

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

15th Meeting of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Gender Statistics
6 December 2021



WOMEN
COUNT



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



PRE-REQUISITES OF THE RGAs ON VAW

13
Countries

Region	Country	Phase 1	Phase 2
Arab States	Jordan		✓
	Morocco		✓
East and Southern Africa	Kenya	✓	
West and Central Africa	Cameroon	✓	
	Cote D'Ivoire		✓
	Nigeria		✓
Europe and Central Asia	Ukraine	✓	
	Albania		✓
	Kyrgyz Republic		✓
Latin America and the Caribbean	Colombia		✓
	Paraguay		✓
Asia and the Pacific	Thailand	✓	
	Bangladesh		✓

- **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!

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
May not participate if there is no assurance of confidentiality	Confidentiality and privacy agreements
May not share personal and direct sensitive experiences	Use of indirect questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vignettes on domestic violence and sexual harassment • List randomization on partner abuse
Sensitive words, phrases, and questions that might make women uncomfortable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully-worded questions and statements and scripted responses • Rigorous interviewer training
Other people may overhear the conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring speakerphone is turned off • Confirming that no one over the age of 2 can overhear • Use of safe/"skip" words
May need access to helplines and resources	List of helplines provided to all respondents

FIELD OPERATIONS: There will always be challenges... but there will also be solutions!

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
Difficulty in reaching women aged 60+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using additional contact database from Ipsos, where available • Prioritizing age quota completion for representativeness
Slow progress on reaching the quota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding interviewers • Repeated interviewer trainings • Trying to call at different days of the week and times of the day
Length of the questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganizing screening questions • Shortening introduction while keeping important parts such as privacy and confidentiality • Strategic placement of safety checks

Challenging commonly held beliefs and assumptions... while providing some assurance

1% used the safe word

1% had speakerphone on

3% were not alone

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%)

COLOMBIA – An exception of asking direct question



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?

NO ONE refused to answer the question

NO ONE used the “safe word”/“skip word”

98% of women

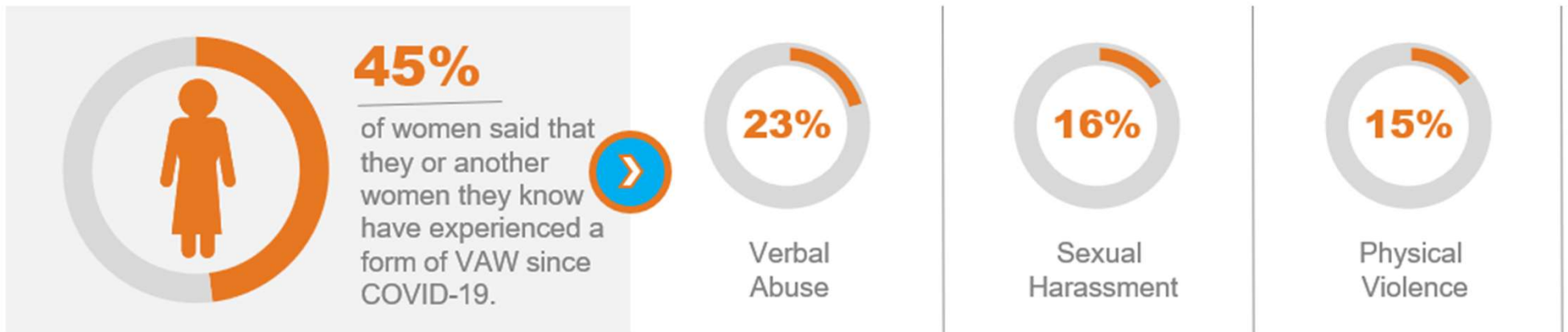
- exhibited **no change in behaviour** when asked directly on experience of VAW

2% of women

- **Paused** before responding
- Sounded shy or uncomfortable; **given more time**

WOMEN REPORTING OWN EXPERIENCES OR KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER WOMEN EXPERIENCING VAW

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.



19%

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



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.



23%

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



23%

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



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%)



**1 in 2
WOMEN**

report that they or a woman they know have experienced violence since the COVID-19 pandemic.

VAW EXPERIENCES AND FOOD INSECURE WOMEN

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%)

WHO IS LIKELY TO BE FOOD-INSECURE?



Women who have experienced or know a woman who has experienced VAW since COVID-19

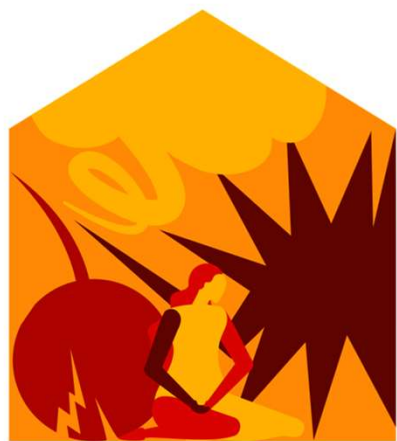


Women who feel less safe at home since COVID-19



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)**



What's next...

**16 Days of Activism
(24 Nov – 10 Dec)**

December

... AND BEYOND

NOV 24th

- **GLOBAL REPORT**
- **VAW DATA DASHBOARD**

PHASED

COUNTRY REPORTS

**GUIDANCE ON
REMOTE VAW DATA
COLLECTION**

**ADVOCACY TO USE
THE DATA**



THANK YOU

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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](#)

