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**Needs Assessment of Women and Youth
through
Gender Responsive Early Warning System (GREWS)**

Kutaisi Municipality

Project 72011421CA00001

Bridging the Gap: People to People Initiatives for Conflict Resolution

April 2021

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Introduction

Gender Responsive Early Warning System (GREWS) involves studying community needs and establishing an early risk response system. Introducing this (GREWS) system with a gender-oriented approach significantly reduces the risk of violence and conflict in society and promotes democratic principles.

Country's unstable political environment, low socio-economic rate, fear of job and income loss, environmental pollution, unstable healthcare guarantees, increased violence rate, and other threats restrict human freedom of choice, hinder the possibility of a full life and significantly increase the risk of violence and conflict in society. Therefore, early intervention and response are essential to neutralize these risks.

Gender Responsive Early Warning System (GREWS) is a crucial tool in early response to societal problems, improving the quality of human security.

Identifying the expected risks of conflict should be based on the population's needs study through a gender approach. Its assessment and inclusion in the early warning system will create a sense of sustained peace and stability in the community.

Fund "Sukhumi"s study on the "**Needs Assessment of Women and Youth through Gender Responsive Early Warning System (GREWS)**" will help identify women and youth priority issues and establish an appropriate GREWS mechanism at the local level.

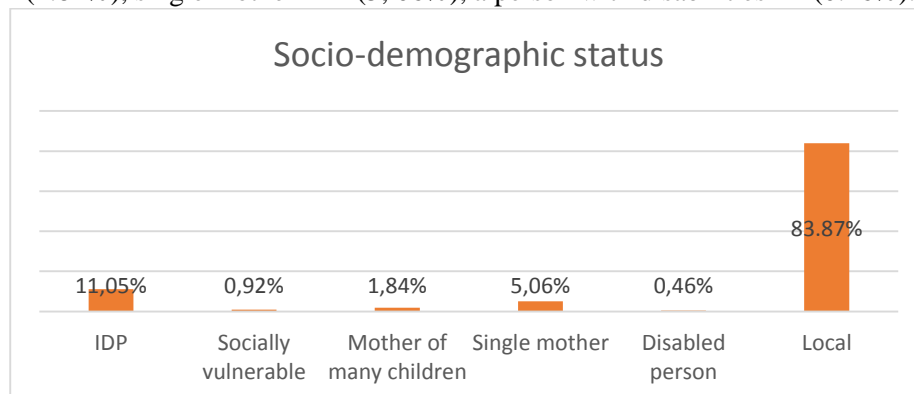
Study aim and methodology

Women aged 18 to 65 living in Kutaisi Municipality participated in the citizens' needs survey, including IDPs, locals, socially vulnerable people, mothers with many children and single mothers, people with disabilities, young people, pensioners, teachers of schools and preschools, local experts in self-government issues. The quantitative study included a survey of 150 women. However, 217 women participated in it. For the qualitative research, 4 in-depth interviews were conducted with local experts (3 men and 2 women) and 4 focus group discussions with local women (24 women in total).

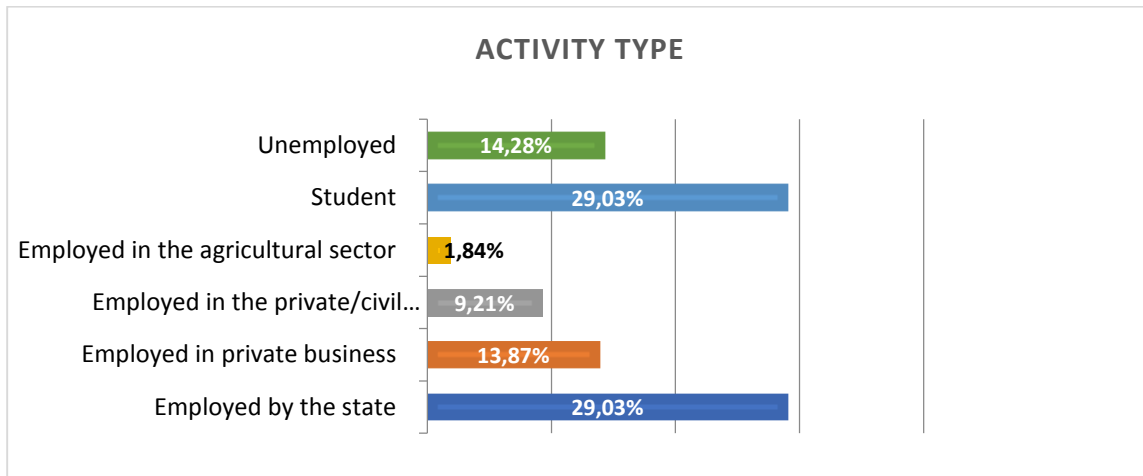
The target groups of the qualitative study included single others and mothers of many children, socially vulnerable women, journalists, teachers, pharmacists, representatives of NGO and budgetary organizations, persons with disabilities or their family members and IDPs.

Block I: Demographic Data

According to the socio-demographic status, among the respondents of the quantitative survey were 182 local women (83.87%) and citizens with special status: IDPs - 24 (11.05%), socially vulnerable 2 - (0.92%), mother of many children - 4 (1.84%), single mother - 11 (5,06%), a person with disabilities - 1 (0.46%). (Diagram 1)



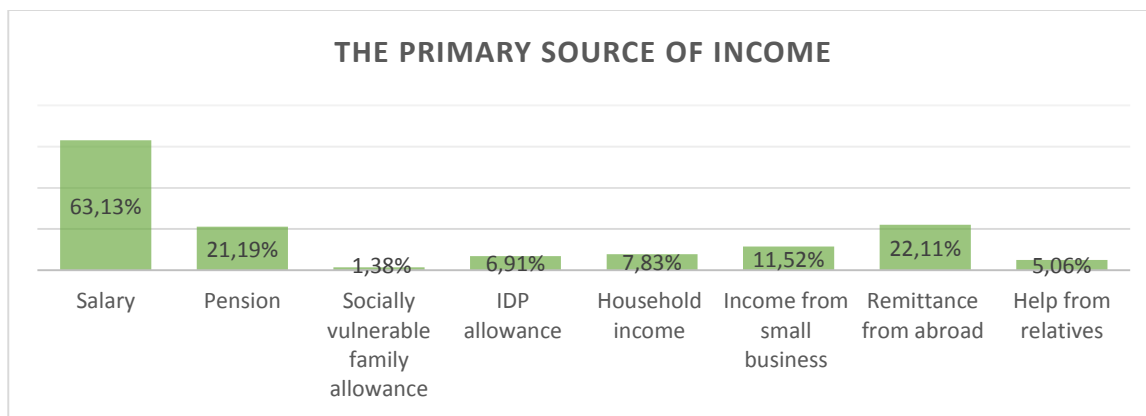
The data of the quantitative survey respondents were distributed according to the type of activity as follows: employed by the state -63(29.03%), employed in private business (individual entrepreneur, self-employed) – 30(13.87%), employed in private/civil society sector - 20(9.21%), employed in the agricultural sector - 4 (1.84%), student - 63(29.03%), unemployed - 31 (14.28%). The rate of unemployed respondents is as follows: IDP - 3 (1.38%), local - 25 (11.52%), single mother - 1 (0.46%). (Diagram 2)



Block II: Economic Security

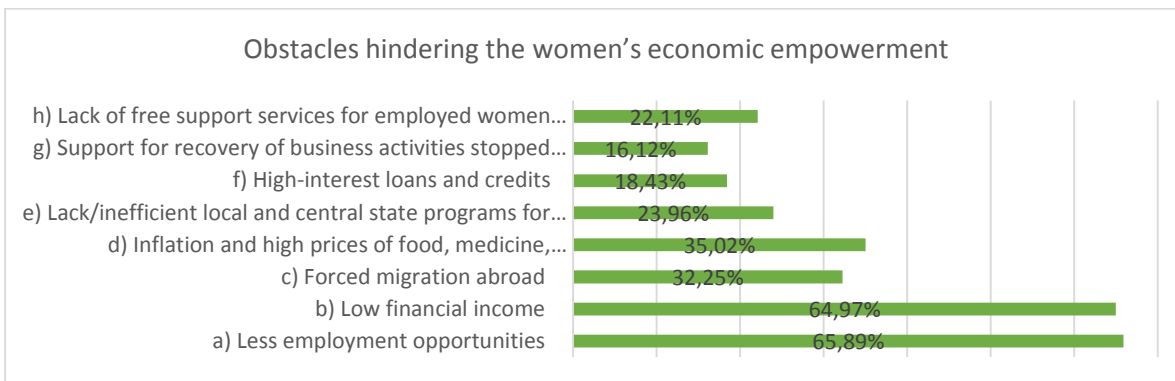
The block data analysis shows that the primary source of income for most of the population of Kutaisi Municipality is a salary - 137 respondents (63.13%), including 14 IDPs (10.21%), 118 locals (86.13%), 7 single mothers (5.10%), 3 mothers with many children (2.18%). For 46 respondents (21.19%), the primary source of family income is a pension. State assistance was distributed on the surveyed social groups as follows:

- Socially vulnerable family allowance - 3 (1.38%), IDP allowance - 15 (6.91%), 17 people have household income (7.83%);
- 25 (11.52%) respondents receive income from small businesses;
- 48 (22.11%) people depend on remittances from abroad, and for 11 respondents (5.06%), the help from relatives is the primary source. **(Diagram 3)**



In the economic security block, it was essential to identify barriers to women's economic empowerment.

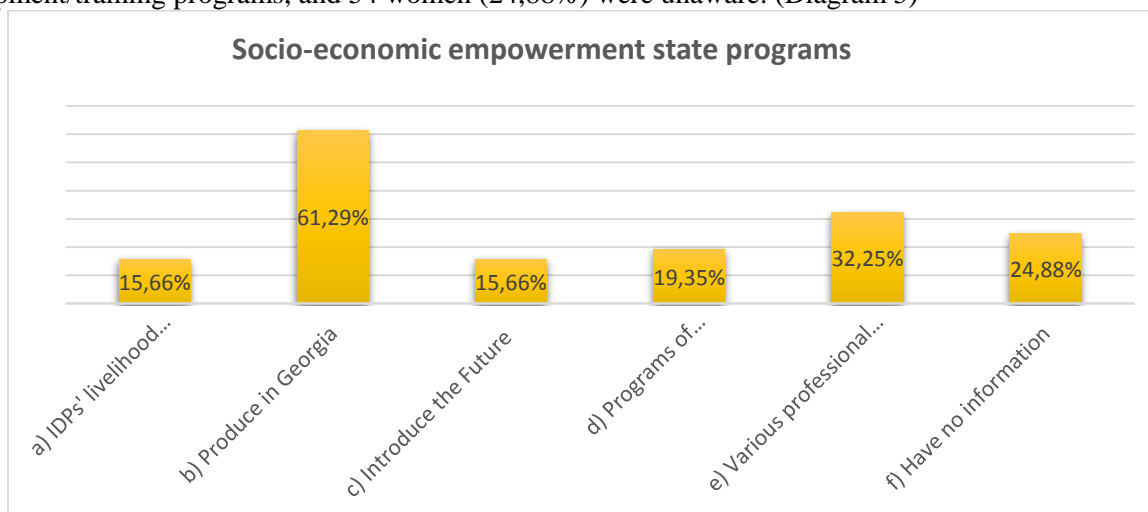
143 (65.89%) respondents pointed out fewer employment opportunities during the analysis. Low financial income was reported by 141 (64.97%) and forced migration abroad by 70(32.25%). Inflation, high prices of food, medicine, household items are mentioned by 76 (35.02%). Lack/inefficient local and central state programs hinder small business, entrepreneurship development according to 52 (23.96%). 40(18.43%) respondents report high-interest loans and credits. Support for recovery of business activities stopped due to Covid 19 is pointed out by 35(16,12%). The quantitative survey has shown that the lack of free support services (including extended child care services in schools and kindergartens, for single mothers, for large families) is an obstacle to the economic empowerment of employed women. It prevents women from being actively involved in economic activities - 48 (22.11%). This number includes 2 IDPs (4.16%), 43 locals (89.58%), 1 mother with many children (2.08%) and 2 single mothers (4.16%). (Diagram 4)



The focus groups confirmed all these reasons, but the following opinion was also expressed:

I.Ch., a female, employed: Employing women is a priority. There is a small sewing shop on my street. The owner used to tell me that she had offered to teach sewing to women, but nobody came.

According to the question "Which state programs of socio-economic empowerment (agricultural development, small business support) are/were you aware of?", we have found out that in Kutaisi Municipality, people are mostly aware of the program "Produce in Georgia" - 133 (61.29%), including 17 IDPs (12.78%) and 108 locals (81.20%). 34 (15.66%) respondents are aware of the livelihood program. 34(15.66%) respondents have information about "Introduce the Future", and programs of international/local non-governmental organizations are familiar to 42(19.35%) respondents. 70(32.25%) were informed about various professional development/training programs, and 54 women (24,88%) were unaware. (Diagram 5)



Promoting family farming, small business, and self-employment is vital to create a favorable economic environment. The highest number of answers - 124 (57.14%) was received by the need for small business support programs. It includes 17 (13.70%) IDP respondents and 99 (79.83%) local ones. Other answers are as follows: affordable credits are pointed out by 107 (49.30%) respondents, 84 (38.70%) speak about grant programs. 91 (41.93) interviewees are interested in rural support programs, and 58 (26.72%) women in local self-government programs to support agriculture, greenhouses and other activities. More information about the existing state programs is emphasized by 102 (47%) and consulting services and assistance in writing business projects by 37 (17.05%) respondents.

Focus groups emphasized this question as well.

L.Ch., a female, employed: Many do not have the necessary inventory after doing vocational training. They need help.

The focus was also made on supporting mothers:

D.S., woman, a representative of ethnic minority: I have three children. I am a single mother. There must be a program to allow a mother to go to work quietly.

I.S., male, a City Council representative: It is essential to promote women's economic activities, inclusiveness of local self-government in trainings and business plan development, support youth initiatives.

We can see that 139(64.05%) respondents receive information from online media and social networks through the survey. Television, radio is a source of information for 109 (50.23) respondents. Neighbors/acquaintances were

reported by 68 (31.33%). Municipality/central government/ministry website/Facebook page is a source for 33(15.20%) surveyed. NGOs are reported by 25(11.52%) and information leaflets/information boards in the community by 18(8.29%) ones. The fewest answers were the representative of the mayor in the community - 7(3.22) and local MP - 6(2.76%).

Qualitative research has also revealed the following:

T.G., woman, single mother, socially vulnerable: 200 GEL assistance is provided from the municipality once a year ... I wrote an application in April, last year and this year, I received 240 GEL.

N.J., a woman employed in an NGO: For two years, we implemented the project "Healthy Mothers - Healthy Future". We introduced municipal and state programs in kindergartens to parents and teachers.

E. K., socially vulnerable woman, mother of many children: Neighbors are the source of information.

M.C., a woman of 65, a person with disabilities: Local authorities do not inform the population about their plans. Their website displays only some activities. It is also not available to many people, as they have neither a computer nor internet.

L.Kh., a woman of 56, employed: A municipality representative comes to us and asks us what we need and takes proposals to City Hall. It happens once a year.

The opinion of the self-government representatives is as follows:

I.Sh., male, City Council representative: Improvement of infrastructure, social and health programs, housing infrastructure, promotion of tourism development is a priority for the population. To identify the specific needs of vulnerable groups, we work closely with NGOs working on vulnerable groups. Based on the cooperation, a program of adapting the gynaecological office for women and girls with disabilities in the municipal polyclinic has been developed. Now we are working on adapting the bus stops. In addition, we collaborate with parents of children with autism spectrum and improve their funded therapy program. The Source of information for local self-government is research and feedback received at meetings and cooperation with organizations.

M.Kh., a local expert in infrastructure: Mayor's representatives have complete information on population`s problems.

Insufficient communication and informing the population by state agencies' representatives are obstacles to obtaining the necessary information for 175 (80.64%) respondents. 32 (14.74%) of the population mentioned low interest as a hindering factor in state and local programs aimed at economic empowerment, including 6 (18.75%) IDPs and 25 (78.12%) locals. Four respondents named the lack of internet access. All of them are locals (1.84%).

Qualitative study has confirmed problem of poor communication:

N.Ch., a woman of 45,

fencer, member of the NGO, a person with disabilities: Frequent communication is necessary to solve various problems of people with disabilities.

N.D., a woman of 35, housewife, mother with many children: There is no communication with the population. Mothers of many children spread information between each other. Information about maternity assistance on the birth of the fourth child should be provided in a maternity house.

M.Ts., a woman of 65, disabled person: No government is interested in communicating with the population. I was offended. Instead of helping me, the social worker told me to buy a smaller flat and support myself with the rest of the money. I had already sold the patriarchal house in the center and moved to the outskirts of town.

M.K., a woman of 67: The local government must be interested in making its programs public. Not everyone can get e-versions on local programs. Therefore they should disseminate this information in public.

N.Ch., a woman of 45, employed in the NGO, a person with disabilities: We will arrange meetings, but they should provide us with a mobile group to help us move.

N.D., housewife, a mother with many children: Five years later, I gave birth to the fourth child; I found out that City Hall transport was free for mothers with many children. I cannot look for news on the stands! Large families should be provided with information.

I.S., a woman of 47, employed, an IDP family member: Lack of computer is a big problem for large families.

N.D., 53, employed: Many children wanted to get involved in programs during distance learning, but there was only one mobile in a family of five, six or seven. Several families were satisfied, but the problem still remained.

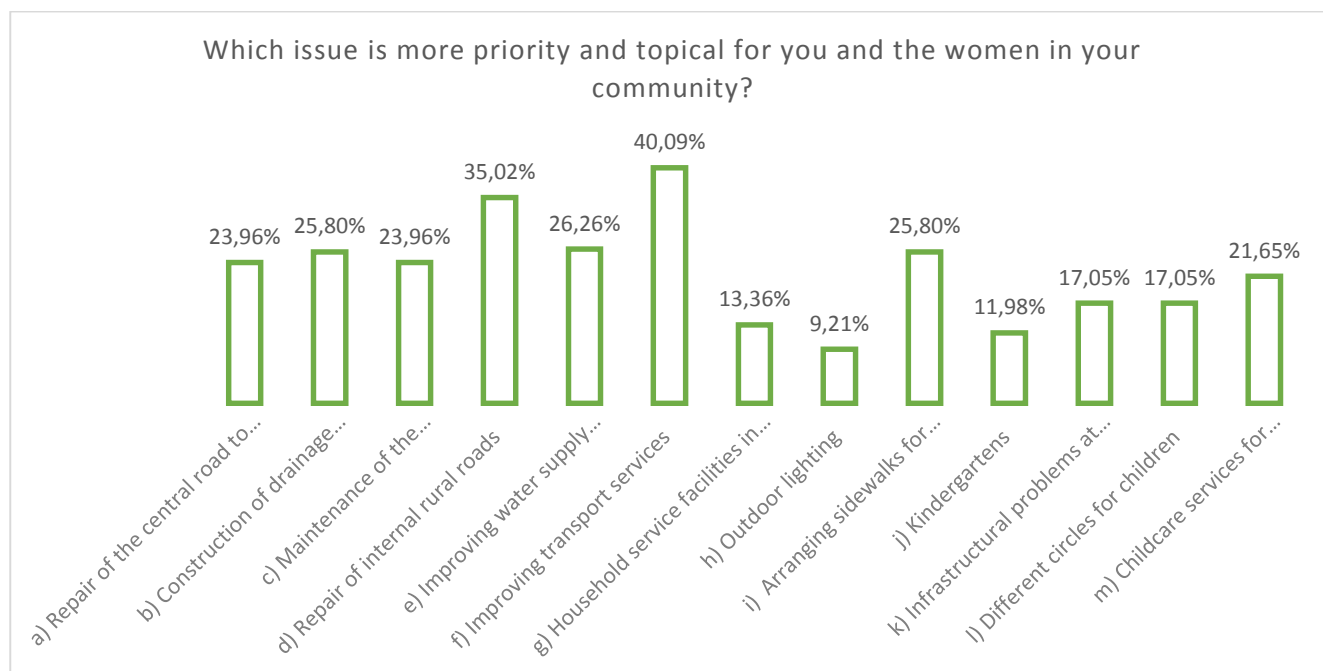
Block III: Food Security

Food security is one of the most important components of human security. The survey has also shown that women are very concerned about this issue. The majority of respondents -183 (84.33%) (including 22 (12.02%) IDPs and 151 (82.51%) locals) indicate high prices for products. Absence of quality products bothers 169(77,88%)

respondents, including 17(10, 05%) IDPs and 143(84, 61%) locals. About the absence of a grocery store nearby complain 11 (5.06%) respondents, including 1 (9,09%) IDP and 10(90.90%) locals. Significant answers were given to this question in the focus groups.

Block IV: Public Security

The women involved in the survey pointed out three issues as the most relevant to public security. Their answers were distributed as follows: improving transport services - 87 (40.09%), repair of internal rural roads - 76 (35.02%), improving water supply system and drinking water supply - 57 (26.26%). As for other indicators, they are as follows: construction of drainage channels - 56 (25.80%), arranging curbs, sidewalks for pedestrians - 56 (25.80%), repair of the central road to the village - 52 (23.96%), maintenance of the sewerage system - 52 (23.96%), childcare services (after school and kindergarten) for employed mothers - 47 (21.65%), infrastructural problems at school - 37 (17.05%), extracurricular circles for children - 37 (17.05%), household service facilities in the village (salon, sewing workshop, etc.) – 29 (13.36%), kindergartens - 26 (11.98%), outdoor lighting - 20 (9.21%). (**Diagram 6**)



In the qualitative survey, focus group and in-depth interview respondents pointed out many things about priority issues.

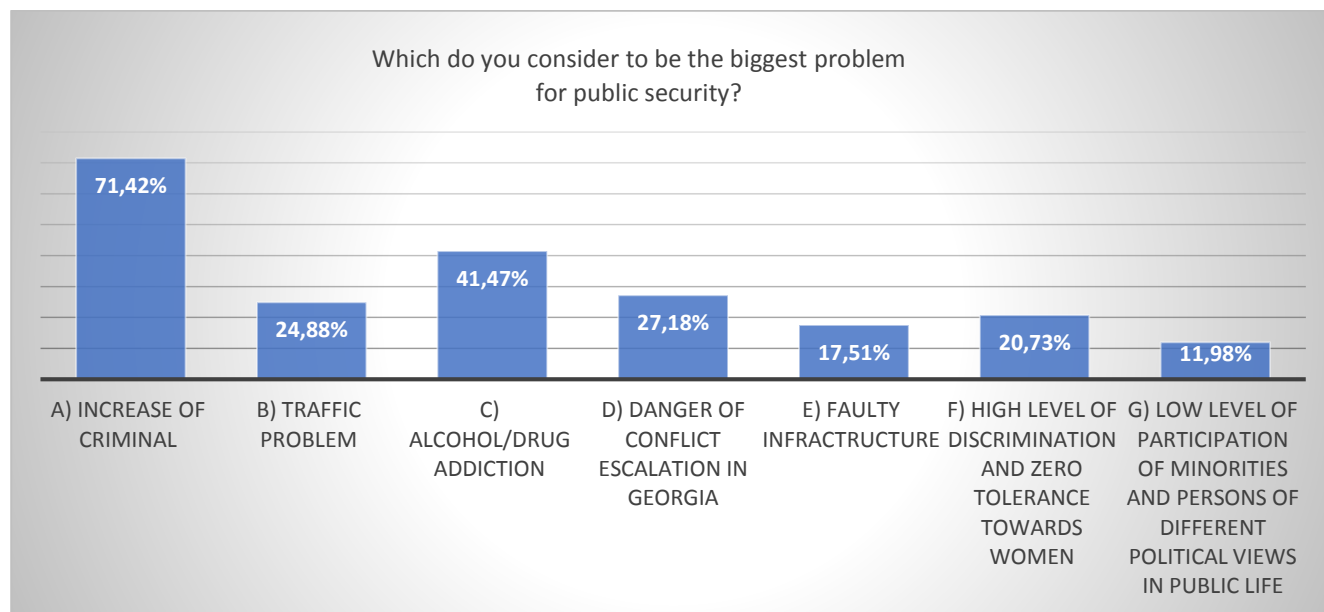
I.Sh., man, City Council representative: Current problems are: unemployment, lack of qualified staff in the region, internal and external migration, infrastructure, social and health programs, tourism development.

K.K., man, a local expert on infrastructure issues: The main problems of the population are: lack of garbage bins, lack of recreational areas and evergreen trees, lack of squares and toilets. Garbage bins are purchased, but they are damaged. Squares are also being arranged. At this stage, 5 squares are being rehabilitated. By the end of 2021, the city will no longer have a first-class road that will have problems with drainage, pavement or road signs. So-called "lying policemen" are arranged in front of schools and kindergartens. They make movement more problematic. Soon, up to 200 new cameras will be installed in the city, and all more will follow traffic rules.

M.Ts., a woman of 65, a person with disabilities: There is no barrier to economic empowerment for women. If they get a job somewhere, the salary is very low.

Based on the quantitative research analysis, the following threats are relevant for the population of Kutaisi Municipality: increase of criminal - 155(71.42%), including 20(12.90%) IDPs and 129(83.22%) locals, alcohol/drug addiction - 90(41.47%), including 8(8.88%) IDPs and 77(85.55%) locals. Traffic problem was emphasized by 54 (24.88%), whereas 59 (27.18%) respondents consider the danger of conflict escalation in Georgia.

Data on other problems were formulated as follows: faulty infrastructure - 38(17.51%), high level of discrimination and zero tolerance towards women - 45(20.73%), the low level of participation of minorities and persons of different political views in public life - 26(11.98%). (**Diagram 7**)



The data from the study show the urgency of problems related to education. **To the question - "Do your children, grandchildren, or acquaintances have access to quality higher education?"**, 85 (39.17%) respondents gave a positive answer. The answer "no" was observed by 16 women (7.37%), including 5 IDPs (31.25%) and 11 locals (68.75%). None of them is socially vulnerable, single mothers or mothers with many children. Access to quality secondary education is partially recorded by 116 people (53.45%), including 10 (8.62%) IDPs and 97 (83.62%) locals, 2 (1.72%) socially vulnerable, 9 (7.75%) single mothers and 2 (1.72%) mothers of many children.

We could identify its reasons through the quantitative survey: 117 (53.91%) respondents point out the low quality of education. 74 (34.10%) respondents emphasize an insufficient number of professional teachers. Faulty school infrastructure (depreciated, old building, faulty sewerage system, lack of water, etc.) is mentioned by - 29(13.36%). School is far from home for 18(8.29%) respondents. Lack of appropriate technical equipment in the school (computers, internet, specialized subject classrooms (physics, chemistry, biology, etc.) is reported by - 49(22.58%), whereas poor Internet connection (for distance learning process) is a problem for - 40(18.43%) interviewees.

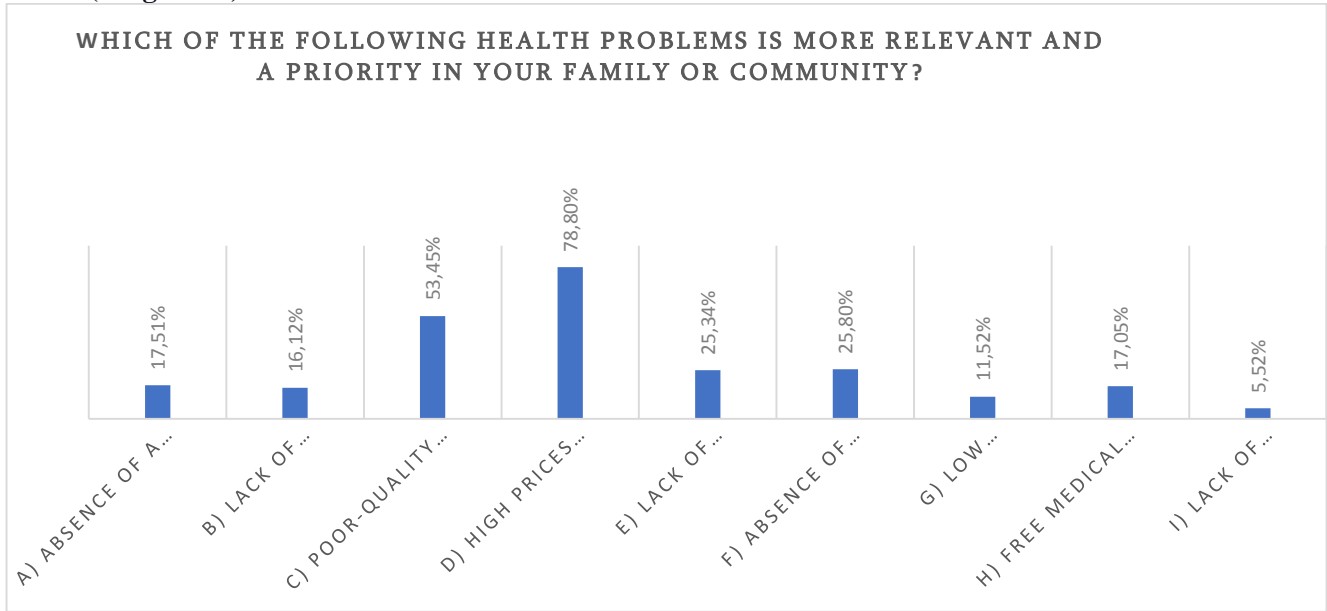
E.F., a woman of 60: It is essential to support gifted children with unique skills in the arts. They have parents, but it is not easy for them. They can do nothing to help.

We found out that higher education is available to family members and acquaintances of 135 (62.21%) respondents. On the other hand, 9 (4.14%) think that it is not available, while 73 (33.64%) think it is partially available. As for the reasons, the problem for obtaining higher education is considered to be as follows: there are no vocational guidance courses in schools, which prevents the entrant from choosing the best profession - 61 (28.11%), free accommodation in the city is not available for students from the region - 27 (12.44%), the high tuition fee is the reason for -85 (39.17%), and 44 (20.27%) reports the low-quality tuition.

Block V: Health Security

During the quantitative research, priority and topical problems were identified. 38 (17.51%) of the surveyed women consider the absence of an outpatient medical center in their community, including 3 (7.89%) IDPs and 34 (89.47%) locals. The lack of medical staff is indicated by 35 (16.12%) respondents, including 7 (20%) IDPs and 26 (74.28%) locals. 116 (53.45%), including 12 (10.34%) IDPs and 97 (83.62%) locals, speak of poor-quality medical services. High prices on medicines are the most pressing problem for 171 (78.80%), including 21 (12.28%) IDPs and 140 (81.87%) locals. Lack of information about healthcare programs is relevant for 55(25.34%), including 6(10.90%) IDPs and 47(85.45%) locals. The absence of free medical examinations on the ground in villages is a priority issue for 53(25.80%), including 4(7.54%) IDPs and 47(88.67%) locals. Low awareness of reproductive health is pointed out by 25(11.52%) respondents (all locals). Free medical screening programs for girls and women is problematic for 37(17.05%) women, including 3(8.10%) IDPs and 31(83.78%). The lack of targeted health care

programs for IDP and conflict-affected women is relevant for 12(5.52%), including 4(33,33%) IDPs and 8(66.66%) locals. **(Diagram 8)**

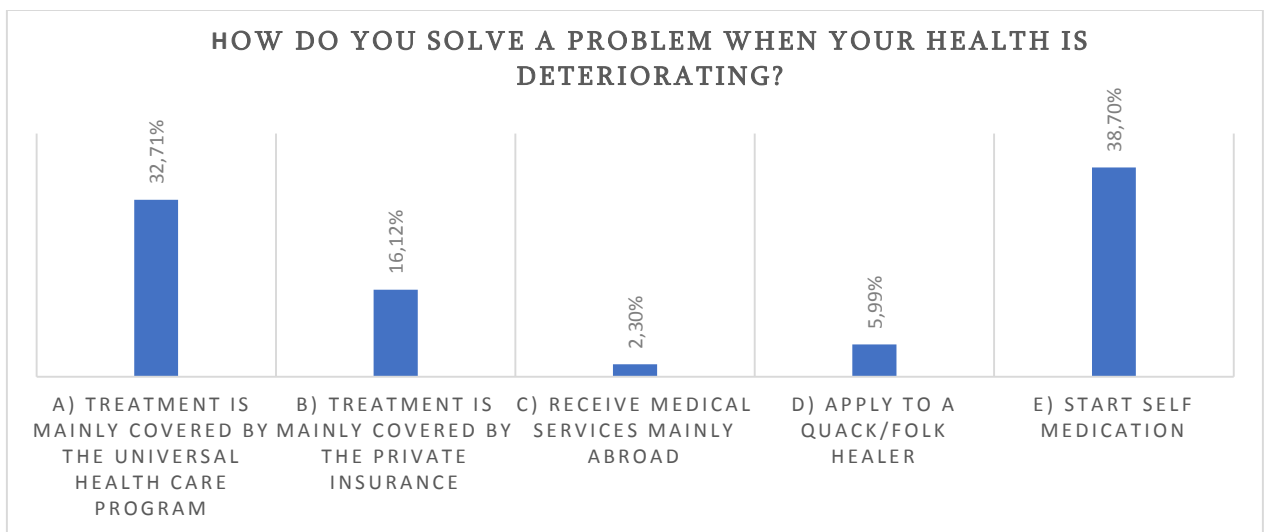


The qualitative research data also confirms the results obtained by quantitative research.

T.J., 27, IDP, mother of many children: I was poisoned during pregnancy and was taken to the hospital. I did not pay the money. I left voluntarily. I was warned not to hurry and stay there. The same day I was rushed back to that hospital. But when registering me, they made a mistake, and I was charged 110 GEL. They lied to me about free and paid medical services. I explained the doctor everything, and he told me not to pay. I left there. They still call me to pay. I do not pay.

E.C., female, City Hall representative: Citizens need co-financing of operations and support in conducting additional medical examinations.

It was interesting how women manage to solve a problem during a health deterioration. It turned out that for 71 (32.71%) respondents, treatment is mainly covered by the universal health care program. 35(16,12%) benefit from private insurance, 5(2.30%) receive medical services mainly abroad, 13(5.99%) apply to a quack/folk healer, most of the respondents 84(38.70%), including 12(14.28%) IDPs and 67(79.76%) locals start self-medication.(Diagram 9)



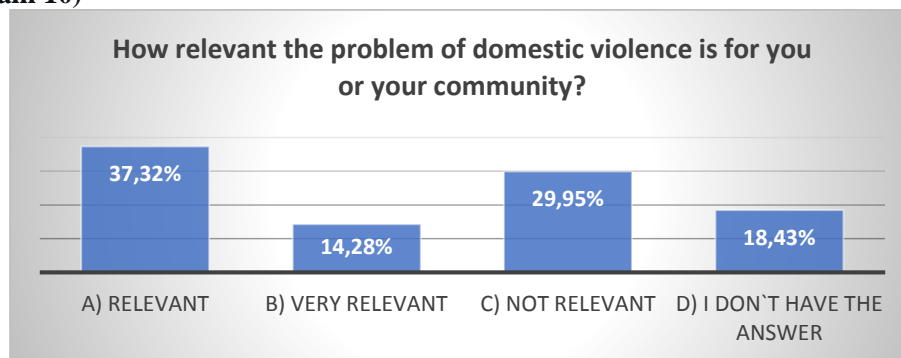
Talking about health problems was also relevant for the qualitative research participant.

E.Ch., woman, City Hall representative: We have a specific program - Cochlear implant support. It is a costly device. This program is less well known. However, self-government is implementing it, and it is necessary as well. There is a program to support people with disabilities and war veterans. Due to referrals and other grounds, it is possible to increase or decrease the allocated funds, although they are regularly in our budget. In terms of gender

needs, we can highlight the assistance program to people with breast cancer in purchasing a particular drug - Herceptin.

Block VI: Personal Security

The quantitative research has revealed the issue of domestic violence and how relevant it is for a part of the Kutaisi Municipality population. **As the research has shown, 81 (37.32%) consider the problem of violence relevant.** Including 9 (11.11%) IDPs, 67 (82.71%) locals, 5 (6.17%) single mothers, 1 (1.23%) socially vulnerable and 10 (12.34%) unemployed. The issue is very relevant for 31(14.28%), including 5 (16.12%) IDPs, 25 (80.64%) locals and 5 unemployed (16.12%). It is not relevant for 65(29.95%) respondents; 40(18.43%) respondents have no reply. **(Diagram 10)**



Attitudes towards the problem were expressed during the focus groups:

N.D., a woman of 53, employed in a non-governmental organization: I have an acquaintance, victim violence. I told her not to break down the family. But as her children say, their childhood has been distorted. There was a student who was abused by her grandmother. Once the baby got cold. Nobody took care of her. We are a day center, and I ran into many things related to the healthcare system. We called an ambulance several times to take the baby to the hospital. They demanded a lot of money - I could not provide it with the teacher's salary. The status of the socially vulnerable was removed from the database. The City Council Deputy Chairman helped me solve this problem not to have to pay.

N.D., a woman of 35, housewife: There was a case of violence nearby, and with the help of 112, the situation was quickly neutralized.

L. Kh., a woman of 56, employed: I have been cooperating with Fund "Sukhumi" for 15 years. This topic used to be taboo. There is more awareness today. Many services are involved in solving the problem. It is important to save even one victim.

One participant even shared her story with the audience.

T.J., a woman of 27, IDP, mother of many children: For me, the issue is very painful. The mother was a constant victim. As a child, I used to watch my mother cry. I asked her to say it to relatives many times, but she refused. I tried to ask for help my aunt and uncle, but they refrained. I was so upset sometimes, and I thought I would buy a mouse potion and give it to the abuser. I was a little girl. I was shocked by my mother's tragedy and could not think otherwise.

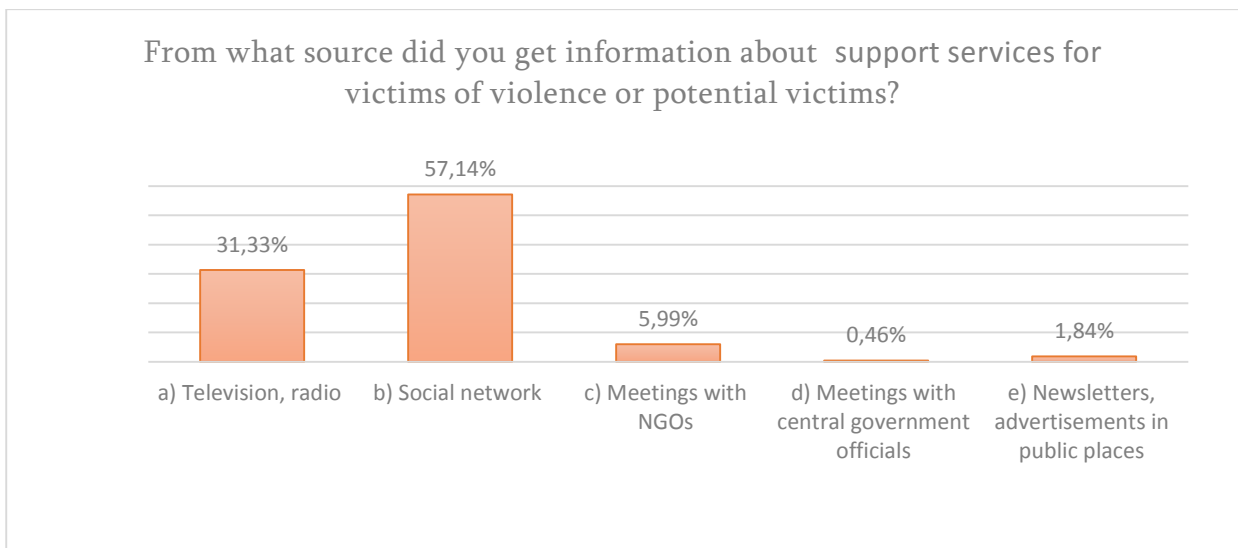
116 (53.45%) respondents consider psychological violence as the most common form. 51 (23.50%) pointed out psychological violence (humiliation, verbal abuse, swearing, neglect, etc.). Economic violence (manipulation of funds, financial dependence on one family member, seizure of money, ban on cash management, etc.) is reported by 40 (18.43%) and sexual (rape, sexual harassment) by 10 (4.60%) respondents.

Survey analysis shows whether the respondents have information about support services for victims of violence. 68 (31.33%) women are informed and 70(32.26%) (6 (7.59%) IDPs and 69 (87.73%) locals) ones do not have information. 70(32.26%) respondents have some information.

A list follows this question:

21(9.67%) are aware of state and NGO crisis centres, whereas 10(4.60%) have information about state and NGO shelters. 13(5.99%) respondents are informed about State Legal Services. 101(46.54%) interviewees are aware of a hotline, 24(11.05%) have information about NGOs and their services. 1(0,46%) has information about municipal services, and 18(8.29%) are informed about NGOs working on violence issues.

The survey participants pointed out the source of information they get about support services for victims of violence or potential victims. The data are as follows: television, radio - 68(31.33%), social network - 124(57.142%), meetings with NGOs - 13(5.99%), meetings with central government officials - 1(0.46%), newsletters, announcements in public places - 4(1.84%). **(Diagram 11)**



N.D., a woman of 35, Housewife: I know what I should do in case of violence. Neither a woman, nor a child, nor anyone should be oppressed.

I.Sh., man, City Council representative: Informing the citizens is one of our top priorities. City Council studies the level of citizens' awareness. In 2020, the Gender Equality Council Facebook page was created to raise awareness or help victims of violence more actively. The source of information for the population is television and media.

P. Kh., woman, a local expert on social issues: Any citizen can see the programs we implement on the municipality website. The City Hall Social Service has an official Facebook page, where the new program, with its amendments, is published.

According to the respondents' answers, we can see the availability of the existing services for the Kutaisi Municipality population. They are available for 75(34.56%) people, insufficiently available for 124(57.14%) respondents and not available for 18(8.29%) ones.

Qualitative research has also revealed that existing services are less available.

Sh.Sh., a woman of 30 years old, socially vulnerable, mother of many children: I must receive an allowance for mothers of many children, and they do not give it to me. One should be a citizen of Kutaisi and registered here. I am not allowed to register in Kutaisi since I am renting a flat. I live alone, with children. My husband has left us.

N.D., a woman of 53, employed by an NGO: There have always been parents, victims of violence and their children at the day center. Often both the mother and the baby hide the fact of violence. We need more inclusiveness of organizations working against violence, support with programs.

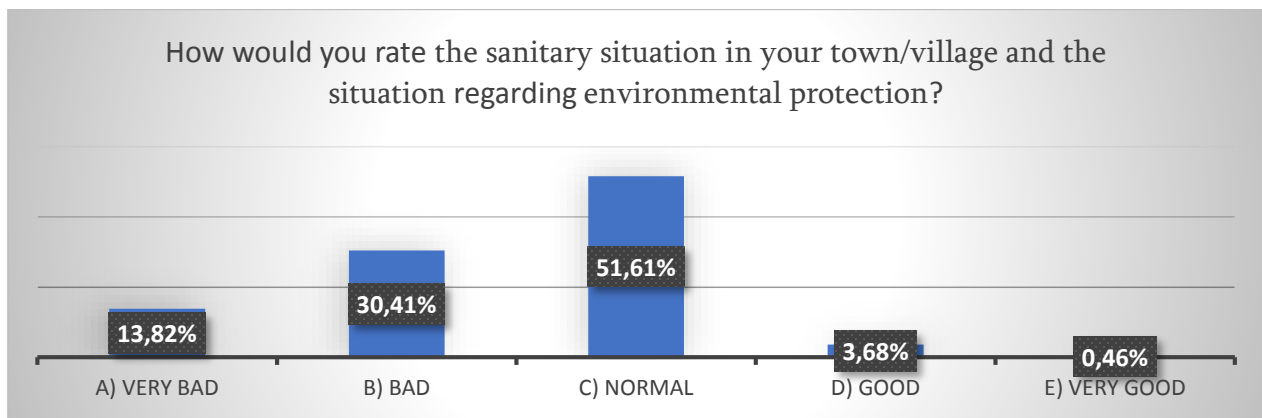
Quantitative study 17 (7.83%) participants think that **the programs implemented by the local self-government to address violence against women** are sufficient. However, they are insufficient for 41(18.89%) ones and partially sufficient for 64(29.49%). However, 67(30.87%) respondents do not have any information about the programs. At the same time, 28(12.90%) talk about the diversity of the programs and adapting them to the specific needs of the victims of violence.

E.Ch., woman, City Hall representative: Women victims of violence find it difficult to establish themselves. They have limited living conditions, and it is better to work to solve their problems. There is more demand for one-time assistance. It may take a long time to provide them with housing. However, City Hall is unable to meet such needs. Social housing will be built as well. If there are applications, we will help them to be accommodated in the housing.

P. Kh., a local expert on social issues: If the population suggests specific initiatives, we will discuss the result and the target and evaluation indicator. We will discuss any initiative and represent it to the City Council and make a decision together.

Block VII: Environmental Security

Quantitative survey participants assessed the sanitary situation in their town/village and the environmental situation as well. 30(13.82%) assess it as very bad, whereas 66(30.41%) think it is bad. It is normal for 112(51.61%) respondents, and for 8(3.68%) ones, it is good. Only one (0,46%) respondent assesses the situation as very good. **(Diagram 12)**



K.K., male, local expert in infrastructure: There is a shortage of garbage bins. Garbage trucks are not enough. The city needs about 60 garbage trucks. Today we have 30 cars. We plan to buy cars this year, and in 3-4 years we will have enough cars. Public toilets are a problem as well. We finished arranging a toilet in Central Boulevard last year. Stray dogs are also a problem. When an aggressive animal appears in the area, they call the City Hall hotline, and the on-duty group (works 24 hours a day) goes to the spot.

Among the most relevant environmental problems in the community, the participants named: polluted air 100(46.08%), poor access to clean water - 24(9.67%), sewage system malfunction - 44(20.27%), lack or malfunction of drainage pipes - 49(22.58%).

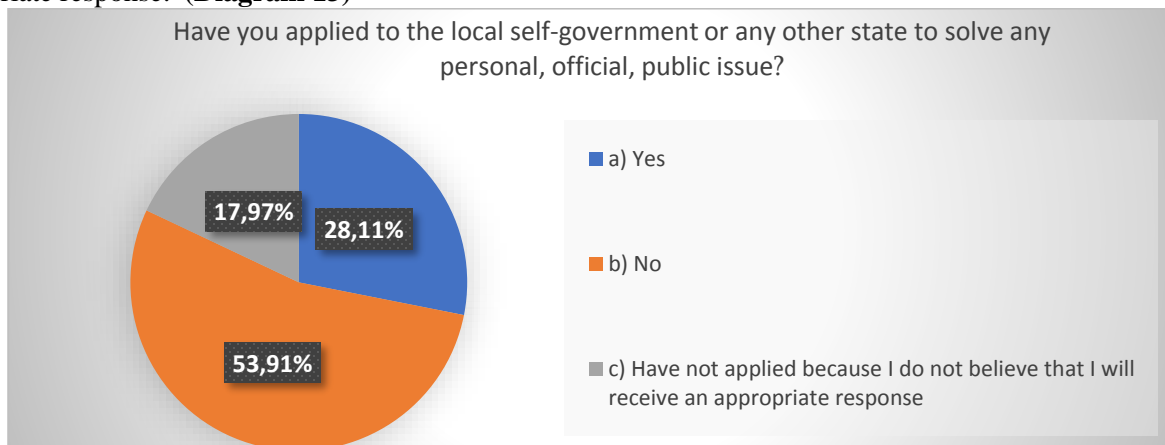
The focus group participants talked about specific environmental problems:

T.G., a woman of 62, IDP, employed: There is a metallurgical plant in Tabukashvili settlement. Terrible exhaust pollutes the air. I am very actively fighting against this problem. They have filters, but they cost extra money, and they avoid using them. Exhaust is released at night.

L. Kh., a woman of 56, employed: There is an Oghaskura canal in the Avtomshenebeli settlement, which has been turned into a landfill. As a result, when it rains, everything is flooded. Also, the first floors of the houses on Muskhelishvili Street are flooded. For years, this problem has not been solved.

Block VIII: General Questions

What kind of communication the population has with the local government and whether they have applied to the local self-government or any other state body to solve any personal, official, public issue, the respondents gave the following answers: 61(28.11%) respondents have applied to, whereas 117(53.91%) of them have not applied. 39(17.97%) respondents have not applied because they do not believe they will receive an appropriate response. **(Diagram 13)**



M.K., a woman, employed: If sewer pipe bursts or anything else happens, they come operatively. We asked for the repair of the inner yard in the Nikea settlement, and the issue was included in the co-financing program. It is already over. Facing works are underway at this stage. They respond promptly. Positive results are visible.

N.Kh., a woman of 50, employed: My colleague needed surgery. So we applied to City Hall, and there was an immediate response.

T.G., a woman of 62, IDP, employed: In 2008, I applied to the municipality for apartment roofing. The response was quick. They also funded my mother's operation in 2010.

N.Ch., a woman of 45, employed in a non-governmental organization, a person with disabilities: The street lighting had to be done. I live in Ukimerioni settlement, and they respond to messages promptly. I am an oncology patient, and I have not received a single penny from the authorities, except that my clinic included me in the program. Everything regarding treatment was delivered for free. I have a friend whose wheelchair broke down. She wrote an application, but it turned out that the issuance of wheelchairs is limited for a year. She is a 28-year-old girl, and she also wants to go out.

L. Kh., a woman of 56, employed: I had an operation four years ago. The City Hall helped me. Sewer pipes are constantly damaged in our block of flats. They respond quickly and promptly to repair.

A woman of 44, employed, mother of many children: There was a program for large families with an entrepreneurial perspective. A competition was announced, we participated, and our project won. We were funded.

M.S., a woman of 60, a person with disabilities, mother of many children: I went to take a New Year's gift. I am a disabled mother with a disabled child, but they did not give me any. They said that there is only one package for a family. There is no exception, and the City Hall does not allow us.

P.Kh., woman, a local expert in social affairs: At least 15 thousand people apply to us for health problems and employment. We do not refuse to meet with citizens.

M.V., a woman of 50, a pensioner: I once applied to the City Hall for one-time assistance, and they did not provide it to me.

I.S., a woman of 30, mother of many children: I applied to the municipality for firewood. I am a socially vulnerable and mother with many children, but they did not provide it to me.

E. K., a woman of 40, socially vulnerable, mother of many children: Last year, I applied to the City Hall for one-time financial assistance as a mother of many children and a disabled person. But I was refused.

N.D., a woman of 53, employed: I have not felt that I belong to the state yet. Since I belong to a non-governmental organization, I have never received any assistance. We do not even have half the salary that public school teachers receive. A month ago, I had a heart problem and went to a clinic. I found out that the therapist's services are free.

K.K., male, a local expert in infrastructure: There have been referrals from the population and apartment owners' association to benefit from the City Hall programs. There are 20 to 50 written requests per day.

E.Ch., woman, City Hall representative: There is a large number of referrals. Special commissions need to be convened at least once a week or two to review applications. Residents apply to us for help with the emergency response program, vouchers for medical assistance, free transportation coupons. They are informed about housing programs arranging entrances, basements and elevators.

An analysis of the survey participants' responses shows the forms of communication with local authorities they have used. The answers are as follows: settlement/village meetings - 47(21.65%), attendance at the City Council session - 21(9.67%), listening to the reports of the Mayor, City Hall services -27(12.44%), petition - 28(12.90%), Mayor's Advisory Council, Gender Council, Council of Persons with Disabilities - 5(2.30%), civil budgeting- 4(1.84%), electronic form of communication (email, window for sending a letter on the municipality's website) - 85(39.17%).

I.Sh., man, City Council representative: The local self-government uses public meetings with the citizens. City Council each member has reception days in the City Council and municipal units. Remote communication increased during the Covid 19 pandemics. Any citizen can attend the City Council sessions and ask questions. Announcements of the Sakrebulo sessions are published on the City Council official Facebook page. The sessions are broadcast on Rioni TV and the City Council page via Facebook. The NGO and media representatives receive the issues for discussion at the meeting via the attached explanations via e-mail.

E.Ch., woman, City Hall representative: Citizens can write an application in the City Hall administration building and mail them. Also, they can clarify the issue by calling on the phone without leaving home. They can write to us on Facebook or the website. The mayor has a reception for citizens on Thursdays, where the deputy mayors are also present. People can meet with the heads of the mayor's offices. The programs are posted on the website. The elderly have a problem in this regard. However, there is also a stand in the City Hall building where people can receive the information. They can get more details from the receptionists. Territorial authorities have comprehensive information. We have a program for large families and youth initiatives. These programs are less well known. More engagement is needed to benefit from them.

M.Kh., man, a local expert in infrastructure: All procurements are made based on an electronic tender available to any interested person.

The study assessed the extent to which the services and programs provided by local governments are tailored (or reflect) to the specific needs of vulnerable groups. However, 110 (50.69%) think that the practice of assessing

the specific needs and satisfaction of vulnerable populations with programs is not introduced. For 56 (25.80%), programs do not address the specific needs of individual vulnerable groups, whereas 51 (23.50%) point out that local programs address the specific needs of vulnerable groups.

The qualitative research analysis has revealed:

M.Ts., a woman of 65, a person with disabilities: Single people, people with disabilities and those on a pension need more attention. During the second wave of the pandemic, when the temperature rose, I called my family doctor and asked her to send somebody from the lab to test on Covid-19. She told me that they do not have such a service. But when she discovered that I was aware of that service, she told me that she had sent them several times but did not reach anyone. So it turns out that we, the disabled, are doomed to death. It is an essential social assistance program to meet the specific needs of the population. But, unfortunately, this program did not have any benefits for me.

On the contrary, I felt humiliated. I am a lonely and disabled person and can hardly move. But unfortunately, I was not included in the program since I have a parquet on the floor, which is completely damaged.

M.V., a woman of 50, retired: I watch TV, and I am aware of programs. Our house has a representative, but he tells me that he does not have the power. The municipality has no resources.

Sh.Sh., a woman of 30, socially vulnerable, with many children: There was some assistance for New Year and Easter. But when I arrived, I was told that I could not receive them as I am not registered in Kutaisi. I am a single mother with four children.

A. Ts., a woman of 44, employed, mother of many children: I did not even have the status of a mother of 6 children. Although they granted it to us last year, that also means nothing. The state subsidizes only electricity. Our choice is to have many children, but elementary support is necessary. The income tax should still be less.

N.D., a woman of 35, housewife, mother of many children: I have 11 underage children. I need baby food, medicines, diapers, child care products. Pediatric drugs have a very high price. There was an advertisement on TV, having many children is good. Well, we need appreciation.

M.Ts., a woman of 65, a person with disabilities: The most priority is economic development, which affects the population. The majority of immigrants are women. We all know the negative future of a family without a mother and a woman.

N.Ch., a woman of 45, employed, disabled person: We had several programs. These were educational programs to teach people with disabilities playing on various instruments, opening computer and foreign language courses. The City Hall funded us, we did three-month courses, and I do not want it to be in vain. Employment is an unresolved issue for us. Wherever I sent a CV and said that I need some work, I can speak, but I can not walk. I can go anywhere if the environment is adapted. We permanently ask the government to arrange the environment so that we can move. New buses have arrived, but you need to get to the bus. There are so many kerbs, and you can not reach the stop. If I make someone help me, it is not an adapted environment. We fight to attract attention. We can do a lot, but we need support.

M.K., a woman of 67, employed: The population does not have the information about programs. I do not think anyone studies the problems of the Kutaisi population. The local government does no analysis.

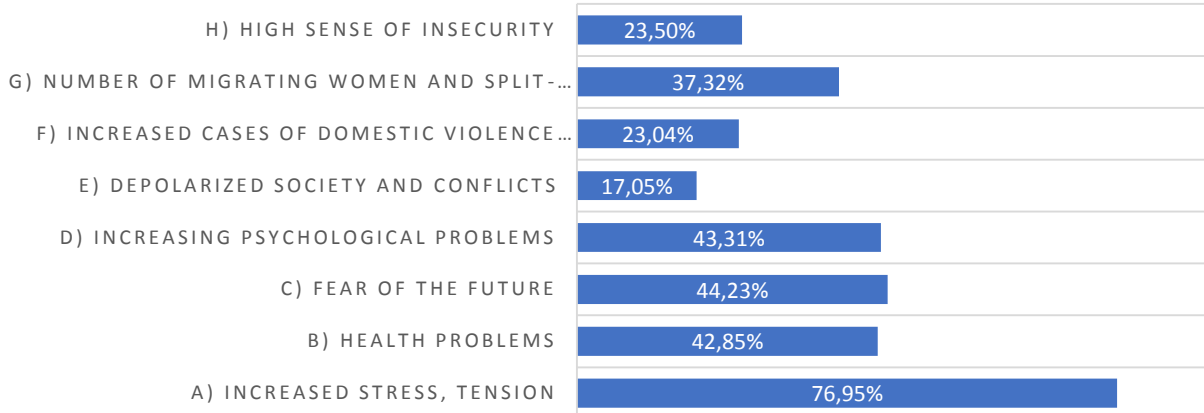
P.Kh., woman, a local expert in social issues: Our budget covers vulnerable groups, children with autism spectrum disorder and children with phenylketonuria go to Tbilisi for special nutrition because the necessary products are not sold in Kutaisi. Support program for people with leukaemia and solid tumours from 0 to 18 years has increased.

The quantitative study participants have also stated their opinion on how the increased threat to human security affects the state of the population:

167 (76.95%) believe that stress, tension are increased. Health problems are relevant for 93 (42.85%) respondents. 96 (44.23%) have a fear of the future. 94 (43.31%) believe that psychological problems are increasing.

Society is depolarized for 37 (17.05%). Cases of domestic violence and violence against women are increasing, which is reported by 50 (23.04%). 87 (37.32%) point out an increase in the number of migrating women and split-up families. 51 (23.50%) respondents have a high sense of insecurity. **(Diagram 14)**

**HOW DOES AN INCREASED THREAT TO HUMAN SECURITY
(ECONOMIC, FOOD, PUBLIC, HEALTH, PERSONAL, ENVIRONMENTAL)
AFFECT THE POPULATION'S CONDITION?**



Recommendations

Based on the information obtained from the research, recommendations have been developed for local governmental or non-governmental structures:

- According to the beneficiaries, some adjustments should be made and the benefits of the existing programs studied;
- Information about local self-government programs should be provided to the population;
- Communication and consultations with the population, especially vulnerable groups, should be constant;
- Needs of different segments of the population should be studied and programs tailored to their needs developed;
- Programs to support women's economic activities and small businesses should be activated;
- It is necessary to provide women with vocational training, further employment and purchase necessary equipment for them;
- It is necessary to activate young people and support youth initiatives;
- The tourism sector should be rehabilitated;
- It is necessary to intensify the activity of the mayor's office representatives, housing partnership and local deputies to inform the population about existing programs;
- It is necessary to improve infrastructure, social and healthcare programs, housing infrastructure;
- It is desirable to provide information to women in maternity homes on municipal assistance on the birth of the third child;
- It is necessary to provide a mobile group to help people with disabilities with movement;
- It is advisable to improve the sanitary situation in the city (increase the number of garbage bins and garbage trucks, construct toilets, take stray animals to shelters);
- It is necessary to take care of the ecological situation (increasing recreational areas, planting evergreen trees, arranging areas, neutralizing the environmental hazard of the metallurgical plant using filters, cleaning the Oghaskura canal);
- It is necessary to develop a program to support unique and gifted children;
- It is advisable to develop a program supporting victims of violence;
- It is necessary to pay more attention to single mothers, mothers with many children, people with disabilities, pensioners;
- It is desirable to facilitate creating sports and cultural institutions (dance, panduri learning circles) for children and youth in all districts;
- It is necessary to promote the employment of women and youth.