VIOLENCE AGAINST ADOLESCENTS IN THE ARAB REGION

Steering Committee: UNICEF, Mercy Corps, Save the Children, International Labour Organization (ILO), No Lost Generation, European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), American University of Beirut, Columbia University, Danish-Arab Partnership Programme, Action Aid and GAGE.
Violence against adolescents in the Arab region

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Translating Research into Scaled Up Action:
Evidence Symposium on Adolescents and Youth in the MENA
Amman, Jordan
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Adolescence

The world currently holds the largest population of adolescents in history.

We define adolescents as those aged 10-19.

Every 7 minutes, somewhere in the world, an adolescent is killed by an act of violence.
Violence globally recognized as a public health and human rights problem

CRC (1989): Children as rights holders, ensuring protection from violence at home, schools, and communities

MDGs (2000-2015): No goals or targets specifically related to violence against children

SDGs (2030): 16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture against children (among others)

Arab State commitment to ending violence
Violence against adolescents

“All forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, exploitation, sexual abuse, and neglect that results in actual or potential harm to the child/adolescent’s health, development or dignity.”

How forms of violence experienced by adolescents are defined

- **Maltreatment**
  - physical abuse
  - sexual abuse
  - emotional/psychological abuse
  - neglect

- **Violent discipline**
  - psychological aggression
  - physical/corporal punishment

- **Peer violence**
  - bullying
  - physical fighting
  - physical attack

- **Others, including**
  - IPV
  - child marriage
  - trafficking and exploitation
  - homicide
  - conflict
Violence across the lifespan

The regional review on violence against adolescents in the Arab region

Regional Research Reviews (3Rs) by The Center for Research on Population and Health at the American University of Beirut. aub.edu.lb/fhs/crph/

Motivation:
• Arab States have expressed commitment to ending violence.
• No comprehensive review of violence against Arab adolescents has been conducted.

Objectives:
• Assess the state of the evidence in the region,
• Obtain estimates of levels of different forms of violence,
• Fill gaps in current knowledge,
• Facilitate comparisons between Arab region and others, and
• Draw implications and recommendations for future research and action.
A systematic search on prevalence of violence:
Maltreatment, violent discipline, and peer violence.
The search included data from all 22 Arab countries from 2000-2016.

Review of published, peer-reviewed literature.
32 articles contributed prevalence data.

Review of population-based, international survey data.
6 DHS, 11 MICS, and 18 GSHS contributed data.
Violent discipline

Percentage of adolescents aged 10-14 who experienced any violent discipline in the past month

These high levels of violent discipline contrast with the lower levels of approval by adult caregivers, all of which lie under 45%, including 14% in Qatar, 25% in Egypt, 44% in Tunisia.

DHS and MICS data, 2006-2014
Peer violence: bullying

Percentage of adolescents aged 13-15 who report being bullied in the past month

- Egypt 2011: 70 Girls, 63 Boys
- Palestine, Gaza 2010: 56 Girls, 52 Boys
- Palestine, West Bank 2010: 55 Girls, 49 Boys
- Qatar 2011: 48 Girls, 55 Boys
- Algeria 2011: 55 Girls, 48 Boys
- Mauritania 2010: 46 Girls, 48 Boys
- Yemen 2014: 47 Girls, 46 Boys
- Jordan 2007: 46 Girls, 45 Boys
- Oman 2015: 45 Girls, 44 Boys
- Djibouti 2007: 44 Girls, 43 Boys
- Libya 2007: 43 Girls, 40 Boys
- Tunisia 2008: 37 Girls, 37 Boys
- Kuwait 2015: 36 Girls, 36 Boys
- Bahrain 2016: 36 Girls, 35 Boys
- Lebanon 2011: 35 Girls, 35 Boys
- Iraq 2012: 32 Girls, 32 Boys
- UAE 2010: 26 Girls, 26 Boys
- Morocco 2010: 21 Girls, 21 Boys

GSYS data, 2007-2016
Peer violence: physical fighting

Percentage of adolescents aged 13-15 who report physical fighting in the past 12 months

Tunisia 2008
Lebanon 2011
Djibouti 2007
Palestine, West Bank 2010
Mauritania 2010
Jordan 2007
UAE 2010
Qatar 2011
Egypt 2011
Algeria 2011
Yemen 2014
Morocco 2010
Kuwait 2015
Libya 2007
Oman 2015
Bahrain 2016
Palestine, Gaza 2010
Iraq 2012

GSHS data, 2007-2016
Intimate partner violence against adolescent girls aged 15-19

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Comoros</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Jordan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical IPV</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual IPV</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and/or Sexual IPV</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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DHS data, 2012-2014
Conclusion and recommendations

• Findings suggest high prevalence of violence against adolescents across the region.

• Scope and quality of evidence:
  – generally scarce
  – great variation in operational definitions of violence
  – lack of qualitative data
Needs and Challenges related to Ending Violence against Adolescents

- Conducting in-depth assessments of culture, context, and determinants
- Implementing international and regional policies, standards and guidelines to prevent and respond to violence
- Addressing stigma and willingness to report in both research and practice
- Strengthening cross-cutting partnerships
- Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track progress
- Changing behaviors and addressing factors that contribute to violence through multifactorial interventions