

**IMPACT OF COVID-19
ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND
GIRLS IN THE ARAB STATES - THROUGH
THE LENS OF WOMEN CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS**



Acknowledgements

This brief showcases qualitative and quantitative data on the impact of COVID-19 on gender equality and violence against women in the Arab region from the perspective of women Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

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Main contributors and editors: **Manal Benkirane and Anouk Heili**

Graphic Design: **Yasmina Kassem**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its spread in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a global emergency of multiple dimensions. Beyond the health repercussions of the coronavirus, a “shadow pandemic” of violence against women and girls (VAWG) has emerged across the world, triggered by lockdown and curfew measures put in place by governments to limit the spread of the virus. Confined at home with their abusers, women and girls in the Arab States have experienced increased VAWG, while other drivers of violence such as the dire economic and livelihoods situation of households have further exacerbated their vulnerability.

This report, based on answers to a questionnaire circulated amongst CSOs networks in the region, presents emerging evidence of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality and VAWG in the Arab States. Developed through the perspective of women CSOs, the report documents major threats to women survivors of violence, associated with COVID-19 – namely, curtailed access to services including justice and police institutions and social services, rising domestic violence and intimate partner violence, as well as violence against women in the public space and online, and the repercussions of the pandemic on vulnerable groups such as refugee and migrant women, and women with disabilities.

The report also shows the consequences of the health crisis on women CSOs, and the challenges they are facing following the pandemic, both in their role as service providers and main vehicle for the promotion of gender equality in the region. Based on contributions from CSOs, this document provides examples of civil society initiatives that illustrate the resilience and capacity of adaptation of women organizations, such as the shift to providing virtual services to women survivors of violence, or the development of online advocacy for gender

equality.

The report proposes policy recommendations to prevent and respond to VAWG in the current circumstances as well as for longer-term recovery plans, on the basis of answers from 220 women CSOs to an online questionnaire. These recommendations, to be considered by all sectors of society, include:

Reinforcing services to respond to the increase in VAWG cases

- Consider VAWG services essential service during crises and allocate the necessary means to these services.
- Build clear and effective referral pathways for women survivors of VAWG, connecting CSOs with institutional service providers
- Develop more knowledge and data to understand women’s needs and barriers to access to services and the challenges women survivors face when looking to report cases of VAWG in the region
- Make information on services accessible and inclusive to reach all groups, including the most vulnerable ones
- Putting women’s organizations at the center of the response
- Earmark funding for women CSOs to enable them to continue their critical action in communities of the region
- Build women CSOs’ capacities on providing VAWG services remotely and using technology-based tools
- Map, assess and share best practices for reaching out to women who are locked up with their abusers.
- Invest in preparedness for women CSOs to be able to respond to crises by developing contingency plans and preparedness tools

Monitoring new forms of VAWG

- Build a deeper understanding of online violence and its impact on women and girls by collecting data on this phenomenon

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has dramatically changed the lives of women and girls in the Arab States. With confinement, curfew and lockdown measures put in place, many have been forced to stop working and have lost their incomes entirely. The burden of unpaid domestic and care work has also increased, for women particularly, due to their roles as caregivers and pre-existing gender norms. With the lockdown measures, other serious implications for women have also emerged, putting them at risk of violence in their homes, or of being trapped with their abusers. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, 37% of ever-partnered women in the eastern Mediterranean region said they had experienced some form of violence in their lifetime,¹ with this number likely to be an under-estimation of the reality in the region. Following the COVID-19 measures, reports of violence against women, and particularly domestic violence, have increased in several countries of the region as security, health and money worries and anxiety have created tensions and strains, further accentuated by the cramped and confined living conditions of lockdown. These conditions have also affected more adversely women in emergency situations

and conflict areas, as well as women refugees, displaced and other vulnerable groups.

During previous crises and conflicts in the Arab region, women have played a critical role as first responders and community leaders, to mitigate the effect on the most vulnerable populations. Similarly, in the context of the current pandemic, women in the region have been on the frontline of the response, including as healthcare workers, carers in the homes, and mobilisers.

To document the role of women's organizations in the response to the current crisis as well as the impact they face in the context of the pandemic, UN Women has reached out to civil society organizations across the Arab States. The report aims to understand the consequences of COVID-19 on their work, the challenges they are facing and the solutions they are creating. The document also provides qualitative and quantitative data on the impact of COVID-19 on violence against women, including within the most vulnerable groups, through the lens of women CSOs from the Arab region.

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

As part of its response to the COVID-19 crisis, UN Women ROAS conducted a rapid assessment of the impact of the pandemic on Women CSOs and their constituency in the region.

The methodology used was based on a survey of 49 questions in English, Arabic and French, including both multiple choice as well as open questions to gather quantitative and qualitative data. UN Women received inputs from 220 CSOs from 15 countries

across the Arab region: **Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.** CSOs working with women survivors of violence, with women peacebuilders, women in conflict affected community, and more broadly on gender equality responded to the questionnaire. This variety of respondents worked at the local, country, and regional level and was funded at 23% by Governments, at 55% by in-

¹ See : WHO, Global and Regional Estimate of Violence Against Women, https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625_eng.pdf;jsessionid=87D1C905AB6AC250DAD96078782ACA88?sequence=1

ternational organizations, and at 48% by private donations.

The data was collected across the Arab States between 06 and 30 May 2020. During this period, most countries in the region were implementing various measures to counter the spread of the virus, such as curfews and lockdowns and most women and men

across the region were unable to leave their homes or only allowed to go out for essentials, while CSOs had seen their work move online and were finding challenges in providing assistance. The results of the questionnaire were then analyzed, and the findings organized around the impact of COVID-19 both on women organizations, on women's lives and gender equality in the region.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls in the Region

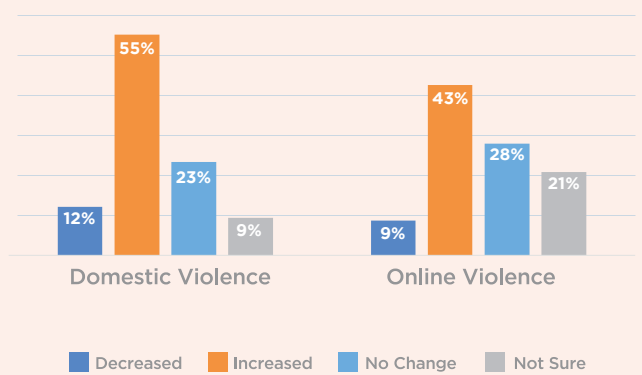
COVID-19 has increased violence against women both in the homes and online

Women CSOs surveyed overly mentioned that domestic violence had increased in the Arab States. Main causes identified for higher numbers in cases of violence were the increased stress due to financial hardship, prolonged confinement in closed spaces, as well as the discontinuation of services or support system for women. Women, unable to run away from the house they share with their abusers or to reach out to their families for support, have been forced to endure violence. The feeling of impunity, due to the halt of justice services in several countries, was also identified as a push factor for perpetrators. Women's increased responsibilities in the household were highlighted by CSOs, who underlined that women were now caring for children and the elderly even more than before the crisis, which made them more vulnerable and had put them under increased tension, pressure and psychological distress. CSOs noted an increase in online violence towards women and girls as social networks were invested by perpetrators as a new

space, due to social distancing and other measures preventing gathering and in person contacts. CSOs indicated the presence of dark humor on social media on gender roles.

“Intimate partner violence and violence by family members have increased with the confinement. Promiscuity and the lack of financial resources are at the core of this increase.” - CSO from Morocco

Do you observe or hear about increases of violence against women, in the context of COVID-19?



Vulnerable groups are more than ever at risk due to the pandemic

Similarly to other crises which compound inequalities and vulnerabilities, the COVID-19 pandemic and related public health measures have had a significant impact on minorities and vulnerable populations who have lost their support structures. Women refugees, migrants, women living with disabilities, but also ethnic minorities and sexual minorities were described by women CSOs as facing a “double impact” of the pandemic due to their pre-existing vulnerabilities.

Women Refugees

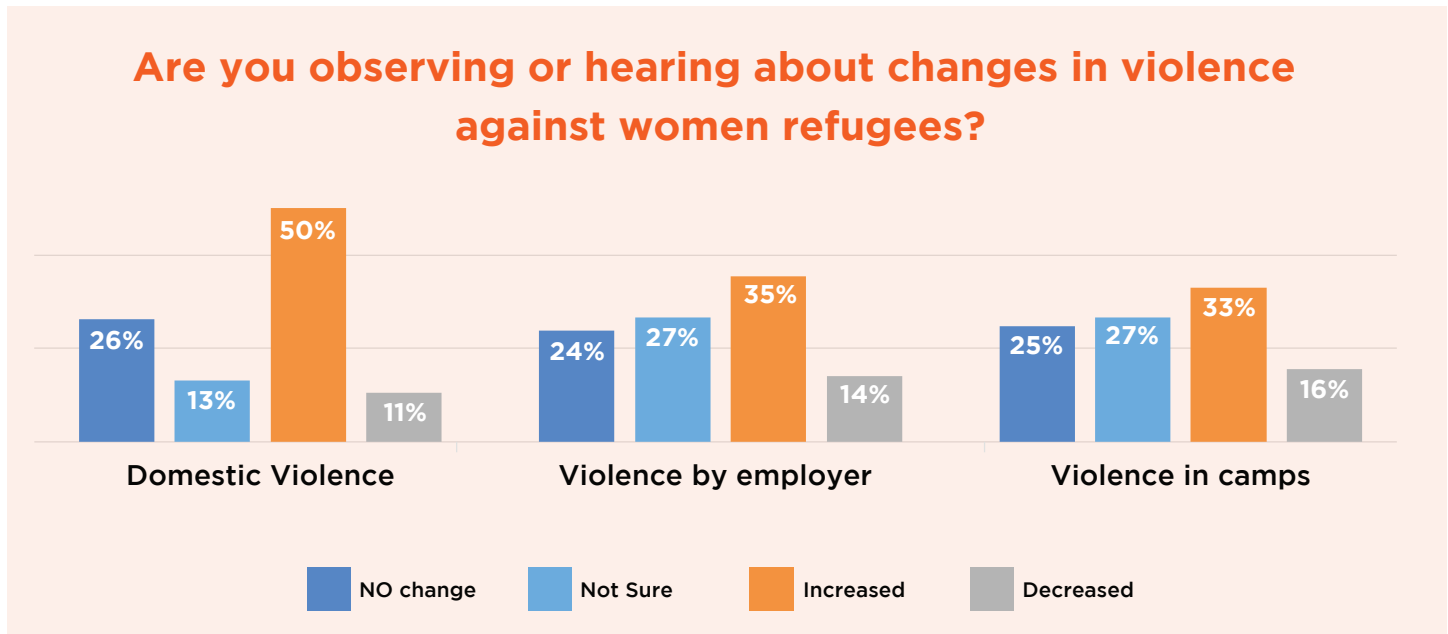
CSOs working with women refugees highlighted new risks for women refugees as well as compound-

ed vulnerabilities. CSOs reported that women refugees are at more risk of health issues, food insecurity as well as being blocked and unable to go back to their countries due to travel restrictions and border closures. This population is also facing stigma and discrimination and is more likely to lose their employment. Women refugees were seen as being more at risk of violence by partners, community members or in camp settings. Fear, lack of access to information as women refugees often do not own smartphones or do not have access to the internet, as well as stigma and discrimination were seen as principal risk factors for women refugee survivors. As registration for new arrivals has been suspended in different countries, many refugees and asylum seekers are also left without legal documentation and the impossibility to procure or renew residency permits.

Based on your observation, what impacts are women refugees experiencing from COVID-19?



In the words of a Palestinian CSO: *“The closure of borders and the inability of women refugees to travel or return to their relatives had a great impact on their psychological and economic situation. Loss of work by women refugees has increased violence (...) including by the husband and the husband’s family. In the absence of anyone to turn to, women refugees were unable to escape the violence” (CSO from Gaza)*



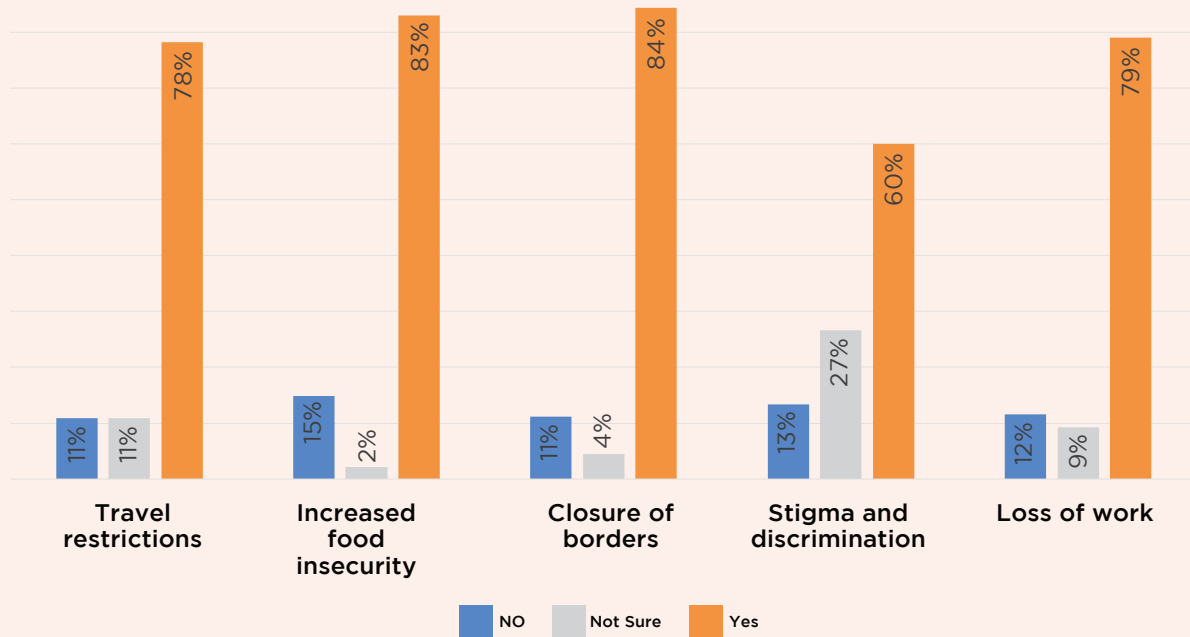
Women migrant workers

“We have observed an increase in xenophobic violence targeting women from refugee and migrant populations in Egypt”- CSO from Egypt

Women CSOs working with women migrant workers highlighted that their beneficiaries were at risk of food insecurity as well as loss of employment. A trend of women domestic migrant workers being

evicted and dismissed by their employers was seen across the region. Often without access to their identity documents or without any possibility to go back home, women migrant workers are left without basic needs assistance and protection. As some women are unregular migrant workers, CSOs in the region mention that they are also afraid to report any harm to the police.

Based on your observation, what impacts are women migrant workers experiencing from COVID-19?



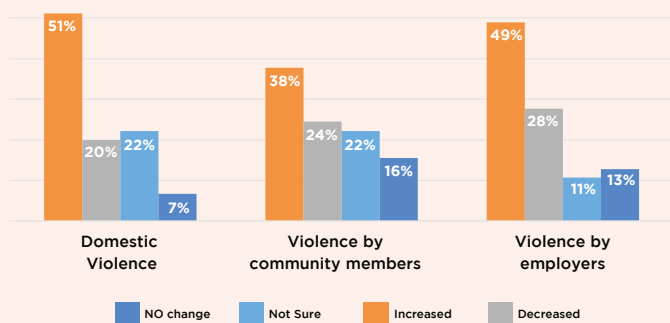
Women migrants were seen as being equally suffering from violence by family members and violence by employers. Women domestic migrant workers have indeed been confined with their employers and face increased tensions in the household, as well as extreme working hours and poor working conditions during the pandemic. Women migrant workers often also experience stigma and discrimination as they are associated with the risk of importing the disease.

Women living with disabilities

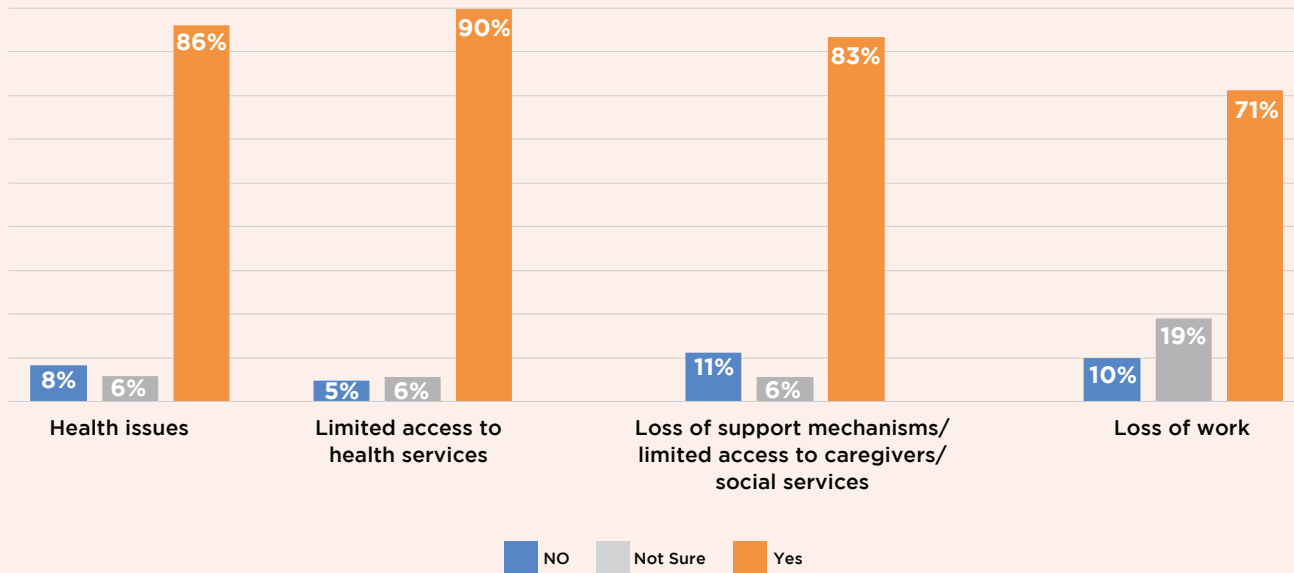
“Women with special needs have lost their jobs and educational opportunities (...) their exclusion from work and the loss of support from state institutions exposes them to hunger, poverty and lack of access to health facilities” (CSO from Yemen)

Women living with disabilities have also been more vulnerable in the face of the pandemic. Women CSOs noted that these women are often more likely to experience limited access to health services, lose their support mechanisms as well as their access to caregivers, and experience violence against women. Women living with disabilities face challenges when accessing transportation and this has impacted their overall access to services in the region. With the closure of special care centers for women with disabilities, these women are also being stigmatized as “dependents” and as representing an additional burden for the households in this period of crisis. Women living with disabilities were at

Are you observing or hearing about changes in violence against women migrants?



Based on your observation, what impacts are women with disabilities experiencing from COVID-19?



higher risk of violence by family members during this period, with 42% of respondents mentioning that they are observing or hearing about an increase in violence by family members. Violence by community members is also on the rise, with 27% of women CSOs mentioning an increase.

“The closure of associations and centers frequented by women with disabilities has forced them to stay at home, where these women are stigmatized because they are unable to provide resources for their families” (CSO from Palestine)

Access to services has been disrupted for women survivors of violence

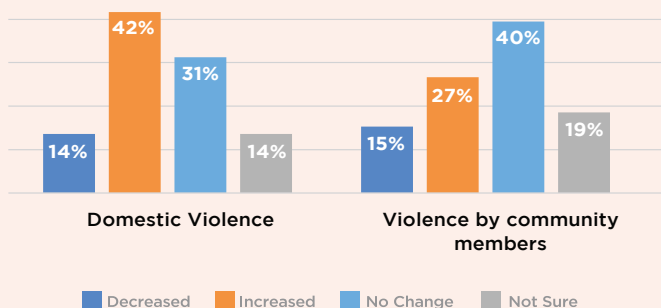
While the pandemic has increased the number of cases of violence against women in the region, this trend has been coupled with a disruption of essential services for survivors of violence due to the lockdown measures. These include the health, police, justice and social services who have been impacted.

Access to justice

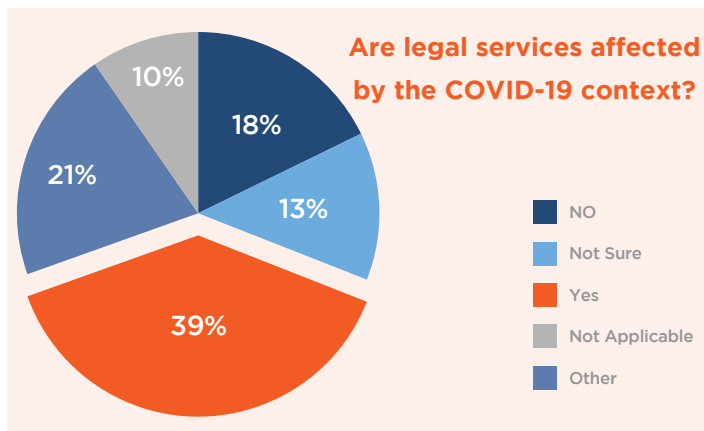
“Access to justice was not possible (during the pandemic) and many cases of women (...) were interrupted, while court rulings were not implemented” - CSO from Palestine

Legal services have been affected by the COVID-19 context according to 39% of women CSOs. Women CSOs report that courts were closed and a number of procedures for legal redress, custody and alimony cases, have been put on hold. Lawyers are also less available for emergency consultations due to the pandemic, and legal advice was provided

Are you observing or hearing about changes in violence against women with disabilities?



through hotlines. Situations requiring urgent measures were the most sensitive according to CSOs, as often women’s organizations were unable to refer cases due to discontinued justice services. CSOs also reported the impact of the economic hardship and loss of income on women seeking legal redress, who were sometimes not in a position to afford the court fees anymore. The disruption of legal services seems to have also forced the police and other actors to resort to informal justice mechanisms to ensure the protection of women survivors. 35% of women CSOs indicate that it has been easier during the period of the pandemic to access informal or traditional justice mechanisms such as community mediation, or alternative dispute resolution through the family or traditional leaders. These coping mechanisms have the potential to increase the vulnerability of women survivors and put at risk their safety and well-being.



Social services

Respondents mentioned that both shelters and hotlines for women survivors had been impacted by the pandemic (respectively at 15% and 29%). Implementing social distancing in shelters has proven difficult as confinement or quarantine spaces are not always available or require more space, while testing for the virus is expensive and often not affordable for shelters. Moreover, staff are not always trained on the means of protection from the virus nor in possession of sufficient personal protection equipments. The measures limiting movement

have also taken their toll on survivors who have often not been able to move and have as such decreased the accessibility of shelters.

Hotline services have been operating at full capacity during the pandemic, and human resources are very much needed for women CSOs to keep providing such services in the context of the higher number of cases of VAWG. Due to lack of financial resources coupled with the increase in calls, a CSO in Iraq reported not being able to provide free access to the hotlines. Moreover, personnel are not always trained on providing counselling services through the hotline, and it has proven difficult for survivors to discuss experiences of violence over the phone. The need to train personnel and establish trust with the survivors is thus critical for counselling to be provided. Finally, CSOs who are providing counselling also report taking on more responsibilities as they have been providing information on the pandemic, the spread of the disease and related public health measures, in addition to the counselling discussions.

“The number of calls has increased, and women need more time than usual to be heard, provided with psychosocial support and legal and social counselling” - CSO from Tunisia

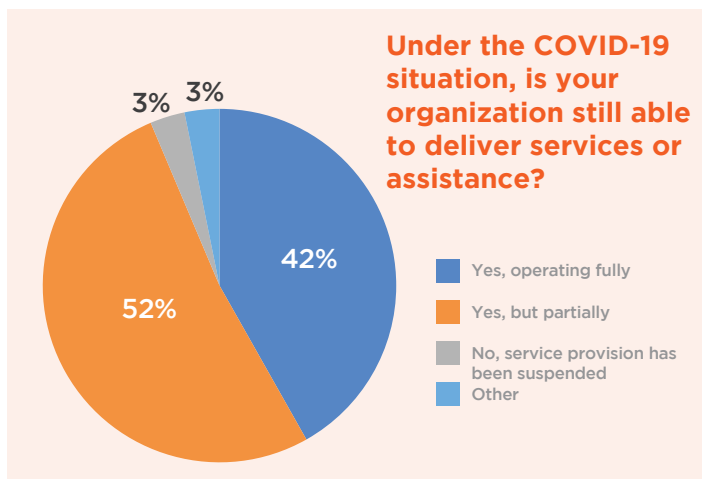
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE WORK OF CSOS

CSOs are proving ever resilient and have adapted their approach in the face of the pandemic

In response to the impact of the pandemic on the essential services for women survivors of violence, CSOs have adapted and shown resilience in exploring new approaches and initiatives. This has enabled these actors to maintain a certain level of activity: 42% of CSOs respondents mention that

they are still able to operate fully to deliver services, while 52% mention that they are operating partially. A high number of organizations mentioned having taken

measures to adjust to the current and future effects of the pandemic. 71% of women organizations have switched to providing remote support for women and 47% have re-allocated their budget to respond to the pandemic. For the CSOs, the pandemic has also meant taking on new roles by trying to raise the awareness of their beneficiaries on the crisis and related government measures. A CSO in Jordan mentions having held more than 20 webinars on



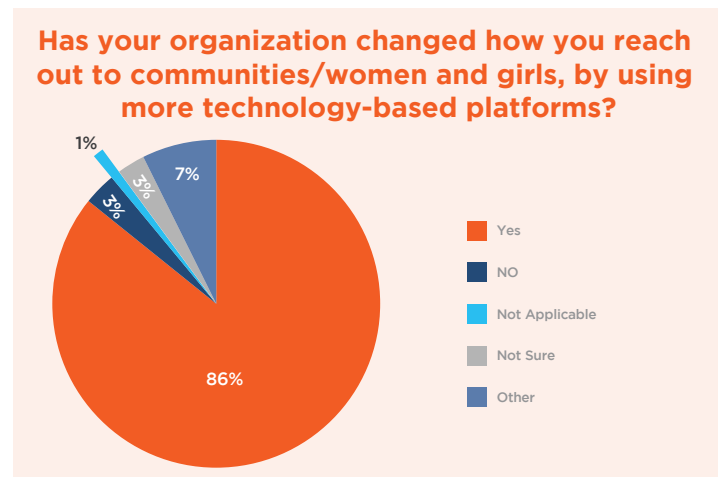
Zoom at the early onset of the pandemic to provide information on the disease. In Palestine, a CSO has undertaken a rapid assessment amongst 200 of its beneficiaries to determine emerging needs due to COVID-19.

“(We) responded to the situation by developing an emergency plan to address the needs of women victims of violence and in need of protection. We activated our free helplines and provided social and legal services online.” - CSO from Palestine

Shift to virtual services

86% of women organizations surveyed mention having changed how they reach out to communities and women and girls by using more technology-based platforms, with 68% of organizations

mentioning being available on Facebook and 50% on mobile applications. CSOs found several positive aspects of the shift to virtual services, such as the more equalitarian access to information, and mentioned that technology-based platforms have enabled them to ensure a that beneficiaries continued to feel safe and protected during the outbreak. Survivors have also avoided transportation, and spending time and money to reach the service providers that can contact them directly online. Such platforms have also reinforced coordination and information sharing between different service providers. For example, a women CSO in Lebanon reports having been able to coordinate with the justice services in country for one their beneficiaries to be heard by the General Prosecutor via Skype. The Prosecutor issued a protection order for the survi-



vor following the interview.

“(Online platforms) widen the regional impact (of our work) to places we could not reach physically before. They also provide a certain distance that gives a sense of safety and anonymity to women receiving our services” - CSO from Tunisia

Negative aspects of the online platforms on the other hand include the high cost of the internet for CSOs and beneficiaries, with the main disadvantage of such services being that the most marginalized populations can be left behind. This is linked to some of these populations not having access to

During the implementation of measures related to COVID-19 pandemic, beneficiaries can access the services of your organization via



a smartphone or other technology assets, having connectivity issues, not being able to afford an internet connection, not knowing how to use certain applications (with some of the beneficiaries also being illiterate), while some survivors are trapped with their abusers and unable to speak most of the time. With the greater use of social media platforms, have also come different challenges such as the necessity to ensure the safety of information online, in particular when dealing with cases of violence against women. Privacy and security issues when working via online platforms were amongst the greatest concerns of service providers.

“Digital security is (...) a concern, we try to communicate through (encoded applications), but not many women and girls are familiar with these” - CSO from Libya

“Not everyone in Libya has equal access to the internet, indigenous women and women with disabilities rarely (do). For other women and girls, access to the internet is given or determined mostly by male family members” -CSO from Libya

Finally, the need for human and in-person contact to reach some of the beneficiaries and build trust with survivors was one of the biggest barriers to online platforms. In the words of a Lebanese CSO:

“(Due to our) limited ability to move and conduct physical activities, (we) lost the connection with a lot of women and people most in need (...) because now we are using online instead of physical communication”.

Women CSOs’ advocacy work has moved online and was halted in some cases

Women CSOs surveyed massively indicated having moved their advocacy activities online. CSOs report having elaborated new tools to attract the attention of decision makers and the general population online and through other media. While some of the messaging was done on the radio and other mass media, social media have also been widely used by women organizations (WhatsApp, Facebook). In Egypt for instance, a CSO that used to organize quarterly awareness raising sessions in public spaces had to innovate in the face of the pandemic, and started to replicate these interactions online. In Libya, CSOs report having also developed online advocacy papers to demand gender responses and increased attention to VAW issues, which have been in some cases followed by response from the government.

“We started to create WhatsApp groups to continue awareness raising sessions and started to provide online training. We continue to carry online campaigns to encourage women to report any incidence of violence”- CSO from Lebanon

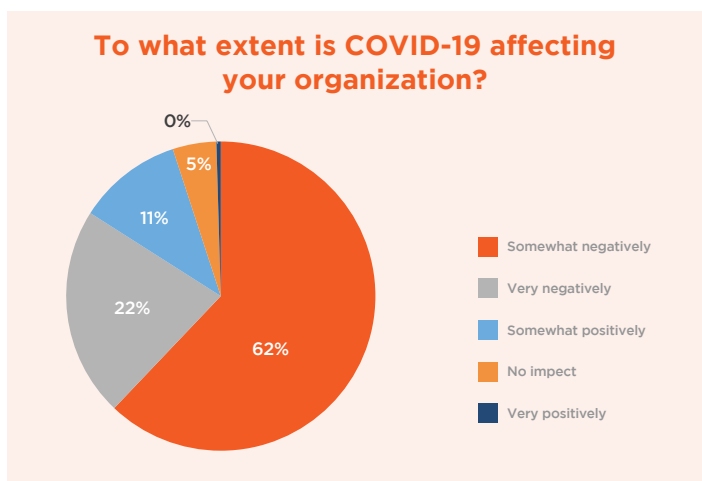
Challenges were raised by CSOs regarding the virtualization of advocacy, including the fact that not all populations have access to the internet and could thus be left behind and the difficulty to evaluate the impact and monitor the advocacy remotely. To mitigate the lack of access to the internet or connectivity in certain parts of the region, women CSOs have made use of mobile phones, and have been publishing information on social media that can be accessed at all time, rather than trying to reach women survivors directly.

Some organizations mention that their activities have been halted completely, especially at the community levels and in hard to reach areas. In some countries, awareness raising activities are also being controlled by government entities to ensure they comply with the overall COVID-19 messaging being used by the authorities, which has made it difficult to develop content in this area. CSOs also

report that violence against women and gender equality in general are not seen as priority issues by most governments and media during the crisis. In this situation, it is increasingly difficult for CSOs to attract the attention of both decision makers and the general public to the plight of women during the pandemic. Moreover, direct meetings with the governments have also been stopped in several countries due to the challenges faced by the government in dealing with the emergency.

COVID-19 is threatening the work of women organizations in the Arab States

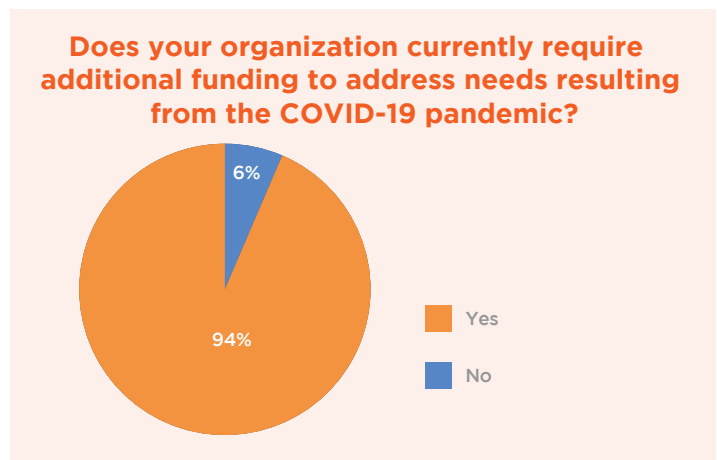
As shown in the previous sections, feedback from civil society organizations show that many of them have been impacted by the pandemic in their ability to implement activities and deliver services. According to responses from women’s organizations, the pandemic is representing a threat to the very existence of CSOs. 84% of the women CSOs participating in the survey mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted them either negatively or very negatively. CSOs mentioned the increased workload directly linked to higher numbers in cas-



es of VAW and major threats to gender equality in general, while staff are working from home and often unable to work as much due to the increased duty of care at home.

“The number of domestic violence cases has increased, above our organization’s ability to respond” says a respondent from a CSO in Iraq.

The halt of humanitarian services to beneficiaries was also mentioned, as well as the lack of smart-phones or connectivity amongst beneficiaries that prevents them from being in touch, and the lost connection with many survivors that cannot be reached in person anymore or sometimes not at all, in the case of women and minorities who are locked up with their abusers.

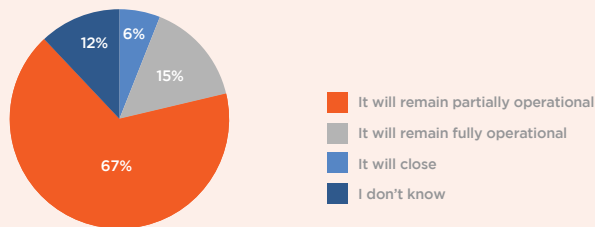


“(During the curfew measures), we could not reach all the beneficiaries (...) we could not conduct trainings, awareness raising seminars and discussion sessions, we (stopped) providing direct psychosocial support to a number of GBV survivors”

CSO from Iraq

CSOs also mentioned the threat that the pandemic is representing and the dire need for funds as some of their funding streams have been either put on hold or cut entirely. As such, the need for more funding for CSOs to maintain their leading role on the frontlines was highlighted by all respondents. 67% of respondents indicated that if their organization did not receive necessary funding in 2020 and 2021, they would remain only partially operational, while another 6% noted that they would have to close down should the funds not be provided. 94%

If your organization does not receive the required funding in 2020-2021:



of CSOs mentioned that additional funding would be required to address new needs resulting from the pandemic. CSOs have indeed had to invest in protective equipment for staff as well as beneficiaries: at the onset of the pandemic in the region, 58% of CSOs indicated that protective equipment such as mask, gloves, sanitizers is available to all staffs or almost all staffs. Moreover, CSOs have had to adapt their approach to service delivery to ensure the continuation of their activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“(We need to) consider GBV a health issue, and allocate means to protect and combat violence”- CSO from Morocco

Reports from women CSOs indicate a dramatic increase in cases of VAWG across the Arab region in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Domestic and online violence were highlighted as the most recurrent types of violence in this context where populations in the region have been experiencing cramped living conditions and tensions linked to the confinement. As most people have made a bigger use of technology and online spaces, this has also meant that women were more at risk of technology-based violence and harassment.

Inequalities have been exacerbated. Vulnerable women have been more at risk due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings from the survey show that women refugees, migrants and women with disabilities have experienced higher rates of violence, increased food insecurity, and the loss of their livelihoods, while also often losing previous support mechanisms.

If cases of violence have increased, CSOs report that essential services for women survivors of VAWG

have also been disrupted. While hotlines and shelters have been overburdened, with some CSOs mentioning that they could not anymore respond to all the reports received; other services could not operate during the lockdown period. This was the case of the justice services in some countries, where the closure of courts has led to delaying a number of cases. This has also had an impact on police services, and prevented referral in parts of the region. In other areas, it pushed the police and other actors to resort to informal justice mechanisms, putting survivors at further risks of violence.

To respond to these increasing needs, CSOs have operated a shift towards online platforms, which has allowed them to continue their outreach to women survivors and their work to promote gender equality. This has however brought on additional challenges, linked to the ability to reach all survivors online, and the need to preserve their anonymity.

This increase in VAWG cases and potential further marginalization of certain groups have shown the critical need for civil society organizations to continue ensuring the provision of services in the region. In their answers however, a number of CSOs

highlight the threat that the pandemic has been for them, and the severe impact on their funding sources, and thus, their very existence. Strong measures will be needed to support civil society, in a context where the gains on gender equality in the region could see setbacks linked to the pandemic.

Recommendations for all stakeholders working to prevent and respond to VAWG:

Reinforcing services to respond to the increase in VAWG cases

- Although VAWG is typically under-reported in the region and worldwide, there is ample evidence that VAWG tends to increase when crises, disasters and pandemics occur. According to reports from CSOs, VAWG has increased dramatically during COVID-19. In this context, and in any crisis setting, VAWG services should be considered an essential service and the necessary means should be allocated for services to be sustained as a key part of any response.
- In emergency contexts, clear and effective referral pathways for women survivors of VAWG need to be established, connecting the CSOs with the institutional services and thus enhancing the rapidity and effectiveness of the response
- More knowledge and data are needed to understand women's access to services and the challenges women survivors face when looking to report cases of VAWG. Actors should collect, analyse, and disseminate data to strengthen targeted approaches, while ensuring that the data is disaggregated by gender, age, and vulnerability, and look out for the specific needs of vulnerable women when accessing services. This is essential to inform effective policies, laws and services.
- Limited access to information can also leave vulnerable groups unaware of the availability of VAWG services. Information should be made accessible and communication inclusive, notably through sign language interpretation, braille, the use of local dialects, the use of plain language text and easy to read formats, as well as radio and TV.

Putting women organizations at the center of the response

- The pandemic has generated funding cuts for women CSOs in the region. This is likely to further entrench the impact of the health crisis on women and girls and especially the most vulnerable amongst them. Funding should be earmarked and allocated to women CSOs to enable them to continue their critical action in communities and countries of the region.
- To ensure women CSOs can keep responding to VAWG, capacity building is also needed, including on providing VAWG services remotely, using technology-based tools while preserving the anonymity of the survivor, dealing with sensitive information and protecting data.
- Sharing best practices and techniques that worked for reaching out to women who are locked up with their abusers is critical for CSOs providing this type of service. These methods first need to be mapped, assessed and evaluated to determine how safe and effective they have been in the context of the pandemic.
- More resources need to be invested in preparedness for women CSOs to be able to respond to crises. Direct support should be provided in the future to enable women CSOs to develop contingency plans and preparedness tools ahead of crises. Funding to women CSOs should also be more flexible, so that financial resources can be redirected to emergencies in crisis context. As CSOs often do not have regular funding for personnel and core activities, flexibility is key to redirect funds to respond to urgent needs.

Monitoring new forms of VAWG

- In the survey, a number of women CSOs from various countries in the region have indicated that new forms of violence had been exacerbated by the pandemic. This includes online and ICT-based violence. A deeper understanding of online violence and its impact on women and girls is critical if we are to respond to this phenomenon. The collection of data and information on this type of violence should be a priority for actors aiming to prevent and respond to VAWG.