



FACTS ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE
16 DÍAS DE ACTIVISMO CONTRA LA VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO
16 JOURS D'ACTIVISME CONTRE LA VIOLENCE DE GENRE
25 NOV - 10 DEC <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu>



“Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. And it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development, and peace.”

Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations
“A World Free of Violence Against Women”
United Nations Global Videoconference, 8 March 1999

Gender-Based Violence

- The World Health Organization estimates that at least one of every three women globally will be beaten, raped, or otherwise abused during her lifetime. In most cases, the abuser is a member of her own family.¹
- Violence kills and disables as many women between the ages of 15 and 44 as cancer. And its toll on women's health surpasses that of traffic accidents and malaria combined.²
- Survivors of sexual assault are 3 times more likely to suffer from depression, 6 times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, 13 times more likely to abuse alcohol, 26 times more likely to abuse drugs, and 4 times more likely to contemplate suicide.³
- About 3% of American men—or 1 in 33—have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. Approximately 2.78 million men in the United States have been victims of sexual assault or rape.⁴
- An estimated 100 to 140 million girls and women worldwide are currently living with the consequences of female genital mutilation (FGM).⁵
- It is estimated that close to 90% of current war casualties are civilians, the majority of whom are women and children, compared to a century ago when 90% of those who lost their lives were military personnel.⁶

Violence Perpetrated by State Actors

- In countries where armed conflict is rife, there have been reports of rape being used as a ‘tool of war’. Amnesty International reported that between 1999 and 2000 in every armed conflict that they investigated, the torture of women was reported.⁷ In some cases, women have been intentionally infected with HIV, with the aim of causing a ‘slow death’.⁸

- Physicians for Human Rights surveyed 603 households in Burma/Myanmar's Chin state in 2009 and confirmed 17 cases of rape over a one-year period—all committed by Tatmadaw forces. One-third of the victims were under the age of 15.⁹
- During the Egyptian uprising in 2011, it was widely reported that female protestors were physically and verbally abused by armed troops, and subjected to forced “virginity” tests.¹⁰
- Military spending in 2011 is estimated to have been \$1,738 billion. Approximately \$711 billion was spent by the United States alone.¹¹
- More than 250 cases of rape in several camps were reported in the first 150 days after the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti.¹²

Domestic Violence and the Role of Small Arms

- Research shows that having a small arm in the home increases the overall risk of someone being murdered by 41%; for women in particular the risk was nearly tripled.¹³
- The most common act of violence against women is being slapped—an experience reported by 9% of women in Japan and 52% in provincial Peru. Rates of sexual abuse also varies greatly around the world—with partner rape being reported by 6% of women from Serbia and Montenegro, 46% of women from provincial Bangladesh, and 59% of women in Ethiopia.¹⁴
- A 2005 study reported that 7% of partnered Canadian women experienced violence at the hands of a spouse between 1999 and 2004. Of these battered women, nearly one-quarter (23%) reported being beaten, choked, or threatened with a knife or gun.¹⁵
- In Colombia, women are victims of 95% of all cases of spousal violence. Half of the women who suffer from aggression fall into the age range of 15 to 24 years.¹⁶
- Domestic and sexual violence in the United Kingdom costs the country £5.7 billion per year, including costs to the criminal justice system, health care costs, housing and the loss to the economy. In the United States, the health care cost of intimate partner rape, physical assault and stalking totals \$5.8 billion each year, nearly \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health care services. Lost productivity from paid work and household chores and lifetime earnings lost by homicide victims total nearly \$1.8 billion.¹⁷
- Of the nearly 900 million small arms in the world today, more than 75% are in the hands of private individuals—most of them men—and stored in homes.¹⁸

Sexual Violence during and after Conflict

- Reports on rape during conflict detail profound brutality towards women and girls, including serious beatings, mutilation or removal of the genitals, rape with sharp objects, and gunshots to the genitals. Others have witnessed the death of friends and family members from similar forms of brutality.¹⁹
- Due to systematic and exceptionally violent gang rapes, doctors in the Democratic Republic of Congo now classify vaginal destruction as a war crime. Thousands of Congolese girls and women suffer from vaginal fistula—tissue tears in the vagina, bladder and rectum—after surviving brutal rapes in which guns, branches and broken bottles were used to violate them.²⁰
- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it is believed that around 200,000 women and girls have been raped since 1998.²¹
- Estimates of the total number of women subjected to sexual violence during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the 1990s vary from 14,000 to 50,000.²²

¹ World Health Organization. (2005) “WHO Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women’s Responses.”

http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study.

² World Health Organization. (2005) “WHO Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women’s Responses.”

http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study.

³ Krug EG et al., eds. (2002) *World report on violence and health*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

⁴ National Institute of Justice & Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. (1998) *Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/172837.pdf>.

⁵ World Health Organization. (2008) *Female Genital Mutilation*. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/>.

⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2000) Fact Sheet No. 5: Women and Armed Conflict.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/fs5.htm>.

⁷ Amnesty International. (2007) *Stop Violence against Women. Rape as a Tool of War: A Fact Sheet*.

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/issues/women-s-rights>.

⁸ United Nations Population Fund. (2005) “Women and Young People in Humanitarian Crises,” *State of the World Population 2005*. http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2005/english/ch8/chap8_page4.htm.

⁹ Physicians for Human Rights. (2011) *Life under the Junta: Evidence of Crimes Against Humanity in Burma’s Chin State*. Cambridge, MA: Physicians for Human Rights. <http://nobelwomensinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/war-on-women-web.pdf>.

¹⁰ McGrath, Cam. (2011) “Egypt: Virginity Checks are Army’s Latest Weapon.” Inter Press Service News Agency.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2011/03/egypt-virginity-checks-are-armys-latest-weapon/>.

¹¹ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. (2012) *Background Paper on SIPRI Military Expenditure Data, 2011*.

<http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex>.

¹² Amnesty International. (2011) *Aftershocks: Women Speak Out Against Sexual Violence in Haiti’s Camps*.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR36/001/2011/en/57237fad-f97b-45ce-8fdb-68cb457a304c/amr360012011en.pdf>.

¹³ Wiebe, D.J., (2003) ‘Homicide and Suicide Risks Associated with Firearms in the Home: A National Case Control Study’, *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, Volume 41, American College of Emergency Physicians.

http://parliamentaryforum.org/sites/default/files/2%20-%20Violence_against_women_and_salw_parliamentary_handbook.pdf.

¹⁴ World Health Organization. (2005) “WHO Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women’s Responses.”

http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study.

¹⁵ Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (2005) *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005*.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2005000-eng.pdf>.

¹⁶ Oxfam International. (2009) *Sexual Violence in Colombia: Instruments of War*.

<http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bp-sexual-violence-colombia.pdf>.

¹⁷ United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2003) *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in the United States*. http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/ipv_cost/IPVBook-Final-Feb18.pdf.

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- ¹⁸ Disarm Domestic Violence Campaign Bulletin and Action Kit: <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/244>.
- ¹⁹ Human Rights Watch. (2002) *The War within the War: Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo*. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/drc/Congo0602.pdf>.
- ²⁰ Amnesty International. (2004) *Stop Violence against Women: It's in our Hands*. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ACT77/003/2004>.
- ²¹ UN Women. (2012) Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_war_peace/conflict_related_sexual_violence.php.
- ²² Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm & Rahel Kunz. (2007) *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict: Global Overview and Implications for the Security Sector*. Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/sexualviolence_conflict_full%5B1%5D.pdf.