



Centre for
Human Rights and
Restorative Justice

REFERENCES TO WOMEN

Truth Commissions

[Abstract](#)

Notes on references to women in the truth commission reports.

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Reports Analyzed

The following truth commissions were analyzed in regards to their discussions and number of references to women using NVivo software:

Asia

1. Indonesia (2008)
2. South Korea (2010)
3. Timor-Lest (2013)

Africa

4. South Africa (1998)
5. Nigeria (2002)
6. Sierra Leone (2004)
7. Ghana (2004)
8. Liberia (2009)
9. Mauritius (2011)
10. Kenya (2013)

The Americas

11. Chile (1996)
12. Guatemala (1999)
13. Grenada (2006)
14. United States of America (2006)
15. Canada (2015)

Summary of Findings

The following report summarizes the themes and coding references to women in the analyzed truth commission reports.

Themes

Women were referenced in the truth commission reports in the following ways:

- colonialism, patriarchy, socio-economic inequality, and sexual discrimination
 - see: Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Canada, Guatemala, US
- barriers to women's education and economic and political engagement
 - see: Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Timor-Leste, Canada
- commission efforts to increase female participation in the process (e.g., gender and sensitivity training, special hearings for women, etc.)
 - see: Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Timor-Leste
- acts of violence committed against women, including: beatings, rape, gang rape, sexual assault, sexual humiliation, torture, disembowelling, maiming, killings, etc.
 - see: Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Canada, Chile, Grenada, Guatemala
- domestic violence
 - see: Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone
- shame in discussing sexual assault and fears of community ostracism
 - see: Liberia, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Guatemala, Sierra Leone
- discussion of harmful traditional practices that violate women's human rights (e.g., female genital mutilation)
 - see: Kenya, Nigeria, Timor-Leste
- women's detention or imprisonment
 - see: Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Indonesia, Timor-Leste
- female slavery – forced labour and sexual
 - see: Ghana, Mauritius, Liberia, Nigeria, Timor-Leste
- women's labour – paid and unpaid
 - see: Ghana, Mauritius, Indonesia, Canada, Grenada
- low wages and gender pay differences
 - see: Mauritius, South Africa
- women's health and lack of medical care
 - see: Kenya, Mauritius, Sierra Leone
- female activism
 - see: Liberia, Nigeria, South Africa, Canada, Chile, US
- female political participation
 - see: Ghana, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Chile, Grenada, Guatemala, US
- discussions of female relationships to men
 - see: Kenya, South Africa, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Chile
- displacement and migration

- see: Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste
- ethnicity and image
 - see: Mauritius, Guatemala, US
- women as perpetrators
 - see: South Africa, Sierra Leone,
- landownership
 - see: Mauritius
- roles as wives, mothers, and grandmothers
 - see: Canada, US

The following reports have a chapter or section dedicated to women or gender hearings:

- Sierra Leone
- Mauritius
- Liberia
- South Africa

While most of the reports do not have a chapter or section dedicated to women, they do discuss women in general throughout.

Number of References to Women

The following reports made the most references to women in the content of their reports:

- Sierra Leone – 614
- Timor-Leste – 541
- Mauritius – 401

All 3 reports shared the following:

- detailed discussions of the experiences of women and the crimes committed against them
- a discussion of gender roles and the socio-economic inequalities faced by women
- numerous accounts of sexual assault and rape
- discussions of how the commissions worked to increase female participation in the process, including:
 - gender and sensitivity training,
 - special hearings for women,
 - closed hearings. and,
 - working with women's organizations
- large pdf page count

The following reports made the least references to women in the content of their reports:

- South Korea – 0
- Grenada – 13
- Guatemala – 17

All 3 reports shared the following:

- no chapter or section dedicated to women

See charts 1-2 for a comparison of the number of references to women in the truth commission reports.

Chart 1: References to Women in the Truth Commission Reports

The following chart provides a breakdown of the number of broad references to women in the 15 truth commissions analyzed for this report. The y-axis represents the number of references to women, and the x-axis represents the truth commission reports. The data sets from left to right read the most to the least references to women. The chart shows that the reports for Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, and Mauritius make the most references to women, and that the reports for Guatemala, Grenada, and South Korea make the least references to women. The report for South Korea had 0 references to women.

This chart only includes references to women in the content of the truth commission reports. References to women in bibliographies, notes, or chapter headers were not included as they had no bearing on discussions of women in the report and often skewed the number of references to women in the report. For example, including bibliography, chapter headers, and notes, the Liberia report had 356 references to women. However, within the content of the report itself, women were only discussed 158 times.

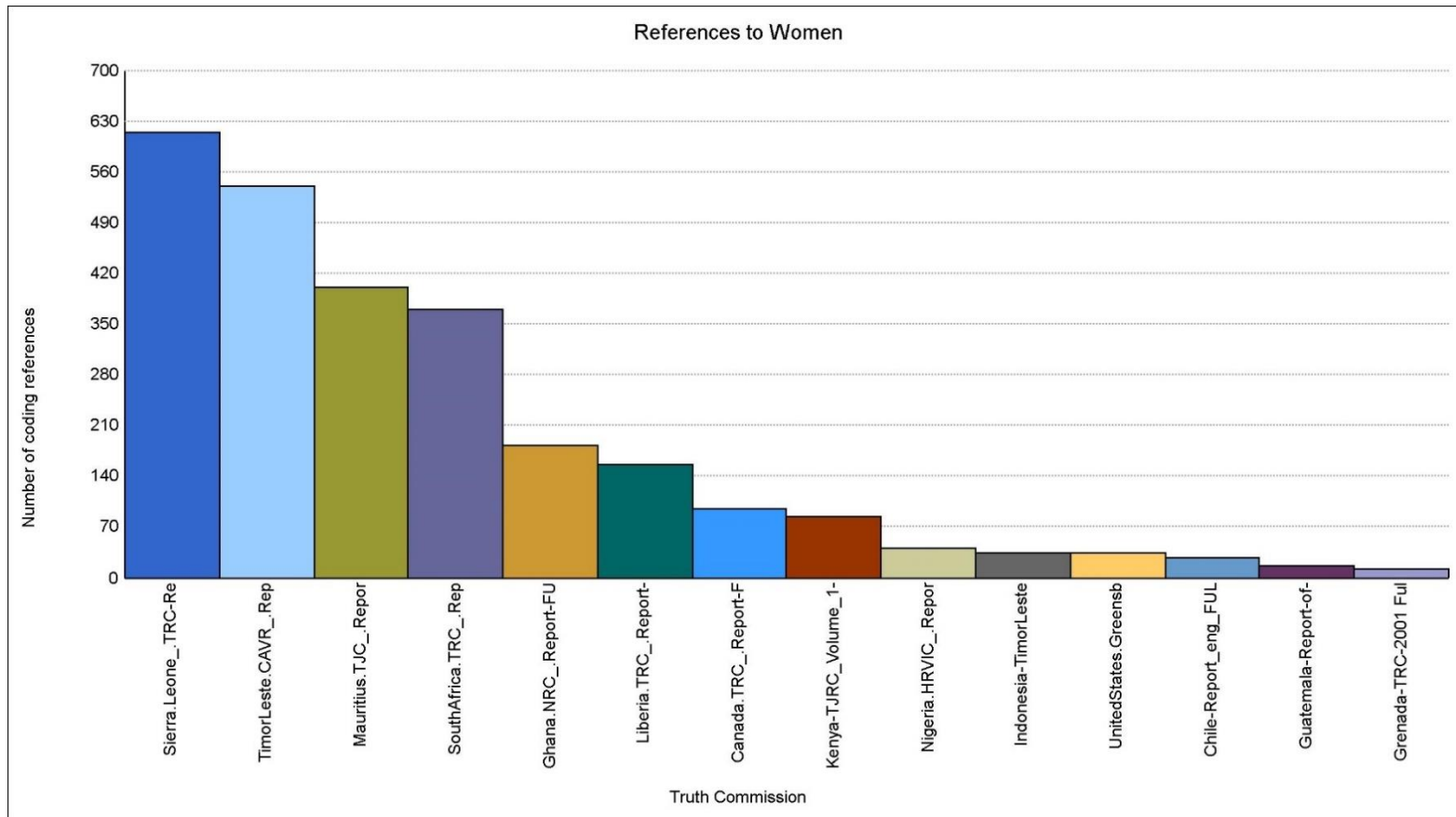
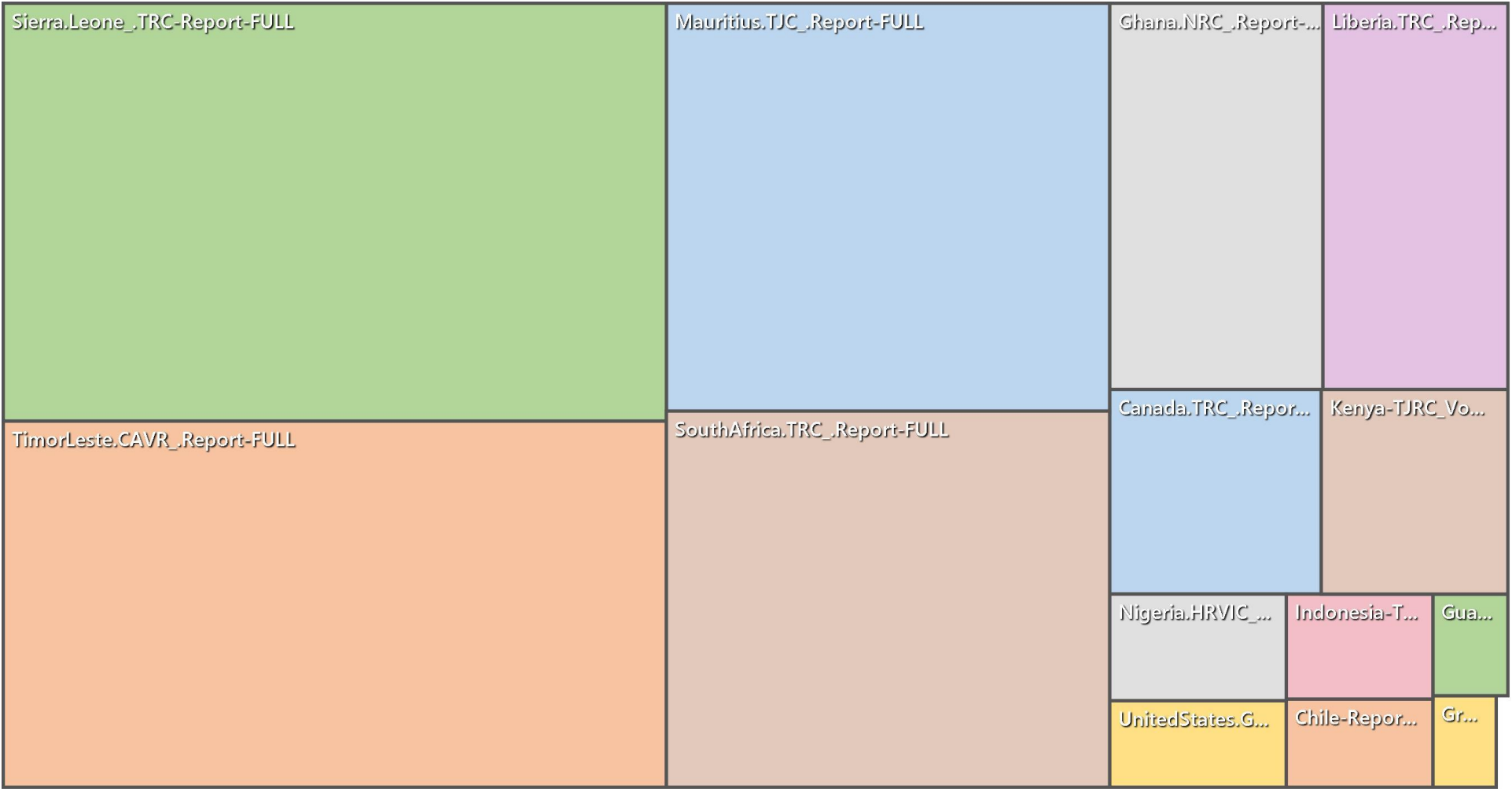


Chart 2: Women Hierarchy Coding for Comparisons Chart

The chart is a diagram that compares the number of coding of broad references to women in the 15 truth commissions analyzed for this report. References are scaled by rectangle size – the bigger the rectangle the more references it has compared to smaller rectangles. The report for South Korea had 0 references to women.



Data Visualization

The following section contains links to data visualization of references to women by truth commission report created using NVivo software. Data visualizations include:

- **word frequency clouds** – a visual way to show the top 30 words referenced in the report. More frequently occurring words appear in larger fonts and less frequently appearing words in progressively smaller fonts
- **word trees** – display NVivo search results for the term women as a tree with branches representing the various contexts in which the word occurs¹

Africa

Ghana

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Kenya

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Liberia

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Mauritius

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Nigeria

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- Women

¹ NVivo software can only edit word trees by changing the central search term and branch sizes. Word trees includes references from bibliography, headers, and notes that cannot be edited out using NVivo software. Researchers will need to manually remove unsightly branches using editing software (e.g., paint, photoshop, etc.).

Sierra Leone

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

South Africa

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

The Americas

Canada

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Chile

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Grenada

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Guatemala

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

US

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

Asia

Indonesia

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

South Korea

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- no word tree for women²

Timor-Leste

- word frequency cloud
- excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings
- women

² The South Korea report had no references to women.