Summary for January to March 2010
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Hello!
We are pleased to present the third release of the quarterly survey on violence against girls at school launched in July 2009. This publication covers the January to March 2010 period and reviews two hundred and fifteen (215) articles including only sixty (60) analytical articles documented this quarter.

During this quarter, the international community celebrated successively the international Day against Female Genital Mutilations (February 6) and the International Women's Day (March 8). Practiced in 28 African countries but also in immigrant communities in France, Europe and the United States, female circumcision is said to affect more than 150 million women and girls around the world each year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

This year again, there was a massive outcry against the practice of female genital mutilations. Many articles highlight its adverse effects and the future challenges to the eradication of excision. The event was widely covered by the press.
March 8, 2010, marking the International Women's Day, was also celebrated in all the newspapers included in our corpus. That day was an opportunity for advocacy and campaigning for women's rights.

As a reminder, please note that the purpose of this survey is to compile and analyze cases of violence against girls as barriers to access, retention and achievement at school as reported in some national media selected by 18 ActionAid country offices in Africa.

Violence is defined as "all forms of abuse (physical, mental, emotional, verbal, emotional, direct, indirect, etc...) against girls under 18, schooled or of school age. Abuse can occur both at home (housework, punishment, physical abuse, rape, sexual mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to the girl) and at school (punishment, discrimination, physical and verbal abuse) as well as on the street".

We also considered cases of teenage pregnancy, sexual exhibitionism, sexual harassment, indecent assault, HIV-infection following rape, early/forced marriage, forced abortion, forced prostitution, forced labour, and gender-based prenatal selection of sex as forms of violence.

The first two reports on VAGS have been widely shared and disseminated to partners. We do hope that the widespread dissemination and popularization of the media survey will help raise awareness among the stakeholders and the public on the issue of violence against girls and to improve media coverage at national level.

Let's hope that the international UNGEI conference to be organized in collaboration with The Institute of Education on Education for Gender Equality: Commitment to equity will be an opportunity for greater media coverage and, therefore, greater visibility of violence against girls.
### SUMMARY TABLE OF VAGS IN JANUARY 1 – MARCH 31, 2010

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<th>COUNTRY</th>
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MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - CAMEROUN

Cameroun Tribune, le Messager and Mutations.

JANUARY
Two cases of rape documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
These were two cases of rape with abduction committed at Mondoni in the District of Tiko.

Victims’ profile
The victims were sisters aged twelve (12) and fourteen (14). They were schoolgirls, repeatedly abused.

Perpetrators’ Profile
An adult resident in Mondoni; he proposed to both sisters to give them a ride to school on his bicycle and took advantage of their naivety to confine them at his place.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The article was published in the local event column. No analytical article was published this month.

FEBRUARY
One case of violence.

Type of Abuse and Site
It was a double case of incest at Nkomo neighbourhood in the suburb of Ekounou.

Victim’s Profile
Third-form girl aged fourteen (14).

Perpetrators’ Profile
The alleged perpetrators were the victim’s father and brother (student at the University of Yaoundé II).

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The article was treated as a news story.

MARCH
One case of abuse and two analytical articles were published.

Type of Abuse and Site
A case of gang rape committed on the campus of Ndang.

Victims’ Profile
A first year student in law at the University of Ngouandéré.

Perpetrators’ Profile
Seven (7) men armed with knives attacked the girl in her room.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The case of gang rape was covered in the Society column. The terms were quite blunt.
One analytical article and one interview were published this month.
The analytical article was entitled “Rape: why the case is stuck at the bar?” According to the reporter, if rape is recognized as a crime punishable by a five to ten year imprisonment\(^1\) by the Cameroonian Penal Code, “sentences are almost never enforced.” The Network of Associations of Aunties (RENATA) that actively

\(^1\) Penalty is twice severer when the perpetrator is related to the victim.
Fights against rape and incest in Cameroon has conducted several studies in Cameroon. In 2009, 432,833 cases of rape were registered and only 16% of victims complained.

Furthermore, only 7% of rape cases are taken to court and only 5% of perpetrators are convicted. RENATA underscores that corruption is the first deterrent. "At all levels of court proceedings victims are humiliated, incriminated, and lawyers as well as judges recommend an amicable settlement." The medical certificate which is the victim’s the main record of evidence is often deemed invalid.

All such practices tend to reinforce the impunity of the rapists. The interview of Flavian Ndonko, anthropologist and partner of RENATA complements the information provided in the first article (See In annex).

MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - ETHIOPIA


JANUARY
One analytical article was published in The Ethiopian Herald in January and entitled "Stop violence against women / girls in the name of tradition". According to the author of the article, the cultural argument (tradition, custom, religion) is often put forward to legitimize violence against women and girls in the Ethiopian society. However, these physical, emotional or sexual abuses are often based on a patriarchal interpretation of religion and traditions. These interpretations help to maintain a form of male domination over women. The article mentioned the possibility of a campaign against violence perpetrated in the name of tradition.

FEBRUARY
Three analytical articles celebrated the International Day against Female Genital Mutilation. Female circumcision is a practice still deeply rooted in Ethiopian customs. The first article is an interview of Rasework Berhane, Manager of an International NGO on the problems encountered in the fight against FGM in Ethiopia. The second section dealt with awareness raising among the youth against FGM. Raising awareness among the youth currently seems the best way to eradicate FGM and AIDS in Ethiopia. Finally, a last article reviewed the practice of female circumcision in Africa.

MARCH
No article was documented this month.

MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - GAMBIA

The Daily Observer.

Violence against women is a reality in The Gambia as proven by the large number of cases documented (89 cases) since the inception of our media survey. These cases are said to be but the tip of the iceberg. Indeed, most cases of abuses do lead to complaints and all complaints are not covered by the media coverage. In addition, the "Daily Observer" reports exclusively on cases of rape and infanticide. However, other forms of violence such as female circumcision and early or forced marriage should have a better coverage insofar as girls are hard-hit.
JANUARY
Twelve (12) cases of violence and one analytical article on VAGS were documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
The cases were predominantly cases of sexual abuse:
- Eight (8) rape of minors including one case with kidnapping and another one with serious physical after-effects;
- Two (2) cases of infanticide;
- One case of indecent assault, and
- One attempted rape.
These violence acts took place in the following areas:
- at Kololi in the KSMD region;
- at Nema Kunku;
- at Sukuta in the district of Kombo;
- in the municipality of Kanifing;
- at Bundung; and
- in seven localities unspecified in the articles.

Victims' Profile
The registered victims were minors aged zero (0) - eighteen (18). The average age was of 10.12 years. Ten (10) of the victims were of school age while the other two victims were newborns.

Perpetrators' Profile
The profile of the authors was not specified in the articles. However, two offenders were the mothers of the victims. The articles stated that they were below twenty (20). Despite stringent legal measures, infanticide is a growing phenomenon in The Gambia. The perpetrators are mostly young single women who fear social stigma for having had a child out of wedlock.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
VAGS are dealt with exclusively in the "Court and Law" column. One analytical article was compiled: "Lower River Region: Women are sensitized on FGM" (The Lower River region heavily affected by female genital mutilation). As part of the awareness campaign on the dangers of female genital mutilation (FGM), the Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices (GAMCOTRAP) and the Spanish NGO ODAM have conducted workshops with 350 participants from six districts of the River region. This workshop series aims at pushing communities to abandon the traditional female circumcision, early and forced marriage.

FEBRUARY
Ten (10) cases of sexual abuse and two analytical articles were published in the Daily Observer.

Type of Abuse and Site
The reported cases of abuse were exclusively cases of rape with one leading to the victim's being pregnant. They occurred:
- at Bundung in the Municipality of Kanifing;
- in the village of Nemakunku;
- at the Children's SOS Village in Bakoteh;
- at Lamin Darang;
- at Palma Beach Hotel in Kotu;
- at Faraja (KSMD);
- at Bundung;
- at Tobacco Road (Banjul);
- in the village of Sukuta in Kombo North District, and
- in the village of Sayang (Kombo District).

Victims’ profile
The victims were aged **three (3) to sixteen (16)**, with an average age of **11.87 years**. The majority of victims were schoolgirls. One of the victims was a resident of the Children's SOS Village.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
The perpetrators were unknown to the victim. However, three recorded cases were perpetrated by:
- **The victim’s foster mother (Children’s SOS Village)** who used to force the 13-year old girl to watch pornographic movies and had a sexual relationship with her;
- **The gatekeeper of the victim’s school** who lived in the school;
- **The hotel employee of the victim’s father**.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
Rape cases were reported in the Court column of the Daily Observer. Two analytical articles were published during the International Day against FGM. The first article entitled “**International Day On Zero Tolerance to FGM**” reported on the celebration of the International Day against FGM. This year the focus was on the risks inherent to this practice on women's health and the theme was the involvement of men and boys in eradicating female genital mutilation.

A second article reported on the subjects dealt with at the workshop on female genital mutilation in the communities of Koine and Brikamaba held by the Gambian Committee against Traditional Practices (GAMCOTRAP) and the Spanish NGO Yolocamba Solidaridad.

**MARCH**
**Seven (7) cases of VAGS and two (2) analytical articles** were compiled.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
The cases of violence documented were as follows:
- **Six (6) cases of rape**;
- **A case of infanticide** at Bakau.

The violence took place in the following locations:
- **Abuko (Kanifing Municipality)**;
- **Jarra Sankwis**;
- **Latrikuna German**; and
- **in unknown places**.

**Victims’ profile**
The victims were aged **zero (0) to fourteen (14)**. The average age was of **8.6 years**.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
The alleged perpetrators were:
- **Trusted individuals**: The brother of the victim's friend, the roommate and a classmate;
- **Unknown individuals** (2 cases);
- **The mother of the victim in the infanticide case**.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
Two analytical articles were published: the first article celebrated Women's Day and put into perspective the struggles of women for equality and respect for their rights.

The second article "Islamic wrap up forum on FGM" was an account of a workshop organized by CIPAD (Islamic Regional Committee) on harmful traditional practices. Experts made the case that FGM was practiced before the advent of Islam. According to Professor Uman Jha, the practice of female circumcision 'is not compulsory in Islam and should no longer be practiced for it is harmful to women ".

**MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - GHANA**

JANUARY
Nine (9) cases of abuse were recorded.

Type of Abuse and Site
The recorded cases of violence were exclusively cases of sexual abuse:
- Seven (7) cases of rape;
- Two cases of gang rape in Cape Coast and Accra.

The violence occurred in the following locations:
- in the central region of Ghana: Cape Coast;
- in Kumasi;
- at Ahwiaa;
- at Juaso in the Ashanti region (2 cases);
- at Dormaa-Ahankro;
- at Maakro.

Victims' Profile
The victims were aged six (6) to fifteen (15). The average age was of 11.14 years. All the victims were of school age. Two of them were child workers (street vendors). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), among working children, girls are more vulnerable to sexual abuses.

Perpetrators' Profile
The assailants were aged fifteen (15) to fifty (50). The offenders' average age was of 24.57 years.
- The alleged gang-rapists were very young. The two cases of recorded gang rapes were committed by individuals below twenty (20). Gang/collective rape is due to the lack of sexual education for young boys. In effect, sex being a taboo subject in African societies, the young boy has no other model but pornography. Beyond the educational dimension, the practice of gang rape appears among boys as a way of "retrieving power and of offsetting their lack of power at the expense of girls." According to psychologist Joëlle Bordet—who worked extensively on the phenomenon of gang rape in disadvantaged areas - "gang rape illustrates the dominance of boys while referring to their impotence vis-à-vis society". In addition, these boys do not have a positive image of the woman (mother, sister, cousin). The girl is always considered as offending while the boy often remains unpunished.
- Five (5) perpetrators are "persons working in the neighbourhood" (farmer, lumberman, taxi driver, and bartender). These people work in the vicinity of the victim’s home and maintain relationships of trust with the family of the victim. In this context one speaks of "rape by an acquaintance". We noticed that this form of rape was the most widespread.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
All the newspapers of our corpus cover VAGS in the crime and punishment column. No case of violence was analyzed in terms of violation of children’s rights or as an obstacle to the victims’ achievement at school.

FEBRUARY
Six (6) cases of VAGS were reported.

Type of Abuse and Site
All the cases of violence were rapes including one resulting in a pregnancy. The cases of sexual abuse were committed in the following localities:
- in the district of Ajumeka-Enyan-Essiam (AEE);
- at Ashalay Botwe;
- in Takoradi; and
- in Tema (3 cases).

Victims' profile
They were aged four (4) to fourteen (14). The average age of victims was of **7.33 years**. Among the six, four were primary schoolgirls in grades 1, 4 and 5 (two victims). The 14-year old victim was eight-week pregnant at the time of the reporting.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
As in previous months, the alleged perpetrators were trusted people living or working near the home of the victim. They were **aged twenty-four to fifty-five**, with an average age of **37 years**. The alleged recorded perpetrators were:
- **Individuals working in the neighbourhood**: two farmers and a herdsman;
- **Roommates and neighbours**: a butcher of Nigerian origin, a former soldier and an unemployed.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
No case of violence was analyzed from the standpoint of children’s rights or as an impediment to the victims’ achievement at school.

**MARCH**
Ten (10) cases of violence and two (2) analytical articles were published.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
There were:
- **Seven (7) cases of rape on minor**
- **Three (3) cases of incest**

These cases of violence occurred:
- at Bokor-Kope near Klikor;
- at Asameseke;
- in Accra (2 cases);
- at Ologo Manchester;
- in the District of Adaku;
- at Akaoefe-Astati in the Municipality of Ho;
- at Hwidie (near Agogi); and
- in two unspecified locations.

**Victims’ Profile**
The girls were aged **eight (8) to fifteen (15)**, with an average age of **12.25 years**. One of them, aged fourteen (14), used to work as a domestic help. She was in grade 5. All the victims were school girls.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
The perpetrators were:
- **Related to the victim**: the victim’s father (3 cases). The two suspects were a driver, 33, and a plumber. The third alleged perpetrator of incest was a very popular pastor of the Religious Association “Jesus on touch”. Cases of incest are commonly committed by persons engaged in difficult and / or insecure jobs or unemployed.
- **People working in the neighbourhood/neighbours**: a former soldier, three shepherds, a craftsman, a worker and a merchant. The rich merchant hosted the pupil aged 14 who used to help with housework. He raped her three times and the victim’s parents initiated a petition to protest against the sluggishness of the legal actions.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
Two analytical articles were published. The first article dealt with the latest police report in the Kosoa district. According to the report, statistics on cases of rape were "alarmingly increasing". During the last three months, complaints about thirty three cases (33) of rape of minors and eleven (11) cases of rape of adults were recorded. The police have cautioned parents against sending children on errands. The street is the main place where girls are lured by sex offenders. The second article, "Northern region records 14% increase in murder cases» focused both on the upsurge of abuses and rapes in the Northern part of the country.
JANUARY
Fourteen (14) cases of abuse and four (4) analytical articles were documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
The cases of abuse involve:
- Eight (8) cases of rape cases resulting in the victim's being pregnant;
- Two (2) cases of incest;
- Abduction resulting in a pregnancy;
- Two (2) cases of forced/early marriage;
- Two (2) cases of female genital mutilation.

These cases occurred in the following localities:
- in the district of Makuana;
- at Siaya (Usanya);
- in Machakos, a town highly affected by the rape phenomenon. According to the reporter, this insecurity is due to the high rate of unemployment and drug abuse in the district;
- in the Trans Mara District;
- at Nyeri;
- in the Kawria sub-district;
- in Eldoret;
- in the city of Nyahururu;
- in Nairobi on Convet Loreto Valley Road; and
- in five unspecified localities.

Victims’ profile
The victims were aged two (2) to eighteen (18). On average, the victims were aged 11.09. One victim is not a schoolgirl.

Perpetrators’ Profile
The alleged perpetrators were all known to the victims. They were:
- Two (2) next-of-kin to the victim. Both cases of incest were perpetrated by the victim’s father (a teacher) in one case and by the stepfather in the other case. In both cases, the mother of the victim did not live under the same roof as their husbands. We noted over the six month period of the media survey the frequency of such cases. In the absence of their mothers, girls take care of the household (housework, cooking, raising children), but also sometimes “act as wives” against their will.
- One primary school headmaster: was accused of raping several of these minor students.
- Three individuals living in the vicinity of the victims: these people were known to the victims and their families and inspired trust.
- Two individuals working near the victim’s home: a herdsman and a night watchman.
- The parents of the victim in the two cases of excision, and two cases of forced marriage. It should be noted that the father of a circumcision girl committed suicide after the act. According to a family member, the man aged 55 had promised to "teach a lesson to those who had mutilated his daughter by force."

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The cases were read about in the “local events” column in The Standard and Daily Nation. Four analytical articles were published.

- The article entitled “Cursed for fighting circumcision” covers the stories of female activists whom were perceived as enemies by the leaders of their conservative communities on account of their fight against FGM and forced/early marriage. In the Samburu community, elders have a strong influence on the life of the community and decide on marriage matters. Recently, the elders of the community decided to marry off a 10-year old grade-six girl. The local and administrative officers fighting against violence against girls are considered "enemies of the community" and are subject to "ideketa" - a dreadful spell cast on enemies.
- A second article entitled "Lucy Kibaki seeks hard penalties for rapists" summed up the request of the First Lady of Kenya for Parliament to amend the law on sexual offenses to make it more stringent. Indeed, in Kenya, despite new laws against rape, the number of cases is steadily increasing. Rape cases are very common in schools. Some of these sexual offenders know they are HIV-infected and think they can be cured by having sex with minors.
- A third article, "Most abortions are blamed on amorous old men" (Most forced abortions are attributed to old womanizers) summarized a study conducted by a team of South African, Nigerian and Kenyan researchers on cases of forced abortions. The study found that older men were responsible for the majority of unwanted pregnancies in minors. They were either the boyfriends of the girls or their fathers. On the other hand, fathers who threaten their daughters who get pregnant out of wedlock played a significant part in cases of forced abortions. This study also points out the economic factor as a major cause of forced abortions.
- A final article focuses on the expulsion of unwed mothers from school. Indeed, in most Kenyan schools, unmarried mothers are expelled. If ever this new school regulation becomes effective, it will require “voluntary” screening for pregnancy once a year. However, this “voluntary basis” might turn into an "obligation". This law may undermine the privacy of young girls in a country where over 13,000 girls leave school each year due to pregnancy.

**FEBRUARY**

Three cases (3) of abuse and three (3) analytical articles were published.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
The three cases of abuse comprised:
- One case of incest in Nakuru;
- One case of forced marriage in Narok;
- Several cases of corruption of underage pupils resulting in pregnancies in the town of Sirare (Tanzanian border).

**Victims’ Profile**
The age of the victims was not specified in the articles. They were all schoolgirls.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
The alleged perpetrators are:
- One individual related to the victim: stepfather of the victim.
- A man aged 55 in the case of forced marriage of the grade-5 pupil. The man paid 4,000 shillings to marry the girl.
- Teachers: cases of pregnant pupils are increasing considerably in the area west of Kuria. The local authority cautioned the school staff during a field visit that "any teacher having affairs with pupils will be severely punished."

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
Insufficient details provided on the incidents (victims’ profile, circumstances, etc…). Three analytical articles were published. They discussed the phenomenon of pupils raped by teachers. Indeed, in Kenya cases of rape perpetrated by teachers are constantly increasing. According to the Commission of Teachers, «rapist teachers will be convicted and struck off as teachers». In one of the articles, the Kenyan First Lady Lucy Kibaki condemned the silence of the Teachers’ Union about rapist teachers.
MARCH
Three cases of abuse and two analytical articles were documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
These cases of abuses were:
• Two cases (2) of rape that occurred in the Division of Wundayi at Werusha and Ndakuru;
• One case of gang rape in Kitale.

Victims’ Profile
The victims are minors, with one aged two (2). The girl is in a coma.

Perpetrators’ Profile
The sexual offenders were strangers.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
Two analytical articles were published. The first article discussed the risks induced by early sex among young Kenyans. A study by the NGO "I Choose Life Africa (ICL), in secondary schools, shows that "70 % of males and 10 % of girls have had intercourse at 13." 33% of boys and 50% of girls use a condom during sexual intercourse. Despite campaigns on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, young people are always at risk of infection.

MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - LIBERIA

The Inquirer and The Heritage.

JANUARY
Eight (8) articles on the murder of young Angel Togba (already documented in September 2009) and one case of violence were documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
Abduction of a girl in an unspecified locality.

Victims’ profile
A ten (10) year-old girl.

Perpetrators’ Profile
The abductor has not been identified.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
these cases of abuse were analyzed as news items.

FEBRUARY
No article was recorded in February.

MARCH
Two (2) cases of abuse were documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
The cases of abuse involved one case of murder and one case of incest in Monrovia.

Victims’ profile
A girl aged eight (8).

Perpetrators’ Profile
The murderer has not been identified and the perpetrator of incest was the father of the victim.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
No analytical article was documented.

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The Nation and The Daily Times.

**JANUARY**
Five (5) cases of violence were documented.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
The cases of violence involved:
- Two (2) cases of incest with one resulting in pregnancy in the district of Ndirande and at Mzuzu;
- One gang rape in the district of Mbayani;
- One case of rape with abduction and subsequent death of the victim at Machinjiri;
- One case of corruption of a minor and attempted marriage in the district of Michangabutuwa.

**Victims’ Profile**
The victims were aged between four (4) and seventeen (17). On average the victims were aged 11.8. Four of the victims were primary schoolgirls.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
The alleged perpetrators were:
- Two persons related to the victim: the stepfathers of the victims aged thirty-three (33) and twenty five (25).
- Unknown individuals: in the gang rape the three alleged perpetrators were unknown to the victim just as for the case of rape followed by murder.
- A bartender aged twenty two (22) for the minor corruption case and attempted marriage of the primary school grade-six pupil. The man involved had a loving relationship with the 14-year old girl despite her parents’ refusal.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
The articles were published as news items. However, the reporters drew attention to the increase in incest cases in Malawi.

**FEBRUARY**
Three cases of abuse were recorded.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
The cases involved:
- Two (2) rape cases, one with STI in the villages of Mulunga and Chinthuli; and
- One case of incest in the village of Njale.

**Victims’ profile**
The victims were aged five (5) to nine (9), with an average age of 6.33 years. One victim was a primary school grade 1-2 pupil.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
- Two individuals living in the vicinity of the victim’s home: these were neighbours aged twenty-two and seventy-nine. In both cases of rape, the incident occurred in the absence of the victims’ families.
- A relative to the victim: the victim's uncle aged twenty-four (24) years.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
The articles were published as news items. No article was documented during the international day against female genital mutilation. Yet, female genital mutilation (FGM) is practiced in secret in Malawi by amkungwis (adult women). But it is difficult to find sources on the practice of female circumcision in Malawi.

**MARCH**
Seven cases of abuse were compiled.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
The cases of abuse involved:
- Three (3) cases of incest;
- Two (2) cases of rape;
- One gang rape;
- One case of child abandonment.

**Victims’ profile**
Aged five (5) to fourteen (14); on average the victim were **10.83-year old**. The majority of victims were schoolgirls.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
- Some relatives of the victims: an uncle (2 cases) and a mother aged 27. The mother abandoned her two daughters.
- Unknown individuals involved in a rape and gang rape. The perpetrators of the gang rape were aged 19, 24 and 25. The average age of the gang-rapist (22.66) is in line with the findings of previous months. The age of the perpetrators of abuse is linked to precarious living conditions, reinforced by the influence of pornography.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
No analytical article was recorded.

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**MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - NIGERIA**

The Guardian, This Day, and Vanguard.

**JANUARY**
No cases was documented during this period.

**FEBRUARY**
One analytical article was published on violence against women and girls. The article entitled "Curbing Violence against Women on through Drama" reviews the forms of daily violence against women and girls: denial of property right, economic discrimination, physical abuse, domestic violence, forced/early marriage, female genital mutilation, rape, incest, etc...

According to a study mentioned in the article, 16% of Nigerian patients treated for infection with STDs are under five (5).

**MARCH**
No cases documented during this period.
Le Soleil, L’Observateur, Le Quotidien, Sud Quotidien and Walfadjri.

The media coverage in Senegal has been one of the largest since July 2009 (124 cases). Large numbers of cases of rape are covered in the newspapers selected and several assumptions may be posted as an explanation. It may be because the taboo is being broken gradually in the Senegalese society; victims and relatives complain and such complaints are covered by the media. Another possible explanation for the high coverage is that cases of VAGS, particularly rape of a minor, paedophilia sell well. It is symptomatic of a form of voyeurism in the Senegalese society that perceives the dark and hidden side of society (perversion, unnatural sexual, etc…) through these very blunt articles. However we must keep in mind that we are dealing with 5 newspapers in Senegal. Whatever the reasons for this coverage, it is welcomed and the analytical processing should be encouraged.

JANUARY
Ten (10) cases of violence and five (5) analytical articles were compiled.

Type of Abuse and Site
- Two (2) cases of incest;
- Four (4) cases of rape including one case of rape on a vulnerable person;
- One gang rape;
- One case of abduction;
- One murder;
- One attempted incest.

These cases of violence occurred in the rural district of Darou Marnane, at Popoguine, in the Diamguène neighbourhood in Mbour, in Yene Kao, an attempted abduction in the HLM1 neighbourhood in Dakar, at Guédiawaye and in the rural district of Djignaki, Casamance. The murder was perpetrated in the Casamance conflict zone, a risk zone for young girls due to the prevalence of sexual abuse, abductions, stray bullets, or racketeering.

Victims’ profile
Aged between ten (10) months and eighteen (18) years; the average age was of 11, 88. The victim of incest aged ten months is the youngest victim in our media survey.

Perpetrators’ Profile
- Two relatives of the victim: the uncle of the victim aged seventeen for the rape of the ten-month old baby. The second perpetrator related to the victim was the victim’s father, aged forty. The father used to live alone with his children;
- A trusted man: the coalman who repeatedly raped three girls;
- Individuals unknown to the victims in the case of the gang rape in Mbour (4 individuals), the attempted kidnapping (several individuals involved);
- One armed gang for the murder of the girl in Casamance.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
Five (5) analytical articles were published this month. The first article entitled “Viols des femmes handicapées, les filles albinos de plus en plus visées - Rape of disabled women, albinos girls increasingly targeted” dealt with the increase in the number of rapes of vulnerable people.
The second article dealt with "inadequacies of the 2000-2005 Action Plan" for the abandonment of FGC (Female genital circumcision).

A third article was entitled "Grand Yoff, lutte contre l'insalubrité et le viol - Grand Yoff, rises against filth and rape." In our media survey we had previously underscored that the municipality of Grand Yoff was one of the most affected by violence against girls. It is also one of the few municipalities to support the fight against violence against girls.

A fourth article dealt with the granting of scholarships to needy pupils in the Fatick region. To end, in the last article, the federation of parliamentary networks initiated actions for the protection of children, especially girls.

**FEBRUARY**

Four (4) cases of abuse and three (3) analytical articles were published in newspapers.

**Type of Abuse and Site**

- **One case of incest** in the village of Ngékhokh;
- **One case of gang rape** in Sor neighbourhood in St. Louis;
- **Two cases of rape with one on a repetitive basis** in the populous neighbourhood of Thiaroye.

**Victims' profile**

Aged eleven (11) to twelve (12); The average age of victims was of **11.75** and they were all schoolgirls.

**Perpetrators' Profile**

The alleged perpetrators of sexual abuse were:

- **An individual related to the victim: her stepfather.** He abused the victim several times.
- **Two people of trust:** a neighbour and friend of the family of the victim. He raped the girl several times. The girl was picking fruit in the alleged perpetrator of rape’s compound.
- **Unknown individuals:** gang-rapist (a carter and an unemployed) and a mason.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**

The cases of abuse were covered as news items. Three analytical articles were published in February, including two on the occasion of the World Day against Female Genital Mutilation.

The first article gave an account of the ActionAid quarterly report on violence against girls in schools. The second one was a report on the fields’ visit of journalists invited by the Ministry of Family, Tostan and UNICEF to attend the launch the Action Plan for the abandonment of female circumcision in three areas. The journalists conducted a series of interviews, reports, portraits on the ground with communities that had given up the practice of female circumcision. From 1997 when the first ceremony of discontinuation was staged at Malicounda Bamba (Thies) to today, 41 public statements of renunciation of FGC and early marriages were recorded in 4121 communities. However, these public statements are not synonymous with abandoning this practice for real. There is a culture and religion-based resistance.

The third article dealt with the "World Day against FGM" and the "zero FGM case target in 2015" set by the Minister of Family and Early Childhood. This year, the campaign focused on men’s involvement in the fight against female circumcision. An action plan was to be developed to support the practitioners of female circumcision who have agreed to "give up their blades" to enable them to undertake income-generating activities and no longer think of resuming their practice.

**MARCH**

Eleven (11) cases of abuse and seven (7) analytical articles were published.

**Type of Abuse and Site**

- **Four (4) cases of infanticide** at Père, Sor, in St. Louis and Dakar;
- **Three (3) cases of rape** at the Bene Tally plant, in Mbour and Pikine;
- **one case of physical abuse leading to the death of an infant** in Thiès;
- **one attempted rape** at Yeumbeul;
- **One death (fall into a pit)** at Sithiang Moadé in Fouladou;
• One indecent assault in Ziguinchor.

**Victims' Profile**

**Aged between zero (0) and sixteen (16).** One victim was a five-form pupil.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**

- Five relatives of the victim: mother (4 cases), father of the victim (physical abuse leading to death);
- Two school staff members: Math Teacher at Fadilou Diop EMC (secondary school) in Pikine and a school watchman;
- Two individuals unknown to the victim: a peddler aged 32 and a security guard.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**

Seven analytical articles were published. Two articles "Baisse des MGF: Unicef et Unfpa enregistre un net progrès - FGM on the decrease: UNICEF and UNFPA record a net progress" and "Excision : les NU évaluent 65% de diminution de la pratique - Female circumcision, a 65-percent reduction in the practice according UN estimates" heralded the decline of the practice of female circumcision. According to the UN Specialized Agencies, Senegal is a role model as regard the abandonment of female circumcision. In 2009, 3548 communities had abandoned excision. However, the final eradication of female circumcision remains a challenge.

A third article was entitled "L'UGPR de Thiès demande la perpétuité en cas de viol sur mineure - UGPR Thies requests life imprisonment for rape of a minor."

The fourth article gave an account of the protest march organized by female teachers in the Mbour Department to protest against the upsurge of violence against girls in schools.

A fifth article talked about the "mobilization of intellectual women from the suburbs of Dakar against early marriage." The group of intellectual women residing in Pikine recently created the association "Maison de refuge des jeunes filles en difficulté" to fight against forced marriages.

An article entitled "Au cœur d'une souffrance innocente – Admist suffering children!" dealt with the problem of child workers in Senegal. In the said country, over “450,000 children aged between five and fourteen work” as maids, beggars, "boudiouman" (garbage collectors), workers...

One last article revealed that "the suburb of Dakar ranks top among the areas where infanticides are rife." However, the article did not provide any explanation.

Prime News, Awareness Times and For Di People.

**JANUARY**

One case of abuse and four (4) analytical articles were compiled.

**Type of Abuse and Site**

The documented case of abuse was a **rape of a minor** in the city of Murrayba.

**Victims’ Profile**

She was **13-year old**.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**

The perpetrator was a man aged 54 years.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**

Four analytical articles were published this month. The first article, "Over 900 rape cases not convicted" conducted a review of cases of rape dealt with in court. According to the Head of the Media Commission of the Ministry of Justice in 2009, 313 cases were brought...
before the Court while 460 cases of sexual abuse are under investigation and 40 others are pending. One hundred and twenty two (122) cases were settled while two were dismissed. The article stated that the head of the Media Commission strongly called on public authorities to take appropriate steps to reduce the processing time for cases of sexual abuse.

The second article entitled “Porto Loco Rejects FGM” announced the abandonment of the practice of circumcision by the community of Porto Loco. The author stated that this community had quit the practice following awareness-raising to the dangers of FGM.

A third article reported on the rise of juvenile prostitution in the region of Bo in southern Sierra Leone. According to the reporter, young pupils aged 15-18 are engaged in prostitution. This phenomenon, he said, was due to the establishment of many nightclubs and other video shops providing access to pornographic material.

One last article reported on a workshop on early pregnancy. The workshop sought to raise awareness about the growing phenomenon of teenage pregnancy. In Sierra Leone, teenage pregnancies are the main cause for girls’ dropping out.

Three (3) cases of abuse and two (2) analytical articles were compiled.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
The cases of abuse documented involved **three (3) cases of rape**. The sexual abuses were committed at Blakhall Road, in Hagan Street and Hallan Street in Freetown.

**Victims’ Profile**
The victims were aged between eleven (11) and fourteen (14). The average age was of **12.33 years**.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
- A person of trust: an adult living near the victim’s house;
- An unknown individual;
- A Koranic teacher from the popular Jamatu Rahama mosque

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
Two analytical articles were published. The first reported on the workshop held by the Planned Parenthood Association (association on the protocol against violence against women and girls).

The second article dealing with sexual abuse in schools was published in the Media survey column, "In the media."

**MARCH**
Two (2) cases of abuse and four (4) analytical articles were published.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
We documented **two rape cases** in Pademba Road and North of the town of Makeni. According to the reporter, the town of Makeni witnessed of late large numbers of cases of rape and violence against women.

**Victims’ Profile**
The victims were aged **ten (10) to fifteen (15)**. The articles did not specify whether they were schoolgirls.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
One **42-year-old neighbour** and the victim’s **35-year old uncle**

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
Four analytical articles were compiled.

The articles entitled "Social activists call for sanction on rapes cases" and "900 rape cases, no convictions" dealt with the sluggishness in legal actions for rape cases. During Women's Day, women's associations took the opportunity to draw the attention of authorities and populations to the sluggishness of legal proceedings. Indeed, more than 900 cases of rape perpetrated in 2009 did not lead to any trial.

An article headlined "In Sierra Leone, Bombali District records 13 rape cases in one month" reported on the
record figure of thirteen cases of rape recorded by the UN Human Rights Section in Bombali district. One last article "Islam says yes to FGM Sheikh Swarray" gave an account of the conference on "Islam and the Media." At the conference, Imam Sheikh Swarray said the Quran made a reference to female circumcision. He declared that the practice of female circumcision enabled girls to "control their sexual urges and helped solve the problem of prostitution." Sierra Leone is a country recording one of the highest rates of FGM.

The Guardian, Daily News and This Day.

JANUARY
One case of abuse was documented and three analytical articles were published.

Type of Abuse and Site
One case of early pregnancy was recorded at Mwanyanya, Bububu in Zanzibar.

Victims’ profile
Seventeen (17) year-old, she gave birth to twins by Caesarean section.

Perpetrators’ Profile
The article did not specify the identity of the father.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
Three analytical articles were published in the Daily Nation.

The first article was entitled "Kagera RC warns against early marriages". The Commissioner of the Kagera region, Mohamed Babu, said that for 2009, over 209 girls dropped out of school for pregnancy/wedding, including 165 secondary school pupils. The Regional Commissioner urged the community to denounce and prosecute parents and spouses marrying underage girls by force.

A second article discussed the issue of teenage pregnancy while attempting to provide an explanation. Indeed, the article entitled "Stop Pregnancies" presented a study conducted in the southern regions of Tanzania: Lindi, Mtwara and Ruvuma. The findings of this study identified two reasons for the upsurge in teenage pregnancies: the endemic poverty of the young girls’ families and the traditional initiation of young girls (jando na unyago).

One last article confirmed that teenage pregnancy is a real obstacle to young Tanzanian girls' success and retention at school. The article entitled "Seregenti records 495 school dropout" documented over 495 primary/secondary school girls who dropped out in the Serengeti region.

FEBRUARY
Nine (9) cases of violence against girls, three (3) analytical articles and three (3) articles on the appeal trial of the musician Babu Seya and his three sons accused of gang rape were published.

Type of Abuse and Site

- one case of serious abuse in the region of Shinyanga;
- eight (7) cases of pregnancies in Handeni District.

Victims’ profile

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Cases of abuse which were already documented in the previous month.
One victim of abuse was twelve-year old. Another victim gave birth to triplets. The young mother, a form-four pupil, said she had a short-lived affair with the father of the children. This adult disappeared following the announcement of the pregnancy. The seven other victims were high-school students who dropped out of school in January-February as a result of pregnancies.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**

Only one alleged perpetrator was identified in an article. She was a female leader of the Women's Wing Cha Napinduzzu accused of physical and psychological abuse against her foster daughter. The alleged culprit severely beat up the twelve-year old girl and tied her up then left her outdoors where the girl spent the night.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**

The cases of abuse were treated as news stories. The case of students who left school due to pregnancy was discussed as an obstacle to the retention of girls at school. Indeed, the Principal of the school in Handeni stated that more than twenty girls dropped out of school during the year, including seven girls for pregnancy. Two articles “Stakeholders to discuss education failing standards” and "Mama Tunu Penda stresses girls’ education” reviewed the obstacles to girls’ access and retention in the school system. The main reasons for girls’ dropping out are forced marriages and pregnancies. The Tanzanian Prime Minister's wife spoke out against parents of young girls forcing them to drop out of school by marrying them off by force. A final article celebrated the International Day against Female Genital Mutilation. Despite awareness campaigns against female circumcision, FGM is still practiced in Tanzania, especially in the area of Dar-es-salaam.

**MARCH**

No cases were documented during this period.

**MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - UGANDA**

The New Vision, Daily Monitor and The Observer.

**JANUARY-MARCH**

No article received.

**MEDIA SURVEY ON VAGS - ZAMBIA**

Targeted dailies: Saturday Post and The Times Online

**JANUARY**

Three (3) cases of abuse and one analytical article were compiled.

**Type of Abuse and Site**

- Two (2) cases of incest resulting in pregnancy west of Lusaka and in the district of Petauke; and
- One rape committed in an unknown place.

**Victims’ Profile**

The victims were underage schoolgirls. One article stated the accurate age of the victim (14). The latter had successfully passed her grade 9 exam, but had to leave school due to her pregnancy.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**

- The father of the victim: forty-four (44).
• Three half-brothers of the victim: they had been raping the victim now fourteen since she turned six. When the mother of the victim lodged a complaint, the three offenders were sent to England to escape justice.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
The cases of abuse were treated from a legal standpoint. A single analytical article on violence against girls in schools was published. The article entitled “Defilement” reviewed the resurgence of sexual abuse of minors in Zambia. According to the reporter, sexual abuses on minors are embedded in our society like a malignant cancer.

**FEBRUARY**
Two analytical articles were published in February.
The first article entitled “Kara Counseling Centre opens for vulnerable children in Lusaka,” announced the opening of a centre for young orphans in the area west of Lusaka. Many orphans and street children are victims of sexual and physical abuse. The second article reviewed the increase in teenage pregnancies in the district of Itezhi Tezhi. According to statistics provided by officials of Uphill School, since January 2010 there have been four pupils pregnant while ten girls got pregnant during the previous school year. Four pupils resorted to illegal abortions. According to one of the teachers in Twaambo Mutinta school, these teenage pregnancies are accounted for by economic reasons. Indeed, many pupils are forced to live as co-tenants because of the distance from their homes to school. These are mostly minor maintained by adult males.

**MARCH**
Three cases of abuse and one analytical article published.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
- Two (2) cases of rape in the areas of Kokolo and Ishindi;
- One case of rape resulting in pregnancy and STD infection in Mazubuka.

**Victims’ profile**
Aged ten (10) to thirteen (13). The average age was of 11.5 years. One victim worked as a maid at the alleged perpetrator’s house. The other two victims were schoolgirls.

**Perpetrators’ Profile**
Three trusted individuals: they were two pastors and a domestic worker. The first individual was a pastor of the Pentecostal Church and the other worked in the victim’s school.

**Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse**
The articles were drafted in a familiar tone. An analytical article entitled “Government warns teachers abusing” dealt with the issue of sexual abuse perpetrated by school staff. The Education Minister, Dora Siliya, threatened in a speech “to dismiss any teacher who would sexually abuse students.” The UN Trust Fund Agency granted one million dollars to the Tisunge Ana Athu Akazi Coalition to fight against violence in schools over a period of three years.

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**JANUARY**
Nine (9) cases of abuse were identified and one analytical article published in the newspapers that are part of our corpus.

**Type of Abuse and Site**
• Seven (7) cases, including two cases of rape resulting in an STI;
• Two cases of incest.

Victims’ Profile
The victims were aged between four (4) and ten (10). Their average age was of 7.42 years.

Perpetrators’ Profile
• Two relatives of the victims: fathers of the two victims in the incest case;
• Two trustworthy individuals who raped four minors aged eight to nine; and
• An individual unknown to both victims.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The documented cases were handled from a legal perspective in The Herald. A single analytical article was published and entitled "Domestic violence: Think about children" analyzes the impact of VAG on children’s behaviour. According to the Program Director of the NGO Justice for Children Trust, domestic violence has "far-reaching negative consequences (...) in addition to being a victim of such violence, children from violent backgrounds have a negative perception of reality. According to him, boys who witness violence acts are liable to replicate the experience as adults. As for the daughters of battered mothers, they are more likely to be beaten up, in their turn

FEBRUARY
Three (3) cases of abuse were documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
• Two (2) cases of rape in Harare and at Nyamaridza;
• one case of physical abuse leading to the death of the victim in Masvingo.

Victims’ profile
The victims were aged between eight (8) and fourteen (14), with an average age of 12.

Perpetrators’ Profile
• a relative to the victim: a 35-year old man who beat his eight-year old daughter to death for losing her shoes at school;
• the brother-in-law of the victim: Aged 34, he was the husband of the victim’s sister;
• A trustworthy individual: the watchman of the victim’s home. He was 25.
On average, the perpetrators were aged 31.33. The profile of the victim confirms the hypothesis that most rapists are related or close to the victim.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The cases of abuse were analyzed as news stories. No article commemorating the International Day against FGM was published. We were unable to compile official documents on female circumcision in Zimbabwe.

MARCH
One case of abuse was documented.

Type of Abuse and Site
Rape of a minor.

Victims’ Profile
The victim was thirteen (13).

Perpetrators’ Profile
The author was a senior official of the Zuna PF political party in Hopley Farm.

Pattern of Treatment of the Cases of Abuse
The article stated that instead of arresting the accused, the police humiliated and assaulted the victim.
SUMMARY TABLE OF VAGS: JULY 2009-MARCH 2010

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The above table summarizes the cases of abuse documented in the 39 journals that are part of corpus from 1 July 2009 to March 31, 2010.

Thanks to the active collaboration of colleagues from ActionAid in eighteen African countries five hundred seventy seven (577) cases of abuse have been documented since 1 July 2009: **Senegal** (124 cases, 5 titles), **Kenya** (103 cases), **Gambia** (89 cases, 1 title), **Ghana** (79 cases, 4 titles) and **Malawi** (55 cases) were countries where we were able to compile the largest number of cases. A total of 455 cases were documented in these five countries. What can be the explanation?

- The enthusiasm of journalists for a subject that sells well?
- Easy information gathering on this issue for journalists in the field?
- Better sensitized journalists?
- The veil lifted on the silence of victims?
- Parents more sensitized?
- A fairer judicial system?
- The impact of awareness-raising actions conducted by NGOs?
- The political will in the fight against violence?
- The survey does not concern all the dailies in the countries covered?
- etc...

In all cases, a better visibility of violence against girls could only be beneficial to the need for better positioning of the issue on the national political agenda.
KENYA, DAILY NATION

Cursed for Fighting Circumcision
By Hassan Huka and Muchiri Karanja

Locals like Ms Josephine Kulea, who joined the war against underage marriage and female circumcision risk being cursed by conservative village elders, who view them as enemies of culture.

Three years ago elders invoked the Ldeketa, a terrible curse reserved for cultural outlaws. “They told my mother to get ready to bury me, that after the curse I was as good as dead,” says the 28-year-old registered nurse.

But the nurse says she does not mind being cursed. Not as long as she snatches as many little girls as possible from the tight grip of harmful traditions like female circumcision and early marriages.

In her Samburu community, elders wield enormous power over the lives of ordinary villagers — from deciding who marries who to quietly settling life and death disputes like rape, defilement and incest.

In their court, many young men get away with rape and defilement for as little as one cow! Ms Mulea says the old men remain the greatest enemy of the Samburu child.

“Right now there is a 10-year-old girl Class Four girl who the elders want married. The elders do not realise that it is illegal,” says Ms Mulea. The police and some provincial administrators, who have failed to act on reported cases of female circumcision and early marriages are the other big enemies of the children.

Gender minister Esther Murugi says her office is seriously understaffed and under-equipped. The Children’s Department, she says, is operating with half the required staff. Reaching such cases as Itoms is an uphill task: the department lacks enough vehicles.

http://www.nation.co.ke/News/regional/-/1070/850622/-/8pe6rd/-/index.html
VIOL - POURQUOI ÇA COINCE A LA BARRE

RAPE - WHY DOES STUCK AT BAR

Félicité Bahane N.
17 Mars 2010

Nombre de victimes disent être découragées par la durée et le déroulement des procédures judiciaires.

Le Code pénal camerounais considère le viol comme un crime, passible d'une peine d'emprisonnement de 5 à 10 ans. La sanction double et va jusqu'à l'emprisonnement à vie, si le coupable est un parent de la victime. Cependant, « ces peines ne sont presque jamais appliquées », affirme-t-on du côté du Réseau national des associations des Tantines (RENATA).

Cette organisation est reconnue pour son combat actif contre le viol et l'inceste au Cameroun. C'est ainsi qu'au terme d'une de ses études, menée en 2008 à travers le pays, les « Tantines » constatent que le viol croît de façon exponentielle et que plusieurs victimes ont moins de 10 ans. D'où l'idée d'une campagne qu'elles ont lancée depuis mai 2009 sur le thème : « Le viol est un crime. Brisons le silence, dénonçons ». Mais très vite, elles constatent aussi que très peu de violeurs arrivent devant la barre. 7 percent selon leurs statistiques, qui montrent par ailleurs que peine 5 percent d'entre eux sont condamnés. Et pour cause : le viol est encore un sujet tabou. Visiblement, même devant les tribunaux.

Pour RENATA, la corruption est le premier argument évoqué pour expliquer la réticence des juges et mêmes des avocats à donner une suite aux affaires de viol. « À tous les niveaux de la procédure, la victime est humiliée, incriminée et tous les intervenants lui conseillent un arrangement à l'amiable », explique l'une des « Tantines ». Christelle K. est mère de trois enfants violés par leur propre père. Elle raconte que seule la longueur de la procédure suffit à décourager. « Ça fait aujourd'hui deux ans que je suis en justice contre mon mari. Mais je suis encore dans l'attente de l'information judiciaire. On a même dit à mon nouvel avocat que le dossier est inconnu », poursuit-elle. Justement, chez RENATA, une conseillère affirme que très souvent les dossiers des victimes disparaissent alors qu'elles se sont déjà rendues à la barre. « Et lorsqu'on observe le chemin parcouru pour arriver à ce niveau, beaucoup préfèrent laisser tomber l'affaire. Toute chose qui laisse aussi le champ libre au violeur pour recommencer son crime avec une autre ». Dans les rares cas qui arrivent malgré tout devant la barre, « on passe de renvoi en renvoi au point de démoraliser les victimes ». En ce moment, l'avocat des « Tantines » est sur une affaire dont le premier procès a eu lieu il y a trois ans. En fait, selon une « Tantine », « le certificat médical qui est la pièce maîtresse dans les affaires de viol est assez souvent jugé non valide. Et en dehors de ce document, le reste passe pour être des spéculations parce qu'il s'agit de témoignages des proches de la victime. »

English version of the original above

Many victims say they are discouraged by the length and conduct of judicial proceedings. The Cameroonian Penal Code considers rape as a crime, punishable by imprisonment for 5 to 10 years. The penalty is up to double life imprisonment if the offender is a relative of the victim. However, "these penalties are almost never enforced," says one side of the National Network of Associations of Tantines (RENATA).

This organization is known for its active struggle against rape and incest in Cameroon. Thus only after one of his studies, conducted in 2008 across the country, "Tantines" find that rape is growing exponentially and that
many victims are under 10 years. Hence the idea of a campaign they have launched since May 2009 on the theme: "Rape is a crime. Breaking the silence, denounce rapists. But very quickly, they also find that few rapists come before the bar. 7 percent according to their statistics, which also show that only 5 percent of them are convicted. And for good reason: rape is still a taboo subject. Obviously, even the courts

For RENATA, corruption is the first argument raised to explain the reluctance of judges and lawyers to give themselves a response to rape cases. "At all levels of the procedure, the victim is humiliated, criminalized and all stakeholders advise him an amicable agreement," explains one of the "Tantines. Christelle K. mother of three children being raped by their own father. It is said that only the length of the proceedings is sufficient to deter. "It's been two years now that I am in court against my husband.

But I'm still waiting for court information. We even told my lawyer that the new record is unknown, "she says. Precisely, in RENATA, a counselor said that very often the records of victims disappear when they have already returned to the bar. "And when we observe the path to reach this level, many prefer to let the matter drop. Anything that also leaves the field open for the rapist's crime again with another.

In the rare cases that come before the bar anyway, 'you pass the reference point in reference to demoralize the victims. " At this time, counsel for "Tantines" is a case in which the first trial took place three years ago. In fact, according to an "Auntie", "the medical certificate which is the centerpiece in cases of rape is often considered invalid. And apart from this document, the rest going to be speculation because it is testimony of the victim's relatives. " 
SIERRA LEONE,

Schools and sex abuse in Sierra Leone

Humu Tavawallie went to school for an education, but was forced into sex with her teacher to pay for her exams. This is an all too common problem in Sierra Leone, and entrenched social attitudes make it difficult to tackle, writes Annabel Symington. “I couldn’t say no,” says Humu Tavawallie, 14. “When he asked, I couldn’t say no.” Humu has been sleeping with her teacher, 37, since the end of last school year. “When the practicals [exams] came I didn’t have the money to pay. My teacher said I didn’t have to pay. He said he wanted to love me.” The practicals cost 5000 Leones, less than 80p.

Humu has been going to her teacher’s house once or twice a week since late July. In exchange for sex, her teacher let her off the school fees and gave her a little money. “My mother knows,” says Humu, “but she did not say anything. As long as I take some money home, and continue to go to school, she never asks questions.”

For many girls in Sierra Leone their teachers are not a support but a further obstacle to their education, as they demand sex in exchange for a place at school or next grades. If the girl says no, the teacher will fail her. “I am afraid to not be wanted by my teacher,” says Tify Gbla, 17. She knew that if her teacher placed her in that catch-22 situation, her education would be over.

“I am one of the only girls in my class who is not having a relationship with the teacher,” said Tify. She said she did not have any friends now; the classroom is divided in two groups: ones accepted teacher suggestions and others refused.

The both situations lived by humu and Tify were worryingly common. Over half of all girls in Sierra Leone have experienced some forms of sexual abuse by the age of 18. And 54 per cent of them have their first baby before their 19th birthday. (openDemocracy: both of these figures were made available to the author by UNICEF in Freetown; there is not yet a published source that we can link to.)

cases of sexual abuse and unwanted pregnancies, which are euphemistically called “girl-child pregnancies”, force girls to leave school early, creating yet another lost generation in this West African nation, which is still getting back on its feet after an 11-year civil war. “When a child is born poor and that child gives birth to a child, that child will be the poorest of the poor,” explains Ahmed Muckson Sesay, the director of the Organization for Peace, Reconciliation and Development Sierra Leone (OPARD-SL).

Maud Droodleever Fortuyn, chief child protection officer for Unicef Sierra Leone, described how difficult the women and children situation is, particularly girls. She said the civil war which ravaged the country brought girls to neglect their dignity, and a feeling that all they can offer is their bodies. “Sex is a currency for these girls. But sex is cheap. In Sierra Leone, girls sell themselves for lunch.”

It is illegal to have sex with a minor in Sierra Leone, but few men are prosecuted, as most parents will accept small out of court payments instead of of taking the perpetrator to court. Khoumba Kanawe, a Sierra Leonean lawyer who focuses on women’s rights and family law, said the problem is getting worse, even mothers actively encourage their daughters into sexual relationships in exchange for money. (...)

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