



AFRICA REGIONAL SEXUALITY RESOURCE CENTRE

**Sexuality in the Media Report**

*The Coverage of  
Sexuality by the Kenyan  
Print Media.*

*(July – December 2005)*

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**CHAPTER ONE**  
**THE COVERAGE OF SEXUALITY BY KENYAN MEDIA:**  
**CONSULTANCY DETAILS**

**1.1 Introduction**

This short first chapter provides all the details of the consultancy sent to the authors of this paper.

The Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (ARSRC), located in Lagos, Nigeria, is a project of Action Health Incorporated (AHI) established in 2002, as one of the four sexuality resource centres set-up around the world under the Ford Foundation-funded initiative - “Global Dialogue on Sexual Health and well-being”. The aim is to promote more informed and affirming public dialogue on human sexuality and to contribute to positive changes in relevant policies and programmes, by creating mechanisms for learning and advocacy at local, regional and global levels. Activities under the initiative focus on four of the most populous countries in Africa: Egypt (North Africa), Kenya (East Africa), Nigeria (West Africa) and South Africa (Southern Africa). You may wish to visit our website for more information - [www.arsrc.org](http://www.arsrc.org)

Under the Sexuality in the Media project, the ARSRC aims to publish a bi-annual publication known as a *Sexuality in the Media*, which in general examines how sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights issues are being treated in the Media in Africa. The series of publications will answer the question - what in essence is the media in Africa saying about sexuality issues? How is the media in Africa portraying sexuality issues?

The ARSRC will draw up a framework and engage researchers in the four focus countries of the Centre – Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa who will use the frame to evaluate media coverage in their specific sub-regions of Africa. The reports from the targeted countries will be compiled and published both electronically and in hard copy twice a year.

It is hoped that the initial reports will also serve as a baseline material mirroring how issues of sexuality are perceived in the ARSRC target countries and also useful in assessing the impact of the Centre in the targeted countries and regions. Secondly, it is hoped that these reports will also serve as a reference for those implementing media projects in the four focus countries, and in Africa in general.

### **a) Definition of Concepts**

#### **i) What is sexuality?**

In its work, the ARSRC adopts the WHO definition of sexuality which states that<sup>1</sup> :

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships.

While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical and religious and spiritual factors

### **b) Media**

While it is recognized that media encompasses diverse modes of communication both modern and traditional, the media here refers essentially to the mass media – print and electronic. The media is significant largely because of its recognized and powerful role in the dissemination of information to large populations; as well as its prominent role in the moulding of public opinion and as a socialization agent. The media, undisputedly, has a powerful influence on society and conversely, social groups also have the opportunity to influence what is reported in the media. In promoting socio-economic development, well-

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<sup>1</sup> See definitions of sex, sexual health and sexual rights in Appendix A.

being and good health of target populations. The media is a powerful tool and as such must be aided to present and disseminate factual and balanced information that will engender behavior change. This is especially crucial for the largely misunderstood and new emerging fields of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights.

### **c) Sexuality in the Media**

The media monitoring will examine the content of stories, editorials, opinions and other articles published in the print and electronic media and analyze for focus on sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights. For the purpose of this project, the subject areas to be investigated will include the following: See Table 1 below.

#### **1.2.0 Terms of Reference (TOR):**

Two consultants were contracted to implement activities regarding the research on sexuality in the media in Kenya.

#### **1.3 Activities:**

The activities are:

- a) Undertake research on the print media's coverage of sexuality.
- b) Undertake a content analysis of five (5) of what is considered the national and most widely circulating dailies (newspaper/magazines) in Kenya, two (2) "soft sell" publications published half (1<sup>st</sup> July-31<sup>st</sup> December 2005 ) of the year 2005 in the country, and a rapid survey/interview with the stakeholders.
- c) Write the report of the research.

#### **1.4 Concrete Outputs:**

The consultants were required to:

- a) Provide Progress report, three weeks after the start of the project.

- b) Provide Fact sheet on media report on sexuality.
- c) Provide final report of not more than 50 pages excluding appendix. The appendix should contain the list of all relevant documents used, a list of newspaper/magazine covered and the biography of the research(s).
- d) Provide first draft report, to be received by 17 June, 2006
- e) The final report should be submitted within two weeks following the transmission of our comments/remarks.

### 1.5.1 The Media project:

The survey will aim to:

- a) Conduct content (discourse analysis) of media reporting on sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights (S/SH/SR) to determine the quantity and quality of focus
- b) Determine the incidence and extent to which the media contributes to misinformation and negative treatment of issues of S/SH/SR. That is, how does the media use pictures, cartoons, language and positioning of article, editorials, etc to promote or devalue issues regarding S/SH/SR
- c) Determine the factors influencing the publishing (or absence) of articles on S/SH/SR in the media. These may include lack of knowledge, writers' or publishers' biases etc.)

## 1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions were provided to guide the study:

- a) How frequently are S/SH/SR issues featured in the press?
- b) What aspects of S/SH/SR are presented?
- c) How much S/SH/SR information is provided?
- d) Where/when is S/SH/SR featured in the press?



- e) What is the ideological background of the media presenting the S/SH/SR information? What are the editorial guidelines of the relevant media? Are they different from other media?
- f) Who is the author/commissioner of the article/programme?
- g) From what perspective (conservative, progressive, and liberal) are they written?
- h) Who are the target audiences?
- i) How balanced are the views/discussions provided?
- j) How does the media coverage of S/SH/SR fit in/challenge/contradict the social, economic and legal contexts?
- k) How does media coverage of S/SH/SR impact on policy issues?
- l) How S/SH/SR issues are linked with broader health issues?

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Rationale for the Selection of Newspapers and Magazines

The consultants' main consideration in the selection of Kenyan print media for content analysis was readership. The wider the circulation the more national the newspapers and magazines are likely to be in readership. One of the consultants visited and conducted informal interviews with several newspaper vendors in the central business district of Nairobi and with an officer in each of the offices of the *Parents* and *Eve* magazines and the *Daily Nation* newspapers. The information gathered helped the consultants to determine:

- a) The newspapers and magazines in circulation.
- b) The readership by newspaper and magazine in terms of numbers.

Early in the year 2006, the Steadman Research Company had conducted a survey on the readership of Kenya's magazines by age. The consultants received a copy of the summary of the most commonly read magazines by their readership measured by the numbers sold.

The Kenyan print media in regular circulation can be classified into three categories.

- a) **The dailies:** The most widely read of these are:
  - *Daily Nation*;
  - *The Standard*;
  - *The People Newspaper*;
  - *The Times* (the consultants however established that there were some days when *The Times* was not in circulation.)
- b) **The weeklies:** These included (listed by circulation order):
  - *Citizen Weekly*
  - *The Independent*
  - *Confidential* (no longer in circulation)
  - *The Leader* (new in the market) etc.

These newspapers are 15% cheaper than the dailies and many of them (e.g. *Citizen Weekly*, *Independent* and *Confidential*) fall under the TOR label ‘soft publications’. Although in Kenya there are commonly associated with the ‘garter’, they command a relatively good readership.

- c) **The monthlies:** The magazines fall in this category. The criteria for the selection of newspapers and magazines were based on the information gathered from the informal interviews and the results of the Steadman Survey.

The consultants selected the following for analysis of the coverage of the sexuality-related content:

i) **Dailies**

- The *Daily Nation*. This is both a national and a regional publication.
- The *Standard* is the second most widely read newspaper in Kenya.

ii) **Weeklies**

The withdrawal of ‘*Confidential*’ from circulation sometimes in 2005 left the *Independent* and *Citizen Weekly*’s as the most widely read newspapers in the category of ‘soft publications’. It is these two publications that the consultants selected. Occasionally, these newspapers have been raided by the police because of their confrontational content.

iii) **Monthlies**

- **The Drum East Africa** is published by the *Daily Nation* and is the second most widely read magazine in the country. Although the *Daily Nation* also publishes True Love magazine; the consultants selected only one (Drum) magazine in order not to give too much weight to one publisher.
- **Eve Magazine** is published by Oakland Services Medial Ltd. and is relatively similar to the *Daily Nation*’s True Love. The consultants received the copies for

the six months under focus free from one of the Senior Officers of the publications.

(As the Steadman survey shows, **Parents Magazine** has a higher circulation than other magazines. However, the consultants were only able to access the only one copy availed to them by the manager. As a result the publication was excluded from the content analysis.)

## 2.2 The Method of Data Collection

To ease and facilitate the collection of the data from the newspapers and magazines selected, the consultants took the following steps:

- a) Purchase of the six (6) of the *Drum* East Africa for the months of July –December 2005. The consultants had planned to use *Parents* magazine but could only access the only one copy that Manager had given them. As result, they concentrated on *Drum* and *Eve* magazines for content analysis.
- b) Purchase of all the available *Citizen Weekly* newspapers for the same period (22 out of 26 copies), and Independent newspaper (13 out of 26 weeks). The offices of Independent had according to its proprietors, been raided by the police late 2005 and all the newspapers that were found were confiscated and destroyed. The 13 available copies were obtained from returnees from the field.
- c) Access of all the publications of the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* newspapers for the last six months of 2005 from a school library.

Four university graduates were hired as research assistants and instructed on the content to look for in each of the dailies and weeklies. They were under close supervision of the lead consultant and were also given a format on which to layout the findings in terms of:

- How many articles per day featured sexuality and sexuality related issues,
- Date of publication,
- Other related head lines, and
- Related editorials.

- One of the consultants' examined the content in the two monthlies --*Eve* and *Drum* East Africa.

### **2.3 Analysis of data**

Once the research assistants completed the assigned activities, the consultants went through the findings and analyzed each article featured further, categorized the articles into several themes and finally grouped the findings into six broad themes which are:

- Sexuality and sexuality education
- Reproductive health and rights
- HIV and Aids
- Sexual violence
- Sexual orientation and identity
- Child marriage

Chapter three is organized according to the above themes.

### **2.4 Lessons Learnt**

At this first instance, the consultants would like to consult more from ARSRC before discussing the lessons learnt. This is because such lessons can be approached from various perspectives, for example, from the research process and from the findings of the content analysis. It would be helpful to the consultants if ARSRC would clarify further from what perspective|(s) this issue should be addressed.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SEXUALITY ISSUES REPORTED BY KENYAN MEDIA

#### 3.1 Sexuality and Sexuality Education

The word 'sexuality' is hardly if at all used in the media reports. The consultants have analyzed the contents of the newspaper and, using but not being limited to the definitions provided in the consultancy's terms of reference, categorized various issues under the headings sexuality and sexuality education. This comprises of sexuality and related issues that are aimed at educating the reader as an individual such as condom use, information on STI, ways of nurturing intimate relationships and ensuring pleasurable sex.

Again, media coverage of sexuality and sexuality education between July and December 2005 is relatively minimal. As highlighted in Table 1 below, the magazines have featured more on sexuality education than any other subject discussed in this report.

**Table 1**  
**Number of Media References to Sexuality and Sexuality-education**  
**in Specified Months**

<b>Month (2005)</b>	<b>Dailies</b>	<b>Weeklies</b>	<b>Magazines</b>	<b>Total</b>
July	38	3	2	<b>43</b>
August	20	9	2	<b>31</b>
September	30	1	1	<b>32</b>
October	27	1	4	<b>32</b>
November	20	0	5	<b>25</b>
December	15	1	9	<b>25</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>188</b>

A couple of issues related to sexuality and sexuality education seem to have attracted media attention than others for example,

- Prostitution/commercial sex work
- Intimate and sexual relationships, and
- Sexuality-related education.

### **3.1.1 Commercial sex work/ers:**

There are 19 references of commercial sex work or workers in the period under review and other than one, they are from the dailies. These newspapers refer to the sex commercial workers as 'call girls'. On July 1, the *Daily Nation* dedicated the first three pages of its Weekend Magazine to a feature entitled 'City Nights' which is highly conspicuous. The articles in these pages provide information about life on the streets of Nairobi at night and the spots where the 'call girls' are located. Four days (July 4) later in its Outlook Magazine, the *Daily Nation* reports about a curious photographic exhibition at the Goethe Institute in Nairobi which is presenting 'a behind-the-scenes look at the lives of 40 female sex workers in the modern day Kenya'. The writer effectively brings out the determination, humanity and humour that emerge through the overlays of poverty and desperation. The second daily – *Standard*, (July 10) also reports about the exhibition during which commercial sex workers are open and articulate their experiences. The exhibition is reported to have attracted a lot of attention provoking calls to legalize prostitution. Indeed, on September 1, *Standard Interactive* carries a detailed and conspicuous letter by Wanjiru Njoroge arguing for legalizing of prostitution to fight unemployment and poverty.

Although a deliberate attempt by the journalists not to appear biased in the reporting is evident, many reports nevertheless portray underlying criticism of commercial sex work and workers and lack of sympathy to the girls. The report headings are captivating to the reader as shown below:

- *Reckless trips to alcohol and sex dens every night*
- *Sex and the big cold city*
- *State outlines plans to fight sex tourism*

- *Sex trade crackdown*
- *Sex worker targets recruits*

The *Standard* newspaper is known to sensationalize commercial sex work and to photograph young girls to whom newspapers sometimes refer as ‘twilight’ girls at night in dramatic missions. There is no evident sympathy for these young girls from either police or newspaper reporters. The latter seem apparently bent on making stories out of anything. Unfortunately articles report as though commercial sex work is a female gender trade only, neglecting the fact that there are male prostitutes and above all, ‘it’s a willing buyer willing seller’ kind of trade and both the buyer and the seller are ‘trading’.

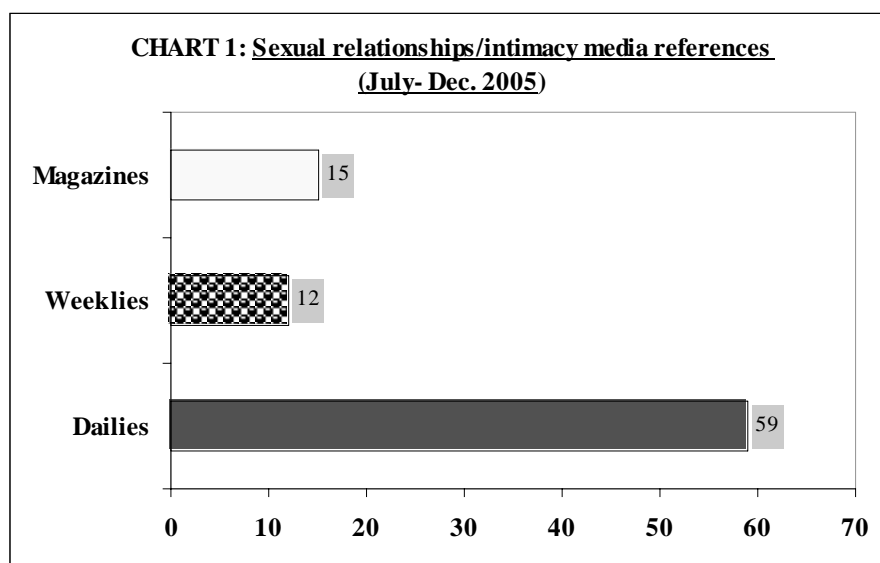
### **3.1.2 Intimate and sexual relationships:**

In the period under focus, these expressions of sexuality addressing individual needs, desires and pleasure attract relatively more media coverage than most other aspects. They are second to sexual violence in coverage. Indeed, the consultants are able to pick out 86 such references all in separate articles in the six months reviewed and, as is the case with all other sexuality related media reports, the majority of these, as Chart 1 below illustrates, are by the two dailies.

Many of the *Daily Nation* articles are found in a weekly Family Magazine called ‘Living’ and another called ‘Horizon’. The following are examples of related headlines:

- *Sex: He’s too big for me (in a corner entitled ‘agony and ecstasy’) (August 3)*
- *Driven by desire (August 10)*
- *Pull down sexy billboards (August 18)*
- *Can’t keep it zipped up*
- *Attracting the wrong men (Standard Nov 26)*
- *Your best friend your enemy (Standard November 26)*
- *Female predators (Standard, November 26)*
- *No love between us (DN October 12)*
- *I have lost my drive*
- *Husband fined for spiking wife’s food to end love affair*





The articles on sexual relationships and intimacy are relatively entertaining but by no means educative. It is unlikely that the target population would be the serious newspaper reader. The dailies feature regular question and answer *Ask the Twins* features columns that provide readers with problems with opportunity to send questions and get answers on various problems sent to the columnist to respond to.

The monthly magazines too have columns dedicated to problems solving such as *Ask Beth* and *Sex Therapy* in the *Drum Magazine*. The *Sex Therapy* column has covered issues such as painful sex, erectile dysfunctions, condom usage, sperm health, oral sex and hygiene, male circumcision and pleasure, and building intimate relationships. *Ask Beth* has covered the following topics in the six months under study –relationship problems, teenage relationships, gender based violence in an intimate relationship, cheating in a relationship and painful sex in females. Since these features take a problem solving approach, they either have regular readers who send the questions to the columnists or the latter have a way of creating a scenario that depicts some readers’ life experiences and creatively responds to the imagined social, medical, or physiological problem.

The weeklies feature numerous articles alleging sexual relationships by some personalities that could be labeled scandalous. As a result, the police have occasionally raided their offices, destroyed and/or confiscated their material. Some newspapers have also been sued for inaccuracies.

### **3.1.3 Sexuality Education:**

Although these words are rarely used by the media, the consultants are able to identify various references that in their view can be categorized under sexuality and also interpreted as articles meant to educate on issues pertaining to sexuality. As expected, the majority of these (41) are reported by the two dailies. The magazines' articles (5) that refer to or provide sexuality education excluding the *Ask Beth* and *Sex Therapy* sections are few. One educative feature touches on policy and issues to do with property inheritance by females, which is an important feature because it touches on women's reproductive health and rights. Discussions about inheritance were triggered by prolonged debate about the content of the draft constitution, which states that '*Women and men have an equal right to inherit, have access to and manage property.*' [Page 30, 38 (2)] However, in some communities, cultural practices do not allow women to inherit land for example. Land is meant to be inherited by 'her' sons, but what if the woman did not sire sons? Thus this issue becomes a sexuality issue as much as it is a legal issue.

In conclusion, the topic on sexuality and sexuality education as addressed in the media under scrutiny between July and December 2005 broadly dealt with three topical issues – commercial sex work/workers, intimate and sexual relationships and generally sexuality education. Most of the articles were opinions from the authors and none was based on structured research.

## **3.2 REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS**

For over a decade, reproductive health-related issues have attracted little attention relatively and this is true of media coverage of the same. Yet, the subject has been given much more attention than is the case of reproductive health rights. In the period under focus (July – December 2005), the consultants are able to pick out various incidences

reported by the newspapers and magazines selected for content analysis. The numbers are enumerated in Table 2 below.

**TABLE 2**

**Media coverage of reproductive health-related issues by number of references**

<b>MONTH (2005)</b>	<b>DAILIES</b>	<b>WEEKLIES</b>	<b>MAGAZINES</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
July	53	3	2	<b>58</b>
August	8	1	4	<b>13</b>
September	30	1	1	<b>32</b>
October	6	0	3	<b>9</b>
November	10	0	1	<b>11</b>
December	4	1	0	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>131</b>

The consultants are able to classify the various reproductive health and rights issues reported under the categories in Table 3, which also includes the number of times the newspapers and magazines refer to them. It can be observed from the table how minimally media focused on this important subject.

In Kenya as stated elsewhere during the time under review, issues relating to the draft constitution attracted more media attention than most issues. Reference by the draft to abortion among other issues generated prolonged debates and various readers commented in letters sent to newspaper editors. It is these to which the ‘general comments’ in the table refers. Appearing in Part II – Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, under the heading ‘*Right to life*’ Section 35, (page 29), the draft constitution states:

*“35. (1) every person has the right to life except as may be prescribed in an Act of Parliament.*

- (2) *The life of a person begins at conception.*
- (3) *Abortion is not permitted except as may be provided for by an Act of Parliament”.*

(Italicized by the consultants)

People gave their own interpretations of these words and the majority accused the Government of supporting abortion. The two dailies commendably featured the whole draft for its readers even before the Government issued five million free copies. The *Daily Nation* for instance circulated a complete free copy of the draft, which meant that more than a million daily readers of the newspaper obtained one.

**TABLE 3****Reproductive health-related issues reported by the media by number of references**

Category	Related Issues	References
Reproductive health rights	Rights to abortion	6
	• (abandoned babies/ • miracle babies)	5 15
	Draft constitution and abortion	3
	Related rights and general comments	22
	Virginty testing and the law	1
Contraception	The Church on contraception	1
	Abstinence and safe sex	12
	Vasectomy	3
Maternal health-related issues	Related health problems	8
	Sex after delivery	1
	Reproductive anatomy	1
	Alternative medicine	1
	Virginty related issues	2
	Child mothers/motherhood	18
	Abortion	13
	Reproductive health and funding	1
	Conception following rape	1
	Fertility issues	5
	Caricature of maternal health	2
	On traditional birth attendants	1
	Diseases	Sexually transmitted infections

Two educative and at the same time informative media features are worth highlighting. One such articles in the *Standard's* (10<sup>th</sup> July) 'News Features' entitled '*Dying from*

*Ignorance*' (appended), decrying the inaccessibility of reproductive health information and services which has led to the death of millions of African women. The paper cites the following statistics obtained from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (Africa):

- 35% of women in Africa die each year due to the inaccessibility to information and services;
- 39% Kenyan women in their reproductive health are able to access contraception, in a country with a fertility rate of 5 children per woman;
- Abortion and the law, Kenya accounts for 72% of unwanted pregnancies.

If legalized, abortion can emancipate our women (28<sup>th</sup> July, page one of *Standard Interactive*. This article is conspicuously placed in page 14.

The second article is written by Brenda Otindo, is entitled, 'We fear contraceptives, don't we?', and is placed in the *Standard Health* pullout's page V in the 'FGM and family planning' section. The writer explores the reasons why many Kenyans use contraceptives.

What has become known as the '*Deya miracle babies*' saga also attracted a lot of attention as the number of related references in Table 3 indicate.

A few articles on reproductive health and rights are informative and educate the media's readership about various issues. Other articles are too brief to make significant impact on the readers and many are also inconspicuously inserted in articles with headings that are not related to reproductive health.

### **3.3 HIV AND AIDS**

#### **3.3.1 Introduction**

The HIV and AIDS pandemic was declared a national disaster in December 1999 in Kenya. However, it does not seem to attract much attention from the media like it did in the late 1990s. The minimal attention by the media between July-December 2005 is not

just peculiar to the six months under consultancy focus. It seems like HIV and AIDS does not make news any more. As Table 4 illustrates, the media coverage of the subject, between August and November, is relatively low key. In a period of six months, the weeklies (*Citizen Weekly* and the few copies of *Independent* available) are attributed to only five (5) related articles or features and none in the magazines. The consultants speculate that the subject does not sell newspapers any more. Even though the media was preoccupied with issues relating to the *draft constitution* and *referendum* during the period under scrutiny, the coverage of HIV/AIDS-related issues by the print media between August and December 2005 is dismal.

**TABLE 4**

**Media coverage of HIV/AIDS by number of monthly articles and newspaper**

<b>MONTH (2005)</b>	<b>DAILIES</b>	<b>WEEKLIES</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
July	100	2	<b>102</b>
August	22	3	<b>25</b>
September	29	-	<b>29</b>
October	10	-	<b>10</b>
November	31	-	<b>31</b>
December	45	-	<b>45</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>242</b>

**3.3.2 HIV/AIDS Related Issues Reported by the Print Media**

Other than July coverage, the dailies did not give the subject the attention and weight it deserves given the high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in Kenya. Although their references to HIV/AIDS in July are numerous, the majority of them are one- or two-time off references, for example, HIV/AIDS and nutrition, injectables, human rights, condom related issues, alternative therapies among many others. Funding and financing AIDS-related issues dominate the coverage of the subject by the dailies. The funding subject is not about more funding per se; a lot was on mismanagement of funds by different

categories of service providers. Table 5 enumerates the issues about which the dailies commonly report or to which they refer.



**TABLE 5****HIV/AIDS-related issues commonly featured by Dailies**

<b>HIV/AIDS RELATED ISSUES</b>	<b>JULY</b>	<b>OTHER MONTHS (AUGUST – DECEMBER)</b>
Funding	24	23
Research	9	12
Legislative/Policy issues	8	7
VCT and HIV testing	8	9
Stigma and related violence incidences	6	4
Workplace issues and HIV/AIDS	4	2
Faith-based organizations and HIV/AIDS	4	-
ARVs	4	11
Related comments	14	31

In its Saturday Magazine, the *Daily Nation* (July 2) features a detailed and conspicuous feature on ‘Taking AIDS head on: Straight from the Heart’. The writer laments about people who ignore the scourge believing albeit erroneously that they are not at risk. He calls on the need to strike a balance between work and life as well as a conducive and supportive environment for all staff and management by adopting policies aimed at addressing the social, diversity and gender imbalances in key areas on HIV/AIDS.

One most informative feature is the regular ‘Asumpta’s Diary’ in which the writer (Asumpta Wagura), who disclosed her HIV status several years ago, writes about her experiences, educates, advises and counsels not only women and other PLWHA virus, but also the general public across age groups and gender. Through this popular diary, she advocates and fights for the rights of PLWHA, for example, their rights to care and support and to retroviral therapy. The regular diary is a positive indicator of the educative role the diary plays. A substantial number of the related comments referred to in Table 5 are in response to Asumpta’s diary.

The *Daily Nation* dedicates a large section of its 'Opinion News' page (see August 6) and discusses in details an article entitled, 'Harsh penalties won't eliminate Aids,' a clause in the draft constitution which criminalizes the act of willfully infecting a sexual partner with HIV. The writer advocates for education rather than criminalizing of consensual sex as a more feasible way of preventing HIV infections. The article also calls for anonymous HIV testing and for assurance of confidentiality.

The *Daily Nation* (August 10) also dedicates a full page to the National HIV/AIDS monitoring and evaluation framework but useful as this is, it is a one time off report and is not followed up by either this or other newspapers.

It is worthy highlighting that, issues of stigma and related violence is an impediment to disclosure. The four (4) incidents reported between august and December 2005 speak to violence unleashed on PLWHA just because they have revealed their status either to the family, friends or colleagues in the workplace. Though there were nine (9) cases reported in July and only four (4) between in the period in focus, that should not be taken as an indicator of better life for PLWHA. Research and vigilance is needed on issues of stigma and stigma related violence.

### **3.4 SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

#### **3.4.1 Introduction**

Reports of incidences of sexual violence are the most commonly featured sexuality related issues in the two dailies selected for content analysis. The *Citizen Weekly* and the *Independent* 'soft' publications have also highlighted defilement incidences, but the coverage is relatively minimal in comparison to the dailies. The subject of sexual violence is given total blackout by the two magazines selected for analysis. Indeed, though sexual violence has become rampant in Kenya, *Eve* and *Drum* magazines do not feature a single incidence in the months under focus.

To enhance clarity, discussions about the media coverage of **gender-based violence**-related issues are separated from those on sexual violence.

The consultants have classified the sexual violence coverage by the media under six sub-headings:

- Coverage of defilement, rape and sodomy incidences in Kenya;
- Coverage of similar incidences in the African region and internationally;
- Sexual harassment coverage;
- Sex for commodity exchange;
- Media reports of incidences of school girl pregnancies and of child mothers, and
- Coverage of sexual violence in statistical form

Each of the above is discussed separately below.

### **3.4.2 Defilement, Rape and Sodomy**

#### Definitions of ‘defilement’ and ‘rape’

Before addressing the actual sexual violence content in the daily and weekly publications, it is important to first define the terms ‘defilement’ and ‘rape’ as used both in the media reports analyzed and in this concept paper. The definitions of ‘defilement’ clearly touch on the sexual violation of a minor, inexperienced or who has not had sexual intercourse before. The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2002) and the Collins English Dictionary\_(1988) define the verb ‘defile’ respectively as:

*“... to spoil something important, pure or holy” and*

*“... to violate the chastity of”.*

‘Rape’ is defined by the two dictionaries as:

*“... the crime of forcing someone to have sex by using violence”.*

For illustration, the Macmillan dictionary gives an example of a 15 year-old having been *“raped on her way to school”*- thus using ‘rape’ even when the victim of the violence is a minor. The Collins dictionary, on the other hand, defines the verb ‘rape’ as:

*“.. the offence of forcing a woman to submit to sexual intercourse against her*

*will*".

The *Daily Nation* uses the verb 'rape' almost uniformly in reference to forced intercourse irrespective of the age of the victim, while the *Standard* distinguishes 'defilement' and 'rape' – the former in reference to victims that are minors and the latter to teenagers that are 18 and above and adults. In the last month (May/June 2006), the British Sky Television Network, used the verb 'rape' in reference to a court case about a man who was convicted of sexual violence of an infant. This shows ambiguity in the way rape and defilement is used globally.

In this concept paper, however, the consultants use 'defilement' in reference to victims of sexual violence under the age of 18 years, including school children and those referred to as 'infants' and 'minors' in the articles analyzed. The word 'rape' is used in this paper when the victim of sexual violation is 18 years or older. Anyone below 18 years under Kenyan law is considered a child/minor.

### **3.4.3 Defilement and Rape Incidences Reported – July–December 2005**

To guide the content analysis of the media coverage of sexuality, the consultancy's Terms of Reference include four key variables touching on:

- number of articles,
- when published,
- related headlines, and
- related editorials.

The dailies featured numerous incidences of defilement and rape between July and December 2005 although the frequency of reporting varied from month to month. In the period under focus, the Kenyan population was nationally preoccupied with the politics and/or the draft constitution, the referendum on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the defeat of the government, and the consequent cabinet reshuffle. It is likely that these events took more of the attention of the media as the year progressed than did sexuality-related issues. In the month of July for example, the two dailies and *Citizen Weekly* report a total of 84 sexual violence incidences (inclusive of sodomy cases), while only 15 and 36 are reported in October and December respectively. The decline in the number of incidences

reported was due to the national history making events and by no means indicative of improved security or vigilance against sexual violence.

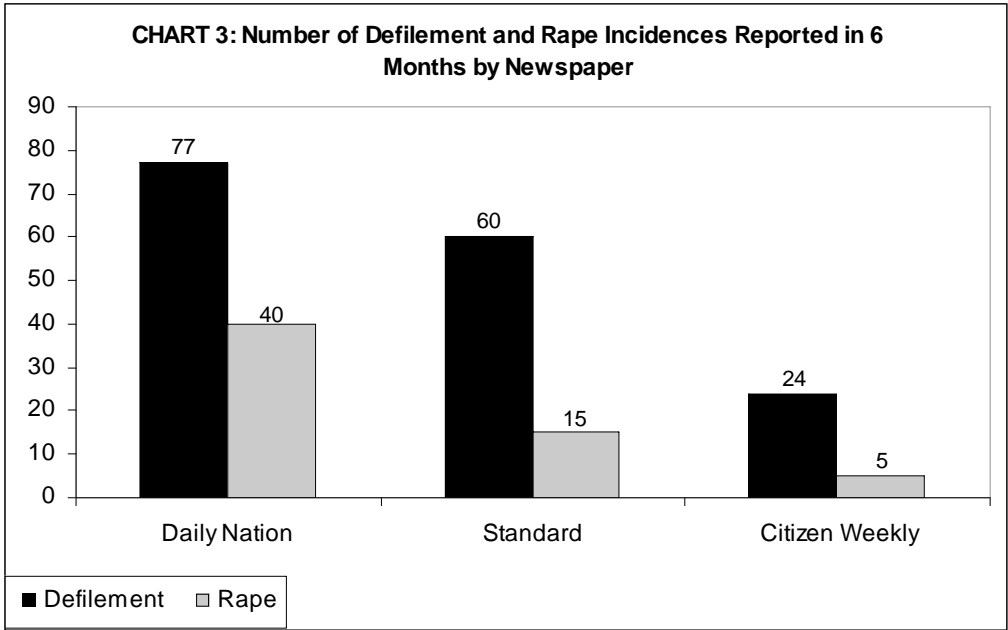
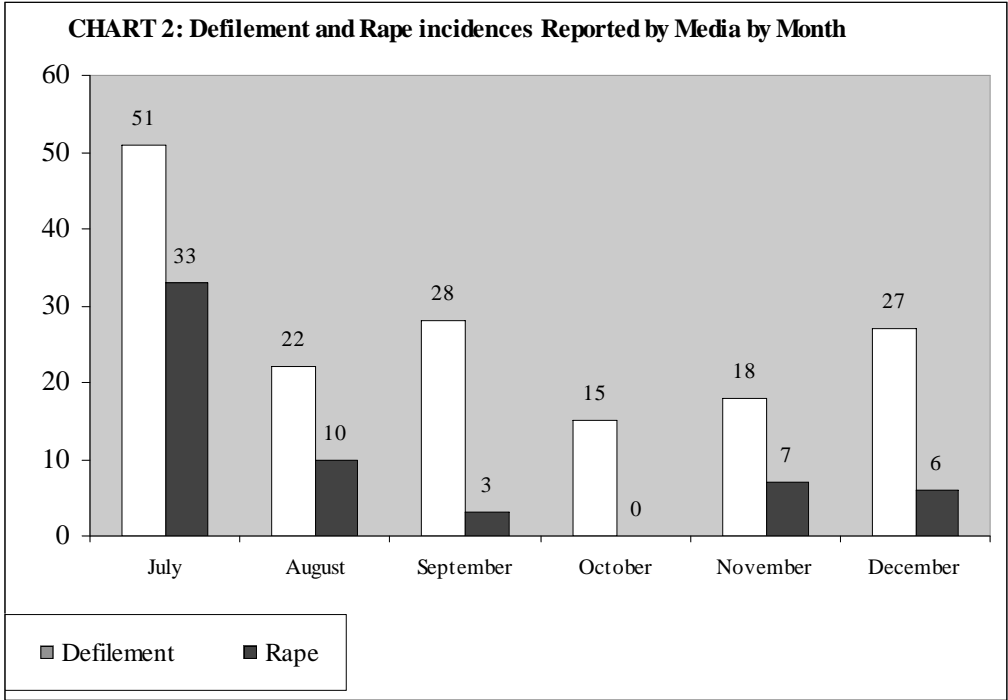
The consultants have analyzed these articles by newspaper and by month of publication and present the number of articles on sexual violence featured and month of publication in Table 6.

**TABLE 6**  
**Defilement and rape by number of days per daily**

Month of publication	Number of days featured Defilement/rape incidences		
	<i>Daily Nation</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Citizen Weekly</i>
July	12	20	4 weeks
August	4	13	0
September	2	9	2 weeks
October	7	4	0
November	11	7	0
December	15	4	1 week
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>7 weeks</b>
	<b>28%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>27%</b>

All three newspapers reported sexual violence incidences more frequently in July than any other month. The *Citizen Weekly* featured such reports in all its July publication. The first two columns of Table 7 also show the proportions of days that the *Daily Nation* (28%) and *Standard* (31%) reported at least one incidence of sexual violence (defilement and/or rape) in the last six months (or last 184 days) of year 2005. The *Citizen Weekly* publishes one newspaper weekly and calculations show that seven out of 26 weeklies (27%) reported a sexual violence incidence. The newspaper coverage of sexual violence translates to on average about one sexual violence media report every four (if not 3.5) days. The following two charts highlight the total number of defilement and rape incidences reported each month (Chart Two) and by each newspaper (Chart Three).

Even with the ‘draft constitution/referendum’ distraction of the media attention, the incidences reported and summarized in the charts (Two and Three) undoubtedly highlight the seriousness and increasing risk of sexual violence to which children in Kenya are exposed especially the girl child.



Sexual violence seems to be emerging as a sub-culture and the female gender is not safe be it infants, teenage girls and adult women. Table 7 below provides additional details of the same data presented in Chart two by each newspaper publication. The table lists the

number of children (under the age of 18) reported to have been defiled by month when each incident was featured in the media.

**TABLE 7**  
**Reports of Defilement and Rape by Newspapers per Month**

<b>MONTH</b>	<i>DAILY NATION</i>		<i>THE STANDARD</i>		<i>CITIZEN WEEKLY</i>		<b>TOTAL</b>
	<b>Defile- ment</b>	<b>Rape</b>	<b>Defile- ment</b>	<b>Rape</b>	<b>Defile- ment</b>	<b>Rape</b>	
<b>July</b>	41	25	7	7	3	1	<b>84</b>
<b>August</b>	11	5	3	1	8	4	<b>32</b>
<b>September</b>	14	3	2	-	12	-	<b>31</b>
<b>October</b>	5	-	10	-	-	-	<b>15</b>
<b>November</b>	3	7	15	1	-	-	<b>31</b>
<b>December</b>	3	-	23	6	1	-	<b>33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>221</b>

The consultants caution the reader that there is the likelihood of one defilement/rape incident being reported in two or more newspapers the same day or on a different day. On few occasions, the consultants were able to pick out a few such incidences, but this was not however frequent. Indeed, quite often, the geographical location remained the same, but the pertinent details like age or number of victims differed from one newspaper to another or in the same newspaper when the same incidence was referred to again.

The defilement/rape incidences reported by the dailies and weeklies also shed some light to the increasing risk to which every female regardless of age is exposed. There are however numerous incidences of sodomy also indicating that the male child in Kenya is not safe from sexual violence. Table 8 lists various sodomy incidences reported by the two dailies and one weekly newspaper. In the last six months of 2005, there are media reports of sodomy of 42 boys.



**TABLE 8**

**Incidences of Sodomy Reported by Newspapers**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b><i>DAILY NATION</i></b>	<b><i>THE STANDARD</i></b>	<b><i>CITIZEN WEEKLY</i></b>
<b>July</b>	3	-	2
<b>August</b>	7	1	-
<b>November</b>	25/16	15	-
<b>December</b>	-	3	-

The table cells reading 25/16 and 15 are worth explaining for they fault the media for anomalies in media reporting that neither substantiated, nor corrected.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November, the *Daily Nation* featured in its National News Column (page 6) a report about 16 boys that were frequently sodomized by a shopkeeper. The incidences are reported to have occurred in a Nairobi estate and the boys were at the time of the report undergoing treatment at the Nairobi Women’s Hospital. The following day (4<sup>th</sup> November), the same newspaper, in the same column referred to 16 (not 25) boys undergoing treatment in Nairobi following sodomy. In the same week, the *Standard* also refers to 15 boys sodomized by a trader who lured them with snacks. The consultants can only speculate that the two articles are about the same boys given the reference to ‘boys’, ‘sodomy’ and ‘treatment in Nairobi’ thus perhaps attesting that the incidence/s did actually take place. It is unclear to the consultants whether the two dailies had the same or different sources.

Surprisingly, despite the magnitude of the numbers (sodomy victims) involved in this report and the fact that they were under medical treatment, the newspapers did not

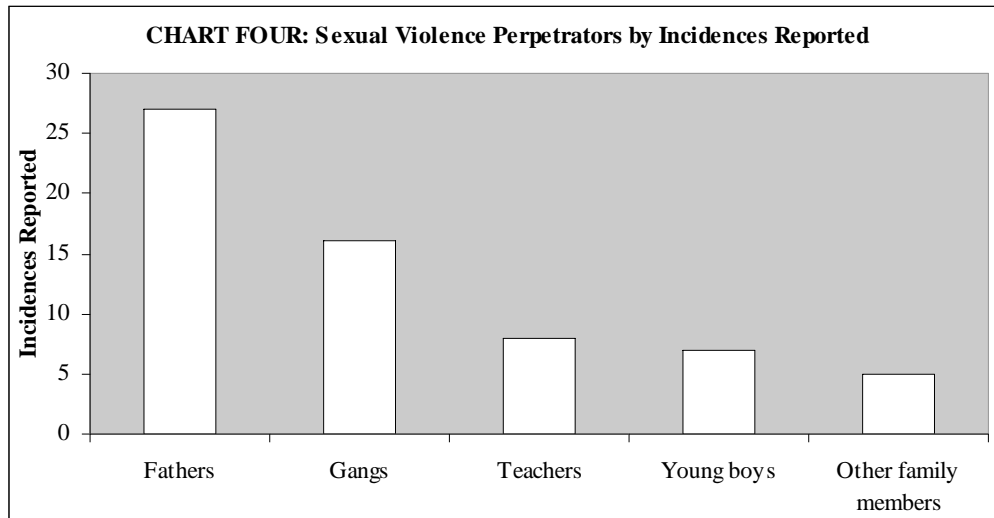
consider the crime serious enough to warrant an editorial commentary on the sodomy and/or the increasing insecurity.

### 3.4.4 Perpetrators and Victims of Sexual Violence

The following sex offenders profile drawn from media reporting about defilement, rape and sodomy is classified by number of incidences reported by *Daily Nation*, *Standard* and *Citizen Weekly* between July and December 2005.

<u>Offender Profile</u>	<u>Number of incidences reported</u>
Fathers	27
Mothers	1
Brothers	2
Uncles	2
Teachers	9
Teenage Boys	7
Gangs	16

The profile indicates that victims of sexual violence are not safe with the very same people they trust most and to whom they would run for help – the parents and teachers – perpetrators of rape, defilement and sodomy. Even a mother is included in this list of sex offenders. A young boy is reported by the *Daily Nation* (November 2005) of having accused his mother of raping him. The list above clearly demonstrated growth of violent trend that says boys and girls in Kenya are neither safe at home, school nor even in the community where they live. Tragically, their safety is threatened by a biological, step and foster parent, a teacher and even by their own brothers and peers. (See also Chart four.)



The following are extracts from a sample of newspaper reports (July to December 2006), highlighting the ages of girl-children subjected to **incestuous rape** by their fathers.

**Incestuous Rape**

- A 17 year- old girl (now pregnant) by her father
- A 5 year-old girl infected with STD by father
- A 7 year-old girl defiled by father
- A 12 year-old girl defiled by father - girl disowned by relatives for reporting the defilement
- Two sisters defiled by their father
- A 17 year old (now pregnant) by her 56 year-old father
- A 17 year-old girl has been frequently defiled by father since she was 11 – now pregnant
- A 10 year-old repeatedly defiled by her 40 year-old father to settle scores with her mother
- A teenage girl (pregnant) by father

The findings of a survey conducted and disseminated by the Chamber of Justice, Care Kenya and Cradle to media houses on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005 and reported widely by the two dailies the first week of July 2005 also places fathers at the top of the list of sex

offenders. Other perpetrators of sexual defilement are blood relatives, neighbors, teachers and domestic servants. The study is dubbed “*Defilement Index: Status report on trends in sexual abuse of the girl child in Kenya’s urban areas*”. Both dailies covered the report extensively. The *Standard* gave the report two pages – the cover and second page – and *Daily Nation* reported on the fourth page. At the same time, the *Standard* cover page (1<sup>st</sup> July) carried a bold headline reading ‘*Shocking Statistics on Fathers Defiling Daughters*’, while the *Daily Nation*’s boldly read ‘*Father’s top list of child defilers*’ in response to a report released the previous day (appended) on the levels of child defilement in Kenya. The report gives the following statistics of perpetrators of most defilement cases reported to the police:

- 40% of 100 defilement cases sampled were carried out by fathers
- 43% of 717 sampled cases involved girls aged between one month and four years
- 83% of the defilement cases reported to police occurred at home and
- 4.9% at school.

The same publication (1<sup>st</sup> July *Standard*) also carried out an editorial entitled “*Rape and the Law: The State must act tough on all sex offenders*’. The editorial’s strongly worded condemnation of the defilement of children described the vice as ‘*moral depravity*’ and ‘*sheer cruelty and betrayal of the girl child*’, at the same time faulting the Kenyan society for not doing enough to fight the crime. The *Standard* editorial concluded thus:

*‘Yet, by using the judicial system, this country is capable of stemming this tragedy. We should not compromise on defilers. They should be handed a life sentence for this dastardly crime against our young ones.’*

These sexual violence features are examples of a media’s commitment to educate the public about the seriousness of sexual violence and to advocate for tougher laws against sexual offenders.

**Teachers** are also included in the list of sex offenders and the content of the two dailies analyzed reported nine incidences of defilement involving them. It is obvious that many more such incidences go unreported.

**Selected incidences of pupils defiled by teachers**

- Five pupils defiled – now pregnant: teachers suspected
- Eight children aged between 6 and 7 years defiled by a teacher
- A secondary schoolgirl pregnant by a teacher

Table 9 on media reports of school girl pregnancies carries a column of people suspected to be responsible for the pregnancies. Teachers form the majority of the suspected perpetrators of defilement of school girls.

**Gang rapes** exacerbate the increasing insecurity in the Kenyan community and the victims cut across age groups and gender. Between July and December 2005, for example, the two dailies reported 16 (10 by *Daily Nation* and 6 by *Standard*) incidences of gang rape.

**Gang rape incidences reported by the dailies (highlights)**

- A 75 year-old woman in hospital after being raped by a gang of five youths,
- A female passenger raped by a gang of eight,
- A married woman gang-raped as her husband watched helplessly,
- A 20 year-old woman raped by a gang of seven,
- A 17 year-old bride-to-be gang-raped on the eve of her wedding,
- A woman and her two daughters gang-raped,
- One Irish woman raped by a gang of four men,
- An 8 year-old girl gang-raped as her father watched.

**Teenage boys (minors)** are among the perpetrators of the sexual violence in the home and community.

The sex offenders do not care about the life or age of their target. Rape shatters forever the dreams and entire life of each victim, as well as of those, for example, of the parent or

spouse who watches helplessly as a loved one is subjected to the painful ordeal. Victims of rape and defilement include minors, pre-teenage and teenage children, young and older adults.

**TABLE 9**

**Sexual Violence Incidences (Highlights)**

<b>Minors (1-9 year-olds) Defiled (as reported by newspapers)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minor defiled by a cyclist repeatedly</li> <li>• Another class two girl by an adult male</li> <li>• A minor defiled repeatedly by a <i>boda boda</i> cyclist</li> <li>• Two seven year-olds girls by an adult male who lured them with snacks</li> <li>• A four year-old girl by a 35 year-old police officer</li> <li>• Three primary schoolgirls by a man who enticed them with snacks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four children by a man living with HIV</li> <li>• A five year-old girl by an adult male</li> <li>• A 10 year-old girl defiled in a robbery incident</li> <li>• A six year-old by a pastor</li> <li>• A mentally retarded girl</li> <li>• A five year-old girl by a form 3 student</li> <li>• A primary schoolgirl for four days by a 42 year-old abductor</li> <li>• A minor by a <i>matatu</i> driver</li> <li>• An AIDS orphan defiled</li> <li>• A class two girl by an adult male</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pre-teenage children (10-12 year-olds)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 12 year-old by a police officer</li> <li>• Three girls by an adult male</li> <li>• A 12 year-old girl defiled</li> <li>• Two primary schoolgirls by an adult male</li> <li>• A 10 year-old mentally sick girl by an adult male</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teenage children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 14 year-old by a government employee</li> <li>• A 14 year-old girl raped by two men who pushed a soda (soft drink) bottle in her genitals</li> <li>• A 13 year-old by a police officer</li> <li>• A 14 year-old girl by her parents' houseboy</li> <li>• Two four and five year-old girls by a police officer</li> <li>• A 17 year-old orphan - three men arrested</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rape victims - 20 years and above</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two women by an adult male</li> </ul>	



- Two sisters plus a friend by 3 robbers
- Two women raped and killed
- A 20 year-old in hospital after rape by a *matatu* driver
- Attempted rape of a 60 year-old woman
- 75 year-old woman gang-raped

#### **Sodomy**

- A 6 year-old boy by a 16 year-old male
- 12 boys sodomized, lured with food
- 25 (16/15) boys in hospital after being repeatedly sodomized by a trader in Nairobi

### **3.5.5 Coverage of Similar Incidences from the Region and Internationally**

The media coverage of sexual violence beyond the Kenyan borders is minimal. No such incidences are reported in *Citizen Weekly* and available copies of *Independent Weekly* newspaper. The two dailies highlight a few incidences although their coverage is not given much weight.

For example, the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* occasionally feature articles on sexual violence in the World News columns. Most of these however are inconspicuous and a reader is likely to miss them. A report about *allegations of abuse of human rights including rape involving Rwandese troops in the Congo* (DN 15<sup>th</sup> July), and another brief report about *a nine year-old girl raped by a Nigerian peacekeeper* (DN 5<sup>th</sup> December) are examples of such reports.

However, not all newspaper articles on sexual violence are inconspicuous. The *Standard's* (November 19) feature entitled (bold headline) *Women decry impunity for rape in Sudan's Darfur* is visibly placed in its World News column and clearly brings out the message that women do not report rape incidences which are reported as common. The report is sourced from Reuters.

Both dailies feature frequently the South African rape trial of Vice President Zuma and these are relatively conspicuous, perhaps because the accused was a well-known personality.

**International News: Media Reports on Sexual Violence (highlights)**

- Call to name rapist who won 7 million Sterling Pound a lottery (DN, 1<sup>st</sup> October,), one paragraph in the World News Briefs;
- Ronaldo arrested over rape charge (DN 20<sup>th</sup> October), one paragraph in the Sports news wrap-up (page 35)
- US Gynaecologist convicted of raping patients (Standard 18<sup>th</sup> November), short but very conspicuous (page 22)
- ANC in crisis over Zuma rape case (Standard 30<sup>th</sup> November), very conspicuously written in the column for Africa –source - Reuters

### **3.5.6 Sexual Harassment Media Coverage**

The coverage by the media of sexual harassment is poor. Only following two such incidences were reported:

- By *Daily Nation* of 29<sup>th</sup> July article headed ‘2 men in court for fighting after one touched the breast of the others girlfriend’. The report appeared inconspicuously in the Provincial News column.
- The *Standard* of 19<sup>th</sup> July, brief reference and inconspicuous in the Court News column – on the same incident reported in the *Daily Nation* of 29<sup>th</sup> July – ‘Judge rules that touching a girl’s breast does not constitute a crime’.

### **3.5.7 Sex for Commodity Exchange**

In the period between July and December 2005, the dailies and *Citizen Weekly* refer to five sex abuse incidences under the banners ‘sex for grades, for jobs or for promotions’ – in reference to universities, a high school and industrial institutions. In its National News column, for example, the *Standard* features a short but conspicuous ‘sex for grades’ report by Mutinda Mwanzia entitled ‘Students shame amorous teachers’, disclosing incidences of secondary school male teachers preying on female students for sexual

favors. The *Citizen Weekly* also carries a detailed report on intimidation and threats of sacking of bar maids if they did not agree to sex.

The media has given relatively little attention to these abusive practices. None of the newspapers selected for content analysis has editorialized or written a commentary on the practice. Only the *Standard's* (September 17, page 16) report of a Vice-Chancellor warning university students against giving in to sex for degrees is conspicuous report. Other similar reports also placed in the National News column by both dailies. These are very short and inconspicuous and the incidences are not followed up.

**Sex for grades/jobs features:**

- *'Writer urges female students to work hard for their degrees instead of using 'sex for grades' methods' (Daily Nation July 14, letter to editor, page 10);*
- *'Bishop at centre of sex for jobs allegations. Man arrested in Naivasha. (Daily Nation, July 21, National News column, page 17.*
- *On 'sex for job promotions' in a pan-African chemical firm. Citizen Weekly, December 5-11.*

### **3.5.8 Media Reports about Rape and the Law**

The media has the potential to educate its target population about any subject that might be of interest or that might affect them (the population). It can also lead the fight against a vice like sexual violence. The question however is whether the Kenyan print media have the will and/or the capacity to undertake these tasks.

The print media has undoubtedly brought out in the light the increasing insecurity and incidences of rape, defilement and sodomy in Kenya. As a result, there are numerous calls from the public for the enactment of laws that protect the population from sexual violence. On daily basis, the two dailies' feature letters to the editor by their readers in which the latter air their views on various current issues of concern and interest. During the period July to December 2005, insecurity appears to be a major concern to the public and this comes out clearly from the various calls for and comments on the proposed **Sex Offences Bill**. These two newspapers also carry weekly magazines (Saturday Nation

Magazine and *Standard's Standard Interactive*) that also occasionally feature reports and commentaries on the increasing insecurity in the country. The following are samples of features on the proposed Sex Offences Bill.

- A Member of Parliament Hon. Njoki Ndungu proposed the bill in Parliament and highlights rape as the top crime in Kenya and describes it as 'A trip to hell' (DN 23, Saturday magazine, pages 6 and 7 – very conspicuous).
  
- In the *Standard Interactive*, calls to:
  - Legislature to enact Sex Offences Bill to protect children (July 7),
  - State to be serious on the increasing cases of rape (July 11),
  - Security Minister to declare rape a national disaster (July 11),
  - Step up efforts to curb child abuse.
  
- In the *Standard Big Issue Monday magazine*, very conspicuously placed (July 18, page 3), article on threat to free care for survivors of sexual and gender based violence – funding problems.

The *Standard* carries a detailed and educative Commentary and Analysis article in October 30 on the challenges of eradicating rape and sexual exploitation by UN troops on peacekeeping missions. This article blames what the author calls (Maggie Farley), a "hyper-masculine" culture and a tradition of silence among soldiers. The paper (July 1) also carries an editorial commentary calling on the State to act tough on all sex offenders.

### **3.5.9 Incidences of Schoolgirl Pregnancies and Child Mothers**

Evidently, for more than a decade, reproductive health issues have taken a back seat and this, not as far as the print media is concerned but also in relation to the focus of many old and new, community-based organization and local and international non-governmental agencies. There are no indications in the media that governmental institutions are doing any better. Teenage fertility in a country with almost a quarter of its population in its teens and a similar proportion under the age of 10 years cannot be taken for granted because of its social, economic and health-related impact on the entire nation's development. See Table 10 below.

**TABLE 10**

**Media Reports of School Girl and Teenage Pregnancies (July –December 2005)**

<b>NEWSPAPER</b>	<b>NO. OF RELATED REPORTS</b>
<i>Daily Nation</i>	11
<i>Standard</i>	47
<i>Citizen Weekly</i>	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>

Appearing most commonly in the dailies' 'Provincial', 'Court', and 'National' news columns, the reports shed light to a serious and potentially explosive problem requiring more attention than given. Although the Ministry of Education does not allow expulsion of pregnant school girls, there are numerous reports of girls dropping out of school because of pregnancy. In most of these and other similar reported incidences, the parents suspect teachers to be responsible. Table 11 summarizes the incidences of school girl pregnancies reported in a period of six months – an indicator of the extent of the problem (81 cases reported). It is important to note a higher percentage could go unreported. In Table 11 below only seven (7) districts are cited out of 72. In 1998, a survey by GTZ in conjunction with the Ministry of Health reported that 10,000 pregnant girls were sent out of school annually. It is possible that these numbers may have escalated and there is need for a scientific research to establish the extent of teenage pregnancies.

**TABLE 11**

**Reported schoolgirl pregnancies by various newspapers (July- December 2005)**

Geographical location	No. of pregnant schoolgirls	Perpetrator	Newspaper reporting
Mumias	10	-	July, <i>Standard</i>
Gucha	10	Parents suspect teachers	
	1	Teacher suspected	
Unstated	1	13 year old girl gave birth, disposed of baby, charged in court	
Machakos	10 in 2004	-	
	10 in 2005		
Butere/Mumias	5	-	
Bureti	10	Parents suspect teachers	
Unstated	2 sisters	A matatu tout	<i>Daily Nation</i> , November
	6	A secondary school boy	
Kirinyaga	1	Teachers	
Bomet	1	Asian businessman	DN , August
Unstated	1	Step father	DN November
Kakamega and Butere/Mumias districts	-	15 teachers interdicted for 4 months for love affairs with schoolgirls	
Kirinyaga	1	A self-styled Bishop suspect	DN Nation August
Unstated	1	A Former head teacher	<i>Citizen Weekly</i> August 15-21
	1	A 13 year old – pregnant by a teacher	
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>		

**3.5.10 Sexual Violence Statistics**

Occasionally the newspapers provide statistics of sexual violence incidences to highlight the rising insecurity (Some of these are appended). Following the sexual violence survey report in July 2005 (referred to earlier), both dailies provided various revealing statistics on the rampancy of sexual violence, for example,

- *Daily Nation* devoted a full page on:
  - Statistics and comparative crime figures 2002-2005 - indicating the weight of the crime (July 18);
  - Statistics at provincial level from 2000-2004 on sexual violence sourced from Kenya National Human Rights Commission (July 27).
- *The Standard*,
  - on 1<sup>st</sup> July devoted two pages on sexual violence in which rape statistics are described as ‘shocking’.
  - On July 8<sup>th</sup>, the cover page of the *Standard* carried a bold headline, ‘***Kenya’s shame as rape tops list of crime***’ in which Cyrus Ombati, a former Kenya Police spokesperson cites statistics of rape incidences reported to the police. In its Commentary and Analysis the same day, the paper cites rape statistics under the heading ‘***Crime: More attention must be given to rape***’.

It is clear from media reports that more women are raped than people murdered, and than vehicles stolen. Almost everyday, the media carry reports of the insecurity throughout the country. During the first six weeks of 2005, the police received the following rape-related reports.

• January	249	April	193
• February	204	May	223
• March	209	June	236

Unfortunately, such figures are not available for the second half of the same year.

- Five percent of the women treated at Nairobi Women’s Hospital are reported to be victims of sexual assault, and

- Every week two incidences of rape in Maela are reported to Naivasha police every week.

### 3.6. SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND IDENTITY

Sexual orientation-related features and incidences reported by the media between July and December 2005 are relatively few. Neither the magazines reviewed, nor the weeklies feature any article or report in the same period. There are 21 references to the subject in the two dailies and most of them were in the month of July, as shown in Table 12 below.

The majority of the media references to sexual orientation are in relation to the historic gay marriages in the US during the period under review (6) and to the response of the Church in Kenya particularly the Anglican Church of Kenya (8). The papers also feature the general comments of a number of readers (6) in the letters to the Editor. None of the two dailies carry an editorial on the subject. Neither the remarks attributed to the Faith-Based Organizations, nor the contents of the letters to the editor are sympathetic to people taking part in same sex marriages. There is no feature related to sexual orientation in the two dailies that is likely to enhance a reader’s objectivity, nor has the media on its part attempted to promote its readers’ understanding or appreciation of the subject.

**TABLE 12**

**References to Sexual orientation by *Daily Nation* and *Standard***

Month (2005)	Dailies
July	16
September	2
November	1
December	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>

### 3.7 CHILD MARRIAGES



Although there are numerous communities in Kenya where child marriages are common, the coverage of the vice by the newspapers and magazines selected for the study is dismal. Indeed, none of the weeklies (soft publication) and magazines featured any reports relating to child marriages between July and December 2005. The selected dailies featured only six child-related marriages in that period. The seventh feature was in reference to girl-child school enrolment in North Eastern Province of Kenya (NEP).

The two dailies feature two categories of child marriages – forced marriages and those between children and neither of these as the following table illustrates, is given adequate attention by the Kenyan media. There is a total blackout of the subject of early marriages in the weeklies and magazines selected for content analysis. This could be because the news reporters in the rural districts if any may be insiders to the culture and therefore take it as the norm. Alternatively, there may not be media personnel in those districts and hence cases go unreported. What is normally reported are incidents of girls running away from home not to be married off.

**TABLE 13**  
**Number of Articles on Child Marriages**

<b>TOPICS FEATURED</b>	<b>MONTHS</b>	<b><i>DAILY NATION</i></b>	<b><i>STANDARD</i></b>
Forced marriages	July	2	1
	October	1	-
	December	-	1
Marriages between children	July	-	2

All the seven newspaper articles on child-related marriages are placed inconspicuously in the inside pages in the ‘National News Briefs’ and ‘National News Roundup’ columns of the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* respectively. For example, the *Daily Nation*’s Briefs column in which an article entitled ‘*DO saves bright (14 year old) girl from forced marriage*’ appears is placed in page 17, and a ‘Court News’ column in which the

*Standard* runs a brief report on ‘*Girl sues her parents over early marriage*’ is in page 14. The eye-catching article titles unfortunately do not make them conspicuous.

There are a few selected articles relatively visible however. One example is found in the 22<sup>nd</sup> July issue of the *Standard* - ‘*Amazing lifestyle of child couples in Suba District*’ - placed in page 15 in the ‘Provincial News’ page. The headline is also eye catching. The author of this article describes a lifestyle of marriages between children - a practice reportedly becoming common among orphans in Suba district which also has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the country. This revealing article on a potentially explosive practice is however neither followed up by the *Standard* nor *Daily Nation* or *Citizen Weekly*.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The content analysis of the coverage of sexuality and sexuality education, HIV and AIDS, reproductive health and rights, sexual orientation and identity, sexual violence and child marriages on the whole, by the media is relatively general and often lacks details. In the period in focus, the media seem to assume the basic role of information transmission and not so much of educating or raising the readership's consciousness to issues such as reproductive rights of women, the adolescents sexual health, sexual violence, HIV and AIDS, and sexual orientation and identity. Sexuality and related issues hardly ever make headlines in the Kenyan print media. Most references are inserted in briefs in inconspicuous spaces and columns. Indeed, the consultants are of the view that a reader would have to be deliberately looking out for such references in order to see them.

#### 4.1 SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The incidences of sexual violence top the list – they get most coverage in terms of number of articles featured between July and December 2005. However, absence of details and follow-ups speak of the print media's silences on the issue. It could be viewed as a case where an evil in society becomes second nature such that it does not affect our conscience as a nation, as policy makers, and change agents any more. This is a trend that needs to be reversed and guarded against.

##### a) Sexual violence vs. poor parenting

Fathers, gangs, teachers and teenage boys and significant family members are reported as the main perpetrators of sexual violence against minors (girls and boys) and women. Reports in early 2005 showed that there were more women raped than people murdered and than vehicles stolen. Between July and December 2005, analysis shows that 40% of 100 defiled cases sampled were carried out by fathers and 43% of 717 sampled cases involved girls aged between one month and four years. Eighty three percent (83%) of the defilement cases reported to the police occurred at home and 4.9% at school. People

trusted with love and care for the children are turning against them and shattering their lives forever. Homes are no longer the safe havens they used to be. Fathers and siblings are the predators, a crime that illustrates some of the fruits of poor parenting or lack of it.

**b) Gang rapes**

Rape is not only rampant but it is taking a new dimension. A gang raids a home and rapes all residents from father to the youngest child. This is also done when victims are watching as the other member of the family is being raped. This is an indicator that there is need for education and skills programs on how do respond and guard oneself/family from such life threatening ordeals. Arming oneself with condoms and microbicides, and skills to negotiate for 'safer rape' could be a wise move.

**c) Teachers as sex offenders**

The reported incidents in the print media under focus are fewer than the unreported. The current professional ethics policy document does not translate to action. The Teachers Service Commission and Kenya National Union of Teachers need to institutionalize and enact policies that will deter teachers from preying on their students.

**d) Sodomy**

Sodomy is one of the sexual violence incidents that occurred at an alarming rate between July and December 2005. Given the rise of sodomy on minors especially boys under 10 years, there is need to create awareness among parents and teachers and to prepare boys in ways that can help them detect predators.

**e) Sexual harassment as a 'non-issue'**

Sexual harassment is treated as a non-issue during the period under focus. Coverage was very scanty. This was reaffirmed by the Kenyan Parliament during the discussion on Sexual Offences Bill (early 2006) where and when sexual harassment was trivialized. Trivializing sexual harassment is similar to creating a path through which rape can be facilitated and enacted, and sex for commodity or exchange of favors is/can be taken as a norm by the powerful such as employers, teachers/lecturers in institutions of learning.

#### **f) Child marriages**

Child marriages might be more common than reported between July and December 2005 (only four cases) given that the cultural beliefs and values that fuel the practice are intact in several districts of Kenya especially the marginalized areas which are also the poorest districts. These are the districts where the girl child enrolment in school is lowest and it decreases as they grow older. There is need for a longitudinal study to follow up girl children enrolled in primary schools up to the time they complete secondary education. Such a study would provide information on what happens to the girls and the experiences they go through before 18 years.

There is also need for vigilance in those districts especially to sensitize girls by raising their aspirations in life beyond the village (to have a dream!)

#### **g) The Sexual Offences Bill**

The Sexual Offences Bill was proposed in Parliament in 2005 partly because cases of sexual violence have grown exponentially. However, the parliamentary discussions in early 2006 are a reflection of a society guided by a legislature that does not understand that sexual violence culture is a reflection of a rotting society where no one is safe. When reported sexual violence incidents are higher than robbery and car jacking incidents, then the societal values are eroded. This is also a reflection of changes in family dynamics and cultural values. Though Sexual Offences Bill was passed by parliament, it was described by many as a 'mutilated bill' that when enacted might be just a toothless dog. The Bill as is might not protect women and children as expected.

## **4.2 REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS**

### **a) Abortion**

Abortion is illegal in Kenya but that does not bar women from procuring from medical personnel or inducing themselves and therefore contributing to abortion related deaths.

In some communities, traditional birth attendants do facilitate when the pregnancy is culturally unacceptable. In the period under focus, the draft constitution ignited the controversy on abortion. Though this would have been a great opportunity for the media to educate on the same, the reports were not objective.

**b) Commercial sex work/workers**

There was scanty coverage of commercial sex workers and especially the male gender and minors in general.

**c) Adolescent reproductive health vs. school girl pregnancies**

There were few media reports from seven (7) out of 72 districts in Kenya showing that a substantial number of school girls drop out of school because of pregnancy. There is need for research to establish the magnitude Kenya wide that would assist draw a relevant reproductive health program for adolescent girls in and out of school.

**d) Child to child marriage**

In a society where orphans are left to care for each other, child to child marriage is probable. There is need to reinforce ethics of care (*I am because we are, and we are because I am*) through schooling and faith based teachings the two effective socialization channels in Kenya. Community organizations need to reinvent their roles and assist orphans to a point where their transition to adulthood is dignified and sets a foundation for responsible adulthood.

**e) Male condoms and rape**

Male condoms were introduced as contraceptives initially. Today they are used to guard against STIs, including HIV. There is need to encourage Kenyans to have them always incase rapists strike one can negotiate for 'safe rape'.

### **4.3 HIV AND AIDS**

Reporting **HIV and AIDS** and related issues is wanting given the magnitude of the pandemic in Kenya. Key issues such as stigma and related violence against PLWHA are minimal. Asumpta's diary is a regular forum aimed at raising awareness of the fact that PLWHA can live positively. A similar forum in the print media could be created to

speak to different issues of HIV and AIDS on regular basis. There is need for the print media to dedicate a day apart from Asumpta's diary when the readership could look forward to reading on contemporary issues/features of HIV and AIDS.

In the period under focus, there were 11 reported cases of stigma related violence that include murder. At the community and institutional level, there is need for programs to protect PLWHA from stigma related violence.

#### **4.4 SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND IDENTITY**

On the issue of sexual orientation and identity, there are silences and therefore very little is known about Kenyans in same sex relationships. There is need for research in this area.

#### **4.5 SEXUALITY AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION**

There is need for programs aimed at breaking the silence on issues of sex, sexuality and HIV and AIDS. This includes demystifying culturally based myths and taboos because they are no longer effective yet they are assumed to offer guidance; that they can deter people from engaging in unbecoming behaviors and sexual crimes such as incest and sodomy. There is need to identify and nurture a value system through the education curriculum and faith based forums given that the assumed culturally based values cannot be enacted with a populace that has not been socialized through the same by their parents.

The emerging culture of sexual violence is a tip of the iceberg. What lies beneath can be traced into poor parenting roles, lack of role models especially for the boy-child, unavailable parents where children are left to care for each other days on end or in the care of house-helpers who in some cases are both victims of abuse and perpetrators too. There is a generation that has lost family values and/or has ungrounded/unfounded value system. It is said that the 'abused become the abusers' and the trend needs to be reversed by studying family dynamics in the last two generations and developing community based correctional/socialization programs.

Given the rise in defilement cases intervention programs should be multi-dimensional:

- There is need for intervention programs in the urban areas especially in high population density areas and the informal settlements focusing on security/safety for children.
- There is also need for a rural based intervention program.
- Both such interventions need to target children (from nursery schools to secondary schools. Should also include Sunday schools and other religious forums that target children), parents and also create community policing organs.
- In addition, the programs should also train women and teenage girls for self defense against rapists.
- In order to facilitate enactment of such programs within a legal framework, there is need to develop programs that target policy makers – to understand sexuality, sexual violence, reproductive health and rights and sexual rights.

#### **4.6 THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA**

It is not disputable that with good will, the media can play the most important:

- **Educative Roles** in imparting sexuality education and at the same time in highlighting and educating its readership about the evil of
  - sexual abuse – rape, defilement and all other forms,
  - gender-based violence and gender prejudices,
  - human rights and dignity, etc.;
- part in **informing**, changing, modifying or shaping the **attitudes** of the various communities within and without Kenya in matters of sexuality. Clearly, the media has this capacity and must utilize it;
  - in **advocating** for (among other issues):



- stiff sentences for sexual offenders,
  - support of all forms (psycho-social, monetary, etc.) for survivors and victims
  - of rape, defilement and gender based violence;
  - the eradication of the vice of sexual predators who take advantage of young
  - children, school girls and boys
  - the passing of the Sexual Offences Bill
- The media also has a **social responsibility** to its target population and communities to point out without inhibitions issues that require to be addressed. This however must be executed with accuracy.
  - Through **ongoing research** the media can help search for sustainable solutions to the many social, health and other problems highlighted in this paper.

The role of the Kenyan media in bringing about a new government in 1992 is not disputable. It can do the same to fight sexual violence, promote human rights, save the girl/boy-child from sexual exploitation, fight apathy in relation to sexual violence and other social ills and promote intolerance to rape regardless of who the victim is.

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