

Methodologies and data sources for costing gender-based violence.

Dr Philippa Olive and Prof. Sylvia Walby, 21st September 2018.

Question 1: How important is the availability of robust national/local administrative and statistical data on gender-based violence (GBV) to costing GBV?

Robust administrative and statistical data is of central importance for costing gender-based violence. Additionally though, a clear and recognised definition of 'gender-based violence' for proposed costing exercises is warranted, first so that it is clear what is included and excluded in the study and second, to inform the range of data necessary to fulfill cost estimations. As an example, for our study estimating the costs of GBV in the European Union (Walby and Olive 2014), we drew on definitions advanced by the UN (1993) and Council of Europe (2011) that focus on sexual violence and violence perpetrated by intimate partner and other family members (domestic violence).

Our review of costing studies identified that seven approaches had been incorporated into earlier methodologies, these were: expert judgement, victim recall studies, surveys, administrative data, population data sets and studies of similar harms, and specialised research projects. The most important of these are representative surveys detailing the extent of the violence and its impact and administrative (service utilisation and cost) data. The quality and robustness of data sources is of central importance so that cost of GBV estimates do not excessively underestimate nor be critiqued as either overestimates or inaccurate. Costing errors could be damaging to prevention of violence against women and gender equality policy and programmes and appropriate prioritisation and allocation of resources. Our approach was one for which we could confidently state that the economic and social cost of GBV against women in the UK, 2012 was at least EUR 28,418,772,278.

Question 2: How does the quality of such data in a country affect the decision to employ a particular costing methodology/method?

Data quality and costing methodology

Item coverage of costing exercises is dependent on availability of robust data on both the extent of the violence and its direct impact for women individually. Overall, the collection of administrative data across the EU across in non-specialised service sectors (i.e., health, police, criminal justice, civil justice and social service) is generally poor and insufficient to specifically identify gender-based violence related service utilisation and costs (EIGE 2014a, 2014b, Olive 2017, Olive 2018). That said, for our UK study we were able to source high quality data sources for the following elements:

- the extent of forms of gender-based violence in terms of prevalence, frequency, type and severity, in the last year.
- the direct impact of the violence on the individual women concerned: e.g. the injuries to health; increased family breakdown; out-of-pocket expense;
- the extent of the utilisation of services (health services, legal services, social welfare and specialist) by women affected by the violence.
- the cost of the services utilised.
- the impact of the violence on the employment (and/or schooling) of the women affected: e.g. the measurement of the detriment to employment (and/or schooling) through lost days off or lost jobs (school place);
- the value placed on avoiding the physical and emotional harms of gender-based and intimate partner violence and/or the value placed on health loss: e.g. reduced quality adjusted life years.

To produce robust estimates for these items multiple data sources were used and these included: quality assured, population-based victimization survey, crime and homicide statistics, administrative data (as possible for service utilisation and service budgets), annual financial reports, government approved methods for estimating cost and cost/benefit evaluations of harm prevention programmes and specialist research findings.

Depending on the format of cost data available there are two main approaches to item costing. The first is the unit cost (bottom up) approach which produces a cost of service per unit of service that is multiplied by number of incidents/victims of violence. The second is the percentage of service cost (top down) approach which divides the total cost or funding of a service by the percentage of that service use justifiably attributable to the violence. Both approaches were used in our UK study.

Question 3: In countries of the Arab region where there is a dearth of robust national/local administrative and statistical data on GBV, what methodology(ies)/method(s) would you recommend?

If robust, high quality data is not available then an alternative approach would be to draw on robust estimates from other costing studies that could be justifiably employed. Such an approach would mean adopting item cost estimates produced in similar contexts. For example, if States' health care systems (service provision, funding and access) were similar and State A had high quality data available to produce a reasonable unit cost estimate and other States in the region with similar contexts did not then State A's robust unit cost could be justifiably used by other States. If contextually similar States have insufficient high-quality data to produce an item cost estimate the next step would be draw on item cost estimates undertaken in other regions appraising whether it would be reasonably valid to employ in respect of contextual similarities and differences. If this is not possible, rather than producing

error-laden estimates, it would be advisable to not include the item whilst making it clear that it is missing from the overall estimate of cost.

Comparability across States

One of the challenges for costing GBV across several States within a region, such as the Arab Region, is the issue of comparability. If source data are not equivalent or comparable then the estimates of costs cannot be comparable. For costs to be comparable across a region means that any difference between States must represent something real about the extent of the violence and/or its impacts rather than difference in accuracy or quality of underpinning data sources. This was one of the challenges for our study 'Estimating the costs of GBV in the European Union'. The range of data needed to estimate the cost of violence against women available for each EU Member State was not available. First, the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) survey on violence against women (VAW), though an important advancement in delivering an EU wide survey of violence against women, was methodologically insufficient to provide robust comparisons of the extent of VAW between Member States (Walby, Francis and Towers 2014). Secondly, administrative data was also insufficient to provide information on use of services by victims of gender-based violence for each Member State. This led to our conclusion that the best option given the insufficiency of data at that time was to develop one excellent case study for one EU Member State (UK) and to extrapolate this cost estimate for each Member State proportionate to their population size. If the UK were typical in the extent of the violence, the use of services, the loss of employment, and value of physical and emotional impact, then cost to EU can be estimated as a multiple of UK. This enabled production of a robust and defensible cost estimate for gender-based violence against women in the European Union of EUR 225,837,418,768 in 2012.

Question 4: What is the criteria you would employ to assess the quality of the administrative data?

General data quality criteria (Walby and Olive 2014):

- Comprehensiveness of data coverage
- Robustness
- Specificity
- Replicability

Violence specific criteria for administrative data (Walby et al 2017):

- Record of the violence

- Actions (and intentions) and harms (non-consent)
- Variations by type of violence
- Temporality of the violence
- Record of gender dimensions of violence
 - Sex of the victim
 - Sex of the perpetrator
 - Relationship between perpetrator and victims
 - Whether there was a sexual aspect to the violence
 - Whether there was a gender motivation

Question 5: Can you please share your experience of co-conducting the 2014 GBV costing study in the EU?

For our study we reviewed the range of methods and approaches taken in earlier costing estimates undertaken in similar contexts. We appraised the methods using the quality criteria: comprehensiveness of coverage, robustness, replicability, simplicity and feasibility of information sources and methods. This review of methodological approaches offers assessments of data requirements for items to be costed using different approaches and feasibility assessments of employing alternative approaches in different contexts and is a valuable knowledge contribution to the field.

Producing sound, good quality estimates of the social and economic costs of gender-based violence is resource intensive warranting subject and methodological expertise and time to robustly determine each item's methodological approach and source the best available data.

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