

The Facts:

Violence against Women & Millennium Development Goals

Violence against women and girls is a global pandemic of alarming proportions, deeply rooted in gender inequality and discrimination. No woman or girl is entirely free of its risks or reach. It takes many forms and occurs in many places — domestic violence in the home; sexual abuse of girls in schools; sexual harassment at work and in public spaces; abuse during pregnancy; and rape in cities and in rural areas, in refugee camps and as a tactic of war. It includes harmful practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting, child and forced marriage, so-called 'honour' killings, acid attacks and dowry-related abuse; as well as newer forms, such as cyber-bullying and e-stalking via the internet and mobile phones. This fact sheet documents the scale of the pandemic: the sources for the data are available online at www.unifem.org.¹

The Global Pandemic

Between 15 and 76 percent of women are targeted for physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, according to the available country data. Most of this violence takes place within intimate relationships, with many women (ranging from 9 to 70 percent) reporting their husbands or partners as the perpetrator.ⁱ

Femicide — the murder of women because they are women—is only the tip of the iceberg

In Guatemala, two women are murdered, on average, each day.ⁱⁱ In India, 8,093 cases of dowry-related death were reported in 2007; an unknown number of murders of women and young girls were falsely labeled 'suicides' or 'accidents'.ⁱⁱⁱ In Australia, Canada, Israel, South Africa and the United States, between 40 and 70 percent of female murder victims were killed by their intimate partners.^{iv} In the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, 66 percent of murders of women were committed by husbands, boyfriends or other family members.^v

Young women are at high risk of violent assault

Worldwide, up to 50 percent of sexual assaults are committed against girls under 16.^{vi} An estimated 150 million girls under the age of 18 suffered some form of sexual violence in 2002 alone.^{vii} The first sexual experience of some 30 percent of women was forced. The percentage is even higher among those who were under 15 at the time of their sexual initiation, with up to 45 percent reporting that the experience was forced. ^{viii}

Millions of girls around the world are subjected to harmful practices

Approximately 100 to 140 million girls and women in the world have experienced female genital mutilation/cutting, with more than 3 million girls in Africa annually at risk of the practice.^{ix}

Over 60 million girls worldwide are child brides, married before the age of 18, primarily in South Asia (31.3 million) and sub-Saharan Africa (14.1 million).^x Violence

¹ All citations available at: http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/



and abuse characterize married life for many of these girls. Women who marry early are more likely to be beaten or threatened, and more likely to believe that a husband might sometimes be justified in beating his wife.^{xi}

Trafficking ensnares millions of women and girls in modern-day slavery

Women and girls are 80 percent of the estimated 800,000 people trafficked across national borders annually,^{xii} with the majority (79 percent) trafficked for sexual exploitation.^{xiii} Within countries, many more women and girls are trafficked, often for purposes of sexual exploitation or domestic servitude. One study in Europe found that 60 percent of trafficked women had experienced physical and/or sexual violence before being trafficked, pointing to gender-based violence as a push factor in the trafficking of women.^{xiv}

Sexual harassment occurs every day in workplaces, schools, streets and public spaces

Between 40 and 50 percent of women in European Union countries experience unwanted sexual advances, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment at work.^{xv} Across Asia, studies in Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea show that 30 to 40 percent of women suffer workplace sexual harassment.^{xvi} In Nairobi, 20 percent of women have been sexually harassed at work or school.^{xvii} In the United States, 83 percent of girls aged 12 to 16 experienced some form of sexual harassment in public schools.^{xviii}

Almost 60 percent of women surveyed in Montreal, Canada reported that they were afraid of walking alone in their neighborhood at night (compared to 17 percent of men).^{xix} In a study in Lima, Peru, only 12 percent of women reported that they could move freely without fear of aggression.^{xx}

Rape as a tactic of warfare is rampant

Conservative estimates suggest that 20,000 to 50,000 women were raped during the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina,^{xxi} while approximately 250,000 to 500,000 women and girls were targeted for rape in the 1994 Rwandan genocide.^{xxii}

Between 50,000 and 64,000 women in camps for internally displaced people in Sierra Leone were sexually assaulted by combatants between 1991 and 2001.^{xxiii} In eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, at least 200,000 cases of sexual violence, mostly involving women and girls, have been documented since 1996: the actual numbers are believed to be far higher.^{xxiv}

Ending Violence against Women and Girls: 'Missing Target' of the MDGs?

Violence against women undermines efforts to realize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which 189 Heads of State and Government have committed to achieve by 2015. While ending violence against women is a strategic priority for achieving gender equality and the goals overall, it remains a 'missing target' of the MDGs.

Gender inequality and violence hamper countries' efforts to reduce poverty

Women and girls are half of the human capital available to reduce poverty and achieve development. Yet gender-based violence undermines human rights, social stability and security, public health, women's educational and employment



opportunities, and the well-being and development prospects of children and communities — all fundamental to achieving the MDGs.

Violence against women reduces productivity and drains public budgets.

Violence against women has enormous direct and indirect costs for survivors, employers and the public sector in terms of health, police, legal and related expenditures as well as lost wages and productivity.

According to a study in India, a woman loses an average of at least 5 paid work days for each incident of intimate partner violence,^{xxv} while in Uganda, about 9 percent of violent incidents forced women to lose time from paid work, amounting to approximately 11 days a year.^{xxvi}

Annual costs of intimate partner violence were calculated at US\$5.8 billion in the United States^{xxvii} and US\$1.16 billion in Canada.^{xxviii} In Australia, violence against women and children costs an estimated US\$11.38 billion per year.^{xxix} In Fiji, the annual estimated cost was US\$135.8 million or 7 percent of the Gross Domestic Product in 2002.^{xxx} Domestic violence alone cost approximately US\$32.9 billion In England and Wales.^{xxxi}

The costs and consequence of violence against women last for generations

Children who witness domestic violence are at increased risk of anxiety, depression, low-self esteem and poor school performance, among other problems that harm their well-being and personal development.^{xxxii} In Nicaragua, 63 percent of children of abused women had to repeat a school year and they left school on average 4 years earlier than other children.^{xxxiii}

Children, both girls and boys, who have witnessed or suffered from gender-based violence, are more likely to become victims and abusers later in life.^{xxxiv} For example, surveys in Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Philippines, Poland and Switzerland revealed that boys who witnessed their father using violence against their mother were 3 times more likely to use violence against their partners later in life.^{xxxv}

Sexual violence deprives girls of education

School-related violence limits the educational opportunities and achievements of girls. In a study in Ethiopia, 23 percent of girls reported experiencing sexual assault or rape en route to or from school.^{xxxvi} In Ecuador, adolescent girls reporting sexual violence in school identified teachers as the perpetrator in 37 percent of cases.^{xxxvii} In South Africa, 33 percent of reported rapes of girls were perpetrated by a teacher.^{xxxviii} Many girls changed schools or left school as a result of hostility after they reported the violence.^{xxxix}

Violence harms reproductive, maternal and child health

Gender-based violence severely restricts women's ability to exercise their reproductive rights, with grave consequences for sexual and reproductive health.

As many as 1 in 4 women experience physical or sexual violence during pregnancy.^{xl} This increases the likelihood of miscarriage, stillbirth and abortion,^{xli} as well as premature labour and low birth weight. Between 23 and 53 percent of women physically abused by their intimate partners during pregnancy are kicked or punched in the abdomen.^{xlii}



Violence limits women's access to family planning, which can potentially decrease maternal mortality by an estimated 20 to 35 percent by reducing women's exposure to pregnancy-related health risks.^{xliii}

Women who experience violence tend to have more children than they themselves want.^{xliv} This not only shows how little control they have over decisions affecting their sexual and reproductive lives, but also reduces the potential demographic benefits of reproductive health, estimated to reduce poverty by 14 percent.^{xlv}

Harmful practices also damage maternal and child health. Child marriage resulting in early and unwanted pregnancies poses life-threatening risks for adolescent girls: pregnancy-related complications are the leading cause of death for 15-to-19-year-old girls world-wide.^{xlvi} Female genital mutilation/cutting increases the risks of obstructed labour, childbirth complications, newborn deaths, postpartum bleeding, infections and maternal mortality.^{xlvii}

Violence fuels the HIV and AIDS pandemic

Violence limits women's ability to protect themselves from HIV, and women living with HIV or AIDS are often the targets of abuse and stigma. Young women are at especially high risk of both HIV and gender-based violence: they represent approximately 60 percent of all the 5.5 million young people in the world living with HIV and AIDS.^{xlviii}

Women are already 2 to 4 times more likely than men to become infected with HIV during intercourse,^{xiix} with forced sex or rape increasing this risk by limiting condom use and causing physical injuries. In the United States, 11.8 percent of new HIV infections among women over 20 during the previous year were attributed to intimate partner violence.¹ Studies from Tanzania, Rwanda and South Africa suggest that women who have experienced partner violence are more likely to contract HIV than those who have not.¹¹

Up to 14.6 percent of women in sub-Saharan Africa and south-east Asia reported that when they disclosed their HIV status, their intimate partners subjected them to violence, and fear of violence is a barrier to women disclosing their status and accessing appropriate care.^{lii}

Life is dangerous for women and girls in city slums

Women in poor urban areas are especially at risk of physical and psychological violence.^{IIII} They are twice as likely as men to experience violence, particularly in developing countries.^{IIV} In São Paulo, Brazil, a woman is assaulted every 15 seconds.^{IV}

No woman or girl in the world is entirely free of the risk of violence and abuse.



MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs):

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education
MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
MDG 4: Reduce child mortality
MDG 5: Improve maternal health [*Target 2 — Universal reproductive health access*]
MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability [*Target 4 — Significantly improve living conditions for slum dwellers*]

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

^v UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. 2005. Report on Mexico produced by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, and reply from the Government of Mexico. CEDAW/C/2005/OP.8/MEXICO. United Nations, New York. Government of Mexico's reply was based on cases between January 1993 and May 2004.

^{vi} UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund). 2003. UNFPA and Young People: Imagine: 3. UNFPA, New York.

^{vii} According to the World Health Organization based on estimates by Andrews, G., et al. 2004. "Child Sexual Abuse," Chapter 23 in Ezzati, M., et al. 2004. *Comparative Quantification of Health Risks: Global and Regional Burden of Disease Attributable to Selected Major Risk Factors.* Vol. 2: 1851-1940. WHO, Geneva, and data of the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs for population under 18 years. *See* WHO. 2006. *Global Estimates of Health Consequences due to Violence against Children.* Background paper for the United Nations Study on Violence against Children. WHO, Geneva, *cited in* General Assembly. 2006. *Report of the Independent Expert for the United Nations Study on Violence against Children:* 10. United Nations, Geneva.

viii Figure based on data from population-based surveys in 13 countries and adapted from: WHO. 2005. WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: 52. WHO, Geneva; Uganda Bureau of Statistics and Macro International Inc. 2007. <u>Uganda</u> <u>Demographic and Health Survey 2006</u>: 289. UBOS and Macro International, Calverton, Maryland; Ukrainian Center for Social Reforms, State Statistical Committee (Ukraine), Ministry of Health (Ukraine) and Macro International Inc. 2008. <u>Ukraine Demographic and Health Survey 2007</u>: 168. UCSR and Macro International, Calverton, Maryland, and Central Statistical Office Zimbabwe and Macro International Inc. 2007. Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey 2005-06: 263. CSO and Macro International Inc, Calverton, Maryland. Note: age of forced sexual initiation not available for Uganda.



 ⁱ Figures are based on data from 40 countries obtained through the three leading international surveys on prevalence, with most survey sites reporting that between 20 and 60 percent of women had experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. Adapted from WHO, 2005. WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: 46. WHO, Geneva; Johnson, H., N. Ollus and S. Nevala. 2008. Violence Against Women: An International Perspective : 39. (International Violence against Women Survey-IVAWS), Springer Science + Business Media, New York; and Demographic and Health Surveys-DHS, ORC Macro, Calverton, Maryland. <u>http://www.measuredhs.com/Topics/gender/dv_surveys.cfm</u>.
 ⁱⁱ Based on 2008 data from the Procurador de los Derechos Humanos, Guatemala, where 11 percent of the 6,292 homicides (692) were women. Procurador de los Derechos Humanos. 2009. Procurador de los Derechos Humanos Presente Informe Anual 2008, Guatemala.

 ⁱⁱⁱ National Crime Records Bureau. 2008. "<u>Chapter 5: Crime against Women</u>". *Crime in India 2007*:
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 ^{iv} Krug, E, G., et al. (eds.) 2002. World Report on Violence and Health. Geneva: WHO, cited in United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2005. State of World Population 2005: 66. UNFPA, New York.

^{xi} UNICEF. 2005. *Early Marriage: A Harmful Traditional Practice.* New York, United Nations.
 ^{xii} Figure does not include the millions of people trafficked within national borders and is based on 2006 calculations. *See* U.S. Department of State. 2008. *Trafficking in Persons Report June 2008*: 7. Office of Undersecretary for Democracy and Global Affairs and Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.

^{xiii} Based on 2006 using data from 61 countries. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). 2009. <u>Global Report on Trafficking in Persons</u>: 11. UNODC, Vienna.

xiv Zimmerman, C., et al. 2006. <u>Stolen Smiles: a Summary Report on the Physical and Psychological Health Consequences of Women and Adolescents Trafficked in Europe</u>: 23. The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, *cited in* Warnath, S. 2007. <u>Examining the Intersection</u> <u>between Trafficking in Persons and Domestic Violence</u>: vi: 15. USAID, Washington, D.C.

^{xv} Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs. 1998. *Sexual* harassment at the workplace in the European Union: iii. European Commission, Brussels, cited in General Assembly. 2006. In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women: Report of the Secretary- General, A/61/122/Add.1.: 42. United Nations, New York.

^{xvi} Based on small scale studies. International Labour Organization. 2001. *Action against Sexual Harassment at Work in Asia and the Pacific*, Technical report for discussion at the ILO/Japan regional tripartite seminar on action against sexual harassment at work in Asia and the Pacific Penang: 35. Malaysia, 2-4 October 2001, *cited in* General Assembly. 2006. *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women: Report of the Secretary- General*, A/61/122/Add.1.: 42. United Nations, New York..

^{xvii} Based on a sample of 195 women survivors of violence. United Nations Centre for Human Settlement. 2002. <u>Survivors Speak: A Snapshot Survey on Violence Against Women in Nairobi Safer</u> <u>Cities Series No. 3</u>: 12. UN HABITAT, Nairobi.
^{xviii} Based on a pationally superscription in the superscription of the superscription.

^{XVIII} Based on a nationally-representative study among female and male students in grades 8 through 11. American Association of University Women. 2001. <u>Hostile Hallways: Bullying, Teasing, and Sexual</u> <u>Harassment in School</u>: 4, Washington D.C., *cited in* General Assembly. 2006. *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women: Report of the Secretary- General*, A/61/122/Add.1.: 42. United Nations, New York.

x^{ix} Based on an opinion poll. Michaud, A. 2002. *Guide D'ménagement: Pour un environment urbain sécuritaire: 15.* Programme Femmes et Ville de la Ville de Montreal, Montreal *cited in* Centro de Intercambio y Servicios Cono Sur Argentina (CISCSA). 2005. *Tools for the Promotion of Safe Cities from the Gender Perspective*: 14. Córdoba.

^{xx} Based on a sample of 208 women surveyed in San Juan de Lurigancho. Flora Tristan. 2004. Informe Final. Investigación Cuantitativa y Cualitativa. Estudio sobre Seguridad en Mujeres del distrito de San Juan de Lurigancho: 21. Lima, cited in UNIFEM. 2007. <u>A Life Free of Violence Is Our</u> <u>Right! UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. 10 Years of Investment</u>: 9. UNIFEM, New York.

^{xxi} Based on reports by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Commission. Ward, J. on behalf of the Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium. 2002. *"Bosnia and Herzegovina", If not Now, When?: Addressing Gender-based Violence in Refugee, Internally Displaced, and Post-Conflict Settings*: 81. RHRC, New York, *cited in* UNIFEM. *Facts and Figures on Peace and Security*.UNIFEM, New York: Web site:

http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/peace_security/facts_figures.php#3, last accessed 14 January 2010.

^{xxii} United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Rwanda. 1996. <u>Report on the</u> <u>situation of human rights in Rwanda</u> (E/CN.4/1996/68): 7. United Nations, New York.

^{xxiii} Based on a representative sample of 991 female heads of internally displaced households. Physicians for Human Rights. 2002. *War-Related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone: A Population-Based Assessment*: 3. PHR, Boston, *cited in* OCHA. 2008. <u>Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict: A</u> <u>Framework for Prevention and Response</u>. OCHA, New York.

^{ix} World Health Organization. 2008. *Female Genital Mutilation - Fact Sheet No. 241*. WHO, Geneva. www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/

^x Figure represents data for 2006 from UNICEF global databases based on MICS, DHS and other national surveys, 1987–2006. UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). 2008. *ChildInfo: Statistics by Area: Child Protection*. UNICEF, New York. <u>www.childinfo.org/marriage.html</u>.

^{xxiv} UNICEF Democratic Republic of Congo, *cited in* Security Council. 2009. *Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820*, S/2009/362.: 5. United Nations, New York.
 ^{xxv} Based on a population-based multi-site survey of 7 geographically diverse areas across India; a maximum of 7 lost work days were reported. ICRW (International Center for Research on Women). 2000. *Domestic Violence in India: A Summary Report for a Multi-Site Household Survey*. No. 3: 18. ICRW, Washington, D.C., *cited in*: UNFPA. 2005 *State of the World's Population*: 65. UNFPA, New York.

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^{xxviii} Figure includes direct medical, dental, and social expenses, prevention costs and indirect productivity losses based on 1993 annual estimates. Amount calculated in USD from 1.5 billion Canadian Dollars based on 1.2901 UN Statistical Database National Accounts exchange rate for 1993. Day, T. 1995. *The Health Related Costs of Violence Against Women: The Tip of the Iceberg*:
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^{xxix} Data calculated for both intimate partner and non-partner violence based on estimated prevalence rates for 2007-2008 and includes direct and indirect individual and public costs related to suffering, health, legal and employment expenses, among others. Figure was calculated in USD from \$13.6 billion Australian Dollars based on 1.1951 <u>UN Statistical Database National Accounts</u> <u>exchange rate for 2007</u>. The National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. 2009. *The Cost of Violence against Women and their Children*: 4. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

^{xxx} Figure represents the direct productivity losses as well as expenses for multi-sectoral state responses to violence against women. Amount calculated in USD from 297 million Fijian Dollars based on 2.1869 UN Statistical Database National Accounts exchange rate for 2002. Based on a presentation by Savenaca Narube, Governor of the Fiji Reserve Bank, at the opening of the 2002 Violence against Women Taskforce's 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, *cited in* Rao, S. 2003. "Violence against Women (VAW) is a barrier to Empowerment". Paper presented at UNIFEM Regional Workshop on Strengthening Partnerships to Eliminate VAW: 3. 17-19 February 2003, Forum Secretariat, Suva.

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^{xxxiv} Heise, L. 1998. "Violence against Women: An Integrated, ecological Framework". *Violence against Women 4 (3)*: 262-290. Sage Publications, *cited in* Johnson, H., N. Ollus and S. Nevala.
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^{xxxviii} Based on a sample of 600 male and female students, aged 14-17, from urban and rural public and private schools. Cordero Velásquez, T. and G. M. Vargas, "Me too...Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Ecuadorian Schools.": 34-35. CONAMU, Women's Communications Workshop, Quito, *cited in* Plan.
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^{xIv} Figure is calculated for the period 2000-2015 for less developed regions (rather than least developed regions) based on the assumption that economic growth from fertility decline has the same impact on poverty reduction as policy-stimulated growth, with an equal impact on poverty across regions. Mason, A. and S.H. Lee. 2004. "The Demographic Dividend and Poverty Reduction". Paper prepared for the Seminar on the Relevance of Population Aspects for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: XX2. 17-19 November 2004. Population Division, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, *cited in* UNFPA. 2005. *State of the World's Population*: 13. UNFPA, New York.

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xIVIII Based on UNAIDS and WHO unpublished data from 2008 estimated at 61.8 percent, *cited in* UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO and UNFPA. 2008. *Children and AIDS: Third Stocktaking Report*: 16. UNICEF, New York; and UNICEF. 2009. <u>*HIV Prevention with Young People: The Key to Tackling the Epidemic*</u>: 3. UNICEF, New York.

^{xlix} UNAIDS. 1999. <u>AIDS - 5 years since ICPD: Emerging issues and challenges for Women, Young</u> <u>People & Infants</u>: 11. UNAIDS, Geneva, cited in Ferdinand, D.L. 2009. A Manual for Integrating the Programmes and Services of HIV and Violence Against Women: 14. Development Connections and UNIFEM, New York.

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