

# Violence Against Children In and Around Schools in Rwanda

Violence against children is preventable, and the education sector can play a critical role in driving change through schools and school systems. This note summarizes the state of school related violence in Rwanda, and highlights key data gaps.

## Bullying

**Bullying** refers to repeated emotional or physical aggressive behaviours including any form of isolating, rejecting or excluding from a group, or hitting, kicking, pushing by peers. Bullying data is not available.<sup>1</sup>



## Sexual Violence

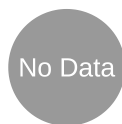
**Sexual violence** takes different forms, and includes non-consensual completed or attempted sexual contact or acts of a sexual nature that do not involve physical contact, and any form of coercion into sexual situations. Available data indicates that 13% of females aged 15 to 19 **experienced sexual violence in their lifetime**, with almost none of these incidents perpetrated by teachers or peers in 2019. Data for boys is not available.<sup>2</sup>



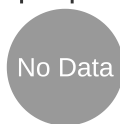
## Corporal Punishment

**Corporal punishment** refers to any form of punishment involving physical force intended to cause pain or discomfort.

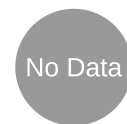
Students who experienced corporal punishment from teachers (%)<sup>2</sup>



Caretakers who agree with using corporal punishment (%)



Children who experienced corporal punishment from caretakers (%)



## Is corporal punishment banned in these settings...<sup>3</sup>



## Data Gaps

DHS (2014, 2019) provides sexual violence data. Data cannot be broken down by disability or LGBTQ+ status. VACS 2015 is not publicly available.<sup>4</sup> The table below denotes available data.

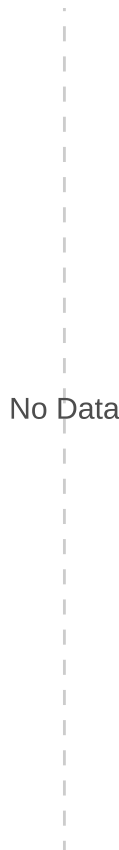
Type of Violence	Aged 6 to 12	Aged 13 to 22	2008 - 2012	2013 - 2018	2019 or after
Physical (Peers)		✓		VACS	
Emotional (Peers)					
Sexual (Peers)		✓		VACS	
Sexual (Teachers)		✓	DHS	DHS, VACS	DHS
Corporal Punishment (Teachers)		✓	DHS <sup>2*</sup>	DHS <sup>2*</sup> , VACS	DHS <sup>2*</sup>
Corporal Punishment (Caretakers)					

# Rwanda Compared to Other Countries

The graphs below include only countries with data from the same international survey, which means the data were collected from children of similar ages using the same questions. **Below are country averages.**

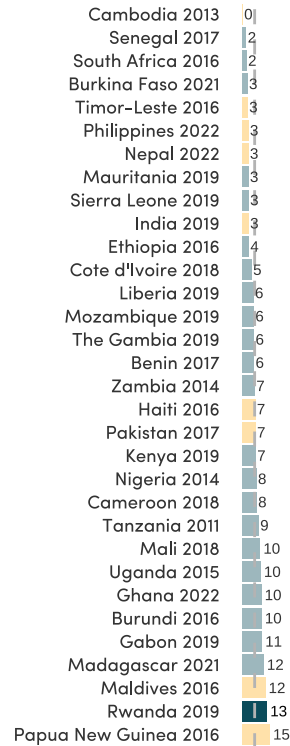


## Bullying data is not available



## Sexual Violence is...

6 percentage points higher than the Sub-Saharan Africa average, and 7 percentage points higher than the average for low- and middle-income countries with data.



DHS 2019 (+/-) 3 years

## Corporal Punishment (Teachers)



## Corporal Punishment (Caretakers)



## Notes

- International surveys cover different forms of violence and do not use a standard definition of violence.
- This brief covers international survey data. We recommend complementing it with national surveys (e.g., household surveys) when available.
- The violence figures included in this brief are likely an underestimate, as many victims do not disclose their experiences of violence.<sup>5</sup>
- Country comparisons created with DHS, VACS, and GSHS data, include low- and middle-income countries within +/- 3 years of Rwanda's survey round. Graphs created with MICS, TIMSS, PIRLS, PISA, PISA-D, and ERCE, include low- and middle-income countries with data on the same survey round.

## Sources

1. Examples of surveys that include questions on bullying are PIRLS, PISA, TIMSS, and GSHS.
2. Calculations using DHS 2019. Surveys women aged 15 - 19. While DHS asks about teacher and peer perpetrators of physical violence, we exclude from our analysis as the age range does not reflect the period when children are most likely to experience corporal punishment. If the focus is on physical violence against women by teachers starting at age 15, DHS data can provide relevant insights. The question on sexual violence asks about the perpetrator of the first incident experienced by the respondent.
3. [End Corporal Punishment of Children](#), data accessed 2024. Note: "Some" represents cases where prohibition is stated for specific provisions (eg., [forms of corporal punishment or school levels](#)). Alternative Care refers to cases where a child's primary caregiver is not their parents (eg. foster care).
4. [Evans, Hares, Smarrelli, and Wu](#). CGD 2023.
5. [Smarrelli, Wu, Baago-Rasmussen, Hares, and Naker](#). CGD 2024.