

LESSONS LEARNED FROM CASE STUDIES

The following recommendations were shared by those involved in the costing studies presented:

1. **Devote enough time to the preparatory phase**

- Take the political context into account, particularly in terms of the will to address domestic violence. It is important to show how much domestic violence impacts the time use of hospitals, physicians and police and that its effects are wider than just the family unit. This also produces a number of potential allies – for example, among hospital staff, police, etc. through training. In the Arab Region, securing support from the business community could be challenging because of the low labour force participation of women. Also, in some cases, the police consider domestic violence a private issue and thus not their concern or as costing them time;
- Engage the government from the beginning to ensure its support for the costing exercise, and to ensure ownership of the findings and a commitment to implement the resulting recommendations. Provide robust information to stakeholders and highlight the importance of accurate prevalence and costing data. In addition, partner with/include all relevant parties – such as civil society, academia (particularly feminist academics) and government;
- Identify the resources and time required for the exercise. In addition, form a multidisciplinary and skilled team, including good interviewers to ensure women are comfortable answering all the questions and where participants can seek help and understand their right to live free of violence. It is important to have the country's National Statistics Institute as a main partner conducting the survey to obtain credible data that is recognized by the government and society, with strong involvement of the Women's National Machinery;
- Ensure support within wider society by raising awareness of the importance of the issue.

2. **Carefully consider the scope of the study**

- Be thorough with the definitions employed in terms of what is being included and what is not; coercive control is really challenging to cost. Although it was a national priority to capture data on violence perpetrated in public spaces in Egypt, it is better to conduct separate surveys - domestic violence and violence in public spaces are different in nature and implications and the former may influence thinking around the latter;
- To address any budget limitations, reduce the scope of the study, exploring the specific costs in greater detail by having more indicators – first, a smaller sample can be used to produce case studies of qualitative and quantitative data on specific cost areas which can then be expanded into a larger survey;
- Take into consideration the pros and cons of focusing on different age cohorts and make an informed decision on the age range selected. For example, including older women may skew the data because usually violence takes different forms during early marriage and later in life. Similarly, the sample for calculating violence in public spaces may skew the results when the number of women working is very small, as was the case in Egypt. On the other hand, including older women (up to 70 years) and women with disabilities sheds light on a wider range of issues of violence. Where possible, it is also recommended to employ percentages regarding age and labour force participation, rather than choosing a random sample, as older women are usually not working which affects the prevalence of violence experienced in the workplace and public spaces;

- While it may be a little more difficult for women completing the questionnaire to recall all incidents, it is recommended to estimate costs of domestic violence per incident, per woman, to produce robust findings. And, where possible, obtain data from survivors and services to enable the assessment of wider costs;
- It is important to (a) map available services for VAW prior to costing service provision and to confirm that these services are recording the relevant data; (b) map barriers to help-seeking (in other words, seek the reasons why women stay in abusive relationships); and (c) focus on women's stories.

3. **Employ innovative and participatory approaches**

- In the absence of official government figures, employ local polling and local surveys (qualitative approach). This is how the United Kingdom began producing cost estimates when there was a gap in the national statistics. For example, a study conducted in the smaller borough of Hackney by Dr. Elizabeth Stanko was used to make a case for investing in services at the London borough level;
- Where possible, involve survivors in the process, particularly in relation to intangible costs that are difficult to estimate, and by highlighting costs that are not measurable. Also, complement the cost estimates with a narrative about the impact of domestic violence on society;
- Include case studies of a particular area or service – as a way to narrow the focus and put a human face on the problem – as people can relate better to what is happening to an individual than to a group of people, according to Hilary Fisher (for example, the general practitioner who sees X number of women every month because of domestic violence, which reduces time spent on other issues).

4. **Carefully design the questionnaire**

- Ensure that the methodology is culturally appropriate and carefully consider the methodological approaches and costs to be included. Be comprehensive in covering: (1) the numerous types of violence, such as financial (for example, when husband takes woman's salary), physical and psychological; (2) solid demographic data, such as men's employment, age, number of children); (3) questions to help understand why women sought support from family members, NGOs, police, etc;
- Consider looking beyond just the previous month when estimating the cost of alternative transport for women experiencing harassment – cost will increase significantly and without this expanded timeframe women who did not experience any incident of violence recently will be excluded. They may have chosen to use alternative transport because of experiencing harassment or because of hearing about the harassment faced by others;
- As productivity data is difficult to calculate, it can be measured by the proxies of time and lost wages: after incident, how many hours of lost focus and change in regular earnings versus earnings after the incident for self-employed;
- Administer the survey in the morning and evening to ensure working women are included.

5. **Produce and disseminate robust estimates**

- While all costings are underestimates, they are still huge, especially in terms of health impacts; we are still scratching at the surface. However, if a robust cost figure cannot be produced, it is

best not to disseminate it as even when the cost is presented as an underestimate, this fact is often not reported;

- Break down the costs in terms of how they are applied in different sectors. For example, in the United Kingdom, women reported valuing the specialist NGO services most, yet these services received the least funding.

6. **Develop an advocacy plan and use the findings at the outset**

- Visualize the key findings of the study to ensure that the general public understands the message. Include a component in the advocacy plan targeting key government leaders and decision makers to address the gaps identified in the study and adopt the recommendations;
- Engage the media to maximize dissemination of the findings and to raise awareness among the public and policymakers on the magnitude of the problem. Set up a press conference, developing a briefing kit for media to ensure they have comprehensive and accurate information and to avoid incorrect interpretations or misunderstandings of the findings;
- All advocacy events should be co-chaired by the relevant lead government agency to: (1) enhance ownership; (2) create a stronger voice and influence; and (3) push commitment for following up actions. Nonetheless, the government's key national partner for the project should act as the coordinating agency to follow up with the government for further actions.

