



# Violence Against Women Around the World

In a global environment which often holds women as second class citizens or non-citizens, women are in alarmingly high numbers the victims of the most shocking violence imaginable. This violence rarely results in punishment for the perpetrators. Violence against women is a global crisis with little evidence of a political will to hold anyone accountable for these crimes.

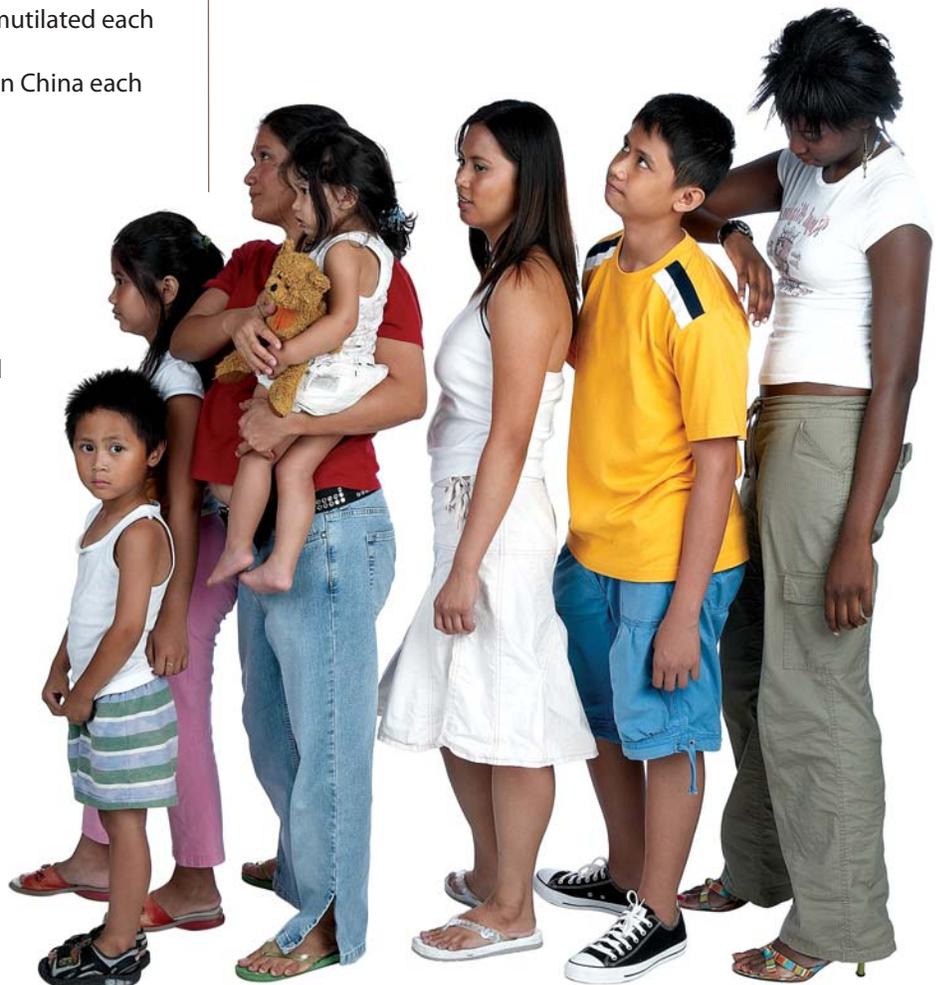
## International Statistics

- In many countries (for example Bangladesh, Peru and Tanzania) half of all women report being sexually or physically assaulted at least once since the age of 15 with the vast majority of these assaults inflicted by a male intimate partner.
- A World Health Organization study shows rates of physical and sexual violence experienced by women in the last 5 years varying between a low of 15% (Japan) to a high of 71% in Ethiopia proving that violence against women by their intimate partners is not inevitable.
- In the US, a woman is raped every 6 minutes; a woman is battered every 15 seconds.
- In North Africa, 6000 women are genitally mutilated each day.
- 15,000 women are sold into sexual slavery in China each year.
- This year 200 women in Bangladesh will be horribly disfigured when their spurned husbands or suitors burn them with acid.
- More than 7,000 women in India will be murdered by their families and in-laws in disputes over dowries.
- Women are trafficked around the world for the purpose of sexual slavery. An estimated 700,000 to 4,000,000 women are forced or sold into prostitution each year.
- War atrocities are often targeted towards women, as a weapon of terror. Between 250,000 and 500,000 women in Rwanda were raped during the 1994 genocide.

- Women are forced into marriages against their will, often as children. One in 7 girls in all developing countries except China marries before she is 15.

## International Solutions

- There are a number of United Nations initiatives that address the global epidemic of violence against women. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), The 1994 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women indicate a growing international acknowledgment of the unacceptability of the conditions under which many women live.
- International movements and human rights groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International take an active role in monitoring the situation of women worldwide and attempt to hold governments accountable for the discrimination and abuse of women which occurs in their country.



## Sheltering Around the World

In developed countries, women's shelters started in the 1970s. They have grown in numbers so that most women in these countries can access a women's shelter, although women in rural and isolated communities face more challenges in this regard. In developing countries, the women's shelter movement began in the 1990s. Currently, some countries have only one shelter which serves a population of several million women. The need for safe and supportive residential services for women is now being recognized by governments in all regions of the world. Women activists are speaking out everywhere about the violence experienced by their sisters. The movement to end the abuse of women has become a global one that is voicing the need for government to take action to protect women and to do everything possible to end the violence that they endure.

### Sources

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