



# INTENSIFICATION OF EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS\*

Violence against women and girls persists as a **GLOBAL EMERGENCY**.



Before COVID-19, **18%** of women and girls who have ever been in a relationship have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months.



Due to COVID-19, women's organizations, crisis centers, helplines and shelters have had **FUNDING CUTS** and are struggling to continue.

Intimate partner violence reports are rising across the globe, with calls to hotlines increasing **FIVE-FOLD** in some countries.

**65 COUNTRIES<sup>1</sup>** have strengthened police and judicial responses to ensure women's access to justice, address lack of punishment of perpetrators and protect women during COVID-19.



**48 COUNTRIES<sup>2</sup>** have integrated violence against women and girls prevention and response into COVID-19 plans, but more efforts are urgently needed.



The COVID-19 pandemic **AFFECTS WOMEN DISPROPORTIONATELY** and is increasing women's vulnerability to violence in the home.



**OVER 80%** of countries<sup>3</sup> have reported action to implement & enforce violence against women **LAWS** in the last 5 years.



**87%** of countries<sup>4</sup> reported introducing or strengthening **SERVICES** for survivors of violence in the last 5 years.



**SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS** remain for the effective enforcement of laws - lack of adequate resources, very low reporting rates, and prevalent gender stereotypes.

\* *Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, Report of the Secretary-General (A/75/274), 30 July 2020*

1,2 *Out of 135 countries. Source: UNDP/UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker*

3,4 *Based on an analysis of 166 national reports submitted for the Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2020/1), 13 December 2019*

# SG Report recommendations

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The COVID-19 pandemic could severely undermine progress made towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls (SDG 5, Target 5.2), which is necessary to achieve equality, development and peace for all. Member States should:

## FUND

1. **Prioritize** the prevention of, and response to, violence against women and girls in national plans for COVID-19 response and recovery. Investments should be part of fiscal stimulus packages and an integral part of ‘building back better’.
2. **Ensure** urgent and flexible funding is available for support services operated by civil society and women’s rights groups, and enable women’s organizations to participate in decision-making processes regarding COVID-19 response and recovery. All women’s organizations should be supported with urgent and flexible funding.

## RESPOND

3. **Declare** support services for women, including shelters, health services psychosocial support, and police and justice responses, as ‘essential services’. Increased funding and adaptation are needed so that women who are disadvantaged, live in remote areas or do not have access to technology, have access to services.
4. **Ensure** that police and justice services give high priority to incidents of violence against women and girls, guaranteeing women access to protection orders and holding perpetrators to account. States should address backlogs through videoconferencing, phone and mobile courts, and the obligation should be placed on perpetrators to leave the home, rather than on victims and survivors.
5. **Ensure** all actors, including the private sector, support women who are experiencing violence, using survivor-based approaches in partnership with women’s organizations, with such efforts further strengthened in the context of COVID-19.

## PREVENT

6. **Use** media, social media and online technologies, as well as community approaches, to shift norms, stereotypes and attitudes that normalize and excuse violence, and engage men and boys as allies in eliminating violence against women and girls.
7. **Guarantee** gender-responsive and universal access to social protection, as it is critical for ensuring women’s economic security and independence. This should include wage subsidies and other safety nets.
8. **Ensure** access to safe and affordable information and communication technologies for women and girls, and work with technology providers to eliminate online violence and harassment, particularly in the context of COVID-19.
9. **Strengthen** laws addressing violence against women and girls - reforms must not be halted.
10. **Ratify** ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) without delay, and prioritize actions that create culture change to eliminate sexual harassment in the world of work.

## COLLECT

11. **Continue** to strengthen efforts to improve data on violence against women and girls, including by addressing gaps in national sexual harassment data.