

War Against Rape(WAR) Factsheet Jan-Jun'10



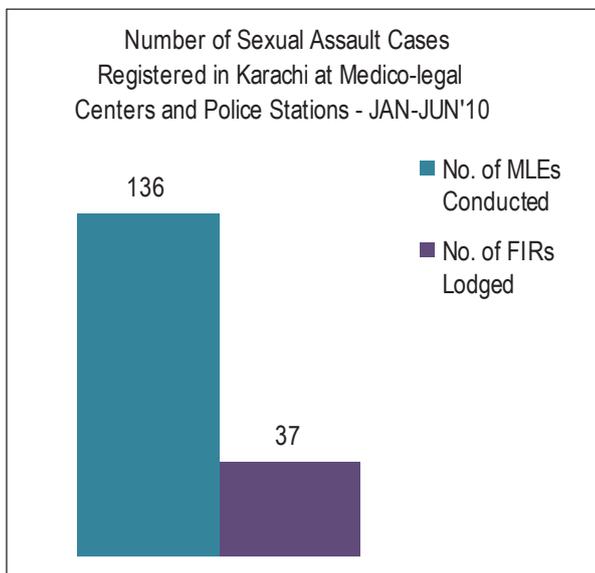
It is estimated that worldwide, one in five women will become a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime.ⁱ

According to 2006 *In-Depth Study of All Forms of Violence Against Women*, "Sexual violence by non-partners refers to violence by a relative, friend, acquaintance, neighbor, work colleague or stranger. Estimates of the prevalence of sexual violence by non-partners are difficult to establish, because in many societies, sexual violence remains an issue of deep shame for women and often for their families. Statistics on rape extracted from police records, for example, are notoriously unreliable because of significant underreporting".ⁱⁱ

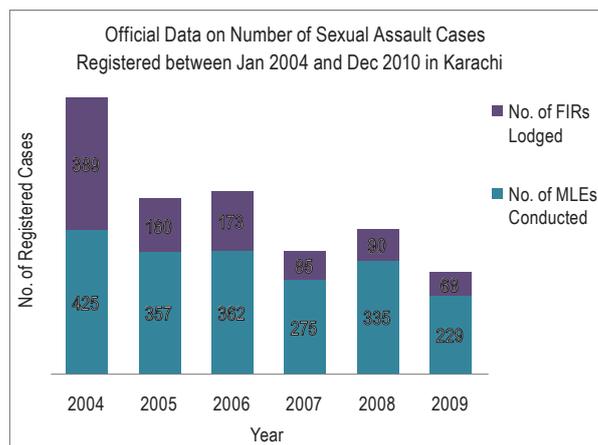
One of WAR's mandates is to highlight statistics on sexual violence in Pakistan and to add urgency to the issue by in-depth analysis of deterrents to reporting abuse. It gathers statistics and case-related information from all 103 Police stations in Karachi, including Women Police Stations and the three major Government hospitals ⁱⁱⁱ in Karachi where medico-legal examinations are conducted. However, the cases it investigates may be referred from other sources as well, including town offices (18 in Karachi), other NGOs, media and directly from courts via public prosecutors and judges.

Reported Sexual Assault Cases Jan-Jun'10

Official records of the first six months of year 2010 show an alarming disparity between the numbers of First Information Reports (FIRs) registered with the Police and medico-legal examinations (MLEs) conducted in sexual assault cases in Karachi. It was found that FIRs had only been registered in 27% of the cases where MLEs had been conducted.

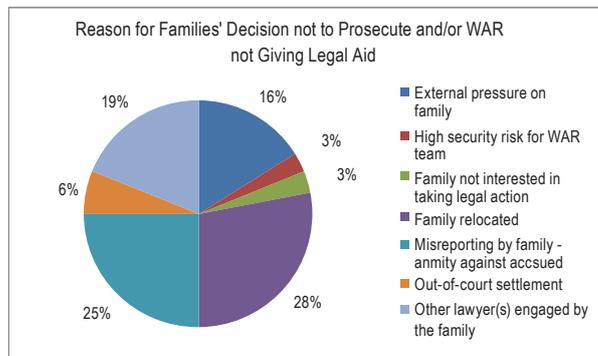


According to data collected by WAR since 2004, this consistent gap between FIRs and MLEs depicted below:



WAR's Investigations

WAR investigated **47 (35%)** cases of sexual assault in the first half of year 2010. **15 (32%)** cases have been taken to court. Whereas **32 (68%)** cases were not taken to court for reasons depicted below:



Analysis of cases investigated by WAR highlighted the following facts:

- The age group most vulnerable to sexual violence was 17-23 (**52%**).
- **17%** survivors belong to the age group between 6 years to 11 years.
- **18** was the average age of survivors.
- Majority of cases (**42%**) involved children under 16 years while (**53%**) were of children under 18 years.

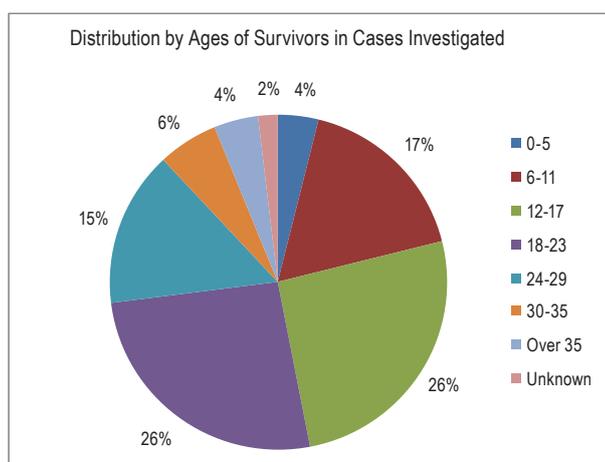
- 15% survivors belong to the age group between 24 years to 29 years.
- Majority (94%) of rape survivors were female and (4%) survivors were male.
- Demographically, the highest incidence of sexual violence was recorded in Korangi town (15%), followed by Landhi, Gadap and Gulshan-e-Iqbal towns (11% each).
- 28% families shifted from their homes to escape stigma and persecution.

Additionally, 548 cases of sexual violence were reported in the first half of 2010 all over Pakistan^{iv}.

Child Sexual Abuse

Susceptibility at younger ages, often along with grievous bodily injury and in some cases death, stand out as rising trends.

The nature of crimes being perpetrated against children is a cause of great concern. With younger children falling prey to sexual offenders the government needs to step up efforts to protect the most vulnerable members of society. The participation of communities in developing community-based



programs that focus on prevention and quick response is the need of the hour, especially as in most cases the perpetrators are neighbors or close relatives.

Male rape where survivors are usually children aged less than 10, goes largely unreported in Pakistan. This is substantiated by only 4% of cases reported from Karachi involving male victims.

Gaps in Legislation

Some glaring gaps in legislation and miscarriage of justice in the criminal justice system of Pakistan include the following:

- Despite amendments to rape laws in 2006, there is no separate legislation on incest.

- Similarly, there are no specific legal provisions for object rape, digital rape or marital rape/partner rape in Pakistani law.
- Though according to the law, the testimony of a rape survivor is sufficient for conviction, courts still rely heavily on corroborative evidence in the form of medical and forensic reports despite various studies indicating that most sexual assaults, there may be no marks of violence, injuries or resistance by the survivor for fear of real or perceived threat to life. Defense attorneys as a matter of routine use lack of medical evidence to establish consent.
- The absence of 'prompt complaint' is cited to give 'benefit of the doubt' to rapists warranting their acquittal despite the fact that in incest cases especially, reporting is almost always delayed.
- Although rape is a crime against the state and is a non-compoundable offence, courts are generally not vigilant against the phenomenon of out-of-court settlements where the plaintiff may be blackmailed or coerced into dropping charges against the accused.
- Courts do not independently ascertain proximity of accused to survivors before granting bail with the result that accused can harass and threaten survivors and families upon release.

ⁱ María José Alcalá. *State of World Population 2005. The Promise of Equality: Gender Equity, Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals.* UNFPA. 2005. 65.

ⁱⁱ General Assembly. *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women: Report of the Secretary General, 2006. A/61/122/Add.1.* 6 July 2006. 41.

ⁱⁱⁱ Civil Hospital, Abbassi Shaheed Hospital and Jinnah Post-graduate Medical Center.

^{iv} Violence Against Women Watch Group, I. (2010). *Incidents of Violence against Women in Pakistan Reported During Januray to June 2010.* Islamabad.

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War Against Rape (WAR), Karachi, established in 1989, is working to provide comprehensive services to rape survivors and to advocate just laws and rights-based services for survivors of sexual violence. For more information, please visit our website.

