



PUBLIC POLICY TO PROMOTE SAFER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

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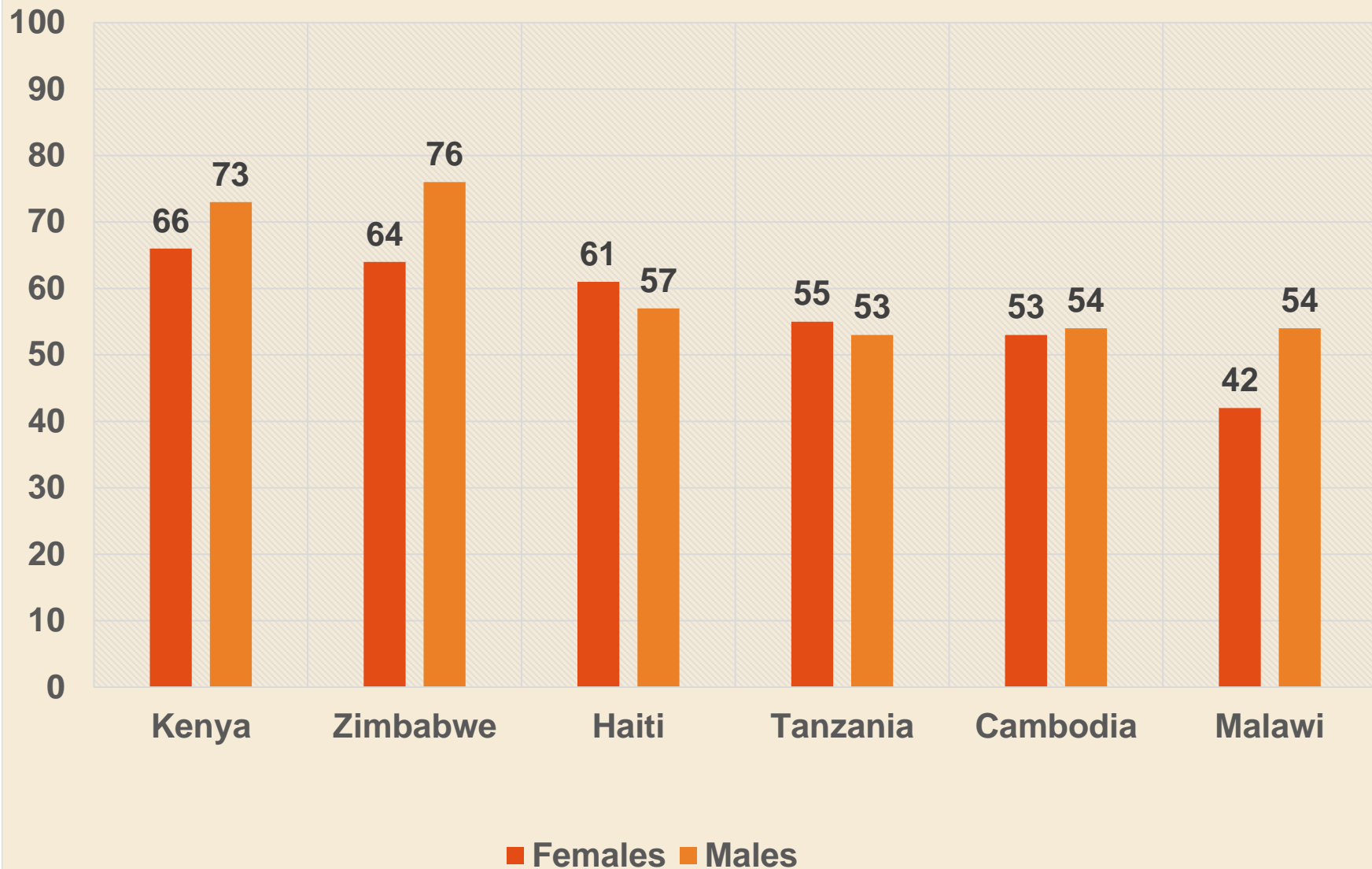


GLOBAL SITUATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

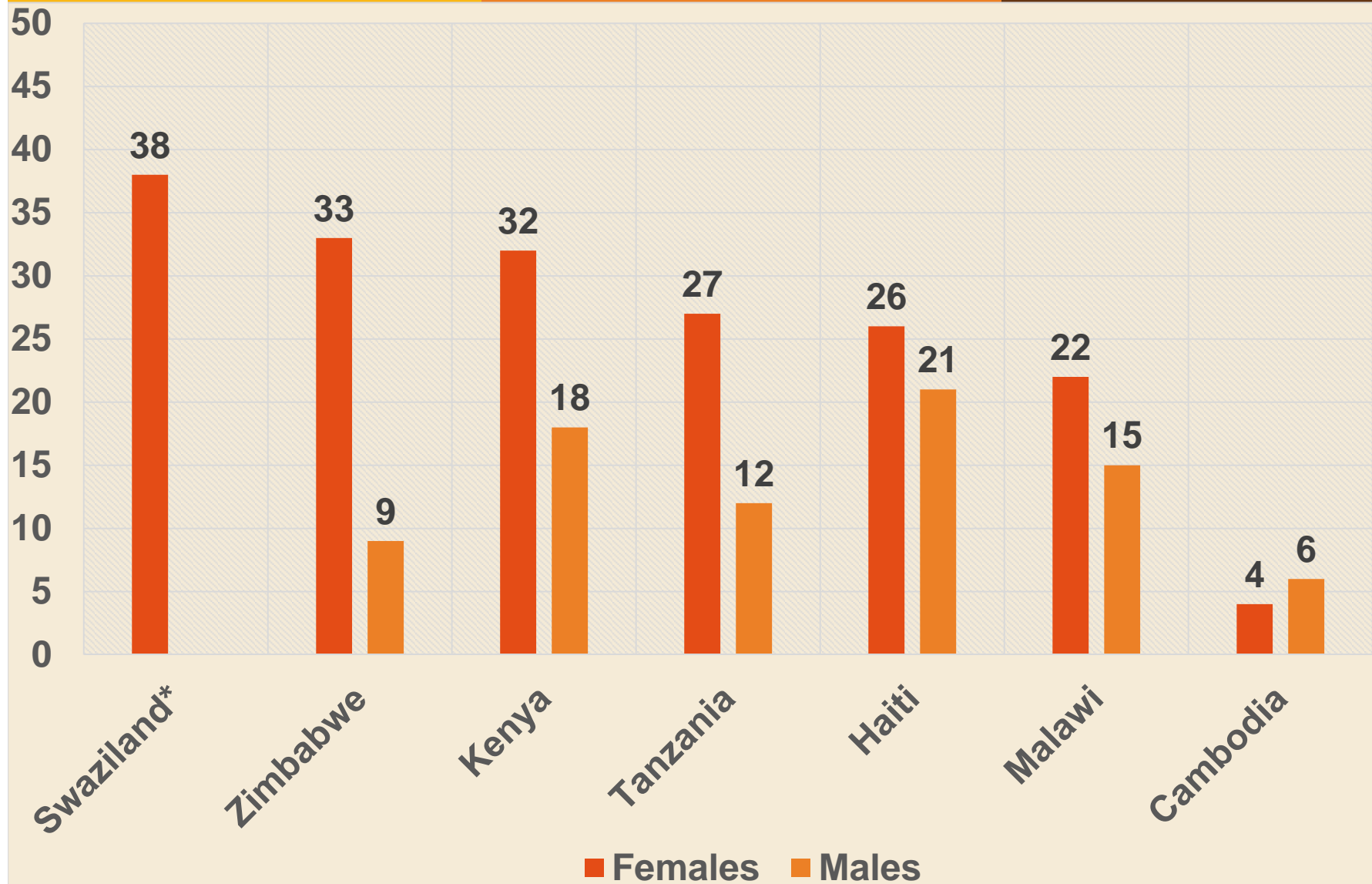
- In 2012 – 95 000 children & adolescents under 20 were homicide victims (20% all homicides that year)
- Half girls 15 – 19 think a husband is sometimes justified in beating his wife
- 1/3 girls 15 – 19 (84m) – victims of Physical Emotional or Sexual abuse from partner
- 120m girls under 20 – forced sexual act at some point
- 3/10 adults believe physical punishment is necessary to raise children

- **6/10 children between 2 & 14 (almost a billion) – experience physical punishment by their caregivers regularly**
- **¼ of girls 15 – 19 (70m) – some physical violence since 15**
- **1/3 students 13 – 15 involved in at least 1 fight in last year**
- **1/3 students 13 – 15 experienced bullying regularly**

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



SEXUAL ABUSE AGAINST CHILDREN



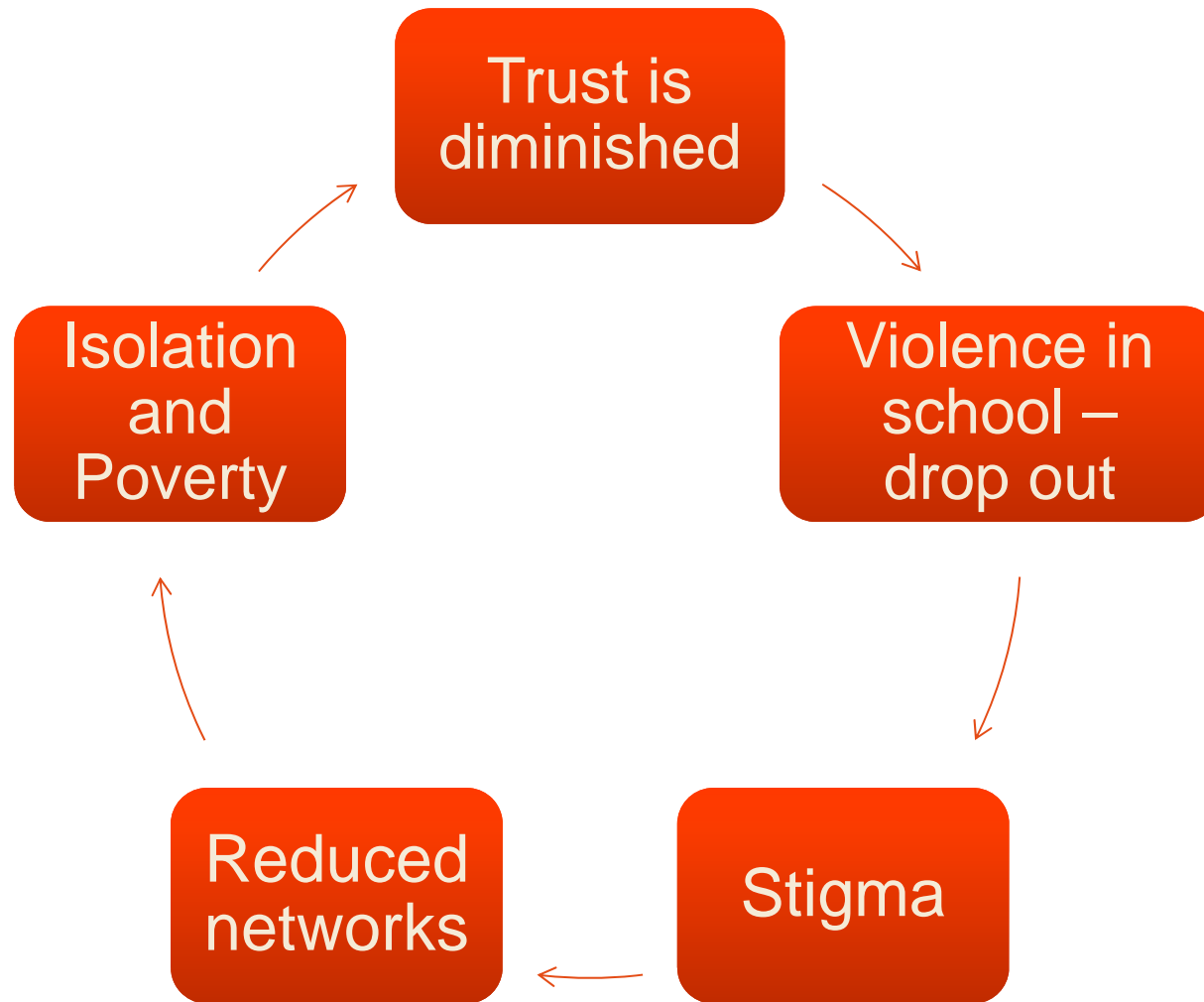
EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- **Emotional violence refers to inappropriate verbal behavior that is damaging to a child's mental health and development**
- **Growing rates of cyber bullying**
- **A study in South Africa found high rates of physical and emotional abuse together**

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

- Much abuse happens at home, at school in the community – where children should be safe
- By people the children know and trust
- Even reports of sexual violence are rarely attended to

SOCIAL ISOLATION



CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

- **REPSSI baseline data from a study in Malawi showed that:**
 - **Boys who had experienced physical violence at home or been bullied were more likely to bully others**
 - **Girls who experienced physical violence at school, or emotional abuse or had been bullied were likely to bully others**
 - **Exposure to emotional abuse for both girls and boys is associated with acceptance of violence towards women**
 - **Girls have accepted GBV and this is associated with emotional and physical violence at home**

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE FOR HEALTH

- **Peace is prerequisite for health –**
- **Violence or lack of peace in the home, school and community is a major factor in poor mental health for children and adolescents –**
 - Contributing to depression, suicide,
 - Risky behaviour – seen in higher rates of STIs; alcohol abuse & smoking
 - Low self esteem – poor service seeking behaviour
 - Increase in criminal behaviour – conflict with the law
 - Leading to deepening cycle of isolation and poverty

PUBLIC POLICY – PROMOTION OF SAFETY

- **We need policy for:**
 - Strong protection systems across the spectrum from promotion of safety / prevention of violence
 - **Formal protection system that links to community systems that engage with families**
 - Promotes Safe homes – Safe schools - Safe communities:
 - Promotes social connectedness, build networks that can prevent violence and work together to address poverty
 - Support children to resist violence and to build relationships that are not based on violence (e.g. the REPSSI Say No to GBV)
 - Build children, adolescent, family and community psychosocial and mental wellbeing, resilience

PUBLIC POLICY – RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE

- **We also need policy that provides for programmes to**
 - Support Boys and Girls who have been victims of violence to overcome the consequences and break out of the cycle
 - Address perpetrators of violence
 - Support and therapy for those with poor mental health

THANK YOU



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