

# ***Child protection research in the Asia Pacific: Needs and opportunities***

**Michael Dunne**

***Queensland University of Technology , Australia***

***Hue Institute for Community Health Research, Viet Nam***

**Know Violence/UNICEF Meeting**

**Bangkok, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2016**

# A Public Health approach for prevention, intervention and care

Child Maltreatment is best understood from the from a population perspective, and best prevented using system wide interventions

# Reflections on data needs

From Claudia Cappa, CDC/TfG meeting,  
Washington October 2015



## What data/evidence do we have?

- Prevalence data on nature and magnitude of CP violations
- Risk and protective factors
- Evidence on how and why certain violations occur and persist

## What data/evidence do we need?

What *can we achieve?* – not what do we want to achieve nor what our donors want us to achieve?

What are the best strategies to prevent and respond to certain violations?

How do we measure our interventions and our results?

# Planned activities, 2016-2017



# Examples of activities

- In-depth analysis on trends in FGM/C in selected countries
- In-depth situation analysis in support of the 12 CM countries
- Statistical update on Birth Registration
- Review of administrative data
- Global count of children in formal care
- Preparation on new estimates on children in worst forms of child labour, including child soldiers

# Violence against Children

- Development of new survey modules on VAC for inclusion in ongoing data collection efforts
- Development of guidelines (ethical and methodological) on the measurement of VAC
- Regional capacity building workshops on the measurement of VAC

*Under the aegis of the UN Statistical Commission  
with direct involvement of NSOs*

# East Asia and Pacific Region

- Our primary need is for original and better research to create and sustain evidence-informed child protection systems
- Recently I've been fortunate to reflect on the state of CP research in Australia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Pacific nations, Philippines and Viet Nam.
- Some specific needs are:

# Stronger Human Resources

- We should strengthen
- Human resources for CP research
- Human resources for VaC monitoring and program evaluation by governments and NGOs
- Human resources for advocacy and policy development nationally and regionally
- (we will discuss in a later session)

# Better Tools

- The CDC/TfG VaC methods and tools have been used with variable success in this region. Work in Indonesia, Lao PDR and the Philippines underscores the need for broader, more inclusive and culturally appropriate tools and interview methods. Standardised tools yield more valid data in China (Ji, Finkelhor & Dunne, 2013)
- Unfortunately, there is no fully validated and standardised tool available. We have used ACE-IQ in Vietnam (Tran et al, 2015) and the Solomons (Lui et al, 2016); Philippines VaCs adapted CAST items. Optimus China used the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire. To date, no systematic psychometric work to compare tools has been done (Rumble et al, 2016)
- Current critical analysis of global VaCs data by UNICEF Innocenti should be informative

# Concentrate on specific research gaps in our region

- Recent meta-analyses (Fang et al, 2015a, 2015b; Moore et al, 2015; Ji et al, 2013, 2015) have shown the scale of the problem (prevalence, some health effects of VaC). **This has been an important advance.**
- ....but they also illustrate the scale of the problems we face in terms of research quality and breadth.
-

# Ten Research Gaps

- 1. Critical analysis of how to align SDGs and targets to official data sources and research work.
- 2. Research into change in VaC over time
- 3. Evaluations of the effectiveness (or otherwise) of preventive interventions
- 4. Many anti-violence laws exist. There are few studies of barriers to implementation of laws, policies and regulations

## Research Gaps...

- 5. How can we align and combine VaC information from hospitals, justice systems, schools and social and family support agencies?
- 6. What are the training needs of national and local Governments, NGOs, INGOs and universities regarding VaC research?

# Research gaps...

- 7. More comprehensive evidence regarding health and social consequences, and the direct and indirect economic impacts, of VaC
- 8. Specific research into VaC experiences of children living with disabilities
- 9. VaC research in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) is seriously lacking
- 10. There is not enough research into VaC in institutional contexts (detention centres, religious schools and dormitories, and workplaces)

# Seven opportunities for our research network (2017-2019)

- 1. We in this room and our colleagues in our region can help to reduce Violence against Children through research and evaluation. An essential step now is to create an *identity* for our network. We should do this by end of 2016
- 2. Advise governments (such as Indonesia, China, Australia) about future VaCs research currently in planning phase

# Opportunities...

- 3. Conduct fresh international collaborative research (to build on the retrospective secondary analyses). We could make progress in educational settings in a short time (especially in universities).
- 4. We can improve knowledge of change in VaC over time: e.g. Follow up a survey in Selangor state Malaysia, and other regional sites where good cross-sectional surveys have been done

# Opportunities...

- 5. We can build our reputation with major agencies by undertaking a Training Needs Analysis (within the SDG framework) for Govt central offices and services ,NGOs, universities etc.
- 6. Initiate an epidemiological study and a TNA specifically in Pacific Island nations
- 7. Set up a regional scholarship/fellowship program

*One worked example of how we can  
move forward*

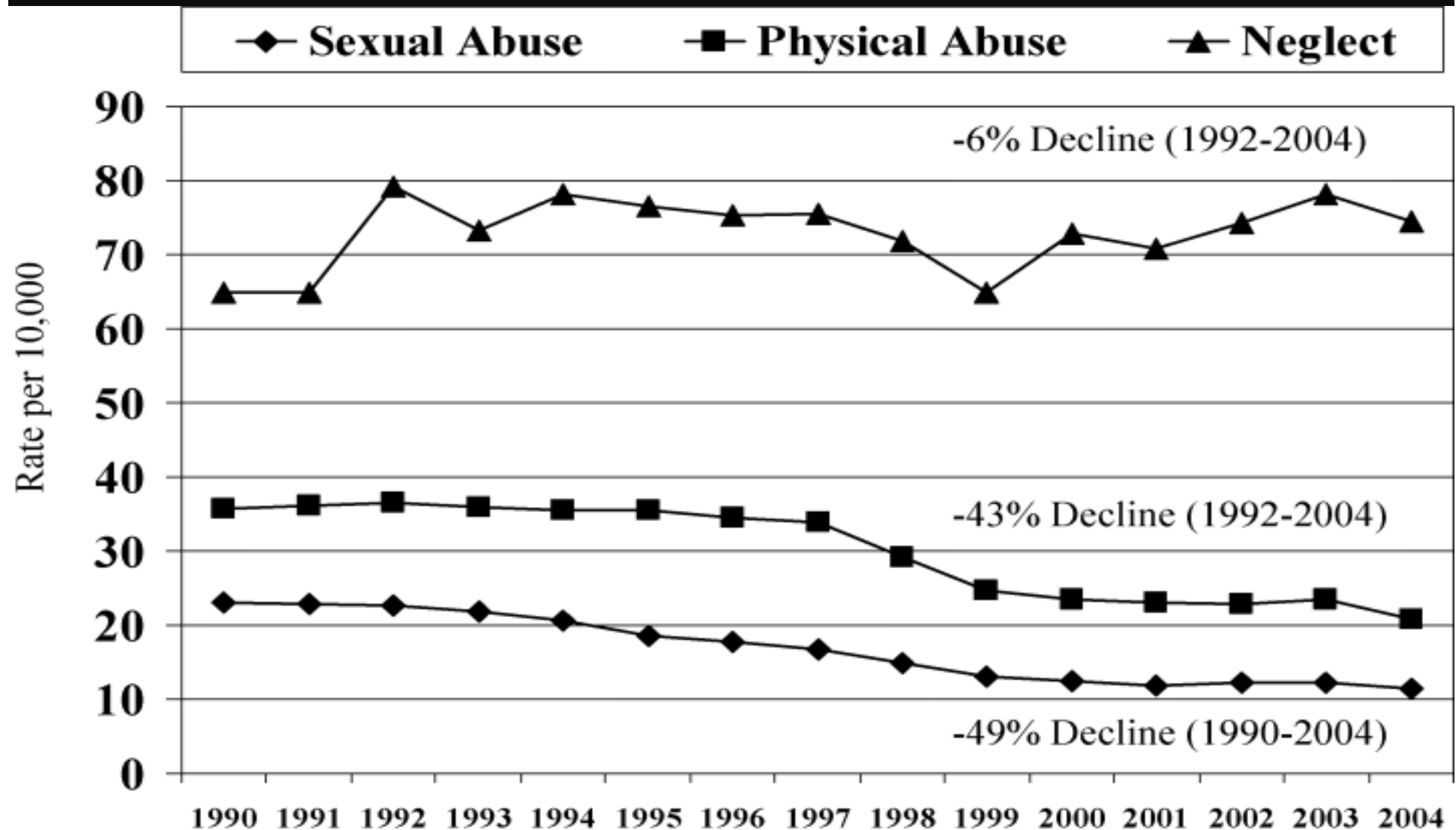
**Research Gap: How is child  
maltreatment changing over time?**

Our network should work together on new studies  
while we also help to develop regional human  
resources and technical capacity

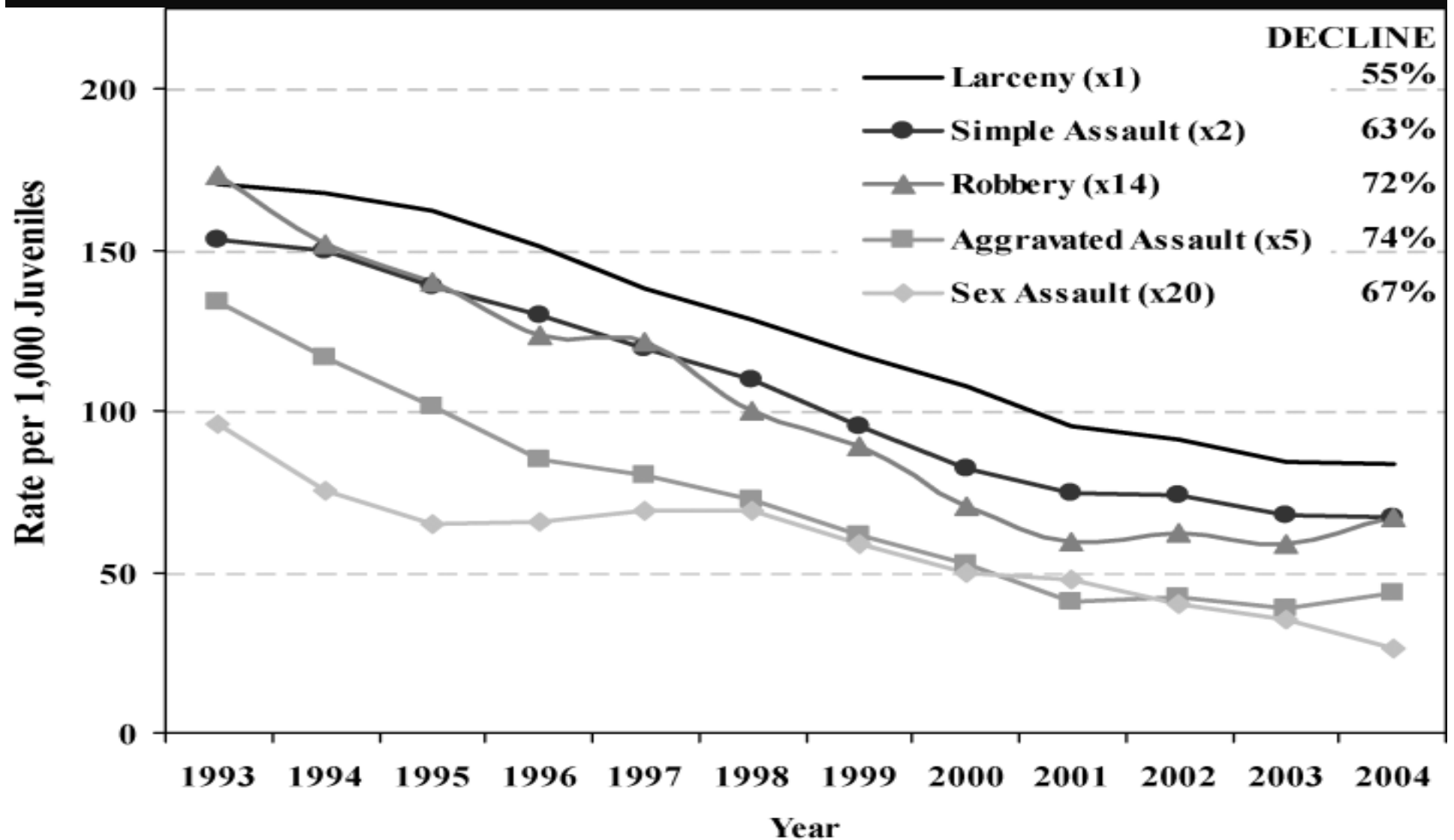
## ***Evidence for time trends in the United States*** (see Finkelhor, 2008, 2014, 2015)

- Analysis of Child Protection Services data on serious child abuse and violent deaths of children in the United States show convincing evidence that children are becoming safer.
- This is occurring across most US states, and the decline is consistent over time since the early 1990s

**Substantiated physical abuse, sexual abuse,  
and neglect, USA (Early data, recent trends are similar)**  
(see Crimes Against Children Research Centre website)



## Juvenile victimisation trends, USA



**How are rates of self-reported child maltreatment changing over time?**

Some patterns internationally

# USA (self-reported victimization)

(WHO meeting, Cape Town, 2011;  
Finkelhor et al, JAMA, 2015)

- USA Study compared self-report interview responses of children aged 10-17 years in 1,000+ randomly selected households across the US (2003 and 2008 and 2014)
- Most children (>60%) had some kind of exposure to victimization (inc. CAN, witness DV and community violence, bullying etc)
- 5 Year and 10 Year Change: Decrease in physical assaults outside home, bullying, peer and sibling assault and contact sexual abuse
- Little or no Change: **Neglect and Physical Abuse by Care-takers**

# Child sexual abuse in Sweden

2003-2009 (Carl-Goran Svedin, 2011)

- C-G Svedin's work includes very substantial studies of child maltreatment in Sweden, In 2009, the sample included 5% of all high school students.
- Any type of unwanted sexual experience in any context ever was reported frequently (10.6% males, 33.3% females)
- Unwanted sexual penetration appears to have decreased) from 2003-2009\*:
- Males: from 5.5% to 3.3%
- Females: 13.5% to 10.1%
- *\*Note: the questions in the two surveys years differed a little, so estimates are not perfectly comparable*

**Generally, evidence in western countries shows declining or stable risk of sexual abuse and other main types of CA&N (except emotional neglect) over the past few decades**

**No published work on change over time in CA&N in all of Asia**

# Recent study in China

(Chen, Dunne, Pouwels, Deliege et al, 2016)

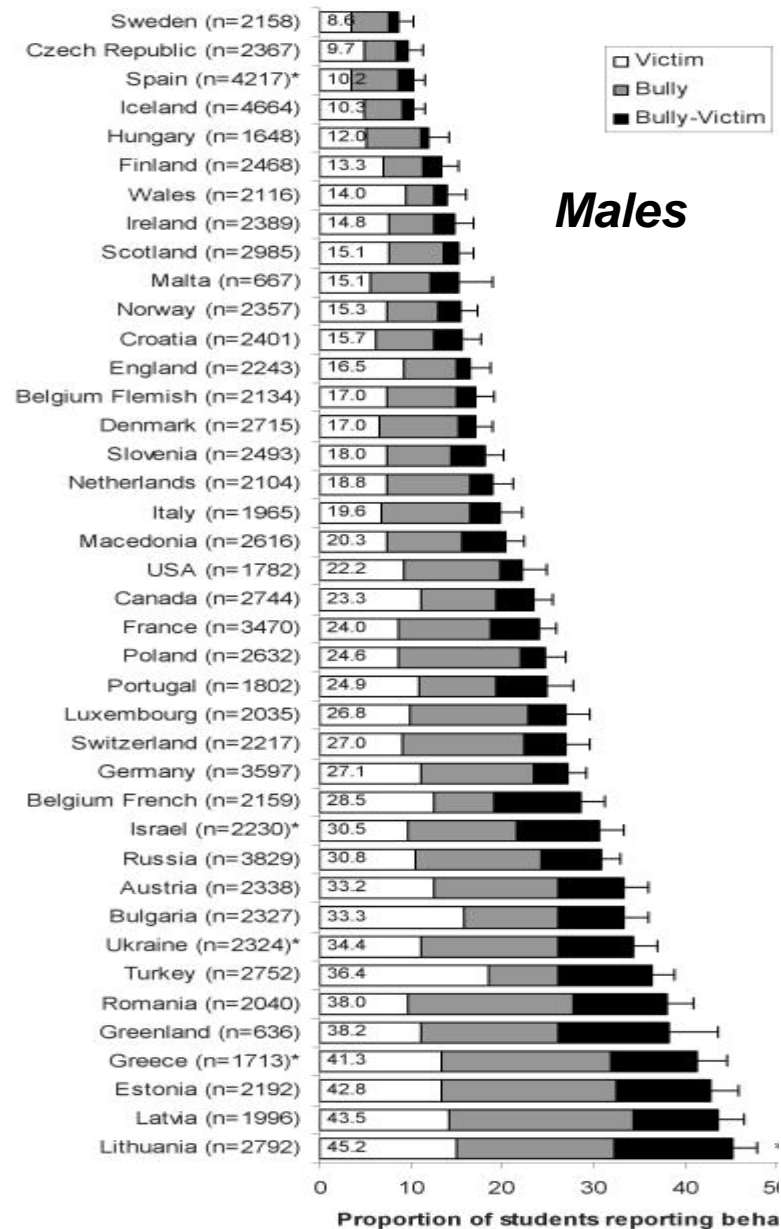
- We compared surveys of college students conducted in 2003 in 4 provinces (Chen, Dunne and Han, 2004) and 3 provinces in 2015. Focus was on child sexual abuse experiences before age of 16 years.
- This first Asian study of community based samples of young people shows that, over time, risk of physical contact CSA was stable among girls (~9%).
- Among boys, the risk *increased from ~5% to above 10%*
- There was no significant difference between genders in risk for any CSA and physical contact CSA, although prevalence of some specific acts differed. These China prevalence estimates are more similar to South East Asian data in this respect.

# **Bullying of young people in schools**

# Bullying worldwide

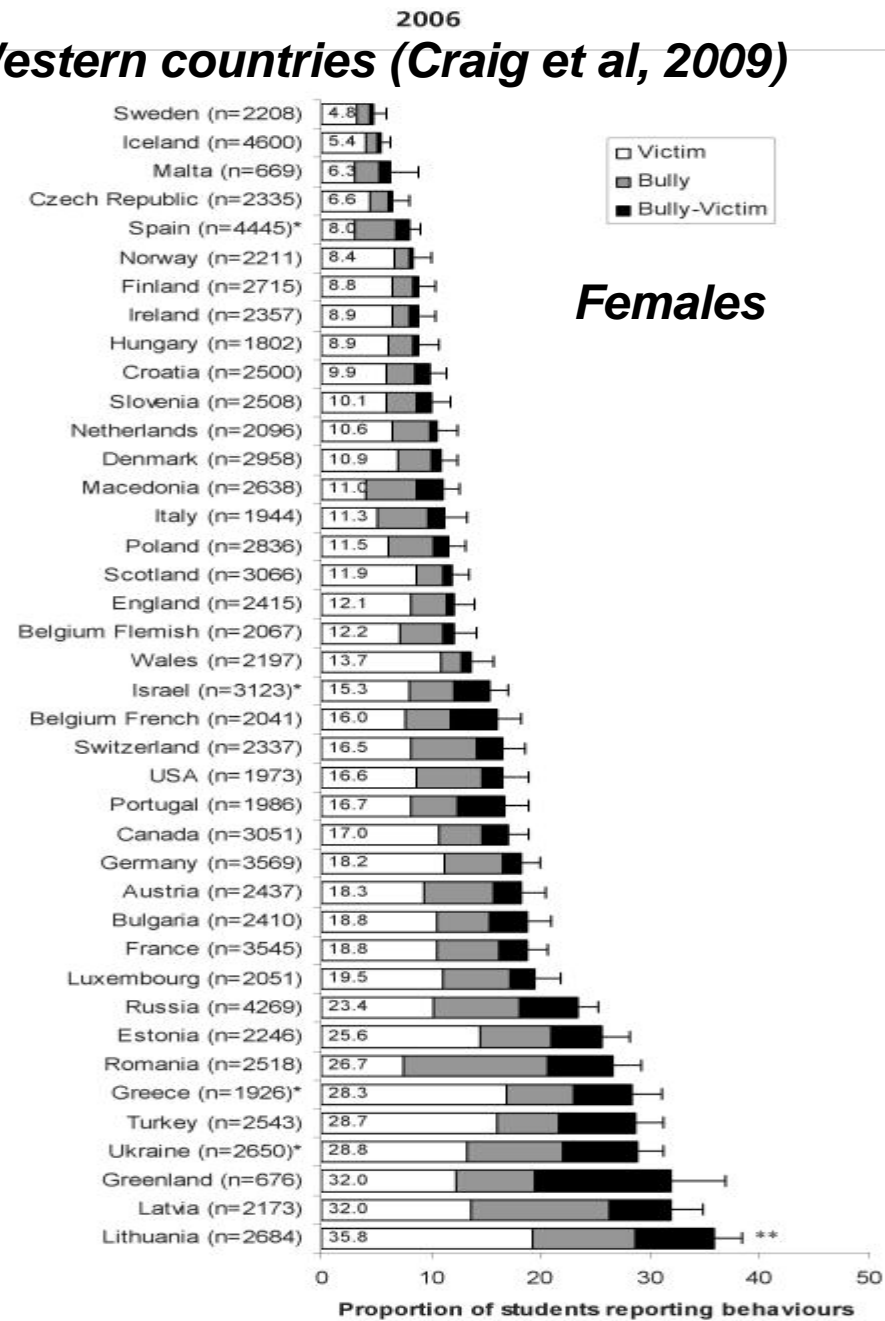
- Bullying – particularly in the context of school - has been extensively studied for several decades in many parts of the world
- There is remarkable variation in estimates of risk of bullying across (mainly) western countries sampled with the same measures at about the same times
- Patterns in East Asia (in types of bullying) are similar to global trends (Sittichai and Smith, 2015; Dunne et al, 2016)

# 2006 Bullying of 11-15 yo children in 40 Western countries (Craig et al, 2009)



\* Non-weighted n

\*\*95 % confidence interval surrounding overall proportion in a design effect of 1.4



\* Non-weighted n

\*\*95 % confidence interval surrounding overall proportion inflated by a design effect of 1.4

# How is risk of bullying among adolescents changing over time?

Bullying is an important indicator of the underlying levels of interpersonal conflict in societies.

*On October 12 2016, UNSRSG Marta Santos Pais will present the global report on Bullying at the UN GA*

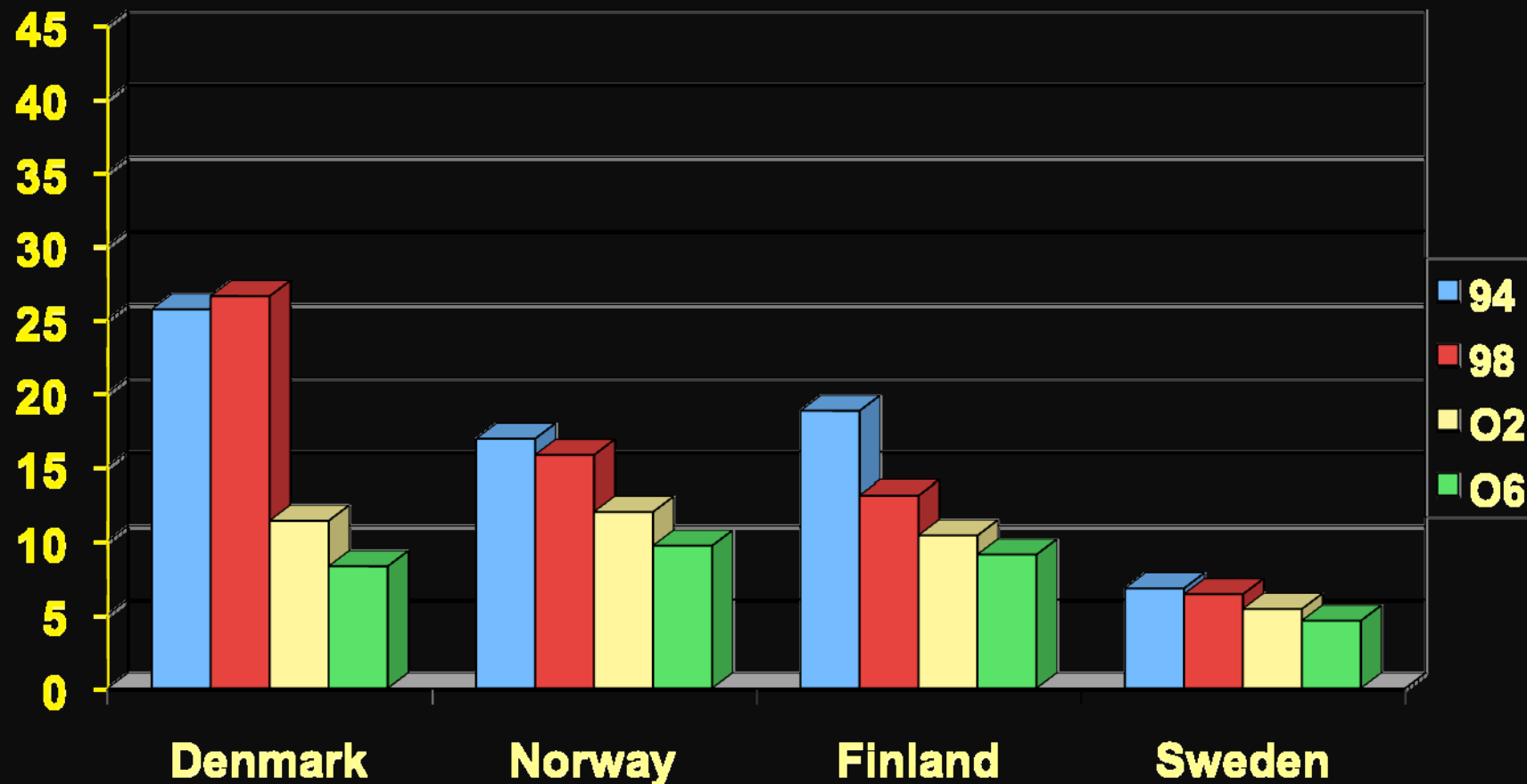
# Bullying in Europe & North America

(Molcho et al, 2009)

- **Significant decreases** in chronic victimization (3 or more times in one school term) were reported in 21 countries. No significant changes were reported in 5–8 countries
- Risk reduced to **less than half** in 10 countries, for both males and females
- Overall, the percentage of children who reported that ***they bullied others*** also decreased over the years, from **19.3%** in 1993/94, through **16.1%** in 1997/98 and **11.1%** in 2001/02, to **10.6%** in 2005/06.

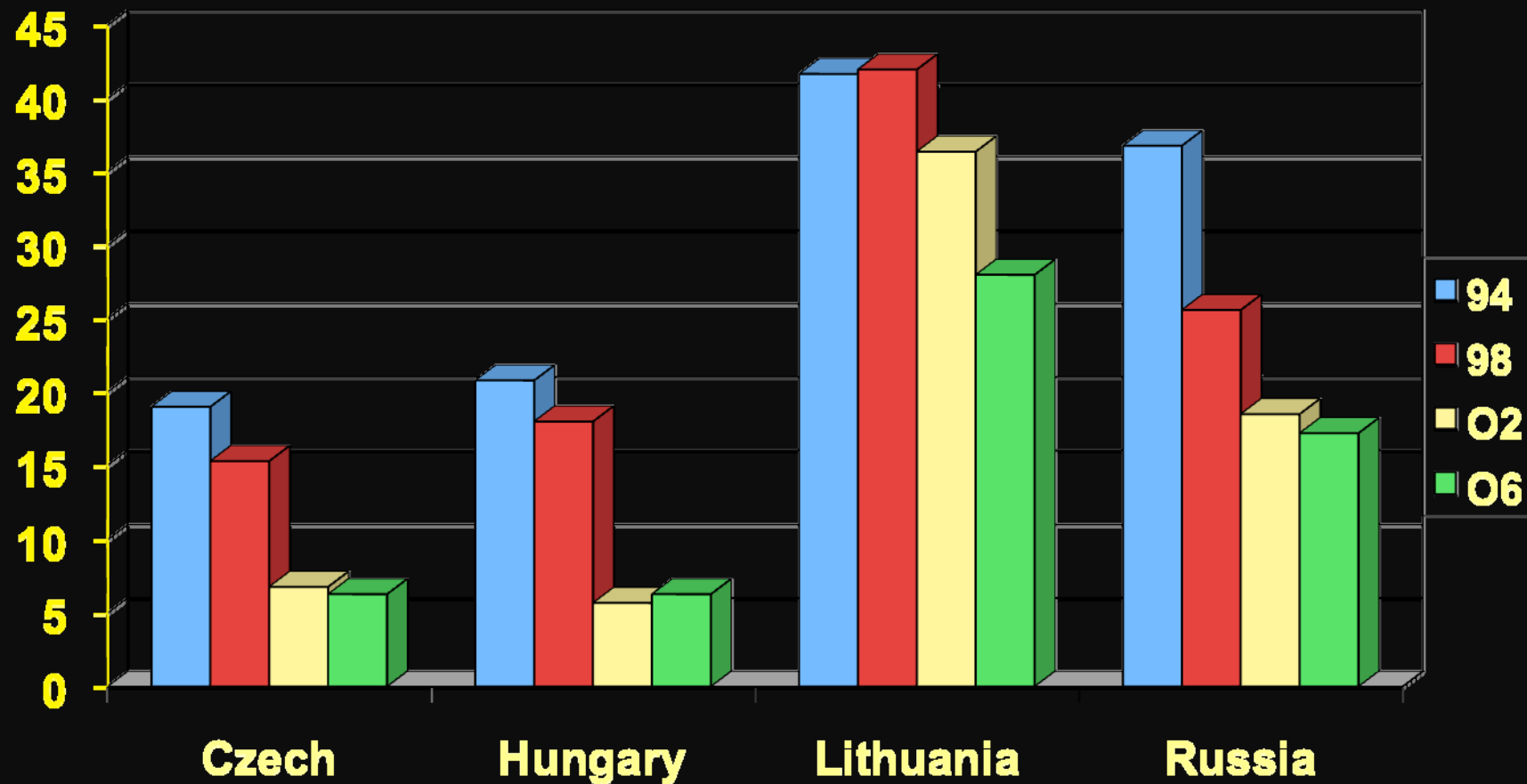
# Chronic bullying of adolescent males in Europe

(from Molcho et al, 2009)

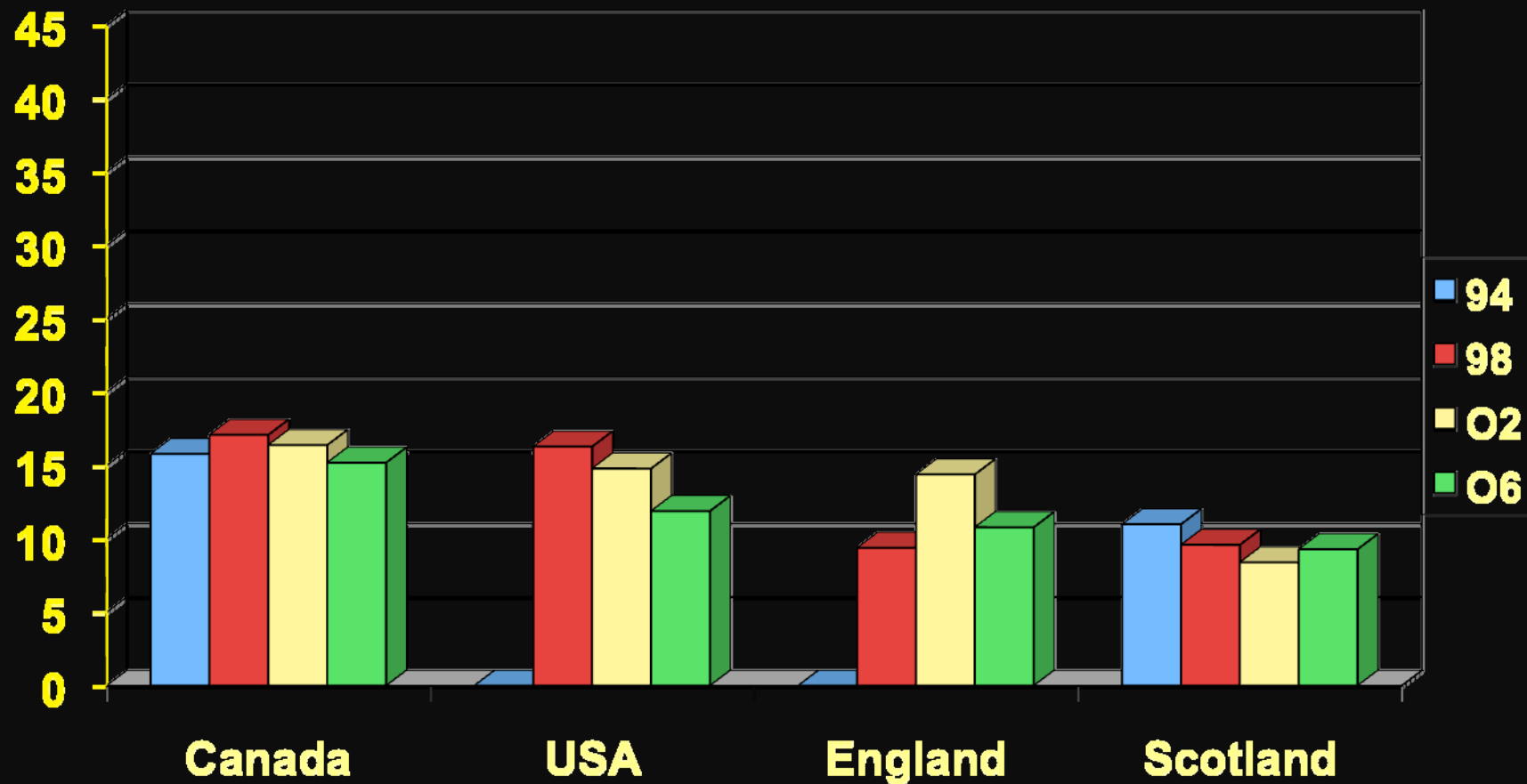


# Chronic bullying of adolescent males in Europe

(from Molcho et al, 2009)



## Chronic bullying of adolescent males in UK and North America (from Molcho et al, 2009)



## ***In South East Asia, we do not know if bullying risk is changing over time***

- Up to 2015, there had been no longitudinal studies in SE Asia (Sittichai and Smith, 2015)
- Recent study in Vietnam: We have completed the first study to use a short-term longitudinal design in SE Asia bullying research. Re-interviewed students across one academic year (Le, Nguyen, Campbell, Gatton and Dunne, 2016; Dunne, Pham, Le and Sun, 2016).
- Found high bullying involvement; very high degree of change in bullying roles over time

# Stability and change in bullying involvement over time (Le et al, 2016)

Time 2 Time 1	Not involved	Victims only	Bullies only	Bully-victims	N (%)
Not involved	554	69	30	35	688 (48.3)
Victims only	174	99	10	41	324 (22.7)
Bullies	56	11	8	24	99 (7)

## Key points:

- 38.9% (554) not involved in any form of bullying across T1&T2
- 61.1% (870) involved in at least one form of bullying across T1&T2
  - 26.0 % (228) remained stable across T1&T2
  - 73.8% (642) changed their bullying roles over time

## WC Collaborate to promote research in educational settings

- There is a strong need for more data and we already have good tools and survey protocols.
- The research should be informed directly by the perspectives of children (e.g. Indonesia study)
- Our network can be strengthened in a relatively short period of time if we do innovative research in places where most children spend much of their time.
- By publishing together from this and other settings, we prove the concept of our Network