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**FAMILIES IN DEVELOPMENT: ASSESSING
PROGRESS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES**

Parenting education in Latin America and the Caribbean

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INTRODUCTION

Aim: with available data, analyse the extent of corporal punishment at home (CPH) in LAC and provide some insights within the framework of parenting:

- Meanings coming from cultural traditions and belief systems jointly with love and support
- Legal protection
- Programmes: limitations and possibilities

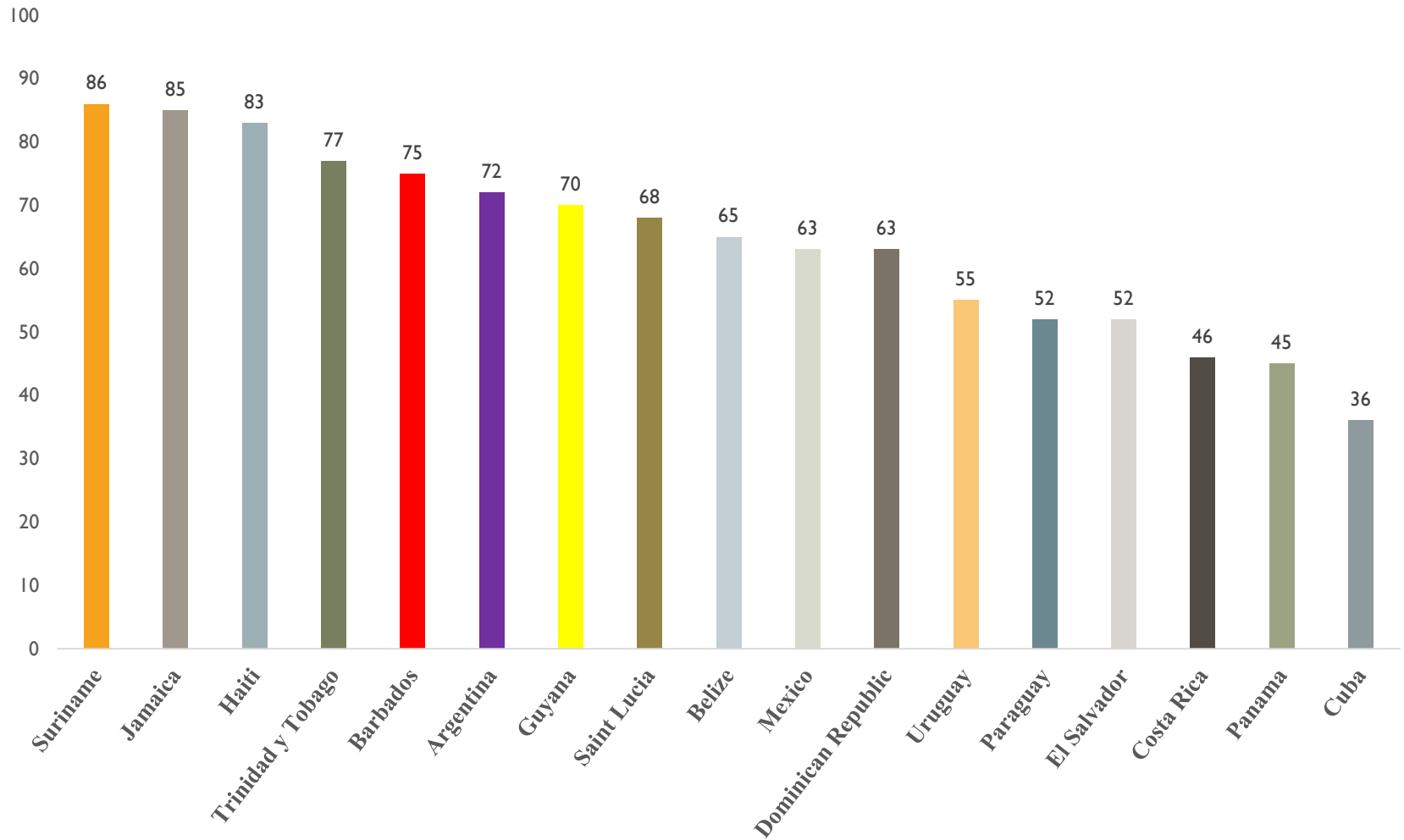
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS DISCIPLINARY METHOD AND PARENTING MODELS

- Available data in LAC is incomplete, insufficient, children of different social sectors under-represented, not disaggregated by sex and age, small sample sizes, composite measures of multiple forms of violence or for any perpetrator and other limits.
- Physical and emotional abuse by caregivers was widespread across all ages in children.
- Physical violence most common against 2-3-year old children (50-60%), and declined as age increased
- Emotional abuse less prevalent amongst 2-3-year old children (40-55%) but remained constant as age increased (Devries, et al., 2019)

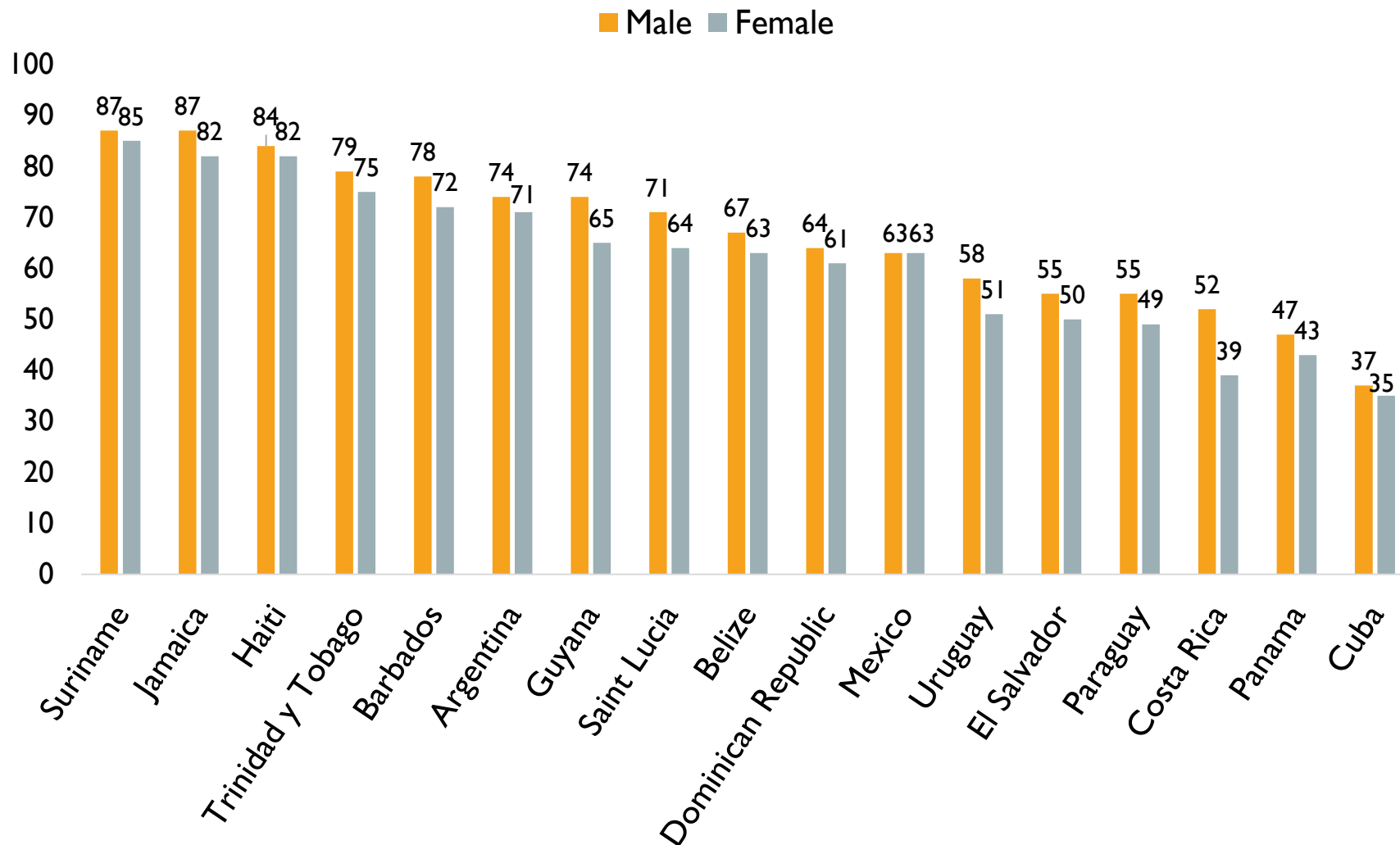
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS DISCIPLINARY METHOD AND PARENTING MODELS

- The most systematic and comparable data comes from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) gathered by Unicef (2019) concerning violent discipline at home
- In LAC, 14 countries report higher levels than 50%, and only 3 report lower levels

Latin America and the Caribbean. Any violent discipline (%) 2012-2018



LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN. ANY VIOLENT DISCIPLINE BY SEX (%) 2012-2018



CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS A DISCIPLINARY METHOD AND PARENTING MODELS

- Violent discipline is a common but concerning practice in LAC countries.
- But strong, positive beliefs and confidence towards parents and family are also common: affectionate and emotional support, communication, comprehension and solidarity, especially with mothers
- Both conceptual dimensions, control and support are present, but is it a problem of unbalance? Are they authoritarian?
- Individualistic (Western societies) vs collectivistic (LAC, Asian societies) views about what works best for a specific society, are they appropriate to assess LAC parenting?
- Collectivistic features of “interdependent-self” generally defined, not informed sufficiently by studies. But the prevalence of the group over the individual is common

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS A DISCIPLINARY METHOD AND PARENTING MODELS

- One Western conceptual tradition identifies authoritative parenting as the best balanced parenting style, which may include "mild" or "moderate" use of aversive methods (e. g., spanking) (Baumrind, 1996).
- The difficulty and ambiguity to determine "mild" or "moderate" leaves room for corporal punishment as a disciplinary method
- Hence, both this Western conceptual tradition and LAC parenting include and allow the use of violent discipline as a disciplinary method.
- The Convention of Children's Rights has addressed this issue by postulating that it is unacceptable. Sweden is an example.

LEGAL PROTECTION AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AT HOME

- One institutional mechanism to tackle violent discipline at home (and other settings) is through explicit amendments in legislations.
- Out of the 199 state parties to CRC only 12% have fully incorporated legal protection from corporal punishment in the home and other settings
- Next table shows LAC countries which have banned it and their year of enactment; which are committed to do so and the years of commitment; the proportion of violent discipline in such countries; and whether they are part of Pathfinder

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES' LEGAL PROTECTION AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN AND PERCENTAGE OF VIOLENT DISCIPLINE

	Fully protect	Committed to protect	Member of Path	Recommendations by HR treaty bodies	Percentage of violent discipline	
Argentina	2016			x	72%	Unicef 2014
Bolivia*	2014			x	48.7%	Bott et al 2012
Brazil	2014		x	x	70.5%	Cardia 2010
Chile		2014-2019		x	44%	Unicef 2015
Colombia*		2019		x	40% 65%	Cuartas 2018; Landsford 2010
Costa Rica	2008			x	46%	Unicef 2014
Cuba		2020		x	36%	Unicef 2014
Dominican Republic		2009-2020		x	63% 44%	Unicef 2014; Uwemedino et al 2017
Ecuador*		2012-2020		x	44%	Unicef et al 2012
El Salvador		2009-2020 No longer considered		x	13%	Ministri of Justice and Public Security 2019
Guatemala		2016-2018		x	52%	Unicef et al 2014
Honduras	2013		x	x	56%	Bott et al 2012
Mexico		2011-2020		x	63%	Unicef, Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica 2016
Nicaragua	2015				34%	Bott et al 2012
Panama		2010-2015		x	45%	Unicef 2019
Paraguay	2016		x		61%	Unicef 2010
Peru	2015		x	x	34%	(parents' use) Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informatica 2011
Uruguay	2007			x	55%	Unicef 2014
Venezuela	2007			x		

LEGAL PROTECTION AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AT HOME

- Ten countries have fully banned it and 9 are committed to prohibited
- Overall, countries which have banned it report the highest proportions of corporal punishment compared to those committed. They need to enforce their legislations
- Civil Codes and legislations in countries committed to ban it still include wording such as: parent's "right to correct" or to "sanction" their children; and allow the use of "moderate" or "reasonable" punishment. Recommendations to expedite or implement changes in legislations, to protect indigenous children and promote positive, alternative non-violent forms of discipline.
- Four countries are part of Pathfinder and have prohibited CPH

PROGRAMMES TO END VIOLENT DISCIPLINE OR BOOST PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Programmes in LAC are scarce, most focused on campaigns and support to women and children, victims of domestic violence
- Programmes focused on health and ECE may contribute to change social norms, attitudes and values and to build protective factors
- Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, Dominican Republic and Cuba have involved families in ECE, and most consider it as criterion of quality standard
- Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Cuba have ECE programmes with a broader view of parenting, as they work on changing behaviours and promote positive parenting and family dynamics, rather than focusing only on health and nutrition

PROGRAMMES TO END VIOLENT DISCIPLINE OR BOOST PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Limits and challenges of ECE programmes:

- The meaning of participation: parents as providing different kind of resources; activities decided by teachers
- They tend to keep a traditional relationship between parents and schools or programmes. Parenting schools or workshops provide information but fail to engage parents
- Parents may delegate responsibilities on the programme and may not want to work closely with it; and schools may also delegate responsibilities on parents such as the economic sustainability of the programme or teaching sensitive issues like sexual education (Unesco, 2004)
- Therefore the relationship may be conflictual and controversial
- Very few impact evaluations have been made, assessments made by the same delivery agency and addresses to the programme itself

RECOMMENDATIONS

- As data is scarce, efforts to build systematic statistics and qualitative information are required in all the region
- Social policy must focus on prevention of violence, rather than focusing only on targeted vulnerable groups. Should promote positive parenting and other preventing measures that address risk factors as they are more effective in the long run and cover whole populations (Higgins, 2020).
- National campaigns and parenting education must be implemented in schools
- Enforcement of legislations and encourage countries to prohibit corporal punishment at home and all settings.
- Implement the INSPIRE violence prevention package in LAC



Thank you;
Gracias;