

LEBANON

Socio-Economic Costs of Gender-Based Violence



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Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global pandemic, with serious social and economic repercussions for survivors, their families, communities and nations.ⁱ

This project aimed to estimate the socio-economic costs of GBV (domestic violence, early and forced marriage, and public sexual harassment) in six USAID presence countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and West Bank and Gaza.

Across the globe, 1 in 3 women has experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV).ⁱⁱ In Lebanon, the prevalence of IPV is slightly higher than this global average, at 23%, but lower than the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regional average (37%).ⁱⁱⁱ Despite certain recent legislative steps forward, many of Lebanon's laws related to GBV have not been updated in decades. In addition, some commonly held social norms also give way to discrimination against women and sexual and gender minorities.



35% of women have experienced IPV



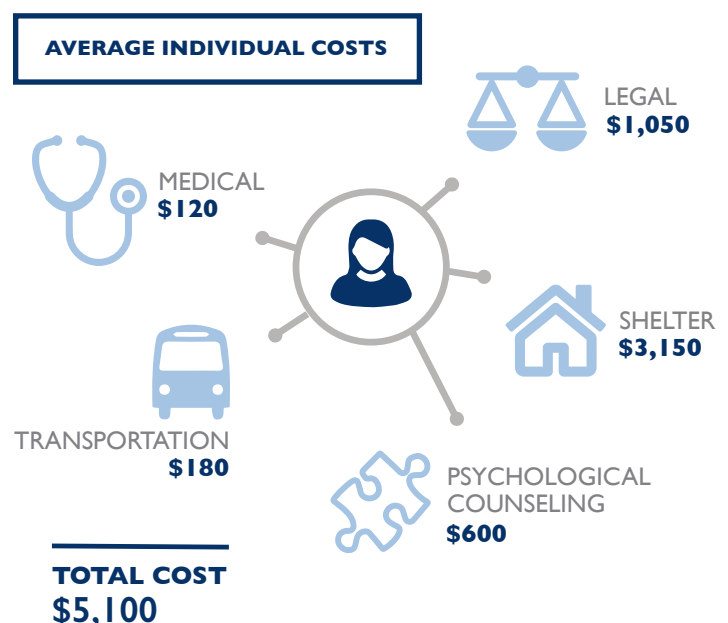
11% prevalence of child marriage

Nearly one quarter (22%) of women have experienced unwanted touching in public, with 6% saying this happened “most times” and 1% experiencing this every time they go out.^{iv} Another important form of GBV is child marriage - defined as any marriage before the age of 18. In Lebanon, where girls can be legally married as young as age 9 with family and religious ap-

proval, the prevalence of child marriage is 11%.^v Among Syrian refugee girls in Lebanon, the risk is even higher, as many families feel compelled to marry their daughters early to ensure that they are “under the protection of a man.”^{vi}

While a 2014 law on domestic violence, coupled with recent political strategies on gender equality, indicate encouraging initial progress, Lebanon's penal code with respect to GBV has significant shortcomings. It lacks proper definitions of certain gender-related crimes, and uses obsolete terminology for others. For example, Article 519 of the penal code criminalizes sexual harassment only for children and repeatedly criminalizes adultery in Articles 487, 488, and 489. Notably, Article 522 absolves a rapist who marries his victim, and in Article 483 permits early marriage if the child's guardian provides consent.

Given the current sociopolitical context, many survivors of violence across Lebanon are likely discouraged from disclosing their experiences and seeking formal help. While data on help seeking in Lebanon are not available, across the world, only 40% of survivors of violence seek help from any source. This includes informal sources such as family members and friends. A mere 9% seek help from formal sources, like police and justice officials, shelters, and health or social service professionals.^{vii}



INCIDENT LEVEL COSTS

In Lebanon, the majority of response services for survivors of GBV are offered free of charge in the public sector. The cost of providing and accessing these services adds up quickly. The model below assumes that IPV survivors who seek help through formal sources receive comprehensive treatment across four types of services, and require transport to access these. Similar costs are likely for other forms of GBV, though estimates for these costs are not available. The average costs of each type of service per episode of IPV are summarized in the graphic below:

Thus, the total average cost incurred for this full complement of care is approximately \$5,100 per episode of violence. As represented in the graphic above, this number is the sum of the average costs for medical services, legal services, psychological counseling, transportation and shelter. It is important to note that not all these incident level costs are exclusively borne by the survivor. Therefore, the above comparison of these costs to the GDP per capita in Lebanon only provides a loose comparison of the magnitude of the economic impact of GBV. The total medical cost without a Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) kit is \$120, whereas the total medical cost with a PEP kit is much higher at \$2,120.

The costs for psychological counseling and transportation are calculated to include the average number of follow up visits a survivor is required to make for full treatment at an average of \$600.

In seeking legal services, a survivor may either take their case through a religious family law court (e.g. Muslim or Christian) or via the federal penal courts. The costs within the religious court system vary dramatically- with an average cost of \$100 for pursuing a case in a Muslim court and \$2,000 for a Christian court. For those survivors who cannot access free services provided by NGOs, many of these costs will be paid out-of-pocket, which may prove prohibitively expensive and limit help seeking.



NATIONAL LEVEL COSTS

The average total cost, assuming all services are used, varies depending on whether survivors need treatment for rape, and whether they are using a Muslim or Christian court. These

calculations can help us understand how much of Lebanon's GDP is spent on services for GBV survivors. Taking into consideration the national IPV prevalence and help-seeking rates^{viii} among IPV survivors and cases in Christian courts, without including rape kits, these expenditures can add up to \$40.8 million, or 0.09% of total GDP for the most comprehensive combination of services. Even for a simpler package of services, including Muslim family law court fees this cost still equates to \$28 million, or 0.06% of total GDP. It is important to note that these figures do not take into account costs related to other forms of GBV.

As a comparison, Lebanon's total health expenditures is currently only 3% of GDP, and education allocations are even lower at 2.6% of GDP. The Lebanese government provides GBV prevention and response services via multiple government agencies such as the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Internal Security Forces, and the National Commission for Lebanese women. This spending represents significant lost opportunity costs. If violence were prevented, up to \$40.8 million currently lost to GBV response could instead be invested in services like education that promote the prevention of GBV, and preventive health measures that benefit the entire nation.



METHODOLOGY

The data presented here were collected via 14 key informant interviews with service providers in Lebanon. The cost estimates include only the direct costs of service access and provision for survivors of GBV and were calculated at the individual level using an accounting methodology.^{xi} Due to limitations of the primary data collected, the national level cost estimates relied on extrapolation using secondary data/statistics.

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 ii. World Health Organization, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and Medical Research Council of South Africa. 2013. "Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence."
 iii. Usta, Jinan, Jo Ann M. Farver, and Nora Pashayan. 2007. "Domestic Violence: The Lebanese Experience." Public Health 121 (3): 208-19. doi:10.1016/j.puhe.2006.09.014.
 vi. Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa" (SWMENA) **THE FULL CITATION FOR THIS IS NOT IN THE CONTEXT ANALYSIS- please fill it in
 v. UNICEF. 2011. "MENA Gender Equality Profile Status of Girls and Women in the Middle East and North Africa: Lebanon." NOTE: the prevalence of child marriage is calculated as the percentage of women currently 20-24 years of age who were married before the age of 18.
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 vi. International Rescue Committee. 2012. "Syrian Women & Girls: Fleeing Death, Facing Ongoing Threats and Humiliation."
 Anani, Ghida. 2013. "Dimensions of Gender-Based Violence against Syrian Refugees in Lebanon." Forced Migration Review, no. 44 (September): 75-78.
 vii. Klugman et al., 2014.
 viii. Where data were available, past year prevalence of IPV was used for this calculation; global figures for formal help seeking were used when country-specific estimates were not available.
 ix. Duvvury, Nata; Callan, Aoife; Carney, Patrick; Raghavendra, Srinivas. 2013. Intimate Partner Violence: Economic Costs and Implications for Growth and Development. Women's voice, agency, and participation research series: No. 3. World Bank, Washington, DC