End Violence Against Women

19th - 20th January 2019
#WomensWave
GLOBAL ANNIVERSARY
Introduction

The heart of the theme for our second-Women’s March anniversary event is “End Violence Against Women” because it is imperative to expose the magnitude of sexual harassment and other forms of violence that women suffer everywhere, every day worldwide.

Women’s March Global has put together this toolkit so that we as individuals are aware of the gross atrocities and struggles faced by women and girls all over the world. Through this toolkit, we aim to provide the global community a perspective into the recent statistics and laws of the various types of violence faced by women. It scratches only the surface of the information and resources available.

One in three women and girls experience violence in their lifetime—that is one too many. Too often, it is normalized and left unpunished. No matter where violence against women happens, what form it takes, and whom it impacts, it must be stopped. By focusing on “End Violence Against Women” as the major theme for our anniversary march, we at Women’s March Global have joined the UNiTE Campaign in solidarity to show our support to women all across the globe and join the movement to end violence against women.

On Jan. 19-20 join us in solidarity with the Women’s Wave and speak out for the rights, freedom, and justice for women and allies everywhere.
Overview

The World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that about one in three (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.¹

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, institutional or structural violence is ‘any form of structural inequality or institutional discrimination that maintains a woman in a subordinate position, whether physical or ideological, to other people within her family, household or community’.²

Research suggests that women with disabilities are more likely to experience domestic violence, emotional abuse, and sexual assault than women without disabilities.³ In 2012, 1.3 million violent crimes—including rape and physical assault—occurred against people with disabilities and that number has been steadily increasing since 2008, making people with disabilities one of the most harmed groups in the United States.⁴

Violence against women goes beyond the interpersonal, direct violence that is captured in gender-based violence research and advocacy like domestic abuse, rape, femicides. The institutional, indirect, and state-sanctioned violence is also at the core of the varying forms of violence that women directly experience. Understanding the interconnectedness of how policies, laws, and misogyny impact women are important so that we can work collective to break down the systems that support recurring violence against women. Violence against women is pervasive throughout the world. It is a complex web of social norms, institutional practices, and cultural values that weaves its way through the entirety of women’s lives.
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Most of the direct violence that women experience is intimate partner violence. Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of women who have been in a relationship report that they have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner in their lifetime. Globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner.

Although violence against others is usually a crime in most states, some women cannot find legal protection against their abusers when this violence occurs within the confines of the home. Throughout the world, “more than one billion women lack legal protection against domestic sexual violence.”

“1.4 billion women lack legal protection against domestic economic violence.”

For sexual violence experienced at home at the hand of an intimate partner or family member, laws are lacking in more than one in three countries. For domestic economic violence, half of the countries do not have specific legislation. For two thirds of countries, unmarried intimate partners are not protected under the laws. Even when laws exist, women fear to report crimes as often further abuse comes from the very agencies that should protect them, and the laws are not enforced.
An average of 137 women across the world are killed by a partner or family member every day, according to new data released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). More than half of the 87,000 women killed in 2017 were reported as dying at the hands of those closest to them. Of that figure, approximately 30,000 women were killed by an intimate partner and another 20,000 by a relative.

**More than half of women killed were victims of relatives or partners**

Estimated breakdown of female homicides globally, 2017

| Killed by a partner or family member: | 50,000 |
| Other female homicides: | 37,000 |

Source: UNODC 2018
Femicide is denying women the right to life.

The regions with the highest femicide levels largely correspond to the regions with the highest overall rates of lethal violence. Eastern Europe and the Russian Federation, however, show disproportionately high rates of femicide with respect to homicides in general.11

In Guatemala, two women are murdered, on average, each day.12

In India, 8,093 cases of dowry-related death were reported in 2007; an unknown number of murders of women and young girls were falsely labeled ‘suicides’ or ‘accidents’.13

In Australia, Canada, Israel, South Africa, and the United States, between 40% and 70% of female murder victims were killed by their intimate partners.14

In the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, 66% of murders of women were committed by husbands, boyfriends or other family members.15
In 2014, 4.4 million women in Italy were physically or psychologically abused by their partner: one woman in four among the ones in a relationship.\textsuperscript{16}
Sexual Assault

Worldwide, up to 50% of sexual assaults are committed against girls under 16. In 2015, the Military Services received a total of 6,083 reports of sexual assault involving service members as either victims or subjects in 2015. In 2015, 4,736 service members reported being raped or sexually assaulted while in the military.

One in five countries do not have appropriate laws against sexual harassment in employment. The proportion is six in 10 countries for sexual harassment in education, and four in five countries for sexual harassment in public spaces.

However, a 2014 U.S. Department of Defense commissioned study estimated 20,300 active duty service members were sexually assaulted, 116,600 service members were sexually harassed, and 43,900 active-duty service members experienced gender discrimination that year.

Of the substantiated complaints from 2015, only 7% of perpetrators received courts-martial or discharge, and 2012 and 2014 studies found that 62% of service member victims of sexual assault report retaliation in response to having reported the crime. Only about one out of every estimated 100 sexual assaults in the military results in the perpetrator being convicted.

There could be more than 400,000 untested rape kits across America.
According to Equality Now’s *The World’s Shame Report*, 2016: Around the world, rape and sexual abuse are everyday violent occurrences -- affecting close to a billion women and girls over their lifetimes. However, despite the pervasiveness of these crimes, laws are insufficient, inconsistent, not systematically enforced and, sometimes, promote violence.

The findings illustrate that governments still have a long way to go to transform their laws, policies, and practices into instruments to a) prevent sexual violence, b) provide better access to justice for victims (including specialized services) and c) effectively punish sexual violence crimes.

For example, Iraq still has so-called ‘Marry your Rapist’ provision within the law which exempt perpetrators from punishment if they marry their victims.
Abortion

In Argentina an estimated 500,000 abortions occur every year in Argentina, representing an estimated 40% of all pregnancies.\(^{21}\)

During 2010–2014, an estimated 6.5 million induced abortions occurred each year in Latin America and the Caribbean—up from 4.4 million during 1990–1994.\(^{22}\)

As of 2017, 42% of women of reproductive age live in the 125 countries where abortion is highly restricted (prohibited altogether or allowed only to save a woman’s life or protect her health).\(^{23}\)

The vast majority (93%) of countries with such highly restrictive laws are in developing regions. In contrast, broadly liberal laws are found in nearly all countries in Europe and Northern America, as well as in several countries in Asia.\(^{24}\) Of all abortions, an estimated 55% are safe (i.e., done using a
recommended method and by an appropriately trained provider), 31% are less safe (meet either method or provider criterion), and 14% are least safe (meet neither criteria). The more restrictive the legal setting, the higher the proportion of abortions that are least safe—ranging from less than 1% in the least-restrictive countries to 31% in the most-restrictive countries. After

In 14 developing countries where unsafe abortion is prevalent, 40% of women who have an abortion develop complications that require medical attention. In all developing regions combined (except Eastern Asia), an estimated 6.9 million women are treated annually for such complications; however, many more who need treatment do not get timely care.

Worldwide, 25 million unsafe abortions (45% of all abortions) occurred every year between 2010 and 2014, according to a new study by WHO and the Guttmacher Institute published today in The Lancet. The majority of unsafe abortions, or 97%, occurred in developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
Economic abuse - Sex discrimination in economic laws restricts women from being economically independent, limiting access to inheritance and property ownership as well as to employment opportunities, thereby, reinforcing gender stereotypes. Explore these laws.

Women earn 77.9 cents for every dollar earned by men. In other words, the median salary for women is roughly 22% lower than the median salary for men.28

There are numerous examples of discrimination against women of colour from various backgrounds in the course of applying for jobs, and in many countries this has become a structural phenomenon. For example, in France, an experiment showed that a woman with a Senegalese sounding name had only an 8.4% chance of being called for a job interview, as compared to a 22.6% chance for women with a French-sounding name.
Incarceration

Mexico, found a 103.3 percent increase in women in prison just between 2014 and 2016.\(^{29}\)

This reflects a larger trend throughout Latin America: The number of women in prison climbed 51.6 percent between 2000 and 2015 compared with 20 percent for men. In Brazil, it went up by 146 percent between 2005 and 2012 for women and 70 percent for men, according to UN statistics.\(^ {30}\)

The vast majority of women going to prison in Latin America are single moms.\(^ {31}\)

When a woman gets sent to prison, the impact can be especially devastating, since she’s usually the head of the household.\(^ {32}\)

Women in jail are the fastest growing correctional population in the United States, increasing 14-fold between 1970 and 2014. Nearly 80% of women in jail are mothers, and most are single parents. Nearly 2/3 of incarcerated women in jail are women of colour: 44% are black, 15% are hispanic, and 5% are of other racial or ethnic backgrounds.
Female Genital Mutilation is the partial or complete removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is mostly carried out—without anesthetic—on girls between infancy and age 15.

It has zero health benefits and often results in lifelong health problems, increased risks during childbirth, psychological trauma, and even death.

Read more about FGM →

Equality Now has been at the forefront of global efforts to eliminate FGM for over two decades, pushing for laws that protect girls and criminalize the practice, and supporting grassroots activists working to end FGM in their communities.

WHERE DOES FGM OCCUR?

Countries with the highest prevalence rates are in the African continent and in the Middle East, but FGM also occurs in Asia, Australia, Latin America, New Zealand, North America, and Western Europe.

In countries, such as the UK and the US, with diaspora communities originating from high-prevalence for FGM countries, girls are frequently at risk of “vacation cutting,” i.e. being brought to their families’ home country during school vacations to undergo FGM.³³
WHY IS FGM PERFORMED?

The causes of female genital mutilation include a mix of cultural, religious, and social factors within families and communities. It is associated with cultural ideals of femininity and modesty, which include the notion that girls are “clean” and “beautiful” after removal of body parts that are considered “male” or “unclean.” Typically seen as a rite of passage into womanhood, it is often an immediate precursor to child marriage. Ultimately, it is a way to control girls’ and women’s sexuality.

As of 2018, Equality Now has ongoing campaigns in the United States, India, Kenya, and Liberia to ensure that the respective governments ensure and enact laws that ban the practice of FGM.34

In October 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, a roadmap whose “goals and targets will stimulate action over the next 15 years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet.” Covering 17 goals and 169 targets, “Agenda 2030” addresses many issues ranging from poverty to HIV/AIDS to climate change. And, for the first time, the gender equality goal includes targets aimed at ending violence and discrimination against women and girls, including a specific target on eliminating female genital mutilation (FGM) and child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM), both of which have an irreversible and lifelong impact.
“Child marriage” is a global problem, affecting 15 million girls each year.\textsuperscript{35}

Over the next ten years, more than 41,000 girls will be married off every day before age 18 if current trends continue.\textsuperscript{36} It legitimizes abuse, violatess girls’ human rights and denies them their autonomy—all under the guise of culture, tradition, and religion.

Through a combination of advocacy reporting, strategic litigation, and partnership-building, Equality Now pressures governments to end this harmful practice and address the gender inequalities that drive it, creating a safer, healthier world for girls.

In Iran, the number of girls married off under the age of 15 has risen and adoptive parents can now marry their adopted children, which will mean adopted girls will be even more vulnerable to child marriage.\textsuperscript{37}

In Egypt, a legislation was discussed to lower the minimum age of marriage to as low as nine years old.\textsuperscript{38}
According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) 47% of girls in India are married before the legal minimum age of 18.\textsuperscript{39}

Child marriages account for over 35% of all marriages in Mauritania according to UNFPA.\textsuperscript{40}

According to UNICEF 35, 55% of girls in Mali are married or in a union before they reach 18 and 15% by the age of 15.\textsuperscript{41}

Although it is difficult to get accurate statistics in Afghanistan, UNICEF estimates that 46% of girls are married before the age of 18 and 15% of them before the age of 15.\textsuperscript{42}

Tanzania’s marriage law allows girls to be married at the age of 14 with parental or a guardian’s consent.\textsuperscript{43}

Addressing child marriage is a challenge in Papua New Guinea as it is hard to ascertain the age of the girl child due to high levels of illiteracy and birth registers not being kept up to date. Elderly men with money often lure girls into marriage.\textsuperscript{44}

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) over 30% of women aged between 20 and 24 were married before the age of 18 in Guatemala.\textsuperscript{45}

Under the Personal Status Law of Syria, the minimum age of marriage is 18 for men and 17 for girls, but a judge can register the marriage of girls as young as 13 years old if the father or grandfather has given his consent.\textsuperscript{46}

In Jordan, the minimum age of marriage is 18 but girls as young as 15 can be married off with the consent of a guardian and a judge.\textsuperscript{47}

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimates that over the next ten years more than 140 million girls will be married before their 18th birthday.
Migrant, Refugee, and Undocumented Women

Gendered power relations are reproduced and exacerbated during migration, which leaves women even more susceptible to all forms of gender-based violence during the migration process. Alongside important discussions about ending gender-based violence targeting women in refugee camps, it is essential to consider the everyday violence some immigrant women suffer when settling in a new country.48

A UNFPA report on women and migration shows that there are 94.5 million women migrants and that women make up 49.6% of international migrants worldwide.49 According to UN reports, 60% of preventable maternal deaths take place in humanitarian settings and at least one in five refugees or displaced women are estimated to have experienced sexual violence.50

Undocumented immigrant women are among the most vulnerable workers in the U.S. and often fill the most physically and mentally challenging jobs in society. Immigrant women and girls are perceived to be more legally and socially vulnerable.51 Studies have also shown that youth from underserved populations are more likely to be victims of violence including sexual
assault. Language barriers between victims and police officers significantly affect the outcome of victims’ interactions with police and deter many immigrant and limited English proficient (LEP) women from reporting abuse.
Islamophobia

Muslim women who wear religious dress are the main targets of state discriminatory policies and violent hate crimes. Civil rights complaints in the U.S. filed with one Muslim advocacy group rose from 366 in 2000 to 2,467 in 2006, an increase of 674%.

State discriminatory policies include discourses and laws that prohibit women in hijab to work in certain professions, as well as hijab bans for young women in girls in educational institutions.

These discourses often instrumentalise feminist agendas, which in the case of muslim women, leads to the specific isolation of muslim women from feminist and emancipatory interests.

One expert has found that Muslim women in the U.S. who wear headscarves are more likely than those who do not to face discrimination: 69% of women who wore hijab reported at least one incident of discrimination compared to 29% of women who did not wear hijab.

A big majority of European states do not record Islamophobic incidents as a separate category of hate crime.

In Belgium, the Collective Against Islamophobia in Belgium (CCIB) stated that, according to UNIA’s data, 63.6% of the Islamophobic hate crimes and offenses registered between January 2012 and September 2015 concerned women.
In France, the French National Observatory against Islamophobia insists on the fact that most verbal or physical aggressions concerned women wearing headscarves.⁵⁹

CCIF data on Islamophobia reveal that in 2014, 81.5% of Islamophobic acts and speech targeted women. Muslim women, especially those wearing some type of headscarf, account for almost 100% of victims of physical aggression.⁶⁰

In Sweden, researcher Mehrako Masifi conducted a survey on hate crime experiences among young Muslims in 2008. About 70% of the victims were young women wearing the headscarf or the veil.⁶¹

In the Netherlands, the organization Meld Islamofobie (Report Islamophobia) registered 89 anti-Muslim incidents over the period January-June 2015.⁶² 90% of the victims of incidents reported were Muslim women. Moreover, 98% of them were identifiable as Muslim because they wore Islamic dress.⁶³

In Germany, a survey conducted by the Antidiskriminierungsstelle des LandesBrandenburg (anti-discrimination bureau of Brandenburg) with Muslim women in Germany, finds that 59% of the respondents were insulted, verbally abused or accosted.⁶⁴

In a study in Denmark, 60% of the women stated they had been shouted at or the like, and many of these incidents were based on their appearance and clothes.⁶⁵

In the UK, data from Tell MAMA from March 2014 to February 2015 show that of the 34 cases of women targeted with verbal abuse in person, 23 (68%) were wearing identifiably religious clothing.⁶⁶

256 Islamophobic incidents were documented in Austria in 2016.⁶⁷ After banning the face veil in October 2017, Austria is currently having heavy debates about a hijab ban in primary schools.
Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking predominantly victimizes women and significant numbers of male and female children. According to an Equality Now fact sheet, the sex trafficking industry pulls in an estimated $99 billion each year.

In September 2017, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that 24.9 million men, women, and children were victims of human trafficking around the globe.

According to data from the UN, 51% of victims are women while another 20% are girls, accounting for 71% of victims.

The United States isn’t immune to incidents of sex trafficking. In fact, the Urban Institute examined what they called “the underground sex economy,” which includes sex trafficking, of eight U.S. cities in 2014. It estimated that those economies ranged from $39.9 million in Denver, Colorado, to $290 million in Atlanta, Georgia.

In 2010, a total of 3,228 cases involving abduction of and trafficking in women were detected throughout China, as were 2,827 cases involving abduction of and trafficking in children.
Dowry-related violence is a serious problem that affects the lives of women and girls.

The violence and deaths associated with dowry demands can constitute domestic violence. Similar to acts of domestic violence, the acts used in dowry-related offenses include physical, emotional, and economic violence, as well as harassment and stalking as means to exact compliance or to punish the victim. While dowry is practiced in many different parts of the world, dowry-related violence is most prevalent in South Asia, in the nations of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.72

About 8,000 dowry deaths are recorded each year in India, according to the national crimes statistics bureau in 2012.73

Torturing women where dowry demand is unsatisfied contributes to 66.7% of violent acts against women and 50% of all murders of women in Bangladesh.74
Violence Against Trans Women

Discrimination, stigma, and violence against transgender and gender-diverse people is prevalent around the world. Furthermore, in many countries, it represents a systemic, institutional, and societal oppression which continues to deprive trans people of their human rights. Transgender people are disproportionately the victims of prejudice, discrimination, oppression, extortion, assault, and murder. In almost every country, violence against trans people is not recorded as a ‘hate crime,’ and often perpetrators are neither pursued nor brought to justice. Since data on trans people is often erroneously recorded, proper statistics are not maintained by law enforcement, and it’s impossible to know the real cost of life.

Violence against trans people is often intersectional. TvT TMM data show that 62% of cases recorded by the project were engaged in sex work. As a result of the systemic oppression, the intersect with poverty, substance abuse, and racism there is a disproportionate number of trans people, most especially trans women of colour, engaging in highly risky sex work in order to survive, often leaving them vulnerable to violent abuse or murder. At least 22 transgender people have been killed in the United States since the beginning of 2018 — 82% of them were women of color; 64% were under the age of 35; 55% lived in the South.

In 2018, the Trans Murder Monitoring(TMM) program tracked 369 homicides of transgender and gender-diverse people worldwide, the most ever recorded, representing a 44 case increase over 2017. Of those killed, 1,145 died as a result of gunshot, 577 stabbed, and 306 were beaten to death. The majority of the murders occurred in Brazil (167), Mexico (71), the United States (28), and Colombia (21), adding up to a total of 2982 reported cases in
72 countries worldwide between 1st of January 2008 and 30th of September 2018. We know, however, that the true number is much higher.
Acid Attacks

Acid attacks happen across the world, and they affect women disproportionately. It is unacceptable when acid violence occurs against men, however acid violence is a form of violence that has a disproportionate impact on women. Women and girls are overwhelmingly the targets of attacks and men are most commonly the perpetrators.77

When a person is attacked with acid the effects are immediately visible, prompting instant and excruciating pain. Injuries are usually directed at the face causing life altering disabilities including disfigurement and blindness. The premeditated act is designed to disfigure, maim and blind, but not to kill. Not only will a survivor need extended specialist medical treatment, sanctuary, reconstructive surgery and follow up physiotherapy but also crucial expert psychological support, an aspect of recovery that is so often overlooked. Due to their disfigurement, survivors will often face social isolation further exacerbating mental trauma.78

Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI), a UK based charity, estimates that there are at least 10,000 attacks occurring each year across the world in multiple regions including Africa, Latin America, Middle East, South Asia, South East Asia and Europe.

India had around 300 recorded attacks in 2016. Research indicates that the majority of victims are women and girls and, unlike Bangladesh (where most attacks occur in the home), attacks often occur in public places such as roads, schools, colleges. The real number of attacks is likely to exceed 1000 attacks a year. Acid attacks are less
likely to be reported in rural areas due to fear of reprisal. ASTI research reveals that if cases are reported that the total time taken for litigation case to end is between 5 – 10 years on an average.\footnote{79}

In Cambodia, there was a sharp increase in number of recorded attacks in 2000 (40 attacks).\footnote{80}

Colombia has approximately 100 recorded attacks a year, and, with a population of around 48 million, this makes attacks in Colombia one of the highest per capita.\footnote{81}

There were 382 victims of acid violence in Uganda between 1985 and May 2011.\footnote{82}

Per capita the UK has one of the highest rates of recorded acid attacks in the world. There were close to 1000 attacks in the UK in 2017.\footnote{83}
Violence Against Indigenous Women

In countries around the world where racism continues to exist in the colonial systems and laws that have always been biased against Indigenous peoples, it is a well known fact that aboriginal women experience disproportionate rates of violence. Within Canada, according to Statistics Canada’s 2004 General Social Survey (GSS), aboriginal women experience much higher rates of violence than non-Aboriginal women.

In Canada, aboriginal women 15 years and older are 3.5 times more likely to experience violence than non-Aboriginal women. Rates of spousal assault against aboriginal women are more than three times higher than those against non-aboriginal women. Nearly one-quarter of aboriginal women experienced some form of spousal violence in the five years preceding the 2004 GSS. In many countries, including Canada, there are a disproportionate number of indigenous women who have been reported murdered or missing over the past two decades. In Canada alone it is estimated that over 1,000 women and girls have gone missing and / or been murdered since 1980. Often these cases have gone unresolved, much to the pain and despair of their loved ones left behind. This is unconscionable.

Family violence occurs at higher rates for Indigenous Australians than for non-Indigenous Australians. In 2014–2015, indigenous women were 32 times as likely to be hospitalised due to family violence as non-indigenous women, while indigenous men were 23 times as likely to be hospitalised as non-indigenous men.84
In 2016, a report from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) found that in the United States, more than 84% of Alaska Native and American Indian women had experienced some form of violence in their lifetimes: 66% experienced psychological violence, 56% experienced sexual violence, 55% experienced physical violence from an intimate partner, and 49% experienced stalking.\(^{85}\)

Likewise, in Mexico, lethal violence against indigenous women and girls is also a serious problem. Across Latin America, including in Mexico, it is estimated that indigenous women and girls are disproportionately the victims of feminicidios (gender-motivated killings) according to a report prepared by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.\(^{86}\)
How War Affects Women and Girls

Women and girls have always been the most impacted group of people in war and still are experiencing in armed-conflict and crisis zones on every continent except Antarctica: multiple rapes, gang rapes, sexual slavery, torture, mutilation, death. In addition, women in war-like situations are often forced to prostitute themselves in order to feed their children. Unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases particularly HIV/AIDS are only part of the repercussions that women face where inadequate or no health services are available.

The horrors do not stop with the marauding armies or militias. Sometimes peacekeepers are complicit. Refugee camps are not necessarily safe havens. Rape and sexual slavery occur there, dark conditions at night and insecure toilet conditions make women and girls easy prey. Men can take control of food distribution, which leads to malnutrition.

In 2003 in Liberia, 74 percent of respondents in a sample survey of 388 female refugees said they had experienced sexualised violence. The violence had been intended to drive them out of their houses, and then 55 percent reported they had experienced sexualised violence during their displacement.

It is reported that, among the thousands of young children that are kidnapped or recruited by gangs or regular forces for armed combat, the girls are repeatedly abused or become “wives” of the commanders.

The statistics are difficult to come by and are mostly estimates.
In Liberia alone, 40,000 women and girls were raped in the civil war (1989 – 2003).

The UN also reports that, from January to March 2010 in the Democratic Republic of Congo alone, 1,244 women and girls experienced rape. The International Rescue Committee documented 40,000 cases of gender-specific violence from 2003 to 2007.

No doubt, the numbers are always higher because of the fear of social exclusion. Traumatized and ashamed, women rarely report any of the atrocities, indeed, if there is anyone to report them to. “When they do, the perpetrators usually escape punishment,” leaving the women open to retaliation.
Emotional / Psychological Abuse: A Weapon of Control

Psychological abuse involves trauma to the victim caused by verbal abuse, acts, threats of acts, or coercive tactics. Perpetrators use psychological abuse to control, terrorize, and denigrate their victims. It frequently occurs prior to or concurrently with physical or sexual abuse.

In the United States, 48.4% of women have experienced at least one psychologically aggressive behavior by an intimate partner. Four in ten women have experienced at least one form of coercive control by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Women who earn 65% or more of their households’ income are more likely to be psychologically abused than women who learn less than 65% of their households’ income.

Most people are aware of the psychological torture is used in war situations, “brain washing.” But emotional abuse is also a large component in domestic violence. “... in the 60 percent of the cases ... I believe the pattern of violence is complemented by this extended pattern of intimidation, isolation and control.” Dr. Evan Stark, author of Coercive Control: How Men Entrap Women in Personal Life, in which he explains that “in millions of abusive relationships, men use a largely unidentified form of subjugation that more closely resembles kidnapping or indentured servitude than assault.” Dr. Stark calls this “coercive control.”

Although Dr. Stark’s book focuses on emotional abuse in the home, it also occurs in the workplace by bosses and co-workers (mobbing), in nursing homes, in jails – any place where there is a power imbalance.
While physical abuse is mostly visible, mental abuse does not produce the bruises, broken bones, and otherwise mutilated bodies. Still, it can be an extreme method of control and is usually described with the many forms it takes: verbal abuse (blaming, shaming, name calling, insults), constant criticism, intimidation, manipulation. It emerges as a pattern of aggressing, denying (refusal to listing, communicate, emotionally withdrawing as punishment, and literally denying that any kind of abuse occurred. The third component, minimizing.

A particularly insidious form of abuse, which develops in a gradual, often subtle way, that has very serious consequences is “gaslighting.” The word which means an abuser’s (person or entity) attempt to psychologically manipulate someone or a target group into doubting their own sanity and questioning their reality in order to gain power. The effects of gaslighting chip away at a person’s confidence, self-esteem, and sanity: anxiety, depression, symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, and the inability to trust anyone.

As with all research and statistics of violence, they are estimations based on the those who will admit or are even aware of psychological and emotional abuse. Fear, fear of retaliation, lack of support, ignorance of available help agencies, et cetera, keeps people from coming forward. In addition, police and even medical personnel may minimize and not recognize this form of abuse, or they themselves find it difficult to handle such a situation.

In 1996, the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, for Health Canada, reported

1. 39% of married women or common-law wives suffered emotional abuse by husbands/partners;
2. 1995 survey of women 15 and over 36.43% reported emotional abuse during childhood or adolescence
3. 39% experienced emotional abuse in marriage/dating.

Men are not the only perpetrators of emotional abuse against women. “Numerous studies done between the 1980 and 1994 report that lesbian relationships have higher overall rates of interpersonal aggression (including psychological aggression/emotional abuse) than heterosexual or gay male relationships. Furthermore, women who have been involved with both men and women reported higher rates of abuse from their female partners.”

Only the U.K (2015) and France (2010) have laws that protect victims of psychological abuse, however proving such abuse in court has been difficult. These are two “advanced” countries. We can only imagine how widespread this form of violence is across the world and that most victims are left with no recourse and little help even for the effects of such abuse where aid focuses on physical violence.
Violence Against Widows/Divorcees

Although accurate information is limited, it has been estimated that there are some 285 million widows around the world, with over 115 million of them living in deep poverty. Data on women’s status are often not disaggregated by marital status, so at every level of gender statistics, from national to global, widows are not visible.

Widows face maltreatment that includes domestic violence, sexual assault, forced marriage, trafficking, property grabbing, conversion of property, forced evictions, as well as discrimination against women in regard to marriage, its dissolution and divorce, property and land rights, children and inheritance.

India’s mortality rates are 86% higher among widows than among married women in the same age, and they are vulnerable to abuse, neglect and high levels of deprivation (Chen, 1995). Particularly vulnerable were 55% of widowed women over 60 years of age since having a male guardian can be important for their safety and status within the Indian social context (Madhurima, 2008; Dong and Simon, 2008; Kim et al, 2005).
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Small Arms Survey
Italian Joint Committee of Inquiry
Guttmacher Institute
Our World by United Nations University
United Nations Economic and Social Council
European Network Against Racism
Council on American-Islamic Relations
Journal of Community Psychology
Collectif Contre l’Islamophobie en Belgique
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
The White House President Barack Obama
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The National
Human Rights Campaign
International Journal of Indian Psychology
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Equality Now
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UN Women
Human Rights Watch
Safe Hands for Mothers
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Open Society Justice Initiative
ACLU
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Meldislamofobie
Statistics Canada
Acid Survivors Trust International
The Advocates for Human Rights
University of Wollongong Australia
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
OHCHR
Reading List

UN General Assembly Adopts 1st Resolution on Sexual Harassment

More than 1 Billion Women Lack Legal Protection Against Domestic Sexual Violence

Income, Race/Ethnicity, and Exposure to Violence in Youth: Results From the National Survey of Adolescents

Calls to the Police and Police Response: A Case Study on Latina Immigrant Women in the USA

Discrimination Against Muslim Women Factsheet

Sex Trafficking Statistics that put the Worldwide Problem into Perspective

Dowries and Death Continue Apace in India

Violence Against the Transgender Community in 2018

A National Epidemic: Fatal Anti-Transgender in America in 2018

Women Filling Mexico’s Prison are the ‘lowest rungs of the drug trade’

Statistics on Violence Against Women and Girls

The Women Killed on One Day Around the World

UN General Assembly Intensification of Efforts to Prevent and Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls: Sexual Harassment

First UN Resolution on Sexual Harassment
Women’s March Global thanks our strategic partner Equality Now for their contribution and input for this report. Through the course of our partnership, two major joint campaigns have been launched in the Global South: Justice for Noura and Free Saudi Activists.

If you would like to find out more information about Equality Now, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank Open Society Justice Initiative for sharing their report about religious dress restrictions in Europe.

If you would like to find out more information about Open Society Justice Initiative, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank Human Rights Watch for sharing their report about abortion in Argentina.

If you would like to find out more information about Human Rights Watch, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank Small Arms Survey for sharing their report about small arms violence.

If you would like to find out more information about Small Arms Survey, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank OHCHR for sharing their report about violence against women.

If you would like to find out more information about OHCHR, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank Center for Reproductive Rights for sharing their report about violence against women.

If you would like to find out more information about Center for Reproductive Rights, please visit their [website](#).
Women’s March Global would also like to thank **Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI)** for sharing their report about acid attacks.

If you would like to find out more information about ASTI, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank **Human Rights Campaign** for sharing their report about violence against trans women.

If you would like to find out more information about Human Rights Campaign, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank **Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence (API-GBV)** for sharing their report about women trafficking.

If you would like to find out more information about API-GBV, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank **The Advocates for Human Rights** for sharing their report on dowry related violence.

If you would like to find out more information about The Advocates for Human Rights, please visit their [website](#).

Women’s March Global would also like to thank **European Network Against Racism (ENAR)** for sharing their report on violence against women.

If you would like to find out more information about ENAR, please visit their [website](#).