MEASURING THE SHADOW PANDEMIC:
Violence Against Women During COVID-19

15th Meeting of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Gender Statistics
6 December 2021
UN Women’s response: RAPID GENDER ASSESSMENTS ON VAW

Data Production

Need for DATA on VAW and COVID-19

13 Rapid Gender Assessment Surveys
- Socio-economic (inc. food security and disability)
- Mental and emotional health
- Safety at home
- Safety in public spaces

Global Guidance

HOW to ethically and safely collect data on VAW during crisis

Guidance on the remote data collection of VAW
- Use of safe word
- Women are alone
- No speakerphone
- No recording
- Helplines for all
- Indirect questions (vignettes, list randomization)

Data Access and Use

How to transform VAW DATA TO POLICIES AND ACTIONS in COVID-19 responses?

- 1 Global Report
- 13 Country Reports
- VAW data dashboard

The Shadow Pandemic: Rapid Gender Assessments on the Impact of COVID-19 on VAW | 6 December 2021
### Pre-requisites of the RGAs on VAW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arab States</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>East and Southern Africa</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>West and Central Africa</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cote D’Ivoire</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Europe and Central Asia</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyrgyz Republic</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Latin America and the Caribbean</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Asia and the Pacific</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Women’s safety is our utmost concern!**
  - “Do no harm” principle
  - Ethical and safety protocols observed

- **Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)**
  - 1,200 women ages 18+ (with mobile phones)
  - Partnered with Ipsos
  - Two phases (Q2 and Q3 2021)

- **Extensive internal and external consultations**

- **No objection letters from NSOs or Ministries of Women**
  - A pre-requisite before a survey is conducted
**PLANNING AND DESIGN: There will always be challenges... but there will also be solutions!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
<th>SOLUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May not participate if there is no assurance of confidentiality</td>
<td>Confidentiality and privacy agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May not share personal and direct sensitive experiences</td>
<td>Use of indirect questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vignettes on domestic violence and sexual harassment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• List randomization on partner abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive words, phrases, and questions that might make women uncomfortable</td>
<td>• Carefully-worded questions and statements and scripted responses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rigorous interviewer training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other people may overhear the conversation</td>
<td>• Ensuring speakerphone is turned off</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confirming that no one over the age of 2 can overhear</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use of safe/”skip” words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May need access to helplines and resources</td>
<td>List of helplines provided to all respondents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FIELD OPERATIONS: There will always be challenges... but there will also be solutions!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in reaching women aged 60+</td>
<td>• Using <strong>additional contact database</strong> from Ipsos, where available</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Prioritizing age quota</strong> completion for representativeness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slow progress on reaching the quota</td>
<td>• <strong>Adding interviewers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Repeated interviewer trainings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trying to call at <strong>different days of the week and times of the day</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Length of the questionnaire</td>
<td>• <strong>Reorganizing</strong> screening questions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Shortening introduction</strong> while keeping important parts such as privacy and confidentiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Strategic placement</strong> of safety checks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenging commonly held beliefs and assumptions… while providing some assurance

13% overall drop-out rate

- Demographic Questions
  - Marital Status (11%)
  - Locality (12%)
  - Number of children (6%)
  - Number of HH members (5%)
  - Food insecurity (9%)

- Lengthy Questions
  - Mental health (10%)
  - Vignette 1 (3%)
  - Vignette 2 (3%)

- Sensitive Questions
  - Feel unsafe walking in day (4%)
  - Frequency of conflicts at homes (3%)
  - Perception of violence (2%)

1% used the safe word
1% had speakerphone on
3% were not alone
One direct question asked in Colombia questionnaire only...

1. How often, if at all, in the past 12 months, has a spouse pushed you, thrown something at you that could hurt you, punched or slapped you?
   i. Did this experience happen before the onset of COVID-19, after, or both?
   ii. Has this experience changed at all as a result of the conditions of COVID-19?

- **98% of women**
  - exhibited no change in behaviour when asked directly on experience of VAW

- **2% of women**
  - Paused before responding
  - Sounded shy or uncomfortable; given more time

NO ONE refused to answer the question
NO ONE used the “safe word”/“skip word”
Nearly 1 in 2 women reported that they or a woman they know have experienced a form of VAW since COVID-19.
WOMEN’S FEELING OF SAFETY AT HOME

15% of women feel unsafe in their homes.

23% said this has gotten worse as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

19% of women live in households with conflict among adults at least weekly.

23% said conflict between adults has become more frequent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

56% of women think that the experience of verbal or physical abuse at the hands of a partner is common for women in their community.

68% said this has gotten worse as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
**WOMEN’S FEELING OF SAFETY IN PUBLIC SPACES**

- **71%** of women think that physical harm, abuse, and harassment are a problem for women in their community.

- **31%** of women think physical harm, abuse, and harassment has gotten worse since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **54%** of women feel unsafe walking alone at night.

- **22%** of women feel unsafe walking alone during the day.

- **58%** of women think that it is common for women to be harassed in public since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic.
WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO REPORT HAVING EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE OR TO KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS SINCE COVID?

- Among countries,
  - Kenya (80%), Morocco (69%), Jordan (49%), and Nigeria (48%)

- Among age groups,
  - Among women between 18-39 years (49%)
  - For older women 60+ years (34%)

- By location,
  - Women living in rural areas (46%)

- By marital status,
  - Women separated from their partners (58%)
Women were more likely than others to be moderately or severely food insecure:

- Women reported they or someone they know have experienced a form of VAW since COVID-19 (58%)

- Women that reported feeling unsafe at home since COVID-19 (56%)
MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF WOMEN

- More than 2 in 5 women said that COVID-19 has worsened their overall mental and emotional health

Women who experienced a form of VAW since COVID-19 (1.3 times)

Women who feel more unsafe at home (1.3 times)
16 Days of Activism (24 Nov – 10 Dec)

December

... AND BEYOND

What's next...

NOV 24th

- GLOBAL REPORT
- VAW DATA DASHBOARD

PHASED

COUNTRY REPORTS

GUIDANCE ON REMOTE VAW DATA COLLECTION

ADVOCACY TO USE THE DATA
THANK YOU

UN Women Resources on RGAs

RGAs on Socio-economic impacts of COVID-19

RGAs on the impacts of COVID-19 on VAW

Whose Time to Care

From Insights to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19

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