



U.N. finds the deadliest place for women is their home

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Last year, 137 women across the globe were killed every day by intimate partners or relatives.

According to the 2018 report on the killing of women and girls released Sunday by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, about 87,000 were killed worldwide in 2017, 58 percent of them victims of domestic or family violence.

Many of these deaths could have been prevented.

Jean-Luc Lemahieu, director of policy analysis and public information at the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, told The Washington Post that more than 30,000 of those deaths were the result of domestic abuse.

Domestic homicides are “the tragic end of a cycle of abuse and violence,” Lemahieu said. “When a female loses her life, it is not without predictions — you see incidences of verbal and other forms of violence. The pattern is established long before the homicide.”

Violence against women is almost universally underreported to authorities, according to the study. The reluctance to come forward is multifaceted. Research suggests it can be attributed to a “fear of reprisals, economic and psychological dependence, anticipation that the police will not take the charges seriously and viewing the assault as a private matter,” the report states.

The U.N. report was released to coincide with its International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, a campaign to raise awareness of gender-based violence and its global prevalence.

"We still do not know the true extent of violence against women, as the fear of reprisals, impact of not being believed, and the stigma borne by the survivor — not the perpetrator — have silenced the voices of millions of survivors of violence and masked the true extent of women's continued horrific experiences," Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, executive director of U.N. Women, said in a statement. "This year, together with you, we aim to support all those whose voices are still not yet being heard."

Heartbreaking photos show what it's like living in a walled city of a brothel.

The report found that the likelihood of women being slain by relatives or intimate partners has increased by more than 10 percent since 2012; women in the Americas and Africa are now the most at risk.

The report also called for a coordinated response from law enforcement that empowers and protects victims and holds their abusers accountable. Several countries have launched initiatives and training to combat gender-based violence.

"Underreporting of domestic abuse highlights the justice system as one area in need of much work," Lemahieu said. He cited figures from Italy, which reported that 31,500 women out of every 100,000 ages 16 to 70 will experience physical and sexual violence, according to a lifetime survey. Domestic homicides occur in 0.4 percent of those cases, while 35 will report domestic abuse to authorities.

“We need to sensitize the justice system — making women feel comfortable reporting, that they are listened to and that there are implications for the abuser,” Lemahieu said.

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