

300,000 Abortions in Kenya? **It's just not true!**

An often-quoted study, “A National Assessment of the Magnitude and Consequences of Unsafe Abortion in Kenya,” reports that each year in Kenya there are about 300,000 illegal abortions; 20,000 women and girls hospitalized are from these abortions; and 2,600 women die from these abortions. The study was done in part by the U.S.-based International Projects Assistance Services (IPAS) and the Kenyan chapter of the Federation of Women Lawyers.

The report's numbers are simply not true.

In releasing the study to the press last year, Peter Gichangi, a senior lecturer at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Nairobi, stated the political purpose of the research: **“We are using the study as a tool to market our case, to advocate for policy changes.”**

This strategy is identical to that used by U.S. abortion supporters in their efforts to legalize abortion in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a leading supporter of abortion rights and an abortionist himself, later admitted to deception:

“We aroused enough sympathy to sell our program of permissive abortion by fabricating the number of illegal abortions done annually in the U.S. The actual figure was approaching 100,000 but the figure we gave to the media repeatedly was 1,000,000. **Repeating the big lie often enough convinces the public.** The number of women dying from illegal abortions was around 200-250 annually. The figure we constantly fed to the media was 10,000.”

For real numbers concerning abortions in Kenya, it is important to look at other national abortion ratios on the African continent. In South Africa, for example, in the year following legalization of abortion there were 29 abortions per 1,000 live births (Johnston's Archive). For Kenya, this same ratio would result in about 45,000 abortions per year (CIA Factbook). The current (2007) South African abortion ratio is 62 per 1,000 live births, which would equate to 97,000 abortions per year in Kenya. Applying Tunisia's rate of 63.9 abortions per 1,000 live births would give Kenya 95,000 abortions per year. All three totals are far from the projected 300,000 number.

Advocates of abortion are using the issue of maternal mortality and illegal abortions to argue for legalization of the procedure. **However, the answer to illegal abortions and high maternal mortality rates is very simple:** provide hope, opportunity and support for pregnant women by ensuring a clean water supply, clean blood supply and adequate health care. Statistics confirm that these save women's lives — not the legalization of abortion.