



# WOMEN & GIRLS STATISTICS

*Last updated June 29, 2020*

- Globally, 9 in 10 girls complete their primary education, though only 3 in 4 complete their lower secondary education.<sup>1</sup> However, in LICs (low-income countries), less than two thirds of girls complete their primary education, and only 1 in 3 completes lower secondary school.<sup>2</sup>
- 132 million girls globally are not in school. This includes 34.3 million girls of primary school age, 30 million girls of lower secondary school age, and 67.4 million girls of upper secondary school age.<sup>3</sup>
- There are 70 million child brides in the world, equating to 1 in 3 girls within developing countries.<sup>4</sup> One in nine will be married before their 15th birthday.<sup>5</sup> The prevalence of child marriage increases in conflict areas.<sup>6</sup>
- In the next decade 14.2 million girls under 18 will be married every year; this translates into 39,000 girls married each day. This will rise to an average of 15.1 million girls a year, starting in 2021 until 2030, if present trends continue.
- Over 250 million more women now own a mobile phone in LMICs (low middle income countries) than in 2014, meaning eighty percent of women in these markets are now mobile owners in 2109.<sup>7</sup> However, there remain 433 million women who don't own mobile phones in LMICs (low- and middle-income countries),<sup>8</sup> thus limiting their ability to pursue healthcare, finance, civic engagement, education, and other lifelines.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Wodon, Montenegro, Nguyen, Onoguruwa. 2011. World Bank. "Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls".

<sup>3</sup> Global Partnership for Education, 2016

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF. 2018. "Child Marriage in the Middle East and North Africa.

<sup>5</sup> USAID. 2017. "We do gender equality."

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF. 2018. "Child Marriage in the Middle East and North Africa.

<sup>7</sup> GSMA, 2019

<sup>8</sup> GSMA, 2019

[www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GSMA-Connected-Women-The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2019.pdf](http://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GSMA-Connected-Women-The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2019.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> USAID. 2018. "What is the digital gender divide?" <https://www.usaid.gov/wcc>



- For persons with disabilities, the overall literacy rate is merely 3%. According to UNESCO, this number drops to 1% for women and girls in this demographic.<sup>10</sup>
- Disabled women and girls are twice as likely to experience gender-based violence compared to females without disabilities.<sup>11</sup>
- Each year, an estimated 295,000 women (99% of whom are in developing countries) die from pregnancy and birth-related complications.<sup>12</sup>
- Though, between 2000 and 2017, the maternal mortality ratio (MMR, number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births) dropped by about 38% worldwide.<sup>13</sup>
- A girl's income increases up to 20% for every year she stays in primary school. Continued education delays marriage and is also a deterrent to becoming a victim of violence.<sup>14</sup>
- It is estimated that at least 200 million girls and women in 30 countries have been subjected to female genital mutilation.<sup>15</sup>
- It is estimated there are roughly 9.34 million women-owned SMEs globally in over 140 countries.
- Women own approximately 8 to 10 million small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which constitutes 31% to 38% of all SMEs in new markets.<sup>16</sup>
- Of the 821+ million people who are food insecure globally, 60 percent are women and minors.<sup>17</sup> On average, rural women account for nearly half the agricultural workforce in LICs (low income countries).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> UNESCO, 2018

<sup>11</sup> USAID. 2015. "Empowering Women and Girls"

<sup>12</sup> World Health Organization, 2019

<sup>13</sup> World Health Organization, 2019,

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>

<sup>14</sup> WFP (World Food Programme). 2019.

<sup>15</sup> UNICEF. 2016. "UNICEF's Data work on FMC/C".

<sup>16</sup> World Bank, 2019

<sup>17</sup> World Food Programme., 2019

<sup>18</sup> ReliefWeb, Gender Inequality and Food Insecurity, Report 2019



- Women farmers who control food resources reportedly have higher-quality diets, as do girls.<sup>19</sup>
- Despite the crucial role women have in household food security, women still face discrimination and limited bargaining power in many countries, particularly in land rights, access to credit, and farm extension services. Women experience a disproportionate degree of exclusion from political representation and decisions on land distribution.<sup>20</sup>
- If women farmers had the same access to resources as men, the number of hungry people in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million due to productivity gains.<sup>21</sup>
- Women reinvest up to 90% of their earnings back into their households and manage it toward nutrition, food, healthcare, school, and income-generating activities, helping to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.<sup>22</sup>
- The number of female-led households is increasing in rural areas in many countries as rural men migrate due to the lack of employment, conflict, and other crises.. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 31 per cent of rural households are female-led, while in Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia, 14-17 per cent are female-led. While there are different types of female-led households, in almost all countries, female-led households are concentrated among the poorer strata of society and often have lower income than male-led households due to discrepancies in gender based laws.<sup>23</sup>
- Women are responsible for half of the world's food production.<sup>24</sup>
- Women produce between 60 and 80 percent of the food in LMICs (low and middle income countries).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> ReliefWeb, Gender Inequality and Food Insecurity, Report 2019

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Food and Agricultural Organization, 2019

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Food and Agricultural Organization, Women and Population Division, 2019

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.