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Agenda item 9

SURVEY MODULE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Report on survey carried out in Moldova in 2010

National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova

1. INTRODUCTION

1. As in many countries, official data gathered by criminal statistics do not provide the real evidence on the phenomena of domestic violence in Moldavian society, including violence against women. Therefore, a special survey is required to assess the incidence, prevalence, type, frequency, severity and the main causes, factors of violence against women. The latest available data on violence refers to the Demography and Health Survey 2005. According to this survey, every fourth woman has ever experienced physical violence since 15 years. 23% of ever married women report having experienced emotional violence by husbands, 24% report physical violence, and 4% report sexual violence.

2. In Moldova there is a considerable demand for information on domestic violence on behalf of government and civil society. The findings of this survey will be used to assess and to monitor the National Plans on implementation of Law on Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence and Law on equal opportunities for men and women as well.

3. The UNDP-UNIFEM-UNFPA joint project on “Strengthening of National Statistical System of Moldova” has financially supported the Survey module on violence against women and has agreed that such a study should be conducted by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), which is in charge of producing official statistics on a large scale representative household sample surveys. It is a challenge for NBS to conduct this survey due to its sensitiveness and related problems to collect such information.

4. The quantitative survey was supplemented by a qualitative one conducted by a local NGO in partnership with NBS and project. The qualitative phase consisted in conducting focus groups with victims of violence, social workers and local authorities. To fulfill the assignment NBS had to start the process in a very short time (May 2010) due to the time and financial constraints. This process involves the following steps: a) analyzing the UNECE questionnaires; b) adjustment of tools to the national needs; c) conducting the survey, including all steps related to a stand alone survey.

5. The final report will be prepared with a support of international consultancy provided by UNFPA and it is an ongoing work, which should be finalized by the middle of the December.

2. QUESTIONNAIRE MODULE

6. The UNECE VAW Module version 1 was a starting point in a developing and adjusting the questionnaire for the Pilot Survey on Violence against women. As it was decided to conduct a stand alone survey, we had to complement this module with a general section about household composition and some characteristics of victim and aggressor (see annex 1). The questionnaire is divided in six sections:

- I. Household composition
- II. Section R – general information about respondent
- III. Section V – relationship with current or more recent husband or intimate partner
- IV. Section N – non-partner violence
- V. Section A – attitudes and knowledge about violence
- VI. Section Z – completion of interview.

7. The target group was women of age 15 to 65 years and the reference person was a woman of the respective age group. With respect to partner violence only women who have or had an intimate relationship with men have been considered and living together have being an essential condition.

8. The original UNECE questionnaire was translated in Romanian language and after adjustment it was compared with English version. The Romanian version before pretesting has been translated in Russian language as well, but without back translation. Translation into Romanian was provided by an interpreter; meanwhile the Russian version was translated by NBS.

9. The main reason why it was decided to conduct a stand alone survey is the sensitiveness of the survey topic. On the other hand, worth to be mentioned that in 2006 NBS has created a common network of interviewers for households surveys in a social sphere and especially for LFS and HBS. This network implies that the same interviewer collects the data for both surveys in the same localities, but on a different sample. This approach is good for mentioned above surveys, but it raises concerns in conducting the Survey on Violence against women in terms of willingness of women to speak about violence to a known person and this is mostly the case of rural area. Taking it into consideration, mobile teams of interviewed was used to collect the data in the field.

10. There were a lot of debates on the name of the survey to be used, but finally it stands for *Violence against women in the family*, as the main focus is the violence by a partner and it less refers to a non-family and community violence. It was strongly recommended not to use this name during the interview, especially when establishing the contact with the respondent. As an alternative, it was suggested to use *Survey on Situation of Women* or *Survey on attitudes of women via the relationship with men*.

11. *Pre - test experience*. The originally adjusted module was tested on a sample of 70 women and the objective of this exercise was to test the content and the length of the questionnaire, way of posing questions, understanding of notions and expressions used, to see the reaction and the willingness of women to speak about violence issues.

12. Lessons learned:

- *Screening techniques*: the repetition of the same set of questions for every partner for some women was too heavy and sometimes they got annoyed or even irritated. In some cases, women who have experienced violence wanted to start to speak immediately about this episode without following the screening procedure of partners.
- *Definitions and wording*: some of questions were found to be very long and interviewers tend to shorten the questions. For example, it was a case of questions V02-V04 original UNECE version and questions A01-02 from adjusted version of module. Besides this, some questions were not well understood by respondents and needed to be posed once again (i.e. “*verbally threatened to hurt you or someone you care about*”, “*did your partner ever force you to do something else sexual...*”). Some expressions, such as “*he insists on knowing where you are...*” or “*expects to ask permission before seeking health care.*” was confused with “*letting him know where I am...*”.
- *Length of the interview*: it depends on what has been reported by a respondent. In some cases it might increase up to 60 minutes and this is the case of woman who has to report severe violence episode;
- *Disclosure problems*: some women did not have any problem in disclosing violence suffered and usually it refers to women who have experienced violence in the past. Nevertheless, other women denied reporting violence; even it was obviously a case, as she had bruises or injuries to eyes. On the other hand, there were victims of violence who become very stressed by the end of interview and some interviewers did not know how to react in that situation. From this perspective, additional training is recommended for interviewers in order to get more abilities how to approach the woman in a different situation and how to deal with sensitive topics during conducting the interview.
- *Limitations*: the proposed structure of the questionnaire doesn't allow skipping the questions on physical or sexual violence, in case if woman refused to answer to some specific questions, especially those related to sexual violence. During the pretesting exercise there were no cases, but in the pilot survey there were few women which answered to physical violence, but refuse to give any answer on sexual violence.

3. SAMPLING STRATEGY

13. The sampling size for this survey was 1575 women. It is a four stage sampling design and at the first stage 150 of PSUs have been drawn with a probability proportional to their size. These PSUs initially have been selected for a master sample for LFS and HBS, and used for this survey as well. At the second stage, a two phase sampling has been used: 1) the first phase refers to selecting of households sample in order to get the real composition of households; 2) the second phase implies screening of households to find the ones with women of age 15 to 65 years.

14. For the first phase, 2009 surveyed sample of LFS was used and it contains 48 000 households. After screening of households only those with women aged from 15 to 65 years was selected and it counts 18 146 households.

15. At the third stage 1575 households was selected from eligible ones by means of simple random sampling within each PSU. Thus, there were 10 households selected in every PSU and 13 households in mun. Chisinau and Balti, due to a higher non-response rate registered in pretesting survey.

16. At the fourth stage from every households only one women of the respective age was selected. The selection of the eligible women for an interview was done by interviewer and the main criteria being the presence of women in the households and closest birthday to the day of reference.

17. *Issues encountered and lessons learned:* using a sample of already interviewed households in other surveys has advantages in terms of costs and disadvantages in terms of difficulty to contact the selected women. The difference between the period when the LFS was conducted and the moment of collection of the data on VAW leads to the fact that some women from sample have already gone abroad and therefore it was impossible to conduct interview. This problem could be solved by doing screening at the moment of the survey, but this could lead into significant additional costs.

4. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF INTERVIEWERS

18. Overall, 40 persons were involved in data collection and about 90% were interviewers who are engaged in data collection for LFS and HBS. 100% were women and of age limit more than 25 years old, preferable married or having other family experience. Should be mentioned, that some of interviewers refused to participate in data collection by the end of trial period, which supposed to contact and interview at least five households. This fact, emphasize once again the disadvantage of recruitment of any female enumerators who collect data for any specific quantitative survey. The basic skills on how to conduct a household survey seems to be insufficient for this survey and additional abilities needed to succeed in conducting the survey. In this regard, it was decided to reduce the number of interviewers and to pay more attention on training and supervising during the process of data collection.

19. Duration of the training was 2 days and it was organized within the Central Office of NBS. The training session consists of two modules: 1) overview on gender based violence issues (definition, type of violence, stereotypes, national legislation, etc.); 2) structure of questionnaire (explanations and practice). The first session was moderated by a national expert on gender, Mrs. Valentina Bodrug - Lungu, Director of NGO *Gender – Center*. In the second session NBS personnel was involved. As the majority of interviewers have experience in conducting face to face interview, there was no training session on general interviewing and communication techniques.

20. *Issues encountered and lessons learned:* training was too short and more information should be provided on topics related to sensitiveness and how to handle and overcome specific situation from emotional and technical perspective of the questionnaire.

5. FIELD OPERATIONS

21. Data collection lasts 2 months and it has started in August till the beginning of the October. The interviews were carried on from 12 am to 9 pm in work days and from 9 am to 7 pm in weekends. The data was collected by means of face to face interview. The interviewers were paid for a completed interview and not for worked hours.

22. To collect data in rural area and small towns there were four teams of interviewers. Every team was supervised by a supervisor who was responsible for editing and monitoring data collection in the field as well. Every supervisor has to report every week to a national coordinator with respect to contact rate, refusals, appointments, and difficulties encountered.

23. An average, the length of interview was about 30 minutes with the range from 10-15 minutes for women without partner and violence, to 60-80 minutes for a victim of violence with severe episodes. The refusal rate of selected women was 17.1% and the main reasons of refusals were the following: 55% have being impossible to contact, every fifth person considered this activity to be useless, 7% refused due to a lack of time, 9% physically were not able to participate in the survey.

24. Prior to the survey interviewers from urban area had an opportunity to contact the respondent by phone and to make a brief introduction of the aim of the survey. Moreover, interviewers had to ensure the confidentiality of interview from the very beginning of the survey. Out of total interviewed women, in case of 1.5% the privacy was not possible to obtain and these persons answered only to questions related to attitudes and knowledge about domestic violence.

25. After completing the interview every woman receives the leaflet with general information about violence against women and the number of hotline/trust line for victims of violence. Besides it, a list with social centers specialized in providing support to victims of violence was provided. This leaflet is a part of information campaign launched by UNFPA.

6. DEBRIEFING OF FIELDWORK

26. Debriefing sessions is an important activity which helps to clarify and to avoid misunderstandings and different treatment of definitions and terms to be used for data collection. This is a good opportunity to learn from each other.

27. During the training debriefing sessions was moderated by a national expert on gender. At the moment of completion the interviews in a specific locality every supervisor has the responsibility to check the questionnaires for data consistency and to discuss the encountered problems.

28. One way to assess the performance of interviewers is to use information provided by them in the section Z of the questionnaire. Even it is qualitative information; it still can help to assess the quality of collected data.

7. DATA PROCESSING

29. In order to minimize the cost of data processing an existent system of data entry developed for LFS and HBS was used. A data entering unit was engaged in data processing and overall it lasts 10 days. The used platform allows checking the data at the time of entering and after the final validation.

30. Data analysis is a joint activity of NBS and UNDP-UNFPA-UNFEM project. NBS is responsible for construction and aggregation of variables, but the interpretation of the data will be supported by an international consultant on behalf of UNFPA. The quantitative study will be complemented with a qualitative one conducted by local NGO. This is a new approach in combining data from different sources and hopefully we will get good results. This is an ongoing activity which should be finalized by the middle of the December.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

- The results of different stages of survey show that domestic violence is a complex phenomenon difficult to measure and to reveal.
- Selection, training and supervision of the interviewers are a crucial step in order to guarantee a reliable data on this issue. Ability to establish a good relationship between respondent and interviewer is essential in helping women disclose the violence. The training sessions should be well structured and organized. At this stage and during the whole process the presence of psychologists as a part of team would be an advantage.

- Due to sensitiveness of the studied topics and a lower probability of women disclose to an unknown person, a stand alone survey seems to be a better solution comparing to ad-hoc module attached to a specific ongoing household survey.
- Using mobile team of interviewers implies extra costs on transportation, but it raises the chance to get a more reliable data. At the same time, these teams should be closely supervised and monitor to avoid the tendency to shortened the interview or not to follow the rules on contacting and approaching the household and women.
- The structure of the questionnaire needs to be revised in order to allow respondents to skip or to refuse to answer to some type of violence.
- Need to discuss the opportunity of combining quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Household composition section contains the following information:

- Sex and age
- Relationship with household head, spouse or partner
- Level of education
- Presence in the household at the moment in interview.

Main variables related to the potential victim of violence:

- Occupational status: current occupation, reasons for working, reasons for not working, willingness to look for a job
- Current or most recent marital status and the reasons for ending the last relation
- The length of relationship with current or most recent partner

Main variables related to the potential aggressor:

- Occupational status: employed or unemployed
- Level of education
- Specific problems: alcohol abuse, irritation, stress, drug addiction and other problems
- Fear of current or most recent partner

MAIN RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Table1. Percentage of women who have suffered emotional, physical, or sexual violence ever since 15 years old, by their current or most recent husband

	<i>emotional</i>	<i>physical</i>	<i>sexual</i>	<i>physical or sexual</i>	<i>emotional physical or sexual</i>	<i>physical and sexual</i>	<i>emotional , physical and sexual</i>
Area of residence							
urban	55,1%	30,1%	17,8%	37,5%	57,4%	10,4%	10,3%
rural	62,9%	47,3%	19,2%	51,9%	68,2%	14,6%	14,0%
Age group							
15-24 ani	50,2%	37,8%	10,5%	42,3%	53,7%	6,1%	6,1%
25-34 ani	51,7%	32,4%	15,5%	41,6%	55,7%	6,3%	6,3%
35-44 ani	59,7%	36,0%	20,6%	40,8%	63,4%	15,8%	15,8%
45-54 ani	65,7%	47,1%	19,9%	51,9%	70,3%	15,1%	14,0%
55-59 ani	66,0%	46,0%	23,9%	51,3%	69,1%	18,6%	18,2%
60-65 ani	59,5%	39,7%	17,1%	43,6%	64,3%	13,3%	12,4%
Marital status							
married	56,8%	35,7%	15,8%	41,6%	61,3%	9,9%	9,3%
living together	51,1%	43,4%	18,4%	47,7%	53,1%	14,1%	14,1%
divorced/separated	83,3%	61,1%	41,0%	70,2%	84,0%	31,9%	31,9%
widowed	60,3%	47,5%	16,8%	49,6%	65,7%	14,6%	14,6%
Level of education							
higher	56,8%	25,2%	16,0%	33,6%	57,7%	7,6%	7,6%
special secondary	60,6%	46,4%	21,0%	52,7%	67,6%	14,7%	14,0%
profesional	60,0%	41,8%	15,2%	44,8%	62,3%	12,2%	12,0%
general	58,2%	35,2%	20,3%	40,5%	61,8%	14,9%	14,0%
gimnazium	61,9%	52,3%	21,0%	58,4%	68,8%	14,9%	14,6%
Occupational status							
employed	62,9%	41,1%	19,6%	47,4%	64,8%	13,4%	13,4%
self-employment in non-agriculture	54,2%	41,8%	26,4%	54,1%	62,6%	14,0%	12,7%
self-employment in agriculture	54,2%	47,4%	17,6%	50,1%	67,0%	14,9%	12,4%
Unemployed	54,7%	31,5%	16,6%	36,5%	59,9%	11,6%	11,6%
housewife	52,8%	37,2%	11,5%	42,9%	57,7%	5,8%	5,8%
pensioner	63,5%	39,7%	19,7%	44,4%	65,9%	15,1%	14,2%
other	49,8%	22,9%	20,6%	30,0%	52,4%	13,5%	13,5%
TOTAL	59,4%	39,7%	18,6%	45,5%	63,4%	12,8%	12,3%

Table 2. Percentage of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence from a non-partner

	<i>physical violence ever</i>		<i>sexual violence ever</i>		<i>physical violence or sexual ever</i>		<i>physical violence and sexual ever</i>	
	<i>since 15 years</i>	<i>in the last 12 months</i>	<i>since 15 years</i>	<i>in the last 12 months</i>	<i>since 15 years</i>	<i>in the last 12 months</i>	<i>since 15 years</i>	<i>in the last 12 months</i>
Area of residence								
urban	12,0%	2,2%	2,4%	0,6%	12,8%	2,2%	1,6%	0,6%
rural	10,6%	0,8%	2,5%		12,3%	0,8%	0,9%	
Age group								
15-24 ani	13,7%	3,2%	1,6%		13,7%	3,2%	1,6%	
25-34 ani	10,1%	0,7%	3,8%		12,4%	0,7%	1,5%	
35-44 ani	8,7%	0,9%	3,5%		11,3%	0,9%	0,9%	
45-54 ani	12,1%	1,7%	2,7%	1,3%	13,5%	1,7%	1,3%	1,3%
55-59 ani	12,1%		0,3%		12,4%			
60-65 ani	8,6%		0,9%		9,1%		0,5%	
Marital status								
married	9,2%	0,8%	2,0%	0,5%	10,3%	0,8%	0,9%	0,5%
living together	31,0%	1,1%	7,1%		32,8%	1,1%	5,3%	
divorced/separated	13,8%	0,4%	5,6%		18,0%	0,4%	1,4%	
widowed	7,9%		1,2%		9,1%			
never married	12,3%	4,3%	1,7%		12,7%	4,3%	1,3%	
Level of education								
higher	8,3%	0,6%	0,6%		8,9%	0,6%		
special secondary	14,2%	0,3%	2,7%		15,0%	0,3%	1,9%	
profesional	14,2%	2,3%	3,7%	1,7%	15,4%	2,3%	2,5%	1,7%
general	8,1%	1,5%	3,3%		10,8%	1,5%	0,5%	
gimnazium	13,0%	2,4%	2,5%		14,0%	2,4%	1,6%	
primary/no education	9,2%				9,2%			

Table 3. Percentage of women who reported specific physical consequences resulting from what did to them current of former partner

	physical consequences			
	<i>had bruises or aches</i>	<i>had eye injuries, sprains or dislocations</i>	<i>had broken bones, internal injuries</i>	<i>had a miscarriage</i>
Physical violence				
ever experienced	66,5	22,9	9,3	6,6
in the last 12 months	55,1	23,5	4,9	-
Sexual violence				
ever experienced	58,4	20,9	11,4	10,9
in the last 12 months	26,3	5,3	4,3	-
Physical and sexual violence				
ever experienced	83,5	30,4	16,7	15,9
in the last 12 months	68,1	14,6	12,1	-
Physical or sexual violence				
ever experienced	58,4	20,0	8,1	5,8
in the last 12 months	43,1	18,1	3,8	-

Table 4. Relationship between victim and aggressor characteristics

<i>Partner characteristics</i>	<i>Women characteristics</i>										<i>Never experienced violence</i>	
	<i>Emotional violence</i>		<i>Physical violence</i>		<i>Sexual violence</i>		<i>Physical or sexual violence</i>		<i>Physical and sexual violence</i>			
	Ever	last year	Ever	last year	Ever	last year	Ever	last year	Ever	last year		
Level of education												
higher	11,8%	17,5%	6,4%	10,1%	15,4%	24,2%	10,1%	15,9%	6,2%	4,5%	21,1%	
special secondary	14,3%	7,9%	14,4%	10,1%	12,5%	10,1%	14,0%	10,6%	12,5%	6,0%	15,3%	
professional	34,8%	35,9%	34,2%	35,5%	30,6%	31,2%	33,6%	35,5%	31,0%	23,6%	30,8%	
general	19,3%	16,9%	20,1%	16,3%	17,2%	9,1%	17,6%	14,3%	24,8%	11,9%	18,1%	
gimnazium	18,2%	21,0%	22,7%	26,6%	21,7%	25,4%	22,6%	22,6%	21,7%	54,0%	14,3%	
primary/no education	1,6%	0,7%	2,4%	1,5%	2,7%	-	2,1%	1,1%	3,9%	-	0,3%	
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
Differences in education												
Husband/partner has more education	21,5%	23,2%	18,9%	20,1%	22,8%	29,4%	20,6%	24,6%	18,6%	10,7%	25,1%	
Wife has more education	32,8%	28,0%	32,5%	28,9%	36,3%	23,9%	33,2%	27,7%	35,8%	24,5%	24,4%	
Both have equal education	45,7%	48,8%	48,6%	51,0%	40,9%	46,7%	46,2%	47,7%	45,6%	64,8%	50,5%	
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
Age difference between wife and husband												
Wife older than husband	12,6%	13,1%	14,0%	13,5%	12,7%	14,1%	13,8%	13,0%	13,0%	19,2%	14,4%	
Have equal	13,5%	16,1%	12,7%	21,2%	3,2%	2,5%	11,6%	17,2%	2,9%	2,8%	11,8%	
Husband older by:												
< 3 years	30,0%	27,5%	33,4%	30,4%	39,8%	27,8%	33,3%	29,8%	45,0%	28,1%	27,9%	
3-6 years	31,7%	34,9%	30,7%	27,5%	36,0%	49,1%	31,5%	32,0%	35,5%	49,9%	33,8%	
7-9 years	7,0%	5,1%	5,3%	5,6%	5,8%	6,5%	6,2%	6,7%	1,0%	-	4,9%	
10+ years	5,2%	3,4%	3,8%	1,8%	2,6%	-	3,7%	1,4%	2,7%	-	7,3%	
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
Husband/partner problems												
no problem	28,5	23,1	24,3	11,6	17,7	30,7	26,2	19,6	7,6	2,6	61,7	
stressed/irritated by family problems	41,7	48,4	42,4	48,4	46,3	50,6	42,6	49,6	47,6	45,4	22,2	
stressed/irritated of not having a job	23,5	32,2	21,8	24,9	22,3	36,1	21,7	24,9	23,1	56,3	16,2	
abuses alcohol	30,2	24,0	38,7	40,0	50,4	25,9	35,8	32,6	66,5	58,3	3,8	
consumes drugs	0,2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
suffered in childhood of abusive/violent actions in family	9,3	11,9	11,6	21,6	10,1	6,4	11,3	17,4	10,5	12,2	0,8	
others	8,4	9,4	8,4	9,2	3,2	-	6,8	7,1	6,5	-	5,3	