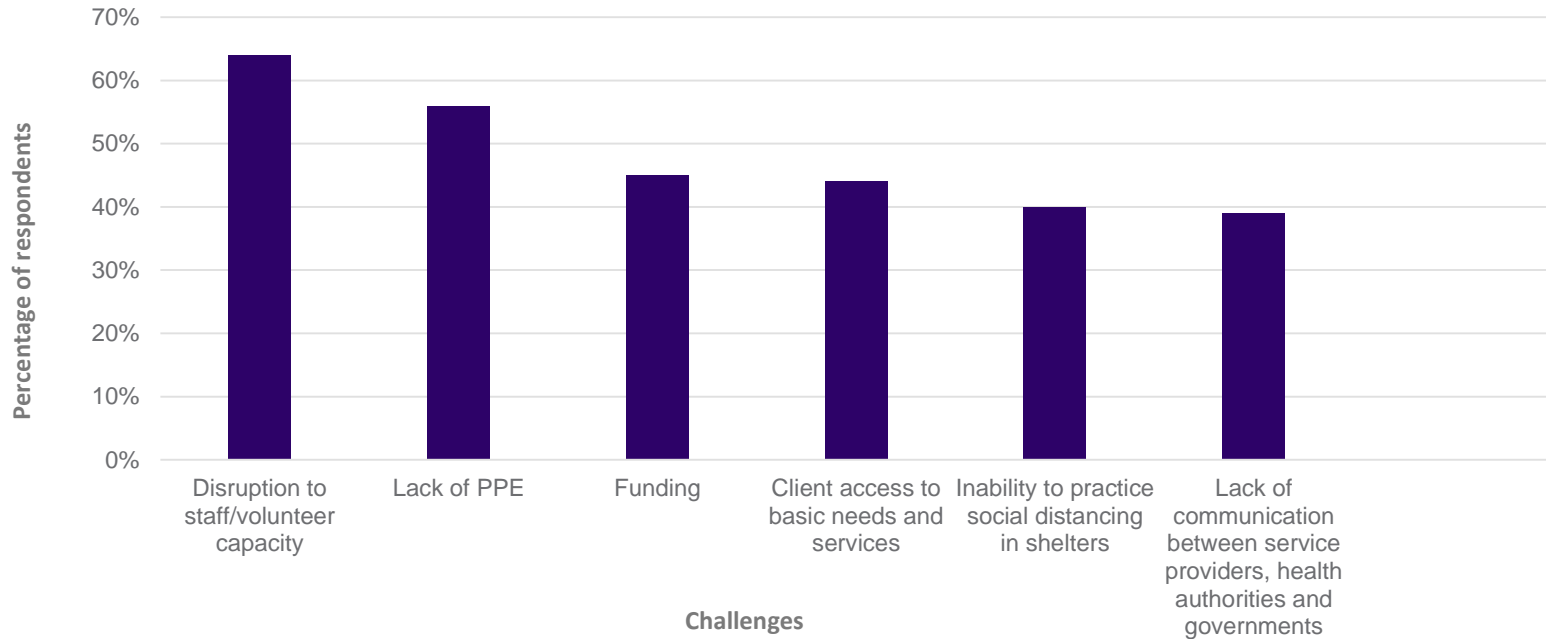


Violence against Women sector: Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

Impacts on survivors

- 60% of survey respondents reported that the women they work with are at greater risk;
- Women are experiencing difficulty in accessing support, mainly because of a lack of mobility and privacy;
- Tension in the home is increased by conflict, financial pressures, childcare responsibilities and anxiety;
- Feelings of being in limbo;
- Additional childcare responsibilities.

Challenges faced by VAW organizations



Supports organizations need

- Increased coordination across violence against women organizations, public health and different levels of government;
- Better communication and information sharing between organizations;
- Funding for core costs, staffing, additional accommodation and new expenses;
- Access to additional accommodation spaces for women;
- Support to develop organizational policies, protocols and practices;
- Access to PPE and training.

Impacts on workforce

- 40% reported that their work has become more complex and challenging;
- 20% are struggling to maintain work and childcare responsibilities;
- Navigating a housing crisis that has been exacerbated;
- Challenges to working remotely.



Supports workforce need

- Flexible, transparent and supportive working environments;
- Clear and open communication from leadership and partner agencies;
- Opportunities to connect with colleagues for learning and support;
- Access to clinical supervision;
- IT equipment to support with remote working;
- Information on changes to programs and services.

Supporting survivors during COVID-19

- Services and supports are open;
 - Crisis Lines
 - Shelters
 - Drop in and counseling services
 - Police
 - Legal supports
- Be aware of the increased risk factors;
- Stay connected with service partners;
- Check in with family, friends and neighbours.

Tips for safety planning and communication

- Retrieve as much information as possible:
 - List of those in isolation with the survivor
 - Establish a way to contact them in the future
 - Establish a code word or phrase to ensure you are speaking to the right person next time or to assess level of risk



Tips for safety planning and communication

- Ensure safe communication
 - Ensure code word is used at the beginning of the conversation;
 - Ask your client if it is a good time to speak;
 - Call clients from unknown or blocked numbers;
- Ongoing safety planning that reflects the changes to their circumstances
 - Awareness of new risk factors
 - Services and supports they normally access that are not available
- Check in with clients
- Create safe communication methods at the agency level
 - Social media account with a safe name for staff to communicate with clients
 - Debrief with colleagues and partners
 - Create case management for high risk clients

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