



A group of women gather during a gender-based violence survivor dialogue session. Photo Credit: USAID

KENYA

FLATTENING THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CURVE

The COVID-19 pandemic, and its accompanying prevention response measures, continue to pose serious health, economic and social threats to all levels of society, wealthy and vulnerable nations alike. Women and girls have faced the brunt of these effects, facing sharp increases in sexual violence cases reported throughout Kenya. By implementing this activity, USAID seeks to provide immediate support to gender-based violence (GBV) survivors in response to the rising number of cases in Kenya.

OUR WORK

Women and girls are overwhelmingly the most vulnerable group impacted by the novel COVID-19 virus. Emerging data shows an increase in reports of GBV within communities with existing histories of gender inequality and high prevalence of sexual violence. In Kenya, 45% of women and girls aged 15-19 have experienced physical violence and 39% of ever-married women report having experienced violence (physical or sexual) at the hands of their spouse.

The prevalence of violence against women renders communities in Kenya particularly vulnerable to increases in GBV as lockdowns and curfews affect livelihoods leading to heightened levels of stress,

frustration, and fear during home confinement. Furthermore, uncertainty around the functionality of government services, including local police and the courts, dramatically reduces reporting of GBV incidents. The project seeks to provide immediate support to the rising number of GBV survivors through increased access to legal, psychosocial and health services, while ensuring that survivors are treated with dignity and in accordance with principles of *do no harm*.

Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a sharp increase in sexual violence cases, amounting to 35.8% of all criminal cases reported within the first two weeks of lockdown in Kenya. Medical and psychosocial support services have been disrupted while access to justice mechanisms such as police stations, courts and other legal services have stalled. The following activities will be carried out to address these gaps:

- Referral systems to pro-bono lawyers
- GBV survivor dialogue sessions
- GBV duty bearers dialogue sessions
- GBV sensitizations for healthcare providers
- Virtual GBV learning and adaptation forums
- Radio programming; and
- Psychosocial support for survivors.

The project's target groups include GBV survivors, relevant criminal justice sector actors.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1,107 (198 Male, 909 Female) GBV survivors supported to access legal aid.
- 94 GBV cases represented in courts.
- 480 GBV survivors have access to quality health and psychological services, through teleworking and face to face counselling.

BUDGET: USD \$200,000

DURATION:
2020 – 2021

ACTIVITY LOCATIONS:

Mombasa (Jomvu, Mvita, Changanwe, Kisauni, Nyali and Likoni) and Nairobi (Kibera, Mathare, Kawangware, Kiambui and Mukuru).

KEY PARTNERS:

Search for Common Ground, Freedom house

OTHER PARTNERS:

FIDA, CREAW

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