

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

FACTS AND FIGURES AND CASE STUDY

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The Haitian Women's Solidarity Movement (Solidarity Fanm Ayisyen - SOFA) currently collects information about women, girls and sexual violence. Between January and June 2008, they recorded 105 rapes, 58 on girls under 18.

2007

In 2007 SOFA documented 238 rapes, of which 140 involved girls aged between 19 months and 18 years.

2006

In 2006, SOFA recorded 155 victims of rape seeking help at one of their 21 centres across the country; 77 were girls under the age of 18.

Kay Fanm (a creole expression for 'women's house') is another organization which tries to collect figures on sexual violence against women and girls. During 2006 they recorded 133 cases of rape and sexual violence against women and girls. Fifty five per cent of rape victims were under 18.

Within the age group 15-19, 10.8 per cent of women who gave information to a government survey carried out in 2006 said that they had been the victims of sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner.

the questionnaire was carried out on behalf of the Ministry of Health and completed by 10,757 women aged between 15 and 49. A sub-sample of women was selected to answer a questionnaire on intimate partner violence, including sexual violence.

CASE STUDY – 22 year old 'Rose', interviewed in March 2008

"I was 15, I went to school, I was the only child in the family who went to school because it was impossible for my mother to support the others too.

One day [I had] an argument with my aunt [and] that evening, she came to my house with three men. They were all armed. They kidnapped me, and brought me to another neighbourhood. They beat me up and then they raped me. Afterwards, they explained to me that they shouldn't have raped or beaten me, they should have killed me there. It was a deserted place where no-one went by. I had to beg them to let me go, so they let me leave and I went to find my mother...

For four months after that, I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat. When I went out, my mother was worried because they were threatening me. They said that if I went and told everything to the

police, they'd kill me. My mother didn't have the means to pay for me to see a psychologist, so I had to struggle to get through it on my own...

I lodged a complaint. It was from then on that they started to threaten me, that if I complained they'd do this and that to me, and to prove to me that they were telling the truth, they set fire to my house...

[At the Caf t ria police station] they said they would do what was necessary but then, nothing happened. Afterwards, one of these men was arrested... but there was no follow-up. About two weeks later, he walked past me in the neighbourhood and said 'you wanted to make me stay in prison, you'll see what I'm going to do to you...', so my mother arranged it so that I could leave the neighbourhood for a while.

[The second time] it happened was two years ago, I was aged 20... A thief came in the house... he raped me. I couldn't yell out because I was on my own in the house with the children... At that time there was a lot of violence in the country and everyone was afraid ...

The morning after I came here, I told everything to these women here... they did everything necessary to see that I hadn't been infected. They gave me medicines, medical care. I went to see a psychologist – that helped me... Here I get medical help and moral support; here they don't deal with the police because that won't get you anywhere anyway.

Now my biggest problem is the neighbourhood I live in. In Haiti at the moment, when you've been raped, it's as though you're shunned from society: you shouldn't study; you shouldn't go to the hospital; you should stay in a corner. Being raped, it makes you... a person without rights, a person rejected from society and now, in the neighbourhood I live in, it's as though I am raped every day because every day someone reminds me that I've been raped and that I am nothing, that I should put myself in a corner, that I shouldn't speak, I should say nothing.

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