

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

Second UNECE Expert Group Meeting on Measuring Violence against Women
(Geneva, 18-19 November 2010)

Agenda item 11

SURVEY MODULE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Draft report on pilot survey carried out in Georgia in 2010

National Statistics Office of Georgia

1. INTRODUCTION

On 28th October, 2010, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and National Statistics Office of Georgia have signed a memorandum of understanding providing for a grant (grant No: ECE/GC/2010/046) from the UNECE for the purposes outlined below, setting out the terms and conditions governing the use of such grant and the implementation of the project.

The project “Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women through networking of local knowledge communities” aims, among others, at improving statistical data and indicators of violence against women. This integrated project involves the development and testing of a survey module to collect data on a set of core indicators approved by the United Nations Commission in February 2009.

Under the project, the National Statistics Office of Georgia will conduct a pilot test of the survey module on violence against women in Georgia.

2. QUESTIONNAIRE

VAW questionnaire and instructions for interviewers were translated into Georgian by two translators in the order shown. Both documents were streamlined by the working group members.

The pilot survey was conducted independently from other specialized household surveys.

The interviewers noted positively the title of the questionnaire – “Survey on women’s conditions” instead – which was offered to respondents. Such soft formulation was critical in building initial trust between the interviewer and a respondent.

In terms of optimizing numbering of questions, it would be useful not to number skips as separate points (V01, V06, V09, V13, V17, V19, V22, V25, V28, V30, V33, V35, V39, V43 and N01).

3. SAMPLING

For pilot survey 200 households were selected in Tbilisi (urban) and Kakheti region (rural), 100 households in each, as agreed with UNECE. In Kakheti 6 villages were selected from 2 districts, as shown below:

Telavi district:

- Gulgula village
- Busheti village
- Vardisubani village

Gurjaani district:

- Chumlaki village
- Vazisubani village
- Kardenakhi village

Based on the survey methodology, first households were selected and then – the desired respondent (woman) within the household.

Households were sampled from households which have already participated in the Integrated Household Survey (quarterly survey of the Geostat) and where at least one woman older than 15 years lived.

Taking into account expected non-response, 175 households and 165 households were selected in Tbilisi and Kakheti region, respectively.

Selection of a desired respondent within the household was made by the interviewers in line with the instructions set out in the methodological guideline.

4. TRAINING

The interviewers for the pilot survey were selected from the IHS network. Preference was given to experience and recommendation of their immediate supervisors.

Eight women interviewers were selected for conducting interviews in Tbilisi and Kakheti region, 4 in each region. Training was conducted in the Geostat office by the members of the working group and lasted 1 day – from 11:00 to 17:00, with half hour break. Apart from the working group members, 2 supervisors were also participating in the training.

The training was conducted in the following order:

- ✓ Identification of goals and objectives of the pilot survey
- ✓ Detailed instructions on filling out the questionnaire
- ✓ Methods of selecting desired respondents and asking questions
- ✓ Discussion of specific cases prepared prior to the training
- ✓ Practice work

The following materials were used for the training:

1. Pilot test of a survey module on violence against women (VAW) - ppt file
2. Survey questionnaire
3. Interviewers' instructions
4. Special cases

It should be noted that it would be very useful to use the Question-by-question description of Violence against Women Module during training. The latter was not translated due to time constraints. In addition, since the training was conducted for a small group of interviewers with a large trainer-to-interviewer ratio (working group members vs. only 8 interviewers), it was sufficient to conduct the training in one day and monitor how the interviewers understood all the necessary ideas. For a larger pilot survey it would be advisable that training should last at least 2 days.

5. FIELD OPERATIONS

Field work was conducted in the following order:

- Tbilisi region - 2-9 November
- Kakheti region - Telavi District:
Village Gulgula - 2 November;
Village Busheti - 3, 5-6 November;
Village Vardisubani – 8-9 November;
- Gurdjaani district:
Village Chumlaki - 2-3 November;
Village Vazisubani - 4-5 November;
Village Kardenakhi - 6-7 November.

The interviewers in Tbilisi were helped by Tbilisi supervisor, while the Kakheti region supervisor (Geostat staff member) made a one-day visit to Telavi after 2 days of fieldwork meeting interviewers and reviewing questionnaires. In general, no significant errors were found in interviewers' work where involvement of supervisors/working group members would be necessary.

Average length of an interview was 20-30 minutes.

Interviews were conducted in 200 households, for which 250 households were contacted in total. The main reasons of non-response were that i) household members were not at home or ii) dwellings were closed and no one lived there. Such cases were typical for Tbilisi. In a few cases household members were busy and refused participation in the pilot testing. 1 woman was not able to participate in the pilot due to her illness. It should be mentioned that only two women (aged more than 60) refused participation in the pilot due to the topic of the survey.

Interviews were conducted face to face for ensuring safety and confidentiality of the information. In a few cases interviewers had to change the topic and questions of the survey due to interruption of the interview by household member(s).

During pilot testing each respondent was informed about existence of organizations that provide support, legal advice and counseling services to women. Unfortunately, interviewers were not in a position to give respondents contact information of these organizations.

Some respondents expressed their interest with respect to the contact information of the above-mentioned organizations. Supporting the respondents with the informational leaflets (preferably at the start of the interview) will assist the quality of the survey and help interviewers to establish trust with the respondents.

6. DEBRIEFING OF FIELDWORK

Debriefing of interviewers was attended by working group members, all interviewers but one (away on personal reasons) and supervisors on November 11. The interviewer which did not attend the debriefing session was debriefed later.

It should be pointed out that in general interviewers did not encounter significant problems in terms of establishing communication with the respondents. To a certain extent, it was a surprise for the interviewers themselves – almost all of them admitted that they expected a tenser attitude from the respondents due to sensitivity of the issues raised and questions asked. Only two respondents (women

above 60) refused participation after learning about the topic of the survey. Other respondents were mainly cooperative with respect to the survey topic.

The questions of the surveys caused awkwardness only in a few cases, which did not affect the response rate on the part of respondents. It should be noted that divorced women and widows were more open in discussing their ex-partners, compared to those who were married at the time of the interview.

There were a number of cases where respondents named moral (verbal) violence from other non-partner members of the household. In this regard, the violence on the part of mother-in-laws should be particularly mentioned. Some divorced respondents explained that it was precisely the case why their marriages were broken. One case should be mentioned in this regard: after the end of one interview, a respondent's mother-in-law entered the room. When the latter found out that her daughter-in-law participated in the survey "about women" (without knowing specific questions that were asked), she verbally abused the respondent and demanded that such interview should be conducted with her attendance. The respondent privately told the interviewer that such abuses were frequent in this household.

A number of respondents (especially in the rural areas) pointed to neighboring households where they knew that violence against women took place. However, those households were not in the sample and thus no specific information was received.

Based on the above-mentioned, it is desirable to conduct a full-scale survey in Georgia, in order to have a comprehensive picture on violence against women. In addition, the survey results showed that victims of violence mainly do not speak about it to others (there were a number of cases where respondents told the interviewers that they were the first to hear about these issues) and do not know where to apply. This type of survey will significantly promote activities of organization protecting women's rights, raising public awareness with respect to this topic.

General impressions of field work and disclosure of violence cases

In a number of cases it became difficult to ensure privacy of the conversation with the respondent. A husband, a mother-in-law or a relative tried to attend the interview. In such cases, the interviewers changed the topic of the conversation. In certain cases respondents were asking the interviewers to enable a face-to-face conversation. In one of such cases an interviewer had to meet the respondent out of the household (the interview took place close to the metro station).

In general women spoke openly (as mentioned elsewhere, this was surprising for interviewers). However, there were cases when the interviewers had an impression that respondents were not sincere.

As it was mentioned above, only in two cases interviewers were refused to speak about the VAW issues (both women were widows above 60). Also, certain awkwardness was present among young, single girls.

A few respondents said that they did not know that there existed organization protecting women's rights and that if new cases of violence against them occur again, they will definitely apply to such organizations. Unfortunately, the interviewers did not have contact information of such organizations at the time. As mentioned above, in case of a full-scale survey it would be useful to have information leaflets which would provide comprehensive information on organizations protecting women's rights. This would also enable interviewers to gain trust of respondents and receive more sincere answers.

Questionnaire/module

In a number of cases respondents found it difficult to answer question V04 a), as the question was too general and required more details as well as additional explanations on the part of interviewers as to which type of violence was implied.

Some respondents did not understand question V08, as such type of violence was unimaginable for them.

Question N02 was not quite clear: it was related only to physical violence on the part of non-partners, without referring to moral, psychological violence. As it was already mentioned above, non-physical violence (e.g., mother-in-laws) was present quite often in respondents' answer.

Sometimes, respondents found it difficult to calculate frequency of violence facts. In particular, it was difficult for women who got divorced or widowed long time ago.

Due to the fact that respondents were Georgian speakers, there were no language barriers.

Ensuring privacy/confidentiality of interview

No significant problems took place due to the survey topic. There were only a few cases when other household members tried to enter into the room during the interview, but the interviewer changed the topic of conversation and asked indirect questions. When other household members found there was nothing special in the interview, they left the room.

One case should be noted when a respondent in the rural area spread the information about the "content" of the interview and potential respondent were anxiously waiting for the interview. Despite this interviewers found no difficulties in obtaining interviews from such neighbors and, to their opinion, questions were not as difficult as they expected from the rumors.

In general respondents easily agreed to participate in the pilot survey and openly spoke in the face-to-face interview. There was one particular case those when a respondent was telling a story about another woman while to the interviewer's opinion, she was speaking about herself.

The survey topic was mainly unexpected for women, as they were positively surprised that someone/some organization would be interested in such questions.

Impact on respondents

According to the interviewers, respondents were interested in such type of surveys. As it was mentioned above, women did not know if there existed organizations protecting women's rights which worked on such issues.

Concluding remarks

Survey coordinators should take into account that most women were not informed about interest to violence issues, they wanted to know contact information about relevant organizations working on these topics, etc. Due to sensitivity of the issues discussed and difficulties of interacting with different groups of population, it is desirable to use gifts for respondents, prepare information leaflets, and conduct other information activities in order to gain trust in the full-scale survey.

All interviewers showed their willingness to participate in this type of survey. Apart from financial reasons, they mentioned that topics discussed and newness of the survey was motivational.