

FACT SHEET

Violence against Women in Kenya

Violence against women is widespread in Kenya, with domestic violence, rape and gender-based violence reported daily. The situation was exacerbated during the post-election violence in 2007, when an estimated 350,000 Kenyans were internally displaced and the death toll rose to 1,000.¹ Thousands of women and children were raped during this volatile period.

- In Kenya, 83 percent of women have faced childhood physical abuse and 61 percent as adults.²
- In Nairobi, 1 out of 5 women has been sexually harassed at work or school.³
- National studies in 2002 revealed 60 percent of married women reported having been victims of domestic abuse.⁴
- Kenyan women are most likely to face violence in the home, from someone they know.
- Women of all ages, education levels and social groups, in rural and urban settings are subjected to violence in Kenya.
- Perpetrators of reported violence are largely men, and violence can take on very violent forms, as demonstrated by the number of rape cases in Kenya.
- Women and girls suffer physical, sexual and psychological violence daily, with physical violence being the most prevalent or at least the most reported.
- While exact numbers are unavailable on violence against women, at Kenyatta Hospital, currently an average of 60–70 women are treated for gender-based violence per month — an increasing number for domestic and other forms of intimate partner violence.⁵
- Kenya has the following legislation to protect women and girls from violence: Children's Act; Sexual Offences Act; HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Act; and Public Officer Ethics Act.
- There is still no law that protects women and girls from domestic violence, and marital rape is not considered a crime in the country.
- Civil society organizations have been working for the passage of three bills that address violence against women: Matrimony Property Bill; Marriage Bill; and the Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Bill.

¹ Feminist Africa. Issue 10. 2008 - Militarism, Conflict and Women's Activism, Lessons from Kenya: Women and the Post-Election Violence - by Muthoni Wanyeki p.91.

² Johnston. Domestic Abuse in Kenya. Nairobi, Population Communication Africa (PCA), 2002, p.10; T. Johnston. Violence and Abuse of Women and Girls in Kenya. Nairobi, PCA, 2002, p. 12.

³ Based on a sample of 195 women survivors of violence. United Nations Centre for Human Settlement. 2002. Survivors Speak: A Snapshot Survey on Violence Against Women in Nairobi Safer Cities Series No. 3. UN HABITAT, Nairobi: 12.

⁴ T. Johnston. Domestic Abuse in Kenya. Nairobi, Population Communication Africa (PCA), 2002, p.10; T. Johnston. Violence and Abuse of Women and Girls in Kenya. Nairobi, PCA, 2002, p. 12.

⁵ Information based on information provided by Kenyatta Hospital in interview with UNIFEM, October 2009.