

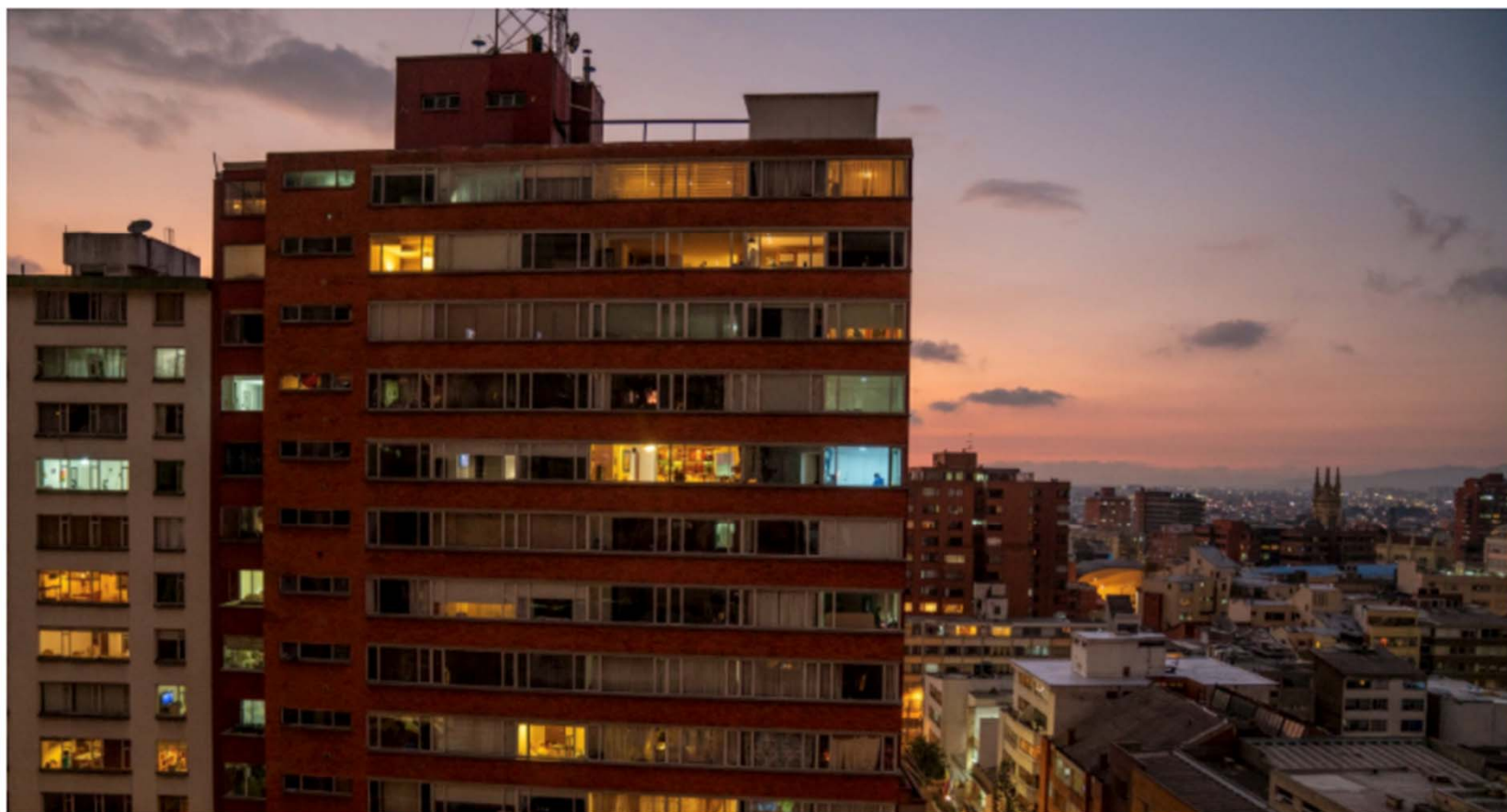
Ethics and practice of asking
about intimate partner
violence in Covid-19 surveys

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THE INTERPRETER

A New Covid-19 Crisis: Domestic Abuse Rises Worldwide

Movement restrictions aimed to stop the spread of the coronavirus may be making violence in homes more frequent, more severe and more dangerous.





GIRLS & WOMEN

Murders of South African Women Surge as 9-Week Lockdown Eases

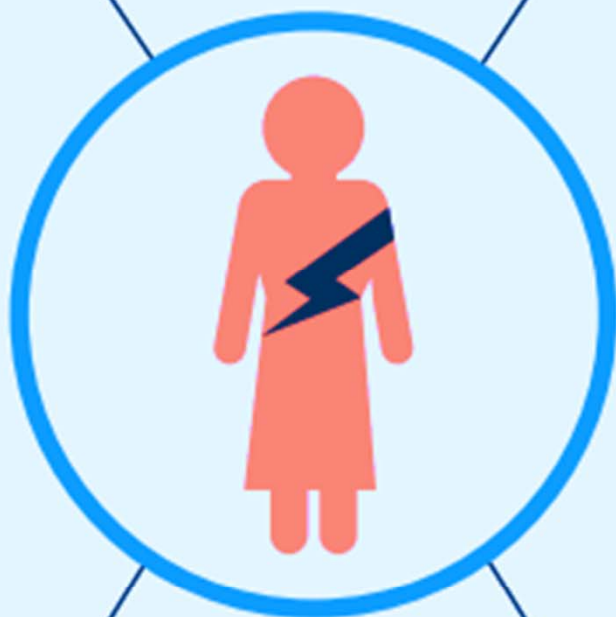
Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, violence against women and girls (VAWG), and particularly domestic violence, has INTENSIFIED.

In **France**, reports of domestic violence have increased by **30%** since the lockdown on March 17.

In **Cyprus** and **Singapore** helplines have registered an increase in calls of **30%** and **33%**, respectively.

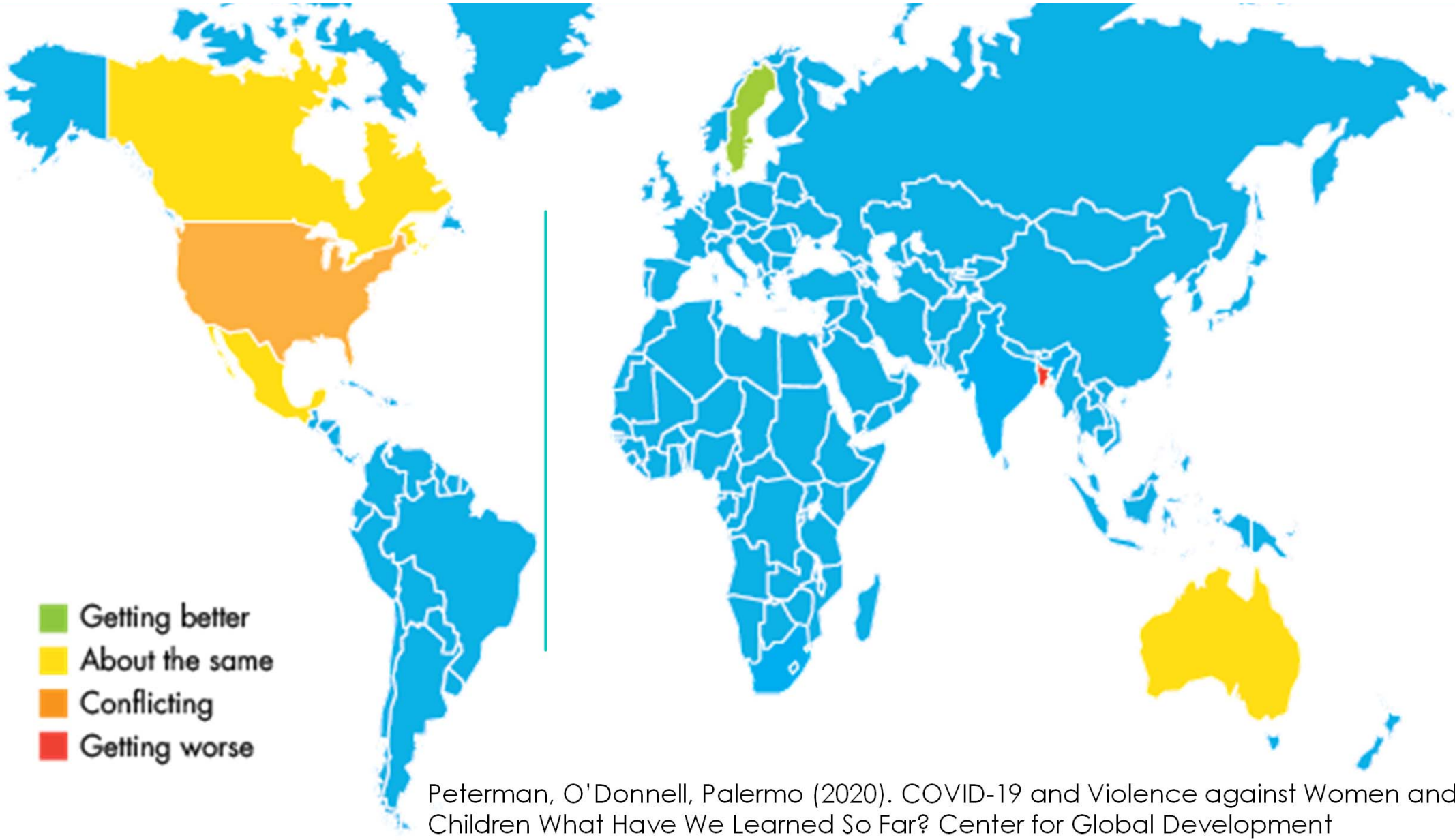
In **Argentina** emergency calls for domestic violence cases have increased by **25%** since the lockdown on March 20.

Increased cases of domestic violence and demand for emergency shelter have also been reported in **Canada, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom** and **the United States**.



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Peterman, O'Donnell, Palermo (2020). COVID-19 and Violence against Women and Children What Have We Learned So Far? Center for Global Development



Asking the question

Set the stage

- Call ahead to find a time to talk
- Ask them to identify a safe, private space (could be out of house)
- A short, clear consent discussion will introduce participants to the fact that part of the survey will talk about their relationship.
 - This should not have the term “violence” but will instead talk about good and bad parts of a relationship, particularly in stressful times such as the Covid-19 crisis.
- Ask about whose phone is being used. They will ask if it is a shared phone, if others look at it, and whether the researcher could text with further information afterward.

Active (re)consent

- Before starting the IPV section, participants should be verbally “re-consented” to continue with that section. Researchers can explain:
 - “I want to make sure it is a safe and comfortable time to speak about your household is coping. Would you like me to ask you questions about your relationship now, at a later time, or skip altogether?”
- Assume the partner is sitting next to her. All questions need to be asked in a way that is content – neutral.

Yes / No / Next question please



Keep it short

3

items

I'm going to ask you some questions about your relationship. Since Covid-19 started (in _____ [place local date here]):

- 1 has your partner slapped you or hit you with a fist or something else? Y/N
- 2 did you ever agree to have sex when you did not want to because you were afraid your partner might harm you if you refused? Y/N
- 3 In the 12 months before Covid-19 did those things ever happen to you? Y/N/does not apply (no partner then)

Chirwa, E., Gibbs, A., Hatcher, A.M. (in draft) Sensitivity and specificity of 2-item measure of intimate partner violence: Item-response theory from 7 global datasets.

Plan for the worst

- **Family member takes the phone.** Give prepared scripts to researchers to safely explain the survey to anyone who takes the phone from the respondent or otherwise contacts the researchers.
- **Respondent is faking who they are.** Ask an identifying question that would not be known by another person (e.g. "To make sure I'm speaking to the correct person, please tell me what is your sister's phone number?").
- **Team is making up data.** If doing data collection remotely (team working from home), find ways to ensure work is true, accurate:
 - Audio record a selection of calls?
 - Data checks for consistency



Responding to violence disclosures

Warm Referrals

- Introduce referrals as a way to get extra support during challenges Covid times
- Offer several ways to provide referral information :
 - "Would you like me to tell you now, SMS it to you later, email to you or your friend, or skip?"
- Participant should never be encouraged to say anything aloud explicitly referencing violence. If they start to tell you more about it, say :
 - "Before you explain more, I want to tell you it may not be safe to share your story with me right now. Instead, may I tell you the name of someone who can support you further?"

Building your referral list

- Prior to being included on the referral list, all agencies will be sensitized to the intervention
- Have capacity :
 - Can take on additional clients
 - Will answer the phone
 - Operating during lockdowns
- Assess every few months to ensure that referrals are still active throughout the course of the study



Building referral list

GBV Services open during national lockdown



WESTERN CAPE

Athlone House of Strength
telephonic counseling
021 862 9983

Badisa
telephonic counseling
021 957 7130

Mosaic
counseling, legal aid
021 761 7585

National Shelter Movement
Bernadine 082 903 8739
Joy 071 906 3949

Sex Workers Education & Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT)
telephonic counseling
021-448 7875

GAUTENG

Gauteng Province
food support
0800 428 8364

Lifeline Vaal Triangle
telephonic counseling
016 428 1640

National Shelter Movement
Rudo 083 684 7737
Zubeda 083 289 9818

Teddy Bear Clinic
crisis support for children
011 660 3077

MPUMALANGA

National Shelter Movement
Fisani 079 310 9633

KWAZULU-NATAL

National Shelter Movement
Sabera 072 446 3337

FREE STATE

National Shelter Movement
Sarah Lekale 072 144 7171

EASTERN CAPE

National Shelter Movement
081 247 6056

NORTH WEST

National Shelter Movement
Rina 072 348 6526

NORTHERN CAPE

National Shelter Movement
Rose Clair 080 021 2321
Rosaline 073 888 8738

NATIONAL

Childline
24 hr Crisis line & counselling
080 055 5555

Women Abuse Helpline
Toll-Free Helpline
0800 150 150

Gender Based Violence Helpline Command Centre
24 hour helpline
0800 428 428
*120*7867# for call-back

Lifeline Crisis
24-hour crisis service
0861 322 322

Lifeline Counseling
WhatsApp call counselling
065 989 9238

MobieG
Live chat counseling for teens
www.mobieg.co.za
*Sun from 18h00
*Mon-Thu from 19h00

NISAA
telephonic counseling
Batsi 083 303 1291
Yvonne 063 083 6061
Nokwethu 011 850 0637

South African Depression & Anxiety Group (SADAG)
24 hour helpline
0800 456789
SMS: 31393

SADAG Suicide crisis line
24 hour helpline
0800 567567

TEARS GBV SMS help line
*134*7355#

"During the Covid-19 lockdown, we cannot ignore the increased risks for victims of domestic violence and abuse. ..Victims and survivors can be assured that there are resources available to assist during this high-risk period."
- National Shelter Movement

You can help someone during the Lockdown:

Call or text them. Checking in means you care about their safety and wellbeing. Let them bring up the violence, only if they want to. Help them think about ways to get to a safe place – and for kids to find safety – if violence erupts.

Help them find a place to stay in your own home or a shelter. Shelters are working in all provinces, even during the Covid crisis. Remember that moving out can be more dangerous - so let them decide what is best.

Phone the police 10111 if you hear a cry or scream. Emergency staffing at police stations will stay the same during the lockdown and social workers will be available.

Are you a victim of domestic violence and need a shelter?

Whatsapp the National Shelter Movement for assistance:

Gauteng : 078 427 6023

KwaZulu-Natal : 082 456 8743

Western Cape : 084 307 9102

Eastern Cape : 076 813 0633

Uber



If you are experiencing violence during COVID-19:



Reach out

to supportive family,
friends or neighbours



Call a hotline or
access information
online if possible



Seek out local
services for survivors



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Save



Training and supporting your team

Craft the right team



- Add a violence expert to your study*
- At time of hiring field staff:
 - Alert team to potential emotional risks involved in conducting this research.
 - Ask how they use coping strategies to deal with emotional topics during research
 - Assess their resilience to work-related stress.
- If collecting data remotely (team works from home) rather hire people you already know to avoid risks of making up data

* Email me for ideas around experts: abbeymae@email.unc.edu

Training ingredients

- General ethical research
 - risk-benefits of research
 - informed consent (in theory and in practice)
 - techniques for ensuring for participants' autonomy and rights
 - brainstorming appropriate responses to potential challenging scenarios around confidentiality
- Specialized training around IPV for all staff (enumerators and supervisors)
 - Understanding IPV
 - Gender norms participatory activities
 - Covid-19 special ethics
 - Ensuring participant safety
 - Managing distress during interview
 - Role plays of complex scenarios (partner picks up phone, woman breaks down crying during interview)
 - Referral networks
 - Self-care & vicarious trauma

tinyurl.com/y2bw8ur2

OR

Google "Research
Gate Abigail Hatcher"

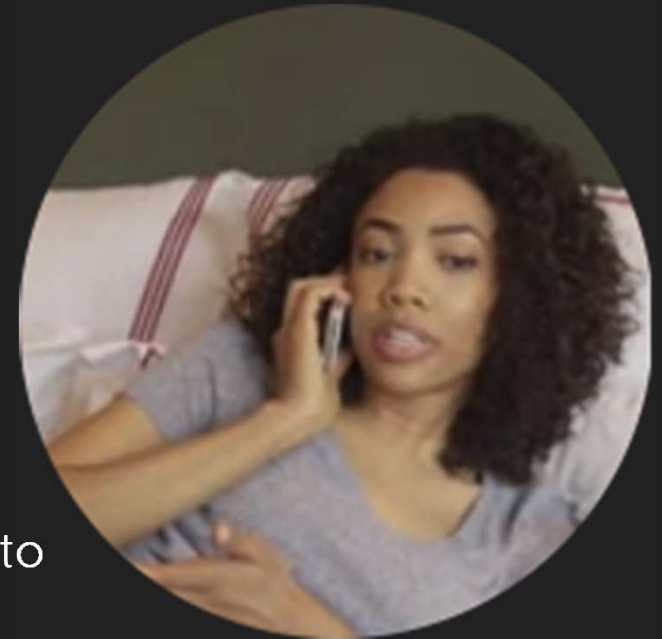


**Asking about violence
in Kenyan health studies**

Facilitators Manual

Supervision is a must

- One-on-one phone calls to researchers by supervisors will offer a basic debriefing on a daily / weekly basis.
- Supervisors should be available by Whatsapp or phone in case researchers want to check-in after a challenging questionnaire.
 - Provide extra data / airtime to researcher cell phones.
 - Encourage team to support one another by phone
- Supervisors should themselves have access to supervision around IPV questions in the form of an external counselor to meet by phone on a monthly basis.





Monitoring as you go

Adverse reporting: look for “social harms”

- Any incidents in which a respondent’s safety – or that of their immediate family – is put at direct risk as a result of the research.
- Any incidents in which a fieldworker’s safety is put at direct risk as a result of the research.
- Any incident in which the confidentiality of respondents is jeopardized.
- EXAMPLE: woman is told by her partner she can’t stay at home because she spoke to people about their problems
- EXAMPLE: a violent partner phones researcher back and makes threats
- EXAMPLE: participant list is accidentally left on the seat of a taxi

if ALL YES
consider asking

if ANY NO
stop here



- 1 Actionable findings
- 2 Past experience using the method
- 3 Prepped for safety concerns (privacy, confidentiality, trust, etc.)
- 4 Updated referral list
- 5 Plans for wellbeing of research team
- 6 Logistics to safely and robustly train team, including on remote data
- 7 Ethical approval for the research – or for pivot to remote methods



If you need more resources to do the research well,

ASK FOR THEM

Sincere thanks to the many survivors,
activists, practitioners, and researchers
who are keeping violence visible.

Please contact me:

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