RAPID GENDER ASSESSMENT
ON THE IMPACT
OF COVID-19 ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN

TECHNICAL REPORT – CAMEROON SURVEY FIELDWORK

MAY – JUNE 2021

UN WOMEN

WOMEN COUNT

1. Introduction

Prompted by strong concern that the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the risk of different forms of violence against women and girls, particularly intimate partner/domestic violence, and realizing the need for collection of reliable data that are in line with methodological, safety and ethical standards, UN Women commissioned Ipsos to conduct a study on the impact of COVID-19 on women's well-being and safety in 13 countries across several regions all over the world. The participating countries were Albania, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Columbia, Côte d'Ivoire, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Nigeria, Paraguay, Thailand and Ukraine.

The **core objectives** of the study were to:

- collect data on the impacts of COVID-19 on violence against women in low- and middle-income countries.

- strengthen measurement and methodologies for violence against women data collection and use.

- strengthen available knowledge on all forms of violence against women and improve capacities to collect, analyse and use data on violence against women in accordance with globally agreed methodological, safety and ethical standards.

- inform where the policy and programmatic response of UN Women should focus and support UN system-wide efforts to scale up actions to address violence against women in the context of COVID-19.

The following groups contributed to the **project's management and execution**:

1. the UN Women project team, comprising statisticians, researchers and policy specialists;

2. the Technical Advisory Group – an external reference group established by UN Women to provide independent technical advice and expertise to the project;

3. the Ipsos project team involved in the set-up and delivery of the study; and

4. national fieldwork partners.

Methodology of the study	
Target group	Women aged 18 +
Timing	Two-phased approach: Phase I (four countries) took place May–June 2021; Phase II (nine countries) took place August-September 2021
Data collection method	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)
Sampling approach	Random probability sampling with monitoring of quota on age and region Random-digit dialling to mobile sample frames
Sample Size	1,200 women aged 18+ per country
Questionnaire length and type	Target duration of max. 20 minutes No open-ended answers Informed consent asked to each participant at the beginning of the interview Awareness of safety, privacy and confidentiality of women respondents Guided by the "do no harm" principle applicable to the women respondents and the interviewers/research team The questionnaire was adapted in each country by localizing characters' names and cultural references (i.e. popular food, music, sports).
Scripting	Central scripting in software applications - iField and Dimensions
Language	At least one main language per country

The country chapters provide information on the set-up of the data collection process (obtaining of ethical clearance, sampling and translation), description of the fieldwork, main characteristics of the achieved sample by several indicators (age group, region, area type, educational attainment), technical information (interview duration, contact outcomes, screen-outs, temporary interview suspension at safety questions, survey dropouts, use of safety word, and item non-response), key field observations and relevant lessons and recommendations.

2. Country information

2.1 Cameroon

2.1.1 Obtaining ethical clearance

UN Women sought general support or tacit approval for the study from the National Institute of Statistics (INS) and the Bureau Central des Recensements et des Études de Population / Central Bureau of the Census and Population Studies (BUCREP). The 'no objection' from the BUCREP was granted on 17 March 2021 in support of the project.

2.1.2 Sampling plan

A single-frame cell-phone random-digit dialling (RDD) survey design was used to reach a nationally representative sample of women aged 18+. The sample mirrored the telephone database distribution (frame size) by provider and the gross (unscreened) sample included numbers for each of the providers in the country to the same proportions as in the frame size.[1] In 2020, 52% of the population had a mobile subscription.[2]

Of the 40,000,000 numbers available in the sample frame, 18,455,836 (46%) were expected to be working numbers (based on cell subscriptions in 2018). The sample was pulsed, meaning that a signal was sent to the randomly generated phone number to verify if the number existed (i.e., if connection could be achieved). The upfront pulsing of the gross sample closely reflected the market shares of the different operators (in terms of subscriptions). The sample was also screened against business registers so as to exclude numbers that were used by companies. Further details on the sampling frame are provided in section 2.4.1 of the main technical report.

To ensure a representative sample, quotas were set on age (18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60+) and region (first-level administrative division), using the following statistical sources:

- Age: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2019. World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. Rev. 1.[3]

- Region: Census data from BUCREP. N.D. Résultats du 3ème RGPH - Projections Démographiques - Rapports National sur l'État de la Population.[4]

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[1] MTN Cameroon 15,000,000; Nextel 10,000,000; Orange Cameroon 15,000,000.
[2] https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Navigating-the-Tech-Ecosystem-in-Cameroon.pdf
[3] https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Interpolated/
[4] http://www.bucrep.cm/index.php/fr/recensements/3eme-rgph/resultats/47-3eme-rgph/volume-ii--analyses-thematiques/140-principaux-indicateur-etat-et-structure

2.1.3 Translation

The questionnaire was translated into French, Fulfulde and Cameroonian Pidgin English.

No issues related to equivalence (conceptual equivalence, semantic equivalence, etc.) were encountered during translation.

The questionnaire required localization for several items in the text of the questions and answers, including widely known, yet neutral in meaning, male and female names, which were used in the vignettes in the Safety Section of the survey. In Cameroon, the male name used was Christian and the female, Christine.

2.1.4 Fieldwork period

Fieldwork took place between 2–30 May 2021. In the first two weeks, progress was slow, partly because the team experienced some technical issues displaying the survey questionnaire, due to Internet connection problems. In the third week, three additional interviewers were trained (for a total of 13) and the team also started calling on weekends and public holidays (Eid al-Fitr and Ascension Day on 13 May, and the National Day of Cameroon on 20 May) to finish fieldwork by the end of May. These measures helped to increase the number of completed interviews per week. Most interviews (around 40%) were completed in week three, which included the National Day of Cameroon.

2.1.5 Achieved sample

In total, 1,226 valid interviews were completed in Cameroon. In general, the distribution of the sample across age groups was in line with the targets, notwithstanding a very small shortfall for the 18–29 age group (1 percentage point).

Table 1: Achieved sample, by age group (Cameroon)

Age group	Target	Target %	Completed (unweighted)	Completed % (unweighted)	Weighted %[5]	Difference unweighted % vs. target %	Difference weighted % vs. target %
18–29	492	41%	490	40%	41%	-1%	0%
30–39	297	25%	310	25%	25%	1%	0%
40–49	187	16%	194	16%	16%	0%	0%
50–59	120	10%	118	10%	10%	0%	0%
60+	108	9%	114	9%	9%	0%	0%

The regional targets were met for all regions except the Far North (where there was a shortfall of 1 percentage point) and the North (where there was a shortfall of two interviews).

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[5] Weighting procedures are discussed in more detail in section 4.4.2 of the main technical report.

Table 2: Achieved sample, by region (Cameroon)

Region	Target	Target %	Completed (unweighted)	Completed % (unweighted)	Weighted %	Difference unweighted % vs. target %[6]	Difference weighted % vs. target %[7]
Adamawa	61	5%	62	5%	5%	0%	0%
Centre	210	18%	210	17%	18%	0%	0%
East	53	4%	55	5%	4%	0%	0%
Far North	214	18%	211	17%	18%	-1%	0%
Littoral	170	14%	180	15%	14%	1%	0%
North	116	10%	114	9%	10%	0%	0%
North West	122	10%	128	10%	10%	0%	0%
West	124	10%	130	11%	10%	0%	0%
South	43	4%	44	4%	4%	0%	0%
South West	88	7%	92	8%	7%	0%	0%

The distribution across rural (35%) and urban (65%) areas (as self-reported by respondents) was relatively close to data from the World Bank that estimate a total rural population of 43%.[8] Of course, it needs to be borne in mind that a cell phone sampling frame was used. Latest available data suggests that mobile Internet use in sub-Saharan Africa – which can be used as an indicator for cell phone use in general – stands at 16% in rural areas, compared to 40% in urban areas. In low- and middle-income countries, there is also a gender gap in mobile Internet use: in 2019, women were 20% less likely than men to use mobile Internet.[9]

Table 3: Achieved sample, by area type (Cameroon)

Area	Completed (unweighted)	Completed % (unweighted)	Weighted %
Urban	786	64%	64%
Rural	440	35%	35%

A quarter of respondents had completed primary school or had no formal education, while about half had completed secondary school or attended technical or vocational training, and one in five had attended a tertiary education programme.

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[6] The figures in this column reflect the actual difference of the unweighted and target percentages. Any variations are caused by the rounding up of the percentages in the table.

[7] The figures in this column reflect the actual difference of the unweighted and target percentages. Any variations are caused by the rounding up of the percentages in the table.

[8] World Bank estimates, based on the United Nations Population Division's World Urbanization Prospects: 2018 Revision.

[9] GSMA. 2020. *The State of Mobile Internet Connectivity 2020*. https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/GSMA-State-of-Mobile-Internet-Connectivity-Report-2020.pdf.

Table 4: Achieved sample, by educational attainment (Cameroon)

Education level	Completed (unweighted)	Completed % (unweighted)	Weighted %
No formal education	45	4%	4%
Completed primary school	255	21%	21%
Completed secondary school	394	32%	32%
Technical & vocational training	270	22%	22%
Completed university/college	181	15%	15%
Completed post-graduate	56	5%	5%
Don't know	23	2%	2%
Refused	2	0%	0%

2.1.6 Quality control and data processing

Three interviews were removed from the Cameroon sample because they did not meet the quality criteria in terms of length, straight-lining and/or item non-response. (section 4.4 of the main technical report provides a detailed description of the implemented quality control procedures and how data were processed).

2.1.7 Technical information

The interview duration was above to the envisaged 20 minutes, at 23 minutes on average (compared with a mean of 25 minutes across the four countries).

Table 5: Interview duration (Cameroon)

Mean	Median	Standard deviation
22.72	19.92	14.25

The response rate in Cameroon was 16%, calculated using the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) definition of response rate. – that is, the number of complete interviews divided by the number of interviews (complete plus partial) plus the number of non-interviews (refusal and break-off plus non-contacts plus others) plus all cases of unknown eligibility (unknown if housing unit, plus unknown, other).[10]

The table below shows the incidence of each outcome code.

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[10] AAPOR. 2015. Standard Definitions. https://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Main/media/MainSiteFiles/Standard-Definitions2015_8thEd.pdf

Table 6: Contact outcomes (Cameroon)

Contact outcomes	Count	% of all outcomes
Fixed appointment	/	0%
Soft appointment	/	0%
Incomplete interview with call-back to resume later	/	0%
Telephone answering device / voicemail / message service	1400	14%
Busy / engaged	/	0%
No answer	/	0%
Complete	1225	12%
Screen-out	2380	24%
Incomplete interview with no call-back (terminated)	1202	12%
Immediate refusal (before eligibility of respondent has been confirmed)	/	0%
Refusal by eligible respondent (after eligibility of respondent has been confirmed, but before the actual interview started)	3895	39%
Respondent never available for appointment	/	0%
Deceased respondent	/	0%
Respondent physically or mentally unable / incompetent	/	0%
Respondent or household language problem	/	0%
Call blocking / barring / do not call list	/	0%
Fax / data line / modem / pager	/	0%
Non-working / disconnected / dead / bad number	/	0%
Non-residential number (business, government office, other organization)	/	0%
Technical issue / CATI system error	/	0%

Table 7 provides an overview of specific call outcomes (completed interview, partial interview, and refusals) by the time of the day (morning, afternoon, evening) and the day of the week. The figures should be interpreted with caution, as they do not reflect the percentage of all contact attempts performed during this time/on that day, but the split of these specific outcomes across the time of the day/day of the week.

Feedback from the field team on the best time and the best day to obtain an interview is provided in section 2.1.8.

Table 7: Call outcome, by time of the day and day of the week (Cameroon)

		Completed interviews		Partial interviews		Refusals	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Sunday	Morning	13	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Afternoon	92	7%	1	7%	1	20%
	Evening	34	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Monday	Morning	15	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Afternoon	89	7%	0	0%	0	0%
	Evening	35	3%	1	7%	0	0%
Tuesday	Morning	25	2%	0	0%	0	0%
	Afternoon	95	8%	0	0%	1	20%
	Evening	58	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Wednesday	Morning	34	3%	1	7%	0	0%
	Afternoon	131	10%	1	7%	1	20%
	Evening	71	6%	1	7%	0	0%
Thursday	Morning	56	4%	2	14%	0	0%
	Afternoon	141	11%	1	7%	0	0%
	Evening	63	5%	1	7%	0	0%
Friday	Morning	26	2%	0	0%	0	0%
	Afternoon	78	6%	0	0%	1	20%
	Evening	42	3%	1	7%	0	0%
Saturday	Morning	12	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Afternoon	95	8%	1	7%	1	20%
	Evening	50	4%	3	21%	0	0%

Twenty-nine per cent of the sample called were men and were thus screened out at the very beginning of the survey. Thereafter, only a small number of people were screened out – three because they were not yet 18 years old, eight because they did not want to participate, and nine because they did not fully understand the purpose of the survey or the confidentiality measures.

Table 8: Screen-outs (Cameroon)

Question	Answer	Count	% of total answered
S3	Sex: Male	556	29%
S4_1	Age: Below 18 years	3	0%
S1	Willing to participate: No	8	1%
S6	Understand purpose: No	4	0%
S7	Understand confidentiality: No	5	0%

The interview was temporarily discontinued in 25 cases because the respondent answered "no" to one of the five 'safety' questions (listed in Table 9 below).

Table 9: Temporary interview suspension due to responses to safety questions (Cameroon)

Question	Answer	Count	% of total answered
S2	Can you let me know if the speaker phone is off? No	7	1%
S5	Can you confirm if now is a good time? No	2	0%
B01	Can you confirm that there is no one around you over the age of 2 that can overhear our conversation? No	5	0%
C18	Alternatively, if someone over the age of 2 is listening to our call or is nearby that can hear, please say no. No	8	1%
C27	If someone over the age of 2 is listening to our call or is nearby that can hear, please say no. No	3	0%

Fourteen respondents dropped out of the survey. The table below shows the questions at which the dropouts occurred.

Table 10: Survey dropouts, by question (Cameroon)

Question	Question text	No. of participants dropped out	% of total dropouts
S11	Would you consider the area you live in to be urban or rural?	1	7.1%
A03	Which of the following best describes what you mainly do each day...?	1	7.1%
A04	In addition to this, do you do any activity that generates an income, even if only for a few hours a week?	1	7.1%
A06	How many people including yourself, live in your household?	1	7.1%
A09	Who do you consider to be the head of your household?	1	7.1%

Question	Question text	No. of participants dropped out	% of total dropouts
A11	Has this changed at all in the past year?	1	7.1%
C10	How common do you think this story is for women in the area where you live?	1	7.1%
C14	How common do you think this story is for women in the area where you live?	1	7.1%
S12	And, as a final question, I would like to know if you have another mobile phone number besides the one I am calling you on? IF YES: How many other mobile phone numbers do you have?	6	42.9%
	Total	14	100%

As previously explained, and as part of the safety protocols, respondents were given a safe word, a specific popular local food (PLF), that they could use if they were disturbed by a third party or otherwise felt unsafe at any point during the interview. In Cameroon, the food used was "PLANTAIN" (French), "PLANTY" (Pidgin) and "KOWNDON" (Fulfulde). This word was used nine times during the course of fieldwork. The table below shows the questions at which this occurred.

Table 11: Use of popular local food, per question (Cameroon)

Question	Question text	PLF mentioned
S8	What region in [COUNTRY] do you live in?	1
A09	Who do you consider to be the head of your household?	1
A12	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household…	1
C05	Discrimination happens when you are treated less favourably compared to others or harassed because of your sex, age, disability, socioeconomic status, place of residence, political opinion, or any other characteristics. Have you personally experienced any form of discrimination against you SINCE COVID-19?	1
C30	Which, if any, of the following have you or any other woman you know experienced SINCE THE START OF COVID-19?	1
C31	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic?	2
Unknown		2
	Total	9

In terms of item non-response (INR), this varied across the survey but was highest at A10 (34%). A high INR for questions that ask about the monthly household income is not unusual. This information is often

considered too sensitive to share in a survey, and respondents frequently do not know the exact income range applicable to them. Asking about the time before the COVID-19 pandemic adds another layer of difficulty because respondents might not remember their income from early 2020. Other questions with high INR were C06 (26%), C08 (21%) and C15 (21%) – all related to changes resulting from the impact of the pandemic.

Table 12: Item non-response (Cameroon)

Question	Question text	Item non-response
A02	What is the highest level of education that you completed?	2.40%
A03	Which of the following best describes what you mainly do each day...?	0.08%
A04	In addition to this, do you do any activity that generates an income, even if only for a few hours a week?	0.16%
A05	Do you have difficulty doing any of the following – walking, seeing (even when wearing classes), hearing (even with hearing assistance), remembering or concentrating, self-caring or communicating?	3.91%
A07	How many of the people living in your household are aged 0–17?	0.56%
A08	How many of the people living in your household are elderly, aged 65 or over? Please include yourself if that is appropriate.	2.08%
A09	Who do you consider to be the head of your household?	0.64%
A10	What was the monthly income of your household BEFORE COVID-19?	34.35%
A11	Has this changed at all in the past year?	12.86%
A12_1	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...were worried you would not have enough food to eat?	0.40%
A12_2	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food?	0.64%
A12_3	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...ate only a few kinds of food?	0.96%
A12_4	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...had to skip a meal?	1.04%
A12_5	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...ate less than you thought you should?	0.80%
A12_6	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...ran out of food?	1.04%
A12_7	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...were hungry but did not eat?	1.28%
A12_8	During the last month, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you or others in your household...went without eating for a whole day?	1.92%

B02_1	In the last month, how often did you feel...that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	0.64%
B02_2	In the last month, how often did you feel...confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	0.72%
B02_3	In the last month, how often did you feel...difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	1.20%
B03	Thinking about these topics I've mentioned, would you say the COVID-19 situation has made these difficulties better, worse or the same?	3.59%
B04	Overall, would you say your own mental or emotional health (e.g., stress, anxiety, confidence, etc.) has been affected AS A RESULT OF COVID-19?	1.12%
C02	To what extent, if at all, do you feel safe when walking alone in the area where you live during the day?	2.32%
C03	To what extent, if at all, do you feel safe when walking alone in the area where you live at night?	5.75%
C04	How, if at all, has your feeling of safety while walking alone at night changed SINCE THE ONSET OF COVID-19?	13.58%
C05	Discrimination happens when you are treated less favourably compared to others or harassed because of your sex, age, disability, socioeconomic status, place of residence, political opinion, or any other characteristics. Have you personally experienced any form of discrimination against you SINCE COVID-19?	3.43%
C06	Do you feel that discrimination, prejudice or racism in the area where you live have changed SINCE THE ONSET OF COVID-19?	25.64%
C07	To what extent do you think that violence, abuse or harassment is a problem in the area where you live?	9.03%
C08	How, if at all, do you think physical harm, abuse or harassment in the area where you live have changed SINCE COVID-19?	21.01%
C09	Have you personally experienced physical harm or threats of physical harm, abuse or harassment specifically by the police or security agents in the context of implementing restrictions to respond to COVID-19 (movement restriction, curfew, closure of certain premises)?	1.92%
C10	How common do you think this story is for women in the area where you live?	17.73%
C11	Would you say the situation of COVID-19 has made things better, worse or the same for [Scripter: insert Female name] from this story?	15.34%
C12	Do you think [Scripter: insert Female name] would seek help for this situation?	11.98%
C13	Who would [Scripter: insert Female name] most likely seek help from?	0.08%
C14	How common do you think this story is for women in the area where you live?	18.45%
C15	Would you say the situation of COVID-19 has made things better, worse or the same for [Scripter: insert Female name] from this story in terms of her feelings of safety?	20.61%
C16	Do you think [Scripter: insert Female name] would seek help for this situation?	9.03%
C17	Who would [Scripter: insert Female name] most likely seek help from?	0.16%

C19	How often in the last six months would you say that adults in your household have argued or have had some sort of conflict among themselves?	1.68%
C20	Would you say the situation of COVID-19 has made conflict between adults in your household more frequent, less frequent or about the same?	8.47%
C21	In the last six months, did you ever feel unsafe in your home?	1.28%
C22	Would you say COVID-19 has made things better, worse or the same in terms of how safe you feel in your home?	4.95%
C23_1	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? I have a serious medical condition or disability and feel vulnerable	0.08%
C23_2	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? My shelter is insecure from external threats (e.g., there are no locks on my front door)	0.32%
C23_3	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? I am unable to communicate/reach out for help	0.48%
C23_4	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? I am living with people I cannot trust	0.48%
C23_5	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? There is substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) in the household	0.40%
C23_6	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? There is physical violence or threats of physical violence in my home	0.24%
C23_7	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? There is verbal abuse in my home	0.16%
C23_8	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? Other adults in the household have hurt me	0.16%
C23_9	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? Other adults in the household have been hurt	0.40%
C23_10	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? Children in the household have been hurt	0.24%
C23_11	Why do you feel unsafe in your home? Something else	0.96%
C24	How often, if at all, did you go out of your house in the last month?	0.64%
C25	Do you still continue to see or speak with your friends and social groups?	1.04%
C28A	Please tell me how many of the following statements you regard as true SINCE THE ONSET OF COVID-19:	7.59%
C28B	Please tell me how many of the following statements you regard as true SINCE THE ONSET OF COVID-19:	8.55%
C29A	Please tell me how many of the following statements you regard as true SINCE THE ONSET OF COVID-19:	7.75%
C29B	Please tell me how many of the following statements you regard as true SINCE THE ONSET OF COVID-19:	8.15%
C30_1	Which, if any, of the following have you or any other woman you know experienced SINCE THE START OF COVID-19? Been slapped, hit, kicked, had things thrown at them, or other physical harm	1.60%
C30_2	Which, if any, of the following have you or any other woman you know experienced SINCE THE START OF COVID-19? Been yelled at, called names, humiliated	2.96%

C30_3	Which, if any, of the following have you or any other woman you know experienced SINCE THE START OF COVID-19? Had resources (like healthcare) or basic needs (like money, food, water, shelter) denied	2.40%
C30_4	Which, if any, of the following have you or any other woman you know experienced SINCE THE START OF COVID-19? Been forced to stay alone for long period of time or denied communication with other people	1.84%
C30_5	Which, if any, of the following have you or any other woman you know experienced SINCE THE START OF COVID-19? Been the subject of inappropriate jokes, suggestive comments, leering, or unwelcome touch/kisses	2.48%
C31_1	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic? Information about security/crime prevention	3.04%
C31_2	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic? Access to basic needs such as shelter, food, clothing	2.00%
C31_3	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic? Medical and financial support	1.68%
C31_4	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic? Someone to talk to like professional mental health experts	2.16%
C31_5	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic? Legal support or help in reporting the incident or dealing with police	2.64%
C31_6	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of what we could do for women suffering from violence during the pandemic? Other, specify	10.30%
S12	And as a final question, I would like to know if you have another mobile phone number besides the one I am calling you on? IF YES: How many other mobile phone numbers do you have?	1.28%

2.1.7 Field observations

This section describes the observations made by Field Managers and interviewers in the course of fieldwork. The observations relate to the most productive days for fieldwork, the main reasons for refusal to take part in the survey, the challenges of reaching certain age groups, and the clarity of terms, concepts and questions, among other topics. The observations effectively complement the fieldwork statistics included in the previous section, providing a more nuanced picture of the fieldwork experience.

- According to the field team, Saturday, Sunday and public holidays were the best days of the week to obtain an interview. There was no specific time of the day that worked better or worse, but most interviews (58%) were completed in the afternoon.

- The main reasons for refusals to take part in the survey were a lack of time to participate and the length of the survey, as well as scepticism among respondents as to how their phone number had been obtained.

- Older age groups (50–59 and 60+) were less represented in the RDD sample frame. The field team also had the impression that women in these age groups refused more often, mainly because they were not interested in participating in a survey. Younger age groups, in contrast, appeared more open to participation and more receptive to survey introduction in general.

- One interviewer stopped working on the project after the pilot because they found the experience of interviewing women on the topic of violence too distressing.

- The telephone-based data-collection method was perceived as appropriate. Interviewers had the feeling that women appreciated that they were able to stay anonymous throughout the interview, which gave them confidence to express their opinion and share their experiences. At the same time, interviewers observed that the telephone approach sometimes made it difficult to sense if a respondent had any negative reactions or feelings to questions, and to know if they should adapt their approach accordingly.

In terms of observations relating to the survey questionnaire:

- Regarding **specific questions**, it was difficult to obtain an answer to the question about respondents' age and their monthly household income. There are various reasons why women might not disclose their monthly household income, including changed incomes between months and therefore not knowing how to answer, and no control of assets within the household.

- Respondents expressed irritation about the frequent reminders to use the **popular local food** if needed.

- **Terms and concepts** such as "harassment" and "discrimination" were generally understood, and conceptual equivalence was confirmed by the field team. In some cases – particularly if the education level of the respondent was low – explanations were needed to help the respondent fully understand what was being asking.

- The first reaction to **questions considered somewhat sensitive** was slight embarrassment, but no strong emotions (like fear or upset) were expressed and respondents answered in a normal tone of voice. Also, respondents who had experienced violence in any form answered the questions and sometimes talked about their experience beyond the questions asked.

2.1.8 Lessons learned and recommendations

This section draws upon the fieldwork statistics and observations outlined in the previous sections to provide recommendations for future surveys on violence against women in Cameroon. Specifically, whether remote data collection can be considered as an appropriate approach to develop an evidence base on perceptions and incidence.

- **CATI** and the use of a **single-frame cell phone RDD design** worked well in Cameroon and this approach is recommended for future data collection activities on violence against women. That said, older women (50+) and those living in certain regions (the Far North and North) were more difficult than other groups to reach with the RDD sample. This should be reflected in the time dedicated to active data collection in future surveys with age- and region-based quotas. A longer fieldwork period would help to ensure the quotas are uniformly achieved. In the case of a face-to-

face approach, a longer fieldwork period would be absolutely necessary owing to the extra time required for physical visits to prospective respondents' homes.

- Given the field team's observations that **weekends and public holidays** were among the most productive days for fieldwork, it is recommended to spread data-collection activities via CATI across all days of the week, including public holidays.

- Given the feedback on interview length and the high dropout rate compared to the other countries, it is also recommended to reduce the questionnaire to **15 minutes** – or at the very least ensure that the questionnaire does not exceed the 20-minute target, as is currently the case.

- Thirty-four per cent did not answer the question about **monthly household income** before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.[11] For future surveys, this question could be replaced by a question on subjective economic welfare (such as the Income Evaluation Question that are commonly used to construct subjective poverty lines[12]) to ensure information on the economic household situation is captured in all countries.

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[11] Analysis of the data shows that a high proportion of the non-responses to this question comprised 'don't know responses (82% of non-responses). Refusals to answer the question were comparatively infrequent (18% of non-responses). Not knowing the monthly household income before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic might have various causes, including simply not remembering, an irregular income, or not managing the household budget. Indeed, 77% of those who did not know the answer to the income question did not consider themselves as head of the household (alone or together with the husband), and the head of the household is most often responsible for managing the household income and assets.

[12] See for example, Lačný, M. 2020. "Approaches to subjective poverty in economic and sociological research." *Human Affairs. 30*, 3. pp. 413-427. https://doi.org/10.1515/humaff-2020-0035https://doi.org/10.1515/humaff-2020-0035

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