

International Day of the Girl Child UNICEF Fact Sheet

Physical Violence

- Almost one quarter of girls aged 15 to 19 worldwide (almost 70 million) report being victims of some form of **physical violence**.
- Nearly two out of three younger adolescent girls aged 10 to 14 are subjected to **corporal punishment** on a regular basis. Adolescent girls continue to experience corporal punishment by parents into late adolescence, and at the same time become prone to acts of physical aggression by intimate partners.
- One in three girls between the ages of 13 and 15 worldwide experience **bullying** on a regular basis.

Sexual Violence

- Around 120 million girls under the age of 20 worldwide (about 1 in 10) have experienced forced intercourse or other forced sexual acts.
- One in 3 ever-married adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 (84 million) have been victims of emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by their husbands or partners.

Perceptions of Violence

- Globally, nearly half (44 per cent) of adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 **think a husband or partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife or partner** under certain circumstances – if the wife argues with her husband, goes out without telling him, neglects the children, refuses sex or burns the food.
- In 28 of 60 countries with data on both sexes, **a larger proportion of girls than boys believe that wife-beating is sometimes justified**; in 14 of these countries, the gap between the two sexes exceeds 10 percentage points.
- Data suggest that in some countries, as many as seven in 10 girls aged 15 to 19 who had been **victims of physical and/or sexual abuse had never sought help**: many said they did not think it was abuse or did not see it as a problem.

Early Marriage

- Worldwide, more than **700 million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday**. More than one in three (about 250 million) entered into union before age 15.
- The **highest rates of child marriage are found in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa**. Almost half of all child brides worldwide live in South Asia; 1 in 3 are in India.

- There is a substantial gap in the prevalence of child marriage between the poorest and richest. **Females in the poorest quintile are 2.5 times more likely to marry in childhood** than those living in the wealthiest quintile.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

- Approximately **28 million adolescent girls alive today have undergone female genital mutilation or cutting** in the 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East where it is most common.
- Available data reveal **FGM/C often persists in spite of individual preferences to stop it**. In most countries where FGM/C is concentrated (21 out of 29), the majority of girls think it should end.
- If there is no reduction in FGM/C between now and 2050, the number of girls cut each year will grow from 3.6 million in 2013 to 6.6 million in 2050.