

# Child Protection Learning Brief #1

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## RESPONDING TO THE SHADOW PANDEMIC: Taking stock of gender-based violence risks and responses during COVID-19

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**Gender-based violence<sup>1</sup> is a problem of human rights, public health and development.** It is also a problem that has had devastating effects for women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>2</sup> This real-time emergent learning brief has been prepared for UNICEF country offices and practitioners as they respond to gender-based violence during the pandemic. Drawing on evidence from current country experiences, the brief identifies emerging risks related to gender-based violence; highlights programme responses and adaptations; and outlines key points for programming, advocacy and systems change.<sup>3</sup>



“Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a problem of human rights, public health and development. It is also a problem that has had devastating effects for women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

COVID-19 has exacerbated the 'shadow pandemic' of gender-based violence. During lockdowns, women and girls who experience violence at home have been trapped with their abusers. This has led to a spike in femicide in some countries.<sup>4</sup> Lockdowns also mean that some women and girls cannot access accurate information and services which were not always easily accessible even before the pandemic. In some places, organizations and localities providing services related to gender-based violence have reassigned facilities to address COVID-19 instead. Some organizations and services struggle to provide effective protective personal equipment (PPE) to their frontline workers, many of whom are women. In some settings, programmes to combat gender-based violence are simply unable or not allowed to operate. No matter what the specific circumstance, the bottom line is that services to respond to gender-based violence are largely unavailable or inaccessible to women and girls at the very moment when they need them the most.

For these reasons, programming around gender-based violence has been an important component of UNICEF's advocacy and work during the COVID-19 crisis.<sup>5</sup> Since the onset of the pandemic, UNICEF has trained more than 83,000 UNICEF and partner staff in gender-based violence risk mitigation and safe referral strategies for survivors.<sup>6</sup> Colleagues working in all sectors must continually adapt to meet the needs of survivors and mitigate gender-based violence risks because the pandemic (and government responses to it) are still evolving. The rest of this brief outlines the emerging gender-based violence risks and programme responses during COVID-19. The conclusion makes the case for adequate financing; inclusion of strategies to address gender-based violence into broader planning and cross-sectoral responses; and a commitment to longer-term systems strengthening.



## 2. EMERGING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RISKS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

The global nature of the pandemic has left no country unaffected. Most governments have responded with strategies aimed at controlling the spread of the virus. These have ranged from full-scale lockdowns to less restrictive social distancing measures. Evidence and data show that COVID-19 mitigation strategies have contributed to a surge in gender-based violence worldwide.<sup>7</sup> In other words, the measures meant to keep populations safe often have the opposite effect for women and girls.

### The global surge of gender-based violence – and the risk of underestimating the problem

Recent reports on the use of helplines offer glimpses into the dynamics and severity of gender-based violence in various countries:



In China, a police station in Jianli County reported that it received **162 reports of domestic violence** in February 2020, compared to 47 reports in the same month the previous year. Authorities **attribute 90 per cent** of newly reported cases to factors related to **COVID-19**.<sup>8</sup>



In Tunisia, a national gender-based violence hotline reported a **fivefold increase in calls** during lockdown.<sup>10</sup>



In Colombia, reports of violence against women **increased by 250 per cent** during the first two weeks of social isolation measures.<sup>9</sup>



In Cyprus and Singapore, helplines have reported an **increase in calls of 30 per cent and 33 per cent, respectively**.<sup>12</sup>



In Argentina, emergency calls for domestic violence cases **increased by 25 per cent** during lockdown.<sup>11</sup>



During the first six weeks of lockdown, Italy registered a **73 per cent increase in calls** to a national helpline compared to the same time period in 2019.<sup>13</sup>





Helplines are an important component of services to address gender-based violence during COVID-19. However, reporting figures in general must be read with caution. Lockdowns themselves can interfere with established reporting mechanisms, because women and girls may feel unsafe or be unable to make calls from their home, resulting in lower reporting levels.<sup>14</sup> For instance, at the start of the pandemic and as service delivery modalities shifted, Iraq went nearly two months without a reported case of gender-based violence.<sup>15</sup> There was also a sharp decrease in the number of women and girls accessing gender-based violence services in Bangladesh (50 per cent decrease) and Tanzania (30 per cent decrease).<sup>16</sup>

In short, decreases in reporting or use of hotlines, particularly during a pandemic, are more likely an indication of the growing intensity of gender-based violence rather than a reduction in its perpetration.



### Gender-based violence risks to survivors during lockdowns

One reason that gender-based violence goes unreported is that it is often impossible for girls and women to report safely.<sup>17</sup> Stay-at-home mandates increase risks for some gender-based violence survivors in their own homes. Restrictions on movement add further strain to households and can exacerbate gender-based violence and hinder reporting it. The following- not exhaustive- gender-based violence risks to women and girls are associated with lockdowns:

- Confinement strategies compel survivors to shelter in place with their abuser and out of contact with others,<sup>18</sup> and in some countries with strict curfews, governments restrict movement out of the house to only one member of the household, i.e., more often than not, men.<sup>19</sup>
- As poverty levels and food insecurity increase, women and girls are disproportionately affected. Gendered power dynamics often mean males control household finances, depriving women and girls of their economic agency.
- In homes where women and girls shoulder the majority of the domestic workload, disruptions such as school closures often mean that women

and girls take on more childcare responsibilities or forego other paid work. Data already show that women are being disproportionately affected by COVID-related job losses and the consequences of the economic downturn,<sup>20</sup> which has knock-on effects on children's well-being.

- Male abusers may restrict the physical movement of female family members. They may also limit their access to mobile phones while increasing control and monitoring, thus reducing women's access to formal and informal support networks.<sup>21</sup>

At the same time, COVID-19 containment measures make the services women and girl survivors need, and the supportive networks they depend on, less available.<sup>22</sup>

- Women and girls may have less access to information and the care services they require.<sup>23</sup>
- Lockdowns and other physical distancing measures may render community spaces unavailable, limiting the ability of, for example, local women's associations to respond to gender-based violence.<sup>24</sup>
- Some services and spaces that typically address gender-based violence have been repurposed to deal with COVID-19 infections.

For example, a burn victims ward in India that served domestic violence survivors was transformed into a COVID-19 ward. This move contributed to a decrease in self-reporting, thereby pushing survivors of gender-based violence further out of sight.<sup>25</sup>

- Some agencies that have continued to offer services addressing gender-based violence, such as safe houses and shelters, report that their services have slowed down or stalled due to added screening restrictions and precautionary measures needed to prevent disease transmission.<sup>26</sup>
- Survivors may be unable to physically reach gender-based violence service points because public transportation has been suspended or they have added childcare responsibilities or work.<sup>27</sup>
- Remote case management by social service providers may introduce privacy issues if social workers are handling sensitive information on gender-based violence within the context of a social worker's own home.

### Emerging risks linked to the overall COVID-19 response<sup>28</sup>

Some risks of gender-based violence are connected to the design of emergency responses to COVID-19. For example:

- Effective programming aimed at women and girls in any sector relies on ongoing (typically in-person) consultations. It has been challenging to adapting this component of programming to COVID-19, particularly when remote communications are not an option. Without in-person consultations, some programmes addressing such essential needs as education, nutrition and WASH could be creating risks that are not yet understood by the humanitarian community.
- In response to media attention, community awareness-raising campaigns on gender-based violence have emerged. However, these must be carefully designed and implemented to avoid inadvertently creating additional harm. They must communicate respect and support for survivors and include information about available response services.



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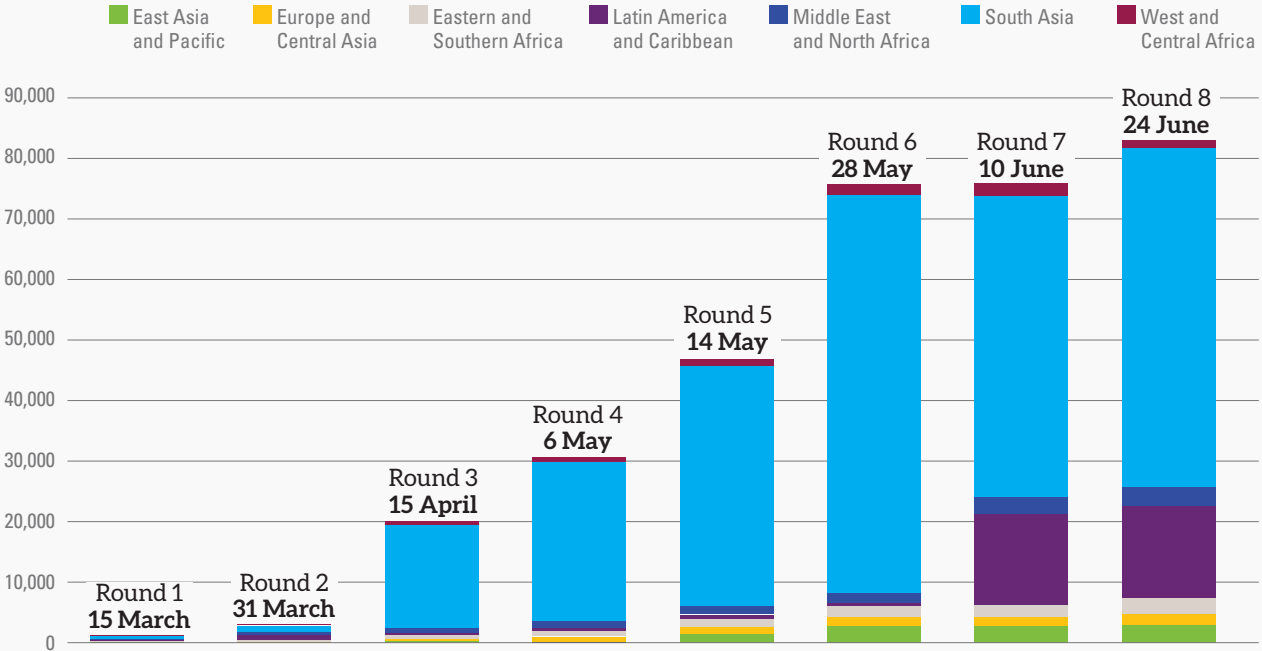
- Many remote solutions to gender-based violence depend on technology. However, girls and women do not always have the same access to and control of technology or credit as men and boys do. This limits their ability to receive information and remote support.
- Access to information and services about COVID-19 remains a problem. In absence of effective targeting, women and girls do not often have access to accurate, trustworthy information about how to protect themselves and their communities. Additionally, some groups that were marginalized prior to COVID-19 (e.g., people with disabilities, sex workers, refugees, etc.) are sometimes blamed for spreading the virus, further increasing stigma and vulnerability to gender-based violence.<sup>29</sup>
- Interventions to combat gender-based violence during COVID-19 have predominately focused on addressing intimate partner violence. However, other gender-based violence issues (e.g., child marriage, survival sex and sexual exploitation) also require attention.<sup>30</sup>
- Implementing emergency services to address gender-based violence requires specialized knowledge and skills. While UNICEF has developed evidence-based frameworks for such specialized service delivery in emergency settings, some country offices and their partners have not had the training and do not have the specialization required for implementation. Yet they urgently need this training because using international best practices and survivor-centred approaches is crucial to prevent introducing new forms of risk inadvertently.
- Discrimination based on gender impacts frontline workers, too. Women make up 70 per cent of the global health workforce and are more likely to be frontline health workers with caretaking responsibilities during COVID-19. Yet their health and safety often come second to that of men. Pervasive gendered dynamics mean those distributing PPE often prioritise men over women. What's more, PPE is largely designed for men so it does not fit women correctly.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, women's menstrual health and hygiene needs often go unmet in the workplace, which can have far-reaching negative impacts on their lives.<sup>32</sup>
- Broader macroeconomic planning and responses to COVID-19 (e.g., in areas such as addressing food security and alleviating poverty) are not sufficiently considering gender-based violence as a factor. While social policies and cash transfers may be designed to provide a safety net to poor families, without looking at the gendered dimensions of control over household finances these forms of support may not benefit – and could actually end up harming – women and girls.

### 3. ADAPTATION AND INNOVATION: DELIVERING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SERVICES AND INFORMATION DURING A PANDEMIC

A programme’s ability to adapt and respond effectively to COVID-19 depends on several factors: whether a country is under a lockdown and the severity of the lockdown; general access to internet-enabled mobile technology; and government support for services and financing to address gender-based violence, among others. UNICEF has adapted and modified its programmes to different contexts to

deliver services and information that address gender-based violence. This section highlights a number of emerging practices – new and potentially effective methods, approaches or strategies that are supported by anecdotal evidence of positive results. These include programme adaptations and strategies for risk communication and community engagement.

Number of UNICEF personnel and partners that have completed training on gender-based violence risk mitigation and referrals for survivors



Source: Data downloaded from the inSight *Global SitRep indicators* dashboard on 24 July 2020.

## Adapting service delivery

### Providing gender-based violence services using remote service delivery

Many countries have adapted to COVID-19 by using remote service delivery pathways. Lockdowns in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Serbia forced service providers to either close safe spaces or limit in-person activities. UNICEF partners quickly shifted to remote ways of delivering services, including online support or phone counselling sessions. In some places, group psychosocial activities shifted to take place remotely. This allowed for continued trust-building, which in turn led to new disclosures of cases of gender-based violence.

Helplines have been a crucial resource for many countries. But as noted above, there are some cases when it may be unsafe for survivors to make a call from their home if their abuser is present.<sup>33</sup> To address this challenge, the governments of Argentina and Chile developed the Silent Chats programme, supported by the United Nations Population Fund and run through WhatsApp. Silent Chats is a text-based hotline women and girls can use to communicate concerns through secure text chat. The gender-based violence referral pathway is done from within the WhatsApp programme itself. The programme is not without challenges (e.g., in reaching those with low literacy), but initial feedback has been positive.



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Existing infrastructure proved to be an advantage when shifting to remote models of service delivery. Several countries in the Middle East and North Africa, such as Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, had established hotlines prior to the pandemic, so this programme model and the hotline numbers were already familiar to some women and girls. Some case workers already had capacity in remote case management. Additional guidance and training were provided for case workers as the shift to remote service delivery expanded this type of case management and support.

New technologies have supported safe and confidential data collection during remote service delivery. Primero/GBVIMS+ is a web application

for safely collecting, storing, managing and sharing data for case management and incident monitoring. Several countries (Bangladesh, Libya and Nigeria) are currently using it, and roll-outs are planned or in process in other countries. The application allows frontline staff to securely track incidents of gender-based violence and individual survivors' progress as they receive case management services.

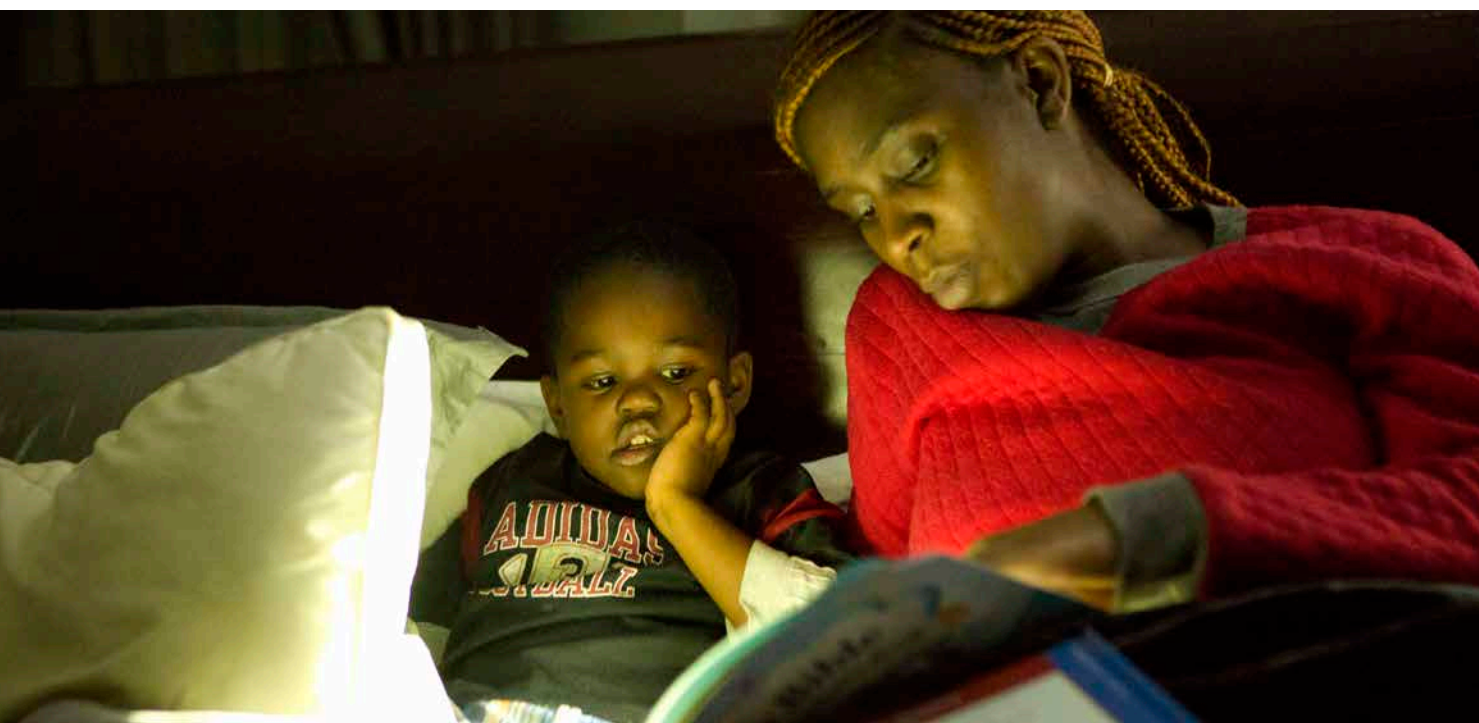
### Enabling social service providers to continue their work

To ensure continuity of services, the social service workforce must be able to work – a fact that cannot be taken for granted during a lockdown. UNICEF has advocated that services to address gender-based violence be "...recognised as life-saving and officially designated as 'essential' for the COVID-19 response and that staff providing such services are equipped with the necessary protective equipment to operate safely..."<sup>34</sup>

In some countries, social workers are not considered essential service providers. UNICEF regional offices in the Middle East and North Africa and in South Asia helped secure permits for government social workers to continue working in communities. In Zimbabwe, UNICEF successfully advocated for the government to ensure social workers were issued permits to continue providing services for survivors of gender-based violence.

Trainings and technical support for service providers dealing with gender-based violence have adapted to the pandemic. Technical support from regional to country offices and to partners shifted to using remote modalities. Early on into the pandemic, an in-depth training on gender-based violence in emergencies was completed in Europe and Central Asia. The training was tailored to the current realities facing Europe, including COVID-19 and its programmatic implications. This meant online training for UNICEF staff and partners, including public institutions from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Serbia.





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### Continuing face-to-face services

In settings where there is no countrywide lockdown, UNICEF has focused on continuing to deliver in-person gender-based violence services safely. For example, in South Sudan, UNICEF focused on keeping its programme for addressing gender-based violence operational and safe. Modification to services (e.g., providing handwashing stations, reducing the number of participants and offering remote service delivery) has allowed some centres to stay open, providing women and girls with continued access to safe spaces and needed services.

In Somalia, in-person services addressing gender-based violence have continued. UNICEF partners have adapted their socio-economic activities to focus on making facemasks. This has allowed women to continue to access safe spaces and essential gender-based violence services, with the added benefit of protecting families in nearby communities from COVID-19 through the production of PPE.

Country offices in Europe and Central Asia have developed innovative strategies to safely reach survivors of gender-based violence. In Greece,

UNICEF has been working with the government to adapt gender-based violence programming. UNICEF provides support for admitting gender-based violence survivors to emergency shelters during the COVID-19 response and at the same time advises service providers on how to manage sensitive data through remote case management services. Country offices in Italy and Serbia have worked to meet the needs of refugees and migrant populations by distributing menstrual hygiene products both inside the formal reception system and beyond.

In some situations, it has been possible to adjust pre-pandemic plans for gender-based violence programmes to the realities of COVID-19. For example, nine country offices in Latin America and the Caribbean receive support for prevention of gender-based violence from the Spotlight Initiative; they have repurposed some of these funds to provide response services adapted to the COVID-19 context.<sup>35</sup> UNICEF Mexico participates in the 'No Estás Sola' (You Are Not Alone) campaign, which works with hotels to create safe spaces offering psychosocial support for women and girls. This compensates for reduced space in shelters due to COVID-19 containment measures.

## Delivering risk communication and community engagement messaging

### Using a wide range of strategies to deliver risk communication<sup>36</sup>

UNICEF and its partners have used many different modalities to deliver information of gender-based violence to women and girls during the pandemic. These include mobile phone, radio, SMS, WhatsApp groups, posters, leaflets, Instagram posts, Facebook and Facebook Live, television, community volunteers, chatbots and U-Report.

Countries and regions use risk communication and community engagement methods that build on their strengths and available resources and fit the communication needs of the local population. For example, interventions in Italy used social media and U-Report, while countries where the population has less access to technology (e.g., Somalia, South Sudan and Mozambique) shared messages about gender-based violence over the radio. When Lebanon shifted to remote service provision, UNICEF and its partners established WhatsApp groups and gave out data bundles so girls and women could receive information on COVID-19 and gender-based violence issues. In Viet Nam, UNICEF is helping the government provide guidelines ensuring the safety of women and children in quarantine centres and a Q&A leaflet for the women, children and adolescents in residence.

Ecuador took an innovative approach to identifying low-tech solutions for sharing information on gender-based violence. UNICEF sponsored a hackathon to yield low-tech means of delivering information to women and girls who lack phone access, which resulted in two innovative solutions. No More Blood provides gender-based violence messaging in sanitary napkin packaging. UNICEF and UNFPA supported a pilot of the initiative in July 2020. The Neighbour's Recipe partners with the Ministry of Social Development, the World Food Programme and GIZ (German Corporation for International Cooperation) to create a community cookbook with recipes that includes information on how to detect

and respond to violence. Elsewhere, Honduras and Peru are interested in using a similar approach to develop localized, low-tech pathways for messaging around gender-based violence during COVID-19.

### Harnessing the strengths of communities and local women's groups to reach people

Prior to COVID-19, women, girls and their representative grassroots organizations and networks were critical resources for information-sharing in communities where UNICEF works. The organizations and networks linked women and girls to services and directly contributed to monitoring and evaluation activities.<sup>37</sup> Many women and girls were trained volunteers and mentors, had links to case workers and were known and trusted in their communities. With COVID-related lockdowns and movement restrictions, their role has become even more necessary. Consultations with women and girls are critical to guide decisions on how to best adapt service delivery models, provide insights on how risks of gender-based violence are increasing and changing and help guide the safe use of mobile and technology-driven approaches. For example, in Lebanon, women and girls who had trained as community volunteers offer frontline support to other women and girls in their communities. They share information on COVID-19 and on gender-based violence and available services and helped connect women and girls to case workers.



**Consultations with women and girls are critical to guide decisions on how to best adapt service delivery models**



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In Italy, UNICEF uses multiple pathways to deliver information on gender-based violence to women and girls remotely. The focus is on risk reduction communication that amplifies information from the national gender-based violence helpline and a government-developed app. UNICEF developed messages targeted at young women and girls promoting available services for gender-based violence and numbers to call should they feel unsafe. UNICEF also adapted key messages for migrant and refugee women and girls using messaging in multiple languages and shared through different channels. Additionally, a mobile outreach team provides in-person information to vulnerable individuals on health issues and gender-based violence services.

As part of its strategy, UNICEF integrated gender-sensitive and gender-based violence issues into the U-Report platform. This allows users to receive tailored messages on topics

## COUNTRY EXAMPLE:

Using multiple remote pathways to provide information to women and girls in Italy

such as stress management, parenting and gender-based violence services. Related messages were also promoted during U-Report LiveChats, via VideoPills and through infographics. UNICEF also entered a partnership with a well-known online editorial company to reach out to women and girls with tailored messages on specific risks related to gender-based violence during COVID-19 and provide information on available support mechanisms.



Through these approaches, UNICEF has reached over 600,000 people on social media and obtained over 72,000 interactions.

## 4. MOBILIZING AND SUSTAINING A RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### **Gender-based violence is a core protection problem that has been exacerbated during COVID-19**

At the start of the pandemic, some country offices were not yet implementing programmes to address gender-based violence. Additionally, many offices were unaccustomed to operating in an emergency situation. The reality is that COVID-19 has increased gender-based violence, an emergency that is relevant everywhere. In response, many country offices are expanding their gender-based violence work beyond advocacy. For this, they are seeking tools, guidance and resources to enable them to provide related remote support and develop risk mitigation strategies. The increased prevalence of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic has spurred these offices to action.

### **Gender-based violence will not end as lockdowns end**

The problem of gender-based violence now has increased visibility among many governments, donors and development organizations. There is a risk that when the pandemic subsides and lockdowns end gender-based violence will no longer be a high priority, despite an expected surge in demand for services addressing gender-based violence, and the very real – and ongoing – threat of violence to women and girls.

The gradual lifting of restrictions is allowing some services to resume, so girls and women in some places can connect to in-person services more easily. However, many households continue to deal with stressful situations, economic shocks and a fear of new waves of infection. All of this contributes to mental health stress and exacerbates gender-based violence. There must be a sustained effort to fight gender-based violence.

### **Despite its high visibility, the response to gender-based violence has been hampered by limited financing**

Funding and programming to address gender-based violence is not proportionate to the concern. For example, at the end of June, funding requirements for efforts to address the rise in gender-based violence in 16 countries with humanitarian response plans (including COVID-19 related-responses) amounted to \$487 million, of which only \$34 million (7 per cent) was funded. This leaves a gap of \$453 million. Internally, the UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal for COVID-19 does not have a specific financial ask for programmes addressing gender-based violence, which makes it difficult to track allocations. Information from country offices suggests that no significant additional allocations are being made during this crisis. Financial institutions are giving massive macroeconomic subsidies linked to COVID-19, but they do not account for increased risks of gender-based violence or specialized programmes to address it. UNICEF launched a due diligence tool for investors to help correct this, but more work is needed to improve accountability in this area.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, when donors have financed programmes targeting gender-based violence during the pandemic, institutional funds to support related staffing needs are often not allocated. What's more, resource allocations do not provide the additional funds (or reallocations) needed to adapt programming to COVID-19 through procurement of PPE, for example, or for physical alterations to spaces to ensure distancing.

The lack of dedicated funds has real consequences for gender-based violence programming. First and foremost, properly implementing or adapting life-saving services cannot happen without funding. Inadequate staffing for gender-based violence expertise at the country level means that programmes will need to rely on the technical expertise of staff

at the regional or headquarter level. This is difficult in any scenario, and even more so during an infectious disease pandemic when travel is unsafe.

The gender-based violence crisis will intensify as lockdown rules ease and cases surge again. The continued lack of funding to respond to this in many recovery plans is cause for concern.

### **Sustaining gender-based violence programming is possible – and a moral and economic imperative**

There are many ways to achieve more sustainable support to improve services addressing gender-based violence and advocacy during COVID-19 and beyond.

- **Clearly designate adequate and proportional funds for gender-based violence in response plans and calls for action.** The Executive Director of UNICEF has made gender-based violence a global priority, as evidenced by the Oslo commitment to include it in the HAC appeals. Gender-based violence is now included in 71 per cent of all global HACs. Yet within the COVID-19 HAC, child protection and gender-based violence responses are grouped with other sectors,<sup>39</sup> making it impossible to track which funds are dedicated to this stream of work. One way to improve targeting is to clearly designate funds to address gender-based violence. Similarly, the Global Humanitarian Response Plan should allocate adequate and proportionate funding to gender-based violence response. If the Plan is funded at 22 per cent, gender-based violence should be funded at this level.
- **Make gender-based violence a cross-cutting issue that requires cross-sectoral support and incorporate gender-based violence risk mitigation into macroeconomic planning.** Gender-based violence is a cross-cutting issue linking WASH, nutrition, education, health, social protection and child protection.<sup>40</sup> Advocacy efforts must focus on the link

between gender-based violence risks and these other sectors and include multiple delivery pathways for education for adolescent girls. Organizations and governments must develop stronger cross-sectoral GBV programmes and referral systems to attract interest from donors who have not previously supported such efforts. They must include gender-based violence in broader macroeconomic planning and responses in areas such as food security, poverty alleviation and longer-term humanitarian and development response strategies.

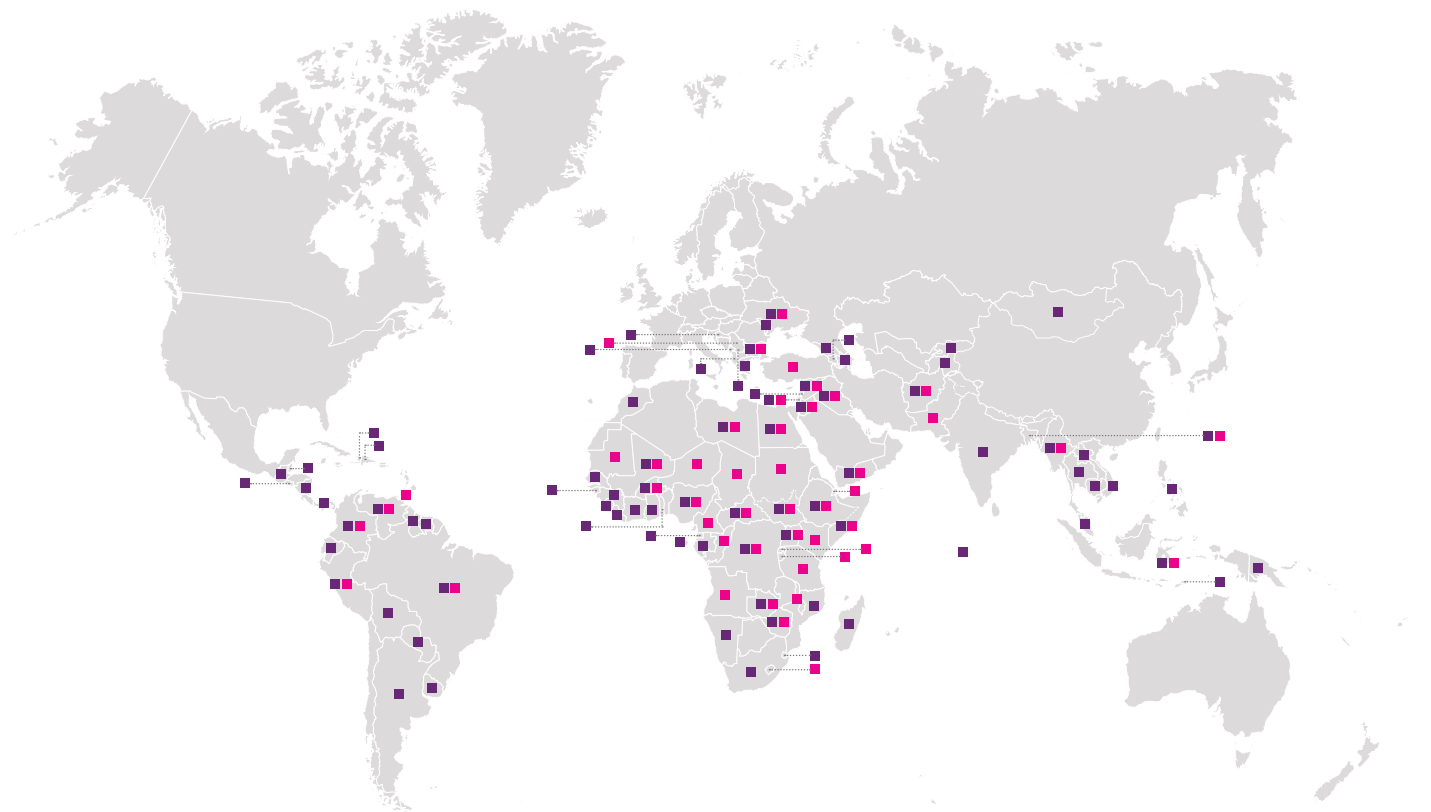
- **After governments lift lockdowns, continue supporting gender-based violence programmatic responses.** Experts anticipate that gender-based violence services will see an unprecedented level of reporting from survivors seeking help once lockdown restrictions relax and end. Services must be positioned to respond to this surge through adequate planning and long-term funding.
- **Evidence-based survivor-centred work requires investing in expertise.** Many countries are eager to develop gender-based violence programmes to reach survivors during lockdowns, but this introduces new risks if staff expertise is lacking. UNICEF country offices must plan and implement programmes using survivor-centred standards, supported by experts from country and regional offices.
- **Make the case that addressing gender-based violence is part of a longer-term investment in systems strengthening alongside an emergency response.** Work to address gender-based violence is essential to reach sectoral outcomes, social protection outcomes, the Sustainable Development Goals, a more sustainable peace and long-term economic development. It requires strong partnerships and sustainable forms of resourcing, not only programme support during acute periods of crisis.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has created additional barriers to accessing services that address gender-based violence at a time when many women and girls need these services the most. Despite these challenges, UNICEF country offices and partners are delivering services and sharing information using innovative strategies and by adapting programmes. As the pandemic evolves,

programmes must continue to adapt to meet the needs of gender-based violence survivors and mitigate emerging risks. For efforts to be successful, donors and organizations must provide adequate financing, include gender-based violence response in macroeconomic planning and cross-sectoral responses, and commit to longer term systems strengthening alongside the emergency response.

### Countries addressing gender-based violence in emergencies, 2019 and 2020



**46** Countries that worked to address GBV in emergencies in 2019

**81** Countries that worked to address GBV in the COVID response in 2020

**Disclaimer:** This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers. The dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the Parties. The final boundary between the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.

## Endnotes

- 1 UNICEF understands gender-based violence to be “any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females”. The learning brief has a focus on women and girls, because they are most affected by GBV. Examples of GBV against women and girls include sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, and differential access to food that prioritizes the nourishment of boys over girls. See: Inter-Agency Standing Committee, [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#), 2015.
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- 3 The brief draws on an analysis of existing programme documents as well as a series of consultative meetings held with child protection and GBV actors within UNICEF in June 2020.
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