

ENDING IMPUNITY FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN and GIRLS

Some facts and figures on Violence against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls is the most common but least punished crime in the world. It is also perhaps the most socially tolerated of human rights violations, and it occurs in every region, country and culture. Such violence transcends income, class, race and ethnicity. Furthermore, it impedes development and prevents women and girls from enjoying their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

- Violence Against Women is defined as ‘Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.’¹
- The costs of violence against women – both indirect and direct— are extremely high. These costs include the direct costs of services to treat and support abused women and their children and to bring perpetrators to justice. The indirect costs include lost employment and productivity, and the costs in human pain and suffering.
- Gender-based violence covers a range of injustices - from systematic rape to pre-birth sex selection to female genital mutilation - Globally, at least one in three women and girls have been beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime. Usually, the abuser is a member of her own family or someone known to her.²
- Globally, women between the age of fifteen and forty-four are more likely to be maimed or die as a result of male violence than through cancer, malaria, traffic accidents or war combined.³

- Boys who witness their fathers’ violence are 10 times more likely to engage in spouse abuse in later adulthood than boys from non-violent homes.⁴
- A study in the New York Times suggests that in the United States one in five adolescent girls become the victims of physical or sexual violence, or both, in a dating relationship.⁵
- A large study in India found that 43.5 per cent of women reported that they were psychologically abused by their partners, and 40.3 per cent reported that they were physically abused. 50 per cent of women who were physically abused reported violence during pregnancy.⁶
- According to Physicians for Human Rights, 50 per cent of all women in Sierra Leone were subjected to sexual violence, including rape, torture and slavery.⁷
- Girls who are targeted for violence are less likely to complete their education. A study in Nicaragua found that children of female victims of violence left school an average of four years earlier than other children.⁸
- Recent South African police statistics show 21,000 cases of child rape or assault reported, against children as young as nine months old. Only an estimated 1 in 36 cases of rape is reported.⁹
- At least 60 million girls who would otherwise be expected to be alive are “missing” from various populations, mostly in Asia, as a result of sex-selective abortions, infanticide or neglect.¹⁰

¹ As defined in the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (A/RES/48/104, 20 December 1993).

² UN. *Secretary-General’s in-depth study on violence against women (2006) (A/61/122/Add.1)*

³ Vlachová, M. and Lea Biason (eds.) "Women in an Insecure World: Violence against Women Facts, Figures and Analysis". DCAF, 2005.

⁴ US. *Family Violence Interventions for the Justice System*, 1993.

⁵ New York Times, 01/08/01.

⁶ International Center for Research on Women. *Domestic Violence in India: A Summary Report of a Multi-Site Household Survey*, 2003. International Center for Research on Women, Washington, DC.

⁷ Vlachová, M. and Lea Biason (eds) "Women in an Insecure World: Violence against Women Facts, Figures and Analysis". DCAF, 2005.

⁸ UN. *Secretary-General’s in-depth study on violence against women (2006) (A/61/122/Add.1)*

⁹ http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_violence.html

¹⁰ <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/ch03.html>





VIOLENCE AT WORK

Some facts and figures on Violence against Women and Girls at Work

At work, violence against women and girls often occur out of sight of the general public, in one-on-one situations, and result in emotional rather than physical injury. This type of violence, however, produces extensive costs for both the employer and the recipient.

- In the UK, Domestic Violence is estimated to cost the economy £ 2.7 billion a year in decreased productivity, lost wages and sick pay. The total direct and indirect cost of domestic violence, including pain and suffering, was estimated to be £23 billion per year, or £440 per person. Because of this, the government-led initiative Corporate Alliance has come into force, which sees companies working with charities to help sufferers among their workforce.¹¹
- Sexual harassment in the workplace is directed at mostly women, especially those in less powerful positions in the labour market. 40 to 50 per cent of the women in the European Union have reported some form of sexual harassment in the workplace¹². This type of violent harassment also often imposes substantial costs on both victims and its employers¹³.
- Statistics show that women are at greater risk of mental violence (i.e. bullying) at the workplace than men. Women are also less hesitant than men to label themselves as bullied.¹⁴
- Studies suggest that health-care workers, a sector often predominated by women, are particularly at risk of workplace violence. In the United States, 85 per cent of all non-fatal assaults occur in retailing and servicing industries. It is estimated that healthcare workers face 16 times the risk of violence from patients/clients than other service workers face.¹⁵

- It has been found that violence against working children is often "part of a collective workplace culture of physical brutality, shouting, bad language, and casual violence including sexual harassment, and in extreme cases, even rape or murder". These dramatically affect girls, who are often performing economic or non economic activities, out of sight.¹⁶
- According to recent ILO (2006) estimates, 218 million girls and boys are trapped in child labour¹⁷, of whom 126 million are in Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL), which includes commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), pornography, trafficking, illicit activities, armed conflict, and a wide array of hazardous activities as defined in the ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182.¹⁸
- The ILO estimates that more girl children less than 6 years of age are working in domestic services than any other category of work or child labour, which is among the most invisible of female-dominated occupations.¹⁹
- In 2000, the ILO reported that 5.7 million children were in forced or bonded labour, 1.8 million in prostitution and pornography, and 1.2 million were victims of trafficking.²⁰
- The number of women forced or sold into prostitution is estimated worldwide at anywhere between 700,000 and 4,000,000 per year. Profits from sex slavery are estimated at seven to twelve billion US dollars per year²¹

¹¹ BBC News. *Tackling Domestic Violence – at work*, (March 14, 2006). UK

¹² UN. *Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women (2006) (A/61/122/Add.1*

¹³ McCann, D. *Sexual harassment at work: National and international responses* (2005), Conditions of Work and Employment Series No. 2.

¹⁴ Chappell, D. and Vittorio Di Martiono. *Violence at Work (3rd Ed)*, ILO. pg. 63.

¹⁵ Elliott, P. (1997). *Violence in health care: what nurse managers need to know*.

¹⁶ *World Report on Violence Against Children*, prepared by the Independent Expert of the Secretary General on Violence against children, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro , November 2006.

¹⁷ Negative child labour is considered at least 1 hour of work if the child is younger than 12 yrs of age; regular work (14-43 hrs/week) by children under the minimum age of not less than 14yrs old for developing countries (ILO C138), 'light work' (less than 14 hrs/week) for children older than 12 yrs; harmful to a child's health and/or development; prejudicial to school attendance.

¹⁸ ILO *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*, Geneva, 2006.

¹⁹ ILO. *Helping Hands or Shackled Lives: Understanding Child Domestic Labour and Responses to it*, Geneva, 2004.

²⁰ ILO. *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*, Geneva 2006.

²¹ UN. *Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women (2006) (A/61/122/Add.1)*



International Labour Office – Geneva



Bureau for Gender Equality