

Exploring the links and impact of COVID-19 and lockdown to gender-based violence, mental health and livelihoods amongst selected population groups in South Africa.

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**London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Third Biennial Linea Meeting**

13 October 2020.

Aim of the study

To understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown on family dynamics amongst selected population groups in Gauteng

- Men and women 18 years and older, living with spouse/partner and or children;
- Frontline health care workers (FHCWs) providing care during COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng province.

Research objectives

Men and women

- How COVID-19 and the lockdown has impacted on families of men and women with no income - low income, and medium - high income

Frontline healthcare workers

- How COVID-19 has impacted on the lives and families of FHCWs

- Experiences of violence against women and children, and the underlying factors influencing dynamics and experiences in the homes
- Asked about key factors we know are associated with IPV and VAWC (e.g. mental health and livelihoods)

Recruitment of participants

- Advert posted on SAMRC social media platforms
- SAMRC advert shared on personal Facebook pages and ex-fieldworkers asked to share advert with their contacts

- Participants sent WhatsApp message, text or an email to indicate their interest
- 1st call to screen for eligibility and taken through informed consent process
- Written consent received via WhatsApp, text and email.

Data collection

- Semi structured, in-depth telephonic interviews of 35 – 60 minutes
- Privacy and confidentiality emphasised during screening and when we started the interview

- We matched interviews by gender and language of participants
- Participants were electronically reimbursed R100.

Remote data collection challenges

- Rapport was not easy to establish, no visual cues and line-cuts
- Some people wanted to do the interview quickly, sense of being rushed

Difficult to ensure privacy: we could overhear a third person present in the background while doing an interview.

Responses to violence questions

Resistance to IPV questions and not being comfortable to talk about violence experiences (hesitation, tone change, nothing bad happened)

Some women would rather talk about other people's experiences of IPV and violence against children

Others gave details about their good husband and happy marriage

Men would rather talk about tension than violence with spouses.

So what?

Deepen knowledge to conduct remote VAW and VAC research safely during times of pandemics and lockdown

- Conditions that will enables participants to disclose violence experiences or perpetration.

