



# KEY MESSAGES & FAST FACTS

## NATIONAL STUDY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN VIET NAM 2019

### **1. The report provides evidence that prevalence rates of violence against women committed by their husband in Viet Nam are lower in 2019 than in 2010, except sexual violence.**

#### **FAST FACTS:**

- Proportions of women experiencing physical and psychological violence (including emotional abuse and controlling behavior) by a husband<sup>1</sup> were lower in 2019 than in 2010, especially for younger women. This was observed for both lifetime and current violence (in the last 12 months). For example, fewer women experienced physical violence by a husband in their lifetime in 2019 (26 per cent) compared to 2010 (32 per cent).
- However, more women reported experience of sexual violence by a husband in their lifetime in the 2019 study (13.3 per cent) compared to 2010 (9.9 per cent); this difference was more prominent among younger women aged 18-24 (13.9 per cent in 2019 compared with 5.3 per cent in 2010). While this may reflect an increase in violence, it may also be the result of a social change where women are more open to talking about sex and sexual violence now.
- A future third data point will be important to establish whether there is a real trend in change to violence prevalence rates.

### **2. Many women in Viet Nam are still potentially at risk of violence by their husband at some point in their lives.**

#### **FAST FACTS:**

- In 2019, nearly two-thirds (62.9 per cent) of women experienced at least one or more types of violence (physical, sexual, economic and/or psychological violence) in their lifetime by a husband, and 31.6 per cent experienced such violence in the last 12 months.

1. The use of the term 'husband' or 'ever-married' includes current or former husbands as well as other male intimate partners with whom a woman has a couple relationship without being married. Nearly all (97 per cent) women in this survey who had a current or former husband/intimate partner had been married.

- Nearly one in three (32 per cent) women still experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their husbands in their lifetime; this was, however, slightly lower than in 2010 (34.3 per cent). Almost one in ten (8.9 per cent) currently experienced physical and/or sexual violence in 2019.
- Women with disabilities were more likely to experience all forms of violence by a husband (physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence) than women without disabilities.
- 13.3 per cent of women experienced sexual violence by their husbands in their lifetime, and 5.7 per cent currently. Almost all of these women also experienced physical violence.

### **3. Women are more likely to be abused by their husband than by any other perpetrator.**

#### **FAST FACTS:**

- In Viet Nam, women were twice as likely to be physically abused by a husband than by any other perpetrator.
- When women were physically abused by someone other than their husband, it was most likely to be a male family member (58 per cent). Only 7 per cent were abused by a stranger.

### **4. The experience of violence varies by region and education in Viet Nam.**

#### **FAST FACTS:**

- Women with only primary schooling had the highest risk of violence by husbands. However, women with education above primary school were less at risk of such violence compared with women with no education or only primary education.
- 40 per cent of women in the Central Highlands and 33 per cent women in the Red River Delta experienced physical violence from a husband. This is much higher than the 20 per cent of women in the Southeast and Mekong River Delta, who experienced the same type of violence.

## 5. Violence against women is very much hidden. Women rarely talk about it or seek help in Viet Nam. Silence, stigma and community attitudes are barriers to speaking out and seeking help.

### FAST FACTS:

- One in two women who experienced violence by husbands had never told anyone before the survey interview – the same proportion as in the 2010 study.
- When women did talk about it, they spoke to close family such as siblings and their parents.
- Almost all women (90.4 per cent) who experienced physical and/or sexual violence by husbands did not seek any help. Only a very few (4.8 per cent) went to the police. This was almost the same in 2010 where 87.1 per cent did NOT seek assistance.
- Women most commonly sought formal support when they felt they could no longer endure the abuse.

## 6. Violence against women has serious consequences on economic development, and physical and mental health.

### FAST FACTS:

- It is estimated that violence against women in Viet Nam costs the national economy, equivalent to 1.8 per cent of GDP. Economic costs include visible costs, such as out of pocket expenses for health care, transport, housing, damaged goods and absenteeism from the workforce, as well as invisible costs (the productivity loss).
- One in four women (23 per cent) who were physically and/or sexually abused by their husband had physical injuries as a result of the violence. Two out of three were injured multiple times.
- Two-thirds of abused women said that the violence had an effect on their health and well-being.
- Women who were abused were three times more likely to experience serious mental health illness as compared with women who were not abused.

## 7. Pregnant women are at risk of violence from the husband.

### FAST FACTS:

- 3 per cent of women who had been pregnant were beaten during pregnancy. Nearly all of these women were beaten by the father of their unborn child.
- Almost a fifth (18 per cent) of women beaten during pregnancy were kicked or punched in the abdomen, thereby placing their unborn baby at risk of harm.
- Women who experienced violence by a husband had experienced more miscarriages, stillbirths and abortions than women without violence.

## 8. Children are also victims when living in a household where their mother was beaten, with serious risks for their well-being.

### FAST FACTS:

- Nearly two-thirds (60 per cent) of women who had experienced physical violence by a husband had children witnessing or overhearing the violence.
- Women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a husband were more likely to say their children (5-12 years old) had behavioural problems (such as nightmares, bedwetting, aggressive behaviours and being quiet or withdrawn) compared to women who had not experienced violence.

## 9. Violence is a learned behaviour.

### FAST FACTS:

- Women who had been abused were more likely to have a husband whose mother was beaten or who was himself beaten as a child.
- Being a child in a violent home was identified as a risk factor for men growing up to become perpetrators.

## 10. Violence can be prevented. We should act now!

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