

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?

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?

Use existing data!

- Explore data from existing surveys.
- Analyse service case records (before and during COVID19).

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).

Can existing data answer the common questions being explored?

Yes → Use existing data!

No → Primary research options that are safe and can provide relevant information:

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

Yes → **Do NOT do it** (with red prohibition sign)

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

Can you ensure confidentiality, privacy and support?

No → **Do NOT do it** (with red prohibition sign)

Yes → Safe to collect data through violence surveys or interviews. **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.

Could I use service data to determine prevalence? (e.g. police reports, calls to helplines, data from shelters)?

Do NOT do it (with red prohibition sign)

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?

Do NOT do it (with red prohibition sign)

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?

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

Do NOT do it (with red prohibition sign)

No. We will not know what it tells us. It is not actionable.

Always prioritize women's safety over data collection!