AT HOME, AT RISK, is a series of rapid surveys to understand how the redressal ecosystem for domestic violence has functioned during the COVID-19 pandemic. The surveys are conducted by eight member organisations of Lam-lynti Chittara Neralu (LCN) across 7 states. They are based on phone interviews with women and transgender survivors of domestic violence, and the staff of stakeholders.

This outline is our attempt to triangulate and sum up key insights gained so far. Unlike each of the earlier briefs that focussed on a particular stakeholder, this outline works across stakeholders. It gleans over insights from the ecosystem, casting a wider angle on certain critical issues.

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 131

- Delhi: 32
- Nagaland: 5
- Assam: 17
- Meghalaya: 9
- Jharkhand: 13
- Karnataka: 28
- Tamil Nadu: 27

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TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 131

- Department of Social Welfare: 2
- Special Police Cells: 2
- Women’s Commissions: 4
- DLSA: 7
- OSCs: 16
- POs: 11
- Medical Officers: 5
- Shelters: 43
- Survivors*: 13
- Helplines: 10
- NGOs: 18

*above 18 years of age
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DURING THE LOCKDOWN

*Number of DV cases between 1st January and 31st March 2020 (pre-lockdown)
**Number of DV cases between 25th March and 24th June 2020 (during lockdown)
WHO IS THE SURVIVOR?

- Married women
- Transpersons
- Married and single women
- Women from low-income families
- Women with physical and mental disabilities
- Women with dependent children
- Farmers
- Elderly women
- Farmers
- Married women
- Married and single women
- Married and single women
- Married women with mental disabilities
- Women with physical and mental disabilities

Note: Some stakeholders reported violence towards minors due to premarital relations or child marriages.
MOST NAMED PERPETRATOR

natal family
husband
in-laws
partner

MOST NAMED PERPETRATOR

son
brother
ex-husband

NATURE OF VIOLENCE

physical
emotional
economic

NATURE OF VIOLENCE

sexual
verbal
cyber-crime
abandonment
marital-rape

STAY HOME. STAY SAFE.
AT HOME. AT RISK.

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STAKEHOLDERS’ RELIANCE ON TECH
- Online counselling by Protection Officers and legal assistance by DLSAs
- Court orders via video conferencing

SURVIVORS’ UNEVEN ACCESS TO TECH
- Survivors’ report little or no access and/or privacy to phones
- Poor awareness/familiarity about online legal procedures

“During this lockdown, we were available 24 x 7. So we got many messages. Many times, we offered counselling on the phone, but I am not sure if it works 100 percent. The husband talks first, then the wife talks...it goes on like this till late night. One call takes nearly 1 hour and we are literally tired, unable to take care of ourselves”.

Protection Officer, Tamil Nadu

“It is really difficult to hold online meetings in such remote areas. Also we cannot expect everyone to have a smartphone”.

NGO, Jharkhand
SPECIAL MEASURES DURING THE LOCKDOWN

24 x 7 response by online counsellors and legal aid
24x7 availability of Protection Officers

The Department of Social Welfare offered its vehicle to Protection Officers for rescue work (Tamil Nadu)

Pandemic-related SOP + 24x7 Helpline and awareness raising (Assam)

24X7 Helpline and legal counselling
Legal awareness camps (including for construction workers) by paralegals (Delhi)

District Legal Services Authority displayed their email and phone numbers in One Stop Centres and District Commissioner’s office (Karnataka)

Distributed menstrual hygiene kits to quarantine centres at Kohima and Dimapur (Nagaland)

Widely distributed flyers with personal contacts numbers (Meghalaya)

A trafficking-related helpline was converted to a women-in-distress helpline (Jharkhand)
LACK OF CLARITY AMONG STAKEHOLDERS

SHELTER HOMES
Admit survivors?
How to quarantine?
(Delhi, Nagaland)

LAWYERS
How to file cases online?
(Delhi)

SURVIVORS
When will my maintenance case be heard?
(Delhi)

ONE STOP CENTRE
Who will get the survivor tested for COVID-19?
(Assam)
CURTAILED SERVICES

WOMEN'S NGOs had to stop field work (Delhi)

SHELTERS could not meet the medical needs of residents (Tamil Nadu)

POLICE got busy with COVID-19 related duties (Assam, Jharkhand)

ONE STOP CENTRES failed to accompany a survivor to the police station due to lack of transport (Assam)

STATE WOMEN'S COMMISSION postponed case hearings (Assam) and were unable to travel to districts (Nagaland)

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE officers (also Protection Officers) sometimes had to neglect domestic violence cases while they handled COVID-19 duties (Assam)

HELPLINES could not reach survivors in other districts (Jharkhand) and found little/no support from other stakeholders
DUALITY OF POLICE RESPONSE

HELPLINE
“A woman with a bleeding head was asked to come back with a mask. They asked a woman to not call again, and told another to compromise”.

SHELTER HOMES
Most found the police responsive; they helped with transport, groceries, medicines and COVID-19 testing.

SURVIVOR
I was told, “people are dying here and you want to file a case for such a small issue”.

53 year old domestic worker, Delhi

NGO
“It was very difficult for women to reach the police station during the lockdown. Yet, the police asked them to come the next day. In some cases, police officials advised women to leave for their natal families once the lockdown was lifted”.

Delhi
CHALLENGES FACED

SHELTERS
- absence of SOPs, inadequate access to medicines, no safe space for transpersons in six states

PANDEMIC-RELATED CHALLENGES
- Lack of PPE kits and transport, denial of admission due to lack of quarantine facilities, lack of physical distancing, poor response from police, shortage of staff

HELPLINES
- survivors' lack of access to phones

SURVIVORS
- unaware of 181, wary of the police, lack of response from 181, 1091 and 100

PROTECTION OFFICERS
- dearth of POs

SPECIAL POLICE CELLS
- lack of trained tele-counsellors

NGOs
- lack of funds for COVID-related relief work, lack of stakeholder coordination

ONE STOP CENTRES
- unavailability of doctors and police

STAY HOME. STAY SAFE. AT HOME. AT RISK.
The 10 stakeholders covered in the series include:

**SHELTER HOMES.** An NGO/government/privately run/funded temporary, safe space and support for escaping violence and abuse.

**NGOs.** Non-profit institutions working on human rights and safety.

**HELPLINES.** Telephone service that offers information, counselling and advice.

**PROTECTION OFFICERS (POs).** Government officers deputed to connect aggrieved survivors of violence with legal aid, the police and other support services.

**DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES (DLSAs).** It provides free legal aid to the survivors of gender-based violence among others.

**ONE STOP CENTRES (OSCs).** They offer an integrated range of specialized services (medical, legal and psychological support) to the survivors who face sexual harassment and assault, domestic violence, trafficking, honour-related crimes, acid attacks or witch-hunting.

**MEDICAL OFFICERS.** They are in-charge of the physical examination of survivors of domestic violence and play a specific role in Medico-Legal Cases.

**SPECIAL POLICE CELLS.** They focus on redressal of violence against women via especially designated desks managed by female police officers and counsellors posted at police stations.

**STATE WOMEN'S COMMISSIONS.** They are statutory bodies mandated to protect and promote women's rights and intervene in cases of violence and atrocities against women.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE.** It runs welfare programmes and services for persons with disabilities and offers social security for the aged and destitute women through a network of residential care homes and non-institutional services.
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