

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 GMT 10 OCTOBER 2024



Sexual violence against children

Preview of new global and regional estimates

Data and Analytics Section, UNICEF

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Definitions of sexual violence

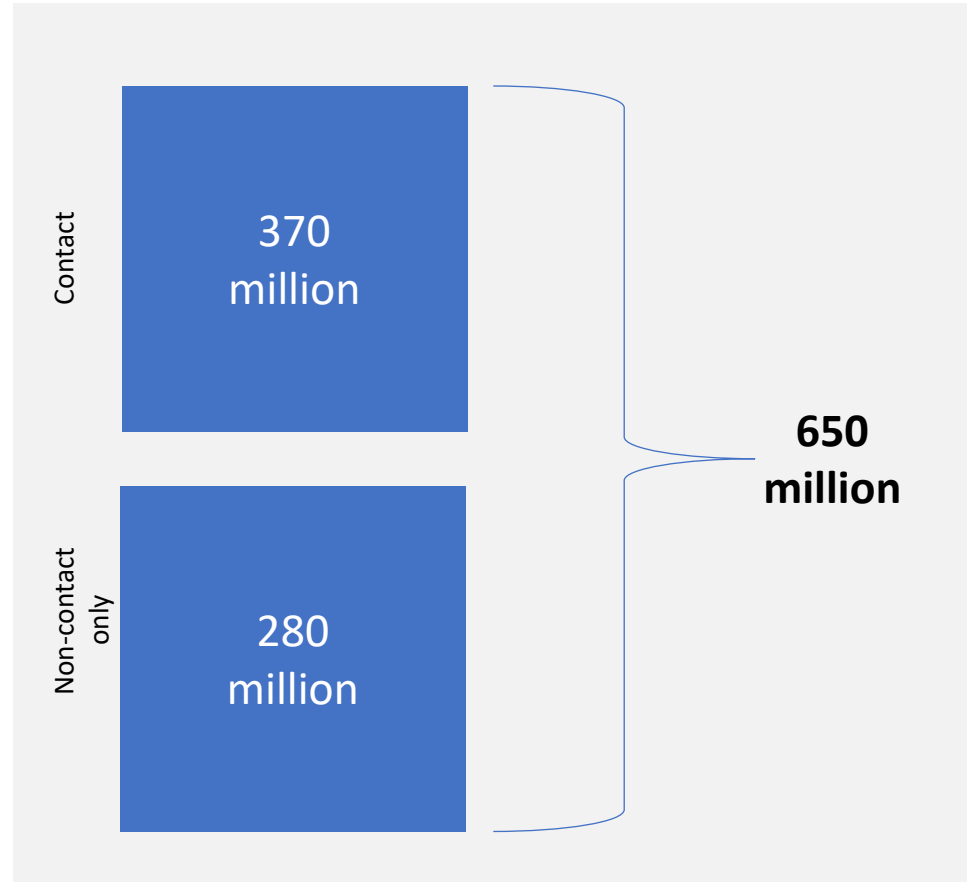
- Sexual violence against a child refers to *“Any deliberate, unwanted and non-essential act of a sexual nature, either completed or attempted, that is perpetrated against a child, including for exploitative purposes, and that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, pain or psychological suffering.”*¹
- For the purposes of this estimation work, sexual violence was broadly categorized into two types – contact sexual violence (including rape and sexual assault) and non-contact sexual violence (online or verbal abuse, for example) –aligned with the categories outlined in the International Classification of Violence against Children

¹ United Nations Children’s Fund, *International Classification of Violence against Children*, UNICEF, New York, 2023.

Globally, 650 million (or 1 in 5) girls and women alive today have been subjected to sexual violence as children

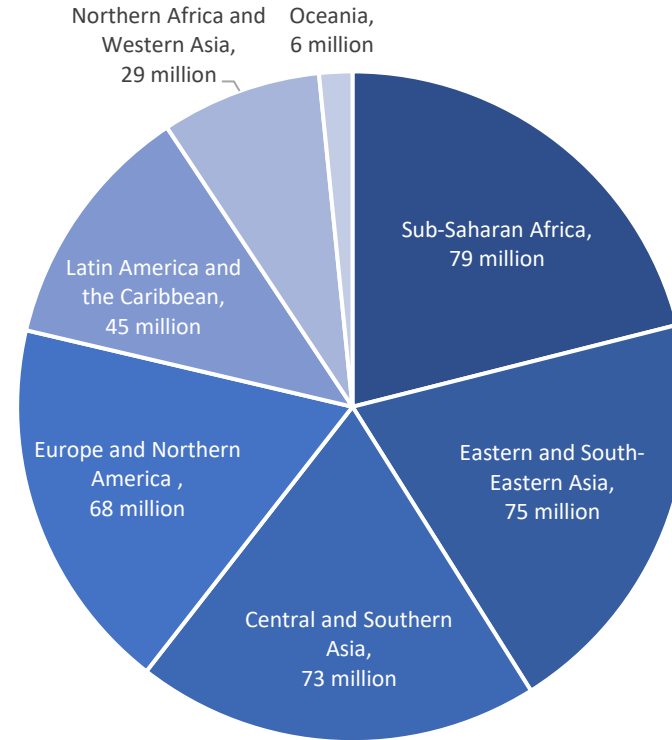
This includes more than 370 million (or 1 in 8) who have experienced rape or sexual assault in childhood

Number of girls and women of all ages who experienced sexual violence before age 18



The largest number of rape and sexual assault victims is found in the most populous regions

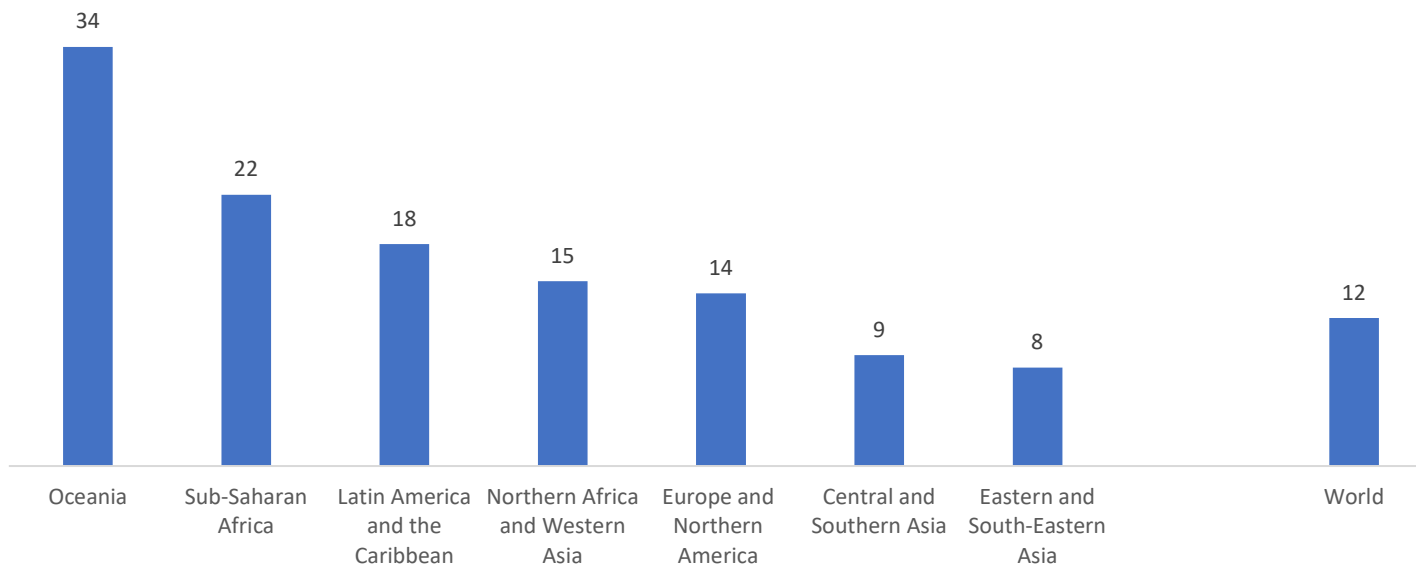
Sexual violence against children is pervasive, cutting across geographic borders, economic contexts and cultural boundaries. But risks are not borne equally



Number of girls and women of all ages who experienced contact sexual violence before age 18, by SDG region

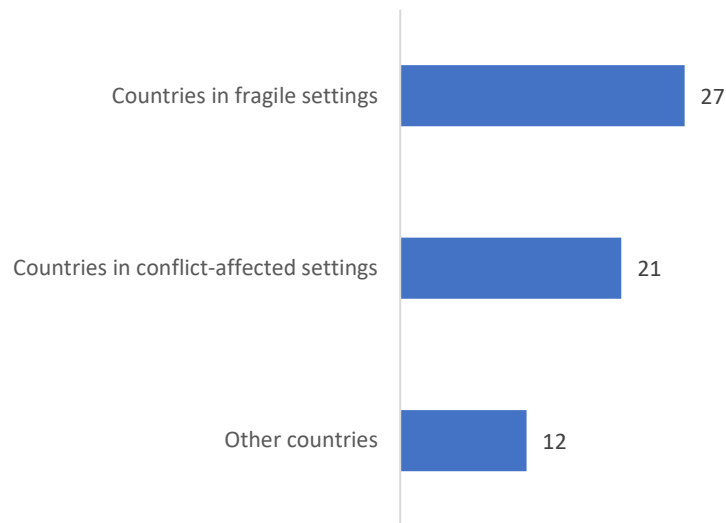
In Oceania, 1 in 3 women report experiences of rape and sexual assault in childhood

Percentage of women aged 18 and older who experienced contact sexual violence before age 18, by SDG region



In fragile settings, the prevalence of rape and sexual assault in childhood is over two times higher than the global average

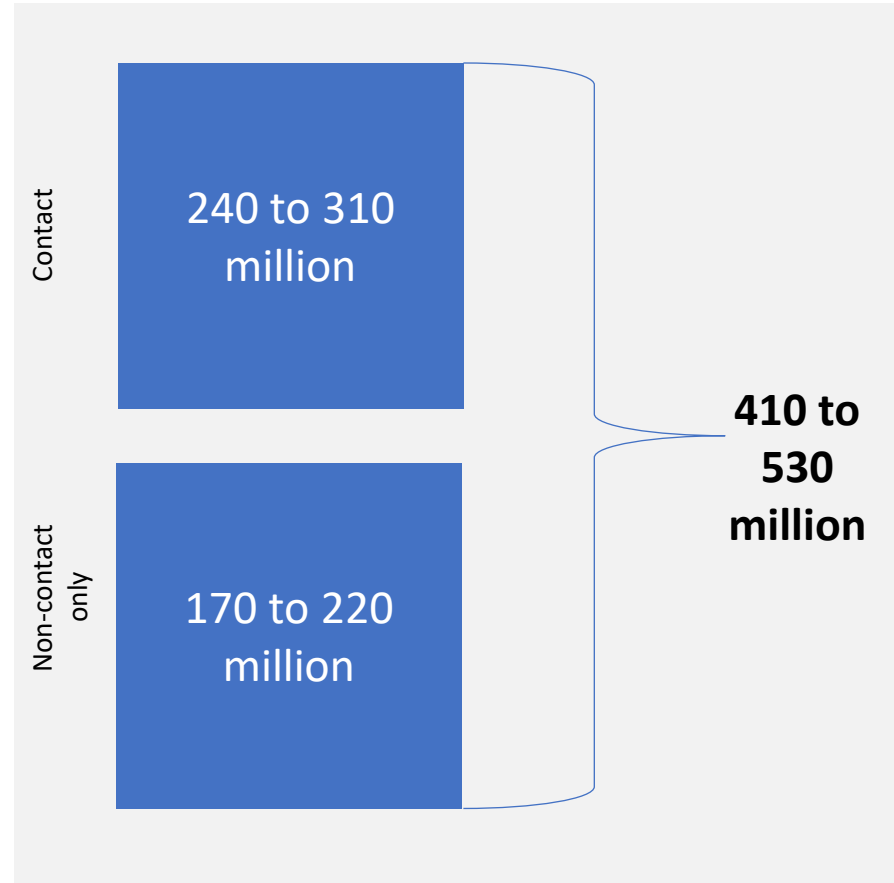
Percentage of women aged 18 and older who experienced contact sexual violence before age 18, by fragility classification



Notes: According to the Revised Classification of Fragility and Conflict Situations for World Bank Group Engagement, fragile countries are defined as those with one or more of the following: (a) the weakest institutional and policy environment (as measured using a set of 16 criteria grouped into four clusters: economic management, structural policies, policies for social inclusion and equity, and public sector management and institutions), (b) the presence of a UN peacekeeping operation, since this reflects a decision by the international community that a significant investment is needed to maintain peace and stability, or (c) flight across borders of 2,000 or more people (per 100,000 population), who are internationally regarded as refugees in need of international protection, since this signals a major political or security crisis. For more details, see: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/harmonized-list-of-fragile-situations>. Population coverage is above 50 per cent for both conflict-affected countries and those in fragile settings.

Globally, between 410 and 530 million (or around 1 in 7) boys and men alive today have been subjected to sexual violence as children

This includes 240 to 310 million (or around 1 in 11) who have experienced rape or sexual assault during childhood



Number of boys and men of all ages who experienced sexual violence before age 18

Data coverage for estimates

- Estimates are based on a subset of countries with available data, which varies across the indicators
- The most comprehensive data coverage is on estimates of contact sexual violence against girls which are derived from nationally representative surveys conducted between 2010 and 2022 in 120 countries and areas, covering 81% of the global female population
 - Population coverage is above 70% for all SDG regions, except Northern Africa and Western Asia and Northern Africa, where the coverage was just below 50%
- While coverage is high globally and in most regions, the quality of the underlying data is not uniform. Most data sources that informed the estimation required some level of re-analysis or adjustment
- As a result of data gaps, limited coverage and the varying scope and quality of the available information, global estimates of sexual violence against boys and of non-contact sexual violence were informed by a broader range of sources and applied some indirect methods. The more restricted data availability for these indicators thus allowed only for the estimation of global figures