

War Against Rape (WAR)

FACTSHEET

Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) (Jan-2020 to Dec-2021)

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against women and children occurs across the world. Globally, nearly 30% or 1 in 3 women have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner or non-partner sexual violence or bothⁱ. Worldwide, approximately 15 million adolescent girls, aged 15-19 have experienced forced sex at some point in their lifeⁱⁱ. Pakistan ranked 153rd out of 156ⁱⁱⁱ countries on the gender parity index, and it ranked seventh among eight countries in South Asia, only better than Afghanistan. Sexual violence has deleterious impact on physical and mental health of the survivors/victims, also causing physical injury. This issue is associated with an increased risk of a range of immediate and long term physical and psychological effects including severe sexual and reproductive health problems, and may also increase the risk of acquiring HIV in some settings.

Cases of sexual violence are underreported in Pakistan with an extremely low, just under 3% conviction rate. Violence against women and girls including rape, gang-rape, murder, sexual harassment, honor killing, domestic violence, and early and forced marriages and forced conversions remains a serious problem across Pakistan.

According to media reports, 70% of women in Pakistan have faced some form of abuse/violence and approximately 1,000 women are killed annually in the country from domestic violence with leaving thousands of others women made disabled. These are alarming figures. The Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18^{iv} finds that over 1 of every 4 ever-married women have faced violence within their marriages. Available data from domestic violence helplines across Pakistan indicated that cases of domestic violence increased 200 percent during January-March 2020^v. This situation further worsened during the Covid-19 lockdowns after March.

According to Human Rights Watch World Report 2021 for Pakistan; as per human rights defenders estimates roughly 1,000 women are killed in the name of honor every year, while child marriage also remains a serious problem in Pakistan, with 21% of girls marrying before age 18, and 3% marrying before 15. The report further states, women from religious minority communities remain particularly vulnerable to forced marriage, and transgender persons also continued to face discrimination, violence and persecution, however, authorities often failed to safeguard them or hold culprits punished.

A recent inhuman and shameful incident happened where four women were stripped, dragged and tortured in a busy market place in Faisalabad. In August 2021, the issue of harassment of women by youngsters was called to attention when a video of sexual assault surfaced nationwide on the internet. A group of motorcyclists harassed a girl in a rickshaw; a man jumped onto the moving rickshaw and forcibly kissed the girl. Later that day, four such incidents were reported, in which a man allegedly raped his 16 years old daughter; a teenage boy sexually assaulted a minor girl. Similarly, a mother of four children was raped by a man and a young man raped a girl who was seeking a job. The accused Zahir Jaffer brutally tortured Noor Maqum to death in Islamabad.

In June 2021, a university professor was sentenced to 8 years imprisonment for harassing a female teacher online. According to a media report, there has been an increase of 70% in cyber-harassment cases in 2020^{vi}. It is estimated that 40 % of female internet users in Pakistan have experienced some kind of harassment via social media platforms and messaging apps, and that 72 % of female social media users do not know about cyber harassment laws in Pakistan^{vii}.

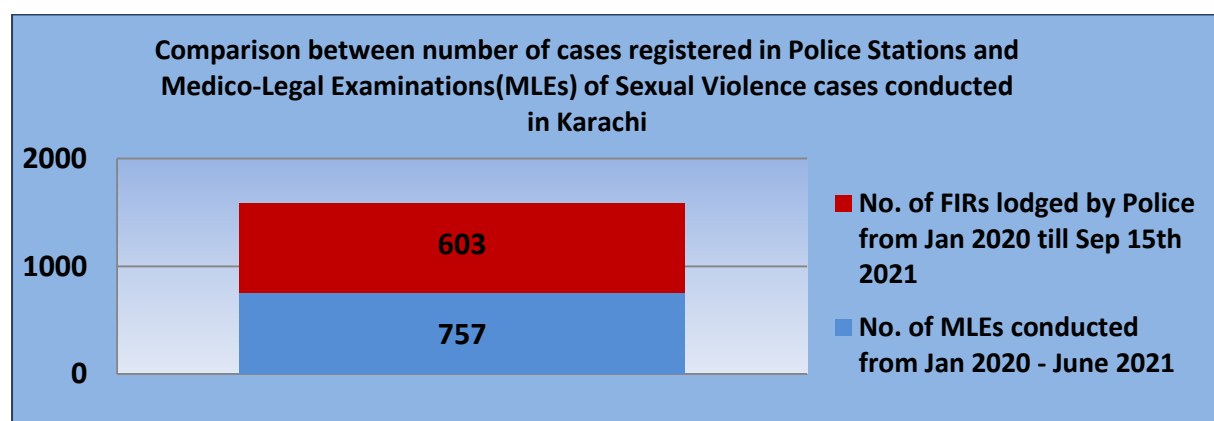
One of WAR’s mandates is to highlight statistics on sexual violence in Pakistan and to add urgency to the issue by in-depth analysis of deterrents to reporting abuse. WAR gathers statistics and case-related information from all police stations, and the three major government hospitals in Karachi where medico-legal examinations are conducted. Cases that WAR investigates also referred from other sources as well, including other NGOs, media, police, medico-legal officers (MLOs) and directly from courts via public prosecutors and judges.

Reported Rape Cases in Pakistan

As per the available data and official statistics, at least ***11 rape cases*** reported in Pakistan daily with over ***22,037 rape cases***^{viii} reported to police across the country in the last six years. However, WAR believes that these figures are only the tip of the iceberg, the actual figures are much higher than this. Out of the total cases, 4,060 cases are pending in the courts, of which, **only 77 accused have been convicted which comprise 0.3% of the total figure**, and only 18% of cases have reached the prosecution stage. According to the report, only ***41% of rape*** cases are reported to the police due to social pressures and other procedural deterrents and gaps in the justice system.

Reported Sexual Violence Cases in Karachi

A comparison of the data obtained from the police and the medico-legal sector is depicted in below in graph:



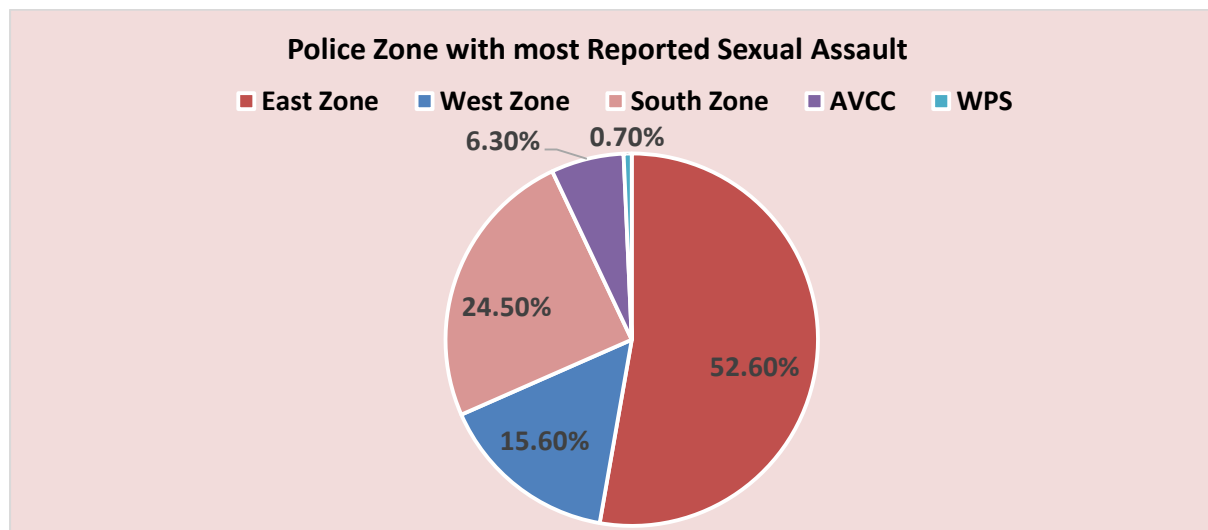
Official data collected from Karachi Police from Jan 2020 – till Sep 15th 2021 shows that a total of **603^{ix} First Information Report (FIRs)** were registered in sexual violence cases (335 in 2020 and 268 till 15th Sep 2021) in Karachi compared to **894 Medico-legal Examinations (MLEs)^x** were conducted in alleged sexual assault cases in 3 major government hospitals 1)

Abbassi Shaheed Hospital, 2) Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Centre (JPMC) and 3) Civil Hospital Karachi. Of the total MLEs, **592** were conducted in 2020 and **302** conducted till 30th June 2021.

The discrepancies continues to exist in the aforementioned figures of MLEs and FIRs as the data revealed that FIRs were registered in approximately 67% of the cases, and if the data had available from the medico-legal sector till Sep-2021, then the discrepancies increases further between number of FIRs and MLEs.

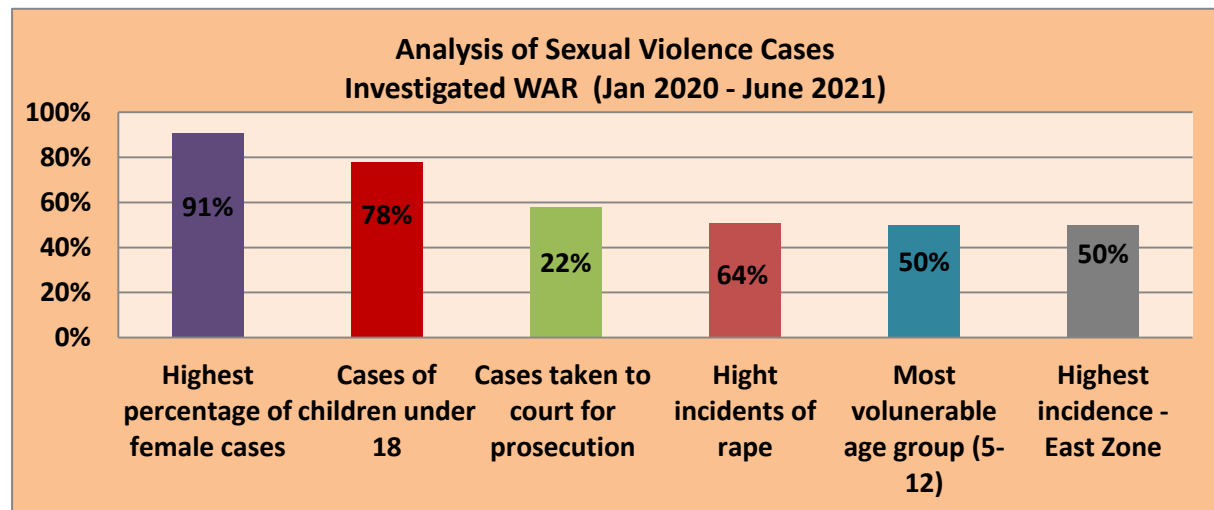
The major reasons that contribute to such discrepancies including lack of trust and cooperation, biased, judgemental and threatening attitude by the police towards victims and their families, fear of social stigma, shame and guilt. It is also indicative of survivors not willing to engage with the justice system or of cases where the complainant attempted to report the crimes remained unable to get their FIRs lodged due to non-supportive behavior by the law enforcement authority. Various other factors are behind underreporting such as snail-paced and lengthy court proceedings, and may be the reliable data is missing by the police or lack of awareness amongst survivors and their families regarding their rights or actual procedure.

The most/highest number of MLEs in alleged rape cases were conducted from the **Korangi Industrial Area police station** jurisdiction (**15**), followed by **Sachal** (**12**) and **Zaman Town** (**9**). The following pie chart shows the red alert spot is Karachi's East Zone (East, Malir and Korangi districts). This area had over half of the city's alleged sexual violence cases.



WAR's Investigations

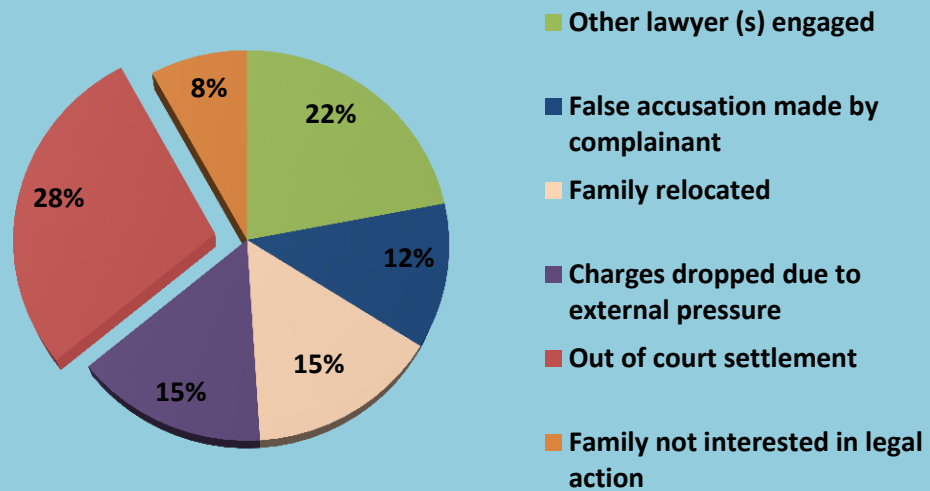
Jan 2020 – Dec 2021, **WAR investigated 100** cases of sexual assault Out of which, **22 (22%)** cases jointly taken by WAR and Legal Aid Foundation for Victims of Rape & Sexual Assault (LRSA) to court for prosecution. **During that period WAR and LRSA won 8 sexual violence cases** including **2 incest cases**. The average age in total 100 investigated cases is **13 years** while on total 22 litigation cases, the average age is **15**. WAR major findings highlighted below in total investigated cases during Jan 2020 to Dec 2021:



- Out of the total **100 investigated cases**, alarming 78 (**78%**) survivors were children under the age of **18 years**.
- The age group most vulnerable to sexual violence was **5-12 (50%)**, followed by 13-18 (28%) and 19-25 (20%).
- Majority (**91%**) of sexual violence survivors were of female and (9%) survivors were male.
- 13 was the average age in overall cases investigated with a minimum of only **5-year-old**.
- Majority (**64%**) rape cases recorded, followed by gang-rape (**21%**), sodomy (**9%**) and incest (**6%**).
- As per WAR's investigations, **demographically**, the highest incidents of sexual violence (**50%**) were recorded in few of the **East Zone police stations** in Karachi. Of the total cases, Korangi Industrial Area (14%), Sacchal (10%) and Zaman Town (9%), Shah Faisal and Ibrahim Hydri (6%) each and Korangi (5%).

Following are the reasons that why **78%** cases were not taken to court for prosecution:

**Cases avail only legal counseling - Reasons
Jan 2020 to Dec 2021**



Recommendations:

- ✚ State should ensure effective implementation of women and child protection laws including implementation of Anti Rape (Investigation and Trial) Ordinance 2020 and accountability mechanisms.
- ✚ Need to build the capacity of key state actors of the justice system, line government departments and other concerned stakeholder's biannually on gender sensitization, laws protecting women, children and transgender persons, importance of behavior change and referral support mechanism to improve SGBV response services.
- ✚ For sustainable change and impact, build capacity of police officers to enhance their technical skills on evidence collection including forensics and appropriate understanding for medico-legal requirements in SGBV cases.
- ✚ Fulfil Medico-legal officers (MLOs) vacant posts urgently for male and female both across Sindh. Enhance their skills and build capacity on standardised best practices including forensics in SGBV cases.
- ✚ Monitoring of GBV courts procedures in dealing with SGBV cases, arguments and what time span these courts are taken and verdicts for gender analysis and to maintained evidence-based outcomes database.
- ✚ Notified copies of pro-women, children and transgender persons laws with Urdu and Sindhi Translation should be shared with all **595 police stations** in across Sindh including judiciary and other key stakeholders to orient concerned them timely as it will ultimately benefits victims of different forms of gender-based violence (GBV).
- ✚ Sexual harassment committees are established, however, police and other state actors of the justice system etc. are not aware. Hence, all institutions of the justice system etc. should be placed a code of conduct in their offices to prevent or reduce harassment against women and girls.
- ✚ Interdepartmental coordination needs to be strengthen between key state actors of the justice system for efficiently handling and responding survivors/victims of sexual violence cases to improve the conviction rate, which is dismally low under 3% in Pakistan.



WAR Introduction

War Against Rape (WAR), established in 1989, is working to provide comprehensive services and to advocate just laws and rights-based services to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). For more information, please visit our website and Facebook page below:

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<https://www.facebook.com/WarAgainstRape1989/>

References

ⁱ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

ⁱⁱ A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents, UNICEF, 2017

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-202>

^{iv} National Institute of Population Studies, 2017-18 Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey: Key Findings, (National Institute of Population Studies, 2018), https://www.nips.org.pk/abstract_files/PDHS%202017-18%20-%20Key%20Findings.pdf

^v <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/pakistan>

^{vi} <https://www.dawn.com/news/1607901>

^{vii} <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2171675/harassment-cyberspace-online-crimes-continue-target-women>

^{viii} <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/743328-about-11-rape-cases-reported-in-pakistan-every-day-official-statistics-reveal>

^{ix} As obtained from the Police

^x As obtained from the Police Surgeon's Office, Karachi