Gender roles and customs in Kenya affect women's health and welfare. Women have less access to education, employment and information than men. Also, women who have little decisionmaking power are less likely to use modern contraception. Almost 50 percent of ever-married women have experienced some form of marital violence. A total of 8 percent of Kenyan women age 15-49 are HIV positive. Women are almost 2 times as likely to have HIV infection as men.

Women and HIV/AIDS

HIV Prevalence by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>2%</th>
<th>4%</th>
<th>6%</th>
<th>8%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>12%</th>
<th>14%</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>15-19</td>
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</table>

11.4 percent of women who are in a polygynous union are HIV-positive, compared to 7.2 percent who are not in a polygynous union.

Empowerment and Women’s Health

Women’s Participation in Decisionmaking

- All decisions: 25%
- Making large purchases: 33%
- Making daily purchases: 48%
- Own health care: 50%
- Visits to family or relatives: 51%
- What food to cook each day: 66%

Gender Violence

Experience of Marital Violence

- Sexual violence: 16%
- Emotional violence: 26%
- Physical violence: 40%
- Any of these: 47%
- All three: 8%

Women’s Attitudes Towards Wife-Beating

- Burns the food: 16%
- Refuses to have sex with him: 29%
- Goes out without telling him: 39%
- Argues with him: 46%
- Neglects children: 55%
- Agrees with at least one reason: 68%

Female Genital Cutting

Kenya 2003:
31%* of women are circumcised

Kenya 1998:
38% of women are circumcised

*excludes northern areas for comparability with 1998 KDHS
For additional information on the results of the 2003 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, please contact:

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