



Violence Against Women on Rise

Why in News

Recently, UN-Women, women's rights activists, government authorities, and civil society partners across the globe have said that domestic violence during the [Covid-19](#) crisis has increased against women.

Key Points

- The reports of violence have increased in countries like Argentina, Canada, France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States, Cyprus, Singapore and Australia among others.
- In **India**, the [National Commission for Women \(NCW\) has recorded a more than twofold rise in gender-based violence.](#)
- It has been said that **confinement due to Covid-19** is fostering the tension and strain created by security, health, and money is the reason behind this.
- This will have **multiple impacts on women's wellbeing**, their sexual and reproductive health, their mental health, and their ability to participate and lead in the recovery of our societies, economy and difficulty in achieving [Sustainable Development Goal -5 \(SDG-5\) -Gender equality.](#)

Challenges in the wake Covid-19 Outbreak

- Even before Covid-19, **domestic violence was already one of the greatest human rights violations.**
 - In 2019-20, 243 million women and girls (aged 15-49) across the world have been subjected to sexual or physical violence by an intimate partner.
 - As the Covid-19 pandemic continues, the violence is likely to grow.
- **Wide under-reporting** of domestic and other forms of violence
 - Less than 40% of women who experience violence seeking help of any sort or reporting the crime.
 - Less than 10% of those women seeking help go to the police.
- The current circumstances (Covid-19 pandemic) **make reporting even harder**, including limitations on women's and girls' access to phones and helplines and disrupted public services like police, justice and social services.
 - These disruptions is **compromising the care and support** that survivors need, like clinical management of rape, and mental health and psycho-social support.
 - The disruptions also fuel impunity for the perpetrators.
- In many countries **the law is not on the women's side.** 1 in 4 countries have no laws specifically protecting women from domestic violence.

Way Forward

- The increase in **violence against women should be dealt with urgently** with measures embedded in **economic support and stimulus packages** that meet the gravity and scale of the challenge and reflect the needs of women who face multiple forms of discrimination.

- **Grassroots and women's organizations** and **communities** need to be supported strongly in their current frontline role.
- **Helplines, psychosocial support and online counselling** should be boosted, using technology-based solutions such as SMS, online tools and networks to expand social support, and to reach women with no access to phones or internet.
- **Police and justice services should mobilize** to ensure that incidents of violence against women and girls are given high priority with no impunity for perpetrators.

UN Women

- It is the **United Nations entity** dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- It is a global champion for women and girls, it was established to accelerate progress on meeting the needs of women worldwide.

Source: UN

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