

Violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls is a major public health problem globally.

WHO estimates that overall, 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.

Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of all women who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner. In some regions, 38% of women have experienced intimate partner violence. Globally, as many as 38% of all murders of women are committed by intimate partners.

FIGO position on issue:

“Violence Against Women is unacceptable whether domestic, external or in any form. It is a women’s human right issue and FIGO stands against any kind of violence. The UN reports that ‘available data from surveys conducted between 2005 and 2015, in 52 countries, (including only one country from the developed regions) indicating that 21 per cent of girls and women aged between 15 and 49 experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner in the previous 12 months’. This is not acceptable”.

Prof. CN Purandare, President, FIGO

“Violence Against Women is something pertinent to all of us, therefore, a problem of public order, which should be a focus of attention for all health promoters and the Government as a whole. FIGO World Congress in Rio is calling on all nations to take action for women’s rights. To us, FEBRASGO, as an affiliate of FIGO and its representative in Brazil, is fully engaged, offering support and helping to spread the word”.

César Fernandes, President of FEBRASGO, the Brazilian Federation of Associations of Gynecology and Obstetrics

“Our focus is the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres as described in SDG5.2. A meeting of this size is an opportunity to address such controversies, especially if we think that Brazil even needs to review health strategies for women.”

César Fernandes, President of FEBRASGO, the Brazilian Federation of Associations of Gynecology and Obstetrics

FIGO commits to taking the following actions:

The four main recommendations to reduce the levels of violence against women are to:

- make public the seriousness of the problem worldwide and also among us in Brazil, through publicity campaigns in this regard

- encourage shared responsibility within the home and family with effective and constant educational actions over time for a male engagement in this cause
- encourage the full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities in leadership positions at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

During FIGO World Congress 2018 in Rio de Janeiro there will be a number of high profile sessions and activities highlighting this major global issue, including the FIGO and World Health Organization Global Declaration on Violence Against Women and the 'Stop Violence Against Women' walk and speeches from key FIGO spokespeople from Panama, Bolivia, India, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico (on Tuesday 16th October).

About FIGO

FIGO is a professional organisation that brings together obstetrical and gynecological associations from all over the world.

FIGO's vision is that women of the world achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. We lead on global programme activities, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia.

FIGO advocates on a global stage, especially in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pertaining to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and non-communicable diseases (SDG3). We also work to raise the status of women and enable their active participation to achieve their reproductive and sexual rights, including addressing FGM and gender based violence (SDG5).

We also provide education and training for our Member Societies and build capacities of those from low-resource countries through strengthening leadership, good practice and promotion of policy dialogues.

FIGO is in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and a consultative status with the United Nations (UN).