



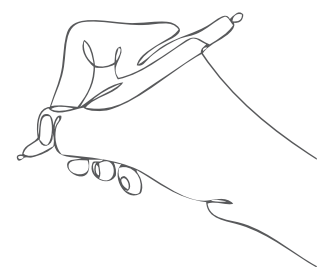
COUNTRY BRIEF



Violence
AGAINST WOMEN
IN THE TIME OF
COVID-19

LEBANON 2020

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01

LIST OF ACRONYMS**GBV**

Gender-Based Violence

HH

Household

IMAGES

International Men and Gender Equality Survey

ISF

Internal Security Forces

LGBTIQ+

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer/ Questioning

PTSD

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

RIWI

Real-time Interactive Worldwide Intelligence

SGBV

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SGBVTF

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Task Force

SPSS

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UNFPA

United Nations Population Fund

UN Women

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

VAW

Violence Against Women

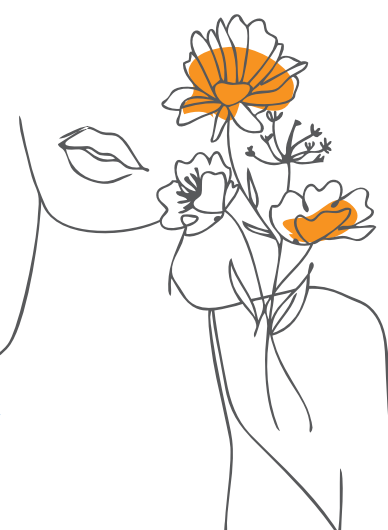
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2020, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women), with support from the United Nations Population fund (UNFPA) undertook primary data collection around issues of violence against women (VAW) during the COVID-19 pandemic in Lebanon. The results outline increased concerns for safety, both inside and outside the home, as a result of the pandemic, with women reporting increased risks to domestic violence and attack by outsiders. Concerns around increased risk of domestic violence were the most significant for women in households of 5 members or more, women that are divorced, separated or widowed, and for women living in camp settings. Secondary trauma, specifically, the witnessing of violence against women, was reported by both male and female respondents, though more clearly expressed by women. Online harassment is increasing throughout the pandemic, exposing more women than men to violence through social media and other internet forums. Camp settings — undefined as to the nationality of those living in them — seem to be the most challenging place to be a woman in Lebanon right now, with more than half reporting a lack of safety in their own home, and all, male and female, fearing attack by outsiders.

The majority of respondents agreed that women are at increased risk of violence as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and believed tackling this to be a priority in which they were willing to engage in preventative actions. However, there still remain pockets of society, including youth aged 18-24, that were more reticent to acknowledge the severity of violence against women as a result of the pandemic and who stated an unwillingness to contribute toward its prevention.

violence against women

STOP IT



1 BACKGROUND

The gendered impacts of pandemics, including the current COVID-19 outbreak, and their potential to compound existing gender inequalities and increase VAW have been well-documented¹. In Lebanon, these effects are exacerbated by an unprecedented economic and political crisis². Prolonged periods of isolation, economic insecurity, social unrest and restricted access to medical and social services have deepened power inequalities and created the opportunity for ongoing VAW and girls to continue³ and new forms to occur.

Incidents of harassment, discrimination and verbal, physical and economic abuses have been documented, with vulnerable groups, including refugees, youth, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer/ Questioning (LGBTIQ+), migrants, people with disabilities, elderly, and female headed households particularly at risk^{4 5}.

With survivor response services relying more heavily on mobile and online platforms including telemedicine, technology gender gaps have left some women and girls, refugees and migrants, cut off from reliable sources of information and services⁶. In seeking to address this, the COVID-19 pandemic has created new avenues to reach women, girls and those marginalized from inequitable norms and practices⁷ and increased awareness of the importance of equal engagement in the domestic sphere. The following research led by UN Women and supported by UNFPA seeks to further efforts by national and international stakeholders to continue to adapt programming and services to support gender equality and reduce risks and incidents of VAW during, and as a result of, the COVID-19 pandemic.



1 Gender Alert on Covid 19 Lebanon: Access to Justice and Gender-based Violence, June 3, 2020. Issue No. 3.

2 Abouzeid, M. et al. 2020. Lebanon's humanitarian crisis escalates after the Beirut blast. *The Lancet*. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31908-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31908-5)

3 Prevalence data finds that 1 out of 3 married women in Lebanon report ever experiencing gender-based violence. UN Women and Promundo, "Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) Lebanon, "2017, page 75, https://imagesmena.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/12/IMAGES_Leb_Report_Final_Web_Dec13.pdf.

4 Gender Alert on Covid 19 Lebanon: Women, Gender, and the Economy, May 15, 2020. Issue No. 2.

5 Gender Alert on Covid 19 Lebanon: Women, Gender Equality, and Health, July 3, 2020. Issue No. 4.

6 Rana Aoun, "Covid-19 Impact on Female Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East," GBV AoR Help Desk, http://www.sddirect.org.uk/media/1953/covid-19-and-impact-on-vulnerable-female-migrant-domesticworkers_english.pdf.

7 Opportunities emerging include moving assistance online, which may make it more accessible for some. For example, online judicial processing.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In 2020, UN Women's Regional Office for Arab States undertook research across the Arab States region on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality and VAW.

For the Lebanon country study, UN Women partnered with UNFPA, with support from the Sexual and Gender-based Violence Task Force⁸ (SGBVTF), to shape the direction of the study and review its findings. The study pioneered a novel technology, as described below, during the time of lockdown to capture changes in social norms associated with COVID-19.

MAIN OBJECTIVES



- Assess the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak on attitudes and practices on gender equality and VAW.
- Analyze trends in VAW during the COVID-19 lockdown period, in particular spousal violence, family violence and online violence.
- Identify opportunities to mitigate risks of VAW especially during the ongoing pandemic.

The research responds to the gap in knowledge emerging at the intersections of violence and pandemics and serves programmatic and advocacy purposes to better integrate VAW/sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and risk mitigation measures in future preparedness and response efforts.

⁸ The SGBV task force is an interagency (UN, government and I/NGO) taskforce that falls under the structure of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, a plan that coordinates and directs the response to the Syria crisis in Lebanon.

2 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted through a regional partnership between UN Women Regional Office for Arab States and Real-time Interactive Worldwide Intelligence (RIWI) Corp⁹.

The surveys were administered across 9 Arab states¹⁰, including Lebanon, between 4 and 27 May 2020, using Random Domain Intercept Technology™, a method devised by RIWI Corp. The methodology involved internet users over the age of 18 in the nine target countries encountering random, anonymous opt-in surveys when they reached lapsed or dormant websites (e.g., phonyurl.com) or accidentally included a typo in their web address (URL) bar. Where they would otherwise see a blank website or error message, respondents were asked if they would like to take a survey¹¹. The targeted sample size was set at 1,000 respondents in each of the nine countries, consisting of a minimum of 500 men and 500 women. A total of 16,462 respondents took part across the region, including 5,070 women (30 percent of all respondents).

The questionnaire was administered in Arabic, English and French, as per the respondents' preference. Furthermore, RIWI surveys employ randomization in every appropriate instance to eliminate question-order bias, which can have a significant effect on data quality. The sample size in Lebanon included a total of 1,436 respondents, including 513 women. While there isn't a conclusive answer as to why significantly more men responded than women, the answer may include gender disparities in internet/mobile access in Lebanon. For example, in 2018, only 1 in 3 Syrian refugee women had regular access to a mobile phone for their own personal use; a disparity that has likely escalated during lockdown¹². The survey targeted internet users over the age of 18 years, employing a confidence level of 97 percent and 5 percent margin of error. Data was analyzed using SPSS¹³. Weights were applied to adjust for age, sex and educational attainment. Accordingly, all the figures presented here are weighted.

⁹ Real-Time Interactive World-Wide Intelligence (RIWI). <https://riwi.com>.

¹⁰ In addition to Lebanon, the following Arab States were included in the UN Women regional study on VAW during the Covid-19 pandemic: Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and Bahrain.

¹¹ The methodology invented and patented by RIWI has been cited in many peer-reviewed journal articles and evaluated by numerous stringent academic institutions and ethics review boards. RIWI uses algorithms allowing access to hundreds of thousands of exposures to websites rotating in real time through multiple geo-location software. Proprietary code ensures that the RIWI sample of exposed domains is randomized, 'bot'-free, geo-representative, and quality controlled. Respondents are only able to answer a survey or question from a specific IP address once, and all IP addresses are scrubbed and automatically translated into unique identifiers. The interview is thus anonymous, with no digital records ever remaining. Respondents are not contacted in any way via links or email and no response is traceable to an individual. All work is conducted remotely from RIWI's offices in Toronto, Canada and all servers are located within Canada and the United States. Only the respondents themselves are located within the countries of data collection. RIWI meets all United States, Canadian and European Union privacy rules. A useful and thorough example of this validation was done in 2018 by researchers at Oxfam and the Australian National University, available at: <https://riwi.com/research/inequality-randomized-control-trials/>.

¹² UN Women, "Unpacking Gendered Realities in Displacement - Lebanon," 2018.

¹³ Data analysis was undertaken by El Zanaty and Associates Company.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations include the following:

- Only people who have access to the internet were able to participate in the study (leaving out one fourth of the population).
- The need to have a limited number of questions to ensure a high response rate.
- The challenges of asking direct questions on experiences of violence online.
- The potential for lack of privacy in responding to this web-based survey which could have biased answers for those living with spouses and other family during the COVID-19 lockdown.



PROTECT THEM

Moreover, in the absence of social protection mechanisms that could enable people to remain at home during a pandemic, many individuals working in the informal sector likely have few options but to continue to work or seek work during lockdown and therefore may not be adequately represented in the study.

The number of variables captured throughout the study were necessarily limited to provide a specific scope of research across gender, age, education, and geography, amongst others. As such there is a dearth of detailed information, for example in differentiating participants living in camps/informal settlements by their country of origin (for example, Palestinian or Syrian) or in capturing the needs of specific vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities and the elderly.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

In Lebanon, a total of 1,436 respondents completed the web-survey out of which 513 identified as female. During the analysis, weights have been applied considering gender, age, and education representation. Accordingly, all the figures presented in the report are weighted. Nearly 76 percent of respondents were Lebanese by comparison to 24 percent of respondents that identified as not Lebanese. Half of the respondents identified as married, 13 percent were ever married (separated, divorced or widowed), while 38 percent were single.

Thirty-six percent of the respondents reported living in big cities, while 29 percent reside in small towns, and 25 percent stated they live in camps¹⁴. Only 13 percent of the respondents were in the age group 18-24, 27 percent in the age cohort 35-44, and about one-fifth fall in other age groups. Almost half of the respondents from Lebanon report living in families of 2-4 members, while only 12 percent live alone. Demographic data presented in Table 1 below.



SUPPORT

all respondents

¹⁴ The survey was unable to differentiate the country of origin for those residing in camps.

TABLE 1: Demographics of respondents

Distribution by percentage of respondents to web-survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on gender roles and GBV in 2020, organised according to age, highest educational level attained, marital status, residence and number of household members.

| AGE | TOTAL | FEMALE | MALE |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| 18 - 24 | 12.7 | 13.5 | 11.9 |
| 25 - 34 | 21.1 | 20.3 | 22.0 |
| 35 - 44 | 27.2 | 27.8 | 26.6 |
| 45 - 54 | 19.2 | 17.7 | 20.9 |
| 55 + | 19.8 | 20.9 | 18.6 |
| HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL | | | |
| Didn't attend school | 8.0 | 6.5 | 9.6 |
| Primary (1-6) | 11.8 | 10.5 | 13.2 |
| Secondary (7-12) | 28.7 | 28.4 | 29.1 |
| Post secondary | 14.4 | 14.7 | 14.1 |
| Bachelor's degree | 21.1 | 23.1 | 18.9 |
| Master's degree or higher | 10.0 | 12.1 | 7.8 |
| Other | 6.1 | 5.0 | 7.3 |
| RESIDENCE | | | |
| Big city | 36.1 | 36.7 | 35.5 |
| Small town | 29.0 | 31.9 | 26.0 |
| Village or rural area | 25.0 | 22.1 | 28.1 |
| Camp | 9.8 | 9.3 | 10.4 |
| MARITAL STATUS | | | |
| Currently married | 49.6 | 48.1 | 51.2 |
| Separated / Divorced / Widowed | 12.7 | 14.8 | 10.4 |
| Single / Engaged | 37.7 | 37.2 | 38.4 |
| NATIONALITY | | | |
| Lebanese | 76.2 | 82.3 | 69.8 |
| Non-Lebanese | 23.8 | 17.7 | 30.2 |
| NUMBER OF HH MEMBERS | | | |
| Lives alone | 12.4 | 11.2 | 13.7 |
| 2-4 | 51.0 | 54.2 | 47.5 |
| 5+ | 36.7 | 34.7 | 38.8 |
| NUMBER (WEIGHTED) | | | |
| | 1489 | 768 | 721 |
| NUMBER (UN-WEIGHTED) | | | |
| | 1436 | 513 | 923 |

3 KEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

UNPAID CARE WORK:

The Changing Roles of Men and Women during the COVID-19 Lockdown

Both male and female respondents reported devoting more time to doing household chores and care taker activities, including care for children, elderly or a sick family member, as a result of the pandemic and resulting lockdowns.

72 percent of married women mentioned that their spouses were more involved in household activities during the pandemic.

In looking across data sets, men's participation in household chores (cooking, cleaning and serving meals) has increased throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in Lebanon. Thirty-two percent of men reported engaging more in household work under this survey, compared to 26 percent in 2017, through data collected under the IMAGES survey¹⁵.

However, on average, male respondents continued to dedicate a much lower percentage of time doing household chores (cooking, cleaning, and serving meals), as compared to female respondents. Fifty-three percent of married women reported greater amounts of household work during the COVID-19 lockdown, as compared to 30 percent of married men.

Male and female respondents reported similar increases in time spent supporting children with their studies (34 percent).

By comparison, women reported slightly higher increased rates of child care as compared to men (36 percent and 33 percent respectively). Women living in camps reported the greatest increases in time spent caring for children (46 percent).

Male respondents' education levels correlate with increased time spent caring for children. Forty-three percent of male respondents with Master's degree or higher reported increased time spent caring for children as compared to 16 percent who reported no education.

¹⁵ UN Women and Promundo, "Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) Lebanon," 2017.

GENDERED AND AGE DIMENSION OF VIOLENCE DURING THE TIME OF COVID-19

Lebanon experienced an uptick in the number of VAW cases reported during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown. Disproportionate increases in VAW were documented alongside new forms of cyber-bullying and online harassment, economic violence, and violence against LGBTIQ+, persons with disabilities, single female headed households, older persons, migrants and refugees. Throughout lockdown both men and women across Lebanon reported feeling unsafe in their home, while also reporting witnessing a disproportionate spike in harassment, violence or abuse against other women and girls in their communities¹⁶.

4 SAFETY OUTSIDE THE HOME

Among respondents who reported feeling unsafe during the time of survey, the majority reported a fear of being attacked outside of the home. Forty-six percent of female respondents as compared to 38 percent of male respondents reported being afraid of being attacked outside the home. By comparison, more than one third of both male and female respondents reported being unsafe within their own homes. Of those living in camps, 49 percent feared being attacked outside their home, reflecting increasing tensions and insecurities in an already under-resourced environment.

Forty-six percent of women feared being attacked by outsiders, compared to 38 percent of male respondents. Across all age groups, male and female, respondents age 55 and older reported the greatest fear of being attacked by a stranger at 47.6 percent. When disaggregated by gender, nearly half of all women aged 35-44 cited fear of being attacked by a stranger¹⁷.

Nearly half of those living in camps feared being attacked.

¹⁶ Inter-agency SGBV Taskforce, "Joint Assessment: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls in Lebanon," May 2020, <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/impact-of-covid19-on-sgbv-in-lebanon>.

¹⁷ 52 percent for ages 35-44; 39 percent for ages 18-24; 30 percent for ages 25-34; 29 percent for ages 55+

5 SAFETY WITHIN THE HOME



stay safe

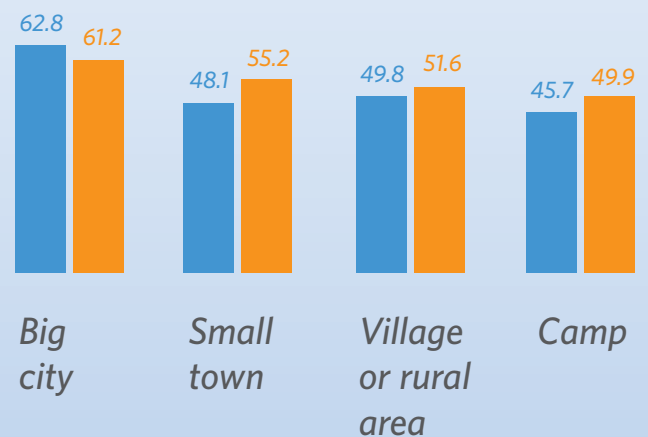
AT HOME

Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, security, access to health services, and volatile finances strain families in already confined and cramped living conditions, increasing risks of VAW¹⁸. More than half of all respondents, male and female, believe that women are currently facing an increased risk of violence from their husbands. More than one-third of all respondents in this study reported feeling unsafe in their home, consistent across all age groups. Half of the respondents living in camps cited not feeling safe within their home. With quarantine measures designed to slow the spread of COVID-19, camps, like other parts of the country, have experienced severe restrictions of movement with withdrawn social, economic and health services, exacerbating VAW risks.

Percentage of respondents who agree that women face an increased risk of violence by their husbands because of the lockdown, by sex and residence area

MALE

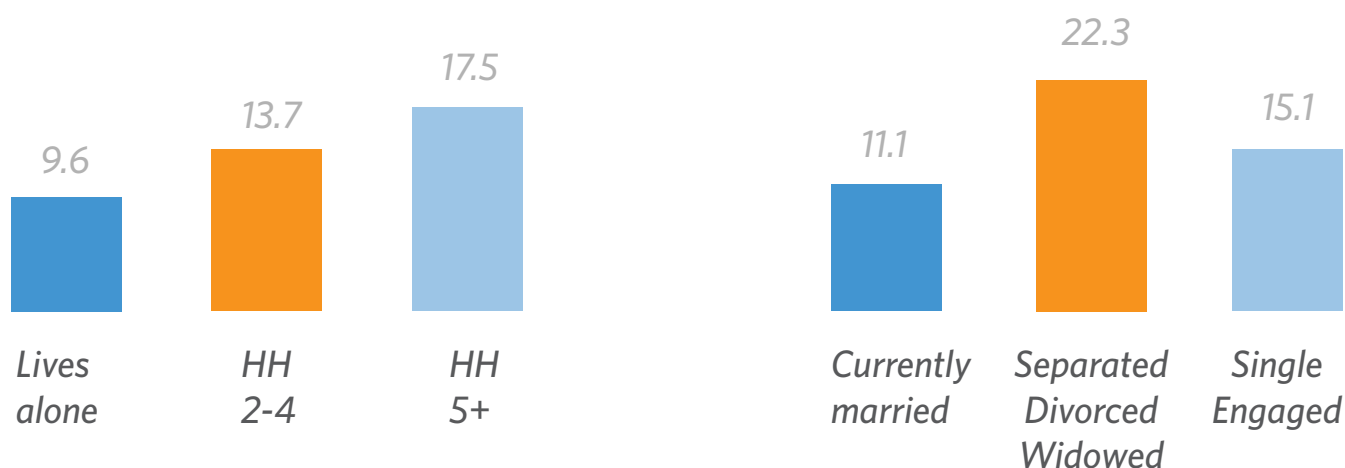
FEMALE



¹⁸ Impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls and service provision: UN Women rapid assessment and findings.
Doi: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/impact-of-covid-19-on->

The research also highlighted educational disparities demonstrating that those with a secondary educational level or lower were more likely than those with higher attained education to feel unsafe in their home. Global data suggests that low levels of education can increase safety risks, in particular, putting those with less education at greater risk of experiencing violence or even perpetrating violence¹⁹. In contrast, higher levels of education can reduce such risks and one's ability to leave violent situations. Those respondents with a primary education (both male and female) felt nearly twice as unsafe in their home as compared to those with a bachelor's or master's degree.

Economic strain and instability have been long recognized to impact rates and severity of domestic violence²⁰. In the context of Lebanon's financial crisis, the COVID-19 lockdown has created a multiplier effect on these variables putting increasing pressure on households struggling to meet basic needs, including families providing for a larger number of individuals. A higher percentage of women living in households with 5 or more family members reported feeling unsafe and afraid of the threat of domestic violence by comparison to those that lived in households of 2-4 or alone.



Percentage of women who reported feeling unsafe and fearing the threat of domestic violence, by size of the household (HH)

Percentage of women who reported feeling unsafe and fearing the threat of domestic violence, by marital status

¹⁹ Gerino, E. et al. Intimate Partner Violence in the Golden Age: Systematic Review of Risk and Protective Factors. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 04 September 2018 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01595>

²⁰ Maxwell C., Stone R. 2010. *The Nexus between Economics and Family Violence: The Expected Impact of Recent Economic Declines on the Rates and Patterns of Intimate, Child and Elder Abuse.*

Double the number of female respondents cited fear of being attacked by their spouse, as compared to male respondents.

The older segment of respondents (55 and above) also cited fear of violence by family members, and reported the highest rate of fear of violence by their spouse (7.9 percent).

THE UNEQUAL BURDEN OF WITNESSING VIOLENCE

Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to report witnessing or knowing a woman who has experienced violence since the lockdown for all three types of violence reported. In addition, more than a third of survey respondents, both male and female, reported witnessing violence or knowing a woman who has experienced any type of violence since the spread of COVID-19. Across the three forms of violence measured in this study, spousal violence was reported the most, which suggests a difference between perception and reality, or reticence to acknowledge violence inside the home — given that the majority of respondents stated they feared violence outside the home, rather in it. Following spousal violence was online violence. The high reporting of witnessing online violence converges with ISF reports of increased online sexual harassment and blackmailing crimes, which have nearly doubled during the COVID-19 lockdown²¹.

While both male and female respondents reported witnessing violence or knowing a woman who experienced violence, women reported witnessing violence at higher rates (42.7 percent) than men (29.7 percent). Additionally, nearly half of respondents that had ever been married reported high rates of witnessing violence. This group reported the highest rates of witnessing violence by a spouse, family member or through online harassment.

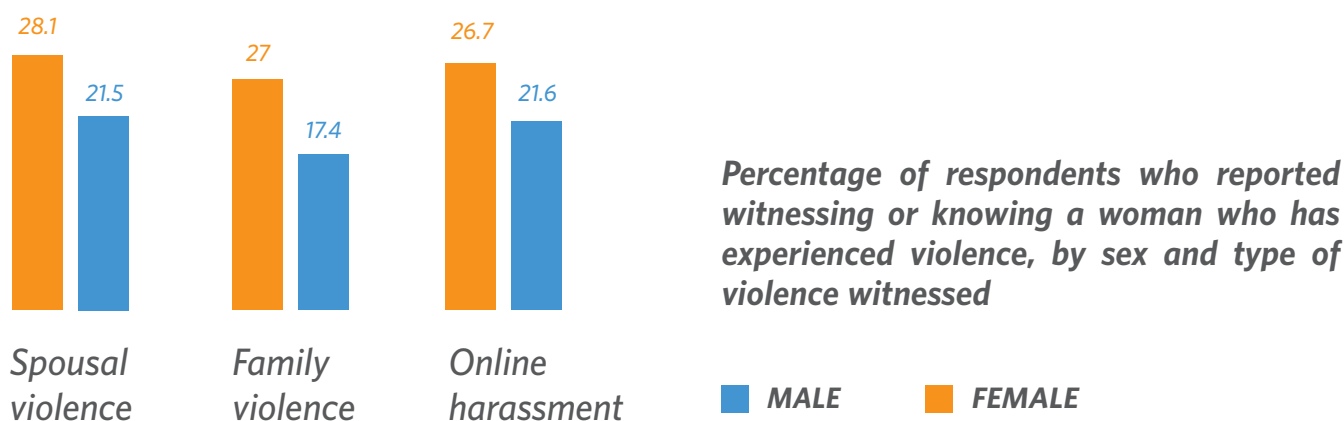


²¹ Lebanon Inter Security Forces, May 2020, <https://twitter.com/LebISF/status/1257215652995182592>.

Trauma is not only experienced directly through sexual, physical or psychological assault, but also through witnessing or learning of an event.

The devastating effects of VAW are well documented, for survivors and those who bear witness. The research findings suggest that witnessing or knowing a woman who has experienced violence is more likely to be reported by respondents who do not attend school, are between the ages of 18 and 34, and those living in camps. The indirect burden, and secondary trauma, experienced by these groups can have lasting behavioral and psychological effects, similar to those abused. Children and youth who witness violence, for example, are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and aggression than children with no exposure²². They are also more likely to become victims of child abuse, or even perpetrators^{23, 24, 25}.

More than half of respondents who didn't attend school reported witnessing or knowing a female survivor who had experienced violence by a spouse, a family member or online harassment. Across all respondents, those living in camps were most likely to report witnessing incidents of violence (39 percent), possibly due to being less likely to be enrolled in school or employment.



²² Wolfe, D.A., Crooks, C.V., Lee, V. et al. *The Effects of Children's Exposure to Domestic Violence: A Meta-Analysis and Critique*. *Clin Child Fam Psychol Rev* 6, 171-187 (2003). <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024910416164>

²³ Øverlien C. *Children exposed to domestic violence: conclusions from the literature and challenges ahead*. *J Soc Work*;10(1):80-97.

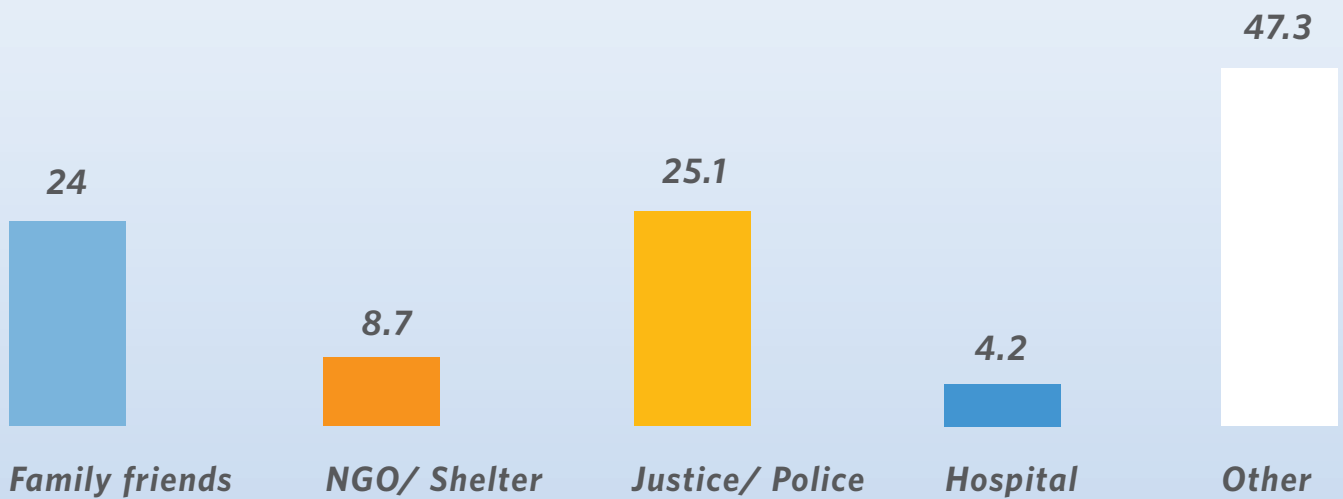
²⁴ Borowsky IW, Hogan M, Ireland M. *Adolescent sexual aggression: risk and protective factors*. *Pediatrics*. 1997 Dec;100(6):E7. doi: 10.1542/peds.100.6.e7. PMID: 9382908.

²⁵ World Health Organization, 'World Report on Violence and Health', ed. by Krug, Etienne G., et al., Geneva, 2002.

More women than men reported knowing a woman who has been subjected to violence, exposing them to more emotional distress.

HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOR

Increases in reports of violence have been happening at the same time that services are being disrupted. Twenty-four percent of respondents who know a woman that has experienced violence, by her husband, a family member or online, reported that this woman has actually sought help. Of the remaining 76 percent who report knowing a woman who has experienced violence, no help was sought. With support moving online due to COVID-19, the gender digital gap creates a serious barrier for services and accountability. Assessments prior to the lockdown found that less than one third of refugee women have access to a phone for their own personal use in Lebanon²⁶.



Percentage of respondents who reported witnessing or knowing a woman who has experienced violence, by sex and type of violence witnessed

Survivors are more likely to seek help from friends and family.

²⁶ IPSOS Group SA (2018), *Unpacking gendered realities in displacement: the status of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon*; UN Women.

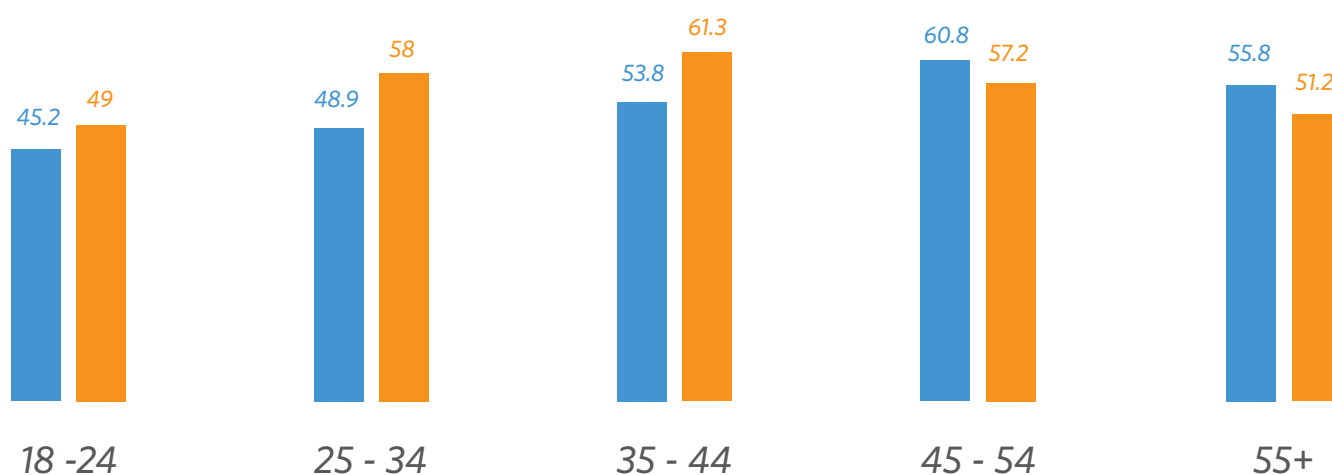
PERCEPTIONS, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Both men and women respondents were more willing to talk about the experience of another person experiencing violence as compared to themselves. While 82 percent of women were willing to report domestic violence experienced by another woman, only 77 percent were willing to report if they themselves experienced it.

Respondents with a post-secondary education or higher were the most likely to agree that women are currently facing an increased risk of violence. Similarly, those respondents residing in an urban centre were the most likely to agree with the statement.

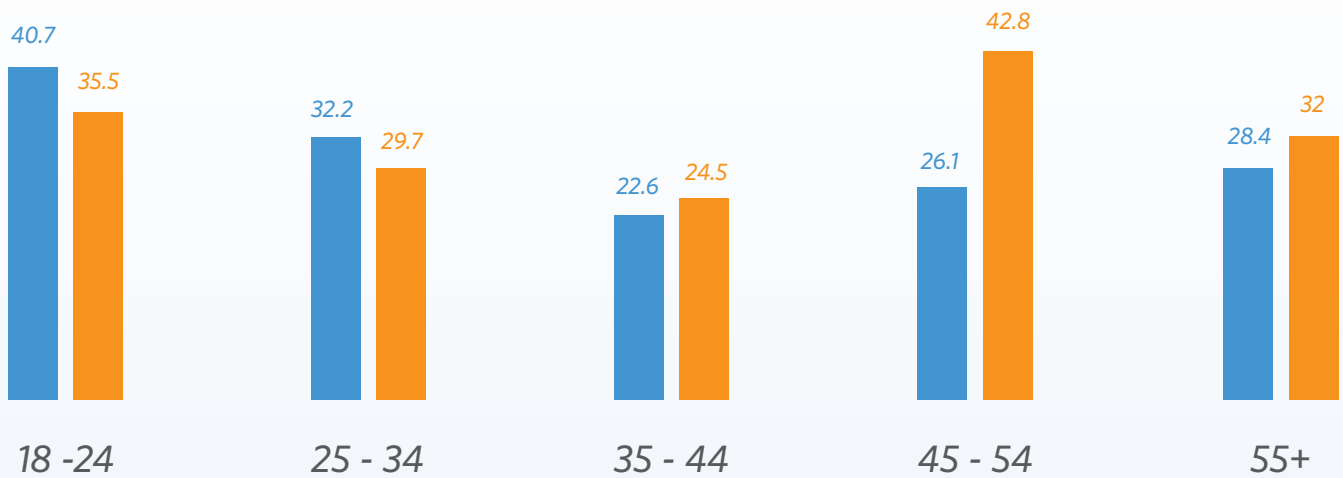
While the majority of respondents agreed that women face increased risk of violence by their husbands at this time, young adults, between the ages of 18-24, reported the lowest rate of agreement with the statement, at 47 percent. Forty one percent of young people also disagreed that addressing VAW should be a priority during COVID-19, as did 42 percent of those living in camps.

Respondents who agree that currently women are facing an increased risk of violence from their husbands were also more likely to agree that addressing domestic violence should be a priority during the COVID-19 outbreak.



Percentage of respondents who agree that women faced an increased risk of violence by their husbands during the lockdown, by sex and age group

■ MALE ■ FEMALE



Percentage of respondents who disagree that addressing violence against women should be a priority during COVID-19, by sex and age group

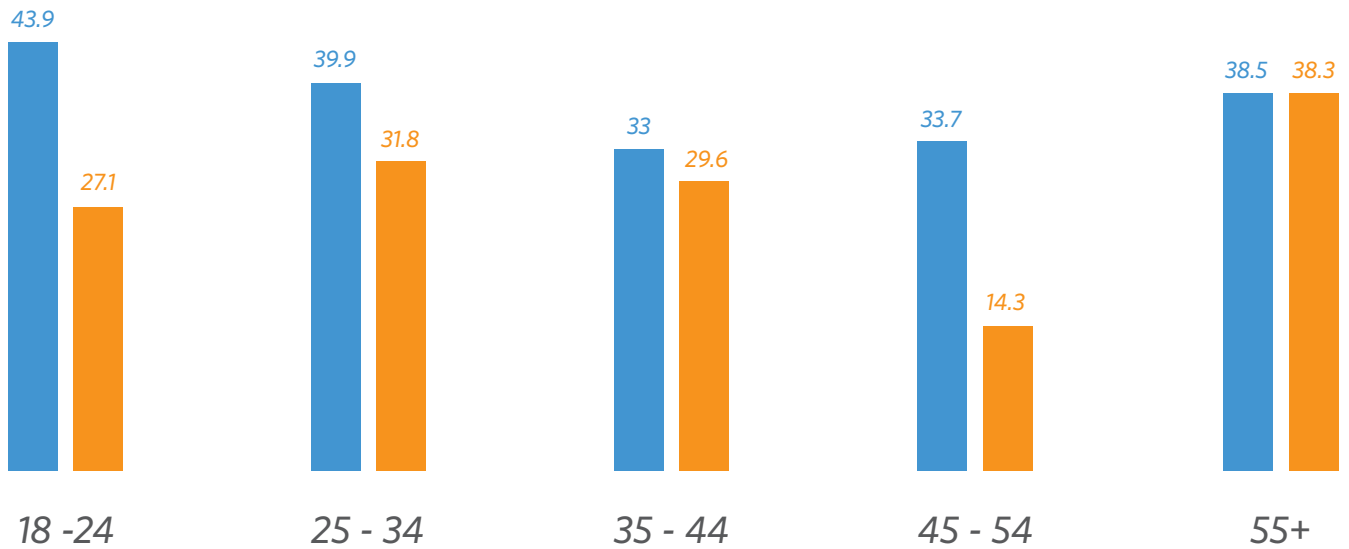
■ MALE ■ FEMALE

72 percent of all respondents believe addressing violence against women is a priority during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Respondents with higher levels of education were most likely to hold the same priority; this included approximately 80 percent of those respondents with post-secondary education, a bachelor's degree, and those with a master's degree who believe that addressing domestic violence should be a priority during the COVID-19 outbreak.

In general, most respondents (67 percent) believe that women should not have to tolerate domestic violence. However, more than a third of respondents continue to agree that, "A woman should tolerate domestic violence to keep her family together, especially in these difficult times," and in particular, more men than women. This disparity was true across all age groups, with men more frequently agreeing with the statement than women. This shows a concerning increase from 2017 whereby 26 percent of men responded stating that a woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together²⁷.

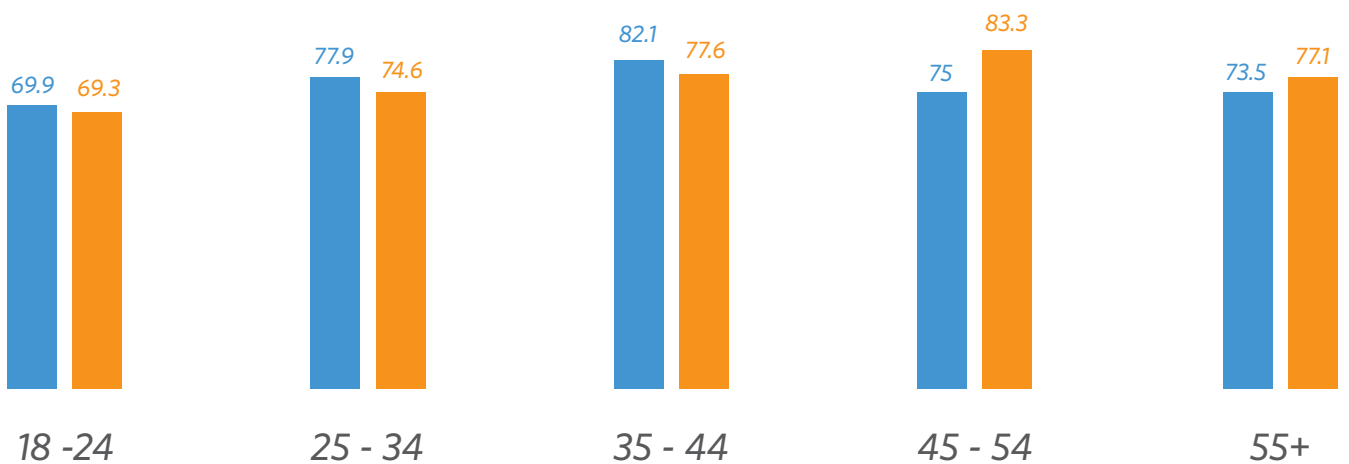
²⁷ UN Women and Promundo, "Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) Lebanon," 2017.



Percentage of respondents who agree that women should tolerate violence to keep the family together, by sex and age group

■ MALE ■ FEMALE

More than **75** percent of respondents are willing to report domestic violence and engage in actions to prevent it.

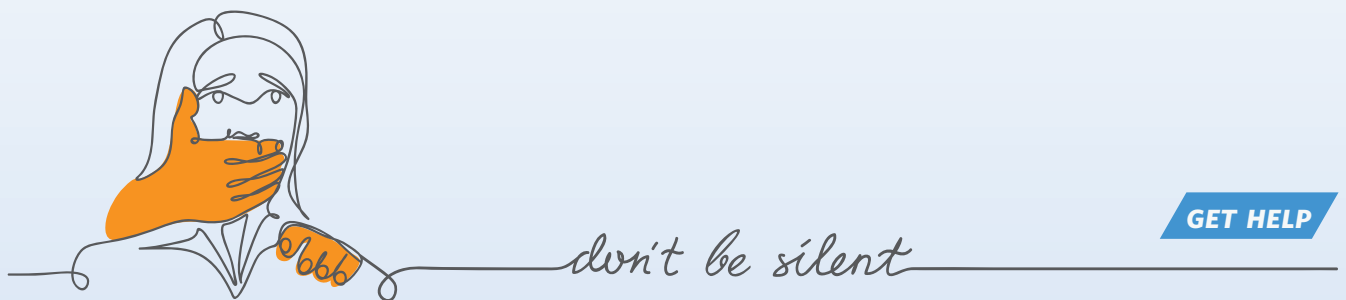


Percentage of respondents who expressed their willingness to engage in actions to prevent domestic violence against women in their community, by sex and age group

■ MALE ■ FEMALE

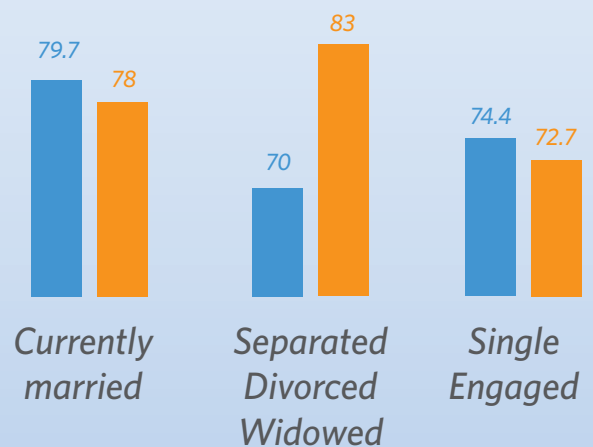
In general, respondents show positive attitudes on willingness to report domestic violence incidents and willingness to engage in actions that would prevent violence against women in their community.

Of those respondents that were ever married, 83 percent were willing to engage in actions to prevent domestic VAW in their community as compared to two thirds of single respondents. Only 70 percent of men, compared to 83 percent of women in this category, were willing to engage in preventative actions. Respondents living in camps and youth aged 18-24 were the least likely to be willing to report domestic violence incidents or engage in actions to combat it within their community. However, across these groups, youth 18-24 and those living in camps, the majority — nearly 70 percent of respondents — were willing to engage in community-based preventative actions. High levels of willingness to engage in community-based preventative actions were found across all areas throughout Lebanon.



Percentage of respondents who expressed willingness to engage in actions to prevent DV against women in their community by sex and marital status

■ MALE ■ FEMALE



Across all levels of education, a strong majority were willing to report domestic violence and engage in preventative community-based actions. More than 80 percent of respondents with primary and secondary school education were willing to report domestic violence and engage in preventative community-based actions, followed closely by two thirds of those with a post-secondary, bachelor's or master's level education.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The pandemic has had an immense impact on women and girls, particularly those in situations of great vulnerability as highlighted by this study. The following recommendations aim to mitigate risks of violence against women and to support a more integrated framework to reduce SGBV across Lebanon:

Awareness Raising and Advocacy

- Identify entry points for connecting with SGBV survivors and those at risk of SGBV, working in partnerships with community-based organizations and local partners, in order to provide comprehensive support.
- Work across sectors and agencies to integrate age-appropriate awareness raising messages on SGBV risks and referrals into remote psychosocial support resources, finance trainings, and social media where safe and feasible.
- Proactively make information on SGBV services/hotlines available across humanitarian operations, remote or in person, including those providing COVID-19 related testing/treatment.

Build Capacities and Empower

- Reinforce the participation of women and women's organizations in the COVID-19 response.
- Mainstream SGBV and VAW actions (e.g. referrals and awareness raising) across key sectors, for example, including livelihoods, shelter and basic needs. Work with different sectors, health, security, justice, shelters and livelihoods, to ensure response services are available, flexible to COVID-19 restrictions and survivor-centered.
- Work with SGBV service providers to adapt regular procedures to allow for remote service provision modalities, if/as safe, appropriate and feasible.
- Tackle social stigma and structural barriers to safe and confidential reporting to ensure women's access to justice and timely care and to promote gender equality at community level.
- Advocate that existing protection facilities, such as domestic violence shelters or institutional care centres for children, remain open.