



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE  
AND GENDER

OFFICE OF THE CABINET  
SECRETARY

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

## STATEMENT ON INCREASED GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN THE COUNTRY

As a Government Ministry responsible for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, I share the deep concerns Kenyans have regarding increased cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and domestic violence in the Country. GBV is any physical or psychological harmful act perpetrated to males and females.

Between January and December 2020, a total of 5009 cases were recorded through the National GBV toll-free helpline 1195, showed an increase of 1,411 (36%) reported from previous year. Data indicates that Nairobi, Kakamega, Kisumu, Nakuru and Kiambu Counties reported the highest cases of GBV.

Due to increased cases of GBV during the COVID 19 pandemic, H.E the President directed the National Crime Research Centre to carry out a study to establish the causes of the increased cases of GBV. The findings of the study established that; the number of GBV cases recorded between January and June, 2020 had an increase of 92% compared with previous year (2019) period.

The study highlighted factors contributing to GBV as alcohol, drug and substance abuse; poverty; family/domestic disputes, retrogressive cultural beliefs and practices; poor parenting/upbringing and moral decadence; identity crisis among the youthful population; and inadequate support system. The most common forms of GBV identified in the study were, physical assault, rape/attempted rape, murder, sexual offences, defilement, grievous harm, physical abuse, child marriages, psychological torture and child neglect.

In response, the Government moved with resolve to mitigate and de-escalate the vice by deploying a multi-pronged approach. In September 2020, the Cabinet approved an inter-agency strategy that includes, stakeholders to deal with the matter; six (6) Ministries (Public service and Gender, Interior, Education, ICT, Health and Labour), County Governments, development partners, and other non-state actors.

Further, the Government in recognition of the contribution of the COVID-19 pandemic to the GBV crisis made an investment through social safety nets cash transfers. Other interventions are through Affirmative Funds to provide support to self-help groups. As a result, loans to the tune of KES. WEF 300M, UWEZO 60M and Youth Fund 80M are disbursed every month.

Today, we share other measures available for use by the public:

1. Toll-free hotlines which include: the National GBV Helpline 1195, National Police Helpline – 0800730999 under Police Care, and Child Helpline-116 to provide services such as anonymous reporting, assistance to survivors, telecounselling and referrals for medical and legal services;



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2. Prevention and response structures through County GBV Working Groups established by the National and County Governments which consists of: law enforcement agents, social workers, medical personnel, and non-state actors to facilitate the prevention and response to GBV;
3. With support from the National Government Affirmative Action Fund the Rescue Centers for GBV were established to support survivors in West Pokot, Bungoma, Vihiga, Meru and Migori counties. Additionally, there are 36 shelters operated by Civil Society Organizations in 13 Counties of Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, Kwale, Samburu, Kajiado, Murang'a, Laikipia, Kiambu, Nyeri, Meru, Machakos, and Makueni; and
4. Continued sensitization and awareness in the national and regional media and within the established National Government Administration Officers (NGAO), in partnership with other stakeholders. To this end, prioritized programs targeting men and boys as allies, advocates, role models and change agents, championing advocacy efforts against all forms of GBV to mobilize collective action in the communities.

Despite all the above interventions, we still have a long way to go. We recognize that the issue of GBV is complex, affects families and GOVERNMENT CAN NOT WIN THE FIGHT SINGLE HANDEDLY. All sections of our society have an important role to play whether big or small in preventing GBV and save the society.

No one is safe till we are all safe. Let us make it our responsibility to voice up GBV in the community. Today, we share the following important key messages to all Kenyans:

1. Komesha Dhuluma/Stop Gender Based Violence, call 1195.
2. Any form of violence is wrong. Do not be afraid to ask for help, Break the SILENCE.
3. If you feel unsafe in or around your home, if you are harmed or feel threatened, intimidated or harassed, Break the SILENCE.
4. The lockdown and curfew are no excuse for Gender Based Violence. Break the SILENCE.
5. During times of crisis, negative coping mechanisms can result to GBV. If you feel unsafe, please Break the SILENCE.
6. Do you know anyone going through domestic violence and needs help? Don't sit back, break the SILENCE.

In conclusion, I wish to appeal to all members of the public to join hands to end this vice before it becomes normal in violating human rights. Stand against GBV by among other things: reporting incidences, supporting victims, and speaking out against harmful and retrogressive cultural beliefs and practices.

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**CABINET SECRETARY**