

- Human rights of women and girls are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights;
- Many women face additional barriers to the enjoyment of their human rights because of such factors as race, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or socio-economic class. Particular groups such as immigrants, displaced women and refugees are also at risk;
- Some countries still use laws, which are perpetuating de jure discrimination with regard to personal status, marital status and violence against women. These include Algeria, Mali, Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya, Lesotho, Cameroon, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Morocco;
- Customary laws and practices facilitate harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, early childhood marriages, forced marriages, widowhood, inheritance, slavery and trafficking in women, child custody and maintenance and burial laws;
- Economic deprivation, religious, traditional & cultural practices have gone hand in hand with gender violence in Africa;
- A report by the Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices in 1998 stated that 100 million African women and girls are victims of FGM;
- In many African countries, women are still regarded as second class citizens, minors and /or property of their husbands;

### **STATISTICS**

- 38% of Kenyan women aged 15-49 have undergone FGM;
- 90% prevalence of FGM in Ethiopia;
- 2.325 million women have undergone FGM in Ghana;
- Approximately 40% to 50% of Nigerian women have undergone FGM;
- 50,000 South African women annually report that they have been raped. Another 17,000 are murdered in the course of sexual attacks. Crisis centres in South Africa estimate that an additional 900,000 women and 600,000 children are raped in cases that go unreported. In Zimbabwe, the majority of victims of male violence are 20-49 years, according to the Musasa project, a non-governmental organization that provides shelter to battered women;
- World wide 20-50% of women declare that they have been abused at least once in their life;
- The latest figures published by UNIFEM in 1996 show that there were 856 murders of women in Botswana, 263 in Zambia and 249 in Zimbabwe. In most cases the person responsible for the murder was the woman's husband/partner.

The AWDF is an institutional capacity-building and programme development Fund, which funds local, national, sub-regional and regional organisations in Africa working towards women's empowerment.

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