



Site selection



A costing study can be undertaken at various levels - household, community, National - with specific advantages, drawbacks and uses of each. A study at the local authority level (for example, a city or municipality), will focus on estimating costs at the household and community level. A more comprehensive option, such as an estimate of the nationwide costs of domestic violence, will require a nationally representative survey of households and service providers.

While several factors determine which kind of study is most appropriate, the level of information available is a key factor. For example, in the United Kingdom, the first costing studies were undertaken at city level since researchers were able to work with service providers in the city to collect the required information through administrative records and interviews with service users with expert interviews conducted to fill any gaps. The resources available for undertaking a costing study is also a significant determining factor, as smaller, regionally focused studies will be less expensive.

Another factor that could influence at which level a study is undertaken is the subregional variation in the extent of violence or in situations where the type and extent of services vary considerably. If particular subregions in the country are known to have significantly higher levels of domestic violence, it is possible that survivors bear higher associated costs. Additionally, where domestic violence is not perceived as a problem by policymakers, using an aggregation of estimates across various regions may be more effective than national costs. However, aggregate national costs run the risk of lacking empirical rigour, which can be used to undermine the validity of the estimates. Estimating costs at specific regional levels could therefore be an option.

