MEASURING THE SHADOW PANDEMIC
Empirical learnings on the collection of violence against women data through telephone interviews
UN WOMEN’S RAPID GENDER ASSESSMENTS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

VAW RGAs collected data from more than 16,000 women in 13 countries.
EVIDENCE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS ON TELEPHONE COLLECTION OF VAW DATA

1. Survey design and sampling

2. Ethical and safety considerations
   Prior, during and following the interview, confidential data management

3. Training and management of interviewers
   Survey structure, staff recruitment, training and supervision

4. VAW measurement tools
   Vignettes, list-randomization experiment, direct question on VAW experience (of self and others they know), direct question on women’s safety, direct question on intimate partner violence (IPV) experience

3 | Measuring the Shadow Pandemic: Empirical learnings on the collection of violence against women data through telephone interviews
Women’s safety is the utmost concern

- Safer alternatives are not to be feasible
- The data are really needed, actionable and will add value in addressing the information needs
- Women are at the centre of the entire initiative and will directly benefit from the use of results
- The survey implementer is able to ensure that the findings will be used
SURVEY DESIGN AND SAMPLING

- Maintain a short survey (20 minutes max.)
- Pilot-test the approach
- Conduct cognitive interviews
- Conduct multiple call attempts
- Use supplemental sampling only when necessary
- Contact mobile phones only
- Use clear but brief introductory scripts
- When reporting the findings, indicated any sampling biases

A phased approach that allowed for survey improvements
### Safeguards were put in place to ensure women’s safety above all

| How can we ensure respondents’ privacy needs and safeguard confidentiality? | Confidentiality and Privacy Agreements  
Informed Consent |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do we respect respondents’ difficulties to share personal and direct sensitive experiences?</td>
<td>Use of indirect questions, such a vignettes and list randomization</td>
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<td>How can we ensure that respondents are comfortable?</td>
<td>Avoid words, phrases, and questions that can be too brutal, carefully-worded questions and statements and scripted responses</td>
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<td>How do we protect respondents' safety from other people who may overhear the conversation?</td>
<td>Ensuring speakerphone is turned off; Confirming that no one over the age of 2 can overhear; Use of “safe” words; Only Yes/No, frequency or number responses</td>
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<td>How do we anticipate respondents’ potential need to access to helplines and resources?</td>
<td>List of helplines proposed to all respondents</td>
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REPORTED USE OF SAFETY PROTOCOLS BY RESPONDENTS OF THE VAW RGAs

- 1% of respondents used the safe word
- 1% of respondents had their speakerphone on
- 1% said they were not in a private quiet place
- 1% said they were not alone

Note: the total number of respondents were 16,154 women, during the survey period of April-September 2021
Select female interviewers with prior experience of VAW surveys

Prioritize respectful and safe engagement with respondents, including non-judgement, empathy, responsiveness and respect from interviewers.

Provide extensive training on the survey questionnaire, sensitive questions, and safety protocols, including techniques to detect and respond to auditory indicators and non-verbal cues of distress from respondents, and to help ensure no others are present during the interview.

Supervise and monitor interviewers and address safety and care issues for interviewers.
### Indirect Questions on intimate-partner physical violence – List Randomization

How many of the statements do you regard as true? What is your count?

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<tr>
<th>CONTROL group</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. I prefer [LOCAL FOOD ONE] to [LOCAL FOOD TWO]</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I like [NAME OF WELL KNOWN LOCAL MUSICIAN, BUT NOT ONE EVERYONE LIKES]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Women in my family enjoy watching [POPULAR LOCAL SPORT].</td>
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<td>1. I prefer [LOCAL FOOD ONE] to [LOCAL FOOD TWO]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I like [NAME OF WELL KNOWN LOCAL MUSICIAN, BUT NOT ONE EVERYONE LIKES]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have been slapped or hit by my husband or partner BEFORE THE ONSET OF COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Women in my family enjoy watching [POPULAR LOCAL SPORT].</td>
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</tbody>
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Vignettes: Proxy for domestic violence

On physical and verbal abuse

Mary and John are a couple. They have been married for several years and have two children. John works in a repair shop, but lately the business has been bad, and they are worried about money. Sometimes when John gets stressed, he takes out his anger by yelling at Mary, and sometimes he hits her. Mary feels hurt and wants him to stop but does not know what to do.

• The vignette results for the study were generally internally consistent with results of other questions in the survey
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”

98% of women

2% of women
RESULTS SNAPSHOT: Women reporting own or other women’s experiences of VAW

45% of women said that they or another woman they know have experienced a form of VAW since COVID-19.

Women’s feelings 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.

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.
RESULTS SNAPSHET: 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 it is common for women to be harassed in public since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic.
ENSURING DATA USE

Accelerating use of VAW data to inform policymaking, service provision and advocacy in response to COVID-19 by global stakeholders, country governments and CSOs

- Put women at the centre of responses
- Allocate enough resources to address VAW in recovery and response plans
- Strengthen services for women who experience violence
- Investing in medium- and long-term prevention efforts
- Ensuring that gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data are collected regularly, including to measure the impacts of COVID.
THANK YOU

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FROM DATA TO ACTION

Strengthening violence against women data collection, reporting, analysis and use.

Data is more than numbers. Reliable, comparable VAW data is critical to understand, advocate for, and act towards prevention and response. This panel will showcase the powerful potential of data by sharing UN Women-WHO Joint Programme key products from recent years. Topics include: collection and use of VAW prevalence data and estimates, including capacity building; administrative data; tools for addressing data gaps (e.g., on violence against older women or women with disabilities)

Friday 23 September | 9:00-10:15 am | Venue: Greco

Panellists from the World Health Organization, UN Women, data producers and users, and Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office, United Kingdom will share their insights and experiences.