



## Emotional violence among couples on the rise - study

- ▶ Intimate partner violence led especially among married couples with 85.2 per cent.
- ▶ 2019 World Bank survey revealed that gender-based violence is a global pandemic.

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Violence against women and girls has been on the rise in the country for the last 12 months, a new survey has revealed. Despite the concerted efforts by the government and non-state actors to reduce the cases, the latest report by Performance Monitoring Action (PMA) under the International Centre for Reproductive Health shows the numbers have shot.

The report focused on 11 counties; Nairobi, Nandi, Nyamira, Siaya, Bungoma, Kakamega, West Pokot, Kiambu, Kericho, Kilifi, and Kitui.

It revealed that 23.1 per cent of the sampled women reported having experienced violence in the last 12 months with some respondents reporting to have experienced more than one type of violence.

Intimate partner violence led especially among married couples with 85.2 per cent of them reporting to have experienced emotional violence, pressure to have sex without force (30.1), physical violence (29.1), and physically forced sex (14.9) and murder threats (10.8).

Further, there was an upsurge of violence against women by the non-partner household members with emotional violence being reported at 86.5 per cent, physical violence (24.5), pressure to have sex without force (14.3), murder threats (13.3) and physically forced sex at 11.1 per cent.

Interestingly, only 1 in 10 of the sampled women sought help for gender-based violence, the report



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said. Only 11.7 per cent of victims reported to the police, lawyers and doctors, 58.9 per cent reported to their family members and 38.1 per cent reported to their in-laws.

“Advocacy programmes are needed to sensitise both women and men with the aim of reducing violence,” said Prof Peter Gichangi, the PMA principal investigator.

Prof Gichangi added: “Programmes should be able to provide non-stigmatising and non-judgmental gender-based violence services, which will require continual training of healthcare workers on how to handle such victims when they come for help.”

The government, on the other hand, has stepped up efforts to fight violence against women and girls by committing at least US \$50 million between 2022 and 2026.

Last May, President Uhuru Kenyatta noted the money had been set aside to facilitate the war against gender-based violence and build rescue centres for the victims.

The report, further, indicates that at least 35 per cent of the women globally have experienced either physical, sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence with seven per cent of them reporting to have been sexually assaulted by someone other than their partner.

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## Water treatment reduces child mortality by 30 per cent, new survey reveals

Over 1.5 million people die annually from diarrhoea and consuming contaminated water globally, according to a new study.

According to the research by economists from the University of Chicago, Stanford University and Harvard University, the most affected are children.

The survey conducted in Kenya and other countries revealed that water treatment reduces child mortality or death before the fifth birthday by 30 per cent.

They noted that water treatment is often excluded from the most cost-effective child-survival interventions, resulting in under-funding.

Prof Stephen Luby, highlighted and vouched for the significance of a 30 per cent reduction in child mortality. “Somewhere, approximately between one in every three, and one in every four deaths of children under five could be prevented by water treatment,” Mr Luby said.

In a five-year randomised controlled trial, the researchers, combined data from 15 different evaluations of water treatment interventions in low- and middle-income countries, to evaluate the impact on under-five child mortality.

Five of the studies included in the meta-analysis took place in Kenya. Another researcher, Nobel Laureate Michael Kremer, noted that in low-income countries, only 28 per cent of the population have access to safe drinking water services.

Mr Kremer has worked on different projects in Kenya for over 20 years. “If you take the meta-analysis estimate of improved water quality on child mortality, it suggests that a programme that targeted that population would save approximately half a million children under five years of age annually at a cost of 1.3 billion dollars per year,” Mr Kremer said.

Director-General Ministry of Health Dr Patrick Amoth, Patrick Amoth, observed that the meta-analysis shows there’s a significant reduc-

tion in mortality if safe water is provided adding that this calls for a policy shift, which promotes the high impact intervention.

“It is very important to address child health, to resolve inequities in child survival so all children will be able to reach their fifth birthday, irrespective of where they live,” Dr Amoth said.

The meta-analysis studies included a total of 25,526 subjects and 509 deaths.

The researchers screened 1,485 studies, reaching a final sample of 15 high-quality studies examining water chlorination (12), water filtration (2), and spring protection interventions (1).

Combining all collected evidence, the authors found that water treatment is a highly cost-effective way to save lives.

World Health Organisation (WHO) describes the intervention as highly cost-effective if it costs less than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of the country in question per disability-adjusted life years (DALY) averted.

One DALY represents the loss of one extra year of healthy life.

WHO lists the most cost-effective interventions for reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health with a cost per DALY of \$10 --\$100, including childhood vaccination, treatment for diarrhoea using oral rehydration solution, and malaria treatment.

The researchers’ cost-effectiveness estimates of around \$36 per DALY averted would rank water treatment among the most cost-effective interventions on the list.

Taking cost data from two water treatment interventions in Kenya and Malawi, the estimated number of DALYs averted per dollar is more than 50 times greater than the WHO’s cost threshold for highly cost-effective interventions.

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Villagers fetch water from a dam at Namasanda village, Bungoma county. [File, Standard]