

# Women rights are infringed around the world

Every day 33 thousand girls are forced to “get married” in the world, which is an infringement to their rights. Besides, 650 million women had to get married when they still were little girls

International Women’s Day, which is commemorated on March 08 does not have so many things to celebrate, because the rights and dignity of millions of women in the world are violated every day, as stated in the State of World Population 2020 published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

In the world, the situation is precarious but it is even worse for women and girls who are victims of inequality and discrimination. Genital mutilation and child marriage are two of the practices that violate women’s health and dignity.

The United Nations (UN) mentions that inequalities and gender-based discrimination become part of every single situation, even a new pandemic or an old conflict, it causes deep disparities in incomes, and lack of political presence for women. Women and girls face additional risks and obstacles just for being that, women and girls.

On March 08 we commemorate International Women’s Day. Currently, in the midst of a sanitary contingency caused by COVID-19 pandemic, there are not so many things to celebrate, but there are many things we need to build up in order to get equality among men and women to avoid discrimination, mentions the UN.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) found five harmful practices against women in the State of World Population 2020: child marriage, domestic violence, sexual violence, preference for male children, and gender-based discrimination.

“Day after day, health, rights, and future are taken away from tens of thousands of girls. Some of them are victims of female genital mutilation, some others are forced to get married in their childhood. Others suffer from abandonment or hunger just for their gender” details UNFPA.

## They are mutilated

Genital mutilation is a harmful practice committed against women and girls, which means a violation to their fundamental rights to health, physical integrity, lack of discrimination and the stop of cruel and degrading treatments; mentions the report.

It may cause severe physical and psychological injuries. It may turn sexual intercourses into something painful and cause infections, cysts and infertility, obstetric fistula, complications while delivering babies and mortality on the newborns, additionally the risk of getting VHI increases, and it also causes depression, nightmares, panic attacks, and traumas.



In the last available data, we can see that the percentage of women from 15 to 49 years old who went through genital mutilation is about 1% in Cameroon (in 2004) and Uganda (in 2011) until 90% as minimum in Djibouti (in 2006), Egypt (in 2015), Guinea (in 2018) and Mali (2018).



The world instruments for human rights strongly condemn female genital mutilation, however, 4.1 million girls and women were forced to have it in 2020.

About 200 million girls and women in the current population have suffered from some type of genital mutilation in 31 countries, despite that fact, they also lacked services to cover their needs to have continuous attention in issues related to physical and mental health.

### WITHOUT ANY MEDICAL JUSTIFICATION

Female genital mutilation is an invasive procedure on a healthy tissue, with no medical justification at all. It implies partial or total ablation in the external area of female genitals without medical reasons (WHO, 2020). They may consist of scraping or cauterization of genitals, ablation of the clitoris, or even stitches on the labia to reduce the vaginal opening. This procedure is practiced in most cases on girls between their early childhood and 15 years old (WHO, 2020). Turning this invasive practice into something “medical” by medicine experts will never be justified.



## Child marriage, a forbidden but common practice

Child marriage is technically forbidden all around the world, but every day 33 thousands of them are celebrated in the world. It is estimated that in the current population of girls and women, 650 million got married when they were girls, and in 2031 another 150 million girls under 18 will get married, mentions the UNFPA.

Child marriage is a violation to fundamental human rights that deprives girls of education, health, and their long-term perspectives. It is defined as the union of two people when any of them is under 18, however it happens all over the world, and it is even more common in poor areas and rural settlements in some developing countries.

Child marriage takes place in boys and girls, however the most harmful effects of it happen with girls because the number of affected girls is much higher, especially due to the fact of getting married too young an age. When children get married too young, their transition to adult life accelerates and it also becomes pressure for them as they have to get money to cover the expenses of their new families.

Many studies have shown that the quality of life of women who get married before turning 18 is remarkably worse than the one of those who get married later. One of the main reasons is because they suffer from gender-based violence.

Worldwide last year, experiences on physical and sexual violence were higher in married women when they were girls (29 percent) than in those who got married when they were adults (20 percent).

Child marriage perpetuates gender-based violence because of the difference in ages of the couple, power imbalances, autonomy is restricted for women, social isolation as well as female and masculine norms that accept and justify domestic violence. The use of violence or even treat someone to use it, becomes a common practice of men to manipulate and control young women.

### In numbers

650 million women of the current population got married when they were girls.

1 out of four girls is married before turning 18 in Latin America.



150 million women will get married at early age in 2030.

33 thousand marriages take place in the world every day.

## CMT is committed to women

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria, A.C. (CMT) is committed to the rights of women and girls to have a decent life, far from violence and activities that may violate their basic rights.

Dr. Honoris causa, Catalina Mendoza Arredondo, founded CMT with the purpose of improving health conditions on people, however, she figured out that the only way to do it was by helping people in vulnerable conditions.

Poverty, education, and security are important issues for CMT. If those issues are not handled properly, women and girls are put into risk. The UN mentions that the lack of access to education does not allow mutilated women to defeat themselves. Poverty affecting thousands of million people in the world forces parents “to sell” girls in “forced marriages”.

CMT, in its Welfare Ecosystem offers integral solutions to support education, productivity and combat poverty; as they are some of the reasons that cause violation of women rights around the world.

