

The Cost of Non-Prevention

Analysis and Recommendations to face violence against women from the perspective and experiences in Villa El Salvador.

Introduction.

Gender-based violence against women (GBV) is a human rights violation, a serious public health problem and a great obstacle in the way of sustainable development. Calculating the economic impact of this problem helps us visibilize the different aspects in women's lives and their communities which are affected by violence, and putting a greater emphasis on the need of an integrated response.

The investigation has as a main objective to determine the impact of GBV, identifying the individual and community-level costs in the district of Villa El Salvador (VES) for the year 2018, through GBV's impacts on health, household, community and their equivalent in monetary costs.

This report was developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through their project Justa: "Villa El Salvador for Justice and Equality". Justa is one of 7 pilot projects focused on gender-based violence prevention being developed in local governments in Bhutan, Lebanon, Indonesia, Iraq, Moldova, Uganda and Peru. This is the first time this methodology has been applied in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Results.

The costs of GBV can be evaluated through multiple perspectives, but due to the unique social background and characteristics in VES, it is vital to evaluate costs through three different levels:

- At an individual level, it negatively impacts women's health, rising morbidity across all areas (higher chance of disease or injury); it hampers their access to job opportunities, and thus their empowerment and development; and it puts their self-care abilities at risk.
- At a household level, it has a direct impact on the development opportunities of the children at home; it's an obstacle in the way of school success, it elevates morbidity and increases the likelihood of violence repeating in other aspects of their social life.
- At a community level, it costs large amounts of opportunity loss felt through hours of work dedicated to the social support of the victims, higher debt to get money to answer violence; and it harms the social fabric of the community support networks and value chain generation.

1. Costs.

- In VES, GBV has resulted, for the year 2018, in a loss of 72.9 million USD.
- 44.7% of these costs are covered by the affected women themselves, while the households and the rest of the community faced 11.1% and 44.2% of the costs, respectively.
- These costs were caused by general spending to answer GBV (14.3 million USD), new debts (4.3 million USD) and opportunity loss in health, work and education areas, among others (54.3 million USD).

2. Women.

- In VES, 3 out of 4 women have been affected by some type of GBV in their lifetime.
- Only in 2018, 1 out of 2 women have been victims of some type of GBV
- Each affected woman loses between \$330 and \$500 (12 to 16% of a minimum wage yearly salary in Peru) every year due to violence incidents, even those who don't have independent income. In VES, this results in more than 30 million USD a year, related mainly to seeking medical attention, access to legal justice and personal protection, among others.

3. Community.

- In VES, each woman that has been the victim of GBV by their current or former spouse has received social support from their family, neighbors or acquaintances up to 15 times, with a average accrued time of 314 hours in the last year.
- In VES, every woman on average knows a victim of GBV. These can be family members (37.6%) neighbors (41.3%), or acquaintances (38.5%) who have been physically assaulted by their current or former spouse.
- In VES, each woman that has provided social support to a victim of violence has dedicated, on average, 53 hours to this task in 2018.

Conclusions.

- GBV is an obstacle in the way of human sustainable development in Villa El Salvador. Researching the economic impact of GBV is a powerful tool to analyze the costs of inaction and motivate further investment in violence prevention.
- Violence against women generates trauma, reduces their development abilities and affects multiple levels of society in general. However, a factor that is usually overlooked is the cost that the community itself faces when violence occurs.

- Women who do not possess independent income are the majority of women who take up the task of being the social support of victims of GBV. The social and community driven support they provide is vital, but in order to reduce the great burden they're carrying now, further government-based answers to violence must be prioritized. Those answers will need to strengthen these community leaders and provide the much needed economic help they currently do not have.
- Current government-led efforts are, and should be, focused on preventing GBV. It's important to strengthen current policies in place, starting from innovating practices and increasing funding, taking into account the ongoing projects by local support networks, already bringing community-based responses to violence.

REPORT METHODOLOGY:

The study was based on a household interview to 504 women between the ages of 18 to 65, residents of the district of Villa El Salvador, selected at random through a two-stage stratified probabilistic sampling with simple affixation. The survey was designed to obtain information of experiences regarding GBV, as well as its effects in health, household and community related costs, complemented with their equivalent in monetary spending.