

**Factsheet based on Highlights & Findings:
From 2013 Africa Scorecard on Multi-Faceted Violence Against Young Girls & Women
Highlighting: Forced 'Marriage' of Girl Children; Wife Beating; Female Genital Mutilation**

**See Accompanying Multifaceted Scorecard for Rankings and Numbers.*

Forced Girl Child 'Marriage' & Health:

- **Maternal Mortality:** The 30 countries where between 30% - 75% of underage girls are forced into 'marriage' also include 26 of the 30 countries with the highest maternal mortality: Chad, Somalia, Central African Rep, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, Cameroon, Nigeria, Guinea, Niger, Zimbabwe, Congo, DRC, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Cote 'd Ivore, Senegal, Gambia, Benin, Ethiopia, Uganda & Burkina Faso.
- **Adolescent, Youth & Reproductive Health:** The 30 countries where between 30% - 75% of underage girls are forced into 'marriage' also include 26 of the 30 countries with the highest adolescent fertility: Niger, Chad, Mali, Mozambique, Liberia, Malawi, Uganda, Guinea, Zambia, Madagascar, Gabon, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Dem Rep Congo, Cent. African Rep, Congo, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Zimbabwe, Senegal
- **HIV & AIDS / Reproductive & Adolescent Health:** In all of the 30 countries where 30% - 75% of under age girls are forced into 'marriage' (except 2, being Madagascar and Somalia) – women aged 15 years & over constitute the greater majority of those living with HIV i.e. in these countries women constitute between 55% & 74% of all 'adults' living with HIV.
- **Child Mortality:** The 30 countries where between 30% - 75% of under age girls are forced into 'marriage' also include 24 of the 30 countries with the highest child mortality: Somalia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Chad, DRC, Central African Rep, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Mozambique, Guinea, Cote 'd Ivore, Benin, Mauritania, Zambia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Uganda, Congo, Malawi, Zimbabwe & Tanzania
- **Mental Health:** The failure to recognize forced 'marriage' of underage girls as a human rights and health violation of epic proportions means no policy or investment provision is made to cater for the mental health of tens of millions of girls forced to suffer repeated sexual assaults and abuse, a life of domestic exploitation and violence, and high maternal mortality & HIV.

Institutional Violence / Forced 'Marriage' of Under Age Girls

- **Trends & Proportion:** *In the 30 countries where 30% to 75% of young girls under 18 years are forced into 'marriage', at least a quarter to half were forced into 'marriage' before or by 15 yrs of age*, indicating a deeper rooted trend. *The worst 15 countries (40% & over) - being Niger, Chad, Guinea, Central African Republic, Mali, Mozambique, Malawi, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Uganda, Somalia, & Zambia.*
- **By Absolute Numbers:** *The 10 countries in which an estimated over one million women each were forced into 'marriage' before age of 18 are:* Nigeria, an estimated 6.8 million; Ethiopia 5 million; DRC, 3 million; Tanzanian 1.8 million; Uganda 1.8 million; Mozambique, 1.4 million; Niger, 1.3 million; Egypt 1.3 million; Madagascar 1.1 Million; Kenya 1.1 million.

Overall, an estimated number of 37.4 million underage girls have been forced into 'marriage' before the age of 18 years over period on which the study is based, robbing them of education, skills & human development; of an opportunity to contribute meaningfully to Africa's development; & condemning them to essentially a life of dependence, domestic slavery, unmitigated violence, sexual abuse, high maternal death, birth related injury, & HIV / AIDS.

- **By Demography:** *In the 30 countries where 30% to 75% of young girls under 18 years were forced into 'marriage' 11 of these countries are from the 15 member ECOWAS sub region being – Niger, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Senegal, Liberia, Gambia, Cote d'Ivoire, & Benin – Along with 6 Central African Countries - Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Sao Tome - (Other ECOWAS countries Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Togo are at 18% to 25%) – making West & Central Africa the sub regions with the highest collective concentration of countries where forced marriage is practiced.*

In East & Horn of Africa: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Uganda, & Tanzania are amongst the 30 countries where over 30% of under age girls are forced into 'marriage' (with Rwanda, Burundi & Kenya at between 13% & 26%).

In SADC countries: Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia DRC, Tanzania (which is in both EAC and SADC) & Zimbabwe are amongst the 30 countries where over 30% of under age girls are forced into 'marriage'.

Physical Violence Against Women

- **There is a deeply damaging socialisation & indoctrination of women to accept Violence Against Women as 'Normal':** *In 34 of the 37 countries for which data is available between 30% to 87% of women aged 15 yrs to 49 yrs consider a husband justified in beating a wife* - for at least one of these reasons – (1) Burning the Food; (2) 'Argues' With Him; (3) Goes Out Without Telling Him; (4) Neglects the Children; (5) Or Refuses Sexual Relations. This in turn has serious negative consequences for women's human rights, gender equality, women's education & development, ability to contribute to social & economic development, & overall health.
- In 12 of the 17 countries for which data is available, 30% to 60% of men believe that Violence Against Women is justified for the same reasons as above.
- **Cycle of Violence / 'Agreement' on Violence:** *Countries in which based on available data, 30% or more of both women & men jointly agree that Violence Against Women is justified include* – Uganda, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Zambia, Lesotho, Kenya, Swaziland, Namibia, Tanzania, Liberia, Nigeria, Madagascar.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Scorecard

- Based on available data in 27 countries, there are 16 countries in which between 30% to 98% of women suffer Female Genital Mutilation. These countries cut across mostly the Horn, North, Central & West Africa.

Countries that Feature Prominently Across All 4 Indicators of Violence Against Women:

- **Concentrations of Multi-faceted Violence:** i.e. *15 Countries in which based on available data, 30% - 98 % of women are affected by 3 to 4 of all indicators included in this multi faceted scorecard:* Ethiopia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mali, Eritrea, Uganda, Somalia, Burkina Faso, Zambia, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Liberia, Madagascar, Gambia. *(However lack of availability of data for all countries means that some countries - where there are high levels of social, community based and sexual violence such as South Africa; or conflict based violence such as DRC – do not feature in this concentration of violence).

Recommendations:

- Given the millions of underage girls already suffering the scourge of forced 'marriage', & the fact that as Africa's population doubles from currently roughly 1 billion to about 2 billion by 2050, this will increase - Africa wide abolition of exploitation & abuse of girl children through so called 'marriage' is clearly now a matter for unambiguous intervention by African Heads of State; as with Female Genital Mutilation. Africa's overall health, human & social development will continue to be stunted for as long as governments do not act decisively to reduce & end institutional, social, & physical Violence Against Women.
- Constitutional, legislative & law enforcement protection are crucial, but will only be effective through massive public education campaigns led by a specific & unambiguous African Union declaration abolishing forced 'marriage' of under age girls, & so called cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation. This should include public education on gender equality, and introduction of gender equality into school curriculum from primary level.
- Alongside this, improved investment in the education & skills development of girls (including forced 'marriage victims'); & improved reproductive & sexual health services is crucial for overall health, human & social development.

Main sources for study summarized in scorecard: UNFPA 2012, Marrying too young - End child marriage; UNICEF State of the World's Children Report 2012; Trends in Maternal Mortality WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank 2010; WHO World Health Statistics 2010, 2011 & 2012; Inter Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimates; UNAIDS, 2012 AIDS Epidemic Update. And latest available comparable information from - UNAIDS Database.

* Ranking is based on the 1223 dense ranking methodology in which items that compare equal receive the same ranking number, and the next item(s) receive the immediately following ranking number. i.e. if A ranks ahead of B and C (which compare equal) which are both ranked ahead of D, then A gets ranking number 1 ("first"), B gets ranking number 2 ("joint second"), C also gets ranking number 2 ("joint second") and D gets ranking number 3 ("third").

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