE, PADRASTRO, HERMANO, TÍO, PRIMO, MAESTRO, NOVIO/EX-NOVIO, PATRÓN/HIJO DEL PATRÓN, VECINO/AMIGO/CONOCIDO, LÍDER RELIGIOSO, DESCONOCIDO, OTRO (ESPECIFIQUE)*

Who forced you to have sexual intercourse?  
Anyone else?

BOYFRIEND/EX-BOYFRIEND, EMPLOYER/SON OF EMPLOYER, NEIGHBOR/FRIEND, ACQUAINTANCE, RELIGIOUS LEADER, STRANGER, OTHER (SPECIFY)

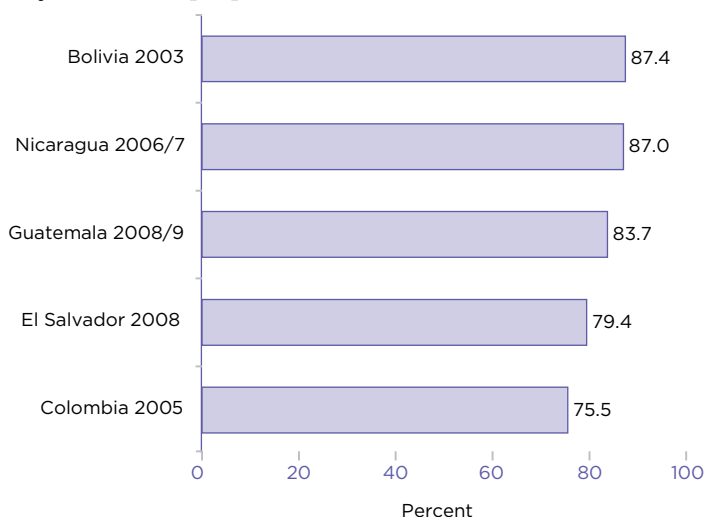
#### ii. Findings: perpetrators of lifetime sexual violence

Among women ever married or in union who reported sexual violence at any time in their lifetime:

- In all five surveys, the vast majority of women who reported lifetime sexual violence said that the perpetrator was someone they knew, rather than a stranger. In fact, most women said the perpetrator of sexual violence was a current or former intimate partner, ranging from 75.5% in Colombia 2005 to 87.4% in Bolivia 2003. (Figure 8.7 and Table 8.2)
- In the two DHS surveys, the most commonly cited perpetrator of sexual violence was the current or most recent husband or partner (reported by 67.5% of women in Bolivia 2003 and 38.1% of women in Colombia 2005). The second most common perpetrator was an ex-husband or ex-partner other than the current/most recent partner, as reported by 20.9% of women in Bolivia 2003 and 37.9% of women in Colombia 2005. RHS survey data could not be used to distinguish between violence by the current/most recent partner and violence by any other partner, however. (Table 8.2)
- In addition to current and ex-husbands and partners, women reported experiencing sexual violence by other perpetrators, including boyfriends, relatives, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, employers, and strangers. However, the combined percentage of women who reported each of these perpetrators did not exceed 10% in any survey. (Table 8.2)

### Perpetrator of lifetime sexual violence was husband or partner:

Figure 8.7 Percentage of women who reported that sexual violence was committed by a current or ex-husband or partner, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who reported sexual violence at any time in life [1-2]



Five surveys collected data that allowed an analysis of the perpetrator of lifetime sexual violence. A 'partner' was defined as any current or former husband or cohabiting male sexual partner. In Figure 8.7 and Table 8.2, sexual violence includes the following acts: forced sexual intercourse (measured by all five surveys), forced 'sex acts' (measured by Colombia 2005 in a single question with forced sexual intercourse), and unwanted sexual intercourse that women had out of fear of what their partner would do if they refused (Nicaragua 2006/7, Guatemala 2008/9, and El Salvador 2008).

### Type of perpetrator:

Table 8.2 Percentage of women who reported that sexual violence was committed by specific types of perpetrators, among women aged 15-49 ever married or in union who reported sexual violence at any time in life [1-4]

Type of perpetrator	DHS surveys		RHS surveys		
	Bolivia 2003	Colombia 2005	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7
Husband or partner (current or ex)	87.4	75.5	79.4	83.7	87.0
Current/most recent partner	67.5	38.1	na	na	na
Ex-partner (other than most recent)	20.9	37.9	na	na	na
Boyfriend (current or ex)	na	2.5	2.3	3.9	3.3
Father or stepfather	0.7	2.9	4.4	3.3	2.3
Other relative	2.5	6.7	3.5	4.2	2.9
Friend, neighbor, acquaintance	5.6	7.3	7.4	7.3	6.9
Employer, someone from work	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.3	0.7
Stranger	7.3	8.3	8.8	7.6	6.4
Other	2.3	1.1	1.4	0.5	1.1
No answer/didn't want to talk about it	0.3	5.6	0.1	0.0	0.0
Total number unweighted	2,214	4,207	1,061	1,830	1,570

**Notes:** [1.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [2.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner. [3.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [4.] RHS surveys did not gather data that distinguished between the current/most recent partner and prior ex-partners.

## CHAPTER 9. HISTORY OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CHILDHOOD

### 9.1 History of sexual abuse in childhood

#### i. Measures and definitions

Six RHS surveys gathered comparable data on experiences of sexual abuse in childhood, as reported by women aged 15-49. Some DHS surveys, such as Honduras 2005/6, also asked women about sexual abuse in childhood, but their measures were not similar enough to those of the RHS surveys to include in a comparative analysis. All six RHS surveys asked women a general question about lifetime experiences of forced sexual intercourse. If women said yes, they were then asked how old they were when this experience first occurred. In addition, four RHS surveys (El Salvador 2008, Ecuador 2004, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Paraguay 2008) asked women whether they had ever been forced to do something such as undress, touch, kiss, embrace, or do any other sexual act that they did not want to do before age 15. Again, if women said yes, they were asked at what age this first occurred. Women who reported experiencing any of these acts before age 15 were classified as having experienced childhood sexual abuse for the purposes of this comparative analysis, as noted below.

#### Sexual abuse in childhood

*Any of the following acts:*

- Forced sexual intercourse that was unwanted/ against her will before age 15
- Forced to do something such as undress, touch someone or be touched, kiss, embrace, or do any other unwanted sexual act, before age 15

It should be noted that the choice of this operational definition was limited by the data that were originally gathered by these surveys. Definitions of child sexual abuse vary widely in prevalence research.<sup>102-104</sup> Compared with some studies, the definition of child sexual abuse used in this report is rather narrow. For example, it required women to report that sexual intercourse during childhood was ‘forced’ in order to qualify as sexual abuse. In contrast, many researchers have considered ‘unwanted’ sexual intercourse in childhood as child sexual abuse (whether or not it was physically forced). Other researchers and

many legal systems have considered any sexual intercourse between an adult and a child below the age of consent to be a form of child sexual abuse, regardless of circumstance—albeit with wide variations in the age of consent.<sup>105</sup> In addition, many definitions of child sexual abuse have included a broader range of acts than those measured by the surveys included in this analysis. For example, while some RHS surveys gathered data on non-penetrative acts such as forced touch, the only behaviorally specific act of non-contact abuse measured was being made to undress.

#### Examples of RHS survey questions used to measure sexual abuse in childhood

##### Nicaragua 2006/7 RHS

*Alguna vez en su vida,*

- *¿Alguien la obligó o la ha obligado a tener relaciones sexuales con penetración (violación) cuando Ud. no lo quiso?*  
ENTREVISTADORA: REFIERE A LA PREGUNTA 819A(b) PARA INCLUIR ACTOS DEL ESPOSO O PAREJA
- *¿Qué edad tenía usted cuando le pasó eso por primera vez?*
- *¿Y alguien la obligó o la ha obligado a hacer algo como lo siguiente: a desvestirse, tocarle o dejarse tocar las partes íntimas, besar, abrazar o hacer cualquier otro acto sexual que usted no quiso? ¿Qué edad tenía usted cuando le pasó eso por primera vez?*

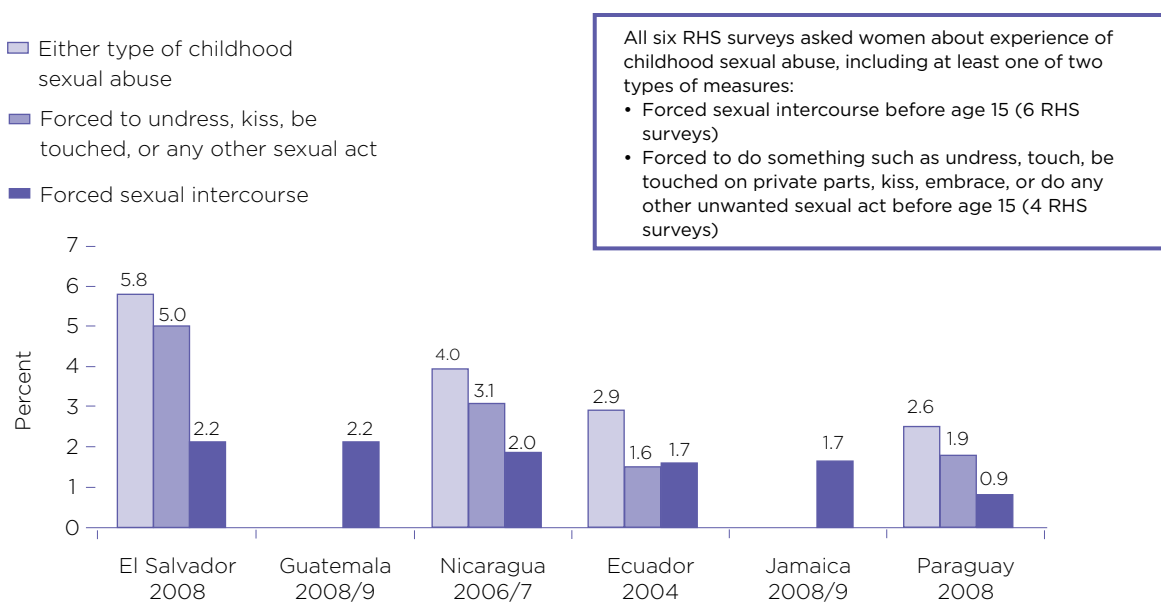
*At any time in your life,*

- *Did anyone ever force you to have sexual intercourse with penetration (rape) against your will? INTERVIEWER: REFER TO QUESTION 819A(b) TO INCLUDE ACTS BY THE HUSBAND OR PARTNER.*
- *How old were you when this happened for the first time?*
- *And has anyone ever forced you to do something such as the following: undress, touch or be touched on private parts, kiss, embrace, or do any other sexual act that you did not want? What age were you when this happened for the first time?*



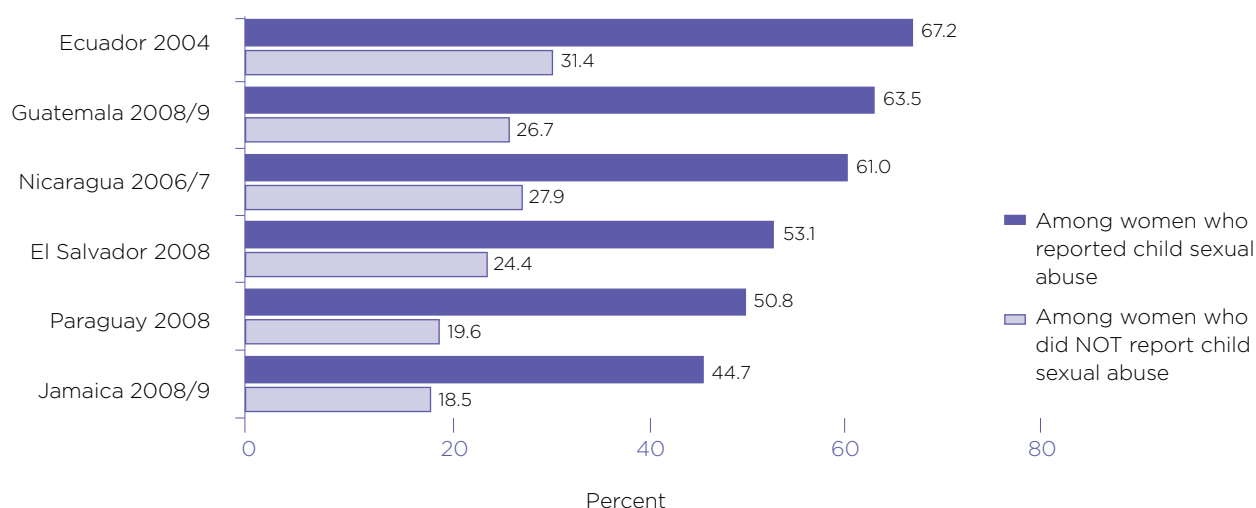
### History of childhood sexual abuse reported by adult women, by type of abuse:

Figure 9.1 Percentage of all women aged 15-49 who reported having experienced childhood sexual abuse before age 15, by type of abuse, RHS surveys [1-2]



### Prevalence of partner violence, according to history of sexual abuse in childhood:

Figure 9.2 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual partner violence ever, by history of childhood sexual abuse, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-4]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Jamaica 2008/9 and Guatemala 2008/9 asked about forced sexual intercourse but not about being forced to undress, touch, be touched, kiss, embrace, or do any other unwanted sexual acts before age 15. [3.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

## ii. Findings: history of sexual abuse in childhood

Among all women (including those ever and never married or in union):

- In all six RHS surveys, approximately 1% to 2% of women reported forced sexual intercourse before age 15. (Figure 9.1)
- In the four surveys that asked women whether they had ever been forced to do something such as undress, touch or be touched, kiss, embrace, or do any other unwanted sexual act before age 15, the percentage of women who reported this type of abuse ranged from 1.6% of women in Ecuador 2004 to 5.0% of women in El Salvador 2008. In these four surveys, the percentage of women who reported this type of abuse or forced sexual intercourse in childhood ranged from 2.6% in Paraguay 2008 to 5.8% in El Salvador 2008. (Figure 9.1)

Among women ever married or in union:

- In all six RHS surveys, the proportion of women ever married or in union who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner **ever** was significantly greater ( $p < 0.001$ ) and, in all six countries, more than twice as high among women who reported sexual abuse in childhood compared with those who did not. (Figure 9.2)

## 9.2 History of physical abuse in childhood

### i. Measures and definitions

All six RHS surveys asked women whether they themselves had been beaten or physically abused in childhood. The questions used to measure this indicator varied slightly. Five surveys asked women whether they were beaten or 'physically abused' ("*golpeada o maltratada físicamente*"). The sixth RHS survey (Jamaica 2008/9) asked women whether they had experienced four specific acts (i.e. were slapped, kicked, shoved, or hit). Most surveys asked about violence by anyone including family members, but Jamaica 2008/9 specified a parent or another adult family member. All surveys asked about physical violence experienced before age 15, except El Salvador 2008, which asked about experiences before age 18. Appendix Table A11 presents the percentage of women who reported being beaten or physically abused in childhood, by women's background characteristics.

### Examples of questions used to measure physical violence in childhood

#### Paraguay 2008 RHS

*Antes que Ud. cumpliera los 15 años ¿Usted fue alguna vez golpeada o maltratada físicamente por alguna persona, incluyendo familiares?*

*Before you turned 15 years old, were you ever beaten or physically abused by anyone, including family members?*

#### Jamaica 2008/9 RHS

*Before you turned 15 years of age, were you ever slapped, kicked, shoved, or hit by a parent or another adult family member?*

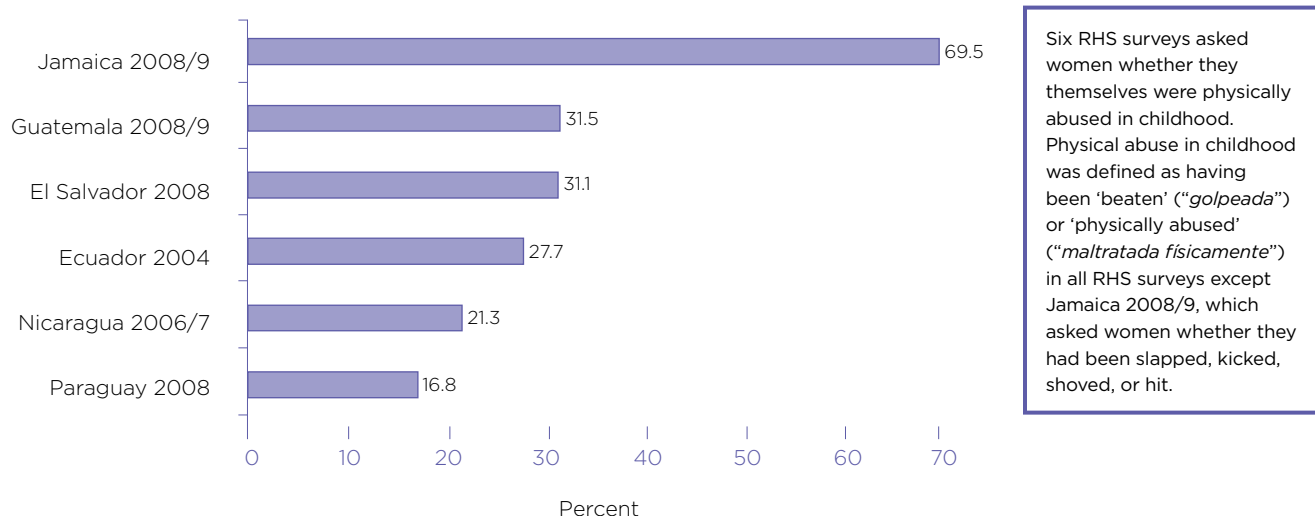
## ii. Findings: history of physical abuse in childhood

Among all women (ever and never married or in union):

- The proportion of all women who reported physical violence during childhood varied widely, ranging from about one-sixth (16.8%) of women in Paraguay 2008 to more than two-thirds (69.5%) in Jamaica 2008/9. In four of the six countries, this proportion fell between one-fifth and one-third of women. (Figure 9.3)
- Compared with other surveys, Jamaica 2008/9 was an outlier, with the proportion of women reporting physical violence in childhood more than double that of women in any other country. (As noted above, however, this survey was the only RHS survey that asked about four behaviorally specific acts.) (Figure 9.3)
- In all six RHS surveys, the proportion of women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported physical violence in childhood compared with those who did not. In three surveys (El Salvador 2008, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Paraguay 2008) the proportion of women who reported partner violence **ever** was more than twice as high among women who reported physical violence in childhood compared with those who did not. (Figure 9.4)

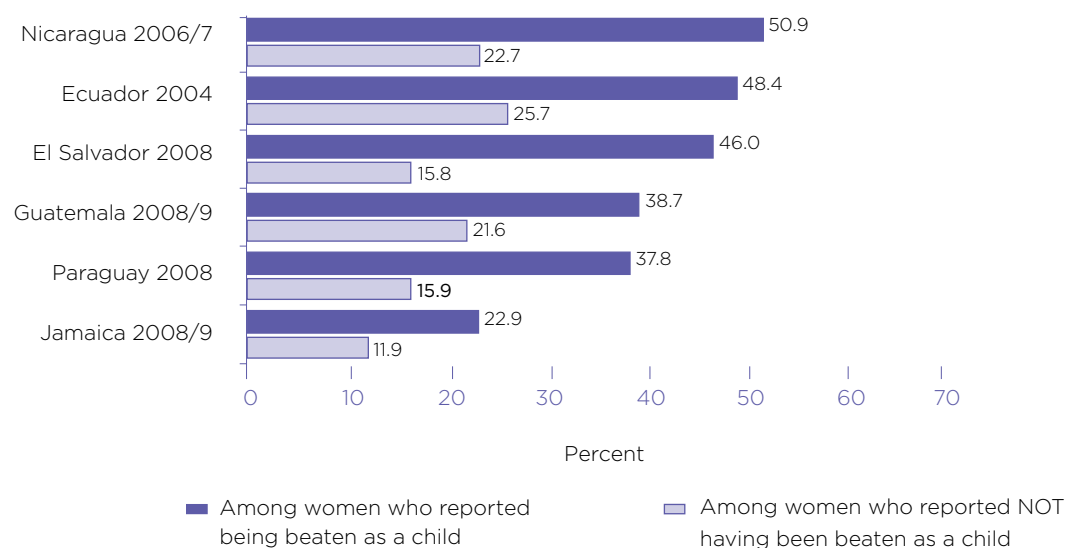
### History of physical abuse in childhood reported by women aged 15-49:

Figure 9.3 Percentage of women who reported being beaten or physically abused in childhood, among all women aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-3]



### Prevalence of partner violence according to women's experience of physical abuse in childhood:

Figure 9.4 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to their experience of physical abuse in childhood, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-5]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Childhood was defined as under age 18 in El Salvador 2008, and under age 15 in all other surveys. [3.] El Salvador 2008 asked about physical abuse that occurred in the home; Jamaica 2008/9 asked about acts by a parent or another adult family member; Ecuador 2004, Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Paraguay 2008 asked about abuse by anyone (or 'anyone including family'). [4.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [5.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

### 9.3 History of their father (or stepfather) beating their mother (or stepmother)

#### i. Measures and definitions

All surveys except Honduras 2005/6 asked women whether their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother). Measures in RHS and DHS surveys were comparable with minor differences in wording. Most RHS surveys asked women whether they had seen or heard their father or stepfather beat or 'physically abuse' their mother or stepmother before they turned age 15. Exceptions included Jamaica 2008/9, which asked about behaviorally specific acts against the mother or stepmother; El Salvador 2008, which asked women more generally whether 'men' had physically abused 'women' in the home(s) where they lived before age 18; and Ecuador 2004, which asked women whether their parents or stepparents had physically abused each other (which could have included women beating men). DHS surveys simply asked women whether their father beat their mother, without asking whether they had personally witnessed the abuse or whether the abuse occurred before a particular age. Appendix Table A12 presents the percentage of women who reported that their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother) by background characteristics.

#### Examples of questions used to measure whether their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother)

##### Guatemala 2008/9 RHS

*Pensando en su niñez antes que cumpliera 15 años, ¿Alguna vez vio o escuchó a su padre o padrastro maltratar físicamente a su madre o madrastra?*

Thinking about your childhood before you turned 15 years old, did you ever see or hear your father or stepfather physically abuse your mother or stepmother?

##### Peru 2007/8 DHS

*Hasta donde usted sabe ¿Su papá le pegó alguna vez a su mamá?*

As far as you know, did your father ever beat your mother?

#### ii. Findings: father (or stepfather) beat mother (or stepmother)

- The proportion of women who reported that their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother) varied widely by country, ranging from one-eighth (12.6%) in Haiti 2005/6 to nearly one-half (48.3%) in Bolivia 2003. In seven countries, one-quarter or more of women reported exposure to this type of domestic violence. (Figure 9.5)
- In all surveys except for El Salvador 2008 and Jamaica 2008/9, a higher proportion of women reported that their mother or stepmother was beaten than that they themselves were beaten (see section 9.2). Compared with other RHS surveys, Jamaica 2008/9 had the lowest percentage of women who reported that their mother (or stepmother) was beaten (16.7%), but the highest percentage (69.5%) of women who reported having experienced physical violence themselves by a family member in childhood. (Figures 9.3 and 9.5)
- The five surveys in which women reported the lowest prevalence of physical violence against the mother (or stepmother) were also the five surveys in which women reported the lowest prevalence of experiencing physical violence by an intimate partner themselves *ever*. (Figures 3.1 and 9.5)
- In all surveys, the proportion of women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence *ever* was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported that their mother (or stepmother) was beaten, compared with those who did not. (Figure 9.6)

### 9.4 Punishment of children in the current home

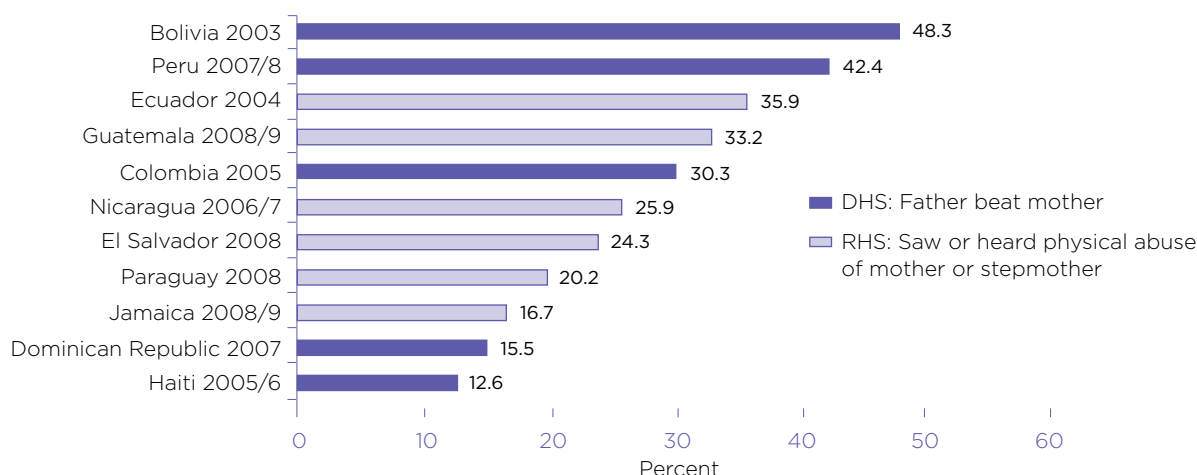
#### i. Measures and definitions

Three DHS and four RHS surveys asked women how children in their current home were punished. Surveys asked these questions among slightly different groups of women. Some asked all women who reported having children under age 16. Others asked women with at least one living child or women with any children living in the household.

Measures of child punishment varied in other ways as well. Two surveys (Bolivia 2008 and Guatemala 2008/9) asked about punishment separately for boys and girls (this report combines them); all others did not. Three of the four RHS surveys (the

### Father or stepfather beat mother or stepmother, among all women:

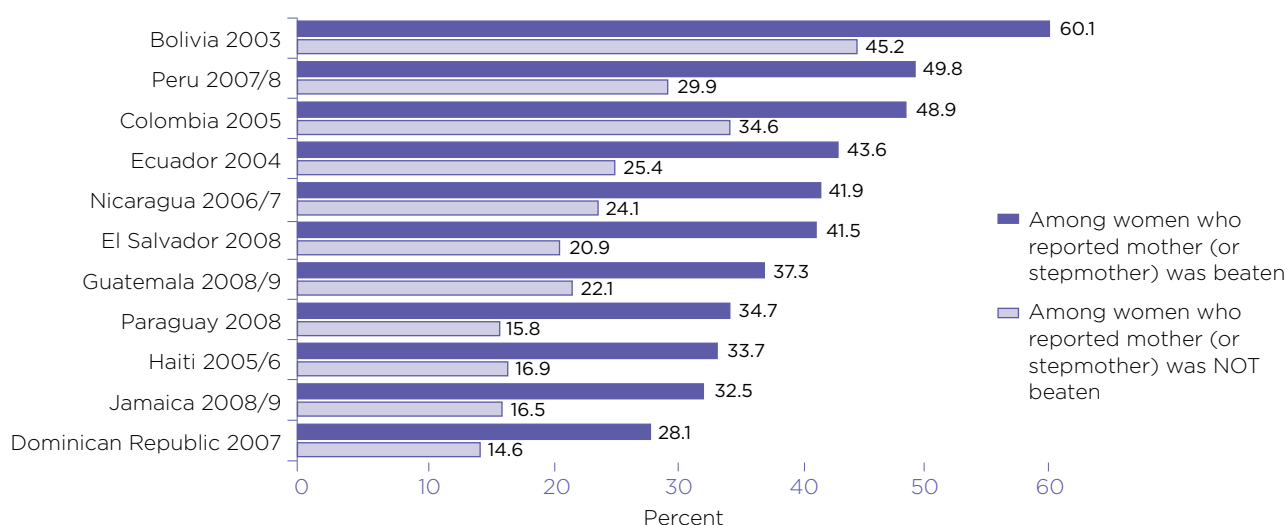
Figure 9.5 Percentage of women who reported that their father beat their mother (DHS surveys) or that they saw or heard their father or stepfather beat or physically abuse their mother or stepmother (RHS surveys), among all women aged 15-49 [1-5]



All surveys except Honduras 2005/6 asked women whether their father beat their mother. Most RHS surveys asked women whether they had seen or heard their father (or stepfather) physically abuse their mother (or stepmother) before age 15. El Salvador 2008 asked women whether men had abused women in the home where they lived before age 18. Ecuador 2004 asked whether parents (or stepparents) abused each other. DHS surveys asked women if they knew whether their father beat their mother (not whether they had personally witnessed the abuse).

### Prevalence of partner violence, according to whether mother (or stepmother) was beaten:

Figure 9.6 Percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner ever, according to whether or not they reported that their mother (or stepmother) was beaten, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Bolivia 2003 limited questions about whether the mother was beaten to women who reported ever having had a husband, partner, lover, or boyfriend. [3.] Ecuador 2004 asked women whether their parents or stepparents abused each other physically or psychologically, but psychological abuse was excluded from this analysis. El Salvador 2008 asked whether men physically abused women in the home(s) where women lived before age 18. [4.] Some women interviewed in DHS surveys said they did not know whether their father beat their mother. [5.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [6.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [7.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

exception was Guatemala 2008/9) asked generally how children in the home were punished. Guatemala 2008/9 and the three DHS surveys asked women which specific members of the household punished children, then asked which acts of punishment they used. In all surveys, women could report multiple types of behaviorally specific acts of punishment, but response options varied by country. For the purpose of this comparative analysis, acts of punishment were classified into the four categories listed below.

**Types of punishment of children in the current home included:**

- **Hitting or beating:** e.g. beating, spanking, slapping, hitting with a hand, belt, stick, etc.
- **Other physical punishments:** e.g. burning them, holding them under water or throwing water on them, making them kneel on corn or stones, pulling their ears, withholding food.
- **Non-physical punishment:** e.g. scolding, lecturing, yelling, insulting, shutting them in or out, ignoring them, giving them more chores, taking away clothes or belongings, not giving them money.
- **No punishment.**

**ii. Findings: punishment of children in the current home**

- In the seven surveys that measured punishment of children in the current home, non-physical punishment was generally the most commonly reported form of punishment. However, the proportion of women who reported that children were punished with hitting or beating was substantial, ranging from about one-fourth (25.1%) in Paraguay 2008 to just under two-thirds (61.4%) in Colombia 2005. (Table 9.1)
- In all surveys, the proportion of women who reported that children were punished with hitting or beating was significantly greater ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** compared with those who did not. (Figure 9.7)

**Example of a survey question used to measure punishment of children in the current home**

**Nicaragua 2006/7 RHS**

*¿En este hogar como se castigan a los niños cuando se portan mal? ¿Algo más?*

MARCAR TODAS LAS RESPUESTAS MENCIONADAS.

- REGAÑOS/REPRIMENDAS VERBALES
- PROHIBIR ALGO QUE LE GUSTA
- BOFETADAS/PALMADAS
- GOLPEÁNDOLA CON LA MANO O EL PUÑO
- GOLPEÁNDOLA CON FAJA, REGLA, MECATE, PALO U OTRO OBJETO
- DEJÁNDOLE ENCERRADA O AISLADA
- PONIÉNDOLE MÁS TRABAJO
- DEJÁNDOLE FUERA DE CASA
- NO SE CASTIGAN A LOS NIÑOS
- OTRO

In this home, how are children punished when they misbehave? Anything else?

MARK ALL THE RESPONSES MENTIONED.

- SCOLDING/VERBAL REPRIMANDS
- PROHIBITING SOMETHING THAT THEY LIKE
- SLAPPING
- HITTING WITH THE HAND OR FIST
- BEATING WITH A BELT, RULER, ROPE, STICK OR OTHER OBJECT
- LEAVING THEM LOCKED UP OR ISOLATED
- GIVING THEM MORE WORK
- LEAVING THEM OUTSIDE THE HOUSE
- CHILDREN ARE NOT PUNISHED
- OTHER

### Type of punishment used to discipline children in the current home:

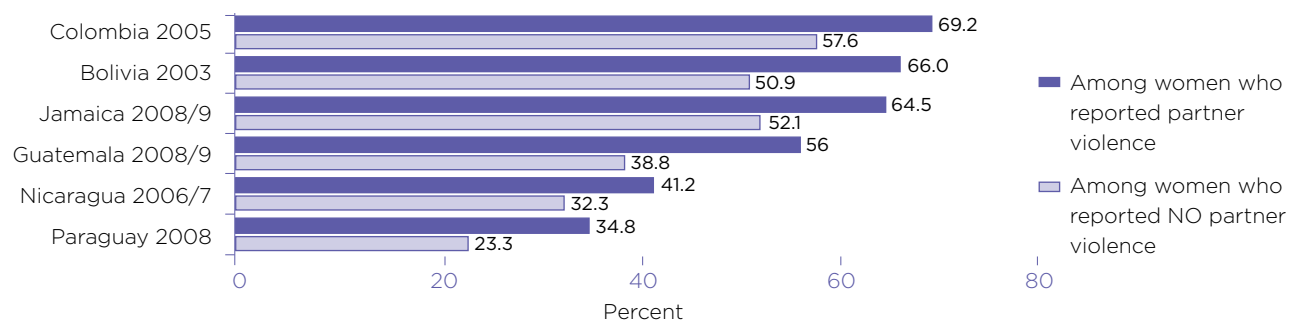
Table 9.1 Percentage of women who reported that children in their home are punished, by type of punishment, among all women aged 15-49 with children in the home [1-3]

	Hitting, beating, spanking, or slapping	Other physical punishment	Non-physical punishment	Children not punished	Total
	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>					
Bolivia 2008	47.6	1.1	63.2	22.2	10,092
Colombia 2005	61.4	1.2	81.9	10.8	26,060
<b>RHS surveys</b>					
Guatemala 2008/9	43.1	13.4	81.9	4.6	12,446
Jamaica 2008/9	53.3	na	71.0	20.2	6,435
Nicaragua 2006/7	34.4	na	75.5	16.2	10,113
Paraguay 2008	25.1	na	91.1	6.2	4,029

Three DHS surveys (Bolivia 2008 rather than 2003 is shown here) and four RHS surveys asked women how children were punished in their current home. All surveys asked about behaviorally specific acts of punishment. The specific acts varied greatly from survey to survey. Acts of punishment were grouped into four categories: hitting or beating, other physical punishments, non-physical punishment, or children not punished.

### Physical punishment of children, according to the woman's experience of partner violence:

Figure 9.7 Percentage of women who reported that their children are punished with hitting, beating, spanking, or slapping, according to their experience of physical or sexual partner violence ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 with children [2-6]



**Notes:** [1.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [2.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [3.] Surveys used different criteria for children's age and relationship to the woman interviewed. RHS surveys asked women with children under 16, except in Guatemala 2008/9, which asked women who had at least one living child. DHS surveys asked women who had at least one living child or reported any child, stepchild, or adopted child in the household. [4.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [5.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [6.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003, which also included boyfriends and lovers.



## CHAPTER 10. GENDER NORMS AND VIOLENCE

### 10.1 Acceptability of wife-beating

#### i. Measures and definitions

Surveys from 10 countries asked women about the acceptability of wife-beating. (Colombia 2005 and El Salvador 2008 did not.) Surveys used different types of questions to measure this indicator. Some surveys asked women whether they agreed that a man has a “good reason” (Jamaica 2008/9) or is ‘right’ (“*tiene razón*”, Ecuador 2004) to beat his wife. Some surveys asked whether a man has ‘the right’ (“*tiene derecho*”) to beat his wife, namely Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Paraguay 2008. Some asked whether wife-beating is ‘justified’ (Bolivia 2008, Haiti 2005/6, and Honduras 2005/6), while others asked women whether they ‘agreed’ with a man beating his wife (the Dominican Republic 2007 and Peru 2007/8).

Surveys in nine countries asked women about the acceptability of wife-beating in four to five specific circumstances. Guatemala 2008/9 asked women more generally whether a man has the right to beat his wife without mentioning specific reasons, so it was excluded from this analysis. DHS and RHS surveys asked about different but overlapping sets of reasons, including circumstances in which the wife:

- Neglects the children or housework (10 surveys)
- Refuses sexual intercourse (10 surveys)
- Goes out without telling her husband (5 DHS surveys and 1 RHS survey)
- Is or is suspected of being unfaithful (4 RHS surveys)
- Disobeys or argues with husband (5 DHS surveys)
- Burns the food (5 DHS surveys)

For five countries, data were available on the acceptability of wife-beating at two different points in time, using estimates from prior surveys.<sup>106-109</sup>

The data charting attitudes at two points in time are presented for all women (both ever and never married or in union) because that was how most earlier country reports constructed the indicator. Appendix Table A13 presents the percentage of women who agreed that wife-beating is acceptable for at least one reason, by women’s background characteristics.

#### Examples of questions used to measure acceptability of wife-beating

##### Jamaica 2008/9 RHS

*In your opinion, does a man have a good reason to hit his wife if:*

- *She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction?*
- *She disobeys him?*
- *She refuses to have sexual intercourse with him?*
- *She asks him whether he has other girlfriends?*
- *He finds out that she has been unfaithful?*

##### Bolivia 2008 DHS

*A veces los esposos/compañeros se molestan por las cosas que hacen las esposas. En su opinión, se justifica que un esposo/compañero golpee a la esposa en las siguientes situaciones:*

- *¿Si ella sale fuera de la casa sin decírselo a él?*
- *¿Si ella descuida/desatiende los niños?*
- *¿Si ella discute con él?*
- *¿Si ella no quiere/rehusa tener relaciones sexuales con él?*
- *¿Si ella deja quemar la comida?*

*Sometimes husbands/partners get upset by the things that their wives do. In your opinion, is it justified for a husband/partner to beat his wife in the following situations:*

- *If she leaves the house without telling him?*
- *If she neglects the children?*
- *If she argues with him?*
- *If she doesn’t want/refuses to have sexual intercourse with him?*
- *If she burns the food?*

#### ii. Findings: acceptability of wife-beating for specific reasons

Among women ever married or in union:

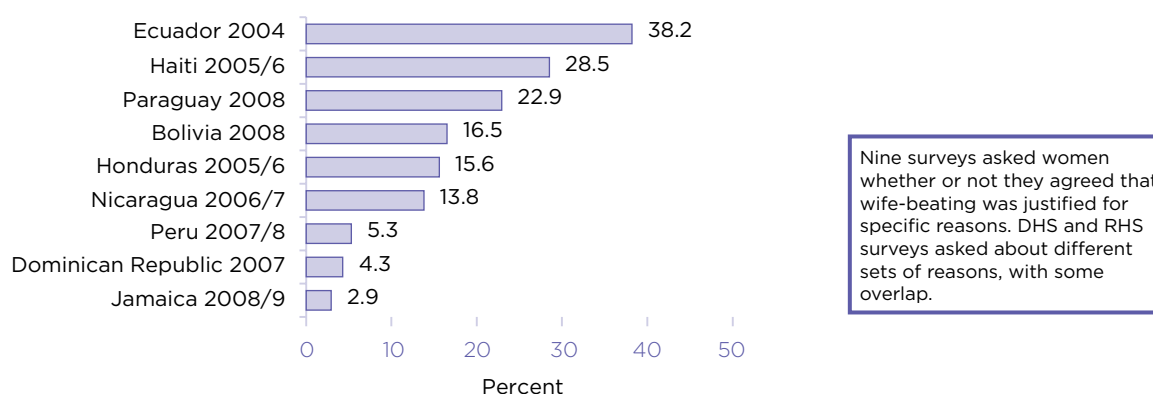
- The acceptability of wife-beating for at least one reason varied widely by country, ranging from 2.9% among women in Jamaica 2008/9 to 38.2% in Ecuador 2004. (Figure 10.1)
- The most common circumstance in which women said that wife-beating was acceptable

varied by survey, in part because surveys asked about different circumstances. In all four RHS surveys, a wife's actual or suspected unfaithfulness was the most common circumstance in which women said that wife-beating was acceptable, ranging from 2.4% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 29.9% in Ecuador 2004. DHS surveys did not ask about unfaithfulness,

however, and in four of the five DHS surveys, the most common circumstance in which women said that wife-beating was acceptable was neglecting the children or housework. Haiti 2005/6 was the exception, in which a slightly higher proportion agreed with wife-beating for leaving the house without telling the husband. (Table 10.1, Figures 10.2 and 10.3)

### Agreement that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason:

Figure 10.1 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-2]



### Agreement that wife-beating is justified, by reason:

Table 10.1 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified, by reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-3]

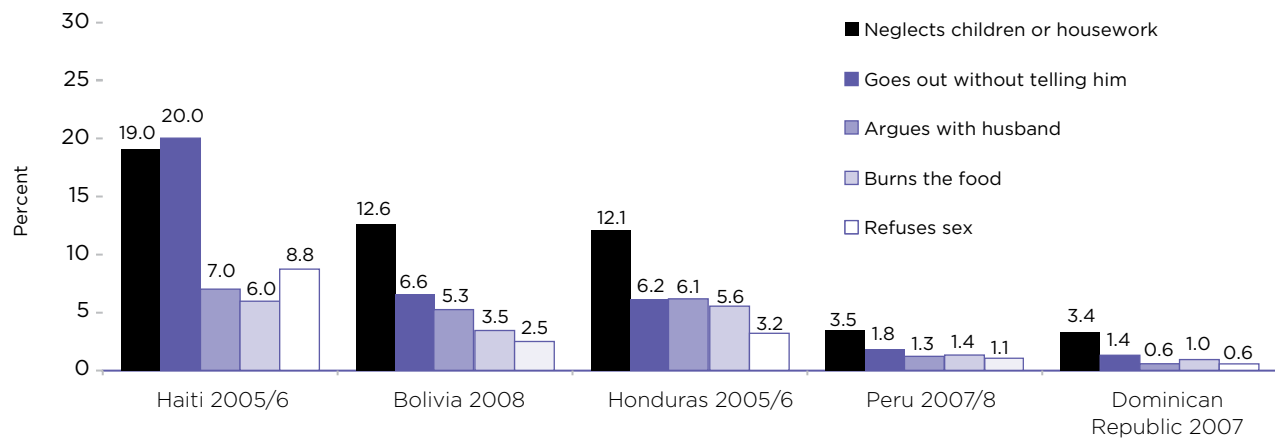
	Woman agreed that wife-beating is justified if the wife:									Total
	Neglects children or housework	Goes out without telling him	Refuses sex	Is or is suspected of being unfaithful	Disobeys husband	Asks husband if he is unfaithful	Argues or disagrees with husband	Burns the food	At least one reason listed	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	Number (unweighted)
<b>DHS surveys</b>										
Bolivia 2008	12.6	6.6	2.5	na	na	na	5.3	3.5	16.5	10,033
Dominican Republic 2007	3.4	1.4	0.6	na	na	na	0.6	1.0	4.3	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	19.0	20.0	8.8	na	na	na	7.0	6.0	28.5	2,680
Honduras 2005/6	12.1	6.2	3.2	na	na	na	6.1	5.6	15.6	14,371
Peru 2007/8	3.5	1.8	1.1	na	na	na	1.3	1.4	5.3	12,572
<b>RHS surveys</b>										
Ecuador 2004	19.6	18.1	6.3	29.9	na	na	na	na	38.2	7,217
Jamaica 2008/9	0.7	na	0.3	2.4	0.8	0.3	na	na	2.9	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	3.4	na	2.2	11.3	5.6	2.3	na	na	13.8	11,393
Paraguay 2008	2.3	na	1.4	20.5	7.5	1.8	na	na	22.9	4,414

Notes: [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

- Women's agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating in other circumstances varied substantially by country. For example, while only 1.4% of women in the Dominican Republic 2007 said that wife-beating was acceptable for going out without telling the husband, this percentage was as high as 20.0% in Haiti 2005/6. A similar range was found for neglecting children or housework, which was considered acceptable by as few as 0.7% of women in Jamaica 2008/9, but by as many as 19.6% of women in Ecuador 2004. (Table 10.1)
- In all nine surveys except Haiti 2005/6, the least acceptable reason for wife-beating was the wife's refusal to have sex with her husband, ranging from 0.3% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 6.3% in Ecuador 2004 and 8.8% in Haiti 2005/6. Haiti 2005/6 was an outlier compared with other surveys, given

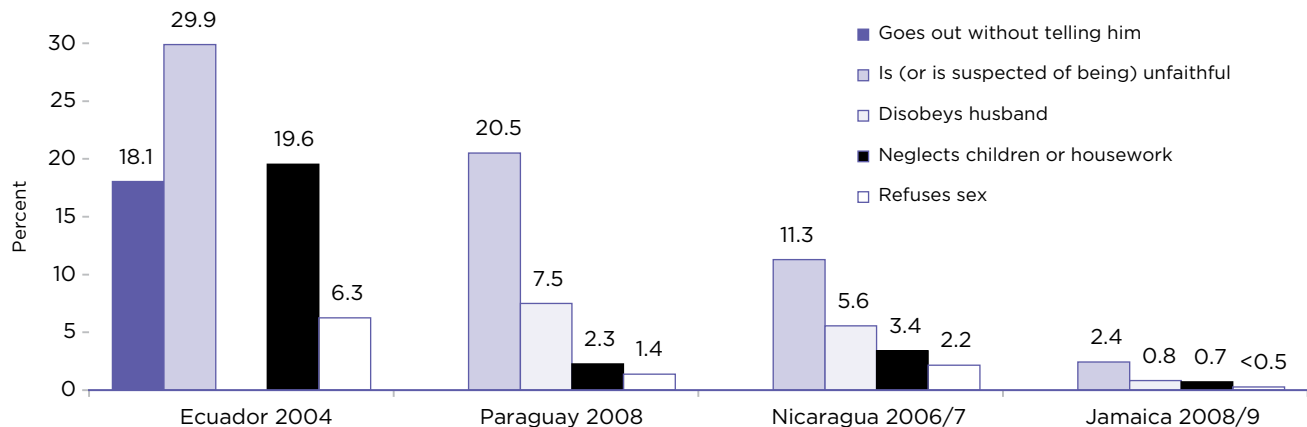
### Agreement that wife-beating is justified, by reason, DHS surveys:

Figure 10.2 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified, by reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys [1]



### Agreement that wife-beating is justified, by reason, RHS surveys:

Figure 10.3 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified, by reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-2]



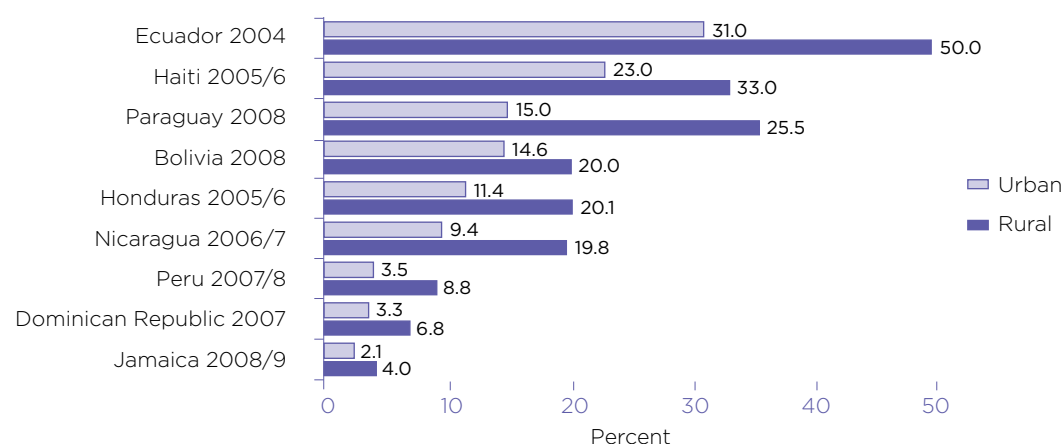
**Notes:** [1.1] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [2.1] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44.

that women's agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating for refusing sex was higher than for burning the food or arguing with the husband. (Table 10.1)

- In all surveys, the percentage of women who said that wife-beating was justified for at least one reason was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among rural women compared with urban women, and in five of the nine surveys, it was at least twice as high. (Figure 10.4)
- In all surveys, agreement that wife-beating was acceptable for at least one reason was significantly higher ( $p < 0.001$ ) among women who reported physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner *in the past 12 months*, compared with those who did not. (Figure 10.5)
- When acceptance of wife-beating for at least one reason is charted relative to the reported prevalence of physical intimate partner violence *in the past 12 months*, no consistent pattern emerges. (Figure 10.7)

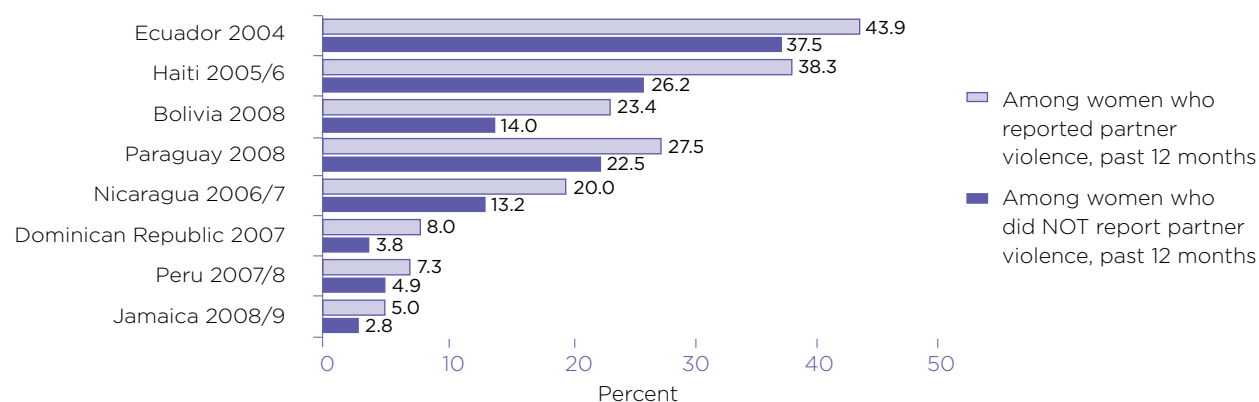
### Agreement that wife-beating is justified, by residence:

Figure 10.4 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, by rural or urban residence, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-2]



### Agreement that wife-beating is justified, by experience of partner violence:

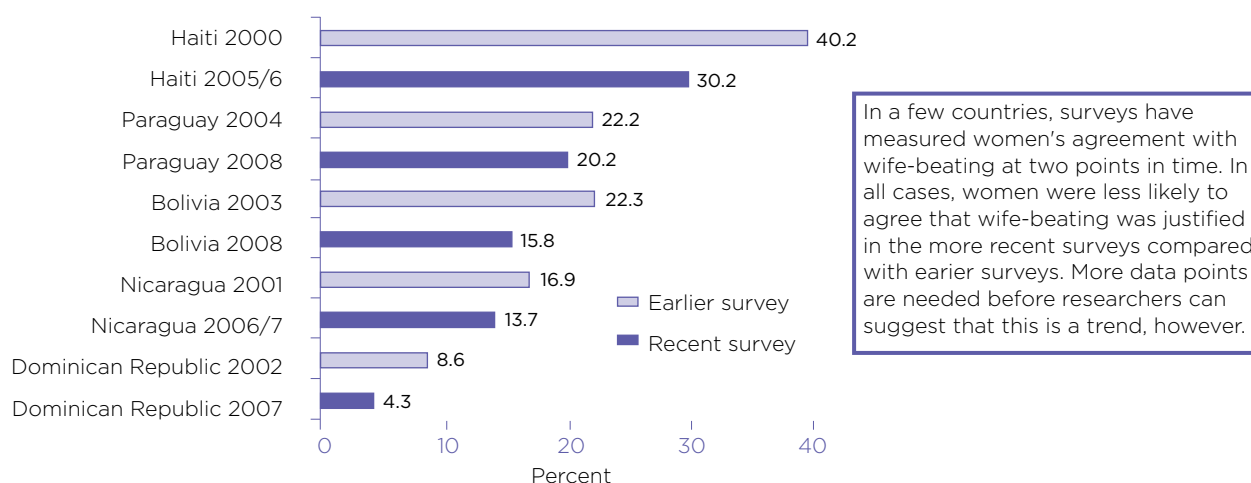
Figure 10.5 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, according to their experience of physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]



**Notes:** [1.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [2.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [3.] Bolivia 2008 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

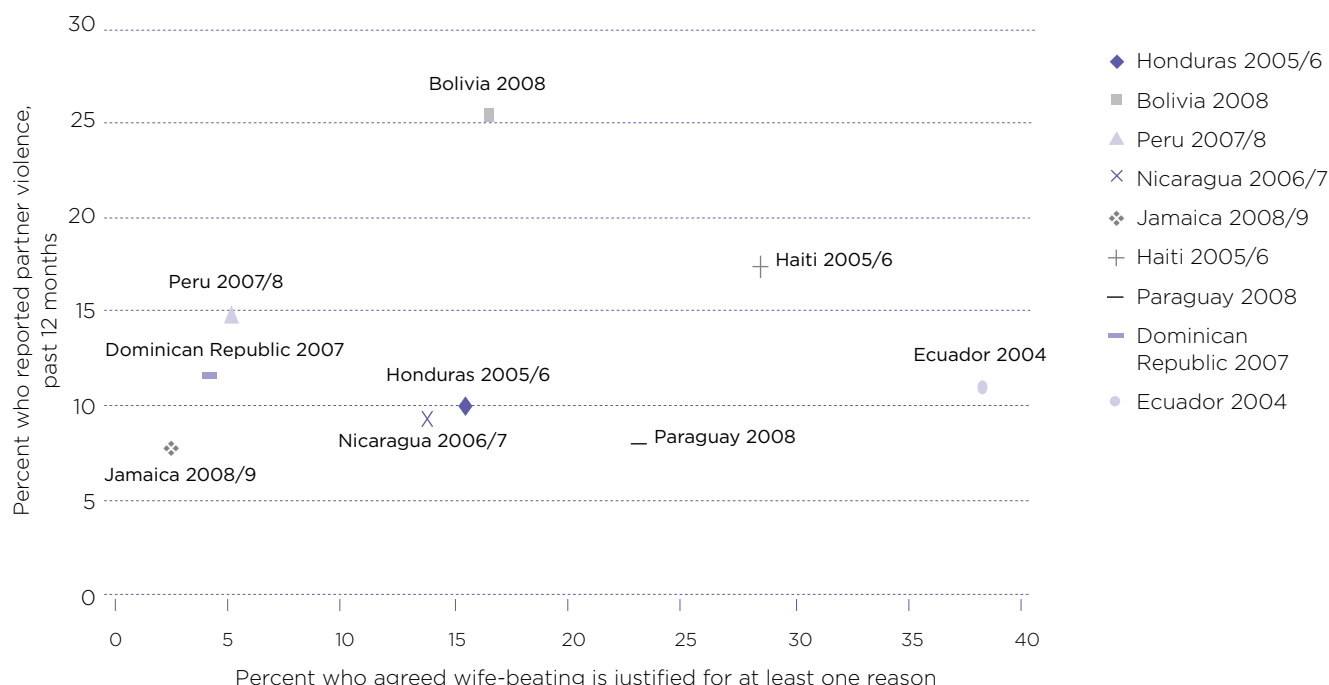
### Agreement that wife-beating is justified among all women, by year of survey:

Figure 10.6 Percentage of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, among all women aged 15-49, by year of survey, earlier and more recent surveys [1-3]



### Prevalence of partner violence in the past 12 months according to levels of agreement with wife-beating:

Figure 10.7. Estimated prevalence of physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months by survey, according to the proportion of women who said that wife-beating is justified for at least one reason, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [3-7]



**Notes:** [1.] Nicaragua 2001 and 2006/7 data are limited to women ever married or in union, as Nicaragua 2001 did not ask never-partnered women this question. [2.] Recent survey data are limited to women who participated in the violence module, even though DHS surveys asked all women who participated in the general survey about their agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating. [3.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [4.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [5.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [6.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [7.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers.

Among all women (including women ever and never married or in union):

- In each of the five countries where acceptance of wife-beating has been measured at two different points in time, the percentage of women who reported that wife-beating was acceptable was lower in the more recent survey than it was in the earlier survey. Without tests of significance and more data points, however, it is too soon to suggest that this is a trend. (Figure 10.6)

## 10.2 Agreement that a wife has the right to refuse sex with her husband

### i. Measures and definitions

All surveys except for Ecuador 2004 and El Salvador 2008 asked women whether it is acceptable for a wife to refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband, with some differences in question wording. Most DHS surveys asked women whether they agreed with or thought it was justified for a wife to refuse sex with her husband for specific reasons, including when she is tired, not in the mood, or just doesn't want to. RHS surveys asked women whether they thought a wife has an obligation to have sex with her husband even when she does not want to or does not feel like it. Agreement with the DHS questions measured support for women's sexual autonomy within marriage, while agreement with the RHS questions measured the reverse. Because of this difference, DHS and RHS data are shown separately, even though they were both designed to measure opinions about women's right to sexual autonomy within marriage. Appendix Table A14 presents the percentage of women who said that a wife should not refuse sex/has an obligation to have sex with her husband, by women's background characteristics.

### ii. Findings: attitudes about a wife's right to refuse/obligation to have sex within marriage

Among women ever married or in union:

- In all four RHS surveys, the majority of women **did not agree** that a wife has an obligation to have sex with her husband if she does not want to (or does not feel like it); nonetheless, a substantial percentage of women did agree that a wife **does** have such an obligation, ranging from 9.4% in

### Examples of questions used to measure women's right to refuse sex within marriage

#### Jamaica 2008/9 RHS

*In this community and elsewhere, people have different ideas about families and what is acceptable behavior for men and women in the home. I am going to read you a list of statements, and I would like you to tell me whether you generally agree or disagree with the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.*

- *It is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn't feel like it.*

#### Colombia 2005 DHS

*Usted está de acuerdo con que una esposa se niegue a tener relaciones sexuales con su esposo/compañero cuando:*

- *¿Ella está cansada o no está de humor?*
- *¿Cuándo ella no quiere?*

*Do you agree that it is okay for a wife to refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband/partner when:*

- *She is tired or not in the mood?*
- *When she doesn't want to?*

Paraguay 2008 to 30.3% in Jamaica 2008/9. (Figure 10.8)

- Similarly, in all DHS surveys, a majority of women supported the right of a wife to refuse sex with her husband if she is tired, doesn't feel like it, or just doesn't want to; however, the percentage of women who did not agree ranged from 7.4% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to 17.7% in Haiti 2005/6. (Figure 10.9)

## 10.3 Agreement with other gender norms and attitudes

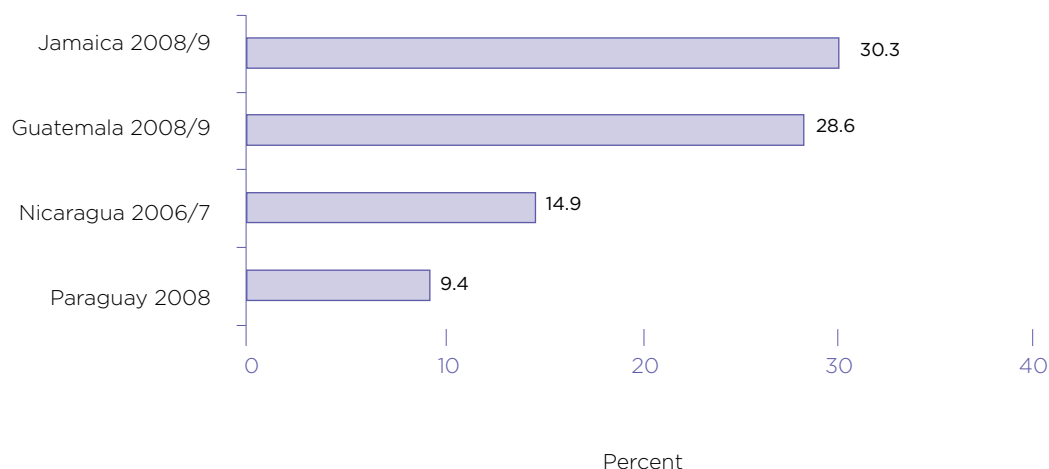
### i. Measures and definitions

Five surveys asked women additional questions about gender norms and attitudes, including all RHS surveys except Ecuador 2004. The questions were similar if not identical across the five surveys and the data are highly comparable, with some exceptions in El Salvador 2008<sup>1</sup>. This report includes

<sup>1</sup> El Salvador 2008 did not ask women whether they agreed that a man needs to show his wife that he is boss. In addition, that survey asked whether 'couple problems' rather than 'family problems' should only be discussed with people in the family.

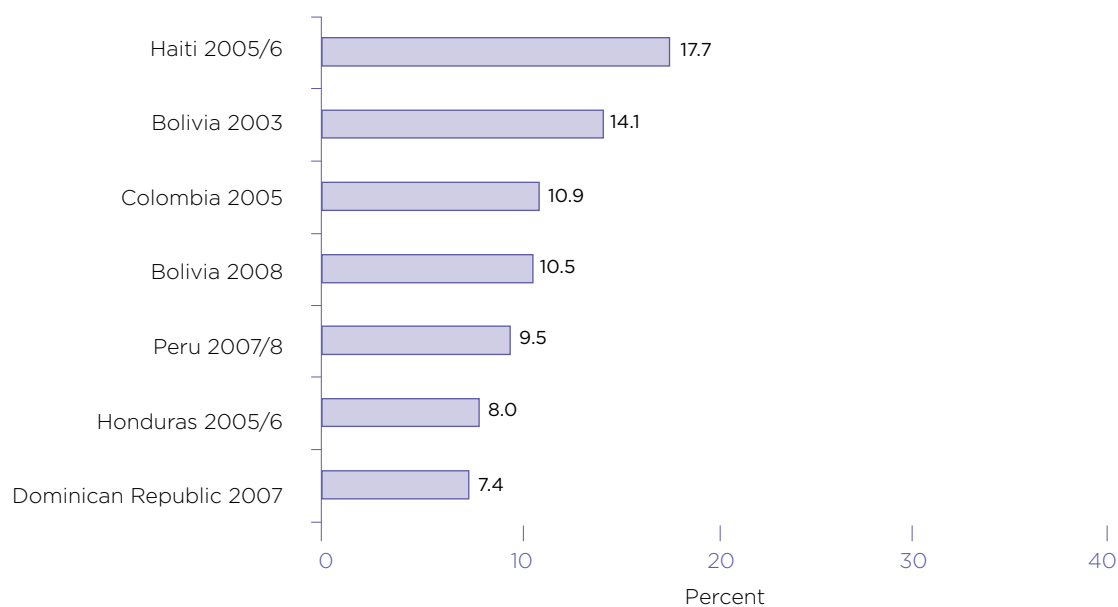
### Agreement that wives have an obligation to have unwanted sex with their husband, RHS surveys:

Figure 10.8 Percentage of women who agreed that a wife has an obligation to have sexual intercourse with her husband, even if she doesn't want to, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-2]



### Disagreement with the right of a wife to refuse sex with her husband, DHS surveys:

Figure 10.9 Percentage of women who did not agree that it is justified for a wife to refuse sexual intercourse with her husband just because she is tired, doesn't feel like it, or doesn't want to, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49, DHS surveys [2]



**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'.



an analysis of four of these additional questions about gender norms and attitudes. Two of the four questions explored norms related to spousal obedience and authority within the household, while the other two questions explored norms related to family privacy and whether outsiders should intervene when a woman is abused by her husband.

#### Examples of RHS questions used to measure support for gender norms and attitudes

##### Nicaragua 2006/7

*En esta comunidad y en otras, la gente tiene diferentes ideas sobre la familia y sobre lo que es un comportamiento aceptable tanto para el hombre como para la mujer. Por favor, dígame si por lo general usted está de acuerdo o no con las siguientes afirmaciones.*

- *Una buena esposa debe obedecer a su esposo aunque no esté de acuerdo con él.*
- *Los problemas familiares deben ser conversados solamente con personas de la familia.*
- *El hombre tiene que mostrar a su esposa/ pareja quién es el jefe.*
- *Si el hombre maltrata a su esposa, otras personas que no son de la familia deben intervenir.*

In this community and in others, people have different ideas about families and what is acceptable behavior both for men and for women. Please tell me whether you generally agree or disagree with the following statements.

- A good wife should obey her husband even if she does not agree with him.
- Family problems should only be discussed with people in the family.
- It is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss.
- If a man abuses his wife, others outside of the family should intervene.

#### ii. Findings: support for traditional gender norms and attitudes (RHS surveys only)

Among all women (both ever and never married or in union):

- Substantial percentages of women agreed with gender norms and attitudes related to

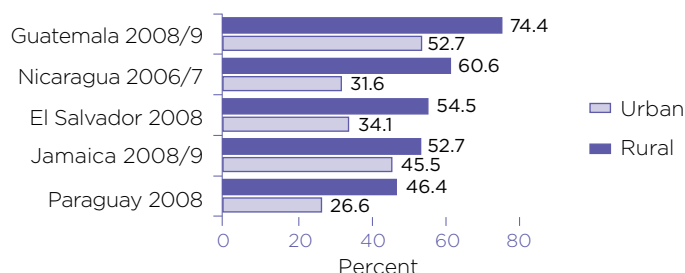
spousal obedience and authority within the household. For example, between 34.0% of women in Paraguay 2008 and 64.5% of women in Guatemala 2008/9 agreed that a wife should obey her husband even if she does not agree with him. Lower but still substantial proportions of women agreed that 'It is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss', ranging from nearly one-sixth (16.4%) in Jamaica 2008/9 to just under one-half (46.8%) of women in Guatemala 2008/9. (Table 10.2)

- In all surveys, agreement that a good wife should obey her husband and that a man needs to show his wife that he is the boss was significantly greater ( $p < 0.001$ ) among rural women compared with urban women, sometimes by a factor of nearly two—as in Nicaragua 2006/7. (Figures 10.10 and 10.11, Table 10.2)
- In all surveys, there was widespread agreement that family problems should only be discussed within the home (or with members of the family), ranging from 64.1% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 91.2% in El Salvador 2008. (Note that El Salvador 2008 asked about 'couple problems' while the other surveys asked about 'family problems'.) The proportions of women who agreed with this norm were significantly greater ( $p < 0.001$ ) among rural compared with urban women in Nicaragua 2006/7 and Paraguay 2008, but rural/urban differences were less significant in El Salvador 2008 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and Jamaica 2008/9 ( $p < 0.01$ ), and were not significant in Guatemala 2008/9. (Table 10.3)
- Despite majorities of women who agreed that family problems should only be discussed within the home, a majority of women in most surveys also agreed that outsiders should intervene if a husband is abusing his wife, ranging from just under one-half (49.5%) of women in Nicaragua 2006/7 to more than two-thirds (69.2%) of women in Paraguay 2008. In all surveys except for Jamaica 2008/9, the proportion of women who agreed that outsiders should intervene was significantly greater ( $p < 0.001$ ) among rural compared with urban women. (Figure 10.12 and Table 10.3)

### Women's agreement with traditional gender norms:

Wives should obey their husband, even if they disagree

Figure 10.10 Percentage of women who agreed that a wife should obey her husband, even if she does not agree with him, by rural and urban residence, among all women aged 15-49 [1]



A man needs to show his wife that he is the boss

Figure 10.11 Percentage of women who agreed that a man needs to show his wife that he is the boss, by rural and urban residence, among all women aged 15-49 [1]

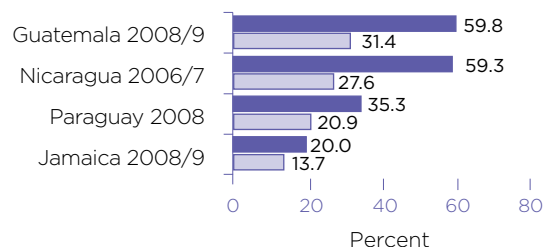


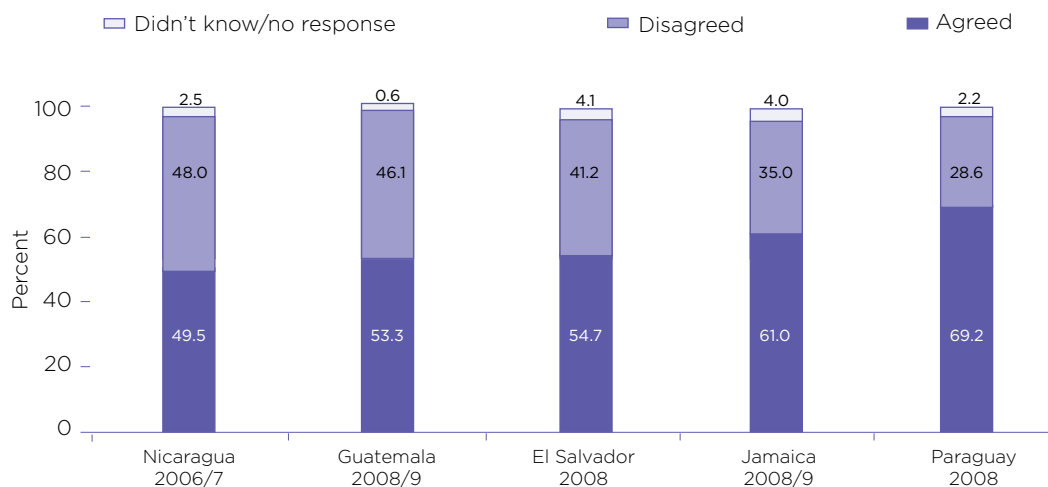
Table 10.2 Percentage of women who agreed with traditional attitudes about gender relations, according to residence (total, urban, rural), among all women aged 15-49 [1-3]

	A wife should obey her husband, even if she does not agree with him				The man needs to show his wife that he is the boss				Total Number (unweighted)		
	Total	Urban	Rural		Total	Urban	Rural		Total	Urban	Rural
	%	%	%		%	%	%		#	#	#
El Salvador 2008	42.8	34.1	54.5	***	na	na	na	na	9,717	5,180	4,537
Guatemala 2008/9	64.5	52.7	74.4	***	46.8	31.4	59.8	***	16,582	7,330	9,252
Jamaica 2008/9	48.6	45.5	52.7	***	16.4	13.7	20.0	***	8,259	3,481	4,778
Nicaragua 2006/7	43.2	31.6	60.6	***	40.4	27.6	59.3	***	14,165	7,090	7,075
Paraguay 2008	34.0	26.6	46.4	***	26.3	20.9	35.3	***	6,526	3,692	2,834

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001. [3.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

### Attitudes about whether outsiders should intervene if a man abuses his wife:

Figure 10.12. Percent distribution of all women aged 15-49 who agreed, disagreed, or didn't know/didn't respond that outsiders should intervene if a man abuses his wife [1]



### Agreement with norms about family privacy and duty of outsiders to intervene:

Table 10.3. Percentage of women who agreed with norms about family privacy and the duty of outsiders to intervene if a man abuses his wife, according to residence (total, urban, rural), among all women aged 15-49 [1-4]

	Family problems should only be discussed with other family members/within the home				If a man abuses his wife, other people outside the family should intervene				Total Number (unweighted)		
	Total	Urban	Rural		Total	Urban	Rural		Total	Urban	Rural
	%	%	%		%	%	%		#	#	#
El Salvador 2008	91.2	90.7	91.9	*	54.7	56.4	52.5	***	9,717	5,180	4,537
Guatemala 2008/9	82.1	81.7	82.5	ns	53.3	58.4	49.1	***	16,582	7,330	9,252
Jamaica 2008/9	64.1	62.9	65.7	**	61.0	61.2	60.7	ns	8,259	3,481	4,778
Nicaragua 2006/7	69.3	68.0	71.3	***	49.5	47.7	52.2	***	14,165	7,090	7,075
Paraguay 2008	86.8	84.8	90.1	***	69.2	71.0	66.3	***	6,526	3,692	2,834

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Asterisks denote significance levels using a Pearson's chi squared test: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; ns = not significant. [3.] El Salvador 2008 asked about 'couple problems' rather than 'family problems'. [4.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

## CHAPTER 11. OTHER SOURCES OF DATA ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE REGION

### 11.1 Other sources of data on violence against women in the Region

This analysis offers a rare opportunity to examine comparable, national, population-based data on violence against women from 12 countries in the LAC Region. Evidence on violence is available from many other sources in Latin America and the Caribbean as well, however. The WHO Multi-country Study offers a particularly high quality source of data on violence against women in many countries around the world, including from Brazil and Peru. Some data from the WHO surveys have been presented in different chapters in this report (see Box 3.1 in Chapter 3 and Box 8.1 in Chapter 8). In addition, Table 11.1 below presents an overview of the prevalence of intimate partner violence in the two Latin American countries included in the WHO Multi-country Study. A full discussion of findings from the WHO Multi-country Study can be found in other publications.<sup>5, 18, 20, 99</sup>

and measured violence, but they offer an important complement to the data presented in this report.

As noted in Chapter 1, population-based, household surveys are needed if the research objective is to produce prevalence estimates that are representative of a given country or community. In contrast, surveys conducted in health facilities capture only those people who seek services, while surveys in schools capture only those young people who attend school. Nonetheless, school- and university-based studies offer another important way to gather information on the magnitude, patterns, and context of violence against girls and young women. School- and university-based studies have been carried out in many Latin American and Caribbean countries, as illustrated by the examples listed in Table 11.3.

Table 11.1 WHO Multi-country Study findings from Latin America: percentage of women who reported intimate partner violence ever and in the past 12 months, according to type of violence, among ever-partnered women aged 15-49 [1-4]

	Physical violence		Sexual violence		Physical or sexual violence or both		Total ever-partnered women
	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	Ever	Past 12 months	
<b>WHO surveys</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	<b>Number (unweighted)</b>
Sao Paulo, Brazil 2000/1	27.2	8.3	10.1	2.8	28.9	9.3	940
Pernambuco, Brazil 2000/1	33.8	12.9	14.3	5.6	36.9	14.8	1,188
Lima, Peru 2000	48.6	16.9	22.5	7.1	51.2	19.2	1,086
Department of Cusco, Peru 2000	61.0	24.8	46.7	22.9	69.0	34.2	1,535

**Notes:** [1.] In Brazil, an intimate partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner. In Peru, an intimate partner was defined as any regular male sexual partner, including current and former boyfriends. [2.] The WHO surveys asked about violence by any current or former partner in the woman's lifetime. [3.] Physical violence included the following acts: was slapped or had something thrown at her that could hurt her; was pushed or shoved; was hit with fist or something else that could hurt; was kicked, dragged, or beaten up; was choked or burnt on purpose; perpetrator threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife, or other weapon against her. [4.] Sexual violence included the following acts: was physically forced to have sexual intercourse when she did not want to; had sexual intercourse when she did not want to because she was afraid of what partner might do; was forced to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating.

**Source:** WHO Multi-country Study publications.<sup>5, 99</sup>

Table 11.2 presents a list of other selected population-based studies that have gathered data on the prevalence of violence in the LAC Region in recent years, along with information about the year, geographic coverage, sample size, and primary focus of each study. As noted in Chapter 1, these studies varied widely in terms of sample design, primary focus, and the ways in which they defined

In addition, many studies of violence against women have drawn their samples from health care facilities. These studies cannot produce prevalence estimates that are representative of the broader community, but they can provide prevalence estimates of violence experienced by users of specific types of women's health services or by women with specific medical conditions. These studies may also offer

Table 11.2 Other selected population-based studies on violence against women in the LAC Region

Country	Lead author	Year	Geographic coverage	Sample	Primary focus of survey	Ref. no.	Short study name
Argentina	Munne	2002	1 urban, 1 provincial site	402 men, 598 women aged 18-65	Alcohol use	110	GENACIS
Belize	Cayetano	2005	National	1,911 men, 2,074 women aged 18-98	Alcohol use	111	GENACIS
Brazil	Barker	2009-10	1 urban site	750 men, 448 women aged 18-59	Men, gender equality	112	IMAGES
Brazil	Bassani	2002-3	Urban areas	1,936 men and women over age 14	Hearing impairment	113	
Brazil	Bruschi	1999	1 urban site	86 women aged 15-49	Marital violence	114	Worldsafe
Brazil	Kerr-Correa	2006-7	1 urban site	867 men and 1,016 women aged 18-97	Alcohol use	115	GENACIS
Brazil	Miranda	2002-3	1 urban site	784 women aged 16-49	Family violence	116	Worldsafe
Brazil	Moura	2007	1 urban site	278 women aged 15-49	IPV	117	
Brazil	Reichenheim	2002-3	16 urban sites	6,760 women aged 15-69	Non-communicable disease	118	
Brazil	Schraiber	2000-1	1 urban, 1 provincial site	3,655 women aged 15-49	Violence against women	5, 21, 99, 119, 120	WHO Multi-country Study
Brazil	Schraiber	2005	Urban sites	5,040 men and women aged 16-65	Sexual behavior and HIV/AIDS	121	
Brazil	Zaleski	2005-6	National	1,445 men and women	Alcohol use	122, 123	National Alcohol Survey
Chile	Barker	2009-10	3 urban sites	1,192 men, 426 women aged 18-59	Men, gender equality	112	IMAGES
Chile	Government of Chile	2008	National	1,109 women aged 15-59, 1,325 women and men aged 60+	Intrafamilial violence and sexual crimes	62	
Chile	Vizcarra	1999	2 urban sites	422 women	Family violence	66, 124-131	Worldsafe
Colombia	Profamilia	2011	National	33,420 women aged 15-49	Demographics and health	82	DHS
Colombia	Tuesca	na	1 urban site	275 women aged 15-44	Marital violence	132	
Costa Rica	Bejarano	2003	1 urban site	416 women, 857 men	Alcohol use	133	GENACIS
Costa Rica	Johnson	2000-7	National	908 women	Violence against women	63	International VAW study
Ecuador	INEC	2011	National	16,140 women age 15+	Violence against women	134	
Haiti	Kolbe	2004-5	1 urban site	5,720 men and women	Criminal violence	135	
Jamaica	Gibbison	2000	National	754 men, 744 women	HIV and STIs	136	
Jamaica	Waszak-Geary	2000	3 sites	1,130 men and women aged 15-24	Reproductive health	137	
Mexico	Baker	1999-2001	4 urban sites	2,509 men and women	Violence and PTSD	138, 139	
Mexico	Barker	2009-10	3 urban sites	1,101 men, 383 women aged 18-59	Men, gender equality	112	IMAGES
Mexico	Borges	2005	Urban sites	3,005 adolescents aged 12-17	Adolescent mental health	140-143	
Mexico	Castro	2003-06	National	2003: 34,184 women aged 15-21, 30-34, and 45-49; 2006: 133,398 women aged 15+	Family dynamics and violence	64, 65, 79, 144	ENDIREH
Mexico	Romero-Mendoza	2005	4 urban sites	529 men, 429 women aged 12-65	Alcohol use	145	GENACIS
Nicaragua	Ellsberg	1995	National	488 women aged 15-49	Domestic violence	146	
Nicaragua	Caldera	2005	5 sites	614 men and 1,416 women	Alcohol use	147	GENACIS
Nicaragua	Valladares	2002-3, 2007	1 urban site	478 pregnant women (baseline), 398 follow-up	Intimate partner violence	35, 148	
Peru	INEI	2011	National	Women aged 15-49	Demographics and health	83	DHS
Peru	Guezmes	2000	1 urban, 1 provincial site	3,665 women aged 15-49	Violence against women	5, 99, 149	WHO Multi-country Study
Peru	Piazza	2005	2 urban sites	516 men, 1,015 women aged 18-24	Alcohol use	150	GENACIS
Uruguay	Magri	2004	Urban sites	376 men, 624 women	Alcohol use	151	GENACIS
Multi-country, Caribbean	Le Franc	2003-4	National	3,401 men and women aged 15-30	Interpersonal violence	67	

Table 11.3 Selected school- or university-based studies of violence against women in the LAC Region

Country	Lead author	Year of field work	Study design/site	Sample	Primary focus of survey	Ref. no.	Short study name
Chile	Lehrer	2005	University-based	Students, 466 male, 484 female	Dating violence	42-45, 152	
Chile	Government of Chile	2008	School-based	1,162 children aged 11-17	Intrafamilial violence and sexual crimes	62	
El Salvador	Sierra	na	University-based	700 male students aged 18-40	Male sexual coercion	46	
Mexico	Chavez Ayala	2004-5	School-based, State of Morelos	13,293 students aged 12-24	Sexual abuse in childhood/adolescence	47	
Multi-country	Straus	2003-5	University-based; Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela	16,000 college students (global total)	Dating violence	153-155	International Dating Violence Study
Multi-country, Caribbean	Blum	1997-8	School-based, 9 Caribbean countries	15,695 male and female adolescents aged 10-18	Adolescents	48-50	

Table 11.4 Selected facility-based studies of violence against women from the LAC Region

Country	Lead author	Year of field work	Sample	Ref. no.	Short study name (if available)
Brazil	Nunes	2006-7	652 pregnant women	28	
Jamaica	Baumgartner	na	Women aged 15-17 (250 pregnant; 500 controls)	51, 52	
Mexico	Doubova	2003-4	383 pregnant women	31	
Mexico	Olaiz	2002-3	26,240 women aged 14+	32, 54, 55, 58-60, 156	ENVIM
Mexico	Romero-Gutierrez	2004-6	1,623 post-partum women	56	
Mexico	Valdez Santiago	1994	110 pregnant women	57	
Peru	Cripe	2005-6	2,394 post-partum women	33, 34, 157	

an important source of information on women's perspectives about the health service response to violence against women. Table 11.4 presents examples of facility-based studies from the LAC Region.

## 11.2 Men's perspectives on violence

One limitation of this comparative analysis is that it relied entirely on data collected among women. A few DHS and RHS surveys in this comparative analysis gathered data among men; however, the data on violence from these surveys are highly diverse. For example, the men's questionnaire in Bolivia 2008 asked men whether they had ever experienced physical or sexual violence inflicted by their female partner or any other perpetrator—questions that were nearly identical to those asked of women. The Dominican Republic 2007 and

Jamaica 2008/9 asked men about the acceptability of wife-beating under specific circumstances, and Jamaica 2008/9 asked young men aged 15-24 detailed questions about perpetrating physical and sexual violence against women and about gender norms and attitudes. Because the data gathered among men were so varied, it was not possible to include them in the main body of this comparative report.

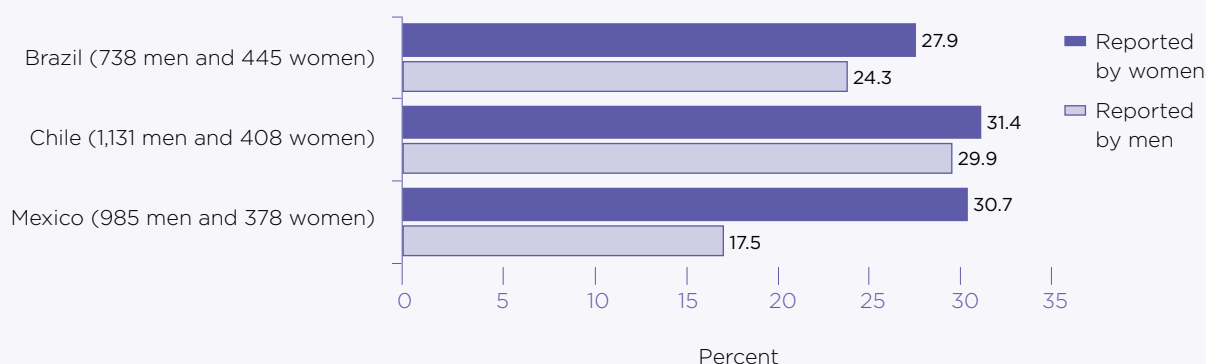
To address this gap, however, the rest of this chapter provides a brief discussion about some available evidence from the Latin American and Caribbean Region on men's perspectives, including attitudes towards wife-beating, men's reports of perpetrating violence against women, and men's reports of experiencing violence themselves. It should be noted, however, not only is the evidence base limited, but so is the methodological literature

### Box 11.1 The IMAGES study: men's reports of perpetrating violence

The IMAGES study was carried out between 2009 and 2010 in six countries around the world, including three countries in Latin America, namely: Brazil, Chile, and Mexico.<sup>112, 159</sup> The study's primary objective was to explore men's and women's opinions and experiences related to gender roles and equality. Men and women were asked about a broad range of topics, including violence against women. The IMAGES study used measures of physical and sexual violence against women that were similar to those used by DHS and RHS surveys in this comparative report, with some differences. For example, IMAGES did not always limit questions about intimate partner violence to respondents who had ever married or cohabited with a partner, and the study used a different age range (18-59 years) than most DHS and RHS surveys. Nonetheless, by asking men about perpetrating physical and sexual violence against female partners, this study offers a different perspective than the DHS and RHS surveys (except Jamaica 2008/9) in this comparative analysis. For this reason, some key data from IMAGES are presented below. More in-depth analysis and discussion of these findings are available in the full study report.<sup>112</sup>

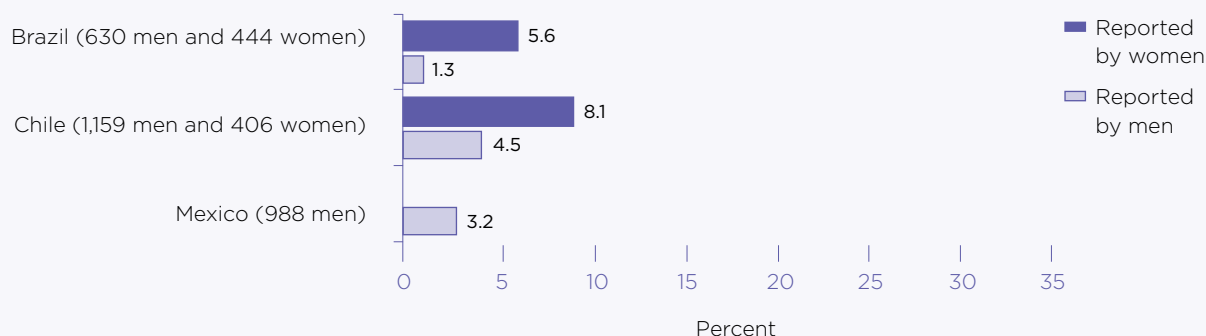
#### Physical violence against women by an intimate partner:

Figure 11.1 Percentage of men who reported ever using physical violence against a female intimate partner, and percentage of women who reported ever experiencing physical violence by a male intimate partner, among men and women aged 18-59



#### Sexual violence (defined as forced sexual intercourse) against women by an intimate partner:

Figure 11.2 Percentage of men who reported ever forcing an intimate partner to have sexual intercourse, and percentage of women who reported ever being forced to have sexual intercourse by an intimate partner, among men and women aged 18-59



Source: Data provided by the IMAGES research team, including Gary Barker, Francisco Aguayo, and Pablo Correo.



on the best approaches to carrying out this research. There are important knowledge gaps, for example, about how to measure and interpret findings about the perpetration of violence against women using data collected among men. Similarly, there is a small but emerging literature on sexual abuse against boys and young men, but much remains unknown about how to study this issue.

#### Men's attitudes towards wife-beating

As reported in individual survey final reports, agreement with wife-beating was substantially higher among men compared with women in both the Dominican Republic 2007 and Jamaica 2008/9.<sup>3, 158</sup> In the Dominican Republic 2007, the percentage of respondents aged 15-49 who agreed with wife-beating in at least one circumstance was twice as high among men compared with women (7.9% compared with 3.9%, respectively). In Jamaica 2008/9, support for wife-beating was nearly five times greater among young men compared with young women (21.5% compared with 4.4%, respectively).

#### Men's self-reports of perpetrating physical and sexual violence against women

A small number of studies from Latin America and the Caribbean have asked men about perpetrating physical and sexual violence against women. For example, the Jamaica 2008/9 final country report analyzed women's reported experience of intimate partner violence *ever* and *in the past 12 months* side-by-side with men's reports of perpetration.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, while women in Jamaica 2008/9 reported experiencing partner violence at rates that were higher than men's reports of perpetrating these acts, differences were *relatively small*, and in the case of physical violence *in the past 12 months*, rates were nearly identical (9%).

Another important source of data on perpetration of intimate partner violence as reported by men in the LAC Region is the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) study.<sup>112, 159</sup> That study was carried out in six countries around the world, including three in Latin America, namely: Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. Similar to the Jamaica 2008/9 RHS, the IMAGES study found that men were often willing to tell interviewers that they had perpetrated physical or sexual violence against women (Box 11.1). While the prevalence of physical

intimate partner violence against women reported by men was generally lower than the prevalence reported by women (Figure 11.1), differences in Brazil and Chile were relatively small. In Mexico, men's reports of perpetrating physical partner violence were substantially and significantly lower than women's reports of experiencing violence (17.5% and 30.7%, respectively). It is noteworthy, however, that in the Brazil and Chile IMAGES surveys, all male respondents were interviewed by men, whereas in Mexico some men were interviewed by women—a methodological difference that the IMAGES researchers suggest may have reduced disclosure of perpetration by men in that site.

The multi-country GENACIS study (carried out in more than 10 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean) also gathered data among both women and men as both perpetrators and victims of intimate partner violence.<sup>61</sup> The GENACIS study found that women reported experiencing significantly higher levels of violence than men reported perpetrating. Researchers suggested that these differences may have reflected differences in willingness to disclose female victimization versus male perpetration, as well as the possibility that abusive men were less likely than other men to agree to participate in the survey.

#### Physical and sexual violence against men and boys

Men and boys in the LAC Region experience high levels of physical violence generally. As noted in the first chapter of this report, globally, men are more likely than women to experience violence related to criminal activity and armed conflict,<sup>160</sup> both of which are serious problems in the Region. In fact, WHO statistics suggest that the Region has one of the highest homicide rates of any region: almost 30 per 100,000 inhabitants per year compared with a world average of around nine.<sup>161</sup> According to some analyses, 13 of the 15 countries with the highest murder rates by firearms in the world are located in this Region.<sup>162</sup>

Some research from the Region has examined men's experiences of exposure to family violence and child punishment. Although there is limited research from LAC on men's experiences of family violence during childhood, an analysis of RHS data from Guatemala (2002) and El Salvador (2002/3) documented that large proportions of men reported having been

punished with hitting or beating during childhood, and that men were more likely than women to report having received severe physical punishment during their childhood.<sup>72</sup>

Evidence indicates that men and boys also experience various forms of sexual violence.<sup>13</sup> Within LAC, studies documenting sexual violence against men and boys (usually in childhood or adolescence) have been carried out in Caribbean countries,<sup>48-50</sup> six countries in Central America,<sup>163</sup> Nicaragua,<sup>164</sup> and Peru,<sup>165</sup> for example. Generally, these studies and other research from the global literature suggest that a small but noteworthy proportion of men experience forced or unwanted sexual intercourse and other types of sexual abuse; men and boys generally report lower rates of sexual violence than women and girls; most sexual violence against males occurs in childhood or adolescence; and perpetrators are often other males.

There is a limited but emerging area of study on how the patterns and contexts of partner violence against women differ from partner violence against men. In the LAC Region, there is limited research on intimate partner violence by women against men. As mentioned earlier, the Bolivia DHS surveys collected some data on this, as did some studies on dating violence using convenience samples of women and men in university settings.<sup>155</sup> The

multi-country study GENACIS also gathered comparative data on intimate partner violence by women against men as well as by men against women.<sup>61</sup> That study found that in some countries, men reported experiencing moderate acts of physical aggression from their partner at rates that were similar to or even higher than those reported by women. However, in all countries, women were more likely than men to report **severe** aggression by their partner. For example, in the GENACIS survey from Argentina, men were more likely than women to report having been slapped by their partner in the past two years; but while 10.7% of women reported being beaten up, none of the men in that survey did so. Moreover, in all countries where the GENACIS study was carried out, men who experienced physical violence by their partner reported much less fear, distress, anger, and need for medical attention as a result of partner violence compared with women, and these differences were significant in almost all cases. A number of studies from high income countries also suggest that while both men and women may experience partner violence, the most severe and chronic forms of violence that occur in the context of high levels of control, fear, and injury are overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women.<sup>166-168</sup>

## CHAPTER 12. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 12.1 Discussion of findings

Discussion of findings: prevalence and patterns of intimate partner violence against women

- ***Intimate partner violence against women is widespread in every Latin American and Caribbean country where these DHS and RHS surveys were conducted, though reported prevalence varies by setting.***

In every Latin American and Caribbean country in this comparative analysis, large percentages of women ever married or in union reported having experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, ranging from 17.0% in the Dominican Republic 2007 to slightly more than half (53.3%) in Bolivia 2003. Most surveys found that between one-fourth and one-half of women had experienced intimate partner violence *ever*. In each country, the percentages of women who reported recent physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner violence (i.e. *in the past 12 months*) were smaller than those who reported it *ever* (as the former is a subset of the latter), but the prevalence of recent partner violence was still substantial, ranging from 7.7% in Jamaica 2008/9 to 25.5% in Bolivia 2008.

As discussed in Chapter 2, measuring the prevalence of intimate partner violence against women is methodologically challenging, and it is highly likely that the estimates reported in this comparative analysis are lower than the true prevalence in these settings.<sup>69</sup> Nonetheless, in general terms, the ranges of these estimates are consistent with those reported by other studies from the Region, including those listed in Table 11.1, the IMAGES surveys in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico,<sup>112</sup> and the WHO Multi-country Study surveys in Brazil and Peru. As a whole, these findings support a large and growing body of evidence that women experience high levels of violence by intimate partners in countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, though prevalence varies by setting.

- ***The prevalence of intimate partner violence varies not only among but also within countries.***

National prevalence estimates, such as those included in this report, can mask substantial

variations by geographic location within a given country. For example, in all countries except Ecuador 2004 and the Dominican Republic 2007, women living in urban areas reported significantly higher rates of intimate partner violence *ever* compared with women in rural areas (with residence categories defined according to criteria developed by the governmental statistics office in each country). This corresponds with findings from a previous comparative analysis of DHS data by Kishor and colleagues (2004), which found that the prevalence of intimate partner violence was significantly higher among urban compared with rural women in all five LAC countries included, except for Haiti, where the difference was not significant.<sup>17</sup> It is noteworthy that the same analysis found the reverse to be true in some countries from other regions, including Egypt and India.

An analysis of how the prevalence of partner violence varied by subnational region, such as by state or department, was largely beyond the scope of this report, except for Peru 2007/8 in Box 3.1. Individual survey country reports as well as the WHO Multi-country Study indicate that subnational differences can be substantial. In fact, in all countries that included more than one site in the WHO Multi-country Study, women living in the provincial site reported higher rates of intimate partner violence than those living in the capital (or major city). The comparison between city and province in the WHO Multi-country Study was quite different from the urban/rural comparison in this report. As the WHO multi-country researchers note, the provincial sites were not strictly rural, but “*included both rural and urban characteristics*”.<sup>99</sup> As Box 3.1 illustrated using Peru as an example, rates in the provincial site of Cusco were substantially higher than in the capital city of Lima in both the DHS and WHO surveys, despite the fact that in the DHS, national rates were significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) higher among urban compared with rural women.

The fact that the prevalence of violence may vary widely—not only between countries but within countries—should be considered when designing policies and program strategies, but also when comparing national estimates in this comparative analysis with subnational estimates from other

sources, such as the WHO Multi-country Study.<sup>5, 99</sup>

- ***Intimate partner violence ranges from occasional experiences of moderate acts to long-term, chronic situations of abuse, sometimes called ‘battering’.***

This comparative analysis illustrates that intimate partner violence includes a wide range of types, acts, and severity of abuse. Many women experience

moderate physical violence by intimate partners, such as slapping or shoving; but in all surveys in this analysis, a majority of women who experienced any physical partner violence **ever** reported ‘severe’ acts of physical violence, such as being hit with a fist, or threatened or wounded with a knife or other weapon. Women often reported having been forced by a partner to have sex, and large proportions of women reported experiencing emotional abuse by

### **Why does the prevalence of violence against women vary widely by country or subnational region?**

Due to the limits of available data, this comparative report did not analyze community- or societal-level factors that might explain why the prevalence of violence against women varied from setting to setting. However, there is a body of research that has explored this question,<sup>12, 13</sup> some of which is summarized below.

In a comparative analysis of 90 societies, Levinson identified four factors that appeared to protect women from family violence—all of which related to women’s relative status vis-à-vis men.<sup>169</sup> They included: women and men sharing responsibility for family decision-making, women having access to (and equal rights to) divorce, monogamous family structures, and a lack of double standard regarding premarital sex for girls and boys.

Cross-cultural research has also found lower rates of violence in societies that routinely hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable, either through legal sanctions or through informal family and community responses on behalf of women and girls who experience abuse, in settings where women have access to assistance or refuge when they do experience abuse, and in societies where women have strong social support networks compared with where women tend to be isolated in their homes.<sup>169-171</sup>

In addition, there is a body of global evidence that violence against women tends to be higher in settings where social norms support a subordinate role for women in society, including norms that associate masculinity with male toughness, honor, and dominance, that promote male domination and control of women, that encourage a rigidly defined and enforced view of women’s roles, and that encourage male virility while emphasizing female chastity.<sup>9, 12, 13, 169-173</sup> Whether these norms are themselves a causal determinant of prevalence or an indicator of underlying social, economic, and political inequalities that contribute to levels of violence, or both, is less clear. For example, in a study from Bangladesh, Koenig and colleagues found that communities with less rigid gender norms were more accepting of women earning money outside the home, compared with more conservative communities in which women’s income generation caused greater conflict and violence within the home.<sup>174</sup>

A few studies have examined community-level risk factors for intimate partner and sexual violence against women within the LAC Region.<sup>75, 175</sup> For example, Gage found significant positive associations between women’s risk of violence and men’s physical abuse of children at the community level, as well as a positive association between the risk of sexual violence and levels of poverty and male unemployment within the neighborhood.<sup>77</sup>

Global evidence also suggests that the prevalence of violence against women tends to be higher in settings characterized by high levels of criminal violence or armed conflict, and in settings where violence is more accepted as a means of resolving interpersonal disputes more generally.<sup>12, 13</sup> This is particularly salient in the LAC Region, where armed conflict has occurred in many countries, and where levels of criminal violence remain extremely high in many parts of the Region.<sup>161, 162</sup>

a partner, such as insults, humiliation, and threats of harm.

Cross-sectional survey data are limited in their ability to characterize experiences over time, including the frequency, chronicity, or duration of intimate partner violence. Nonetheless, many studies (including some of those listed in Table 11.1) indicate that while some women experience a few isolated acts of physical or sexual partner violence in their lifetime, others experience long-term, repeated, and severe abuse. In recent years, researchers have begun to design studies to distinguish severe chronic violence accompanied by high levels of control, fear, and injury—sometimes called ‘battering’ or ‘intimate partner terrorism’—from more occasional or moderate forms of partner violence.<sup>166-168</sup> These studies suggest that ‘battering’ is perpetrated largely by men against women, is characterized by high levels of fear and controlling behavior, and has particularly serious negative outcomes for women’s health, safety, and well-being compared with more moderate and occasional forms of partner violence. This comparative study was not able to carry out this type of analysis due to limitations of the survey data, but it did find that, generally, physical and sexual intimate partner violence often occur in a context characterized by high levels of emotional abuse and controlling behavior by partners, as well as high levels of fear, injury, and mental distress, including suicidal thoughts experienced by women.

- ***Emotional abuse and controlling behaviors are important dimensions of intimate partner violence that are widespread in the Region.***

This comparative analysis found that emotional abuse by intimate partners, such as insults, humiliation, intimidation, and threats of harm, is widespread in these Latin American and Caribbean countries. The proportion of women ever married or in union who reported emotional abuse by a partner **ever** ranged from one-sixth (17.0%) in Haiti 2005/6 to nearly one-half (47.8%) in Nicaragua 2006/7. The prevalence of emotional abuse by a partner **in the past 12 months** ranged from 13.7% of women ever married or in union in Honduras 2005/6 to 32.3% in Bolivia 2008. Similarly, large proportions of women in the Region reported that their current or most recent partner engaged in three or more controlling

behaviors, such as trying to isolate them from family or friends, insisting on knowing where they were at all times, or limiting their access to money.

In this report, however, the comparative potential of data on emotional abuse and controlling behavior was limited by the diversity of acts measured by the 13 surveys. More generally, other researchers have noted that comparing the prevalence of emotional abuse across different countries can be challenging due to differences in the patterns of emotional abuse as well as differences in women’s perceptions of what acts constitute abuse.<sup>14, 69</sup> More research is needed to improve measures used to explore emotional abuse, and to standardize approaches to gathering such data in demographic and reproductive health surveys.

Researchers have also found it difficult to disentangle emotional abuse from physical and sexual intimate partner violence.<sup>176</sup> Nonetheless, researchers have increasingly documented ways in which emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by partners undermine women’s health and well-being. Jewkes argues that emotional abuse generates fear and anxiety, removes social support, undermines women’s self-esteem, and increases women’s impoverishment.<sup>14</sup> An in-depth analysis of RHS survey data from Paraguay found that, controlling for other factors, emotional abuse by an intimate partner was independently associated with the greatest increased risk of common mental health disorders of any factor studied.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, research from Brazil found that emotional abuse by a partner during pregnancy was strongly associated with postnatal depression, independent of physical or sexual violence.<sup>177</sup> An analysis of WHO Multi-country Study data from Brazil found that mental disorders were significantly ( $p < 0.0001$ ) more common among women who reported any type of partner violence—including emotional abuse—compared with those who did not.<sup>21</sup> That analysis also found that even without any physical or sexual partner abuse, emotional partner abuse alone was significantly associated with mental disorders after controlling for key sociodemographic characteristics (OR 2.00; CI 95% 1.5-2.6). During in-depth interviews, women sometimes describe emotional abuse as even more damaging than physical violence, as did a woman in a study from Peru who said: “*he continues to hit me, now always on the face, but what hurts the most are*



*the insults. I'm telling you they are like a dagger in my back*".<sup>178</sup>

- ***Emotional abuse and controlling behaviors are closely linked to physical and sexual violence.***

In all countries in this comparative analysis, a majority of women who experienced physical violence *in the past 12 months* also reported emotional abuse, ranging from 61.1% in Colombia 2005 to 92.6% in El Salvador 2008. Similarly, the percentage of women who reported three or more controlling behaviors by their partner was typically two to three times higher among women who reported physical or sexual partner violence *ever*, compared with those who did not. In contrast, emotional abuse was relatively uncommon—ranging from 7.0% in Haiti 2005/6 to 18.9% in Bolivia 2008—among women who reported no physical partner violence *in the past 12 months*. These findings support evidence that emotional abuse and controlling behaviors often accompany physical violence and are important dimensions of intimate partner violence.<sup>14</sup> In fact, some researchers argue that men often use physical violence against their partner when threats and controlling behaviors do not work.<sup>168</sup>

Discussion of findings: prevalence of physical or sexual partner violence according to sociodemographic characteristics

- ***In these Latin American and Caribbean countries, substantial percentages of women from all socioeconomic groups report having experienced intimate partner violence, though prevalence varies by certain background characteristics, depending on the setting.***

This analysis found that the prevalence of physical or sexual partner violence varied according to certain sociodemographic characteristics in many settings, although associations did not always hold across all countries. In many countries, the prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence *ever* or *in the past 12 months* was significantly higher among urban compared with rural women, among divorced or separated women compared with married women, among women who were currently or recently employed compared with those who were not, and among women in the lowest wealth or education categories compared with those in the highest. In many cases, however,

differences in the prevalence of intimate partner violence by women's socioeconomic characteristics were small, statistically insignificant, or inconsistent across countries. Similarly, in some countries, the reported prevalence of intimate partner violence was significantly higher among women identified as indigenous compared with those who were not, but in other countries, the reverse was true. Given the differences among countries, a country-specific understanding of how prevalence varies by sociodemographic characteristics may be particularly important.

Nonetheless, despite differences in prevalence according to sociodemographic characteristics within individual countries, substantial proportions of women from all socioeconomic backgrounds in these Latin American and Caribbean countries reported having experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Thus, when formulating policies and programs, it is important to understand that intimate partner violence is not limited to specific groups of women according to characteristics such as wealth, educational status, ethnicity, or age.

Discussion of findings: sociodemographic factors associated with experiencing intimate partner violence

- ***After controlling for other factors, there was wide variation by country in the individual sociodemographic factors significantly associated with experiencing physical or sexual partner violence.***

When multivariate logistic regression was used to identify which factors were associated with increased odds of having experienced intimate partner violence *ever* and *in the past 12 months*, while controlling for a selected group of potential confounding factors, there were wide variations by country. For example, lower wealth was highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) in only four countries. Urban residence was significantly associated with a higher risk of violence in most but not all countries. Education was not significant in most surveys. In most countries, younger women had a greater risk of violence *in the past 12 months* and a lower risk of partner violence *ever*, but this did not hold across all sites, and it was not always significant. Younger age at first union was significantly ( $p < 0.01$

or  $p < 0.001$ ) associated with a higher risk of partner violence **ever** in seven countries, but in only one country for **the past 12 months**. Employment (current or recent) was significantly associated with a higher risk of violence in all surveys except for Jamaica 2008/9 and Haiti 2005/6, where it was not significant, and in Nicaragua 2006/7, where the association was the reverse.

Other studies support the finding that significant risk factors for partner violence vary widely by setting, including other DHS comparative analyses,<sup>16</sup> the Worldsafe study,<sup>128</sup> and a global review of the evidence.<sup>15</sup> An analysis of data from the WHO Multi-country Study found somewhat more consistency across different countries in terms of which factors were associated with a greater risk of partner violence, but even then, associations were not found across all sites.<sup>18</sup> Together, these findings reinforce the conclusion that violence against women occurs across the whole sociodemographic spectrum of society in Latin America and the Caribbean, that risk factors vary by setting, and that the risk of intimate partner violence is not limited to women with specific sociodemographic characteristics. As Abramsky and colleagues (2011) argue, this evidence suggests that policy makers should be cautious about any 'one model fits all' approach based on risk factors.<sup>18</sup>

- ***The prevalence and odds of intimate partner violence are not always highest among those with the least wealth or education.***

Two socioeconomic characteristics whose association varied widely by country are worth exploring in more detail. In both the bivariate and the multivariate analyses, there was not always a significant or consistent association between violence and education or wealth across all countries. While reported prevalence of physical or sexual intimate partner violence was usually, but not always, lowest among women reporting the highest levels of wealth and education, the prevalence of intimate partner violence did not always consistently decline as education or wealth quintile increased. In several countries, notably Paraguay 2008 and Peru 2007/8, the prevalence of intimate partner violence ever was higher among women with 7-11 years of schooling compared with women with 4-6 years of schooling. Similarly, in a majority of surveys, the prevalence of partner violence both

**ever** and **in the past 12 months** was highest among women in intermediate wealth quintiles, not the poorest.

When the multivariate analysis controlled for other factors (such as residence, marital status, etc.), lower education was not significantly associated with a higher risk of intimate partner violence in most countries. Lower wealth was a significant risk factor for partner violence in four countries, but the association was not as strong or only marginally significant in the rest. Moreover, in the countries where wealth was significantly associated with partner violence, the risk of intimate partner violence did not always decrease consistently with each wealth quintile, and in a majority of countries, the highest risk of intimate partner violence was associated with intermediate, not the lowest, wealth quintiles.

These findings contrast somewhat with a widespread belief that poverty increases women's risk of experiencing intimate partner violence. For example, a recent WHO/PAHO review of the literature asserts that: "*studies from a wide range of settings show that, while intimate partner violence and sexual violence cut across all socioeconomic groups, women living in poverty are disproportionately affected*".<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless, other studies have produced findings similar to those presented here in this comparative report. Kishor and Johnson (2004) found "no consistent relationship" between the risk of partner violence and wealth quintile after controlling for other factors in an analysis of data from nine countries.<sup>17</sup> And, while an analysis of WHO Multi-country Study data did find an association in some countries, researchers concluded that wealth may not always be an independent risk factor, but one that may be confounded by other factors.<sup>18</sup> Some researchers, such as Jewkes (2002), have argued that the effect of poverty on intimate partner violence may be mediated through factors such as increased stress, marital conflict, and threats to masculine identity, and that the unequal social and economic status of women may have a greater influence on levels of violence than absolute levels of income.<sup>15</sup>

The findings related to education in this analysis echo those from other settings that have found an inverted U-shaped curve with regard to the relationship between intimate partner violence and



women's education, whereby (in some settings) violence is lower among women with the least education, rises among women with intermediate levels of education, and then falls among women with the highest levels of education.<sup>15</sup> Jewkes (2002) suggests that one likely explanation for this finding is that *"having some education empowers women enough to challenge certain aspects of traditional sex roles, but that such empowerment carries an increased risk of violence until a high enough level is reached for protective effects to predominate"*.<sup>15</sup> She goes on to argue that in communities where gender relations are in transition, women may be at particular risk of violence by intimate partners—a possibility that may be worth considering in the Latin American and Caribbean Region, where important shifts in women's roles and empowerment are underway.

- ***After controlling for other factors, the strongest factors associated with a higher risk of experiencing partner violence across the 12 countries were being separated or divorced, having a higher number of live births, and a history of their father beating their mother.***

After controlling for other factors in the multivariate analysis, the strongest and most consistent factors associated with a higher risk of intimate partner violence across all surveys were being separated or divorced, high parity (number of live births), and a history of 'father beat mother'. Generally, these findings support results of other DHS comparative analyses,<sup>16, 17</sup> the WHO Multi-country Study,<sup>5</sup> and evidence from other settings.<sup>12</sup>

Being separated or divorced was associated with significantly higher odds of experiencing intimate partner violence **ever** in all countries except Haiti 2005/6, and **in the past 12 months** in more than half of the countries. In these cross-sectional surveys it was impossible to determine whether violence occurred before or after separation; however, evidence from other sources indicates that both may occur. In some cases, intimate partner violence precedes separation or divorce, and may even be an important reason for the end of the partnership.<sup>146</sup> Other studies have found that the process of separation/divorce itself may trigger or elevate the risk of intimate partner violence.<sup>179</sup> From a programmatic perspective, these findings suggest that the risk of intimate partner violence may not

end just because a woman no longer lives with an ex-partner, and ex-partners are an important group of perpetrators.

In almost all countries, higher parity was significantly associated with a higher risk of intimate partner violence, even after controlling for women's age. This suggests that intimate partner violence and women's reproductive health and family formation are closely related, as will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The single risk factor that was consistent and significant across all surveys that measured it, however, was a history of 'father beat mother'. In all countries (except Honduras 2005/6, which did not measure it), women who reported that their father (or stepfather) beat their mother (or stepmother) were significantly more likely to report having experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence than those who did not, after controlling for all other factors in the model. This supports a large body of evidence that intimate partner violence has strong intergenerational effects.<sup>18, 131</sup>

It is important to point out, however, that due to a lack of comparable data, this analysis was not able to include partner characteristics in the analysis of risk factors. A large body of research indicates that partner and union characteristics are important dimensions of women's risk of violence. In particular, studies have identified a partner's alcohol use and exposure to domestic violence in his childhood home as important risk factors, for example.<sup>12, 18</sup>

#### Discussion of findings: situations that triggered intimate partner violence

- ***Women cite many different situations that 'trigger' intimate partner violence, but in nearly all settings, the partner's alcohol consumption plays an important role.***

Women who experienced intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months** cited many situations that triggered their partner's violence against them. In almost all surveys, however, their partner's drunkenness or drug use was the single most commonly cited situation, ranging from 29.8% of such women in Guatemala 2008/9 to more than half (53.4%) in Ecuador 2004. The finding that—according to women's reports—their partner's drunkenness and/or drug use was the most

common trigger of violence corresponds with a large body of evidence that men's alcohol abuse increases women's risk of experiencing intimate partner violence (as mentioned earlier). For example, partner's alcohol consumption was a significant predictor of intimate partner violence in two other comparative analyses of DHS survey data,<sup>16, 17</sup> as well as in an analysis of WHO Multi-country Study data.<sup>18</sup>

Due to a lack of comparable data on alcohol use across these 13 surveys, it was not possible to explore other dimensions of the link between alcohol use and violence against women within this report. However, the role of alcohol is a growing area of interest for researchers focused on violence against women, and it has been highlighted by other studies from Latin America and the Caribbean, including studies from Brazil,<sup>122, 123</sup> Mexico,<sup>60</sup> and the GENACIS study.<sup>61</sup> For example, in 10 Latin American and Caribbean countries included in the GENACIS study, both men and women who were victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence were more likely to be drinkers of alcohol (versus abstainers) and—among drinkers—more likely to drink heavily on each occasion, compared with those who did not report intimate partner violence.

#### Discussion of findings: consequences of intimate partner violence

- ***Intimate partner violence often has serious consequences for women's physical health.***

In all surveys in this analysis, women reported serious physical consequences as a result of intimate partner violence. Large proportions of women who experienced partner violence **ever** and **in the past 12 months** reported being physically injured as a result, including 'minor' injuries such as bruises and pain as well as more 'severe' injuries such as broken bones, burns, and knife wounds. These findings support a growing body of global evidence that intimate partner violence is a public health problem with negative consequences for women's physical health, including physical injury, disability, and chronic pain.<sup>9, 12, 19, 20</sup> Not surprisingly, research from countries across the globe suggests that women with a history of having experienced physical or sexual violence use health services more than other women, leading to considerable direct costs to countries' health sectors.<sup>12</sup> One of the

most extreme forms of intimate partner violence—femicide—was beyond the scope of what could be measured by these 13 surveys; but other sources of evidence suggest that substantial numbers of women are killed by their partner in the LAC Region each year.<sup>180</sup>

- ***Intimate partner violence often has serious emotional, mental health, and work-related consequences.***

This comparative analysis documented widespread emotional and mental health consequences of intimate partner violence, including fear, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. In the five surveys that measured this indicator, between one-half and just over two-thirds of women who experienced partner violence **in the past 12 months** said they had experienced anxiety or depression severe enough that they could not carry out their usual work as a result of the violence. This supports a broader body of evidence that partner violence takes a heavy toll on women's economic productivity in the Region.<sup>24</sup>

Four studies gathered data that allowed an examination of partner violence and suicidal thoughts. In Guatemala 2008/9 and Paraguay 2008, women who had experienced physical or sexual partner violence **in the past 12 months** were significantly more likely (by a factor of more than four and seven, respectively) to have contemplated or attempted suicide in the past four weeks compared with those who had never experienced partner violence. While these data cannot examine causal linkages, they do suggest a strong correlation between suicidal thoughts and the experience of physical and sexual intimate partner violence.

In addition, 23.7% of women in Colombia 2005 who reported partner violence **ever**, and 31.7% of women in El Salvador 2008 who reported partner violence **in the past 12 months**, told interviewers that they had wanted to kill themselves as a result of the partner violence they had experienced. These findings were limited by a lack of comparable data among women who had not experienced violence. On the other hand, they reflect women's own view that these suicidal thoughts were a 'consequence' of the violence they experienced, and therefore an indicator of high levels of distress that women felt at the time.

Together, these findings support growing evidence that violence against women is a major contributing factor to the burden of mental ill health among women in the LAC Region.<sup>20-22</sup> Similarly, an analysis of global data from the WHO Multi-country Study found that the most consistent risk factors for suicide included intimate partner violence, childhood sexual abuse, and having a mother who had experienced intimate partner violence.<sup>23</sup>

- ***Intimate partner violence is closely linked to a number of key reproductive health indicators.***

In the four DHS surveys that asked ever-pregnant women whether they had **ever** experienced physical violence during any pregnancy, between 5.6% of ever-pregnant women in Haiti 2005/6 and 11.3% of ever-pregnant women in Peru 2007/8 reported such violence. These findings fall within the range of 3-13% of women reporting intimate partner violence during pregnancy from global literature reviews,<sup>25-27</sup> as well as from studies on violence during pregnancy from countries in LAC such as Brazil,<sup>28</sup> Mexico,<sup>29-32</sup> and Peru.<sup>33, 34</sup>

More generally, this comparative analysis found a close link between physical and sexual intimate partner violence and a number of reproductive health indicators. In almost all countries, the prevalence or odds of physical or sexual intimate partner violence **ever** or **in the past 12 months** was significantly higher among women who reported a younger age at first birth, among women who had higher parity (number of live births), and among women whose last live birth was unintended or unwanted. Similarly, in all surveys except Haiti 2005/6, unintended and unwanted pregnancy was significantly more common among women who reported partner violence **ever** compared with those who did not.

The ability to make causal inferences about the relationship between violence against women and reproductive health indicators is extremely limited using the cross-sectional data analyzed in this report. Evidence suggests that pathways may operate directly or indirectly, and may even work in both directions. For example, some researchers view high parity as a risk factor for intimate partner violence,<sup>16, 17</sup> while others suggest that unwanted pregnancy and high parity may result from the climate of fear, control, and disempowerment that often

characterizes abusive partnerships.<sup>74, 181</sup> Regardless of how pathways work, however, this comparative analysis clearly suggests that women in the LAC Region who experience intimate partner violence face an elevated risk of negative reproductive outcomes, including unwanted pregnancy. It also suggests that intimate partner violence has serious negative implications for women's sexual and reproductive health, and that improving women's reproductive health in the LAC Region will require a better understanding of and interventions to address intimate partner violence.

#### Discussion of findings: help-seeking behavior among women who experience violence

- ***Help-seeking behaviors by women who experience intimate partner violence vary widely by country.***

The proportion of women who sought help for intimate partner violence, either by telling someone close to them or by seeking institutional help, varied widely by country. Among women who experienced intimate partner violence **in the past 12 months**, the proportion who told family or friends ranged from less than one-third (29.3%) in Honduras 2005/6 to almost two-thirds (65.5%) in El Salvador 2008. The percentage of women who sought help from institutions ranged from 8.2% in Ecuador 2004 to 36.0% in El Salvador 2008, and in all countries was lower than the percentage who sought help from family or friends. Women cited many different reasons for not seeking help, including shame, fear of retaliation, not knowing where to go, and not believing that anyone would help.

The surveys in this comparative analysis did not gather data on the availability of services for women who experience violence in each setting, or women's perceptions of the accessibility, affordability, or quality of those services. Nonetheless, findings from this analysis echo other research from the Latin American and Caribbean Region that has explored whether, where, and from whom women seek help, including a 10-country set of case studies.<sup>178, 182</sup> That multi-country study found that help-seeking is influenced by the availability and quality of services for women who experience violence, women's awareness of their rights and of places where they could go for help, as well as social norms, attitudes, and support

among family and friends—all of which may vary by setting. Understanding where, how, and from whom women seek help for violence is essential for designing better policies and programs to respond to violence at the local, community, national, and regional levels. It may not be feasible for DHS and RHS surveys to include detailed questions of this nature due to their large sample sizes and the brevity of the violence modules, but more in-depth studies on this topic could increase the understanding of factors associated with help-seeking.

#### Discussion of findings: sexual violence against women and girls by any perpetrator

- ***Large proportions of women in Latin America and the Caribbean report experiencing sexual violence in their lifetime, perpetrated mostly by men known to them.***

Findings from this comparative analysis suggest that substantial proportions of women in Latin American and Caribbean countries with recent DHS or RHS surveys have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lifetime, either by an intimate partner or by someone else. Among ever-partnered women, the percentage of women who reported sexual violence (including forced sex, forced sex acts, forced sexual debut, and/or sex out of fear) ranged from 10.3% in Paraguay 2008 to 27.2% in Haiti 2005/6. In most surveys, the majority of these women had experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner.

Comparing prevalence estimates of sexual violence across countries is challenging for many reasons, in part because sexual violence takes many different forms, and also because studies vary widely in the ways that they define and measure sexual violence. There is generally a lack of knowledge or agreement about how best to measure these experiences.<sup>69, 183-</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Given the sensitivity of the topic, there may also be wide variation in disclosure rates among surveys, depending on interviewer training and skill.<sup>84</sup> Nonetheless, this comparative analysis adds to a limited but growing literature that indicates that substantial proportions of women in the LAC Region have experienced sexual violence, that sexual violence takes a myriad of forms, and that most perpetrators are known to women (and are often intimate partners) rather than strangers.<sup>51, 186, 187</sup>

- ***Both forced and unwanted sexual initiation often occurs at early ages for young women and girls in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.***

In this comparative analysis, small but important proportions of young women reported that their first intercourse was ‘forced’, with husbands, partners, and boyfriends as the most commonly reported perpetrators in surveys that measured this indicator. These results almost certainly represent the tip of the iceberg that is the broader problem of child sexual abuse and unwanted sexual debut. Qualitative research from Mexico suggests that young women are sometimes reluctant to describe their first sexual intercourse as ‘forced’ when it occurs in the context of a romantic partnership, even if it involves substantial physical or emotional coercion.<sup>188</sup> Moreover, when researchers give young women the option of reporting that their first sexual intercourse was unwanted without having to call it ‘forced’, large proportions of women typically report unwanted sexual debut—as in the RHS survey from Jamaica 2008/9 and the WHO Multi-country Study surveys in Brazil and Peru. These findings suggest that many young women feel pressured to have sexual intercourse before they are ready. They also suggest that asking women to choose between ‘forced’ and ‘wanted’ does not adequately measure the sexual coercion that young women experience in LAC. There is clearly a need for better research tools to understand the circumstances of first sexual intercourse and the experience of other coerced sexual activity at early ages.

#### Discussion of findings: exposure to violence during childhood

- ***Exposure to violence in childhood raises the risk of other forms of violence later in life and has important negative intergenerational effects.***

This comparative analysis produced evidence suggesting that exposure to violence in childhood increases the risk of violence later in life and has strong intergenerational effects. As noted earlier, the multivariate analysis found that the most consistent risk factor for physical or sexual intimate partner violence against women across all countries was a history of ‘father beat mother’. In addition, the prevalence of intimate partner violence was significantly higher (usually around twice as high) among women who reported

physical abuse in childhood compared with those who did not. Partner violence was also significantly higher (usually more than twice as high) among women who reported experiencing sexual abuse in childhood compared with those who did not. Moreover, children living in households where women had experienced intimate partner violence were significantly more likely than other children to be punished with hitting, beating, spanking, or slapping. (Note that these surveys did not gather comparable data on who in the household administered such punishments.)

Evidence that exposure to violence in childhood—either as a victim or a witness—may increase the risk of violence later in life supports research from many regions, including Latin America and the Caribbean, as does evidence that violence against women is associated with increased risk of violence among children living in the same home.<sup>12, 13, 18, 71, 72, 76</sup> It is worth noting that an increased risk of violence later in life is only one of many negative health and social consequences that researchers in Latin America have documented among children exposed to violence in the home.<sup>146, 189</sup>

#### Discussion of findings: support for gender norms and attitudes related to violence against women

- ***Agreement with the acceptability of intimate partner violence against women varies widely by country, but is widespread in many parts of the Region.***

Agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating for at least one reason varied widely by country, ranging from 2.9% of women in Jamaica 2008/9 to 38.2% in Ecuador 2004. In addition, acceptability was significantly higher among rural than among urban women, and among women who had experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence ***in the past 12 months***, compared with those who had not. In each of the five countries where data are available from surveys carried out at two different points in time (Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Paraguay), the acceptability of wife-beating was lower in the more recent survey than it was in the earlier survey. Two data points are not enough to demonstrate a trend, but other researchers have suggested that support for wife-beating may be declining in countries in the Region, as did

authors of a longitudinal study from Nicaragua,<sup>35</sup> for example.

In recent years, qualitative research from Bangladesh suggests that responses to survey questions about the acceptability of wife-beating may reflect women's beliefs about community norms as well as or instead of their own individual attitudes.<sup>190</sup> Whether they reflect individual attitudes or community norms, however, the acceptability of wife-beating is a common target for change by programs seeking to prevent and reduce intimate partner violence,<sup>191</sup> based in part on evidence that men who agree with the acceptability of violence against women are more likely to use physical or sexual violence against their partners, as suggested by studies from El Salvador<sup>46</sup> and Jamaica,<sup>136</sup> as well as the IMAGES study in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico.<sup>112</sup> There is also evidence that community norms supporting the acceptability of violence against women are associated with higher prevalence levels of intimate partner violence.<sup>12, 13</sup> Interestingly, however, in this comparative analysis, when national prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence ***in the past 12 months*** are plotted against women's agreement with the acceptability of wife-beating for at least one reason, no clear relationship emerges, suggesting that the relationship between attitudes and behaviors is complex.

- ***There is widespread agreement in the Region with norms that reinforce gender inequality, discourage women from seeking help, or downplay the duty of bystanders to intervene in situations of abuse, with wide variations both among and within individual countries.***

This analysis found widespread agreement with norms and attitudes that support women's subordinate gender roles and non-interference in situations of violence, although levels of agreement varied widely among and within countries. In the five RHS surveys that measured these gender norms and attitudes, the proportion of women who agreed that a wife should obey her husband even if she disagreed with him ranged from just over one-fourth of women in urban Paraguay 2008 to nearly three-fourths of women in rural Guatemala 2008/9. Substantial proportions of women in these surveys did not agree that outsiders should intervene to help a woman who was being abused by her husband or that family problems should be



discussed with those outside the family. Increasing the willingness of family and community members to intervene when women experience violence—sometimes called bystander interventions<sup>192</sup>—may be one way to reduce violence in the future.

## 12.2 Limitations of this comparative analysis

As discussed earlier, this comparative analysis was limited in terms of scope and content by the availability of comparable data in countries within the LAC Region that had recent DHS or RHS surveys. Other challenges and limitations included the following:

- ***Although all 13 DHS and RHS surveys in this report used field procedures designed to ensure data quality, there may have been variations in data quality among the surveys.***

Indicators such as response rates, completeness, and internal consistency are routinely tracked, and in general were found to be adequate for all surveys in this report. Most surveys received official government approval by the country's national statistics organization as producing 'official data' that could be used to guide policy and programs. Nevertheless, there may have been differences in overall data quality by survey.

- ***As noted throughout this report, differences in question wording, filters, and overall questionnaire design limited the comparability of many indicators in this report.***

Because this comparative analysis used surveys that were not designed for multi-country comparisons, survey measures varied for most indicators in this report, to different degrees. This heterogeneity poses serious challenges for comparability and should be considered when comparing findings from one country to another. Readers are encouraged to read the detailed notes about comparability when interpreting findings.

- ***In general, surveys may underestimate the prevalence of violence against women for a host of reasons.***

Women may under-report violence out of shame or fear, because they don't recognize acts of physical, sexual, or emotional violence as a form of abuse, because interviewers fail to gain their confidence or to ensure privacy during the

interview, or because local social and cultural norms make disclosure difficult.<sup>69, 84</sup> We do not know whether or to what degree levels of under-reporting varied among the surveys in this report. Ironically, it is possible that in settings where awareness of intimate partner violence rises or acceptability of wife-beating declines, women may become more willing to disclose their experiences to interviewers over time, even if underlying prevalence does not change. It is also important to note that—within individual countries—disclosure rates may vary among women by sociodemographic characteristics in ways that we do not necessarily understand; for example, it is possible that women with more or less education or wealth may be more willing to disclose their experiences to interviewers than other women.

- ***Violence modules in larger health surveys—such as these—sometimes (but not always) produce lower prevalence estimates than surveys focused primarily on violence against women.***

In the past, surveys that incorporated a small violence module into a broader survey of women's and children's health—such as these RHS and DHS surveys—have sometimes (but not always) produced lower prevalence estimates than surveys dedicated specifically to investigating violence against women,<sup>68, 69</sup> possibly because they were able to invest greater resources in questionnaire design and interviewer training, which have been found to influence disclosure rates.<sup>69, 84</sup> While all DHS and RHS surveys took measures to conform to international safety and ethical guidelines for researching violence against women, it is possible that interviewers had different levels of skill and adherence to ethical safeguards in different countries.

- ***None of the DHS surveys in this comparative analysis measured the lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence.***

Unfortunately, all DHS surveys that measured intimate partner violence **ever** asked specifically about violence by the current or most recent partner rather than by any current or former partner in life. As a result, none were able to produce lifetime prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence, and their estimates were, therefore, not entirely comparable to RHS surveys.

This limitation of DHS surveys is particularly problematic in light of evidence that partner violence is higher among women who have had more than one partnership in life compared with women who have had just one. The DHS prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence in this report would almost certainly have been higher if they had measured violence by any partner in life, especially in settings such as the Dominican Republic 2007 and Haiti 2005/6, in which nearly 40% of women had more than one partnership in their lifetime.

- ***By measuring violence by husbands or cohabiting partners, most of these surveys did not capture violence by informal partners, particularly during partnership formation.***

Most RHS and DHS surveys limited the definition of a partner to a husband or a cohabiting partner. In Latin America and the Caribbean, large proportions of young women experience sexual debut and even childbearing before formal marriage or cohabitation. Others have informal sexual relationships at other periods of their life.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>194</sup> Surveys that focus most heavily on measuring violence by husbands or cohabiting partners may not capture the full range of physical or sexual violence committed by boyfriends early in sexual relationships or by informal sexual partners later in life. It is noteworthy that to address this limitation, some RHS and DHS surveys, as well as the WHO Multi-country Study in Peru, included a broader range of sexual partners in their survey questions specifically focused on intimate partner violence.

- ***Many questions remain about how to measure and interpret the data on sexual violence by intimate partners and other perpetrators in these surveys.***

There was great diversity in the ways that surveys in this report measured sexual violence by partners, at debut, during childhood, and throughout women's lives, which presented challenges for comparability. Even when measures were similar, it was not always clear how small wording differences in the questionnaires may have affected reporting of sexual violence, including the varied use of words such as 'made' ("*obligado*") versus 'forced' ("*forzado*") to have sexual intercourse, the specificity of 'physically

forced' versus just 'forced', as well as differences in what women understood by the term 'sex acts' or by questions about sexual intercourse performed out of fear of what their partner might do if they refused. (For example, were they afraid of physical violence or other types of consequences?) These limitations reflect broader challenges in the field of research on violence against women, including the general lack of comparability among surveys that explore sexual violence, as well as important gaps in our understanding of how to measure and interpret such data.<sup>69</sup>

- ***The cross-sectional data gathered by these surveys had limited ability to shed light on the timing of or the causal relationships between violence and other possible risk factors.***

As already noted in this report, these surveys gathered cross-sectional data that have limited ability to characterize experiences over time, including the frequency, chronicity, or duration of intimate partner violence, or the timing of violence in relation to possible risk factors. For example, these data sets did not always include information that could be used to determine whether events such as divorce, employment, first birth, or unintended pregnancy occurred before or after intimate partner violence began. Therefore, while the data can be used to examine correlations, they have limited ability to allow temporal or causal inferences about the relationship between violence against women and other possible risk factors. For example, divorce and high parity were both significantly associated with increased odds of experiencing intimate partner violence *ever* in nearly all surveys, but the cross-sectional nature of these data does not allow us to conclude that there was a causal relationship between either of these factors and intimate partner violence, nor to determine the direction of causality.

- ***Because of the heterogeneity of the surveys in the comparative analysis, it was not possible to explore associations between partner characteristics and women's risk of violence.*** One major limitation of this comparative analysis was that it did not explore the association between women's risk of intimate partner violence and characteristics of partners. In part



this was because these variables were often measured by the 13 DHS and RHS surveys in ways that greatly limited their comparability. Many studies have found that partner characteristics have a strong effect on women's odds of experiencing partner violence—in some cases, even greater than the effect of women's own individual characteristics.<sup>194</sup> In particular, other studies have found men's alcohol abuse to be a significant risk factor for women's risk of violence, independent of other factors.<sup>16, 17</sup> While many surveys in this report measured some dimension of alcohol use, they did so in diverse ways, which made it impossible to include this factor in the multivariate analysis.

- ***A number of variables included in the multivariate logistic regression models may be highly correlated.***

The multivariate logistic regression models included a number of variables that may be correlated with one another, most notably age and parity and age and first union. In some cases, this might explain why some strong associations observed in the bivariate analysis were not as strong in the multivariate analysis—a possibility that may be explored in more depth in future analyses. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy

that despite these possible correlations, age, parity, and age at first union were significantly associated with intimate partner violence in many if not all countries.

- ***This comparative analysis did not explore the association between community-level factors and women's risk of violence.***

While individual factors may increase women's risk of experiencing violence in some settings, a growing body of research suggests that community-level factors are an important determinant of women's underlying vulnerability to violence and their ability to seek assistance for or leave an abusive situation after it begins.<sup>12,</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Some researchers have used household survey data to carry out this type of analysis, including Gage (2005) using data from Haiti,<sup>77</sup> Pallitto and O'Campo (2005) using data from Colombia,<sup>75</sup> and Hindin and colleagues (2008) using DHS data from 10 countries.<sup>16</sup> However, multi-level analysis was beyond the scope of this comparative analysis. From the perspective of identifying opportunities for reducing levels of violence against women, however, a focus on individual risk factors should not encourage policy makers to overlook the importance of community-wide strategies and responses.



## CHAPTER 13. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

### 13.1 Recommendations for future research

In the process of carrying out this comparative analysis, a number of methodological recommendations emerged, many of which have been mentioned at different points throughout this report, such as the following:

- ***DHS surveys should consider revising their measures of intimate partner violence to include violence by any current or former partner in life, not just the most current or recent partner.***

The DHS approach of limiting survey questions on intimate partner violence to the current or most recent partner produces estimates that not only fall short of lifetime prevalence (particularly in countries where a large percentage of women have more than one partnership in life) but also limit their comparability to surveys that do measure lifetime prevalence. This is problematic for a host of reasons, including the fact that many researchers and some final reports in the Region present these estimates as if they were lifetime prevalence estimates when they are not. This problem could be rectified by revising the questionnaires so that they first ask about violence by any current or former partner in life (as both the RHS and WHO surveys have done), and then include a follow-up question to identify whether any of the violence reported was perpetrated by the current/most recent partner. It is noteworthy that RHS surveys in this report did not include this type of follow-up question, which might have enhanced the comparability and scope of the data they gathered.

- ***More methodological work is needed to improve measures of sexual violence.***

More research is needed to understand how to measure and interpret findings about different types of sexual violence in the Region. This was noted by Ellsberg and Heise (2005), who wrote: “instruments to measure sexual coercion and/or forced sex are less well developed cross culturally than those to measure [physical] partner violence”.<sup>69</sup> Ideally, qualitative and quantitative work would be carried out to explore how women understand different types of questions about sexual violence. For example, it is not entirely

clear what women themselves understand by the term ‘sex acts’ or the questions about unwanted sex out of fear. There is a particular need to develop better measures for the lifetime prevalence of sexual violence, which would avoid the internal inconsistencies found in this comparative analysis, namely that women often do not report forced sexual relations by intimate partners in response to a general question about forced sex by any perpetrator. And generally, this suggests that researchers should not try to measure lifetime experiences of forced sex using a single-question approach. Researchers should use multiple questionnaire items to ask separate questions specifically about forced sexual intercourse by intimate partners apart from questions about forced sexual intercourse by other perpetrators.

- ***More research is needed on child sexual abuse and the circumstances of sexual debut more generally.***

Generally there is a need for a better understanding of the circumstances surrounding sexual debut among girls and boys in the Region. In particular, however, surveys that investigate the circumstances of sexual debut need to go beyond dichotomous questions that ask respondents to choose between ‘forced’ and ‘wanted’. Clearly, many young women experience unwanted sexual debut, whether or not they are willing to label it ‘forced’. As noted earlier, qualitative research from Mexico suggests that women sometimes hesitate to say that sexual intercourse was ‘forced’ by a partner, even when they experience clear physical or emotional coercion.<sup>188</sup> There is also a need for greater comparability among surveys in the Region on sexual debut and child sexual abuse of both girls and boys.

- ***More research is needed to understand risk factors associated with violence against women—not just individual background characteristics of women, but also those of partners and communities.***

Much more needs to be done to understand risk and protective factors associated with violence against women that go beyond women’s individual characteristics, to include risk factors

related to the characteristics of partners and communities.

- ***Surveys should follow international ethical and safety recommendations for researching violence against women, including interviewing only one woman per household.***

Finally, all surveys should follow the safety and ethical guidelines developed by WHO,<sup>96</sup> including the recommendation that surveys interview only one woman from each household about violence. In addition, surveys should ensure that women are interviewed in private by including strict privacy filters in the questionnaire and by training interviewers to stop the interview if another person is present.

### 13.2 Policy and program implications

This comparative analysis produced many findings that have specific policy and program implications, including the following:

- ***Violence against women should be a priority for policy makers and programmers in the Region.***

Given the widespread prevalence of violence against women and children, its significant health and economic consequences, as well as its violation of many basic human rights, policy makers and programmers need to address violence against women in countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean in order to prevent and mitigate the negative consequences of such violence for women's physical and mental health, as well as for the health and well-being of future generations and the broader society.

- ***Evidence suggests that violence against women can be prevented.***

While violence against women was reported by substantial proportions of women in all settings, prevalence varied by setting, indicating that high levels of violence against women are not an inevitable feature of human society. Work by WHO and others<sup>24, 36-38</sup> documents examples of strategies that have shown evidence of the potential for preventing violence against women.

- ***Key institutions across all sectors should improve their response to violence against women.***

Women who experience violence in Latin America and the Caribbean do not always seek help, often because they do not know where to go or do not

have confidence that they will receive effective, compassionate, and confidential assistance. Improving the service response to violence is an important objective that both government and civil society institutions can work towards. In addition, given the clear link between violence and reproductive health, prenatal care and other sexual and reproductive health services may want to consider implementing strategies to actively and routinely identify cases of violence and address the broader implications of power imbalances within sexual partnerships.

- ***The close link between different types of violence suggests there might be value in comprehensive strategies that address multiple types of violence and multiple generations simultaneously.***

Different types of violence are closely linked, and have strong intergenerational effects. This suggests that policy makers and programmers should look for ways to address multiple types of violence and multiple generations simultaneously, and to build links and alliances among professionals working on different types of violence, particularly those working in violence against children and violence against women.

- ***Policy makers and programmers should address norms and attitudes in the Region that support gender inequality and violence.***

Gender norms and attitudes that support gender inequity or view violence against women as a 'private' matter are still widespread in many parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. These norms may discourage women from seeking help and families and community members from assisting women who experience abuse. Changing these norms and attitudes may contribute to prevention of and response to violence against women, as well as to promoting gender equality more broadly.

### 13.3 Promising strategies for preventing and responding to violence against women

In 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the global campaign called UNiTE to End Violence against Women.<sup>39</sup> The UNiTE campaign calls on governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, the media, and the entire UN system to support strategies such as adopting

and enforcing national laws to address and punish all forms of violence against women and girls; implementing multi-sectoral national action plans; strengthening data collection on the prevalence of violence against women and girls; increasing public awareness and social mobilization; and addressing sexual violence in conflict situations.

The UNiTE campaign is one of many efforts around the world to address violence against women, based on what is known about effective or at least promising approaches. In recent years, a number of international reviews have synthesized evidence from evaluations of efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, including efforts to reform laws, policies, institutional practices, structural inequalities, social norms, attitudes, and behaviors.<sup>7, 24, 36-41</sup> These reviews suggest a need for investment in both prevention and response, and for comprehensive, multi-sectoral, long-term actions that involve collaboration between governments and civil society at different levels of society.

A detailed review of the evidence about specific initiatives is beyond the scope of this report, but the following examples of prevention and response strategies have been singled out by the international reviews noted above as showing evidence of effectiveness or promise, and are listed according to the level of society that they address.

- ***Reform criminal and civil legislation and work to ensure that women can exercise their civil rights.***

In recent years, there have been many efforts in the Region to reform criminal and civil legislation.<sup>196-198</sup> Other strategies in this category include media and political advocacy campaigns aimed at changing laws and policies or raising awareness about existing legislation that criminalizes intimate partner violence, rape, child abuse, sexual harassment, etc. Another important—if indirect—strategy for addressing violence against women has been to strengthen women's ability to exercise their civil rights relating to divorce, property, child support and custody, employment, and freedom from sexual harassment in the workplace. Some of these strategies have been evaluated in the Region, including for example work carried out by the Nicaraguan Network of Women Against Violence.<sup>178, 199</sup>

- ***Build coalitions and networks of government and civil society institutions.***

In many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, coalitions and networks of government and civil society institutions have collaborated on a comprehensive approach to preventing and improving the response to violence against women. Again the Nicaraguan Network of Women Against Violence<sup>199</sup> is one evaluated model of this approach. Many others are documented in a set of case studies from Central America carried out by the Pan American Health Organization.<sup>178</sup>

- ***Use community mobilization and mass communication to achieve social change.***

Mass media 'edutainment' strategies (e.g. programs that use multimedia such as television, radio, and print) to change social norms and mobilize community-wide changes have been shown to influence gender norms and community responses to violence against women. Sexto Sentido in Nicaragua is the most well-known and rigorously evaluated model of edutainment in the LAC Region,<sup>200</sup> but many NGOs have used community mobilization, community education, and mass media to address violence against women.<sup>24</sup>

- ***Work to transform whole institutions in every sector.***

Another important set of strategies for preventing and responding to violence against women is reform of the policies and practices of key institutions, including: government ministries, police, the judiciary, schools, universities, health care institutions, and social services agencies. In all sectors, evidence suggests that these efforts are most effective when they address whole institutions rather than targeted or narrow policy changes or staff training. Examples of transforming institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean include the Safe Schools Program in Jamaica<sup>201</sup> and the International Planned Parenthood Federation's regional initiative to strengthen the health care response to violence against women in Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Peru, and Venezuela.<sup>202-205</sup>

- ***Strengthen the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resources of individuals, couples, and families.***

Many strategies have attempted to strengthen the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resources of

individuals and families, including by promoting social and economic empowerment of women and girls, by promoting gender equitable attitudes and beliefs among young people, by engaging men and boys to promote nonviolence and gender equity, and in some settings, by providing early intervention services to at-risk families. For example, Program H, originally implemented in Brazil, is one of the more well-evaluated strategies to engage men in the Latin American and Caribbean Region; that program has demonstrated the ability to

change individual attitudes and in some cases behavior.<sup>191, 206</sup> In recent years, a number of programs around the world have demonstrated effectiveness in the area of dating violence, though most of these experiences have been in high-income settings.<sup>207</sup> Another emerging and promising area of work is early childhood intervention, including strategies to prevent child abuse and neglect, as illustrated by a recent review of program experiences and literature from low- and middle-income countries.<sup>208</sup>

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## APPENDIX

## A1 Numbers of women ever married or in union who completed the violence modules

Table A1 Numbers (unweighted) of women ever married or in union who completed the violence modules, by women's background characteristics [1-4]

	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008	Bolivia 2003	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Honduras 2005/6	Peru 2007/8
<b>Residence</b>													
Urban	4,025	3,788	5,463	3,078	5,407	2,339	7,607	5,354	19,283	4,898	1,140	4,831	7,523
Rural	3,192	3,561	7,305	4,144	5,986	2,075	4,447	3,628	6,337	3,540	1,540	7,870	5,049
<b>Education</b>													
0-3 years	889	2,148	6,732	6	3,882	387	3,440	2,106	4,287	1,579	1,488	4,499	2,175
4-6 years	2,594	1,654	3,038	78	3,229	1,617	2,968	2,047	6,963	1,147	513	5,323	3,044
7-11 years	1,626	1,951	1,632	5,687	3,108	1,023	2,565	1,913	10,730	3,009	566	1,084	4,642
12+ years	2,108	1,596	1,366	1,273	1,174	1,387	3,080	2,916	3,640	2,388	111	1,795	2,711
<b>Age of woman</b>													
15-19	371	460	798	424	1,003	267	512	475	1,312	607	147	1,097	459
20-24	1,070	979	2,024	1,024	2,132	693	1,860	1,221	3,541	1,256	428	2,326	1,485
25-29	1,395	1,489	2,701	1,308	2,378	982	2,172	1,683	4,212	1,519	568	2,515	2,243
30-39	2,658	2,652	4,659	2,398	3,712	1,771	4,306	3,199	8,836	2,998	881	4,037	4,779
40-49	1,723	1,769	2,586	2,068	2,168	701	3,204	2,404	7,719	2,058	656	2,726	3,606
<b>Wealth quintile</b>													
Lowest	1,713	1,561	2,840	1,823	3,013	1,209	2,059	1,748	5,023	2,361	601	3,068	1,195
Second	1,563	1,586	2,770	1,541	2,614	958	2,460	1,726	6,495	1,996	546	2,969	3,215
Third	1,435	1,540	2,643	1,444	2,256	880	2,649	1,814	5,930	1,667	548	2,455	3,403
Fourth	1,373	1,524	2,605	1,399	1,979	745	2,656	1,897	4,703	1,431	599	2,200	2,437
Highest	1,133	1,138	1,910	1,015	1,531	622	2,230	1,797	3,469	983	386	2,009	2,322
<b>Current marital status</b>													
Married or in union	6,256	5,709	11,416	5,878	9,369	3,940	10,626	8,749	19,657	6,644	2,339	11,544	11,039
-Married	4,074	2,605	7,076	1,441	3,828	2,079	7,177	5,243	7,530	1,404	1,827	5,084	4,815
-In union	2,182	3,104	4,340	4,437	5,541	1,861	3,449	3,407	12,127	5,240	512	6,460	6,224
Separated/divorced	826	1,456	1,030	1,344	1,862	439	2,283	204	5,207	1,690	266	1,082	1,428
Widowed	135	184	322	na	162	35	245	29	756	104	75	75	105
<b>Number of unions</b>													
1	6,284	5,722	11,321	2,377	8,655	3,905	10,936	8,133	20,352	4,963	1,622	10,060	11,000
2+	512	1,627	1,447	4,663	2,738	506	1,118	812	5,268	3,221	1,052	2,636	1,572
<b>Parity (live births)</b>													
0	365	522	112	1,208	916	515	563	489	1,927	685	261	908	635
1-2	3,308	3,596	1,033	3,312	5,101	2,133	4,327	3,524	12,391	3,313	982	4,708	5,805
3-4	2,347	2,373	1,229	1,819	3,154	1,180	3,473	2,576	8,028	3,310	618	3,611	3,832
5+	1,197	858	1,056	883	2,222	586	3,691	2,393	3,274	1,130	819	3,474	2,300
<b>Age at first union</b>													
<15	358	689	1,542	530	2,040	141	833	602	2,098	1,569	249	1,771	834
15-19	3,391	3,891	7,171	4,491	6,681	2,269	5,843	4,219	11,825	4,465	1,310	7,435	6,045
20-24	1,958	1,889	3,027	1,319	1,993	1,398	3,789	2,822	7,750	1,764	807	2,699	3,745
25+	941	845	1,027	616	674	604	1,589	1,339	3,947	640	314	796	1,948
<b>Employed</b>													
No	3,725	4,419	6,989	3,724	5,807	2,385	3,694	2,493	8,697	4,285	824	6,836	2,838
Yes	3,425	2,930	5,779	3,498	5,585	2,029	8,358	6,489	16,923	4,151	1,856	5,863	9,734
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	<b>7,217</b>	<b>7,349</b>	<b>12,768</b>	<b>7,222</b>	<b>11,393</b>	<b>4,414</b>	<b>12,054</b>	<b>8,982</b>	<b>25,620</b>	<b>8,438</b>	<b>2,680</b>	<b>12,701</b>	<b>12,572</b>

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 are further limited to women ever married or in union who reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months, because this was the subsample asked about intimate partner violence in those surveys. [4.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced.

## A2a Women's background characteristics, violence modules, DHS surveys

Table A2a Percent distribution of women by background characteristics, among all women and among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who completed the violence module, DHS surveys [1-2]

	Bolivia 2003		Bolivia 2008		Colombia 2005		Dominican Republic 2007		Haiti 2005/6		Honduras 2005/6		Peru 2007/8	
	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Residence</b>														
Urban	67.2	66.3	66.7	63.7	77.8	75.7	73.1	71.8	47.7	45.2	53.8	51.4	70.2	67.0
Rural	32.8	33.7	33.3	36.3	22.2	24.3	27.0	28.2	52.3	54.8	46.2	48.6	29.8	33.0
<b>Education</b>														
0-3 years	24.9	28.6	17.5	24.2	11.8	15.4	12.1	14.9	41.2	51.7	24.7	30.3	12.9	16.3
4-6 years	22.9	24.9	17.3	22.0	22.3	26.7	13.5	15.7	23.2	20.0	40.0	42.8	18.0	21.6
7-11 years	23.7	21.1	28.9	21.9	47.3	43.2	42.4	39.2	27.1	22.3	13.5	9.9	41.2	38.0
12+ years	28.6	25.4	36.3	32.0	18.6	14.7	31.8	30.0	8.5	6.0	21.8	17.1	27.9	24.2
<b>Age of woman</b>														
15-19	11.2	4.0	21.4	4.6	18.2	4.6	20.7	7.7	24.0	6.2	22.6	7.8	14.0	3.0
20-24	17.4	15.2	16.1	12.5	16.6	13.1	15.4	13.5	18.3	16.0	18.7	17.1	14.4	10.7
25-29	17.0	18.0	16.1	18.7	14.7	15.8	15.1	16.5	18.0	21.5	16.5	19.7	16.7	17.9
30-39	31.5	35.9	26.3	35.8	26.9	34.4	27.5	34.9	22.4	31.2	24.8	32.2	31.4	38.2
40-49	23.0	26.9	20.2	28.4	23.8	32.1	21.4	27.5	17.4	25.1	17.4	23.2	23.5	30.2
<b>Wealth quintile</b>														
Lowest	15.9	17.1	14.8	17.0	14.7	16.5	15.0	16.7	14.8	16.8	15.1	16.6	6.9	8.1
Second	18.1	18.6	16.9	18.0	19.3	20.7	19.4	20.7	17.6	19.2	17.3	18.2	19.5	21.5
Third	20.9	21.4	20.7	21.5	21.0	21.6	20.8	21.6	17.4	17.8	20.3	21.0	21.5	23.3
Fourth	22.6	22.8	22.6	22.7	22.3	21.3	21.2	20.9	23.7	25.0	23.3	22.9	20.7	21.1
Highest	22.5	20.1	24.9	20.9	22.8	19.9	23.6	20.2	26.6	21.2	24.1	21.3	31.4	25.9
<b>Current marital status</b>														
Never in union	16.2	na	32.5	na	33.1	na	23.9	na	32.1	na	27.9	na	27.7	na
Married or in union	73.8	88.0	59.0	87.5	51.2	76.5	57.1	74.9	58.4	86.0	58.2	80.7	62.8	86.9
- <i>Married</i>	50.9	60.8	37.1	55.0	21.6	32.3	14.5	19.1	43.1	63.5	24.3	33.6	28.5	39.4
- <i>In union</i>	22.9	27.3	21.9	32.5	29.6	44.2	42.5	55.9	15.2	22.5	34.0	47.1	34.4	47.5
Separated/divorced	8.5	10.1	7.1	10.5	13.7	20.5	18.2	23.9	7.6	11.2	12.5	17.3	8.8	12.2
Widowed	1.6	1.9	1.4	2.1	2.0	3.0	0.9	1.2	1.9	2.8	1.4	2.0	0.6	0.8
<b>Number of unions</b>														
0	16.2	na	32.5	na	33.1	na	23.9	na	32.1	na	27.9	na	27.2	na
1	76.4	91.2	61.1	90.5	54.6	81.6	45.4	59.7	41.4	61.0	55.2	76.6	63.6	88.0
2+	7.4	8.9	6.2	9.2	12.3	18.4	28.3	37.2	26.3	38.8	16.9	23.4	8.7	12.0
<b>Parity (live births)</b>														
0	16.7	4.8	31.9	5.5	31.7	7.3	29.0	9.1	39.3	11.4	29.9	6.6	27.9	5.6
1-2	33.7	36.4	31.0	39.9	39.6	50.6	32.6	40.7	26.2	37.8	31.3	40.2	38.8	48.7
3-4	24.7	29.3	19.6	28.7	21.4	31.2	28.8	37.7	14.6	21.4	21.3	29.2	22.0	30.2
5+	24.8	29.6	17.5	25.9	7.4	10.9	9.6	12.5	19.9	29.4	17.5	24.1	11.3	15.6
<b>Age at first union</b>														
<15	na	6.1	na	5.7	na	6.9	na	16.5	na	9.4	na	13.5	na	5.4
15-19	na	48.3	na	46.6	na	44.3	na	52.5	na	49.8	na	57.1	na	43.4
20-24	na	32.0	na	32.7	na	31.8	na	22.5	na	29.5	na	22.3	na	32.4
25+	na	13.7	na	15.0	na	17.0	na	8.5	na	11.4	na	7.1	na	18.9
<b>Employed</b>														
No	29.0	27.5	29.1	23.9	36.1	33.5	49.9	45.5	46.4	33.2	49.4	48.7	23.5	22.1
Yes	71.0	72.5	70.9	76.1	63.9	66.5	50.1	54.5	53.6	66.8	50.6	51.3	76.5	77.9
Total N unweighted	14,679	12,054	14,900	10,033	37,597	25,620	10,140	8,438	3,568	2,680	19,948	14,371	16,648	12,572

Notes: [1.] DHS surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner. [2.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

## A2b Women's background characteristics, violence modules, RHS surveys

Table A2b Percent distribution of women by background characteristics, among all women and among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 who completed the violence module, RHS surveys [1-5]

	Ecuador 2004		El Salvador 2008		Guatemala 2008/9		Jamaica 2008/9		Nicaragua 2006/7		Paraguay 2008	
	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union	All	Ever married or in union
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Residence</b>												
Urban	61.6	62.0	57.3	55.7	45.8	44.0	56.8	57.4	59.8	57.1	62.5	61.4
Rural	38.4	38.0	42.7	44.4	54.2	56.0	43.2	42.6	40.2	42.9	37.5	38.6
<b>Education</b>												
0-3 years	9.4	12.2	21.8	28.8	42.4	52.1	--	--	24.1	30.1	5.5	7.9
4-6 years	29.5	33.8	19.1	21.8	24.4	23.4	2.1	2.4	25.2	26.8	25.6	33.7
7-11 years	29.0	23.9	34.2	27.2	20.3	13.6	78.2	78.1	36.9	31.2	29.8	23.1
12+ years	32.1	30.2	24.9	22.4	12.8	10.9	19.4	19.2	13.8	11.9	39.1	35.4
<b>Age of woman</b>												
15-19	21.1	5.3	21.3	6.8	23.5	7.4	18.4	7.5	23.5	9.8	22.8	5.3
20-24	17.4	14.6	16.5	13.2	17.9	15.6	16.3	17.1	20.2	18.4	21.2	16.7
25-29	14.7	17.3	16.2	18.5	15.9	19.0	15.8	18.0	15.5	18.4	18.2	21.9
30-39	26.3	34.8	26.3	34.2	25.2	33.8	29.4	34.3	23.3	30.0	26.5	38.9
40-49	20.5	28.1	19.7	27.3	17.4	24.2	20.1	23.1	17.6	23.3	11.3	17.3
<b>Wealth quintile</b>												
Lowest	21.0	21.9	18.2	19.2	19.2	20.8	20.9	22.0	19.1	20.9	19.6	21.5
Second	21.2	22.0	19.6	20.8	20.4	20.9	18.5	19.2	19.1	20.0	20.0	20.5
Third	20.4	20.3	19.9	20.6	20.8	20.6	20.0	19.9	20.0	20.3	20.4	21.2
Fourth	19.6	19.4	21.6	21.7	20.3	20.6	20.7	20.1	21.5	20.1	19.6	19.5
Highest	17.8	16.5	20.6	17.7	19.2	17.1	19.9	18.7	20.4	18.7	20.5	17.2
<b>Current marital status</b>												
Never in union	30.7	na	31.7	na	31.7	na	15.5	na	27.8	na	38.7	na
Married or in union	58.5	84.4	51.7	75.7	59.9	87.6	68.5	81.0	55.9	77.3	53.9	87.9
- <i>Married</i>	36.5	52.7	23.8	34.9	37.3	54.5	14.8	17.5	22.4	31.0	29.1	47.4
- <i>In union</i>	21.9	31.7	27.9	40.8	22.6	33.1	53.7	63.6	33.5	46.4	24.8	40.5
Separated/divorced	9.5	13.7	14.8	21.6	6.5	9.5	16.0	19.0	15.1	20.9	7.0	11.4
Widowed	1.4	2.0	1.8	2.7	2.0	2.9	na	na	1.3	1.7	0.5	0.7
<b>Number of unions</b>												
0	30.7	na	31.7	na	31.7	na	15.5	na	27.8	na	38.7	na
1	59.7	86.1	53.1	77.7	60.9	89.2	28.5	33.7	53.9	74.7	54.4	88.7
2+	9.6	13.9	15.2	22.3	7.4	10.8	54.3	64.2	18.3	25.4	6.9	11.3
<b>Parity (live births)</b>												
0	31.1	5.6	32.8	7.5	32.6	6.0	33.0	21.2	31.2	9.1	41.6	11.8
1-2	33.4	43.7	36.3	47.8	27.1	35.7	39.3	46.1	34.5	43.9	34.2	49.4
3-4	23.5	33.5	22.6	32.6	21.2	30.5	19.2	22.6	19.8	27.0	16.8	26.9
5+	12.0	17.2	8.3	12.1	19.0	27.8	8.5	10.1	14.5	20.0	7.4	11.9
<b>Age at first union</b>												
<15	na	5.5	na	9.4	na	11.5	na	7.9	na	17.1	na	2.9
15-19	na	51.3	na	53.2	na	56.9	na	64.0	na	58.9	na	49.4
20-24	na	28.3	na	25.8	na	23.8	na	17.5	na	18.0	na	33.7
25+	na	13.2	na	11.1	na	7.7	na	8.0	na	5.9	na	14.1
<b>Employed</b>												
No	55.9	52.6	62.4	58.9	51.7	53.7	56.5	50.9	52.6	55.3	51.9	49.5
Yes	44.1	47.4	37.6	41.2	48.3	46.3	43.5	49.1	47.4	44.7	48.1	50.5
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	9,576	7,217	9,717	7,349	16,582	12,768	8,259	7,222	14,165	11,393	6,526	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25. [2.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [3.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [4.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [5.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

### A3 Physical intimate partner violence, by women's background characteristics

Table A3 Percentage of women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner ever, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

	DHS surveys					RHS surveys					
	Bolivia 2003	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence											
Urban	53.4	39.2	15.9	14.1	40.1	32.1	27.4	27.2	17.3	29.7	20.2
Rural	50.1	36.6	16.8	12.8	35.4	29.2	20.1	22.3	17.0	23.2	14.1
Education											
0-3 years	56.5	41.6	19.5	15.1	39.6	38.3	26.4	25.5	--	30.3	22.0
4-6 years	53.9	41.7	18.8	15.3	37.5	32.2	23.7	23.6	28.8	26.8	15.3
7-11 years	53.5	38.6	17.4	10.1	43.1	34.7	24.7	26.0	18.1	26.2	22.7
12+ years	44.9	30.0	11.5	4.2	31.8	23.9	21.1	19.5	12.1	20.8	16.2
Age of woman											
15-19	43.0	36.8	18.1	21.1	25.0	22.0	12.9	16.4	10.3	14.5	12.2
20-24	48.6	36.3	20.2	14.6	33.2	29.4	16.4	19.9	15.8	20.2	15.3
25-29	49.9	36.5	17.9	15.2	34.6	28.7	22.4	23.1	19.2	26.1	16.9
30-39	54.0	40.6	15.9	12.1	42.1	34.5	26.3	25.5	18.4	29.9	20.9
40-49	55.1	38.7	12.8	10.7	39.7	30.7	29.3	29.6	17.2	34.3	16.5
Wealth quintile											
Lowest	48.5	36.9	21.1	13.1	30.9	35.4	22.7	21.5	23.5	23.9	18.1
Second	55.7	42.1	19.5	11.5	37.1	30.6	21.3	24.4	22.6	27.5	19.5
Third	55.6	41.2	17.2	17.4	44.5	32.0	24.3	26.4	16.2	30.2	18.4
Fourth	55.8	38.7	12.2	16.0	43.5	31.2	30.2	27.6	12.8	28.5	18.0
Highest	44.9	33.4	11.4	8.8	32.9	24.3	21.6	22.1	10.0	24.7	14.8
Current marital status											
Married or in union	51.0	33.4	13.9	12.4	35.3	28.0	19.8	21.4	16.9	23.8	14.7
-Married	50.1	30.3	9.4	11.5	32.5	24.7	16.7	18.4	11.0	20.0	10.5
-In union	53.1	35.6	15.4	14.8	37.7	33.4	22.5	26.2	18.6	26.2	19.7
Separated/divorced	63.0	57.4	23.1	21.6	62.2	50.6	38.3	49.6	18.3	37.5	42.3
Widowed	55.2	43.9	17.8	11.1	34.9	23.9	33.4	35.8	na	41.8	11.7
Number of unions											
1	52.5	38.5	14.5	11.0	37.7	27.7	19.2	21.4	9.9	21.3	14.4
2+	50.3	39.2	18.7	17.0	45.1	51.9	41.4	49.8	20.9	43.6	45.3
Parity (live births)											
0	35.3	21.9	10.4	10.6	21.2	15.1	11.3	15.0	9.5	10.9	11.9
1-2	47.6	35.8	15.4	13.9	35.9	27.2	19.5	20.1	15.7	21.9	15.0
3-4	54.0	43.9	17.1	18.3	42.8	32.9	31.2	27.5	21.2	31.6	22.2
5+	59.1	47.5	19.8	10.2	45.1	42.1	31.4	28.7	31.2	39.0	26.0
Age at first union											
<15	52.0	48.1	23.3	21.9	42.7	42.3	37.4	34.0	27.7	36.6	24.5
15-19	55.6	42.8	17.1	13.7	43.4	33.0	26.1	25.8	18.8	26.8	19.6
20-24	49.2	36.5	11.1	13.2	36.8	24.3	18.0	19.7	10.2	21.5	16.9
25+	48.0	27.7	9.3	5.5	29.3	25.8	18.0	15.2	11.1	16.5	12.5
Employed											
No	45.8	32.0	15.1	14.4	31.7	28.4	20.5	20.3	18.3	32.3	14.6
Yes	54.7	41.9	17.0	12.9	40.5	34.0	29.4	29.3	16.1	20.4	21.1
Total %	52.3	38.6	16.1	13.4	38.6	31.0	24.2	24.5	17.2	27.0	17.9
Total N unweighted	12,054	25,620	8,438	2,680	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [7.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A4 Physical intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics

Table A4 Percentage of women who reported physical violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-8]

	DHS surveys						RHS surveys					
	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Honduras 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence												
Urban	25.2	21.1	10.8	12.3	8.1	14.2	10.5	7.2	8.8	7.2	9.1	6.9
Rural	23.2	19.4	11.2	11.9	6.7	13.4	9.9	6.2	7.1	5.4	6.4	6.4
Education												
0-3 years	25.6	21.4	14.0	14.0	9.5	12.6	11.0	7.3	7.4	--	8.5	9.3
4-6 years	24.7	21.4	12.5	12.5	6.8	13.4	11.6	6.9	8.2	10.3	8.2	5.8
7-11 years	27.3	21.9	12.1	9.4	8.4	16.2	11.6	7.5	9.7	6.9	8.3	9.5
12+ years	21.4	14.9	7.0	4.3	4.6	11.9	7.4	5.0	6.7	4.2	5.0	5.2
Age of woman												
15-19	29.6	30.8	14.0	20.6	9.3	18.1	14.9	9.0	10.8	8.1	9.5	9.1
20-24	30.0	25.3	14.7	13.9	8.3	20.2	15.0	7.8	10.0	9.6	8.8	9.2
25-29	26.2	23.2	13.1	12.6	7.0	15.7	10.1	7.7	9.5	8.5	8.8	7.0
30-39	23.5	21.5	10.4	10.5	7.2	14.1	10.5	6.9	7.1	5.3	8.2	5.7
40-49	20.8	15.2	7.5	10.2	6.5	10.2	6.7	4.8	5.3	3.7	5.6	5.5
Wealth quintile												
Lowest	25.3	21.5	16.8	11.3	8.0	13.6	12.6	7.0	7.5	8.6	7.0	9.2
Second	24.8	24.3	13.6	11.1	7.1	14.8	10.5	7.5	8.2	9.2	8.6	5.9
Third	27.6	22.4	11.6	14.3	9.0	16.9	11.3	6.6	8.5	6.9	9.1	7.8
Fourth	26.6	20.0	7.3	15.6	7.5	14.4	9.6	8.1	8.5	4.2	9.0	5.0
Highest	17.6	15.1	6.2	7.6	5.4	10.4	6.5	4.1	6.2	3.2	5.9	5.2
Current marital status												
Married or in union	24.0	17.0	10.4	11.2	6.9	14.2	9.9	6.3	8.0	6.9	8.3	5.9
-Married	22.1	11.8	6.2	10.0	4.3	9.9	8.0	3.9	6.1	3.5	6.3	3.8
-In union	27.1	20.8	11.8	14.5	8.7	17.7	12.9	8.3	11.2	7.8	9.6	8.4
Separated/divorced	45.7	35.0	12.7	19.1	13.3	13.3	13.8	8.8	8.3	4.7	7.0	13.1
Widowed	23.0	16.5	9.9	na	3.1	1.4	1.8	3.2	0.6	na	3.4	2.5
Number of unions												
1	24.0	19.7	9.3	9.4	6.5	13.2	9.5	5.9	7.3	4.4	7.1	6.2
2+	28.8	24.8	13.1	16.2	10.5	19.3	14.7	9.7	12.5	7.6	10.4	10.2
Parity (live births)												
0	24.6	14.2	8.0	10.4	6.7	14.4	6.6	6.2	7.0	5.7	5.0	6.1
1-2	23.6	20.5	10.2	11.8	6.7	14.0	10.1	6.4	8.7	6.2	8.3	6.5
3-4	24.8	21.6	11.8	17.5	7.4	14.3	10.6	7.4	7.8	6.6	8.0	6.2
5+	25.3	22.9	12.7	9.0	8.8	13.1	11.2	6.8	6.9	9.1	8.7	9.2
Age at first union												
<15	30.5	29.7	15.5	19.7	10.0	16.8	12.9	10.8	10.9	12.0	10.9	9.5
15-19	25.5	23.4	11.6	13.0	7.9	15.7	11.8	7.2	8.0	7.2	8.3	7.2
20-24	24.1	18.4	7.6	11.1	5.6	13.3	8.1	5.5	6.7	3.4	5.7	6.2
25+	19.6	14.1	6.7	4.7	3.0	10.3	7.8	3.8	5.6	2.7	3.2	5.4
Employed												
No	21.0	16.8	10.5	13.8	6.6	12.8	10.2	5.9	6.9	7.6	8.6	6.2
Yes	25.7	22.6	11.2	11.2	8.3	14.3	10.3	8.0	8.9	5.4	7.1	7.1
Total %	24.5	20.7	10.9	12.1	7.4	14.0	10.3	6.8	7.8	6.5	8.0	6.7
Total N unweighted	8,982	25,620	8,438	2,605	12,701	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [7.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [8.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A5 Sexual intimate partner violence ever, by women's background characteristics

Table A5 Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

	DHS surveys					RHS surveys					
	Bolivia 2003	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence											
Urban	16.2	11.9	4.8	11.6	9.3	12.3	12.7	13.7	7.7	14.9	9.2
Rural	13.4	11.5	6.2	10.1	9.5	10.2	10.1	11.2	7.4	10.6	8.4
Education											
0-3 years	17.7	14.4	6.8	12.0	13.6	16.1	12.4	13.0	--	14.1	13.6
4-6 years	15.8	14.1	6.5	12.2	8.9	12.5	11.9	12.5	13.7	12.5	10.1
7-11 years	15.8	10.8	5.3	8.7	9.5	11.9	12.1	11.5	7.8	13.5	9.6
12+ years	11.4	7.4	3.6	4.0	6.6	8.2	9.3	9.7	5.9	10.7	6.3
Age of woman											
15-19	11.0	7.5	2.8	10.8	3.3	4.3	3.8	8.1	5.9	6.3	7.5
20-24	12.0	8.2	4.9	10.8	5.2	8.4	6.4	8.8	6.2	9.1	6.3
25-29	13.2	9.8	6.5	12.4	6.7	10.3	9.6	10.7	9.5	12.1	6.9
30-39	16.6	13.3	5.4	11.7	10.3	13.3	12.8	13.4	8.3	14.5	10.3
40-49	17.3	13.1	5.0	8.3	11.8	13.0	15.6	15.5	6.7	18.1	11.2
Wealth quintile											
Lowest	12.7	11.2	6.6	8.4	7.9	14.1	11.4	10.1	10.1	10.2	11.7
Second	16.2	13.3	6.4	9.0	10.1	12.4	9.9	13.1	9.3	12.9	10.5
Third	17.1	12.6	6.5	13.9	11.1	11.6	12.1	13.5	6.6	15.7	8.0
Fourth	17.0	12.7	4.1	13.1	11.6	9.9	12.9	13.8	6.1	13.4	8.3
Highest	12.5	8.6	2.6	8.9	5.9	8.5	11.3	10.7	5.5	13.2	5.3
Current marital status											
Married or in union	13.7	8.3	3.9	10.8	7.4	8.8	8.4	10.4	7.6	11.1	7.3
-Married	13.3	7.6	2.4	11.7	7.5	7.4	7.7	8.7	6.4	9.2	5.7
-In union	14.5	8.8	4.5	8.3	7.3	11.3	8.9	13.1	7.9	12.3	9.1
Separated/divorced	28.1	24.2	8.9	11.3	23.0	27.8	22.0	27.8	7.6	20.4	21.0
Widowed	18.8	15.5	9.6	8.5	12.9	12.0	17.1	20.2	na	14.7	19.0
Number of unions											
1	15.1	11.6	4.6	10.3	8.9	9.5	8.5	10.5	4.2	9.8	7.1
2+	16.8	12.7	6.0	11.5	12.9	24.0	22.3	27.0	9.4	22.8	23.2
Parity (live births)											
0	7.7	4.2	2.0	7.1	2.8	2.4	4.2	7.8	5.8	5.4	5.9
1-2	11.9	9.8	4.3	10.5	7.4	8.4	8.8	8.8	7.2	10.2	6.1
3-4	16.3	14.5	5.9	11.8	11.0	12.0	14.9	14.9	8.0	15.4	12.2
5+	19.5	18.3	8.2	11.9	14.7	21.2	17.7	14.9	12.1	19.8	16.2
Age at first union											
<15	18.6	14.4	8.2	16.7	13.9	17.7	19.0	18.2	13.3	17.0	14.4
15-19	16.6	13.3	5.4	10.6	10.9	11.7	12.5	12.7	7.6	13.2	11.2
20-24	13.2	10.8	3.2	11.2	8.3	8.1	8.5	9.8	6.1	10.7	6.4
25+	14.0	8.5	3.2	5.8	6.3	7.5	7.7	8.2	5.6	8.3	5.9
Employed											
No	11.8	8.4	4.6	10.8	4.7	9.9	9.6	9.6	7.8	16.2	7.5
Yes	16.5	13.5	5.7	10.8	10.7	13.2	14.3	15.5	7.4	9.3	10.3
Total %	15.2	11.8	5.2	10.8	9.4	11.5	11.5	12.3	7.6	13.1	8.9
Total N unweighted	12,054	25,620	8,438	2,680	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [7.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.



## A6 Sexual intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics

Table A6 Percentage of women who reported sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-8]

	DHS surveys						RHS surveys					
	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Honduras 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
<b>Residence</b>												
Urban	7.2	6.7	3.3	10.6	4.7	3.2	3.8	3.4	4.8	3.0	4.7	2.8
Rural	6.0	7.3	4.5	9.7	5.4	4.6	3.8	3.3	4.7	2.5	4.0	4.0
<b>Education</b>												
0-3 years	7.0	9.0	4.9	11.7	7.0	5.4	5.9	3.7	5.3	--	5.3	4.9
4-6 years	8.2	7.7	3.9	11.2	4.7	3.8	4.7	3.6	4.4	9.6	4.3	3.8
7-11 years	8.8	6.5	3.8	7.1	4.3	3.6	3.4	3.3	4.5	2.8	4.2	3.7
12+ years	4.1	4.2	2.6	4.1	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.6	3.2	1.7	2.8	2.2
<b>Age of woman</b>												
15-19	5.8	5.5	2.6	10.2	5.1	2.3	2.2	2.9	5.1	4.6	4.6	5.0
20-24	6.7	5.8	4.4	9.9	4.7	3.3	4.0	3.2	4.7	3.3	3.8	4.4
25-29	6.1	6.6	5.0	11.5	4.1	3.9	3.5	3.8	5.0	3.3	4.8	2.9
30-39	7.2	8.3	3.5	10.8	5.3	3.8	4.4	3.4	4.7	2.7	4.7	2.9
40-49	6.9	6.0	2.8	8.0	5.9	3.8	3.4	3.2	4.6	1.6	4.1	3.2
<b>Wealth quintile</b>												
Lowest	7.0	7.3	5.1	8.4	6.7	3.8	5.2	3.6	5.0	4.1	4.2	5.7
Second	7.2	8.6	4.7	7.9	5.6	4.9	4.3	3.7	5.2	4.0	4.3	2.7
Third	9.0	7.3	4.2	12.7	6.3	4.5	4.4	2.9	4.9	2.3	6.0	3.9
Fourth	6.4	6.9	2.8	12.7	3.6	4.2	3.0	3.7	5.3	2.0	4.3	2.2
Highest	4.2	4.2	1.6	8.3	3.6	1.5	1.4	2.7	3.2	1.4	3.2	1.5
<b>Current marital status</b>												
Married or in union	6.5	4.8	2.9	10.3	4.9	3.6	3.5	3.1	5.1	2.8	4.9	3.2
-Married	6.1	3.8	1.6	11.0	4.3	3.3	2.7	2.8	4.2	2.0	4.2	2.5
-In union	7.0	5.5	3.4	8.3	5.3	3.9	4.8	3.3	6.6	3.0	5.4	3.9
Separated/divorced	18.4	14.7	5.6	8.5	7.1	4.4	6.0	4.5	3.2	2.9	3.0	4.3
Widowed	6.5	5.9	9.6	na	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.6	0.3	na	0.0	5.0
<b>Number of unions</b>												
1	8.2	6.4	3.2	9.5	4.8	3.4	3.6	3.0	4.3	1.5	4.1	3.1
2+	4.2	8.8	4.1	11.0	5.9	5.5	5.3	4.5	8.2	3.6	5.3	5.0
<b>Parity (live births)</b>												
0	3.7	2.9	1.4	6.5	3.6	1.3	0.8	1.6	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2
1-2	5.4	6.0	3.2	9.7	3.8	3.0	2.7	2.7	4.0	2.8	3.9	2.4
3-4	7.7	7.7	4.0	11.4	5.4	3.9	4.3	4.1	5.6	2.3	4.6	4.4
5+	8.3	11.2	5.6	11.1	7.2	6.2	6.6	5.1	5.3	3.0	5.8	4.8
<b>Age at first union</b>												
<15	12.1	8.9	6.3	15.7	6.3	5.6	5.4	5.6	7.3	7.4	5.5	6.4
15-19	7.4	8.1	3.8	9.8	5.4	4.4	4.0	3.9	4.8	2.6	4.8	4.1
20-24	5.9	5.9	2.0	10.6	3.7	3.2	2.7	2.2	3.8	1.8	2.8	2.4
25+	4.4	4.7	1.8	5.7	3.5	2.3	3.5	1.4	3.7	2.3	2.3	1.8
<b>Employed</b>												
No	6.1	4.9	3.4	9.4	4.3	2.5	3.9	2.9	4.3	3.4	4.6	3.5
Yes	7.0	7.8	3.9	10.5	5.8	4.0	3.7	4.0	5.3	2.1	4.1	3.1
<b>Total %</b>	6.7	6.9	3.6	10.1	5.0	3.7	3.8	3.3	4.8	2.8	4.4	3.3
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	8,982	25,620	8,438	2,605	12,701	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [7.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [8.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A7 Prevalence of physical, sexual, or either type of intimate partner violence, ever and in the past 12 months

Table A7 Percentage and number (weighted and unweighted) of women who reported physical, sexual, or either type of partner violence, ever and in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-8]

	Physical partner violence						Sexual partner violence						Physical or sexual partner violence						Total		
	Ever			Past 12 months			Ever			Past 12 months			Ever			Past 12 months					
	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted	%	Number weighted	Number unweighted
DHS surveys	By current or most recent partner only:																				
Bolivia 2003	52.3	6,276	6,227	na	na	na	15.2	1,828	1,886	na	na	na	53.3	6,401	6,363	na	na	na	100	12,005	12,054
Bolivia 2008	na	na	na	24.5	2,151	2,233	na	na	na	6.7	593	627	na	na	na	25.5	2,243	2,332	100	8,795	8,982
Colombia 2005	38.6	9,756	9,873	20.7	5,221	5,112	11.8	2,971	2,903	6.9	1,735	1,618	39.7	10,031	10,155	22.1	5,574	5,454	100	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	16.1	1,245	1,344	10.9	841	958	5.2	401	450	3.6	280	333	17.0	1,311	1,406	11.7	900	1,014	100	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	13.4	324	329	12.1	284	283	10.8	261	284	10.1	238	261	19.3	467	475	17.5	413	419	100	2,420	2,680
Peru 2007/8	38.6	4,662	4,982	14.0	1,686	1,870	9.4	1,130	1,192	3.7	446	489	39.5	4,769	5,082	14.9	1,804	1,984	100	12,084	12,572
	By any current or former partner:																				
Honduras 2005/6	na	na	na	7.4	934	935	na	na	na	5.0	637	687	na	na	na	9.9	1,252	1,285	100	12,637	12,701
RHS surveys																					
Ecuador 2004	31.0	2,867	2,201	10.3	949	753	11.5	1,062	787	3.8	351	271	32.4	2,999	2,297	11.1	1,026	809	100	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	24.2	2,291	1,727	6.8	640	512	11.5	1,093	835	3.3	316	254	26.3	2,492	1,890	7.7	731	589	100	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	24.5	2,780	3,022	7.8	891	1,024	12.3	1,397	1,520	4.8	541	646	27.6	3,133	3,430	9.9	1,123	1,309	100	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	17.2	1,694	1,383	6.5	638	480	7.6	747	600	2.8	274	206	19.6	1,928	1,546	7.7	756	563	100	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	27.0	4,088	2,931	8.0	1,207	878	13.1	1,985	1,369	4.4	667	480	29.3	4,451	3,174	9.3	1,413	1,032	100	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	17.9	977	737	6.7	367	289	8.9	487	393	3.3	180	156	20.4	1,115	854	8.0	435	345	100	5,471	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [8.] All percentages are weighted.

## A8 Prevalence of emotional abuse by an intimate partner, ever and in the past 12 months

Table A8 Percentage of women who reported emotional abuse by a partner ever and in the past 12 months, by act, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-9]

	Insulted her		Belittled or humiliated her		Scared or intimidated her (e.g. by destroying things)		Threatened to harm her or someone she cared about		Threatened to abandon her		Threatened to take away her children		Threatened to withhold economic support		At least one act of emotional abuse listed		Total	
	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Ever %	Past 12 months %	Number Unweighted	
DHS surveys	By the current or most recent partner only:																	
Current or most recent partner only	Bolivia 2003	na	na	36.9	na	na	na	na	na	24.6	na	na	na	21.5	na	44.2	na	12,054
	Bolivia 2008	na	na	na	24.7	na	9.1	na	na	na	16.1	na	11.6	na	11.4	na	32.3	8,982
	Colombia 2005	26.3	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	21.2	13.6	18.6	11.3	16.0	11.5	41.5	21.9	25,620
	Dominican Republic 2007	23.2	18.3	14.4	11.1	na	na	9.0	7.0	na	na	na	na	na	na	26.1	20.8	8,438
	Haiti 2005/6	14.0	11.9	11.4	9.9	na	na	5.2	4.6	na	na	na	na	na	na	17.0	14.6	2,680
	Peru 2007/8	na	na	22.0	10.6	na	na	11.6	5.7	20.3		10.2		31.7		16.3		12,572
By any current or former partner:																		
Any current or former partner	Honduras 2005/6	na	na	na	13.7	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	13.7	12,701
	RHS surveys																	
	Ecuador 2004	28.6	9.7	33.7	13.1	na	na	13.7	4.7	na	na	na	na	na	na	40.7	15.3	7,217
	El Salvador 2008	41.2	17.1	22.3	8.7	19.7	8.2	10.3	3.8	na	na	na	na	na	na	44.2	18.8	7,349
	Guatemala 2008/9	37.6	18.0	21.0	9.4	18.7	8.9	13.4	5.9	na	na	13.1	6.0	na	na	42.2	21.6	12,768
	Jamaica 2008/9	28.3	13.6	na	na	na	na	11.4	4.5	na	na	na	na	na	na	30.8	14.7	7,222
	Nicaragua 2006/7	45.7	19.7	29.1	11.6	24.2	10.2	12.4	4.1	na	na	na	na	na	na	47.8	21.2	11,393
	Paraguay 2008	33.6	16.8	14.4	6.9	14.3	7.5	9.7	4.3	na	na	na	na	na	na	36.0	18.4	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [8.] Bolivia 2003 and 2008 used a single question to ask about insults and humiliation. Peru 2007/8 used a single question to ask about threats to abandon her, take away her children, or withhold economic support. [9.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted.

## A9 Threats of harm by a partner ever, by women's background characteristics

Table A9 Percentage of women who reported that a partner ever threatened to harm them or someone they cared about, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

	DHS surveys			RHS surveys					
	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
<b>Residence</b>									
Urban	8.8	5.6	11.4	13.6	11.4	14.7	10.1	13.3	10.4
Rural	9.4	4.8	12.0	13.7	8.8	12.4	13.2	11.1	8.6
<b>Education</b>									
0-3 years	11.5	6.0	15.6	18.2	12.3	13.7	--	15.6	16.1
4-6 years	10.3	5.5	11.1	14.6	10.4	13.5	20.2	11.5	8.4
7-11 years	8.5	3.3	12.0	14.2	9.6	14.3	11.6	11.5	12.3
12+ years	7.7	3.9	8.6	10.4	8.3	11.0	9.5	8.2	7.9
<b>Age of woman</b>									
15-19	4.1	3.6	4.7	7.2	3.6	8.4	7.4	3.6	7.1
20-24	9.8	3.9	7.6	12.7	4.8	10.8	12.2	8.0	6.9
25-29	9.8	6.8	8.6	12.4	8.5	13.1	13.5	11.2	8.8
30-39	8.8	3.9	12.5	15.2	12.0	13.3	11.1	14.7	11.7
40-49	9.6	6.6	14.3	14.3	13.5	17.1	11.0	17.4	10.2
<b>Wealth quintile</b>									
Lowest	11.3	5.3	11.1	16.2	11.5	11.3	17.5	12.2	12.5
Second	10.1	5.8	13.7	14.0	8.6	14.2	13.0	12.9	11.6
Third	10.6	4.2	12.3	13.5	9.7	14.6	11.4	15.5	9.4
Fourth	5.9	5.4	13.8	12.8	11.1	14.5	9.0	11.6	8.3
Highest	7.5	5.1	7.5	10.8	10.3	12.4	5.2	9.4	6.1
<b>Current marital status</b>									
Married or in union	7.0	4.2	8.4	11.5	7.1	10.7	11.2	9.5	7.2
-Married	4.8	4.3	8.0	9.6	5.7	8.9	6.7	7.3	5.0
-In union	7.8	3.8	8.7	14.5	8.3	13.8	12.4	10.9	9.6
Separated/divorced	15.0	12.9	33.7	27.5	20.2	35.0	12.4	22.3	29.7
Widowed	12.9	5.1	17.9	12.1	18.4	24.3	na	21.3	9.0
<b>Number of unions</b>									
1	8.3	4.7	10.9	11.0	6.9	11.7	4.8	8.4	7.3
2+	10.1	5.9	16.7	30.1	22.0	27.8	14.9	24.1	29.3
<b>Parity (live births)</b>									
0	2.7	4.7	4.2	5.3	4.2	9.3	8.4	3.9	7.0
1-2	7.9	3.4	10.5	11.3	7.6	10.8	10.1	9.1	7.1
3-4	10.0	7.5	12.3	14.1	13.5	14.5	12.5	14.1	12.4
5+	14.1	6.0	16.3	21.5	15.9	16.6	21.1	20.9	17.5
<b>Age at first union</b>									
<15	12.6	5.6	18.3	20.2	16.6	20.5	20.3	18.3	12.7
15-19	8.5	5.4	13.1	14.2	11.3	14.0	12.2	12.0	11.6
20-24	7.8	6.0	9.8	9.8	7.6	10.3	6.5	9.4	7.7
25+	8.0	1.4	9.3	11.2	6.6	8.5	8.2	8.1	7.3
<b>Employed</b>									
No	6.6	3.8	5.8	11.4	7.9	10.3	12.2	15.4	8.3
Yes	10.9	5.8	13.2	16.2	13.7	17.0	10.6	8.7	11.1
<b>Total %</b>	9.0	5.2	11.6	13.7	10.3	13.4	11.4	12.4	9.7
<b>Total N unweighted</b>	8,438	2,680	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [4.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of previously partnered, along with women who were separated or divorced. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [7.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A10 Threats of harm by a partner in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics

Table A10 Percentage of women who reported that a partner threatened to harm them or someone they cared about in the past 12 months, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-8]

	DHS surveys			RHS surveys					
	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence									
Urban	7.0	4.6	5.7	4.4	4.1	6.7	4.2	4.6	4.2
Rural	6.9	4.4	5.7	5.3	3.5	5.3	5.0	3.5	4.5
Education									
0-3 years	9.1	5.4	6.8	6.8	4.5	5.4	--	4.9	6.5
4-6 years	8.2	4.5	5.4	5.6	4.1	6.8	7.4	3.8	3.8
7-11 years	6.5	2.9	6.3	4.5	3.8	7.6	4.8	4.1	6.0
12+ years	6.1	3.1	4.2	3.1	2.6	4.4	3.2	2.5	3.2
Age of woman									
15-19	3.9	3.1	4.1	3.8	3.4	6.0	5.9	2.5	5.7
20-24	8.9	3.4	5.2	6.5	3.3	5.9	6.1	3.8	4.1
25-29	8.7	6.5	5.1	4.5	4.6	6.7	6.6	4.4	3.7
30-39	6.2	3.3	6.1	4.7	4.4	6.0	3.4	5.1	4.5
40-49	7.0	5.2	5.8	4.2	3.0	5.2	3.1	3.5	4.5
Wealth quintile									
Lowest	9.6	4.6	5.6	6.3	4.5	4.4	7.0	4.0	7.3
Second	7.9	5.4	6.9	5.1	3.9	6.2	5.6	4.4	3.8
Third	7.4	3.6	5.9	4.8	3.4	6.6	4.5	5.2	4.2
Fourth	5.1	4.2	7.1	4.6	4.4	6.9	3.2	4.2	3.0
Highest	5.4	4.5	3.4	2.2	2.8	5.3	1.9	2.5	2.8
Current marital status									
Married or in union	5.8	3.9	5.0	4.2	3.2	5.9	4.7	4.1	3.6
-Married	3.5	4.0	4.2	3.3	2.0	4.4	2.7	3.3	2.6
-In union	6.6	3.7	5.7	5.7	4.1	8.3	5.3	4.7	4.7
Separated/divorced	10.7	9.9	10.8	8.3	6.3	8.2	3.7	4.3	10.2
Widowed	9.3	na	0.9	3.9	2.3	0.2	na	1.6	3.4
Number of unions									
1	6.3	4.0	5.4	4.1	2.9	5.3	1.7	3.6	3.8
2+	8.1	5.1	8.2	8.6	7.0	11.3	6.2	5.4	8.1
Parity (live births)									
0	1.6	4.3	2.5	1.8	2.3	4.3	5.2	2.0	3.6
1-2	6.5	2.9	5.4	4.2	3.3	5.3	3.7	3.8	3.4
3-4	7.6	6.9	6.1	5.0	4.8	6.8	4.3	4.4	4.6
5+	10.9	4.8	7.0	6.5	4.2	6.2	7.3	5.3	8.1
Age at first union									
<15	9.4	4.0	8.2	8.1	6.1	9.5	9.0	5.6	6.3
15-19	6.9	4.6	6.6	5.3	4.2	5.9	4.8	4.1	5.1
20-24	5.6	5.8	4.7	3.2	3.2	5.2	2.3	3.2	3.2
25+	6.5	0.7	4.6	3.4	1.7	3.2	3.2	2.5	3.9
Employed									
No	5.2	3.3	3.6	4.7	3.0	4.9	5.8	4.7	4.1
Yes	8.5	5.1	6.3	4.7	5.0	7.1	3.2	3.3	4.6
Total %	7.0	4.6	5.7	4.7	3.8	5.9	4.5	4.1	4.3
Total N unweighted	8,438	2,605	12,572	7,217	7,349	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. All DHS surveys (except Honduras 2005/6) asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Ecuador 2004, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of previously partnered, along with women who were separated or divorced. [7.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [8.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A11 History of physical abuse in childhood, by women's background characteristics

Table A11 Percentage of women who reported being beaten or physically abused in childhood, by women's background characteristics, among all women aged 15-49, RHS surveys [1-7]

	RHS surveys					
	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence						
Urban	26.9	33.2	34.6	68.5	23.5	16.5
Rural	29.0	28.2	28.9	70.8	18.0	17.3
Education						
0-3 years	40.3	35.1	35.0	--	23.6	26.6
4-6 years	29.7	32.5	29.2	67.9	20.9	17.2
7-11 years	26.9	29.2	29.0	69.0	20.1	17.1
12+ years	22.9	28.9	28.5	71.6	21.0	14.9
Age of woman						
15-19	23.8	23.7	25.7	70.6	18.7	13.1
20-24	26.5	29.2	29.8	70.2	19.7	15.4
25-29	25.3	29.6	34.7	65.5	21.1	16.4
30-39	29.8	35.1	34.6	70.7	23.9	20.4
40-49	31.7	36.4	33.8	69.2	23.2	19.2
Wealth quintile						
Lowest	29.0	30.9	32.2	71.6	18.8	18.7
Second	27.8	27.3	32.6	70.6	20.7	17.8
Third	28.8	33.9	29.7	70.0	22.3	17.4
Fourth	29.8	32.1	31.2	68.2	24.0	16.0
Highest	22.3	30.8	32.1	67.0	20.3	14.2
Current marital status						
Never married or in union	23.4	22.9	24.9	64.5	15.5	10.9
Married or in union	29.2	33.8	34.3	71.0	22.9	19.3
-Married	29.3	33.2	33.5	75.6	21.5	17.4
-In union	28.9	34.4	35.6	69.7	23.9	21.5
Separated/divorced	32.3	37.9	37.8	67.9	25.4	30.6
Widowed	27.9	38.5	34.3	na	25.6	10.6
Number of unions						
0	23.4	22.9	24.9	64.5	15.5	10.9
1	28.6	31.4	33.6	68.7	21.7	19.3
2+	35.4	47.0	43.2	71.0	28.6	29.8
Parity (live births)						
0	23.6	23.5	25.0	66.1	16.3	12.3
1-2	25.9	31.3	32.8	69.1	21.9	17.5
3-4	30.2	38.2	36.3	73.0	25.2	23.7
5+	38.0	40.3	35.5	75.6	25.0	23.0
Age at first union						
<15	37.7	43.9	38.6	71.0	31.3	27.1
15-19	29.9	34.8	35.1	71.2	21.9	22.7
20-24	28.9	34.2	32.9	68.4	21.7	18.1
25+	27.2	28.9	30.0	70.8	22.2	17.1
Employed						
No	25.5	27.8	29.0	69.4	23.6	14.9
Yes	30.5	36.4	34.2	69.5	18.7	18.9
Total %	27.7	31.1	31.5	69.5	21.3	16.8
Total N unweighted	9,576	9,717	16,582	8,259	14,165	6,526

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Childhood was defined as under age 18 in El Salvador 2008 and under age 15 in all other surveys. [3.] El Salvador 2008 asked about physical abuse that occurred in the home; Jamaica 2008/9 asked about acts by a parent or another adult family member; Ecuador 2004, Guatemala 2008/9, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Paraguay 2008 asked about abuse by anyone (or 'anyone including family'). [4.] Physical abuse in childhood was defined as having been 'beaten' ("golpeada") or 'physically abused' ("maltratada físicamente") in all RHS surveys except Jamaica 2008/9, which asked women whether they had been slapped, kicked, shoved, or hit. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [7.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A12 Father or stepfather beat mother or stepmother, by women's background characteristics

Table A12 Percentage of women who reported that their father or stepfather beat their mother or stepmother, by women's background characteristics, among all women aged 15-49 [1-7]

	DHS surveys						RHS surveys					
	Bolivia 2003	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	El Salvador 2008	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence												
Urban	47.5	41.1	30.4	15.3	14.5	43.1	34.6	26.1	35.6	16.7	27.8	21.1
Rural	49.8	48.3	30.2	16.1	10.8	40.8	37.9	22.0	31.2	16.7	23.2	18.9
Education												
0-3 years	50.9	51.2	32.4	15.5	11.6	39.4	45.8	26.0	35.6	--	28.3	28.4
4-6 years	51.7	52.8	33.7	14.9	14.5	42.4	38.6	25.0	32.5	26.2	25.7	21.3
7-11 years	50.2	40.7	30.9	15.8	11.6	46.4	35.3	24.8	32.3	16.5	24.4	20.3
12+ years	41.6	37.6	23.5	15.1	14.9	39.9	31.0	21.7	28.3	16.4	26.1	18.3
Age of woman												
15-19	48.5	39.0	28.6	16.2	14.1	40.4	32.4	19.2	27.7	11.3	22.3	17.9
20-24	52.4	42.0	30.4	18.3	13.5	43.4	36.2	23.4	30.1	19.0	24.1	19.0
25-29	48.1	43.1	31.8	16.5	13.5	43.2	34.8	23.0	35.2	18.7	26.5	19.0
30-39	48.2	45.9	31.7	15.2	11.0	44.1	39.0	26.9	37.2	18.3	29.0	23.7
40-49	45.3	46.6	29.1	12.4	10.4	40.2	36.2	28.5	36.3	16.0	28.2	21.1
Wealth quintile												
Lowest	51.5	49.8	29.3	14.7	11.4	37.3	36.3	23.4	29.4	19.1	23.4	21.6
Second	48.9	48.6	31.6	17.2	11.2	41.8	37.4	22.1	33.3	19.4	24.5	20.3
Third	50.8	47.9	34.6	15.7	11.1	47.8	38.9	25.0	35.6	15.2	27.3	21.9
Fourth	49.9	43.1	30.3	15.9	13.9	47.1	35.8	26.5	36.1	16.1	28.8	21.1
Highest	41.4	33.0	25.9	14.0	13.8	37.1	30.4	24.4	31.2	13.9	25.1	16.4
Current marital status												
Never married or in union	46.5	37.9	24.9	12.5	12.9	37.4	31.6	20.0	26.7	9.2	19.3	14.4
Married or in union	49.0	46.1	33.3	16.2	12.1	44.0	38.2	25.8	36.4	18.8	28.5	23.3
-Married	47.4	44.8	30.9	14.6	10.7	41.0	38.5	25.5	35.8	20.0	28.0	20.6
-In union	52.3	48.4	35.1	16.7	16.2	46.5	37.6	26.2	37.4	18.5	28.8	26.4
Separated/divorced	46.3	47.4	32.6	17.0	15.0	46.4	37.0	28.3	35.0	15.2	28.4	27.9
Widowed	44.8	43.8	28.2	19.0	10.1	47.8	27.1	25.1	34.1	na	27.5	31.9
Number of unions												
0	46.5	37.9	24.9	12.5	12.9	37.4	31.6	20.0	26.7	9.2	19.3	14.4
1	48.5	46.1	32.4	15.3	12.7	43.3	37.0	24.1	35.4	13.8	27.3	22.9
2+	49.7	47.4	35.8	18.0	11.9	51.5	43.1	34.1	42.8	20.2	31.9	31.6
Parity (live births)												
0	46.6	38.3	24.5	13.0	14.4	37.8	31.2	19.5	27.0	13.6	20.6	16.4
1-2	47.9	43.2	32.6	19.0	11.3	43.8	35.9	24.4	33.0	17.5	27.4	21.6
3-4	48.1	45.7	33.8	14.4	10.5	45.2	37.9	29.8	38.6	19.6	27.8	24.5
5+	50.1	51.2	32.8	14.1	12.1	43.7	44.1	28.2	38.1	18.7	31.3	25.8
Age at first union												
<15	47.6	52.0	35.5	20.7	16.4	48.9	42.5	31.8	36.8	22.8	31.6	30.5
15-19	51.0	48.0	35.1	16.2	14.2	47.0	38.7	26.9	37.2	19.2	27.9	26.1
20-24	46.5	44.7	32.2	15.2	8.6	43.5	36.7	24.8	34.8	13.8	27.0	20.5
25+	45.5	41.8	28.1	12.8	11.0	38.2	36.9	22.4	32.6	16.0	29.5	22.8
Employed												
No	45.3	38.0	27.6	15.7	13.8	39.2	34.5	22.6	30.6	16.5	28.6	18.7
Yes	49.5	45.8	31.9	15.3	11.5	43.4	37.6	27.2	36.1	17.0	23.0	21.9
Total %	48.3	43.5	30.3	15.5	12.6	42.4	35.9	24.3	33.2	16.7	25.9	20.2
Total N unweighted	14,679	14,900	37,597	10,140	3,568	16,648	9,576	9,717	16,582	8,259	14,165	6,526

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Bolivia 2003 limited questions about whether the mother was beaten to women who reported ever having a husband, partner, lover, or boyfriend. [3.] Ecuador 2004 asked whether parents or stepparents abused each other physically or psychologically, but psychological abuse was excluded from this analysis. El Salvador 2008 asked whether men physically abused women in the home(s) where they lived before age 18. [4.] Some women interviewed in DHS surveys said they did not know whether their father beat their mother. [5.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [6.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [7.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.



### A13 Acceptability of wife-beating, by women's background characteristics

Table A13 Percentage of women who agreed that wife-beating is acceptable for at least one reason, by women's background characteristics, among all women aged 15-49 [1-4]

	DHS surveys						RHS surveys			
	Bolivia 2003	Bolivia 2008	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Honduras 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Ecuador 2004	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence										
Urban	20.1	13.5	3.3	25.1	11.2	3.2	27.4	2.1	9.5	13.0
Rural	26.9	20.5	6.8	34.9	20.6	9.1	47.2	3.9	19.9	32.2
Education										
0-3 years	27.0	22.1	8.0	37.4	23.2	8.6	60.7	--	21.2	49.6
4-6 years	27.4	20.2	8.4	36.7	18.3	8.8	50.6	3.2	17.5	35.6
7-11 years	24.1	18.8	4.0	19.8	10.5	4.6	33.1	3.2	10.2	18.2
12+ years	12.7	8.4	1.4	10.5	5.0	1.3	14.9	1.5	2.8	7.5
Age of woman										
15-19	25.0	17.1	6.5	39.1	18.1	6.0	34.4	4.0	18.9	21.0
20-24	20.1	13.0	4.2	30.0	15.7	4.4	31.1	3.4	12.8	17.6
25-29	22.1	13.6	3.5	21.8	14.9	3.6	34.0	2.5	13.4	19.1
30-39	22.2	15.8	3.9	28.5	14.1	4.7	37.0	2.3	12.1	20.9
40-49	23.1	18.6	3.1	29.4	14.8	6.0	37.1	2.6	10.1	23.6
Wealth quintile										
Lowest	28.2	19.4	8.9	40.8	26.5	9.5	50.0	5.0	25.9	43.4
Second	26.7	21.2	6.7	36.5	23.1	9.2	43.7	3.7	16.7	25.8
Third	26.3	18.9	3.6	34.5	16.0	5.8	34.5	2.6	12.4	16.8
Fourth	20.9	15.5	2.0	27.2	10.8	3.2	26.2	1.6	9.2	8.4
Highest	12.3	7.9	1.8	20.1	7.3	1.9	17.1	1.6	5.5	7.2
Current marital status										
Never married or in union	19.7	14.4	4.1	33.9	15.3	4.1	27.9	2.6	13.3	15.9
Married or in union	22.8	16.6	4.6	29.4	15.8	5.5	38.4	3.0	14.7	23.1
-Married	21.1	15.9	1.5	30.0	12.7	5.5	35.4	1.9	12.0	20.4
-In union	26.7	17.9	5.6	27.6	18.0	5.5	43.3	3.2	16.4	26.3
Separated/divorced	22.2	15.6	3.2	20.5	14.2	3.5	36.4	2.8	11.1	22.1
Widowed	28.1	18.0	8.8	33.3	20.7	7.0	42.1	na	8.6	13.4
Number of unions										
0	19.7	14.4	4.1	33.9	15.3	4.1	27.9	2.6	13.3	15.9
1	22.6	16.3	3.4	27.9	15.7	5.2	38.1	2.6	13.9	22.2
2+	24.9	19.1	5.8	29.5	15.4	5.6	38.6	3.1	13.6	28.2
Parity (live births)										
0	19.7	14.0	3.8	32.8	15.5	4.1	27.3	2.7	13.9	15.8
1-2	20.5	13.5	4.3	24.7	14.3	4.1	33.0	2.6	12.7	19.0
3-4	22.6	18.1	3.9	28.7	14.3	5.6	39.8	2.6	13.1	24.1
5+	26.2	20.9	6.8	33.7	19.4	8.7	51.4	5.5	16.3	41.3
Age at first union										
<15	26.0	20.7	7.3	38.4	19.6	8.6	48.9	2.6	17.5	30.9
15-19	24.4	17.2	4.8	28.9	16.3	6.4	43.4	3.4	14.5	28.0
20-24	21.1	15.1	2.0	28.5	12.6	4.2	32.6	2.0	10.1	17.1
25+	20.2	15.9	1.5	18.7	12.4	3.8	27.0	1.0	8.2	17.1
Employed										
No	22.4	14.4	5.2	31.0	16.7	3.8	35.6	3.2	11.4	24.4
Yes	22.3	16.5	3.4	29.6	14.4	5.3	34.3	2.5	16.2	15.7
Total %	22.3	15.8	4.3	30.2	15.5	5.0	35.0	2.9	13.7	20.2
Total N unweighted	14,679	14,900	10,140	3,568	19,948	16,648	9,576	8,259	14,165	6,526

Notes: [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of 'previously partnered', along with women who were separated or divorced. [3.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [4.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

## A14 Agreement with wives' right to refuse/obligation to have sex within marriage, by women's background characteristics

Table A14 Percentage of women who said that a wife should not refuse sex/has an obligation to have sex with her husband, by women's background characteristics, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-5]

	DHS surveys							RHS surveys			
	A wife should not refuse to have sexual relations with her husband just because she is tired, doesn't feel like it, is not in the mood, or doesn't want to							Wives have an obligation to have sexual relations with their husband even if they don't want to			
	Bolivia 2003	Bolivia 2008	Colombia 2005	Dominican Republic 2007	Haiti 2005/6	Honduras 2005/6	Peru 2007/8	Guatemala 2008/9	Jamaica 2008/9	Nicaragua 2006/7	Paraguay 2008
Residence											
Urban	13.3	8.1	11.4	7.6	21.1	8.3	8.9	17.6	30.0	8.1	6.8
Rural	15.7	14.9	9.5	7.1	14.9	7.8	10.7	37.3	30.8	24.0	13.6
Education											
0-3 years	15.8	14.1	10.6	9.7	16.3	8.9	11.3	41.9	--	27.9	24.3
4-6 years	14.4	12.5	9.6	9.4	20.0	7.8	9.0	21.6	27.1	15.5	13.7
7-11 years	12.6	9.0	11.6	6.2	14.5	7.2	8.4	9.3	32.0	6.5	7.6
12+ years	13.1	7.6	11.8	6.9	33.6	7.4	10.4	4.4	24.1	2.5	3.1
Age of woman											
15-19	15.1	8.3	11.0	6.4	19.2	10.1	12.5	27.5	24.0	17.2	7.6
20-24	14.7	10.9	10.2	6.3	14.6	8.8	9.1	25.2	25.3	14.4	6.3
25-29	13.5	10.9	11.0	7.3	17.5	7.9	9.1	26.3	29.4	13.6	7.6
30-39	14.0	10.3	10.8	8.2	19.6	7.6	8.8	28.0	33.2	14.7	10.4
40-49	14.2	10.8	11.3	7.4	17.0	7.5	10.5	33.9	32.6	15.7	12.9
Wealth quintile											
Lowest	15.2	14.7	9.9	8.3	19.3	9.4	12.1	47.9	30.2	32.1	18.2
Second	14.6	14.5	10.2	7.7	13.6	8.0	11.2	38.8	28.9	16.9	11.8
Third	13.3	10.1	9.9	7.7	13.6	8.2	8.0	27.8	29.2	11.3	7.4
Fourth	14.2	7.9	12.0	6.3	19.8	7.0	7.8	16.0	35.4	7.7	4.4
Highest	13.5	7.1	12.6	7.2	21.1	8.0	10.0	8.9	27.8	5.4	3.8
Current marital status											
Married or in union	14.1	10.6	10.6	7.8	17.3	8.0	9.4	29.0	31.3	16.0	9.7
-Married	13.8	11.0	10.2	8.2	16.4	8.6	9.9	29.2	41.3	16.2	9.2
-In union	14.8	9.8	10.9	7.7	19.7	7.5	9.1	28.6	28.5	15.9	10.2
Separated/divorced	13.7	10.0	11.9	6.1	18.6	8.3	9.8	22.8	26.4	11.0	7.4
Widowed	15.9	11.9	11.8	7.8	26.5	8.3	9.0	37.2	na	14.2	10.6
Number of unions											
1	14.2	10.7	10.8	7.4	20.1	8.1	9.6	28.5	29.7	14.7	9.1
2+	12.7	8.8	11.4	7.1	14.0	7.7	8.5	29.5	30.7	15.5	11.9
Parity (live births)											
0	15.0	9.8	14.9	10.4	24.0	10.5	10.4	21.9	29.0	14.6	4.4
1-2	14.6	9.4	11.1	6.8	16.4	8.5	9.6	20.8	28.7	11.5	7.3
3-4	12.5	10.6	10.2	7.4	17.9	7.5	8.7	27.8	31.9	14.4	11.1
5+	15.0	12.5	9.5	7.6	16.7	7.3	10.4	41.0	37.2	23.2	19.4
Age at first union											
<15	12.4	8.3	10.3	7.7	15.4	8.0	9.9	40.2	34.9	20.5	13.3
15-19	14.9	11.0	10.2	6.5	16.3	7.7	9.4	29.9	29.3	15.0	10.8
20-24	13.9	10.5	11.5	8.6	19.7	8.8	8.8	23.2	32.0	11.1	8.1
25+	12.7	10.2	11.9	10.1	20.4	8.2	10.5	18.7	34.7	9.5	6.9
Employed											
No	14.8	11.0	10.7	7.7	18.8	8.3	8.8	32.9	28.8	10.6	12.3
Yes	13.9	10.4	11.1	7.2	17.1	7.8	9.7	23.7	31.9	20.3	6.6
Total %	14.1	10.5	10.9	7.4	17.7	8.0	9.5	28.6	30.3	14.9	9.4
Total N unweighted	12,054	10,033	25,620	8,438	2,680	14,371	12,572	12,768	7,222	11,393	4,414

Notes: [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Jamaica 2008/9 grouped widows in a single category of previously partnered, along with women who were separated or divorced. [4.] All percentages are weighted but total numbers are unweighted. [5.] A double dash (--) indicates that the denominator was less than 25.

### A15 Standard errors and confidence intervals: prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, ever

Table A15 Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]

	Weighted prevalence estimate	Std. error (EE)	DEFF	Design effect	Relative error (EE/V)	95% confidence interval			Total number of women	
						Lower bound	Upper bound	Weighted	Unweighted	
DHS surveys										
Bolivia 2003	53.3	0.61	1.77	1.33	0.01	52.1	-	54.5	12,005	12,054
Colombia 2005	39.7	0.47	2.36	1.54	0.01	38.8	-	40.6	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	17.0	0.75	3.08	1.76	0.04	15.5	-	18.5	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	19.3	1.23	2.35	1.53	0.06	16.9	-	21.7	2,420	2,680
Peru 2007/8	39.5	0.75	2.80	1.67	0.02	38.0	-	40.9	12,084	12,572
RHS surveys										
Ecuador 2004	32.4	0.82	2.05	1.43	0.03	30.8	-	34.1	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	26.3	0.62	1.33	1.15	0.02	25.1	-	27.5	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	27.6	0.60	2.03	1.43	0.02	26.4	-	28.8	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	19.6	0.87	3.39	1.84	0.04	17.9	-	21.3	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	29.3	0.59	1.72	1.31	0.02	28.2	-	30.5	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	20.4	0.82	1.67	1.29	0.04	18.8	-	22.0	5,471	4,414

### A16 Standard errors and confidence intervals: prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, past 12 months

Table A16 Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

Intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-45 [1-7]										
	Weighted prevalence estimate	Std. error (EE)	DEFF	Design effect	Relative error (EE/V)	95% confidence interval			Total number of women	
						Lower bound		Upper bound	Weighted	Unweighted
DHS surveys										
Bolivia 2008	25.5	0.64	1.90	1.38	0.03	24.3	-	26.8	8,795	8,982
Colombia 2005	22.1	0.39	2.27	1.51	0.02	21.3	-	22.8	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	11.7	0.60	2.72	1.65	0.05	10.5	-	12.8	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	17.5	1.25	2.56	1.60	0.07	15.1	-	20.0	2,353	2,605
Honduras 2005/6	9.9	0.34	1.60	1.26	0.03	9.3	-	10.6	12,637	12,701
Peru 2007/8	14.9	0.56	2.89	1.70	0.04	13.8	-	16.0	23,034	22,558
RHS surveys										
Ecuador 2004	11.1	0.55	2.00	1.41	0.05	10.0	-	12.2	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	7.7	0.32	0.96	0.98	0.04	7.1	-	8.3	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	9.9	0.36	1.65	1.28	0.04	9.2	-	10.6	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	7.7	0.51	2.58	1.60	0.07	6.7	-	8.7	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	9.3	0.36	1.54	1.24	0.04	8.6	-	10.0	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	8.0	0.52	1.47	1.21	0.07	6.9	-	9.0	5,471	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not specifically ask about the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months.

### A17 Standard errors and confidence intervals: prevalence of physical intimate partner violence, ever

Table A17 Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]

	Weighted prevalence estimate	Std. error (EE)	DEFF	Design effect	Relative error (EE/V)	95% confidence interval			Total number of women	
						Lower bound	Upper bound	Weighted	Unweighted	
DHS surveys										
Bolivia 2003	52.3	0.61	1.80	1.34	0.01	51.1	-	53.5	12,005	12,054
Colombia 2005	38.6	0.47	2.35	1.53	0.01	37.7	-	39.5	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	16.1	0.74	3.14	1.77	0.05	14.7	-	17.6	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	13.4	1.05	2.31	1.52	0.08	11.3	-	15.5	2,420	2,680
Peru 2007/8	38.6	0.76	2.86	1.69	0.02	37.1	-	40.1	12,084	12,572
RHS surveys										
Ecuador 2004	31.0	0.80	1.96	1.40	0.03	29.5	-	32.6	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	24.2	0.60	1.32	1.15	0.02	23.0	-	25.4	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	24.5	0.56	1.93	1.39	0.02	23.4	-	25.6	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	17.2	0.79	3.07	1.75	0.05	15.6	-	18.8	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	27.0	0.57	1.71	1.31	0.02	25.8	-	28.1	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	17.9	0.79	1.70	1.30	0.04	16.3	-	19.4	5,471	4,414

### A18 Standard errors and confidence intervals: prevalence of physical intimate partner violence, past 12 months

Table A18 Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

	Weighted prevalence estimate	Std. error (EE)	DEFF	Design effect	Relative error (EE/V)	95% confidence interval			Total number of women	
						Lower bound		Upper bound	Weighted	Unweighted
DHS surveys										
Bolivia 2008	24.5	0.63	1.90	1.38	0.03	23.2	-	25.7	8,795	8,982
Colombia 2005	20.7	0.38	2.24	1.50	0.02	19.9	-	21.4	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	10.9	0.60	2.82	1.68	0.05	9.7	-	12.1	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	12.1	1.07	2.56	1.60	0.09	10.0	-	14.2	2,353	2,605
Honduras 2005/6	7.4	0.29	1.50	1.23	0.04	6.8	-	8.0	12,637	12,701
Peru 2007/8	14.0	0.53	2.80	1.67	0.04	12.9	-	15.0	23,034	22,558
RHS surveys										
Ecuador 2004	10.3	0.52	1.94	1.39	0.05	9.2	-	11.3	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	6.8	0.31	1.00	1.00	0.05	6.1	-	7.4	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	7.8	0.32	1.59	1.26	0.04	7.2	-	8.5	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	6.5	0.45	2.31	1.52	0.07	5.6	-	7.4	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	8.0	0.34	1.57	1.25	0.04	7.3	-	8.6	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	6.7	0.47	1.44	1.20	0.07	5.8	-	7.6	5,471	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not ask specifically about partner violence in the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months.

## A19 Standard errors and confidence intervals: prevalence of sexual intimate partner violence, ever

Table A19 Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner ever, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-6]

	Weighted prevalence estimate	Std. error (EE)	DEFF	Design effect	Relative error (EE/V)	95% confidence interval		Total number of women	
						Lower bound	Upper bound	Weighted	Unweighted
DHS surveys									
Bolivia 2003	15.2	0.42	1.64	1.28	0.03	14.4	- 16.1	12,005	12,054
Colombia 2005	11.8	0.29	2.04	1.43	0.02	11.2	- 12.3	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	5.2	0.42	2.79	1.67	0.08	4.4	- 6.0	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	10.8	0.88	1.95	1.40	0.08	9.0	- 12.5	2,420	2,680
Peru 2007/8	9.4	0.40	2.22	1.49	0.04	8.6	- 10.1	12,084	12,572
RHS surveys									
Ecuador 2004	11.5	0.55	1.98	1.41	0.05	10.4	- 12.6	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	11.5	0.45	1.32	1.15	0.04	10.6	- 12.4	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	12.3	0.44	1.99	1.41	0.04	11.4	- 13.2	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	7.6	0.52	2.71	1.65	0.07	6.6	- 8.6	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	13.1	0.42	1.57	1.25	0.03	12.3	- 13.9	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	8.9	0.55	1.48	1.22	0.06	7.8	- 10.0	5,471	4,414

## A20 Standard errors and confidence intervals: prevalence of sexual intimate partner violence, past 12 months

Table A20 Standard errors and confidence intervals for the prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, among women ever married or in union aged 15-49 [1-7]

	Weighted prevalence estimate	Std. error (EE)	DEFF	Design effect	Relative error (EE/V)	95% confidence interval			Total number of women	
						Lower bound		Upper bound	Weighted	Unweighted
DHS surveys										
Bolivia 2008	6.7	0.34	1.64	1.28	0.05	6.1	-	7.4	8,795	8,982
Colombia 2005	6.9	0.23	2.01	1.42	0.03	6.4	-	7.3	25,279	25,620
Dominican Republic 2007	3.6	0.37	2.99	1.73	0.10	2.9	-	4.4	7,719	8,438
Haiti 2005/6	10.1	0.84	1.84	1.36	0.08	8.4	-	11.8	2,353	2,605
Honduras 2005/6	5.0	0.24	1.46	1.21	0.05	4.6	-	5.5	12,637	12,701
Peru 2007/8	3.7	0.24	1.90	1.38	0.06	3.2	-	4.2	23,034	22,558
RHS surveys										
Ecuador 2004	3.8	0.31	1.73	1.32	0.08	3.2	-	4.4	9,243	7,217
El Salvador 2008	3.3	0.22	1.03	1.02	0.07	2.9	-	3.8	9,473	7,349
Guatemala 2008/9	4.8	0.25	1.59	1.26	0.05	4.3	-	5.3	11,357	12,768
Jamaica 2008/9	2.8	0.30	2.28	1.51	0.11	2.2	-	3.4	9,850	7,222
Nicaragua 2006/7	4.4	0.26	1.61	1.27	0.06	3.9	-	4.9	15,168	11,393
Paraguay 2008	3.3	0.31	1.19	1.09	0.09	2.7	-	3.9	5,471	4,414

**Notes:** [1.] Paraguay 2008 interviewed women aged 15-44. [2.] Surveys classified women as 'ever married or in union' if they had ever married or lived with a male sexual partner, except Jamaica 2008/9, which also included women who reported a 'visiting partner'. [3.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 asked women about partner violence only if they reported a husband, partner, boyfriend, or lover in the past 12 months. For comparability, this analysis restricted the data further to women ever married or in union. [4.] RHS surveys asked women about violence by any current or former partner in life. Honduras 2005/6 asked about violence by any partner in the past year. All other DHS surveys asked about violence by the current or (if no current partner) the most recent partner only. [5.] A partner was defined as a husband or cohabiting male sexual partner, except in Jamaica 2008/9, which also included 'visiting partners', and in Bolivia 2003 and 2008, Ecuador 2004, and Honduras 2005/6, which also included boyfriends and lovers. [6.] Bolivia 2008 and Honduras 2005/6 did not ask about partner violence ever (before the past 12 months). Bolivia 2003 did not specifically ask about the past 12 months. [7.] Haiti 2005/6 excluded 75 widows from questions about partner violence in the past 12 months.





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