

CANCER IN INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

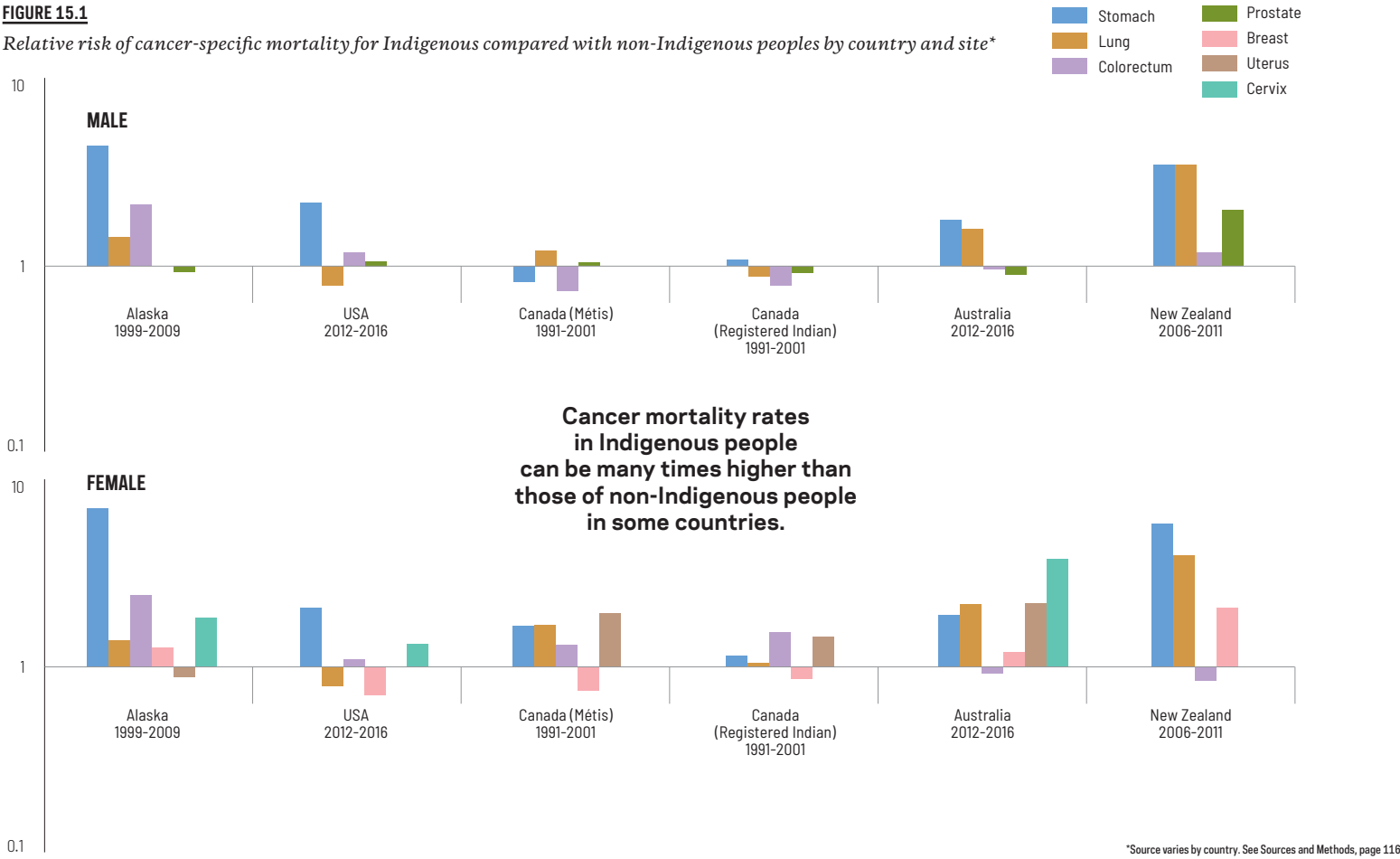
Higher prevalence of risk factors, poor outcomes, and under-reporting are among the cancer control challenges for Indigenous peoples.

There are more than 370 million Indigenous people spanning at least 70 countries worldwide. Indigenous peoples generally face disadvantage and have worse health than non-Indigenous people. Data related to cancer in these populations tend to be absent or of poor quality making many Indigenous peoples statistically invisible, with the majority of data that exist coming from a few high-income countries. There is under-reporting of cancer incidence and mortality in many jurisdictions. Indigenous peoples often have higher incidence and mortality rates of cancers related to exposure to tobacco, alcohol, poor diet, physical inactivity, high BMI, and diabetes mellitus than non-Indigenous people living in the same countries, although cancer patterns vary from country to country. **FIGURE 15.1** Cancer-causing infections such as *Helicobacter pylori* and hepatitis B virus, which are related to poverty and overcrowding, tend to be higher in Indigenous populations, particularly in regions where vaccination for hepatitis B is not occurring. **FIGURE 15.2** Further, survival after diagnosis is lower, and its improvement is slower in Indigenous populations, suggesting Indigenous

populations have not benefited equally from advances in early detection and treatment. Comprehensive, sustained efforts centered around indigenous leadership and participation are needed to improve cancer outcomes for Indigenous peoples. Cancer control planning by and for Indigenous peoples is progressing in some jurisdictions.

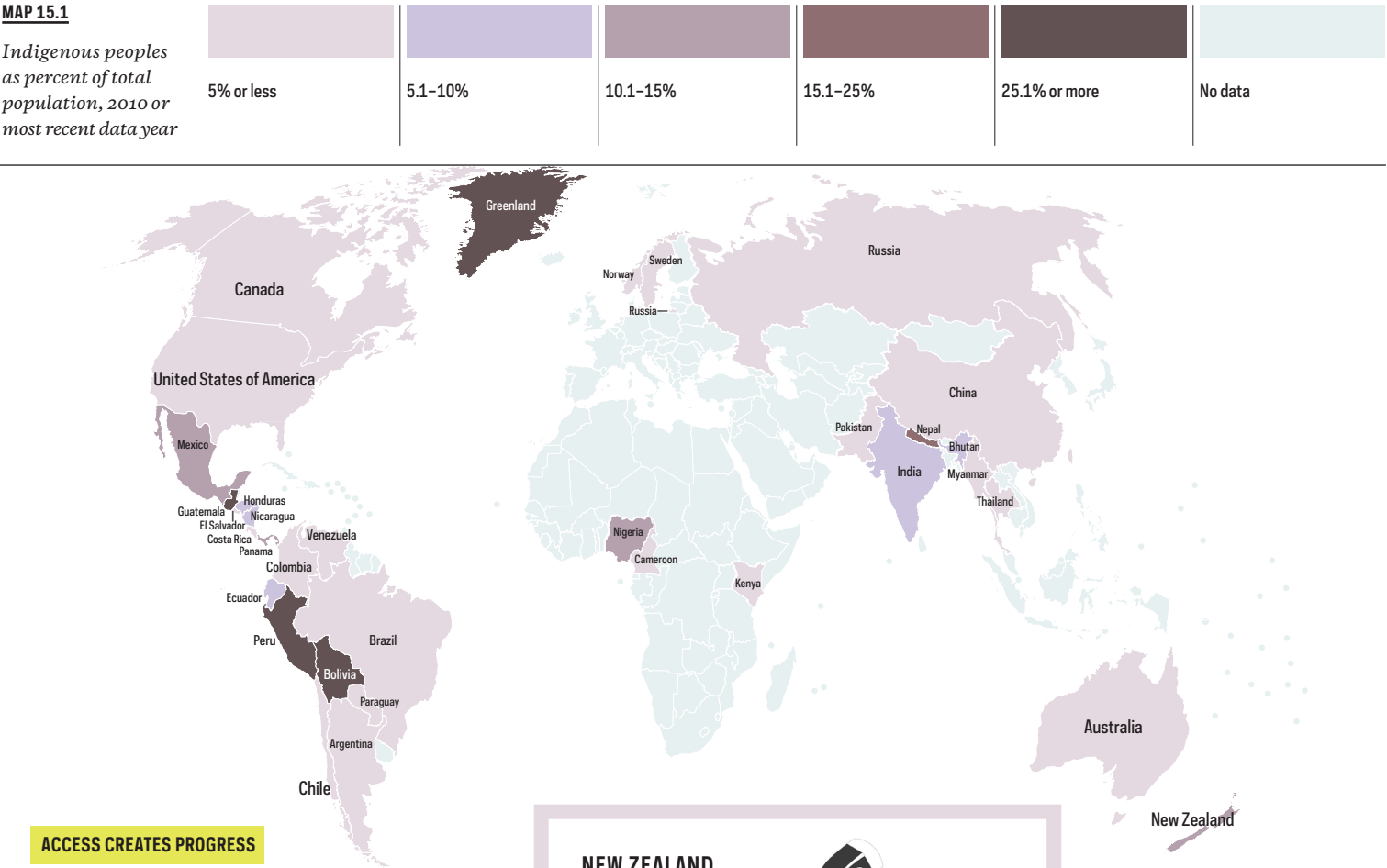
THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION HAS CALLED FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CERVICAL CANCER. While disease burden is highest in lower- and middle-income countries, significant disparities exist in high-income countries. In Australia, cervical cancer incidence in Indigenous women is double that of non-Indigenous women, with mortality rates over three times higher. Strategies and actions needed to accelerate cervical cancer elimination for Indigenous women globally must be led by Indigenous women and form part of the draft global strategy tabled at the 2020 World Health Assembly.

FIGURE 15.1
Relative risk of cancer-specific mortality for Indigenous compared with non-Indigenous peoples by country and site*



MAP 15.1

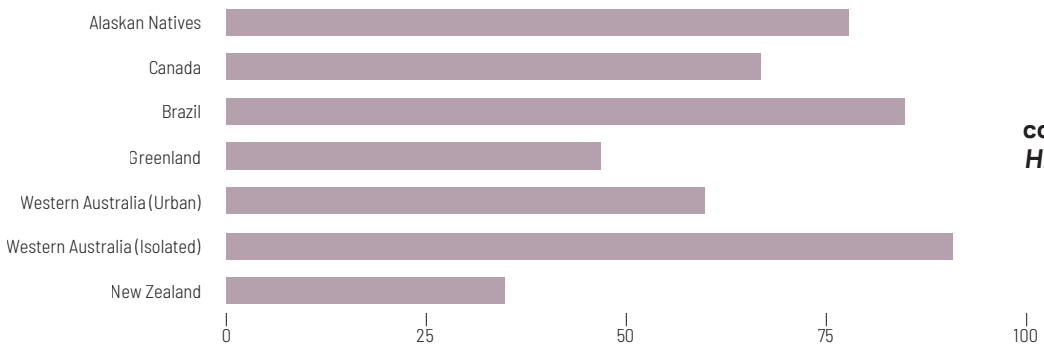
Indigenous peoples as percent of total population, 2010 or most recent data year



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New Zealand is the only country in the world that routinely records and reports national-level cancer statistics for its Indigenous population.

FIGURE 15.2
Prevalence (%) of *H. pylori* among Indigenous peoples, select studies*



Indigenous peoples in many countries have a high prevalence of *H. pylori*, an infection which causes stomach cancer.