

# Prevalence of intimate partner violence in the Americas

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Presenter:

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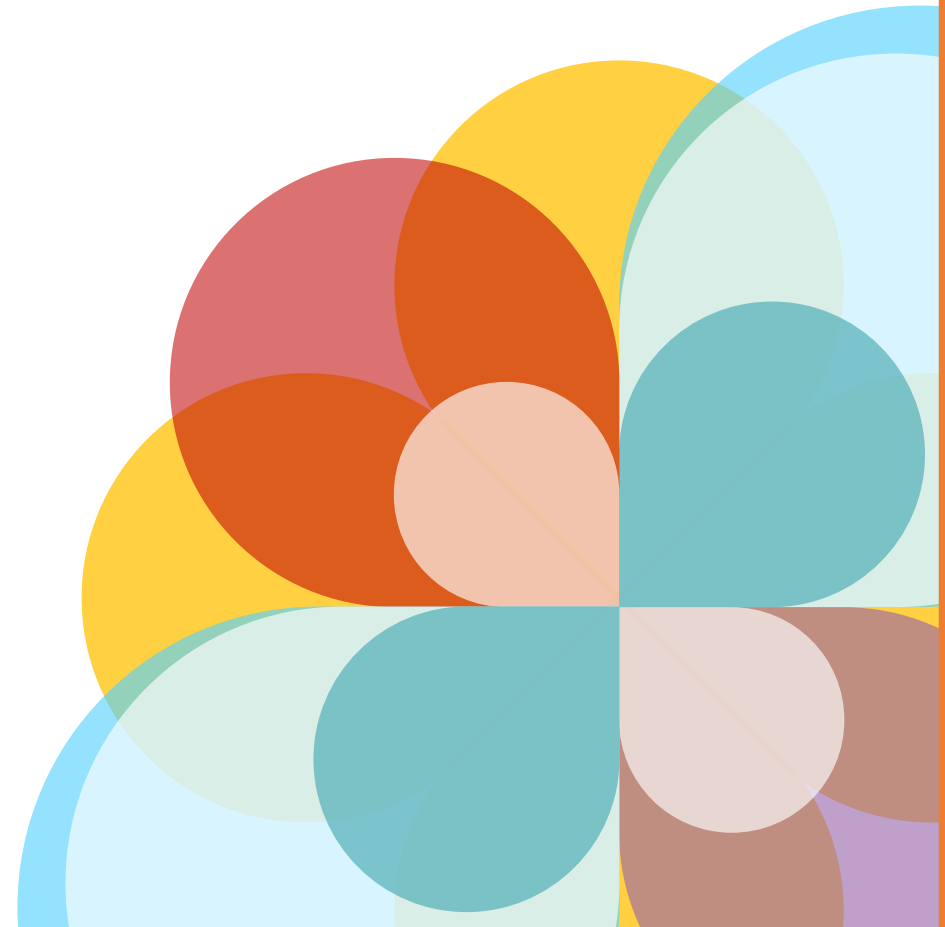
**Sarah Bott, Ana P. Ruiz-Celis, Jennifer Adams**



Pan American  
Health  
Organization



World Health  
Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Americas



# Overview of presentation

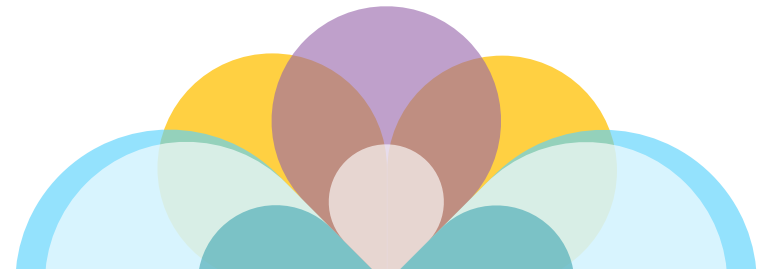
Background

Methodology: Systematic review and reanalysis

Findings: Most recent IPV prevalence estimates

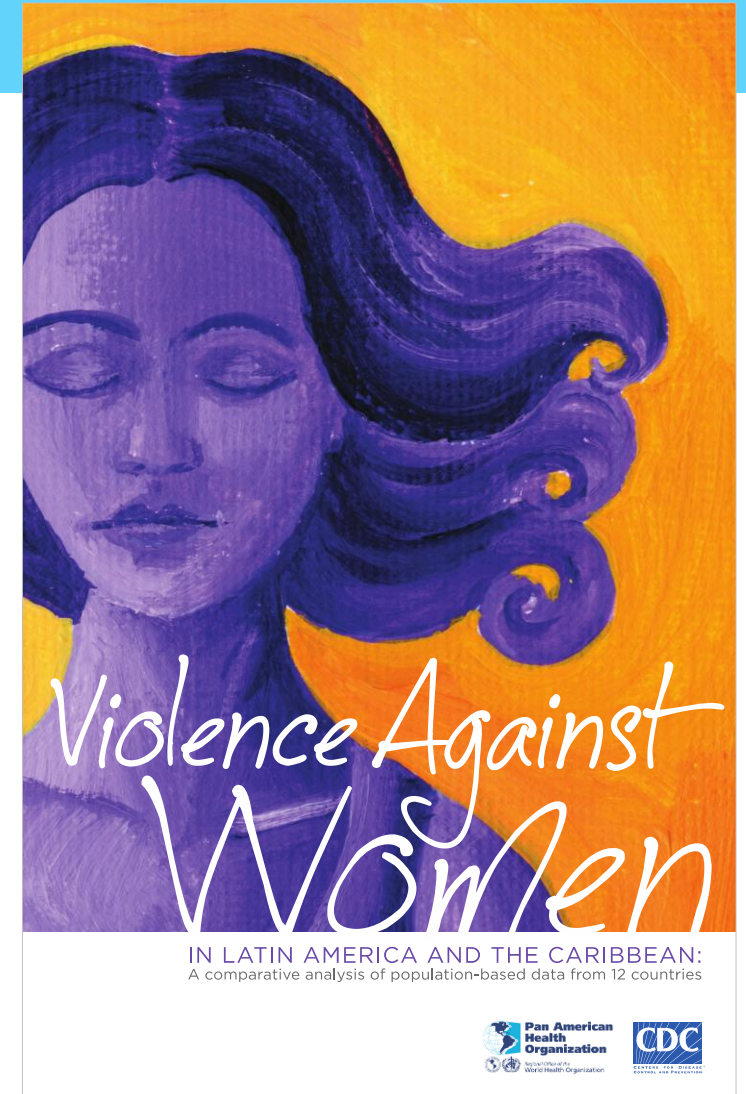
Findings: Changes in IPV prevalence over time

Recommendations and conclusions



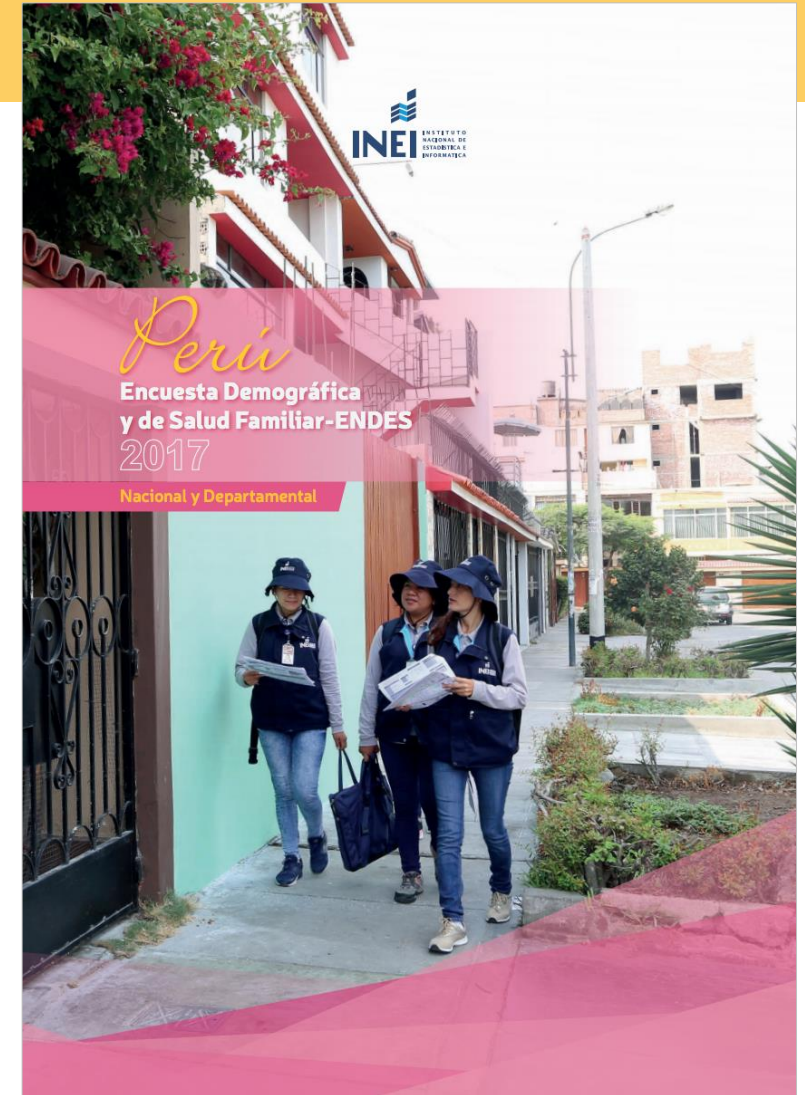
# Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Comparative Analysis of Population-Based Data from 12 Countries

- PAHO and CDC 2012
- Demographic Health Surveys and Reproductive Health Surveys
- First regional comparison of nationally-representative data
- Physical, sexual and emotional violence; controlling behaviors
- Prevalence, risk factors, consequences, and attitudes towards violence

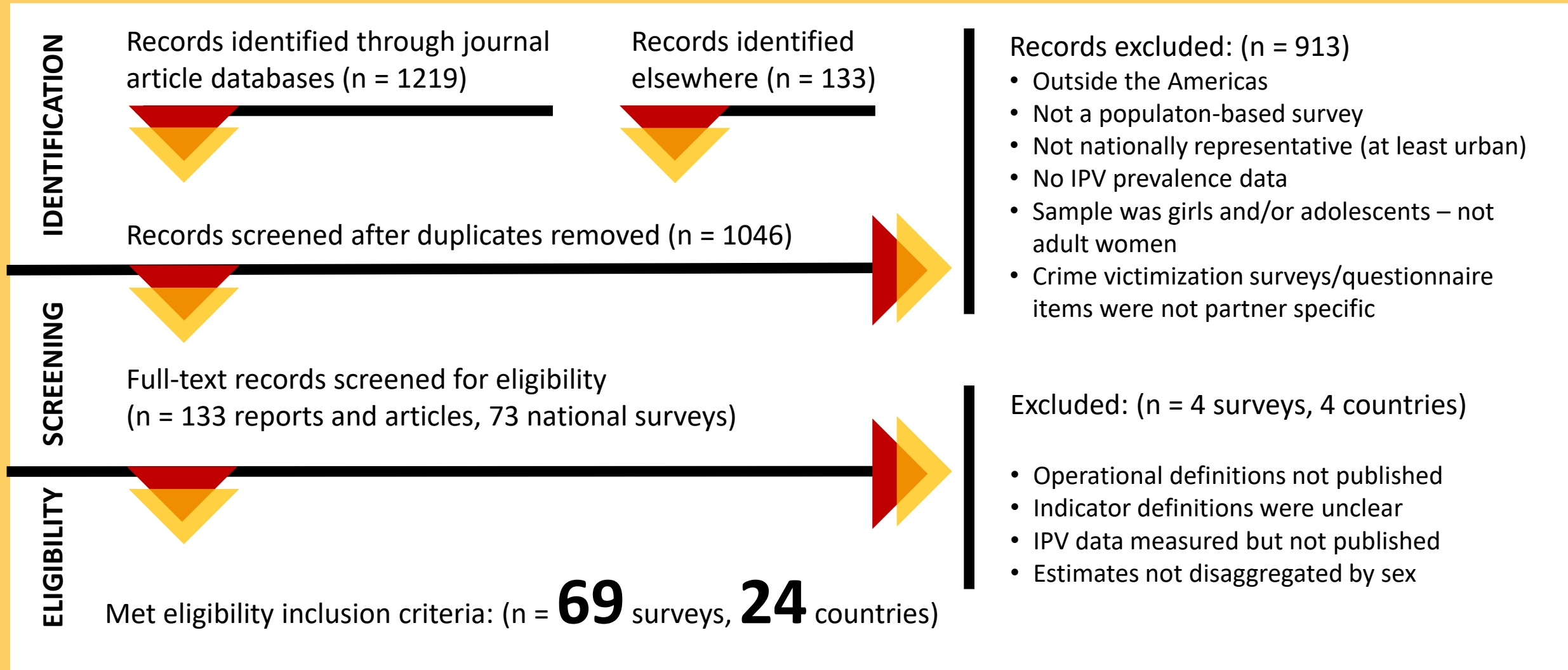


# Survey eligibility criteria – 2018 Systematic review

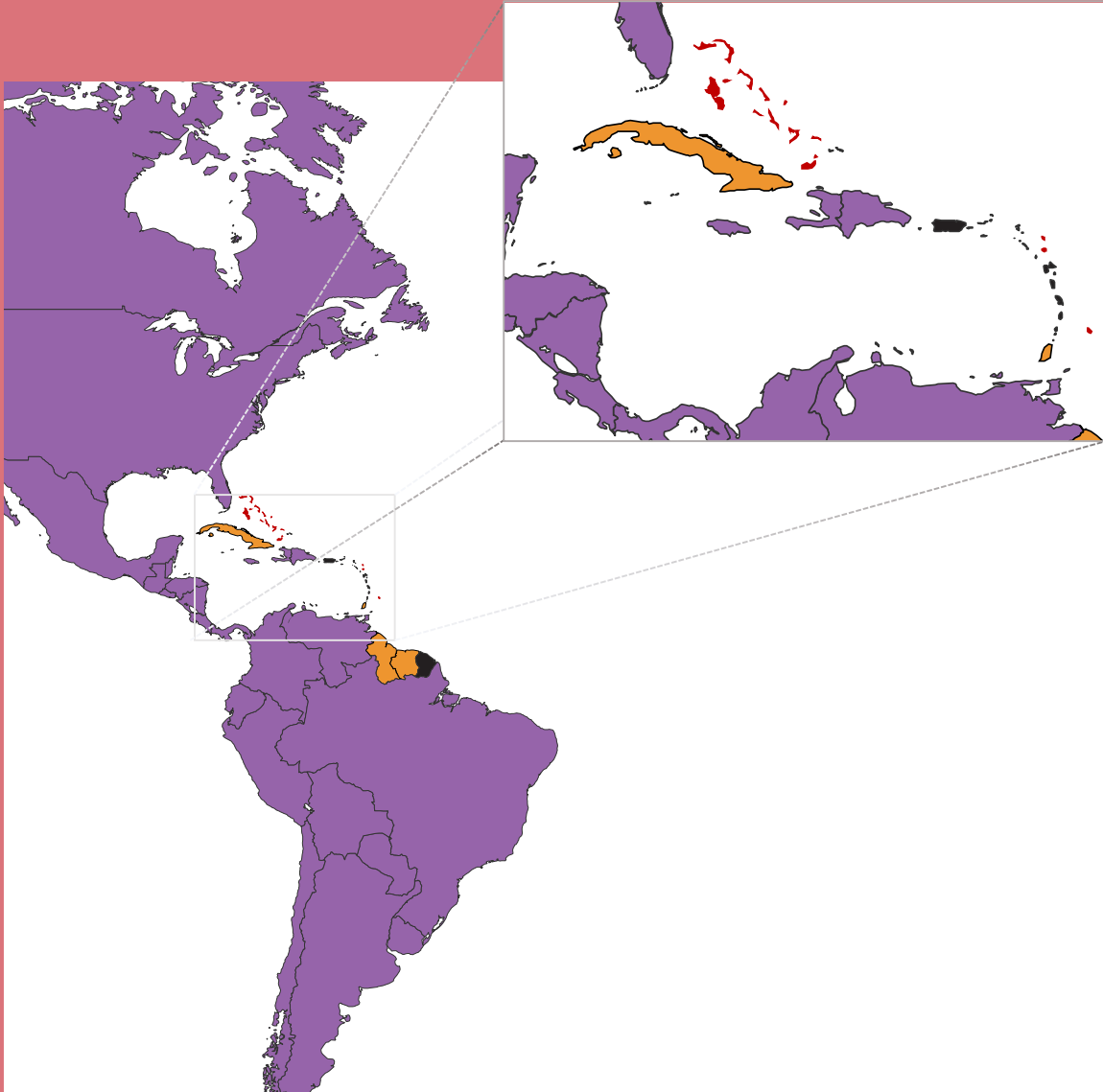
- Nationally representative (at least urban)
- Population-based
- Household or telephone survey
- From any PAHO Member State
- Gathered IPV prevalence data
- Collected data 1998 - 2017
- Published (at least online) by July 2018
- Any language (*English, French, Portuguese, Spanish*)
- Sufficient information to assess quality
- Explicitly mentioned partners when measuring violence



# Search and screening for eligible surveys (per PRISMA guidelines)



# Geographic coverage of eligible surveys



Searched for national surveys from 35 PAHO member States

**24** countries: Eligible survey found (*Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, USA, and Venezuela*)

**11** countries: No **published** national survey found

**4** countries: Survey in development or close to publication (*Cuba, Grenada, Guyana, Suriname*)

**7** countries: No survey found (*Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis*)

**Overseas territories with no eligible survey**



# Prevalence indicators: Challenges to comparability

% of **ever partnered**

women and girls  
aged **15-49 years**

subjected to  
physical or sexual **violence**  
by a **current or former**

**intimate partner,**

**ever** and in the  
**past 12 months,**

disaggregated by  
**type** of violence  
and **type of partner**

*Ever-partnered, currently-partnered, or never-partnered women?*

*What age range?*

*What forms of  
violence?  
Defined how?*

*¿Current, most  
recent partner  
and/or any  
partner in life?*

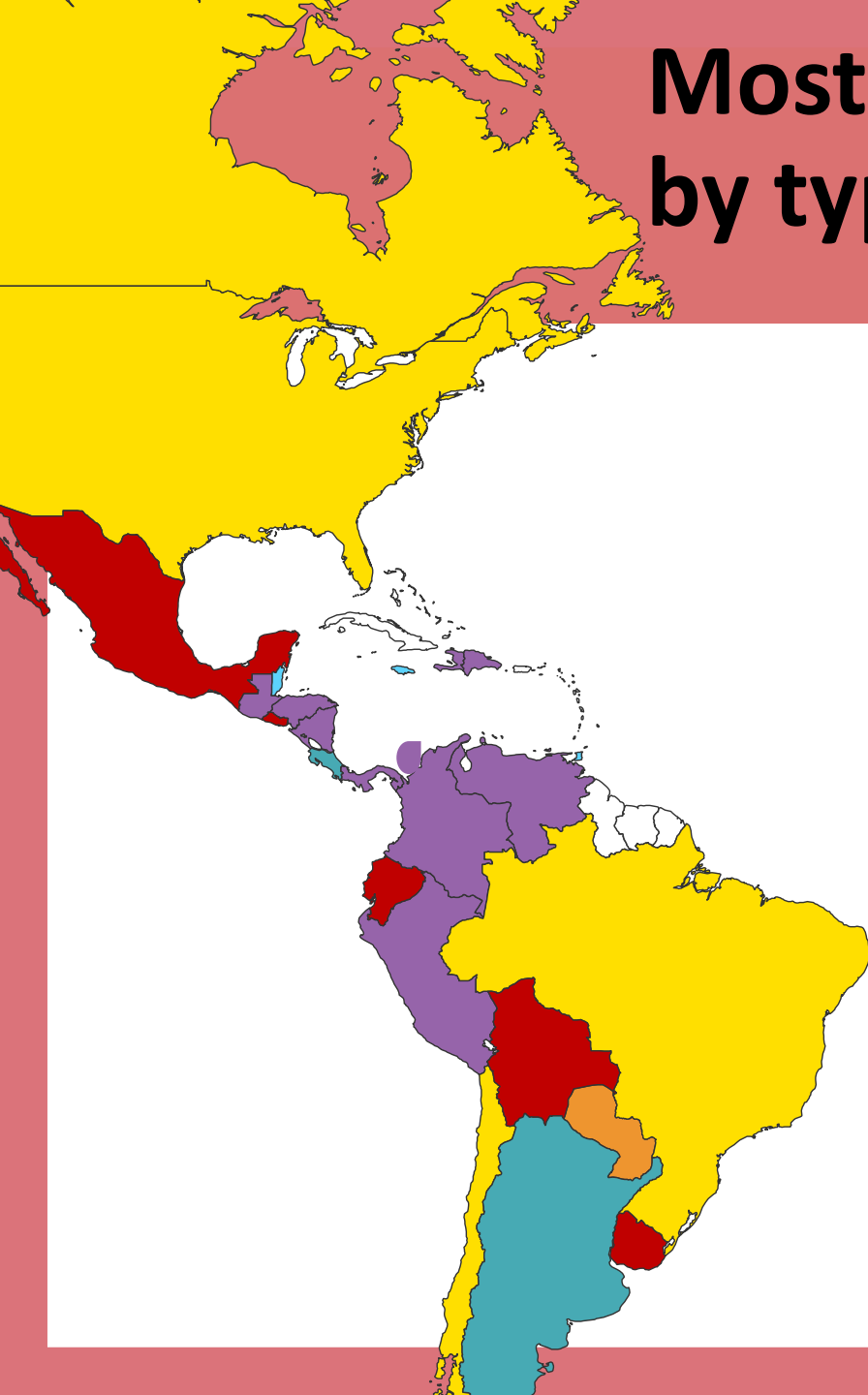
*Who was considered  
an intimate partner?  
Husband?  
Cohabiting partner?  
Stable partner?  
Boyfriend? Lover?*

*In what timeframes did  
violence occur?*

*What type(s) of violence?  
Physical? Sexual?  
Physical and/or sexual?*

*Current/most recent partner  
and/or any partner in life?*

# Most recent 24 eligible surveys by type of instrument



## Demographic Health Surveys (DHS)

Colombia (2015), Dominican Republic (2013), Guatemala (2014/15), Haiti (2016/17), Honduras (2011), Nicaragua (2011/12), Panama (2009), Peru (2017), Venezuela (2010)

## Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS)

Paraguay (2008)

## World Health Organization, Multi-country study (WHO MCS)

Belize (2015), El Salvador (2013/14), Jamaica (2016), Trinidad and Tobago (2017)

## International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS)

Argentina (2015), Costa Rica (2003)

## Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (ENDIREH) or similar

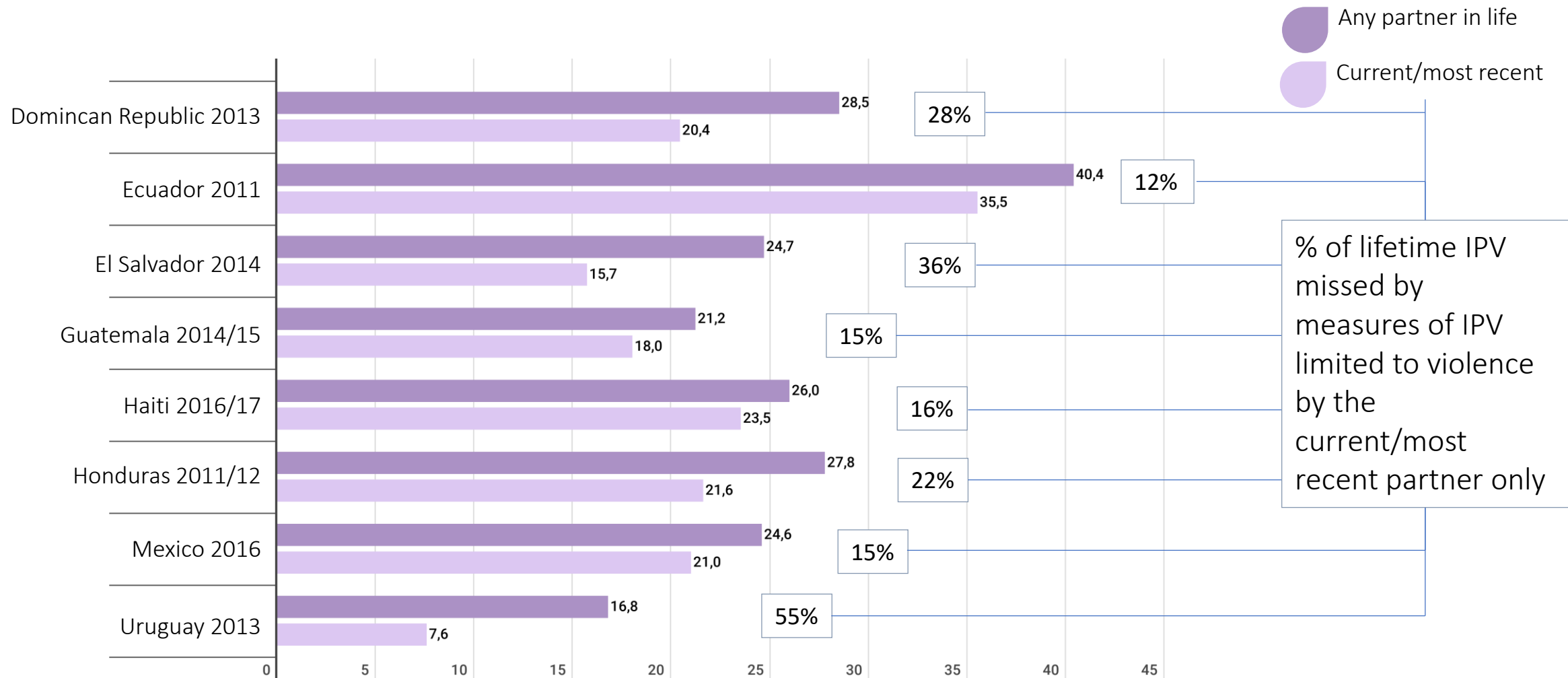
Bolivia (2016), Ecuador (2011), El Salvador (2017), Mexico (2016), Uruguay (2013)

## Unique surveys

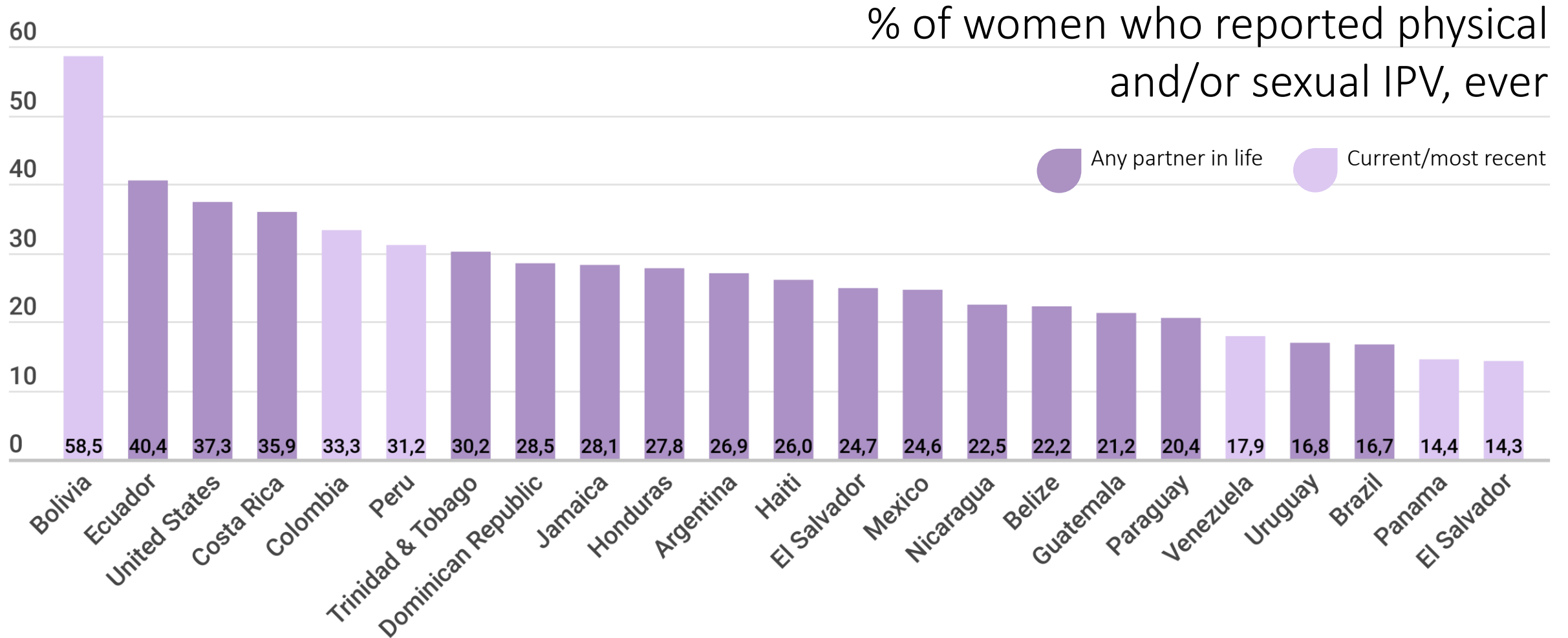
Brazil (2017), Canada (2014), Chile (2016/17), USA (2010/12)



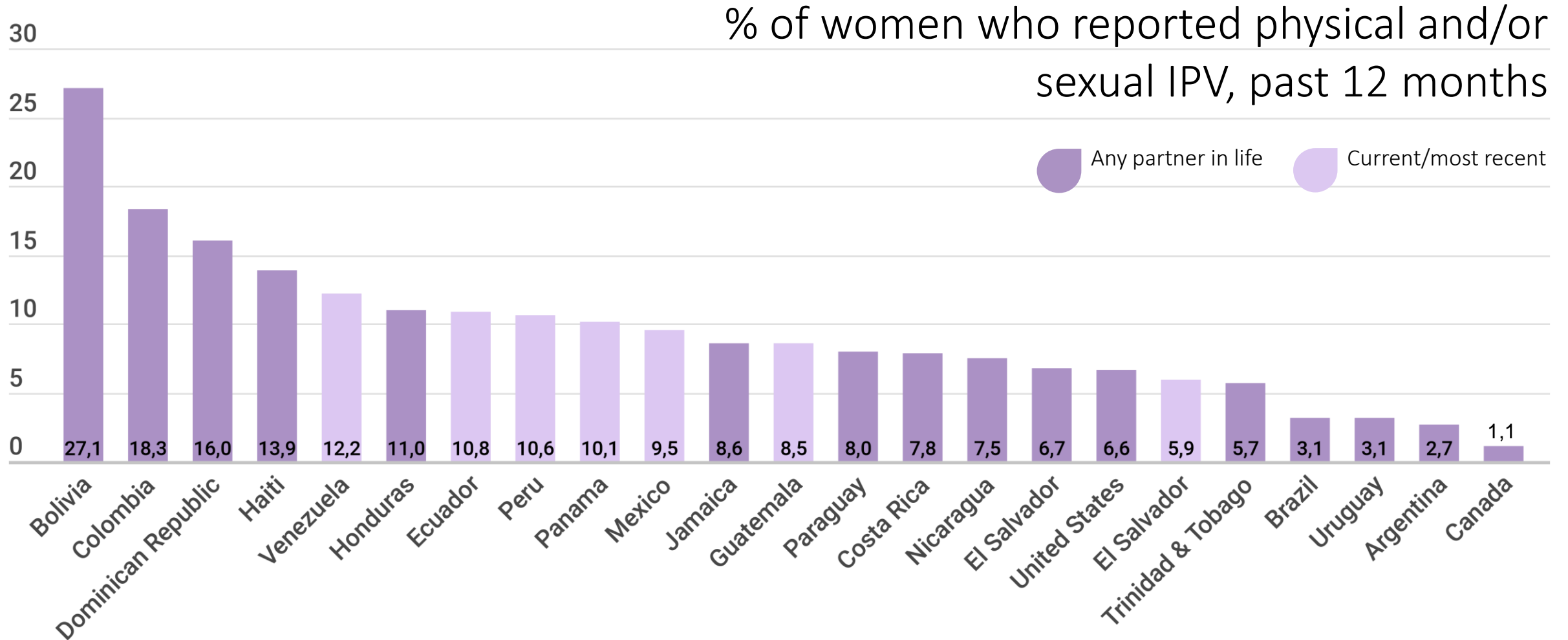
# Challenges to comparability: Difference between any partner in life and current/most recent partner



# Prevalence of PHYSICAL and/or SEXUAL intimate partner violence EVER



# Prevalence of PHYSICAL and/or SEXUAL intimate partner violence PAST YEAR



# Analysis of changes over time in reported IPV prevalence

## 7 countries

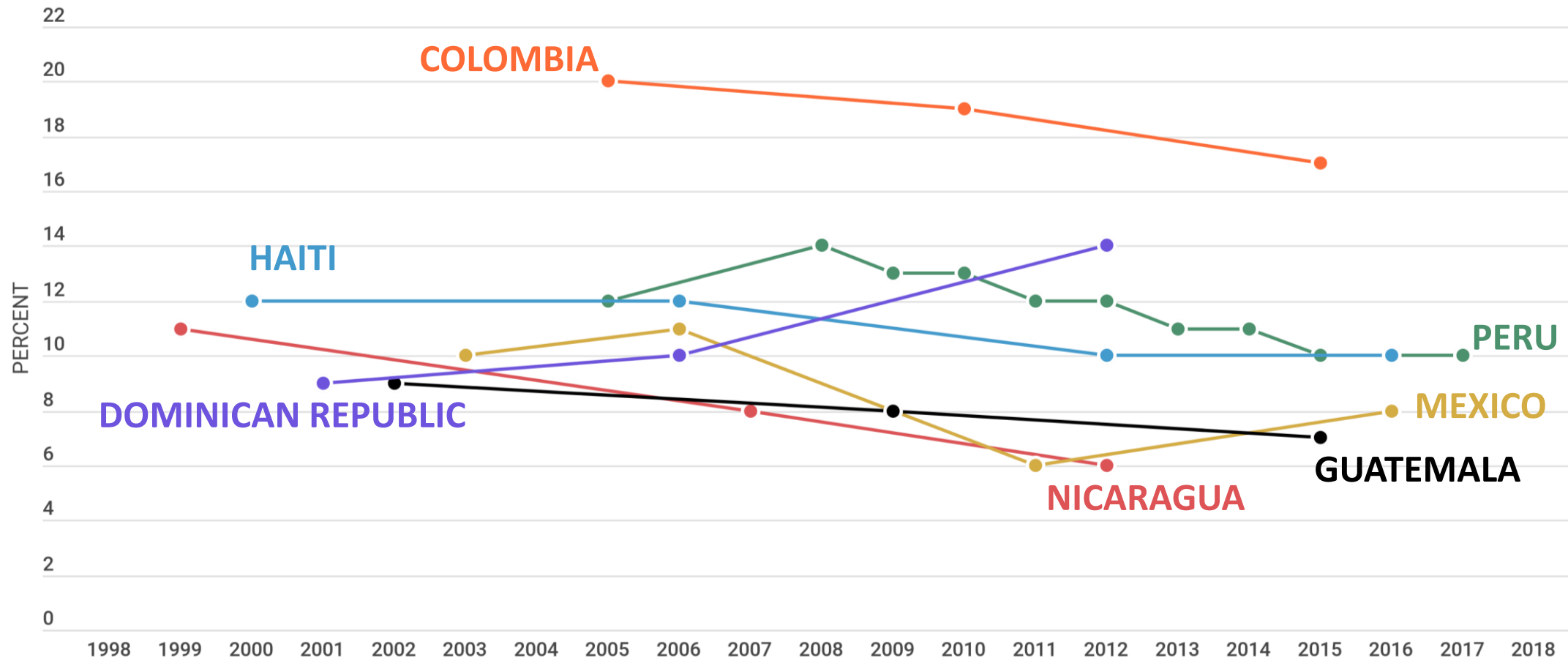
- 3+ rounds of open access data based with a comparable instrument 1998-2017
- *Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru*
- PAHO analyzed changes over time using Cochran Armitage Trend Test

## 1 country

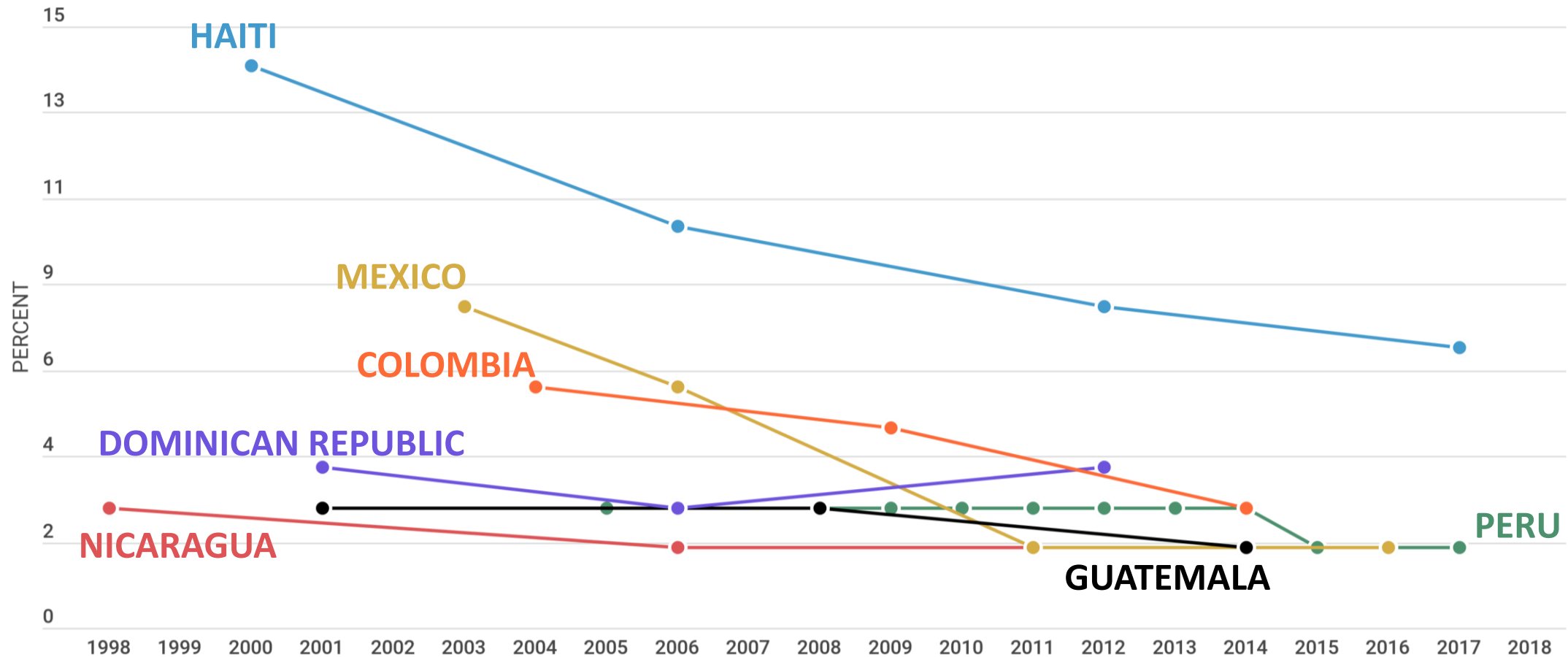
- Canadian researcher already published an analysis of changes over 3 points in time



# Changes over time: Physical IPV past year



# Changes over time: Sexual IPV past year





# Methodological findings of systematic review

- Estimates of IPV by any partner in life are NOT comparable to IPV by the current/most recent partner only – surveys should measure and publish both.
- In accordance with SDG and UN guidelines, surveys should publish indicators of physical and/or sexual IPV
- Composite indicators of physical, sexual and/or emotional IPV are less helpful (not comparable, tier 3, not compelling to policy makers)
- Surveys vary by age range – please disaggregate for the 15-49 year old cohort
- Many reports do not clearly define their indicators or label their tables/charts for numerator and denominators (type of violence, partner, etc.)
  - readers need more clearly labeled findings
- Inadequate information about ethics and safety

# Conclusions

**1**

IPV remains  
widespread  
in the  
Americas

**2**

While reported IPV  
prevalence declined  
significantly in  
several countries,  
some indicators  
were unchanged or  
rose over time

**3**

Availability of prevalence  
estimates increased  
significantly, but need:  
Greater geographic  
coverage, improved  
quality and  
comparability and  
repeat surveys

**4**

Greater and  
sustained  
investment  
needed on  
evidence-based  
VAW prevention  
and response

# How WHO/PAHO is working **to strengthen health systems** in the Americas

1

## **Strengthen leadership and governance:**

- Strengthen political will
- Integrate violence within policies, programs
- Advocate for adoption/reform of laws

2

## **Strengthen health service delivery:**

- Develop evidence-based normative guidance & curricula
- Train health care professionals
- Integrate VAW into university-level and continuing education

3

## **Strengthen prevention:**

- Support programs that challenge gender norms
- Inform policies and programs in other sectors

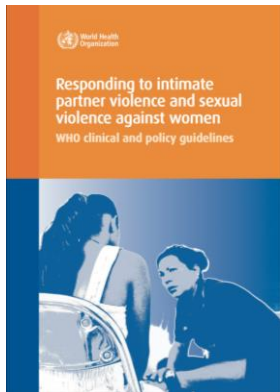
4

## **Strengthen evidence:**

- Strengthen routine reporting
- Support research to develop, evaluate, and scale up health systems' interventions
- Provide guidance to improve quality and comparability of data

# Tools by WHO and PAHO to support health systems

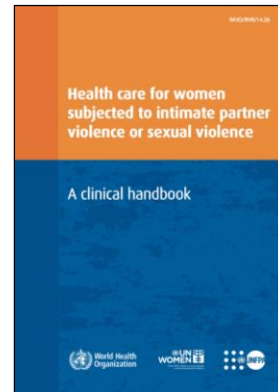
Responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women: WHO clinical and policy guidelines



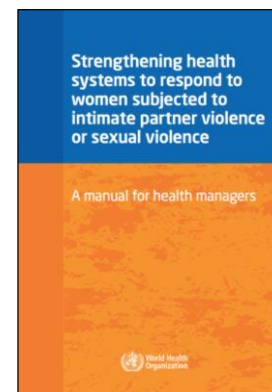
Strengthening the medico-legal response to sexual violence



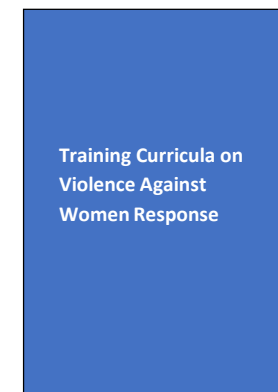
Health care for women subjected to intimate partner violence or sexual violence: A clinical handbook



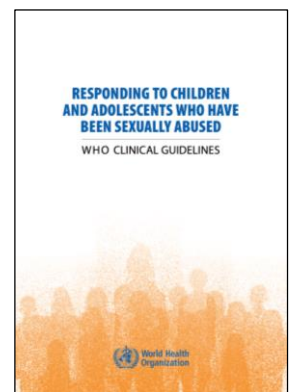
Strengthening health systems to respond to women subjected to intimate partner violence or sexual violence: A manual for health managers



Training Curricula on Violence Against Women Response (forthcoming)



WHO Clinical Guidelines for responding to children and adolescents who have been sexually abused





# Thank you

Bott S, Guedes A, Ruiz-Celis AP, Mendoza JA. Intimate partner violence in the Americas: A systematic review and reanalysis of national prevalence estimates. Rev Panam Salud Publica. 2019;43:e26. <https://doi.org/10.26633/RPSP.2019.26> (forthcoming).



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