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Violence against women

Prevalence survey on violence against women: Bringing together ownership and comparable data

Note by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)*

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present an overview of the OSCE project ‘Survey on the Well-being and Safety of Women in South East Europe, Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus’. It will, furthermore, elaborate on the data/results that will be obtained through the research and discuss the benefits of comparable data and how Statistical Offices could use the data and integrate it into their own work.

At the heart of this project is the implementation of a household survey on violence against women. Approximately 16,000 women across up to 9 OSCE participating States and in Kosovo¹ will be asked about experiences of different forms of violence. The goal of the project is to collect comparable data on violence against women that could be further used by decision-makers for the improvement of policies and programmes.

The OSCE questionnaire is based on the existing research by the European Fundamental

¹ All references to Kosovo whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244.

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Rights Agency and will introduce a new “conflict module” to the questionnaire, with the goal of also collecting information about experiences of violence in conflict situations. Additional qualitative research will be conducted in order to put the collected data into the local contexts and to gather more information about gender bias and possible low disclosure rates. The result of the research will be a vast source of data that can be used for various purposes.

Recent discussions about the data that will be used for reporting on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have urged local ownership over this data. This paper and presentation want to inspire a discussion on how Statistical Offices could use the OSCE data as baseline for the reporting on the SDGs and re-use some of the methodology in their own future surveys on violence against women.

I. The OSCE Survey on Well-being and Safety of Women

A. Rationale and approach

1. The underpinning tenet of the OSCE’s mandate is its comprehensive approach to security. This approach recognizes the importance of individual security in the political, economic and human dimensions, equally for men and women, boys and girls. Research shows that gaps continue in the ability of institutions to understand and address women and girls’ experience of personal insecurity and violence. Unfortunately, violence against women continues to persist at disturbingly high rates in the OSCE region (and globally), in both public – on the street, in the working environment, in schools and other institutions – as well as in private spaces – in the family, at home or other private locations. This comes at great costs to society as personal insecurity obstructs women from participating equally in life. Violence against women brings huge economic costs to any society. It results in lost employment and productivity, and it drains resources from health-care agencies and insurance companies, social services, the justice system, and employers. Research indicates² that the cost of violence against women could amount to around 2% of the global gross domestic product (GDP), for example:
 - Annual costs of partner violence were calculated at \$5.8 billion in the United States of America and \$1.16 billion in Canada. Domestic violence alone costs approximately \$32.9 billion per year in England and Wales.
 - Women who are exposed to partner violence are employed in higher numbers in casual and part-time work, and their earnings are 60 % lower, compared to women who do not experience such violence.
 - According to several studies³, globally 35% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.

²Council of Europe: Overview of Studies on the Costs of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, Updated, 14 October 2014

³ World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, South African Medical Research Council (2013). *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*, p.2. For individual country information, see *The World’s Women 2015, Trends and Statistics, Chapter 6, Violence against Women*, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015 and UN Women *Global Database on Violence against Women*.

2. Many international organizations have time and again highlighted the need for comparable data on violence against women as a basis for spurring public debate and developing evidence-based policies. In order to respond to this need, the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union (FRA) initiated the first EU-wide Survey on Women's Safety and Wellbeing in 2010 and launched the results on International Women's Day in 2014. The OSCE saw it as a unique opportunity to expand the research that has been done by FRA to other locations in the OSCE region and produce comprehensive and comparable data.
3. The OSCE research is based on the questionnaire and methodology developed by FRA for their violence against women survey. The FRA research surveyed 42,000 women across 28 EU Member States. These women were asked about their experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence since the age of 15 as well as in childhood. The research also included questions on stalking, sexual harassment, and the role played by new technologies in women's experience of abuse. Our study replicates the FRA survey, but adds a specific perspective corresponding to the OSCE mandate: experiences of violence *in conflict settings*.
4. This project is conducted in the following OSCE participating States: Albania, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Ukraine and in Kosovo. Under discussion is the participation of two other OSCE participating States, which are Armenia and Georgia.
5. The years 2016 and 2017 were dedicated to the set-up and the design of the research – a pilot is being conducted throughout the survey area as we speak. 2018 will be devoted to the actual data collection, the analysis and drafting of reports. OSCE will reach out to key actors in fall 2018 to discuss preliminary results and findings and will provide the full data sets and a policy brief to each participating State and to Kosovo. The results will be officially published and launched in early 2019.
6. The research has two components: the quantitative part with an extensive questionnaire and a qualitative part which will help to contextualize the data at the local level. The sampling and data collection methodology for the quantitative data collection is the same throughout the survey area to ensure the comparability of the survey results. Qualitative add-ons provide the necessary flexibility by taking into account specific local needs and issues. The qualitative research includes desk research, Key Expert Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Interviews and will ensure that the survey data is contextualized. Adherence to ethical principles is a cornerstone of the project methodology and the OSCE applies the proposed procedures by WHO and UN⁴.
7. Table1 below summarises the research tools that will be used, their purpose and the possibilities to tailor them to specific local needs:

⁴ Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women— Statistical Surveys, United Nations, New York, 2014.

Table 1: Research tools

Research tool	Purpose	Tailoring for local needs
<p>Household survey (sample size 1750 women) will be conducted via face-to-face CAPI interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if respondents are conflicted affected or not • Determine prevalence of violence against women and girls (VAWG) <p>Collect data about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social norms related to gender-based violence • Experiences of VAWG (physical, sexual, psychological), and their possible connection to conflict • Behaviours related to seeking help/ reporting violence • Reasons for not reporting • Conflict-related experiences • Physical and psychological consequences of VAWG • Services for survivors of VAWG 	<p>Three questions to be adapted:</p> <p>(a) If the respondents know the three <i>main organisations/services</i> available for support</p> <p>(b) Self-identification as a minority person: can either be done more in general (ethnic, religious minority) or specifically indicate which one</p> <p>(c) A question if the respondent knows up to three major organisations that offer support in case she has experienced violence</p>
<p>Background profile and Key Expert Interviews</p>	<p>To find out more about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional and legal framework • Institutional cooperation • Available data on VAWG • Existing prevention and support • Consequences of conflicts on VAWG 	<p>If requested a section on the situation of IDPs can be added</p>

Research tool	Purpose	Tailoring for local needs
<p>Focus Group Discussions: only with women. Quotas to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age (aim for women who have lived through a time of conflict and women who have not) • Women from urban/rural areas • Women from minority groups • Women who have been displaced during conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand societal attitudes towards women generally, towards gender based violence (GBV) and perpetrators. To explore how this has changed over time including in times of conflict • To explore awareness and views on existing support/ barriers to disclosure • To identify how prevention and support could be improved 	<p>If requested a higher number of Focus Groups could be conducted with a specific group of women, for example IDPs</p>
<p>In-depth Interviews Women with experience of GBV, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women with experience of conflict related GBV • Women with experience of non-conflict related GBV • Women who have a disability 	<p>To explore in-depth personal experiences of GBV including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How/ when GBV began and how this has changed over time • The role of conflict in their experience • Opportunities to disclose experience and the decision making on disclosure and barriers. • Support received or needed 	<p>If requested the number of In-depth Interviews can be increased for a specific group, for example disabled women</p>

B. Overview and specific questionnaire sections developed by the OSCE

8. The questionnaire is divided into 13 sections. The questionnaire starts with an introductory section and continues with questions on gender attitudes and norms, asking respondents if they think certain behaviours are acceptable or would be regarded as acceptable by their neighbourhood/environment. This section is followed by questions about conflict experiences. The conflict questions aim to find out at the beginning of the interview if the respondent has experienced conflict and if yes, at what age, how this experience has affected the respondent's life. Questions about experiences of violence in conflict are integrated throughout the relevant sections of the questionnaire, to avoid asking the respondents twice about the same types of violence - in conflict and non-conflict settings. A separate section on violence in conflict asks respondents about the behaviour of armed men/soldiers; the absence of police, health services and partners; if women had to go to potentially dangerous places and if there were circumstances, which caused women to offer sexual services in exchange for essential goods or for ensuring their safety. The goal of the conflict module is to identify conflict affected women and cover specific conflict related experiences of violence -- including sexual violence -- by tying the most serious

incidents of the reported lifetime experiences to conflicts that survivors lived through, The section on gender attitudes and norms will help understanding the reasons behind anticipated low disclosure rates.

9. The terminology of the survey is based on the definitions used in the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (‘Istanbul Convention’). Table 2 provides an overview of the questionnaire:

Table 2: Sections of the questionnaire

Section	Description
1) Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender attitudes and norms • Experienced an armed conflict?
2) Health, feelings of safety and knowledge about services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions on feelings about own health, disability
3) Sexual harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type, perpetrators and locations • Did she report it? Why not? To whom? Satisfaction with response? Emotional and physical consequences of most serious incident • Most serious incident connected to conflict or not? • Types of violence occurring right before/during/after the conflict • Lifetime and last 12 month prevalence
4) Other experiences with non-partners – physical and sexual violence	
5) Experiences with current partner	
6) Current partner background	
7) Experience with previous partners	
8) Repeated incidents (stalking)	
9) Experiences in childhood	
10) Experience of violence in conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour of armed men/soldiers • Absence of police, health services and partners
11) Respondents background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age, education, occupation, income, minority status, etc.
12) Reporting and seeking help behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences/incidents reported which are perceived as not severe or frequent
13) Self-completion form	

11. Other additions/changes that have been introduced in the OSCE questionnaire are questions about the age at first marriage and if the respondent has a personal bank account; a changed list of occupations and the possibilities for self-identification as a minority/IDP/refugee have been added.
12. The conflict module has been cognitively pre-tested, and subsequently adjusted, in May and June this year in 4 locations in Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and in Kosovo. The conflict related questions have proven to work well.

II. Methodology

A. Introduction

13. The purpose of this section is to describe the overall sampling approach for the research. It will also explain how we will ensure a significant number of conflict-affected women is included in the sample. Booster samples of conflict-affected women will be used where we assume that their total number will be below a certain minimum threshold of the random sample of the population. These are preliminary sampling strategies; final sampling plans for each location are still being developed as we are currently in the preparatory stage of the project.
14. The fieldwork research will be implemented by Ipsos MORI, a London-based international survey research company. Ipsos has local offices in the majority of the targeted OSCE participating States and in Kosovo. Sub-contractors are contracted where Ipsos has no local office.
15. This is a prevalence survey with a representative random sample of 1,750 women in each OSCE participating State and in Kosovo. The target population for the survey are all women aged **18-74 years**. In order to achieve the net sample size, a bigger gross sample will be drawn so that in the end there will be a sufficient number of interviews available for analysis, even after accounting for survey non-response and non-contacts.
16. The interviews will be conducted using **face-to-face by female interviewers only**, who will be using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). Only interviewers with previous interviewing experience will be recruited.
17. The **main sampling principles** that will be followed include:
 - Using the best possible probability sample design and random or deterministic selection methods in each stage of sampling (no quota sampling will be used);
 - Explicitly stratifying the sample according to region and degree of urbanisation and allocating the sample to strata proportionately to target population in each stratum;
 - Using a large enough number of primary sampling units (PSU's) to achieve a maximum of 20 achieved interviews per PSU (the goal is 10 interviews per PSU, on average);
 - Randomly selecting dwelling units;
 - Randomly selecting one household at an address/dwelling unit (where applicable);
 - Random selection of one eligible respondent per household (only one interview per household permitted); and
 - No substitution of dwellings, households or respondents at any stage of the sampling.

B. Overview of the sampling approach

18. A centralized approach to sampling will be taken, e.g. a uniform method to select PSUs. Furthermore, harmonised rules for address sampling (where address-level sampling frames of sufficient quality are available) or for designating starting points (sampling intervals used for random route sample) will be used where no sampling frame exists or is not accessible.
19. Depending on the availability of sampling frames of the target population the sampling will resort to a randomised/deterministic sample enumeration approach. Where a **register-based sampling frame is not available, area-based sampling frames will be used.** The selection of PSUs is the same as for the register-based sampling approach. However, rather than addresses or individuals being preselected in each PSU, interviewers will follow a particular route within each selected PSU starting from one or more addresses (**random walk methodology**) and enumerate/sample dwellings with a pre-set sampling interval (proportional to the size of the PSU), and apply deterministic selection schemes to identify households and target respondents.
20. As a standard, a **two-stage stratified sample of households will be used.** The first stage will be the selection of primary sampling units: small, clearly defined geographic areas where clusters of interviews will be conducted. Typically, census enumeration areas or electoral polling stations/districts will be used. **The PSUs will be sampled with probability proportional to their size (PPS).** In addition to the selection of PSUs proportionate to their size, the sample will be **stratified by geography**. That means that all urban as well as rural settlements in each OSCE participating State and in Kosovo will be proportionately represented in the sample. In most of the cases, **a minimum of 175 PSUs will be selected**, to achieve an average of 10 interviews per PSU and 1,750 in total.
21. Once the PSUs have been selected, residential addresses within the PSUs will be selected. This may be derived from a registry-type sampling frame, or via enumerators, applying random walk sampling methodology, again, depending on the availability of sampling frames. An anchor- or starting point for each PSU will be randomly selected by the field manager (using a public directory or geocoding randomly generated coordinates within the PSU through Google maps), this is the seed address where the enumeration of dwelling starts from. The interviewer will identify and visit residential addresses; starting from the pre-selected starting point, according to a strictly designed set of rules. In each PSU, **a fixed number of addresses** will be assigned to interviews to identify (via random route) and contact. The **sampling interval** will be defined for each PSU, depending on the total population of the PSU. The maximum interval will be fixed at 10 addresses.
22. Unregistered livelihoods/irregular addresses where minority and refugee women may be living will be included in the random selection as they are identified through the random walk procedure.
23. If more than one household resides at the selected address, one household will be randomly selected using a Kish grid. After establishing contact with the sampled household, all eligible respondents starting (i.e. all women between 18 and 74) will be documented starting with the oldest eligible member of the household, and the target respondent will be selected by using the **Kish selection method**. After the respondent has been selected, no substitution will be allowed, and the interviewer will have to make an appointment to conduct the interview with the selected respondent if she is not available at the time of the visit.

C. Booster/Oversampling of conflict affected women

24. One of explicit aims of this research is to better understand how conflicts affect VAWG. To serve this analytical purpose, the sample design ensures that where a general random sample of women does not yield a minimum number of conflict-affected women a booster sample will be added to collect interviews from at least 150 conflict-affected women in each relevant OSCE participating State and in

Kosovo. Our definition of conflict affected women is a person with direct experiences of conflict. Boosters will be **sampled with the same methods** as the general population sample, but focused in the locations that were particularly affected by conflict or where a high number of internally displaced persons reside. Unequal selection probabilities that accompany these booster interviews will be adjusted for by applying selection-probability weights on geographical region and urbanisation level.

III. Relevance/use of the data

25. The purpose of this section is to outline how the data could be used by Statistical Offices and aims to inspire them to include the results of the OSCE's study into their own work plans.
26. The collected data could be of relevance for the Statistical Offices, as it could be used for the reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), in particular SDG 5.2 (Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation). Current discussions about the SDG indicators show that the local authorities will have the responsibility to decide which data will be used. If such data does not already exist in the relevant statistical system, Statistical Offices would have to collect the data. The OSCE survey would close this gap, as it will collect the most recent data by using a robust and tested methodology with a large enough sample, which could be, for example, used as baseline data.
27. Although the project has initially not foreseen the involvement of Statistical Office, we would like to encourage the Statistical Offices to use the data, once the findings are available. With my presentation, I would like to open up the discussion on how the Statistical Offices could benefit from the data by using it for their own agendas/activities. I would like to furthermore discuss how our research fits into the discussion about the localisation of the SDG's.

Next steps:

- We would like to reach out to Statistical Offices in the respective participating States and in Kosovo in order to intensify the discussion and strengthen co-operation;
 - We plan to organize a meeting/workshop with relevant Statistical Offices
-