

# WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE

RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL STUDY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN VIET NAM 2019

## ABOUT THE STUDY – OBJECTIVES, LEAD AGENCIES, SAMPLE SIZE AND METHODS

The 2019 study on violence against women consists of three parts: quantitative survey, qualitative study, and economic costing of violence. It provides official data on the prevalence, frequency and types of violence by husbands as well as violence by abusers who are not husbands. This is the second survey of this kind in Viet Nam since 2010, and Viet Nam is so far the only country which successfully conducted the second survey, with technical and financial support by UNFPA and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The quantitative survey was conducted by the General Statistics Office (GSO) at the request of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA). The qualitative study was carried out by CCIHP, and the economic costing study was led by international experts commissioned by UNFPA. All three components have been integrated into one report.

A total of 5,976 women aged 15-64 years were interviewed in private by specially trained female interviewers, using a globally validated questionnaire (WHO methodology) and fully addressing ethical and safety issues.

All women who ever had a husband were asked whether they had experienced acts of physical, sexual, psychological and/or economic violence, while non partner violence was measured against physical and sexual violence. Child abuse (sexual and physical) formed also part of this study and was measured retroactively. Two different periods are measured: the last 12 months preceding the interview (current violence) and any period in their life (lifetime experience of violence).

### Violence against Women

"... any act of **gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women...**" (United Nations, 1993)

#### Intimate Partner Violence

'Intimate partners' are current and former husbands, cohabiting partners, fiancés, and regular dating partners.

Physical

Sexual

Psychological

Economic abuse

Emotional abuse

Controlling behaviour

#### Non-partner violence

Anyone not a current or former intimate partner, e.g. parent, teacher, friend, sibling, other family member, stranger

Physical since age 15

Sexual since age 15

Child abuse before age 15

Forced sexual intercourse

Attempted rape and other sexual abuse

Physical

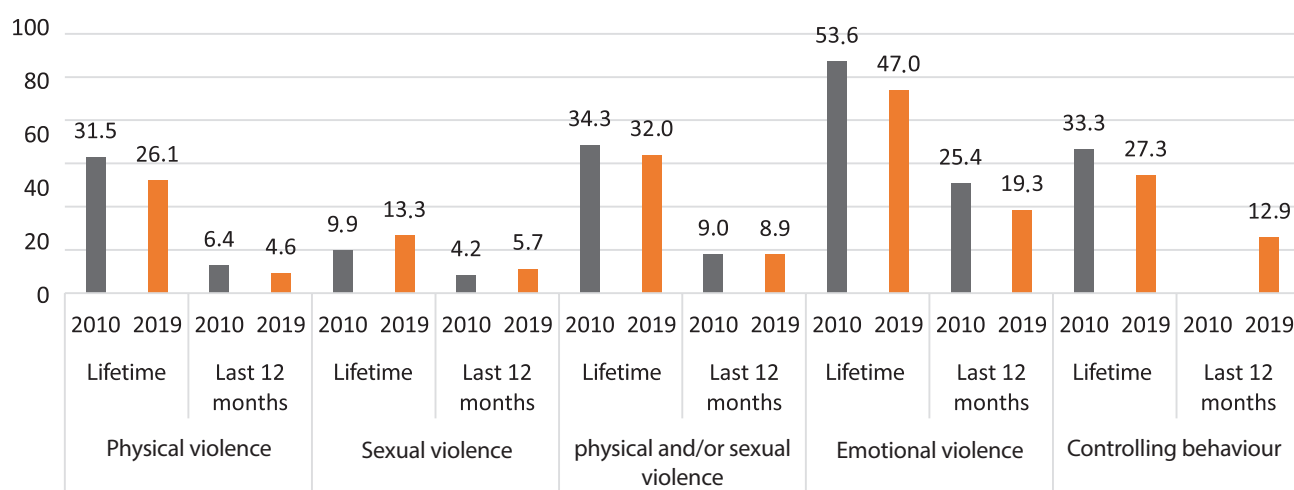
Sexual

# VIOLENCE BY A CURRENT OR FORMER HUSBAND

Prevalence rates of all forms of violence against women committed by their husband in Viet Nam are lower in 2019 than in 2010, except sexual violence.

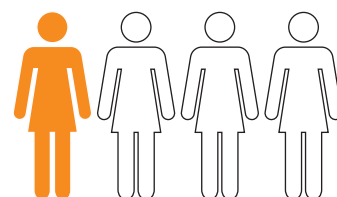
According to the 2019 survey, nearly 2 out of 3 women (63 per cent) in Viet Nam experienced one or more forms of violence in their life time, while 32 per cent in the past 12 months (also referred to as current violence).

**Prevalence of violence during lifetime and the last 12 months among ever-married women, Viet Nam 2010 (N=4,561, aged 18-60) and 2019 (N=5,553, aged 15-64)<sup>1</sup>**

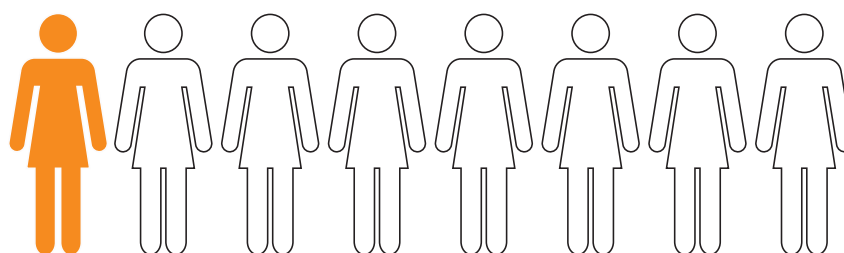


## More than one in four women experienced **PHYSICAL VIOLENCE** by a current or former husband in her lifetime

More than one quarter (26 per cent) of women experienced physical violence by a current or former husband sometime in her life, and 5 per cent in the past 12 months. Being **slapped or having something thrown at her** that could hurt her was the most common form of violence by a husband, experienced by 23 per cent during lifetime and 4 per cent currently (in the last 12 months).



## One in eight women experienced **SEXUAL VIOLENCE** by a current or former husband in her lifetime



1. In 2010, the question was not asked about controlling behaviour in the last 12 months.

One in eight (13 per cent) of women experienced sexual violence by a husband in her lifetime, and 6 per cent currently. Being **physically forced to have sex when she did not want to** – a form of marital rape – was the most common act of sexual violence disclosed (13 per cent during lifetime and 6 per cent currently).

It should be highlighted that in Viet Nam, the proportion of women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence was **32 per cent in their lifetime** and **9 per cent currently (in the last 12 months)**.

## **More women experienced PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE than any other forms of violence.**

Psychological violence in this study included emotional abuse and controlling behaviours, that were measured separately.

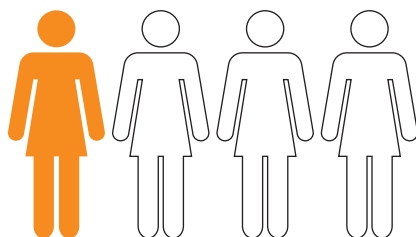
**Nearly half (47 per cent) of all women experienced emotional abuse by a current or former husband sometime in her life** and **19 per cent currently**. This included a husband insulting his wife, humiliating her in front of others, scaring or intimidating, threatening to hurt her or others she cares about.

Controlling behaviours, also a form of psychological abuse, include being kept from seeing family and friends, having a husband who insists on knowing where she is at all times, and getting angry if she speaks with another man. Just over a quarter (27 per cent) of women experienced controlling behaviours by their husband during their lifetime, and 13 per cent currently.

## **One in five women experienced ECONOMIC VIOLENCE**

**Economic violence** includes prohibiting a wife from getting a job, taking her earnings from her against her will, and refusing to give her money for household expenses. One in five (21 per cent) of women in Viet Nam experienced economic abuse from a husband during their life time and 12 per cent currently (in the last 12 months).

## **One in four women was injured as a result of physical and/or sexual husband violence**



In the survey, 23 per cent of women who had been physically and/or sexually abused by husbands were also injured as a direct result of the violence. Among those injured, two-thirds (66 per cent) had been injured more than once.

Injuries are one of many potential impacts of violence. Psychological distress, poor general health, inability to work and impact on children's behaviour were also more common among women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence compared with those who had not experienced such violence.

**Women in Viet Nam were more than twice as likely to have experienced physical violence by husbands rather than by someone else.** One in ten (11 per cent) women experienced physical violence by someone other than her husband since the age of 15, and 9 per cent experienced sexual violence by another abuser in their lifetime.

## VIOLENCE BY OTHERS (“NON-PARTNERS” OR ANYONE OTHER THAN A CURRENT OR FORMER HUSBAND)

**Just over one in ten women (11 per cent) had experienced PHYSICAL VIOLENCE by an abuser other than her husband since the age of 15, and 1.4 per cent currently.** Perpetrators were most commonly male family members (mentioned by 35 per cent of women who had experienced such violence).

**Nearly one in ten (9 per cent) of women experienced SEXUAL VIOLENCE by an abuser other than her husband since the age of 15, and 1.2 per cent currently.**

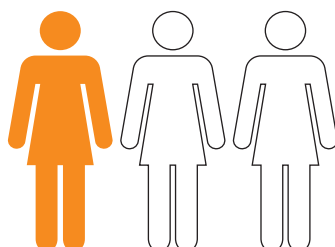
**Perpetrators were predominantly male friends, acquaintances or male strangers.** Young women aged between 20 and 24 were most at risk of sexual violence by abusers other than husbands in the last 12 months (18 per cent).

**4 per cent of women indicated that they had experienced CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE before the age of 15.** This included whether anyone had ever touched them sexually or made them do something sexual that they did not want to do.



## ATTITUDES TO GENDER ROLES AND VIOLENCE

**One third of women in Viet Nam supported that men, rather than women, should be decision makers and the head of the household.** Women in rural areas held these views more strongly than urban women. The overall percentage of women who agree with the statement had not changed since 2010, although younger women were less inclined to agree.



**More than half of the women interviewed (52 per cent) agreed with at least one reason or situation in which it was acceptable for a husband to beat his wife** such as if she were “unfaithful” (45 per cent) or did not take “care of children” (27 per cent).

These attitudes were supported by more women living in rural areas than in urban areas and among

## THEN AND NOW: A SUMMARY OF KEY INDICATORS 2010 vs 2019

more women with lower levels of education.

**Change seems to be happening.** The prevalence of all forms of violence is **slightly reduced in 2019 from 2010, with the exception of sexual violence.** Particularly, younger women were experiencing less physical violence by a husband in 2019 than older women, suggesting that change may be happening especially among young generations.

However, it is still concerning that sexual violence by a husband increased from 10 per cent in 2010 to 13 per cent in 2019 for violence during lifetime, and from 4 per cent in 2010 to 6 per cent in 2019, for violence in the last 12 months. More younger women experienced sexual violence in 2019 than in 2010. This could possibly be interpreted that society is more open to talking about sex and sexual violence compared with a decade earlier. A future third data point is needed to establish a real trend.

Indicator		2010 (%)	2019 (%)
Physical partner violence	Lifetime	31.5	26.1
	Last 12 months	6.4	4.6
Sexual partner violence	Lifetime	9.9	13.3
	Last 12 months	4.2	5.7
Physical and/or sexual partner violence	Lifetime	34.3	32.0
	Last 12 months	9.0	8.9
Emotional partner violence	Lifetime	53.6	47.0
	Last 12 months	25.4	19.3
Economic partner violence <sup>^</sup>	Lifetime	9.0	20.6
	Last 12 months	*	11.5
Controlling behaviours	Lifetime	33.3	27.3
	Last 12 months	*	12.9

### Violence by non-partners (someone other than a current or former husband)

Indicator		2010 (%)	2019 (%)
Physical non-partner violence	Lifetime	9.9	11.4
	Last 12 months	*	1.4
Sexual non-partner violence	Lifetime	2.3	9.0
	Last 12 months	*	1.2
Child sexual abuse	Ever before age 15 years	2.8	4.4

## Other key indicators

	Indicator	2010 (%)	2019 (%)
Attitudes to gender and gender-based violence	% who agree that "A good wife obeys her husband even if she disagrees"	27.0	27.2
	% who agree that "A man should show he is the boss"	*	35.9
	% of women who agree with one or more reasons for a man to hit his wife	*	51.8
Coping with partner violence	% of women who told no one about the husband/partner violence they experienced	49.6	49.6
	% of women who sought help from the police	5.2	4.8
	% of women who sought help from local leaders	6.3	3.6
	% of women who sought help from a hospital or health professional	5.1	2.3

### Notes:

^ There were major differences in the number of acts considered economic violence in 2010 (2 acts) compared with 2019 (5 acts).

\* The indicator was not measured in 2010.

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