Collecting violence against women data amid COVID-19

Dr Henriette Jansen

What kind of data should we collect amid COVID-19?

Decision tree available in 15 languages

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HOW IS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PREVALENCE MEASURED?

How many women experience it? (%*)

Number of ever-partnered women subjected to [type of] violence

Total number of ever-partnered women

Two time periods

Lifetime:
Did it ever happen?

Current:
Did it happen in the last 12 months?

*Proportion or percentage of the population of interest
SURVEYS ON THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE

GOLD STANDARD APPROACH TO COLLECTING VIOLENCE PREVALENCE DATA:

- Standard international survey methods with structured questionnaires
- Guided by set of ethical and safety measures
- Extensive, specialized, in-depth interviewer training
- Participatory process and national ownership
- Capacity building and mentoring of national staff
- Data for action!!
Administrative data (service records) vs. population-based survey data on experience of violence against women:

How well do they represent prevalence in a population?

Severity

Actual prevalence (unknown)

Administrative data

Survey data

Graphic: Henriette Jansen
Data Collection on Violence against Women and COVID-19: Decision Tree

WHY do you want to collect data and how will it be used?
What questions are useful to explore?

Use existing data!
- Explore data from existing surveys.
- Analyse service case records (before and during COVID-19).
- Can existing data answer the common questions being explored?

Primary research options that are safe and can provide relevant information:
- Map services, including changes in availability and resources.
- Conduct short surveys or key informant interviews with service providers.
- Interview survivors if possible to do safely and with full consent (e.g., in women’s organisations, health facilities or shelters).

Potential questions answered by population-based surveys:
- Has violence increased?
- Have the nature, forms or severity of violence changed?
- Have the risk/protective factors for violence changed?

Potential questions answered by other sources of data:
- Is there a change in the nature, forms or severity of reported violence?
- Is there an increase or decrease in service use?
- Are services being accessed and/or delivered differently and is this safe and effective?

Is there a national lockdown or are there significant movement restrictions?

Safe to collect data through violence surveys or interviews.

Do NOT do it

Interviewers cannot safely visit homes and arrange private and confidential interviews.

Can you ensure confidentiality, privacy and support?

Do NOT do it

Important!
Representative data on how many women experience violence (prevalence) before, during and after COVID-19 can only be collected through surveys with a random sample of women.

Always prioritize women’s safety over data collection!

Please refer to accompanying brief for details (forthcoming) v. 30 June 2020
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- No
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  - Yes
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**Do you have access to safe and confidential interview locations?**
- No
  - Do NOT do it
  - Identifiers cannot safely visit homes and arrange private and confidential interviews.

**Could I use service data to determine prevalence?**
- No. Only a small fraction of abused women use services. It is not correct to interpret any change in service use data as a change in prevalence. Service data are useful to answer different questions.

**Could I add a few questions on experience of violence in a rapid assessment population-based survey on the impact of COVID-19?**
- No. Women's participation in any survey on violence, particularly when at home with their abusers, may result in more violence and/or in poor quality data.

**Could I conduct phone interviews or collect data using the internet/mobile devices to get violence prevalence data?**
- No. We will not know what it tells us. It is not actionable.
Could I use service data to determine prevalence? (e.g. police reports, calls to helplines, data from shelters)?

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Would it be useful to add proxy questions in a rapid assessment (e.g. violence experienced by others)?

**Do NOT do it**

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Before you start, ask yourself:

Is this really the best time to be collecting data?
Reflect on the motivation for the research:
Who will benefit and in what way?
Are the women at the center?
Does the research add value?
Will the findings be actionable?
How will you ensure that findings will be used?
Think of the COVID pandemic and how it affected what your (last) (husband/male partner) did to you, which of the following statements best describes his behavior to you (ONLY ONE ANSWER):

a) None of this behavior happened during the pandemic. It had already stopped before the pandemic.

b) He did this already before the pandemic and it was the same during the pandemic.

c) He did this already before the pandemic, but it got worse (more often, more severe) during the pandemic.

d) Before the pandemic he did not do any of this; but it started during the pandemic.
Selected references and Resources

- Regional Snapshot (2020) by UNFPA/kNOwVAWdata: [Map of Violence against Women prevalence in Asia-Pacific region | July 2020](#)
- Decision Tree by UNFPA/kNOwVAWdata, WHO, UNWomen: [Data Collection on Violence against Women and COVID-19 | 30 June 2020](#)
- Brief paper by UNWomen-WHO Global Joint Programme: [Violence against women and girls data collection during COVID-19 | April 2020](#)
- Resource by SVRI: [Pivoting to remote research on violence against women during COVID-19 | 24 July, 2020](#)
- Think piece by UNICEF Innocenti: [Remote data collection on violence against women during COVID-19: A conversation with experts on ethics, measurement & research priorities (Part 1) | May 2020](#)
- News article by Devex: COVID-19: [Has it become too dangerous to measure violence against women? | 6 May, 2020](#)
Thank you!!

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