RESEARCH ON THE RISK OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Tsalenjikha

Zugdidi   Khoni   Tskaltubo
Senaki
        Samtredia
Chokhatauri   Baghdati
Kobuleti

2023

C O N T E N T S

2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the quantitative research conducted by the Women's Fund 'Sukhumi' in the target municipalities is to determine and assess the risks of violence in families and against women. This aims to facilitate timely responses to such cases and provide appropriate advocacy.

Within this research, 1003 female respondents, were interviewed across 10 target municipalities: Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha, Senaki, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Kutaisi, Baghdati, Chokhatauri, Samtredia, and Kobuleti.

In researching issues of violence against women, the development of accurate and relevant indicators is crucial. These indicators aid in the early identification of violence cases and, consequently, in preventing violence. Indicators derived from various sources can be categorized into two main groups:

1. Indicators that measure the event's scale;

2. Indicators that measure the state's response to the existing problem.

The indicators outlined in the mentioned groups include four different subgroups ("drivers"), each examined at **four primary levels: societal, institutional/systemic, organizational/community, and individual/interpersonal (relationships).** Indicators developed by various organizations/institutions "move in these dimensions" and are statistically analyzed.

According to a general assessment, individual risk factors are biological and/or interpersonal: e.g., history of violence in the family, exposure to violent behavior in various contexts, substance (alcohol, drugs) abuse, unemployment, antisocial behavior, self-doubt/emotional dependence/low self-esteem, etc.; Attempts to dominate and control a partner, psychological/emotional abuse, conflictual relationships, poor communication skills, jealousy, etc.;

Societal, institutional, and organizational risk factors reflect the systemic response to male violent behavior. The impact of institutions such as schools, churches, media, the legal system, social standards, gender roles, and others are among these variables.[1] A social-ecological model developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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1 Violence against women: Risk factors, consequences and prevalence. Sherry L. Hamby and Mary P. Koss. Arizona Prevention Center, College of Medicine. University of Arizona. გვ. 13 – 28. available on -
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276847446–Violence–against–women–Risk–factors–consequences–and–prevalence

(CDC) aligns with the previously mentioned indicators/ factors/levels and suggests that efforts to prevent violence should be implemented both individually and collectively across each indicator and factor. For example, addressing domestic violence could involve education, training, prevention programs, and policy changes. Additionally, as confirmed by the CDC and supported by empirical evidence, it is essential to note the interrelated nature of **individual, institutional, community/organizational, and societal** factors. A modification made at one level can have an impact on and result in changes made at other levels.

Quantitative survey data reveal that **unemployment and poverty** are the key factors associated with respondents' primary concerns regarding personal security. Overall, the sense of security is **average**. However, a deeper examination of the issue reveals the presence of actions that threaten the respondents' life, health, property, and freedom of speech: even those respondents who reported a high level of personal security, feeling relatively safe and rating it with scores of '4' and '5', indicated experiencing specific threatening actions in their lives: **life threats were reported in 44 cases, health threats in 116 cases, property threats in 72 cases, and freedom of speech threats in 62 cases.**

In regards to the manifestations of family violence, respondents identified **psychological violence** as a form that is considerably less problematic **to discuss**. One-fifth of the respondents have personally experienced violence or have a relative (35.1%) who has been in a violent situation. Out of these, **212 respondents reported that either they or their relatives had personally experienced domestic violence. Personal experiences of domestic violence were noted in 100 cases.**

The research analysis indicates that recognizing the fact or perception of violence is challenging not only for ordinary members of society but also for the victims themselves. This difficulty primarily stems from the fear of acknowledging one's problems (as highlighted in the analysis of why victims of violence often refrain from seeking support services in cases of domestic violence). In identifying the perpetrator, the **'husband'** was most frequently mentioned **(Mean 4.0)**, aligning with the trends observed in official statistics.[2]

The use of support services for victims of violence plays a critical role in identifying instances of violence, assessing the risks, and reducing their number and impact. For this to be effective, these services must be easily accessible and widely known to the public. **The research identified gaps in both accessibility and awareness,**

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2 Based on domestic violence statistics from January to September 2023, men are identified as the main perpetrators of violence. The total number of restraining orders issued during this period was 6,510, of which 73.5% (4,785) specifically targeting male perpetrators. **Official source: Ministry of Internal Affairs.** Available on: https://info.police.ge/uploads/65410fd3787f7.pdf

necessitating increased public awareness and service availability. Notably, almost half of the respondents are aware of **several** support services for victims of violence, while 16.6% **did not seek any services**[3].

More than half of the surveyed female respondents (55%) find support services for victims of violence to be limited or entirely unavailable, with 36% reporting complete unavailability. Regarding the sources of information about these services, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a significant role in 63.3% of cases, followed by social networks in 57.5% of cases. However, regarding referrals, NGOs rank fourth, accounting for 37.8% of cases. The highest referral rates are to local government bodies ("closest" to the population and providing services) and the police (112). **This highlights a clear need to raise public awareness regarding the role of the non-governmental sector as a service provider.**

In identifying the causes of domestic violence, substance (alcohol, drug) abuse is most frequently cited (51.7% of cases), followed by gender stereotypes that assign a subordinate role to women and a decision-making role to men (42% of cases), financial hardship (40.3% of cases), and unemployment (38% of cases).

Recommendations include implementing women's economic empowerment programs and awareness-raising campaigns, strengthening the role of municipalities, fostering cooperation between various relevant agencies, conducting monitoring and evaluation, and providing continuous training for relevant specialists.

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3 A total of 16.6%, equivalent to 166 individuals, cited the reason for their reluctance. Among them, the majority (77 out of 130 cases) hesitated to disclose information about their problem. Additionally, 36 respondents preferred not to answer the question.

INTRODUCTION

To assess the extent of violence against women and in the family, indicators have been established and categorized into two main groups. **1. Indicators that measure the scale of the aforementioned event 2. Indicators that measure the state's response to the existing problem.**

These indicators are measured through various methods, such as criminal statistics, studies focusing on issues of violence against women, and analyses of related challenges.[4]

Gender-based violence impacts the functioning of all areas and sectors. Therefore, it's crucial when developing various state programs to identify and analyze the threats and risks of violence. Appropriate strategies for addressing these issues should be integrated into relevant political documents and programs. This is important because **gender-based violence is not an isolated phenomenon** but is intertwined with the risks present in the broader environment/context[5].

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have developed a social-ecological model that **emphasizes the** intersection of **four levels/variables influencing domestic violence**. These factors include **individual** (covering aspects like gender, age, education, and substance abuse), **relational** (involving peers and family members), **community** (encompassing schools, workplaces, and the immediate environment), and **societal** (which includes broader elements such as health, education, and social policy)[6].

As a result of the studies, **four primary 'drivers' / factors that predict the occurrence of violence have been identified.** To effectively address domestic violence against women, it is crucial to focus on and consider these four factors:

(i) Justification of violence against women;

(ii) Men's control over decision-making and restricting women's independence in public life and relationships;

(iii) Rigid gender roles and stereotypical constructs of masculinity and femininity;

(iv) Men's attitude towards women when aggression and disrespect are strongly expressed.

Each of these indicators should be examined at four levels: **individual/interpersonal,**

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4 Indicators to measure violence against women. Expert Group Meeting Organized by: United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women United Nations Economic Commission for Europe United Nations Statistical Division In collaboration with: UN ECA UN ECLAC UN ESCAP UN ESCWA. pp. 4 -14. Available on - https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/IndicatorsVAW/IndicatorsVAW_EGM_report.pdf

5 Data Collection For Gender-based Violence Risk Mitigation. p. 1. Available on - https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/GBV-Risk-Analysis-Guidance-2021.pdf

6 The Dangers of Domestic Violence and the Importance of Prevention. By IHPL - April 1, 2019. Kaitlin Brehaut, MPH, CHES.p. 3 - available at - https://ihpl.llu.edu/blog/dangers-domestic-violence-and-importance-prevention

organizational/community, institutional/systemic, and societal. These levels closely align with the variables developed by the CDC.[7],[8]: (see table #1)

Table #1

	Societal	Institutional/ systemic	Organizational/ Community	Individual/ interpersonal (relationships)	Solution
Justification of violence against women	Depicting the man as mentally ill, and substance-abused, to diminish his responsibility.	Secondary victimization of women, e.g., within the court. Accusing the woman of fabricating incidents of violence and spreading false information to the detriment of the man.	Highlighting the perpetrators' achievements, e.g., sporting achievements.	Encouraging aggressive behavior in adolescent boys as a manifestation of "manliness."	Promoting women's independence and developing positive, equal relationships. Raising awareness.
Men's control over decision-making and limitation of women's independence in public life and relationships.	The depiction of a female 'icon' as dependent on or primarily associated with men, such as in the media. The lack of women's participation in the decision-making process.	The dominance of men in leadership positions, a form of vertical discrimination, is evident even in institutions where the majority of employees are women, such as schools and medical institutions. The relatively lower salary for women.	Recognition of the man as the primary 'breadwinner,' who controls all financial expenditures. Employers often do not provide working conditions adapted to the needs of women, such as part-time employment, the option of remote work, etc.	Statistically, women are more frequently interrupted than men during conversations or discussions. There is a lack of access to basic needs for women, such as food, water, shelter, and hygiene items.	Encouraging the involvement of women in leadership training and various empowerment programs, offering flexible work schedules, and fostering the development of social networks for women, etc.

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7 Data Collection For Gender-based Violence Risk Mitigation. pp. 2 - 4. Available on - https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/GBV-Risk-Analysis-Guidance-2021.pdf

8 Unpacking The Gendered Drivers Of Violence Against Women. Condoning of Violence Against Women. Available on - https://www.respectatwork.gov.au/resource-hub/unpacking-gendered-drivers-violence-against-women

Rigid gender roles and stereotypical constructs of masculinity and femininity.	Men are seen as more practical, rational, and essential, decision-makers. Double standards, favoring men's assertiveness and leadership qualities while demeaning women.	Denigrating the achievements of female athletes. Offering lower salaries for women. Providing less media attention to women, etc.	Perceiving maternity leave as a necessity exclusively for women and considering child care responsibility solely a woman's duty; A lack of diverse income-generating opportunities for vulnerable groups.	Sayings: "Don't act like a girl" and "Crying like a girl" - put men under pressure; Gender-unfair distribution of household resources.	Raising awareness; changing the employment policy; Encouraging women to become more involved in sports and STEM subjects.
Men's attitude towards women when aggression and disrespect are strongly expressed.	For instance, internet groups known for promoting aggression and bullying against women remain active due to the absence of standards to eliminate such behavior.	For example, there is a perception that sexism and gender discrimination are normal and unchangeable phenomena in male-dominated workplaces, such as police departments.	For example, discussing certain topics only in "men's" conversations and not in the broader group where women are represented.	For instance, young men share a woman's personal information without her consent.	Raising awareness in educational institutions, Conducting training sessions for men and boys, etc.

The four levels (variables) presented in the table are **interrelated and directly proportional**. In other words, a change in one variable also leads to changes in the others. For instance, modifications in individual factors can improve attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, serving as a preventive measure against domestic violence. Similarly, changes in social policy can strengthen community relationships and contribute to a reduction in violence.[9]

9 The Dangers of Domestic Violence and the Importance of Prevention. By IHPL - April 1, 2019. Kaitlin Brehaut, MPH, CHES. p. 4 - available on - https://ihpl.llu.edu/blog/dangers-domestic-violence-and-importance-prevention

INDICATORS FOR ASSESSING THE RISK OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN DEVELOPED BY VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)-identified five key aspects in the fight against violence towards women. These aspects encompass levels of physical, psychological, economic, sexual, and undisclosed violence.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) - has established several indicators to gauge this issue: the prevalence of domestic violence; criminal or violent acts committed against women; trafficking of women and girls; understanding the causes and consequences of violence against women; ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); and the existence of specific legislation related to violence against women.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)-has defined several specific indicators for measuring violence against women. These include the proportion of women who experienced sexual violence and filed a complaint within a calendar year, divided by the total number of women of all ages and then multiplied by 100,000 to account for the number of perpetrators; the prevalence of domestic violence; the number or statistics of 'honor crimes'; and the percentage of housewives who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence.

The Council of Europe employs various indicators to monitor policy progress on violence against women. These involve determining whether police statistics record the gender of both the victims and the perpetrators in connection with various offenses, along with details about the gender of the perpetrator and the relationship between the victim and perpetrator. They also assess whether systematic medical information is collected concerning medical services for abused women; whether questions on violence against women are included in regular representative national surveys; and whether nationally representative surveys focus specifically on issues of violence against women.[10]

The World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA)) includes 16 indicators that measure various types of data. These indicators encompass access to education, family planning, business ownership and management, land ownership, property rights, legal measures against violence towards women, political participation, access to economic resources, etc. It's important to note that the underrepresentation of women in civil society often indicates a lack of safety for women in that society and a diminished capacity for conflict resolution. Additionally, one of the CPIA indicators is

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10 Indicators to measure violence against women. Expert Group Meeting Organized by: United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women United Nations Economic Commission for Europe United Nations Statistical Division In collaboration with: UN ECA UN ECLAC UN ESCAP UN ESCWA. pp. 4 – 14. available on - https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/IndicatorsVAW/IndicatorsVAW_EGM_report.pdf

the high number of unemployed and economically inactive young men, which can be a potential source of instability.[11]

GLOBAL MUNICIPAL INITIATIVES FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND FEMICIDE

In Ecuador, an integrated victim protection system was implemented, involving cooperation with local legal institutions. This system includes the development of a 'Unique Registry of Violence' as a tool for monitoring gender-based violence.

In Spain, the city of Barcelona has established a significant municipal service known as SARA, aimed explicitly at supporting women survivors. This service offers a range of care and targeted services designed both to assist victims of violence and to work with male perpetrators of violence. Additionally, the municipality of Barcelona has developed appropriate protocols for the prevention of violence and femicide.

An advisory board was established in the municipal unit of Iztapalapa in Mexico City to develop political documents on preventing violence. This board comprises local officials and civil activists. Additionally, 200 local civil servants received training, and numerous workshops and awareness-raising campaigns were conducted.

In France, the departmental council of Seine-Saint-Denis established an observatory on violence against women. It aims to inform local authorities about the extent of violence against women in their territorial units and provide appropriate recommendations for its elimination.

In Sweden, the Umeå municipality initiated the 'Gender Landscape' awareness-raising program. Its primary goal is to identify potential threats of violence in the city's public spaces and develop initiatives to create safe and adapted spaces that meet the specific needs of women.

In Argentina, the municipality of Rosario developed a comprehensive program to support victims of violence. This program includes the launch of a municipal hotline and public centers for protecting women from workplace violence. Furthermore, a participatory approach was introduced through the creation of the 'Women's Network,' which encourages and revitalizes the active participation of civil society and women in the policy-making process.[12]

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11 Gender-Responsive Early Warning: Overview and How-to Guide. UN Women. p. 5. available on - https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2012/10/WPSsourcebook-04E-GenderResponsiveEarlyWarning-en.pdf

12 Preventing and Addressing Violence Against Women by Local Governments. United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. Becoming a Human Rights City series. p. 3. available on - https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/localgvt/2022-10-28/Local-governments-actions-on-VAW.pdf

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE WOMEN'S FUND 'SUKHUMI'

Quantitative Survey Sampling: A total of 1003 respondents were selected through an online survey method.

Target Groups of the Research (Women): Victims of violence, internally displaced persons (IDPs, including those in collective settlements), teachers, social workers, doctors, and women entrepreneurs.

10 Target Municipalities: Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha, Senaki, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Kutaisi, Baghdati, Chokhatauri, Samtredia, and Kobuleti.

Field Work: Conducted from June to September 2023.

Research Instrument and Survey Method: A quantitative questionnaire was developed and subsequently distributed via an online survey.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data analysis was conducted upon the completion of the fieldwork.
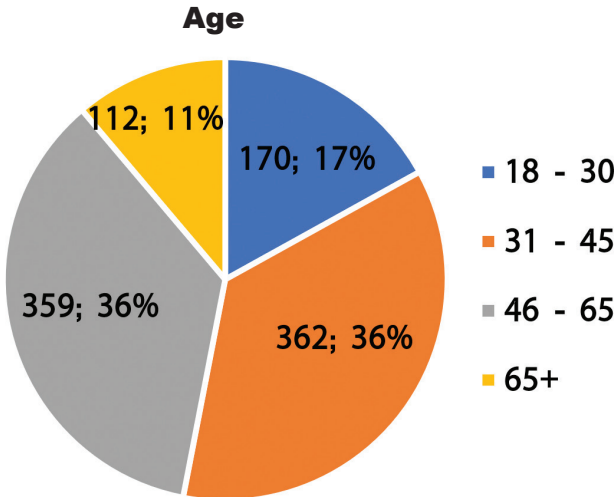
QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DATA

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Diagram #1

Age

- 18 - 30 : 170; 17%
- 31 - 45 : 362; 36%
- 46 - 65 : 359; 36%
- 65+ : 112; 11%

Diagram #2

Place of Residence N=1003

- Zugdidi
- Tsalenjikha
- Senaki
- Tskaltubo
- Khoni
- Kutaisi
- Baghdati
- Chokhatauri
- Samtredia
- Kobuleti

Value	Percent
106	11%
100	10%
102	10%
90	9%
79	8%
83	8%
114	11%
115	12%
103	10%
111	11%
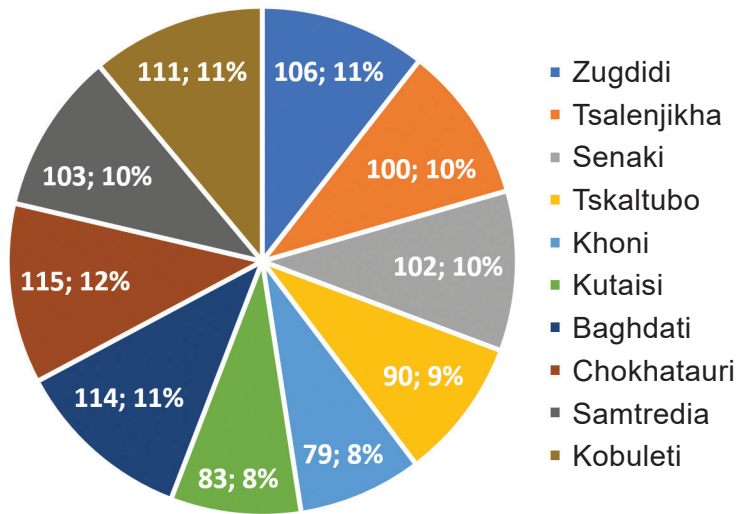
Diagram #3

Type of Activity N=1003

- Employed in the state service
- Employed in the private sector (individual entrepreneur, self-employed)
- Employed in the civil sector (CSO)
- Agricultural activity
- Student
- Unemployed/Housewife

Value	Percent
159	16%
195	20%
84	8%
169	17%
81	8%
315	31%
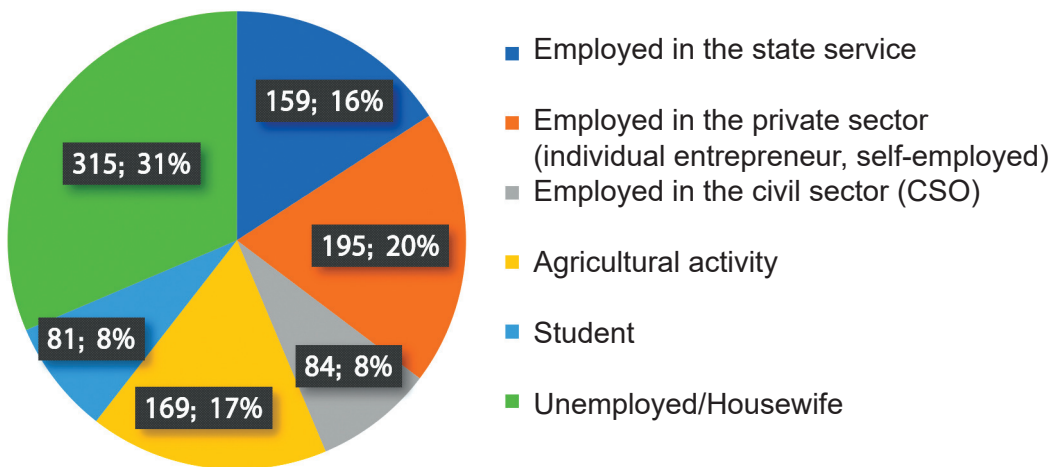
Diagram #4

Socio-Demographic Status N=1003

- Married
- Single
- Mother of many children
- Single mother
- Person with disabilities
- Divorced

Value	Percent
434	39%
182	17%
146	13%
127	12%
68	6%
146	13%
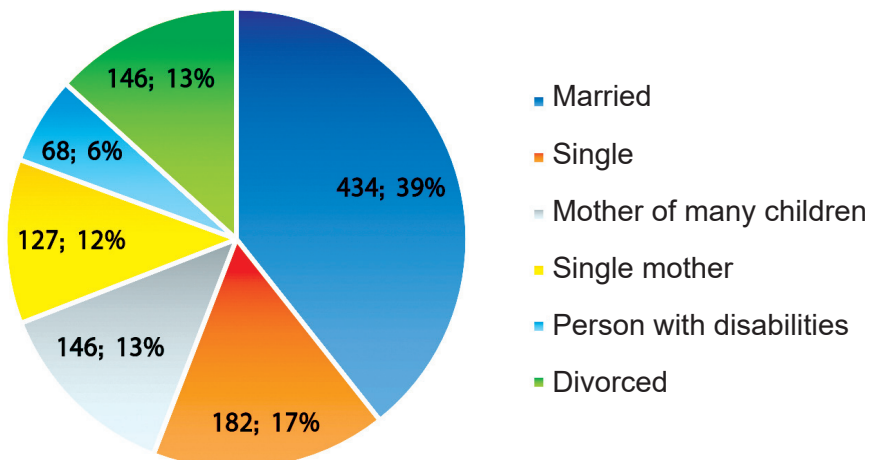
PERSONAL SECURITY

According to the research data, **all the identified problems regarding personal security are relevant to some extent and are associated with a sense of danger. However, the most clearly defined risk is related to employment issues, specifically unemployment (Mean=4.02)**. Other highly rated problems also stem from and are related to employment issues, including poverty (Mean=3.3), domestic violence (Mean=3.2), increasing inclination towards migration (Mean=3.2), alcohol consumption of a family member (Mean=3.1), the threat of job loss (Mean=3.07), and poor living conditions (Mean=3.01). The remaining issues scored at or near the neutral point on the scale. Similar trends were observed in different sections (see Table #2 and Diagram #5).

Table #2[13]

Which of the following is the main threat to your security?	Mean	Mode	Median
Unemployment	4.02	5.0	4.0
Poverty	3.3	3.0	3.0
Domestic Violence	3.2	3.0	3.0
Substance abuse of a family member	2.9	3.0	3.0
Alcohol consumption by a family member	3.1	3.0	3.0
Intolerance/discrimination from society	2.9	3.0	3.0
Increased criminogenic situation	2.9	3.0	3.0
The threat of job loss	3.07	3.0	3.0
Poor living conditions	3.01	3.0	3.0
Risk of dropping out of educational institutions due to high tuition fees, high rent, etc.	2.99	3.0	3.0
Increased inclination to migrate, feeling forced to do so	3.2	3.0	3.0

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13 **Note:** Means (MEAN) are presented on a 5-point scale. In this scale, '1' indicates a low level of danger, while '5' indicates a high level of danger. The neutral point on the scale is '3'. Scores below 3 fall into the low score range, signifying 'low risk/threat,' whereas scores above 3 fall into the high score range, indicating 'high risk/threat'.

Note 2: The 'Mode' refers to the data value that occurs most frequently in a dataset. The **'Median'** represents the central or middle value in a dataset when the data is arranged in ascending order.

Diagram #5

How would you rate the level of personal security? N = 1003

70; 7%   62; 6%   201; 20%   288; 29%   382; 38%

■ 1   ■ 2   ■ 3   ■ 4   ■ 5
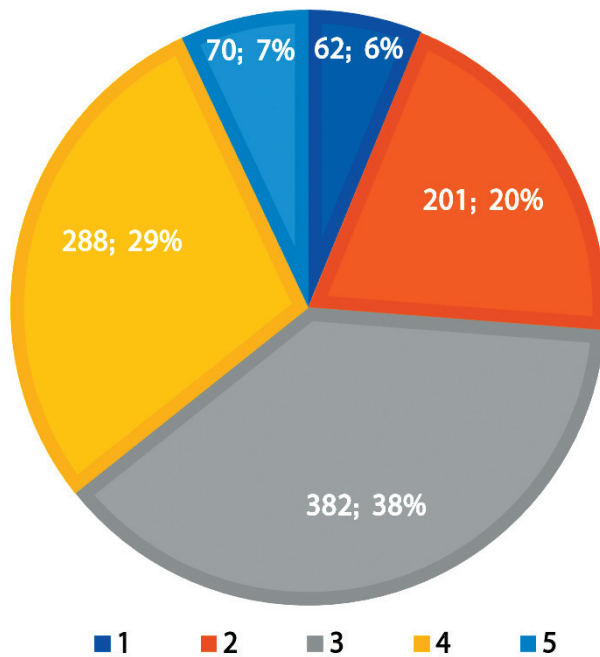
In the study, residents of the target municipalities rated their personal security with a mean score (Mean = 3.1)

In terms of personal security, the overall data indicates a moderate level of threat perception, with initial emphasis on unemployment as the main challenge. However, respondents also reported experiencing actions that **threatened their life, health, property, or freedom of speech, constituting 63.9% of cases.** (see Diagram #6)

Have you ever experienced a situation where actions taken against you threatened your life, health, property or freedom of speech? N = 1003

- Yes, my life was threatened
- Yes, my health was threatened
- Yes, my property was threatened
- Yes, my freedom of speech was threatened
- No
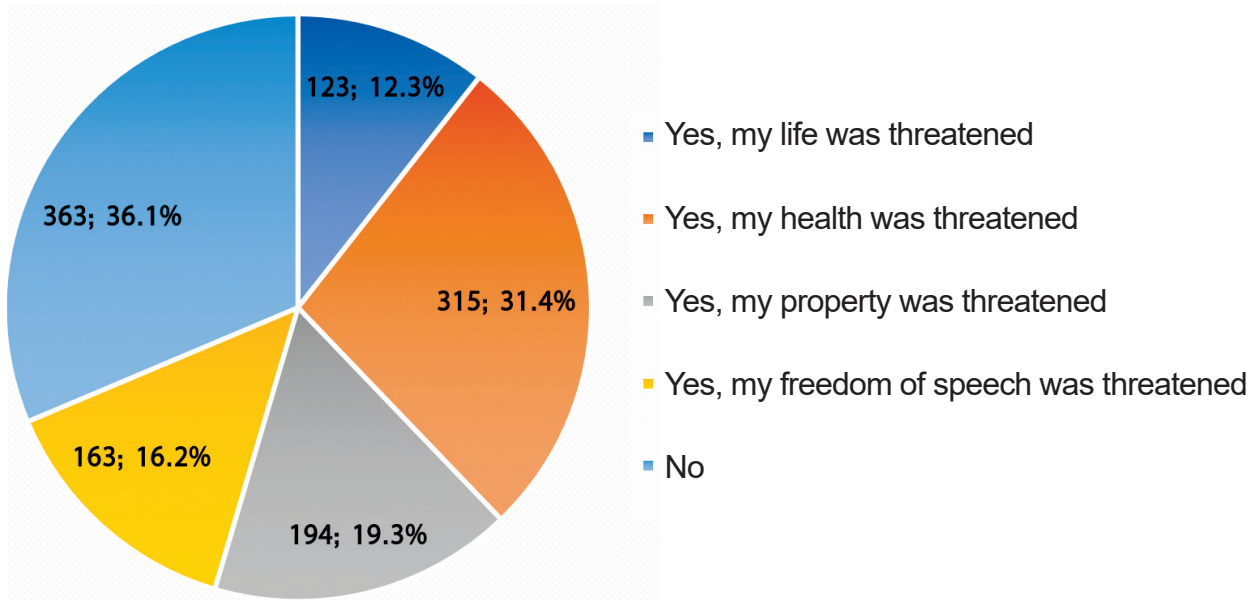
When comparing the data related to personal security, domestic violence ranks high on the scale (Mean=3.2), **whereas discrimination from society, the increased criminogenic situation**, **and family members' substance/alcohol abuse are positioned at the neutral point. This distribution of perceived danger is rational, given that unemployment and domestic violence are notable causes or triggers of these issues.**

This perspective is further supported by nuanced differences observed in different sections. Specifically, those respondents who report a high level of personal security (feeling relatively safe), scoring '4' (288 respondents) and '5' (70 respondents) – a total of 358 respondents (35.6% of the total sampling) – reveal an interesting contrast. Despite their sense of safety, 242 of them (67.6% of this group) <u>**still report being in situations where actions threatening their life and health were taken:**</u> notably, <u>**44 experienced threats to their lives, 116 to their health, 72 to their property, and 62 faced threats to their freedom of speech.**</u>
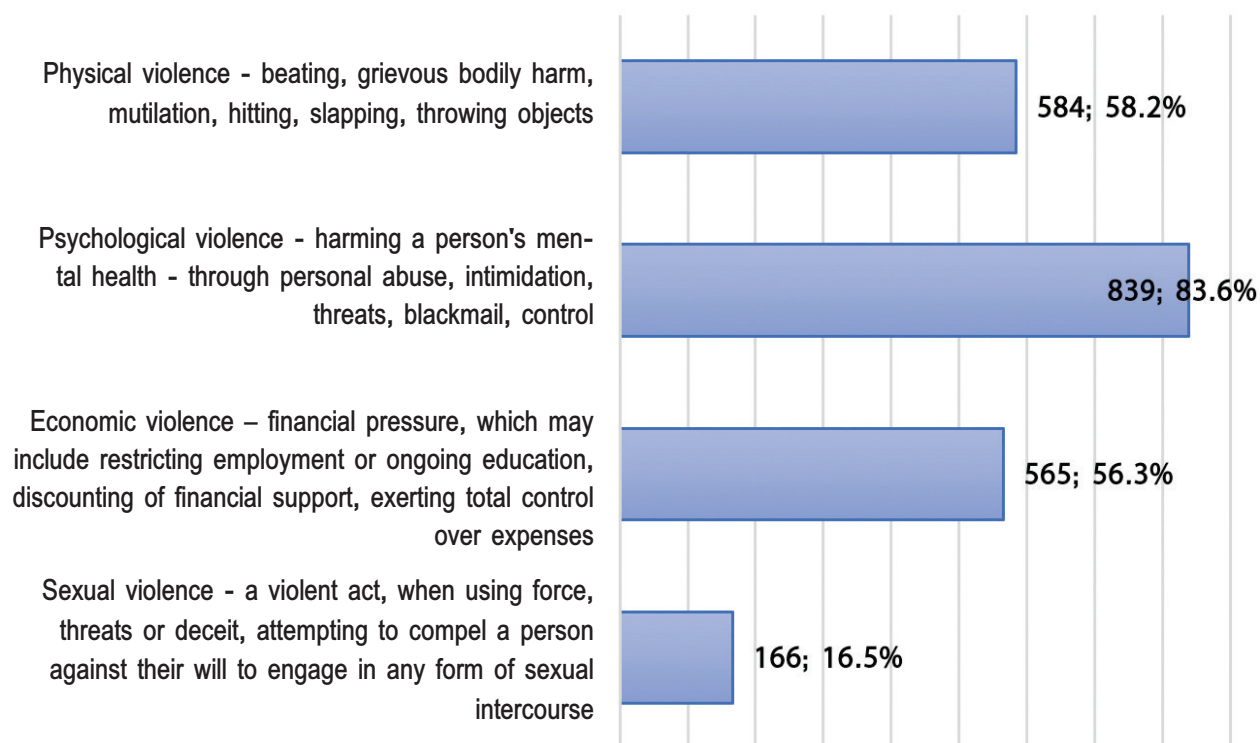
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14 **Note:** Respondents could select more than one answer. Therefore, The **diagram shows the number of cases, not the number of responses.**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/FORMS OF VIOLENCE

In the study, the respondents, who were all women, primarily reported experiencing psychological violence (83.6% of the cases). However, there were also significant instances of physical and economic violence, accounting for approximately 56-58% of the cases. The rate of sexual violence is notably alarming, at 16.5% of the cases. **This is a considerable increase** compared to other studies on violence and security, attributable to two factors: 1. **exclusive participation of women in this study**; 2. **increased awareness over time about the nature of violence**, leading to more people identifying and acknowledging it. Similar trends were observed across different sections. (see Diagram #7)

Diagram #7[15]

Which form of violence is more common?

When explicitly asked whether they or their close people had experienced violence, slightly less than half of the respondents (women) (48.4%, 486 respondents) denied any such instances. However, **20.1% (202 respondents) reported personally experiencing violence**, **while 35.1% (352 respondents) mentioned incidents of violence against their relatives.** It's essential to consider the **psychological nuances** often present in such surveys: **respondents might find it more comfortable to discuss violence against others than to share their own experiences.**

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15   Note: Respondents could select more than one answer. Therefore, The diagram shows the number of cases not the number of responses

Similar trends were observed in different sections. Notably, among those who rated their security highly (scoring '4' and '5' - a total of 358 respondents), **212 still reported instances of domestic violence involving themselves and their close people. Besides, personal experiences of such violence were reported in 100 cases. This discrepancy likely indicates challenges in identifying domestic violence, as well as difficulties in perceiving and discussing the nature of violence in society, including among the victims themselves.**

The survey results reveal that the husband is the most frequently identified perpetrator of domestic violence, with a mean score of 4.0. The prominence of the husband's role as an abuser is so significant that other family members with different statuses fall into the low evaluation field. This trend holds across various data sections. Notably, **among the respondents who identified themselves as victims of domestic violence (202 respondents)**, **a substantial 75.2% (152 respondents) assigned high scores ('4' and '5') to their husbands as the abusers** (see Table #3)[16]

Table #3

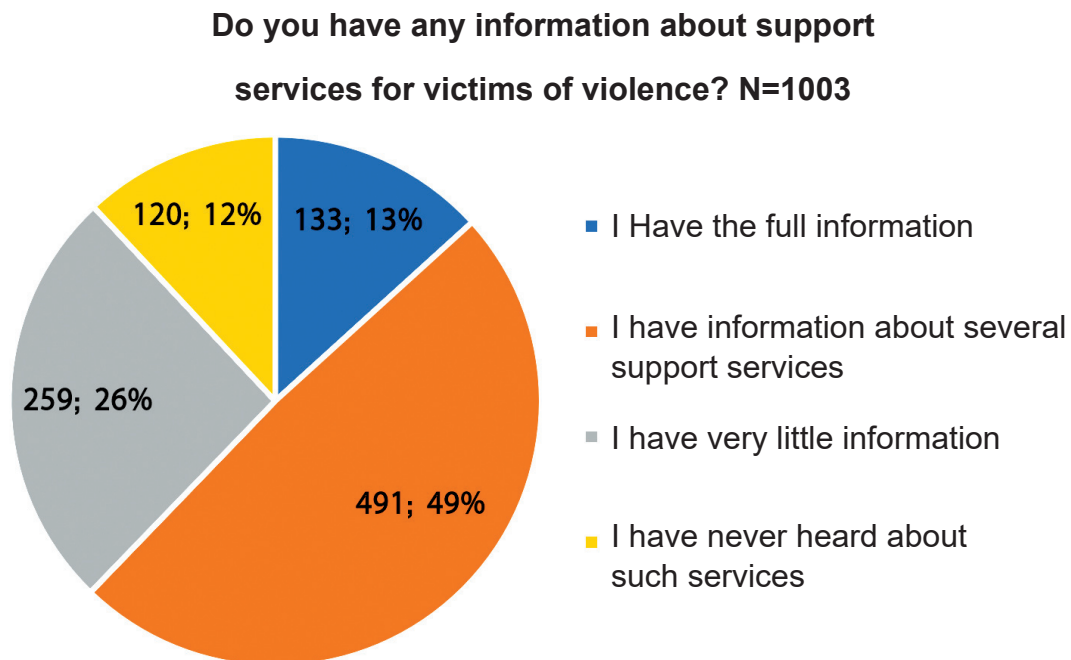| Who more frequently assumes responsibility for violent actions within the family?	Mean
Husband	4.0
Wife	2.28
Father	2.4
Father-in-law	2.39
Mother	2.1
Mother-in-law	2.4
Son	2.25
Daughter	2.0

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16 **Note:** The Means (MEAN) are presented on a 5-point scale, where **'1' indicates little to no violence**, and **'5' signifies very frequent violence**. The neutral point on this scale is '3'. Consequently, scores below '3' suggest a low occurrence of violence, while scores above '3' indicate a high occurrence.

INFORMATION ON SUPPORT SERVICES
FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

The survey revealed that **nearly half of the respondents (49%) are primarily aware of several support services for victims of violence.** Conversely, 12% have never heard of such services, a trend consistent across different sections.

The two primary sources through which respondents learned about these services were identified as meetings with non-governmental organizations (63.3% of cases) and social networks (57.5% of cases). (see Diagram #8)

Diagram #8

Do you have any information about support services for victims of violence? N=1003

- 133; 13% — I Have the full information
- 491; 49% — I have information about several support services
- 259; 26% — I have very little information
- 120; 12% — I have never heard about such services

Furthermore, several nuanced differences emerged from the survey. In Kutaisi, social networks are the preferred source of information (50 cases), closely followed by meetings with non-governmental organizations (37 cases). A similar trend is observed among **young adults aged 18-30 years**: social networks (92 cases) and meetings with non-governmental organizations (86 cases) are the primary sources of information. For **respondents aged 31-45**, the distribution is almost equal between social networks (205 cases) and meetings with non-governmental organizations (207 cases). Comparable trends are noted in other sections as well. (see Diagram #9).[17]

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17 **Note:** Respondents could select more than one answer. Therefore, The **diagram shows the number of cases. not the number of responses.**

Diagram #9

**Where do you get information about support services
for victims of violence? N=883**

Source	Value
On TV	176; 19.9%
Through social networks	508; 57.5%
During the meeting with non-governmental organizations	569; 63.3%
During the meeting with the local government	277; 31.4%
During the meeting with the central government	108; 12.2%
Through information brochures, announcements in public gathering places	174; 19.7%
From friends and acquaintances	180; 20.4%
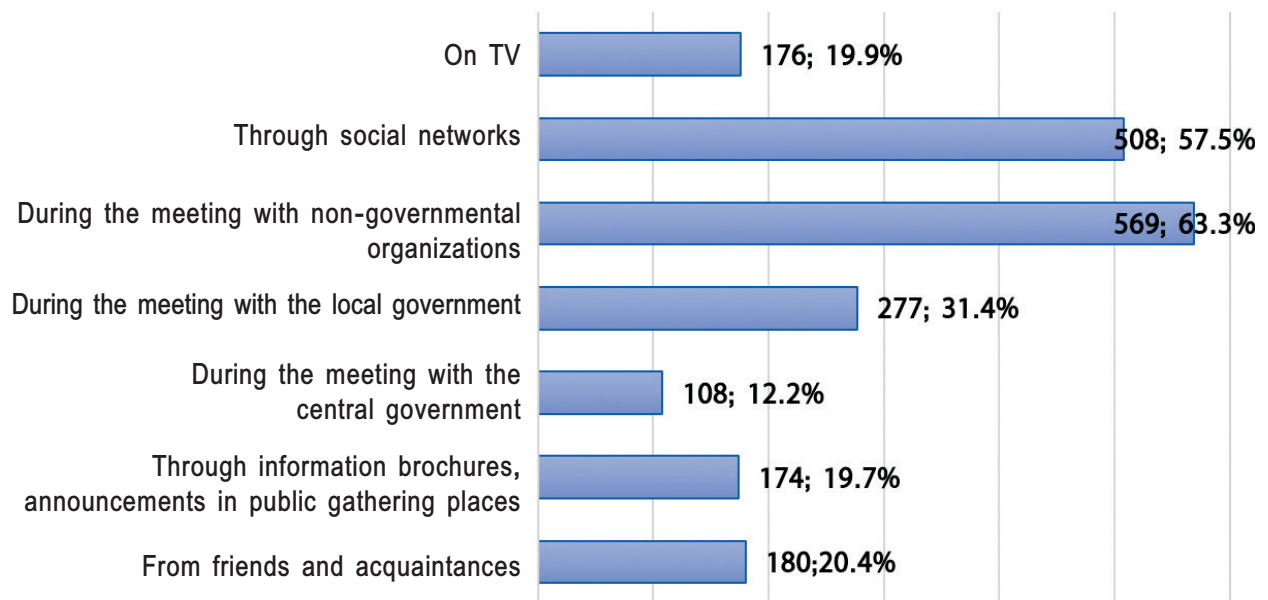
The survey identified three primary support services that respondent women or their relatives/acquaintances turned to (or would consider turning to) for protection in domestic violence cases. These are predominantly from both the state and civil sectors: local government (45% of cases), police-call 112 (44.2% of cases), and non-governmental (rights protection) organizations (37.8% of cases). **Other listed services are rarely used, indicating a need for more public awareness.** (see Diagram #10)

Variations were noted in different sections. For instance, **in Chokhatauri** (total 115 cases), **local government referrals were most common** (75 out of 115 cases). **In Khoni** (total 79 cases), respondents mainly turned to relatives or friends (27 cases), the police/call 112 (26 cases), or the hotline - 116 006 (25 cases).
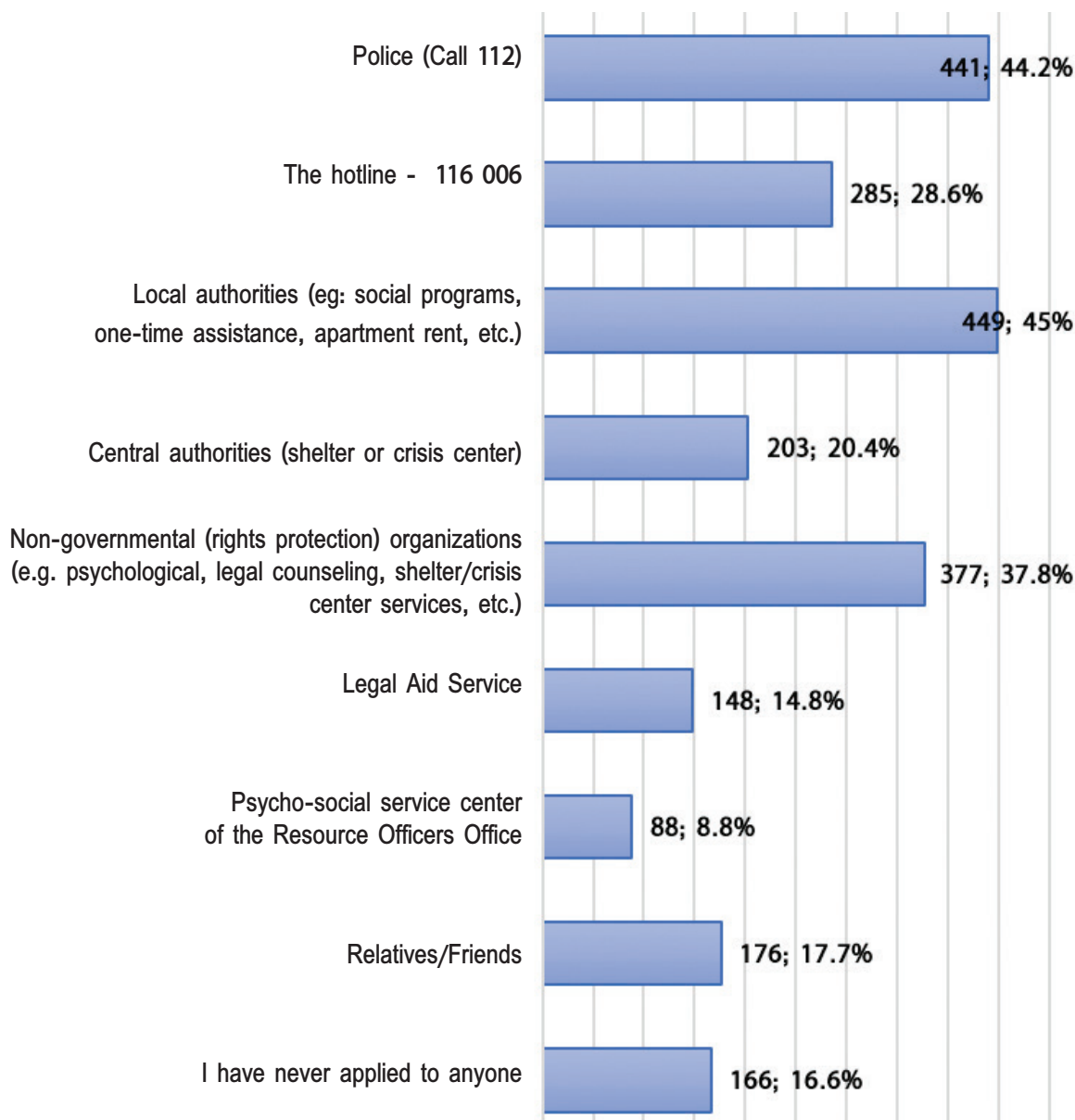
Additionally, the distribution of respondents by region **who reported not contacting anyone or not using/having support services is noteworthy.** (see Diagram #11)

Among the reasons **for not seeking any service in cases of domestic violence**, several were cited, with **the primary one being the fear of disclosing negative personal information**.

- **I was afraid of the negative reaction of family members/relatives/acquaintances (17 answers);**
- **I was uncertain about whom to contact (11 answers);**
- **I doubted about receiving assistance anyway (25 answers);**
- **I did not want information about my problem to be publicized (77 answers).**
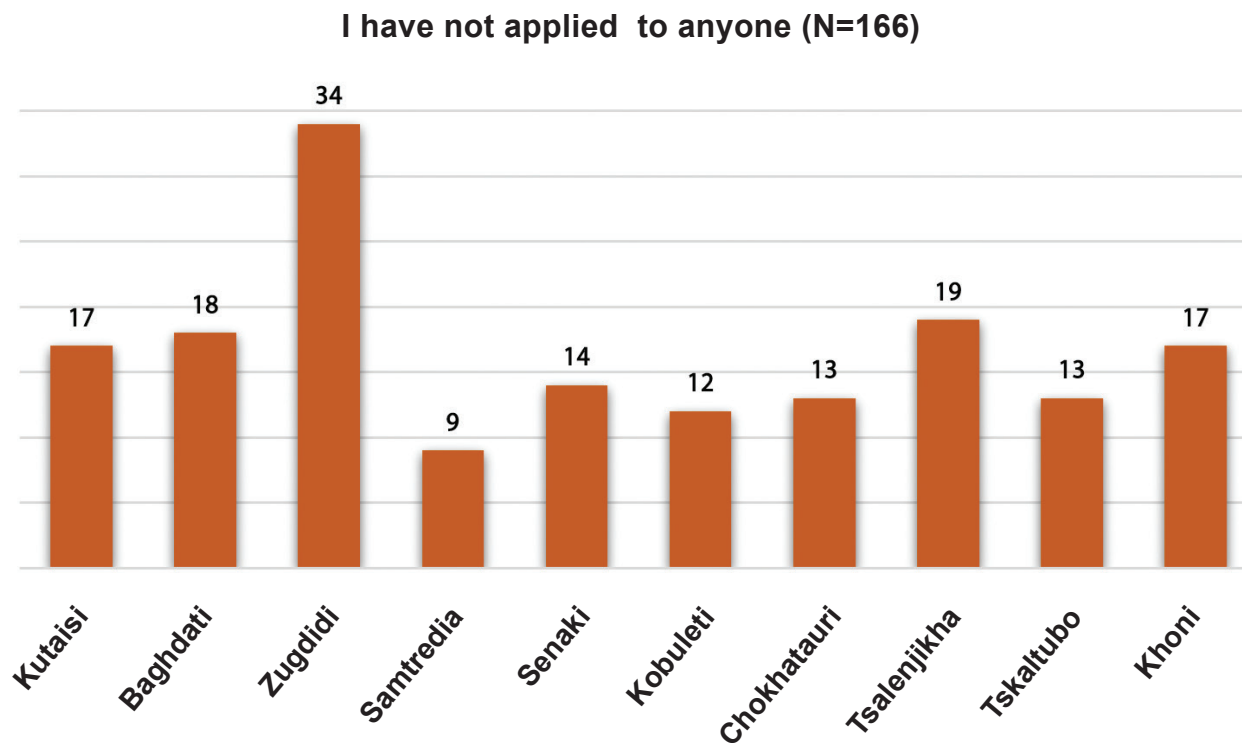
Diagram #10[18]

Who or what support services you/your close people/acquaintaces would apply or have already applied for? N=997

Category	Value
Police (Call 112)	441; 44.2%
The hotline - 116 006	285; 28.6%
Local authorities (eg: social programs, one-time assistance, apartment rent, etc.)	449; 45%
Central authorities (shelter or crisis center)	203; 20.4%
Non-governmental (rights protection) organizations (e.g. psychological, legal counseling, shelter/crisis center services, etc.)	377; 37.8%
Legal Aid Service	148; 14.8%
Psycho-social service center of the Resource Officers Office	88; 8.8%
Relatives/Friends	176; 17.7%
I have never applied to anyone	166; 16.6%

18 **Note:** Respondents could select more than one answer. Therefore, The **diagram shows the number of cases, not the number of responses.**

Diagram #11[19]

I have not applied to anyone (N=166)

ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES
FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

According to the survey, **more than half of the women respondents (55%) report that support services for victims of violence are either scarcely available or completely unavailable**, with 36% indicating total unavailability. (see Diagram #12)

A sectional analysis reveals slight variations in accessibility. **In Zugdidi**, 44.3% of respondents find support services for victims of violence **more available**; **in Kutaisi**, 49.3% find them **available**, and 22.4% find them **more available**. **In Samtredia**, 41.7% report **more accessibility** to these services. However, **in Chokhatauri Municipality**, almost 60% of respondents report **complete unavailability** of these services; in Baghdati, the figure is 53.47%. In Tsalenjikha, Senaki, and Kobuleti, 41-43% of respondents indicate **complete unavailability**.

The research data underscores **the necessity of raising public awareness about support services for victims of violence and enhancing their geographical availability.**

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19 **Note:** The diagrm shows the number of responses

Diagram #12

**How available are support services for victims
of violence in your area of residence
(city, village)? N=1003**

- Available
- More available
- More unavailable
- Unavailable

150; 15%
297; 30%
361; 36%
195; 19%
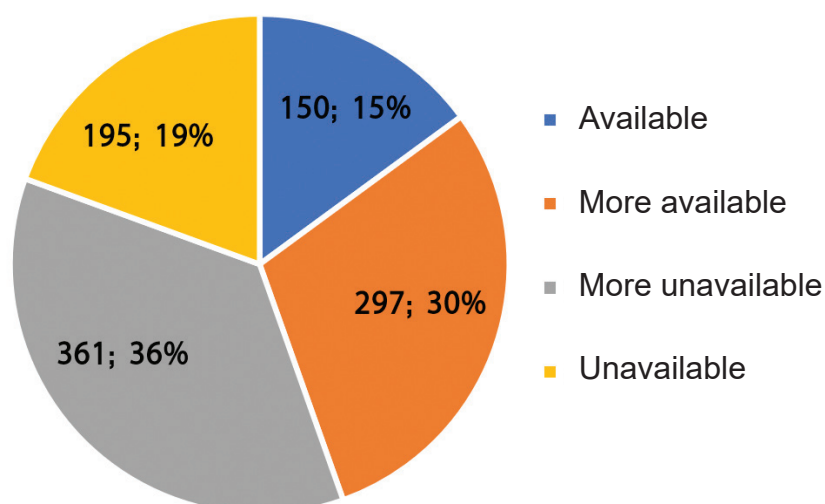
MAIN CAUSES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The research revealed that when identifying the main causes of domestic violence, respondents **most frequently mentioned factors they deemed as significant threats to personal security**. These include:
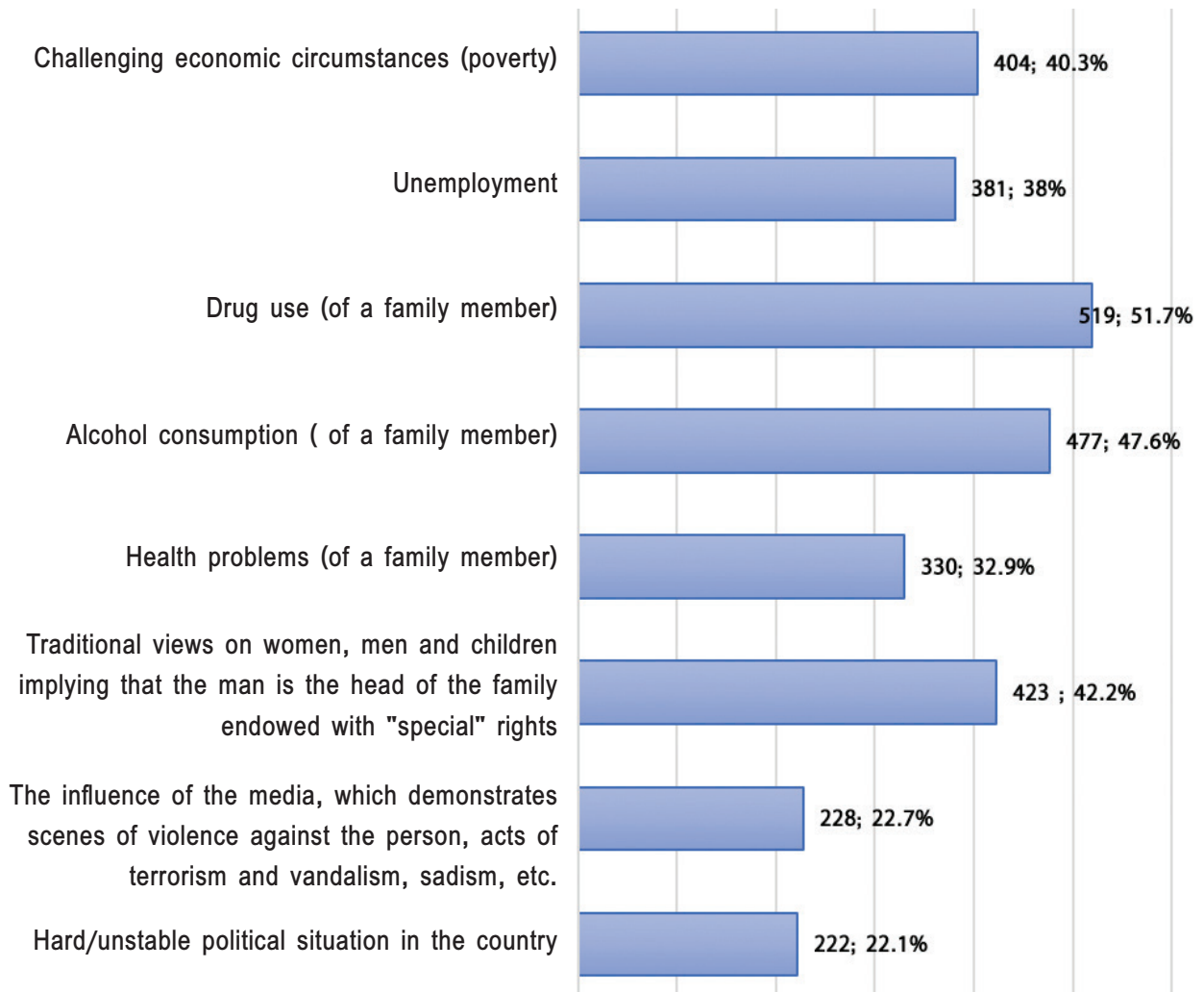
- Substance abuse within the family was prevalent, with drug use reported in 51.7% of cases and alcohol consumption in 47.6% of cases;

- Traditional or stereotypical perceptions are mentioned in 42.2% of cases;

- 40.3% of cases pointed to challenging economic circumstances;

Notably, unemployment ranks fourth (38% of cases), yet it shares a similar prevalence with challenging economic circumstances, suggesting a direct correlation. Therefore, it is reasonable to examine these two indicators in conjunction with each other. (see Diagram #13)[20]

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20 **Note:** Respondents could select more than one answer. Therefore, The **diagram shows the number of cases, not the number of responses.**

Diagram #13

What are the main causes of domestic violence? N=1003

Category	Value
Challenging economic circumstances (poverty)	404; 40.3%
Unemployment	381; 38%
Drug use (of a family member)	519; 51.7%
Alcohol consumption (of a family member)	477; 47.6%
Health problems (of a family member)	330; 32.9%
Traditional views on women, men and children implying that the man is the head of the family endowed with "special" rights	423 ; 42.2%
The influence of the media, which demonstrates scenes of violence against the person, acts of terrorism and vandalism, sadism, etc.	228; 22.7%
Hard/unstable political situation in the country	222; 22.1%

CONCLUSION

The indicators and variables used to determine the causes and primary threats of domestic violence are interconnected and interdependent. This leads to the conclusion that poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, as well as gender stereotypes, and cultural clichés should not be regarded in isolation. Instead, they ought to be considered as interrelated factors that contribute to violence and personal danger and mutually exacerbate each other. To effectively address these issues and promote a safe and secure environment, a set of measures should be implemented, primarily focusing on two key areas:

<u>Improvement of Existing Programs:</u> This includes diversifying and expanding programs, with a primary emphasis on increasing their accessibility.

<u>Enhancing Communication:</u> This entails informing the public on the nature and manifestations of violence as well as available response mechanisms. It also includes coordinated involvement of various stakeholders in the fight against domestic violence, enhancing their roles, and fostering active cooperation with relevant agencies and organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Economic empowerment and employment promotion for Women/Vulnerable Groups: This includes developing childcare services, flexible work schedules, day centers, summer gardens, etc.;

- Educational courses for women and representatives of vulnerable groups: providing various courses, including professional development and business project writing;

- Awareness-Raising Campaigns on gender stereotypes and domestic violence: These campaigns should address the general population, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as women survivors, victims of violence, vulnerable families, large and socially vulnerable families, men, and youth. Involvement of relevant authorities including the Ministry of Internal Affairs (patrol police, district inspectors, community officers), the Ministry of Health, representatives of crisis centers (116 006; 111), and social services, is crucial for the success of these campaigns;

- To prevent actions that threaten life, health, property, or freedom of speech and strengthen the role of municipalities: Municipalities play a crucial role as they are closest to the population and can swiftly identify and respond to problems. This includes empowering the roles of the mayor's representatives and social agents of the Children's Rights Protection Service;

- Enhanced cooperation among municipalities and referral mechanism entities: This involves a coordinated exchange of information and joint efforts with various entities, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, social service agency, state care agency, educational resource center, resource officer's office, etc.;

- Institutionalization of interdepartmental Commissions in Municipalities as an effective mechanism for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence and ensuring timely responses;

- Enhancing Cooperation Between Government and Non-Government Sectors, the primary service providers for victims of domestic violence;

- Strengthening Behavior Change Programs for Perpetrators at an early stage and actively informing the population about these programs;

- Intensive information Campaigns about assistance for Victims of Violence, with a focus on improving and refining programs based on feedback from beneficiaries;

- Increasing the accessibility of assistance programs for Victims of Violence both financially and geographically;

- Ensuring the Monitoring and Evaluation of existing programs and assistance, including the measurement of beneficiary satisfaction levels;

- Increasing the number of municipal representatives, social workers, and psychologists and ensuring their continuous education;

- Strengthening information campaigns on domestic violence against women in schools and kindergartens, and enhancing the cooperation of these institutions with relevant agencies.

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