

Contemporary issues in reproductive agency and women's empowerment globally

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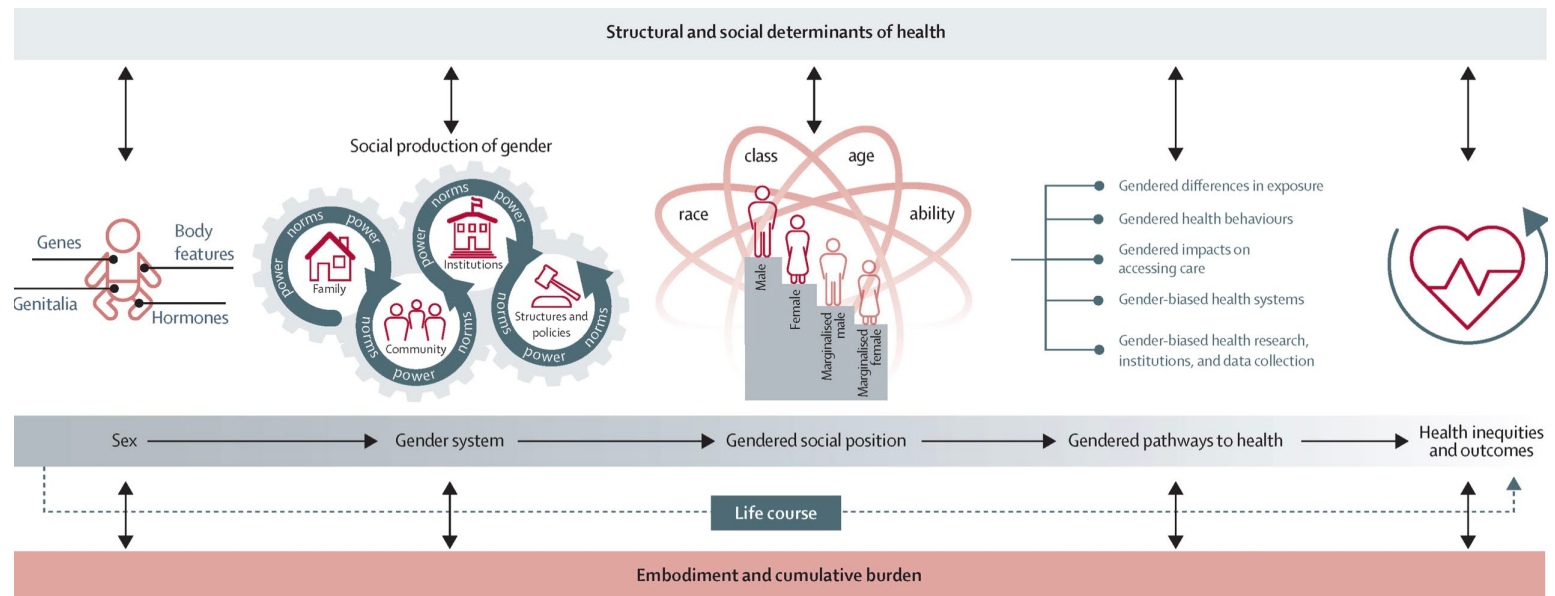
Framing Women's Reproductive Agency and Empowerment

- Gendered systems and their influences

- Macro policy & structures
- Social normative environment
- Interpersonal - family and relationship dyad
- Individual factors



- Act in concert with biology, positionality and health/support systems



Gender inequality and restrictive gender norms: framing the challenges to health

Lois Hesse*, Margaret E Greene*, Neelke Doorn, Maria Stavropoulou, Caroline Harper, Marcos Nascimento, Debrework Zewdie, on behalf of the Gender Equality, Norms, and Health Steering Committee†

Gender-based violence (GBV)

- Affects an estimated one in three women across her lifetime
 - Intimate partner violence and sexual violence: leading forms of GBV
 - Persistent gender disparities in prevalence, severity and impact
- Significant impact on reproductive health and reproductive agency
- Responsible for ~13% of homicides globally
 - 38% among women
- Experienced at the dyad/interpersonal level
 - Influenced by the full socio-ecological system

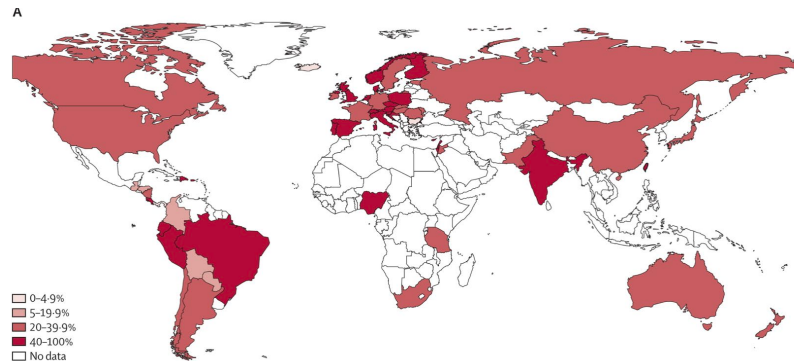


Figure 2. Prevalence of intimate partner homicide among all homicide cases.

**The global prevalence of intimate partner homicide:
a systematic review**

Heidi Stöckl, Karen Devries, Alexandra Rotstein, Naeemah Abrahams, Jacquelyn Campbell, Charlotte Watts, Claudia Garcia Moreno

Evidence evolution over time

1990s

Today



Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*

The Fourth World Conference on Women,

Having met in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995,

1. Adopts the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which are annexed to the present resolution;
2. Recommends to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its fiftieth session that it endorse the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as adopted by the Conference.

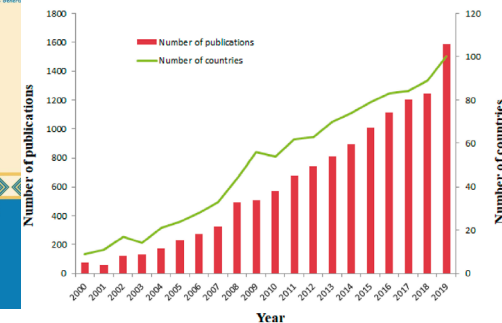
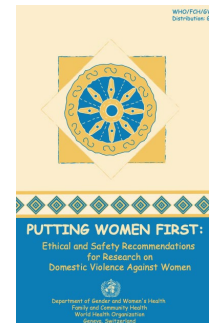
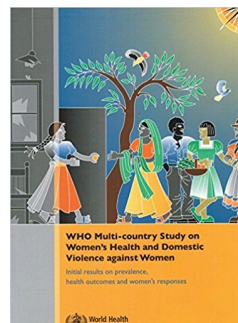


Figure 1. The number of the publication and number of countries by year.



**ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND
EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS**

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Research on Addressing Violence to Improve Health

Outcomes

Notice Number:

NOT-OD-22-167

Key Dates

Release Date:

July 8, 2022

First Available Due Date:

September 07, 2022

Expiration Date:

October 05, 2025

**U.S. NATIONAL
PLAN TO END
GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE:**

**STRATEGIES FOR
ACTION**



Reproductive Coercion:

A threat to reproductive agency

IPV survivors describe perceived pregnancy intentions of abusive male partners

- **Reproductive Coercion**
 - Overt efforts to sabotage birth control and promote pregnancy
 - Coercive/compromised sexual negotiation
- **Compromised condom negotiation**
 - Coercive condom non-use, condom removal, condom refusal
- **Sustained constraints on agency**

“He [used condoms] when we first started, and then he would fight with me over it, and he would just stop [using condoms] completely, and didn't care.

He got me pregnant on purpose, and then he wanted me to get an abortion....”

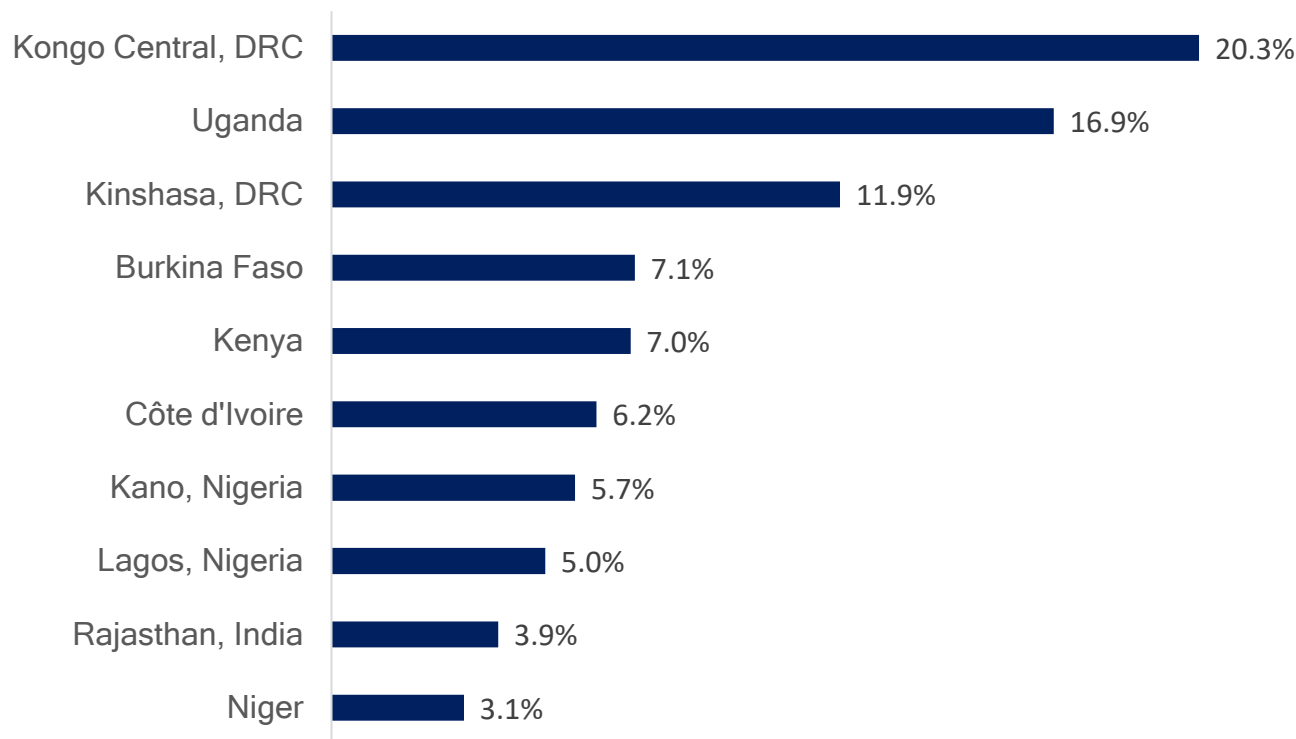
Adolescent IPV survivor, Boston
~2005

Miller, Decker, Silverman et al. *Contraception*, 2010
Alexander...Campbell, Miller, Decker. *J Interpers Violence*. 2019.
Wood, Kennedy...Glass, Decker. *Stud Fam Plann*. 2020.
Holliday, Miller, Decker, et al., *Womens Health Issues*, 2018
Holliday, Decker, Miller et al., *J Womens Health*, 2017
Grace, Holliday, Bevilacqua, Kaur, Miller, Decker. *J Fam Violence*. 2022.
Grace...Miller, Decker, Campbell, Glass. *J Midwifery Womens Health*. 2020.



Reproductive Coercion: Building the global knowledge base

Past-year Reproductive Coercion, by site



I don't know how my husband knows where the pills are.

Even if I put them in the make-up bag, he will find them.

He has found them more than thrice in place you would not expect him to search. He throws them away...

-IPV survivor, Nairobi



Emerging challenges and opportunities to advance policy

- Currently, big emphasis on measurement and individual-level metrics, access is a heavily used outcome
- Opportunity: conceptual clarity
 - Particularly about social and structural determinants
 - Interface with family and partner dynamics
 - Interface with social norms
 - E.g., norms that shame and restrict adolescent relationships
 - Intersectionality
 - E.g., gender wage gap, gender race wage gap
 - Changes over the lifecourse, cohort effects



Emerging challenges and opportunities to advance policy

- Design & Data:
 - Reproductive agency is mutually deterministic with socio-economic development and other key outcomes
 - We are ready to overcome overreliance on cross-sectional data
 - We are ready for methods innovation to maximize inferences
 - We must be prepared to ask: where, and for whom.
 - Move past looking for a “universal” relationship, and rather expect (and design for) variation and intersectionality at all levels of the socio-ecologic framework
 - Outcomes need to be actionable
 - Lifecourse framework
 - Quantitative data == absolutely essential

