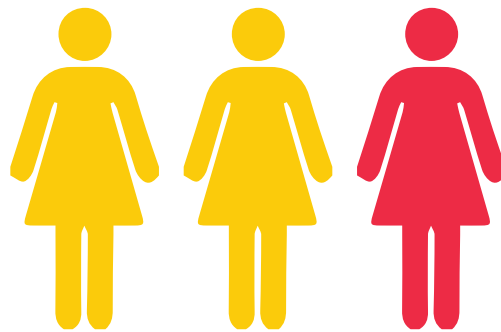


# Responding to Domestic Violence during Lockdown

## CAUSE OF CONCERN



**1 in 3 women**  
experience domestic violence (NFHS- 2015-16)

Only **14%** women sought any form of support

Domestic violence increased by 20-70% worldwide. Prevalence of DV in India is high and lockdown made it worse as women could not access any formal or informal support.

At the same time, public health strategies like lockdowns/quarantines to counter the pandemic, severely constrained access of women survivors of violence to support services due to restrictions on movement and unavailability/closure of crisis intervention centres/clinics.

It is known that violence against women tends to increase during all emergencies including epidemics.

Civil Society Organisations in India responded to this crisis by re-strategising the provisioning of support services for survivors of violence.

# Number of survivors who sought support during lockdown (24 March to 15 June 2020)

Number of survivors supported

**4760**

Percentage increase in survivors seeking support



\*Source-Service records data. Average number of survivors before and during lockdown.

Civil society organisations that actively disseminated information about their services through various fora have recorded an increase in the numbers of survivors seeking support.

Others have continued to receive cases through the lockdown but have noted a dip as women were not able to reach or call.



## Triggers for Violence



Presence of perpetrators 24x7 in the home



Loss of jobs/income of perpetrators leading to inability to support economic needs of the family



Crisis food, poverty, alcohol (beating because of too much drinking or lack of it)



## Advocacy with government to declare VAW services as essential

GO for hospital based centres under National Health Mission issued in last week of March by Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, similarly Sukoon centres of Haryana under NHM were functional from last week of March 2020

GO in Rajasthan for OSCs and Mahila Salah aur Suraksha Kendra (MSSK) issued on 8th May 2020

GO in Assam on 21 May 2020 with clear Standard Operating procedures for helplines, OSCs, shelters, Protection officers. Task force set up on 2nd June for monitoring services and compliance to SoP



# OUTREACH

## Dissemination of Information



Social Media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp

Engaging celebrities

Radio/TV

Engaging Panchayat members and Mukhiyas

## Outreach by organisations



Survivors were informed about available services

Community at large were informed about existing services

Volunteers engaged in awareness and relief work for Covid-19 gave information on available services

Phones numbers of helplines/counsellors were given through ration packets that were distributed

4 organisations were directly involved in relief work, arranging food and other material while the rest coordinated with existing relief services

2823 women survivors were provided with ration kits and 120,000 sanitary napkins were distributed

## Mode of Contact



Mostly by phone but also through email, Facebook, Twitter  
In person

# FORMS OF VIOLENCE

## **Domestic violence: physical, emotional, sexual, economic**

- Perpetrators: Husbands, marital and natal families
- Severe physical abuse to taunts, extreme control over daily routine, burden of housework and care work,
- Women were thrown out of the house (at least 50 reported)
- Dowry murders
- Adolescent girls not being allowed to join online classes
- Unmarried girls being abused at home by parents and siblings
- Abusers not following preventive measures (use of mask, washing hands, staying home) and demanding sex

## **Attempted suicides**

## **Cases of inter caste and inter religious marriages needed support**

## **Violence from neighbours, landlords**

**Sexual harassment outside homes: public toilets were closed during pandemic so women and girls had to go out to defecate (pictures/videos being taken, clothes torn, harassed)**

## **Rape cases: adult women as well as children**

## **Cyber crime**

## **Forced evictions**

## **No documentation so could not access food packets**

# INTERVENTIONS FACILITATED BY CSOS

## SAFETY PLANNING

- Involving family, resident associations, ward members
- Provided numbers of local police, Mukhiya, district collector
- Kept in touch with the survivors

## POLICE

- Facilitated lodging of FIR in few cases
- Asked women to call police helpline and then spoke to the police when they reached her residence
- Counsellors called local police stations and helplines
- Organised passes/permission for safe passage for survivors to access medical care or move to safe place
- Facilitated police transporting women to safe homes

## MEDICAL

- Facilitated access to MTPs, treatment of injuries in public hospitals
- Urged private doctors to provide care as public hospitals were completely burdened with Covid work
- Distribution of Sanitary pads and contraceptive pills
- Provided support to covid positive patients - access to beds and treatment

## SHELTER

- Required repeated calls, coordination and escalation to senior officials

## CWC & LEGAL

- 2 cases where CWC was contacted
- Consultation with lawyers over the phone for legal advice

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Provided therapy on the phone to survivors and their children
- Family counselling over phone

# Summary

- **18 CSOs** responded to a short survey form for collecting data on services provided to survivors of violence during lockdown as members of the Aman Global Voice of Peace in the Home - A network of organizations and individuals, have consolidated their experiences of responding to VAW during the period **24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020**.
- Coverage: **16 states**  
Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.
- Pan India Helplines by CSOs
- Reports from **National Commission for Women as well as Childline** about the voluminous numbers of women and children reporting abuse at home.
- Reports from China, the United Kingdom, the United States, Brazil, Germany amongst other countries suggest an increase in domestic violence cases since the COVID-19 outbreak.



AMAN: Global Voices for Peace in the Home is a national Network to End Domestic Violence. It comprises of 154 women's rights organisations and individuals from across 19 states in India, working on the core issue of violence against women, particularly domestic violence. It came into existence on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2006.

The network provides a platform for member organisations and individuals to interact with each other and learn and grow from each other's strategies and best practices. The network believes in the strength of collective processes to bring about social change.

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