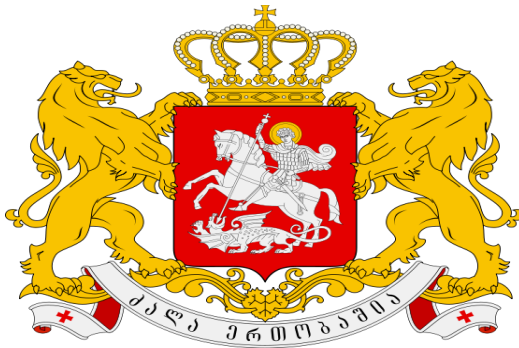




საქართველოს სახალხო დამცველი
PUBLIC DEFENDER (OMBUDSMAN) OF GEORGIA

SPECIAL REPORT

Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Georgia



2015

Preface

The scale of violence against women and domestic violence is devastating; we have clearly felt the acuteness of the problem in 2014, when 17 women were killed as a result of domestic violence. Often, we hear the argument that domestic violence is hard to identify, as it occurs in a closed social setting. However, violence against women has long spread beyond the closed environment.

Apart from the indifference of the society, the key challenge is the inefficient use of the protection and assistance measures. Repeatedly, the measures foreseen by the law are not being applied to protect women and consequently, their plea for help is being ignored.

I welcome revision of the legislation in the field of domestic violence in 2014 and signature of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating and Preventing Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The national anti-violence strategy has been elaborated covering different areas of perpetrating violence, however bearing in mind the specificity of the issue at hand, it would be more advisable to develop a separate document as a strategy for the prevention of gender based violence against women.

The Public Defender's Office of Georgia has investigated a number of cases in 2014 and conducted monitoring of femicide investigations and evaluation of services.

The present special report reflects findings of the monitoring and study of the existing state services for the victims/survivors of domestic violence and protection mechanisms. We are hopeful that its contents will be interesting to both, governmental organizations and civil society, especially to those who are providing these services.

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Public Defender of Georgia

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Introduction

The scale of violence against women in Georgia has also become a concern for the Committee for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Namely, as a result of the review of the joint fourth and fifth periodic reports of Georgia at its 58th session in 2014, the Committee has urged the Government to take immediate measures to eliminate the increasing number of femicides committed by husbands and partners and other forms of domestic violence.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (MoIA), in 2014 the Emergency and Operative Response Center “112” received 9290¹ notifications related to domestic violence / family conflict. However, these data only represent initial information, while the information on the actual situation at the scene as a result of the response by the authorized services is not being processed by the MoIA.

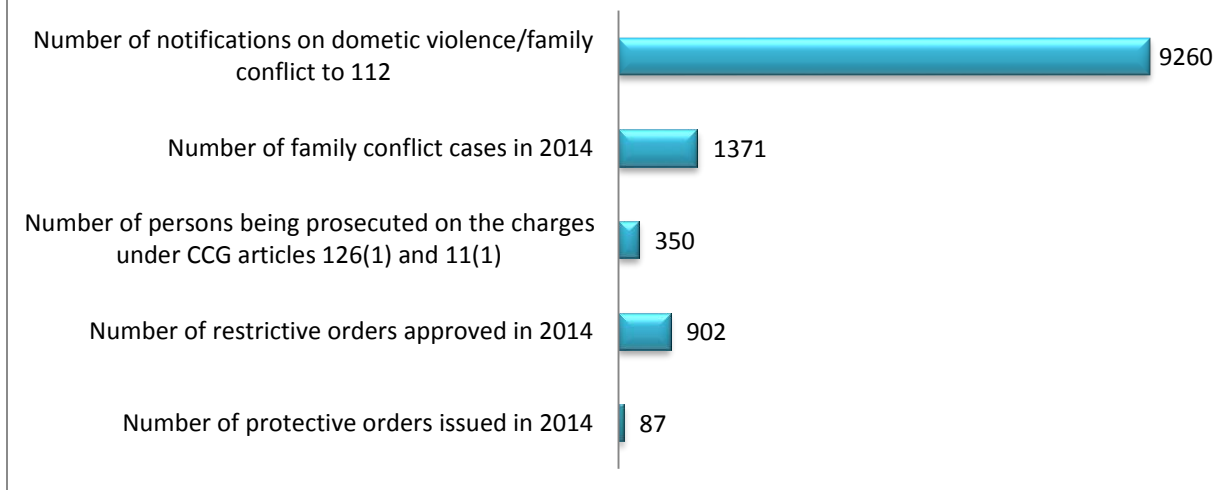
As for the statistics of the application of criminal mechanisms in domestic violence cases, according to the information provided by the Chief Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia (CPO), criminal prosecution has been initiated against 17 persons based on the article 126¹ of the Criminal Code of Georgia (CCG) – domestic violence and against 333 persons based on the CCG articles 11⁻¹–126¹. In total, 495 victims/survivors of domestic violence (in criminal cases) have been registered². Furthermore, according to the information provided by the MoIA, investigations have been initiated into 180 cases for the crimes foreseen by the CCG articles 11¹–126¹ and 44 cases for the crimes foreseen under the CCG article 126¹. Criminal prosecution based on these articles has been initiated against 479 men (including one juvenile) and 37 women, while 525 women, including 32 juveniles and 135 men, including 18 juveniles were acknowledged victims/survivors.³

¹ The data cover the period of December-October , 2014 / Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia / #2376761 ; 24/11/2014

² Chief Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia; #13/79703 / 23.12.2014

³ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia; #541888/ 12.03.2015

Domestic Violence Statistics



For the achievement of gender equality and elimination of violence against women it is essential to both revise the policy, as well as to work towards increasing public awareness and empowering vulnerable groups in order to enable them to better protect their rights. The data⁴ in the above chart clearly show that this will be a complex and long process.

Unfortunately, regardless of numerous recommendations, the role of social workers in the response to domestic violence incidents remains unclear; while, due to the nature of the problem, involvement of law enforcement is not always sufficient and requires support by relevant professionals. In accordance to the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Assistance to the Victims of Domestic Violence (DVL), the date for the enactment of social workers' related responsibilities is determined for September 1st 2015. However, due to the lack of resources, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection of Georgia (MoLHSA) does not plan to recruit social workers specialized in domestic violence issues, but rather to train existing human resources on domestic violence issues and recruit a few dozen new personnel. It should be noted that the current scope of the social workers' duties and issues to be covered is rather wide, while their number and even resources available to them – are rather scarce. Therefore, without further strengthening, it is highly likely that their work related to the elimination of domestic violence issues will be inefficient.

Activities implemented upon MoIA's initiative in the area of combating violence against women are noteworthy, including granting the power to issue restrictive orders to inspector-investigators of the territorial units (making the protection mechanisms for victims/survivors more flexible), training of police officers, strengthening cooperation with NGOs, production and placement of a public service

⁴ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia; #541888/ 12.03.2015; #564071 / 16.03/2015; Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia; #13/79703 / 23.12.2014

announcement in the media, organizing information meetings with youths and etc. However, certain issues remain that require a comprehensive approach and active inter-agency coordination.

Regardless of the existence of a rather straightforward instruction in terms of what measures must be taken by law enforcement in responding to domestic violence incidents, during the reporting period significant tendencies have come to surface indicating improper performance of the actions foreseen by the law.

Based on a number of cases studied by the Public Defender's Office of Georgia (PDO), it has been found that in responding to domestic violence incidents, law enforcement representatives have used warnings/notes, which are not even foreseen under the existing protection mechanisms from violence. The analyzed cases have shown that warnings/notes are clearly inefficient means and fail to ensure actual protection of victims/survivors, as they have no legal consequences whatsoever. Furthermore, they fail to ensure prevention violence from reoccurring or holding the perpetrator responsible.

In order to analyze these problems and develop relevant recommendations, in 2014 the PDO has carried out monitoring of the existing state services for domestic violence victims/survivors - monitoring of the shelters and hotline; monitoring of individual applications on domestic violence incidents, assessment of protective and restrictive orders and monitoring of femicides.

Monitoring of State Services

In 2014, the PDO's Gender Equality Department (GED) has carried out monitoring of the shelters and national hotline for domestic violence victims/survivors with the support by UN Women. The monitoring was aimed at the assessment of the conditions of the three state shelters and of the needs of service users, as well as evaluation of the hotline operation.

Shelters for Domestic Violence Victims/Survivors

Creation of shelters for domestic violence victims/survivors is a step forward, which significantly enhances and supports protection mechanisms from domestic violence. It further creates opportunities for better protection of domestic violence victims/survivors and offers them an alternative way to escape a violent environment.

It should be noted that the monitoring of state shelters has been conducted for the first time and it has revealed many interesting aspects. Based on the analysis of the findings, specific recommendations have been elaborated, consideration of which will enable service providers to improve and enhance the services in order to create a more responsive environment for service users tailored to their needs.

Study Methodology

Beneficiaries of the shelters have been identified as the main target group for the monitoring. Therefore, quality assessment of the services has been based on the findings of their survey. In addition, condition of the children residing in the shelters together with their parents has also been examined during monitoring and their needs have been assessed.

Semi-closed type questionnaires have been used in the survey of the shelter beneficiaries⁵. This approach has facilitated answering given questions. Furthermore, it was sought to the extent possible that the questions did not incite negative feelings and were not of a critical nature. Closed questions enabled for the collection of a large volume of information within a short timeframe and reduced the risk of additionally traumatizing domestic violence victims/survivors. Each question or thesis was followed by a long list of possible answers, on average consisting of 25 options, which encouraged collection of answers as comprehensive as possible.

Two types of questionnaires have been used in the monitoring. The questionnaire A included questions on expectations beneficiaries have during the initial period of placement in the shelter. Therefore, only those beneficiaries were surveyed, who were residing in the shelter for not more than two weeks. This inquiry has clearly shown expectations and initial impressions of beneficiaries upon placement in the shelter and what kind of services they are looking for. The questionnaire B was aimed at those beneficiaries, who had spent more than one month in the shelter or have recently used its service and are currently no longer in need of shelter. This questionnaire assessed their experiences, whether their expectations were met and what additional needs they had after primary care has been provided.

The monitoring has been conducted in three state shelters: Tbilisi, Gori and Kutaisi. All adults placed in the shelters at the time of the monitoring have been surveyed. In order to receive general information from the shelter administration, a special inquiry document has been developed. As a result of interviews, certain gaps and positive aspect have been identified, which may come up in the management process. In addition, the residencies were visually observed and compliance with the existing standards has been assessed.

In order to collect complete data, additional information has been requested from the State Fund for the Protection and Assistance to the Victims of Human Trafficking (State Fund) which operates the domestic violence shelters. In addition, we have requested statistics on admission and discharge to the shelter for the last two years in order to assess trends.

The main limitation of the monitoring has been the small number of the respondents, which is unsuitable for quantitative study methodology. Nevertheless, the entire population of the shelter (at the time of monitoring – 8 beneficiaries) has been surveyed. Therefore, we can assume that the findings are

⁵ The study and questionnaires are based on the 2008 US shelter evaluation methodology – Meeting Survivors' Needs: A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences, Final Report/ 2008/

representative. In addition, we may assume that not all respondents were completely open and preferred not to disclose information fully.

Admission and Discharge of Beneficiaries in the Shelters

Any victim/survivor of domestic violence in need of refuge may be admitted to the shelter. According to the shelter regulations, a family member shall be considered victim/survivor of domestic violence, if s/he has suffered physical, psychological, sexual, economic violence or coercion and whose status as a domestic violence victim has been determined by the relevant service of the MoIA and/or judicial body (i.e. through issuance of a restrictive or protective order accordingly) and/or by the DV victim/survivor status identification group, as well as based on court ruling on holding a person a victim/survivor. According to the information provided by the shelter management, two persons were placed in the Gori shelter based on such ruling.

In terms of different age groups of the beneficiaries, the most frequent users of the shelter services are persons in the age group 24-34 years (75%). According to information by the State Fund, as of November 5th 2014, 12 women were using shelter services (9 in the age group 24-44 years and 3 above the age of 45). According to the data provided by the administration, the shelters have the following number of beds: Gori 18-20; Kutaisi 17 and Tbilisi 7.

Below are the statistics on the admission and discharge of beneficiaries in the shelters during 2013–2014:

Table #1

2013-2014 admission - discharge	admission 2013	discharge 2013	admission 2014	discharge 2014
Adult victim/survivor	27	29	23	24
Juvenile victim/survivor	2	2	2	2
Dependent	38	43	32	24
Total	67	74	57	50

The Table #1 shows that in 2014, 38%⁶ less beneficiaries have used shelter services. It is hard to identify direct causes of the reduction in the number of beneficiaries, however suspension of the operation of the DV victim/survivor status identification group (DV status group) as of April 2014 may be deemed as one of the reasons. If we look at the legal grounds for the admission of victims/survivors to the shelter during 2013–2014, it becomes evident, that the number of the victims/survivors placed in the shelter

⁶ The data represent a comparison based on the Table #3 for the period of 2013–2014

based on a restrictive order has significantly increased (by 175%), while the number of these placed based on the status granted by the DV status group has decreased (by 53%).

Those who suffer domestic violence have quite some difficulty in addressing law enforcement for help, as they fear that the perpetrator may become even more violence. In addition, this procedure also involves some other inconveniences (negative attitude of the society, fear of disapproval), which they are trying to avoid. It is therefore, that the existence of an alternative mechanism for being granted a domestic violence victim/survivor status simplifies the disclosure process and increases the disclosure rate. The Gori shelter administration has notified us that because the DV status group was dysfunctional, during the monitoring 11 women in need of shelter were using crisis center services, who were reluctant to engage the patrol police in the process of resolving their problems. Alternative ways for granting the victims/survivor status to them could not be found.

Table #2

Legal grounds for the admission to the shelter	2013	2014	Comparative %
Based on a restrictive order	4	11	175%
Based on a protective order	1	0	-100%
Based on the status granted by the DV status group	15	7	-53%
Based on a patrol police's report	9	0	-100%
Based on finding a person a domestic violence victim/survivor (in a criminal case)	0	0	0%

Improved activity of the patrol police and increased application of the measures foreseen by the law is noteworthy. As compared to 2013 data, the number of beneficiaries brought to the shelters based on a restrictive order has increased by 175% in 2014, which reflects a rather positive trend. However, it is evident that a lot of work remains to be done in this regard.

The Public Defender has examined a number of cases, where in domestic violence incidents the patrol police has continued to use receipts as opposed to measures foreseen by the law. Moreover, during the monitoring, almost all respondents have noted that before being placed in the shelter, they had applied to the police, both the patrol police and the district inspect numerous times and did not receive any support from them. A restrictive order has been issued upon the first call of the police in one case only. Other respondents pointed out the mostly, they have experienced a cynical attitude from the part of police officers. According to one of the respondents, she was told by the police that if she left, the husband would take away her child.

According to the Table #2, in 2014 no beneficiaries have been placed in shelters based on a report by the patrol police, which apparently affected the increased number of persons placed in shelters based on restrictive orders.

As a result of processing collected information, it may be argued that the reduction in the number of beneficiaries placed in shelters has not been caused by the reduction in the number of victims/survivors, but rather by the inflexibility of relevant procedures. We are hopeful, that after the re-establishment of the commission and DV status group, the services will be unimpededly provided to all those in need.

In addition, we have requested information from the State Fund on the grounds for discharge from the shelter and on where the beneficiaries were located after having left the shelter. The relevant data are presented below:

Table #3

Grounds for discharge from the shelter	2013	2014
Expiry of the term	15	18
Personal statement	16	8
Integration into the family (parents)	4	2
Integration into the family (spouse)	16	8
Moved to live separately	7	12
Internal referral (transferred to another shelter run by the State Fund)	1	1
Transfer to another institution	1	1
Unknown	2	2

As a result of an inquiry with the administration it has been established that upon expiry of the term of placement in the shelter, the case file of each beneficiary is being reviewed and the term is extended as necessary. If a beneficiary holds a victim/survivor status, in some cases the term has been extended for another 3 or 6 months and in emergency cases for one year. This allows us to assume that the shelter administration is interested in the beneficiaries' post-shelter lives, tries to support them and provide shelter as necessary. All beneficiaries residing in the Gori shelter during 2014 were extended the term of stay. In the Tbilisi shelter, 5 beneficiaries were in need of extending the term and their need has been met. Due to the fact that the Kutaisi shelter is relatively new, only one beneficiary has been transferred to the shelter in Tbilisi in order to extend the term of her stay.

As a result of inquiry with the beneficiaries, the following circumstances became evident: in most of the cases, the 3 month term of stay in the shelter foreseen by the law is not sufficient for the victim/survivor's full-fledged psycho-social rehabilitation. Their majority has been living in a violent environment for rather lengthy periods of time and required enormous effort to make the step towards escaping it. Consequently, the majority of them has numerous physical, as well as severe psychological

trauma that require time to heal. Moreover, persons in need of shelter services often do not possess their own residencies.

It should further be noted that the majority of women leaving the family are accompanied with children, who are left depending solely on their mothers until the court rules on child support from the part of their father. According to the existing practice, child support and division of property occurs extremely rarely, therefore women victims/survivors of domestic violence often must continue their lives on their own. Shelter services are rather important to help them and therefore, the term of stay in the shelter should be longer. As it was mentioned, the initial term of stay is usually extended. However, expecting extension of the term is extremely stressful for the victims/survivors. During inquiry, almost all of the beneficiaries have noted that they feel very comfortable in the shelter, but at the same time, they are counting the remaining days, as they do not know where to go once the term expires. Often, the sole alternative for them is to return to the violent husband.

Clearly, the shelter cannot be a permanent place of residence for the persons in need, but based on the exiting circumstances, it has been established that the initial 3 months are a rather short term for even partial solution of the problems the users of these services are facing.

Shelter Personnel

During the monitoring, 14 staffers were employed in the Gori shelter, 11 in Kutaisi and 17 in Tbilisi. All of them have been trained on domestic violence issued. The job descriptions of the staff are clearly defined in the shelter regulations. According to the Domestic Violence Shelter and Hotline Guidelines, the shelter staff must be comprised of: shelter manager, social workers, psychologist, medical personnel – nurse, staff on duty. The shelters in Gori and Kutaisi do not have lawyers, however, if a need for a legal consultation arises, they apply to local non-governmental organizations for support, which provide consultation and court representation services to victims/survivors as necessary. In addition, the Kutaisi shelter has no social workers, but during the monitoring, the Kutaisi shelter was in the process of recruiting staff. According to the director of the shelter, the social worker's position will be filled shortly.

In terms of service provision to persons without knowledge of the Georgian language, the shelter administration is ready to recruit an interpreter as necessary and provide information to the person through the interpreter.

Performance and qualification evaluation of the staff during the monitoring has been based on the survey of persons placed in the shelters. The majority of respondents rates the personnel positively and believes that the staff of the institution treat them friendly and with respect, spend sufficient time on providing the beneficiaries with information on safety measures or other state services. It is evident that the general attitude is positive towards all personnel of the shelter, which is confirmed in the table below:

Table #4

Statement	Completely agree	Agree	Disagree	Does not concern me
Shelter personnel treat me with respect	6			
Shelter personnel are caring and support me	6			
Shelter personnel spend sufficient time to discuss safety issues with us	4	2		
Shelter personnel spend sufficient time to discuss safety issues with our children	1	2	2	1
Respect my religion and belief	5	1		
Respect my ethnic origin and race	4	1		1
Shelter personnel help me receive necessary assistance due to my or my child's disability	1			5

Based on the findings of the general inquiry it is clear that in the framework of its duties, the shelter administration is trying to meet primary needs of the persons placed in the shelters.

The process of the victim/survivor's psycho-social rehabilitation should be highlighted, requiring major efforts and professionalism. According to the shelter regulations and Domestic Violence Shelter and Hotline Guidelines, psychological assistance must be provided to all persons in need of such services. These documents defines in detail the plan for the provision of psychological services. The majority of beneficiaries have noted that they are undergoing a group rehabilitation course, however, according to the beneficiaries, individual consultations are rare. As a result of interviews, we have an impression that the beneficiaries have not been properly explained the importance of psychological assistance and consequently, they do use these services. It is advisable to work intensively in the future in this regard and clearly define the psychologist's role in the rehabilitation process.

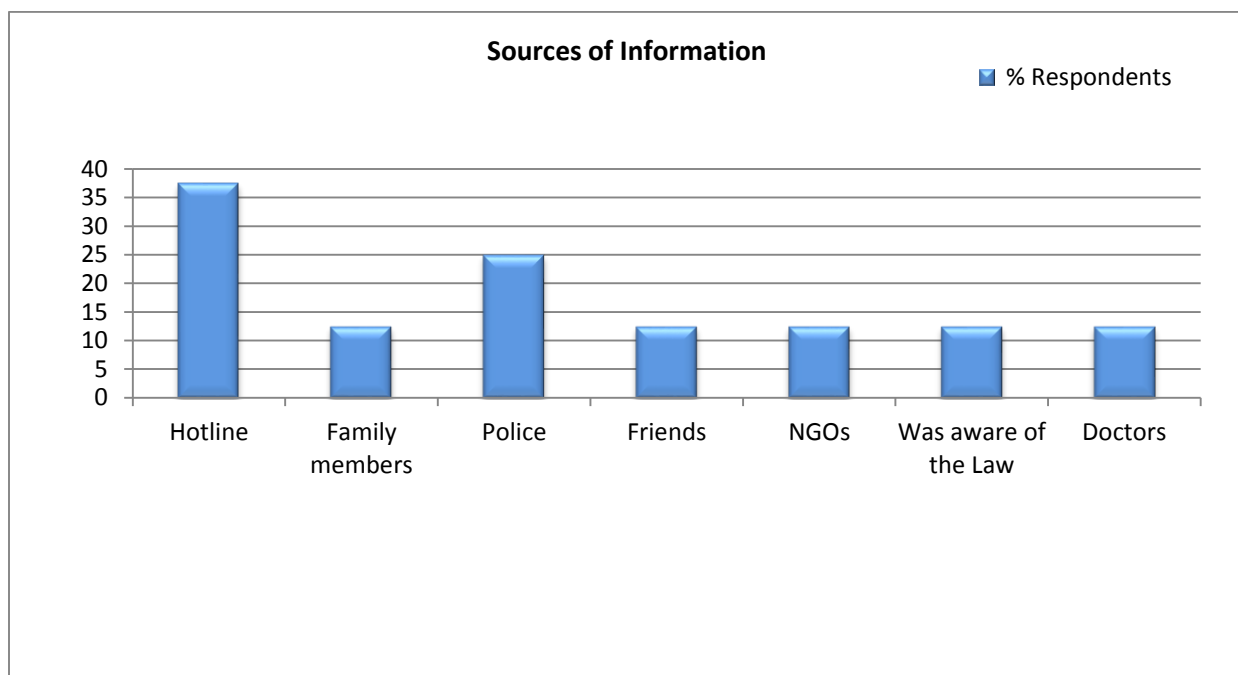
The Needs of the Beneficiaries

One of the most important aspects of monitoring was the information received as a result of beneficiary survey. As it was mentioned above, the majority of questions were closed and included a list of possible options as comprehensive as possible. However, conversations with beneficiaries also concerned issues beyond the scope of the questionnaires and touched upon topics that seemed problematic to the respondents.

Sources for Distributing Information

Interesting data has been collected on the distribution of information regarding shelters. Respondents were given an opportunity to select from several possible options listed. As it turned out from the findings, the majority of respondents have found out about the shelter through the hotline. Clearly, victims/survivors of domestic violence require detailed information in order to decide leaving the family and seek refuge in the shelter. It seems that the hotline operators are meeting this objective rather well and provide sufficient information to the callers, which facilitates their decision-making. The findings of the survey are as follows:

Table #5



From the interviews it turns out that the majority of the victims/survivors did not possess information on the existing services for a long time and therefore continued to live in a violent environment. As it was mentioned above, their majority had called the police a number of times (3 times on average) to the scene of violence, but they were not informed on the opportunity of being placed in a shelter, because which made them stay in their homes or seek temporary refuge with their relatives or neighbors. It is clear that information on the shelters should be intensively disseminated through the media. Furthermore, relevant services must notify in detail alleged victims/survivors of the existing state services at the scene. It is also possible to produce brief information bulletins to be distributed to interested parties at the scenes.

Initial impressions described by respondents

During the monitoring we have collected information on the initial impressions that women victims/survivors have had upon admission to shelters. The respondents were to mark all those statements that reflected their feelings and emotions:

Table #6

When you first came to the shelter...	% agreed
Personnel have received me well	100
The residency is suitable / comfortable for me	100
Other residents received me well	50
Personnel treat me with respect	50
This place is intended for people like me	50
None of the listed statements are acceptable for me	0

This question was intended only for those respondents who spent no more than two weeks in the shelter and therefore remembered their initial impressions rather clearly.

In addition, a number of open questions were provided in the questionnaire intended for collecting information on the expectations related to the shelter: when you have made the decision to come to the shelter, what were you thinking the shelter would be able to do for you? What expectations did you have initially and what are they now? Obviously, the initial expectation was the hope for safety and assistance, however, the beneficiaries have also touched upon problems related to providing permanent residency.

In terms of coming to the shelter, it turns out that difficulties were only related with overcoming fear and having inaccurate information. The general picture is as follows: the shelter administration and staff are quite well trained to obtain initial trust. Beneficiaries feel themselves protected, the environment is friendly for them. However, the questionnaires have shown that some difficulties and conflict situations do exist among the beneficiaries of the shelters. Naturally, every person deals with having to live with strangers in his/her own way, it is a rather subjective matter which causes some disagreement.

Experience received as a result of living in the shelter

Apart from studying initial perceptions, it was rather important to share the experience of those, who have been using the shelter services for a longer period of time (one month or longer). It was interesting to identify the respondents' opinions as to whether and to what extent their expectations were met and what was the actual benefit they received as a result of being admitted to the shelter.

Obviously, after the first stress is overcome, certain needs are increasing and the beneficiaries' assessment becomes more credible. People possess more information on the existing services. In addition, beneficiaries are then able to better analyze their abilities and realize what they have overcome and how they want to continue with their lives in the future. Moreover, they better realize

the actual reality. In order to ensure that this process is properly run, the shelter has the duty to provide legal consultations to the service user as well as to inform them on the relevant social programs and ensure their psychological assistance. The beneficiaries' assessment of the services provided by the shelters in relation to the aforementioned factors are presented in the **Table #7** below. Like in the other tables, specific statements were provided in this table requiring a positive or negative assessment by the respondents:

Table #7

As a result of coming to the shelter....	Yes	Yes %	No
I know of more ways towards my safety	3	50	3
I know more of the existing services	1	17	5
I am more confident in my decisions	3	50	3
It is easier for me to discuss issues of my concern	5	83	1
I can achieve my goals	3	50	3
I have hope in the future	3	50	3
It is easier for me to accept help	4	67	2
I know more of my abilities	2	33	4
I can do more	5	83	1

As it is evident from the completed questionnaires, as well as from the interviews, the majority of the beneficiaries is completely dependent on the assistance from the side of the shelter personnel and is not ready to solve problems independently. Certainly, it is difficult for any person and especially for victims/survivors to face the severe problems that the persons placed in the shelter have as result of being subjected to violence. However, it would be advisable that the work with the service users be more efficient before expiry of the term of stay in order to ensure their empowerment.

Only 17% of the respondents believe that they have information on the existing state services, while a half of the respondents are now aware of ways for self protection, i.e. they have not been prepared for leaving the shelter and not have to face the perpetrator again. However, it is a step forward that it is easier for them to discuss their problems and have the ability to ask for help, as it is widely known, that the majority of domestic violence victims/survivors have to live in severe conditions because they are ashamed of asking for help, are unable to discuss this topic, which is so painful for them and overcoming this sense of shame and inability to talk about it, is a result of hard work. However, it is obvious that the psycho-social rehabilitation program of victims/survivors needs to be improved as well as the methods for disseminating information on the existing state services, which is a temporary measures and during the use of which, the victims/survivors should be empowered to the greatest extent possible.

It is rather important that after leaving the services, beneficiaries be able to continue their lives independently in order to avoid reoccurrence of violence, as otherwise they will be caught up in a cycle of violence with the victim/survivor temporarily escaping the violent environment to start the rehabilitation process and return back to it due to the lack of time, because they have no alternative.

The service providers should be the ones to know best how to increase efficiency of the psycho-social rehabilitation plans in shelters, as they are the ones who have to deal closest with the victims/survivors and they should have the ability to determine what additional measures are necessary for comprehensive protection of the beneficiaries.

In order to be able to see the full picture, expectations and services received in reality have been compared in order to identify whether they have matched and whether the shelters meet the needs of beneficiaries to strengthen their capacities. The **Table #8** below shows statements with several possible answers, which the respondents were supposed to select based on their experiences of long-term stay in shelters.

Assistance that you may have needed or may have received during your stay in the shelter

3= I have received all the assistance needed

2= I have partially received the assistance sought

1= I sought a certain kind of assistance which I did not receive

0= It does not help me, I don't want it or I don't need it

However, persons who had spent in a shelter less than two weeks, were supposed to only assess their expectations, as they did not possess sufficient information on the actual situations:

Table #8

I hope to receive assistance..../I have received assistance	% who has selected the answer in the beginning	% needed assistance	% received all kinds of assistance	% partially received assistance	% has not received any assistance
to pay attention to my own wishes and needs	100	100	50	33	17
to receive more education	50	67	25	25	50
to get to know the child protection system better	0	83	20	60	20
to overcome stress	100	83	60	40	0
to find a place to live suitable for me	50	50	0	33	67
to find a job or receive more information on employment	50	67	25	0	75
to solve my health problems	50	67	50	25	25

other statutory benefits	50	50	0	33	67
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Both, the newly placed beneficiaries as well as those with a long-term experience of staying in the shelter agreed that they were in need of assistance in terms of safety and they did receive it. In addition, they needed more information on domestic violence. Some 67% believed that they have received such information, while 17% thought that they were not provided with sufficient information. Moreover, all respondents needed assistance in healing trauma received as a result of violence and in developing skills of analyzing their own abilities, which is related to the psycho-social rehabilitation process. However, only a half of the respondents believed that they have indeed received such assistance, while 33% noted that they were only partially assisted in this regard and 17% refuses having received such assistance as such. Regardless of the fact that according to 83% of the respondents they were provided with psychological assistance, it is clear that it was not sufficient to meet the needs of the victims/survivors.

It is clear from the table that there is disagreement with regard to the statements related to resocialization and resolution of social issues, such as employment, residency or severe psychological problems and healing trauma. This implies a lack of psychological assistance and relevant social programs. In addition, apparently, the lack of time also negatively affects comprehensive provision of rehabilitation services.

Some 67% of the respondents needed additional education. However, a half of these respondents believe that such services were not available. Problems related to a place of residence remained unresolved for 67% of the respondents with this problem. Clearly, the shelter administration will be unable to resolve the place of residence-related problems, as this issue is beyond their competency. The administration has the duty to only provide legal consultation on property or other disputes. Furthermore, 75% did not receive assistance in finding employment. In general, the employment rate is rather high in the country and the level of education of the shelter residents' should be borne in mind (**Table #9**) – the study has shown that only 62% of the residents had higher education.

Table #9

Level of education	Number of respondents	% of Respondents
9 grades or less	1	12.5
9 –11		0
Graduated from school	1	12.5
Vocational education	1	12.5
Undergraduate degree	5	62.5
Total	8	100

The shelter residents are suspended any other state assistance during their use of the service. Afterwards, they need a few months for the state assistance to resume, as the proxy means testing has to be redone and the decision on granting social assistance needs to be made anew. In fact, after leaving

the shelter, socially vulnerable beneficiaries have no income to sustain their lives. The aforementioned problems are not directly related to the shelter service, however their resolution is required in order to improve protection measures of domestic violence victims/survivors. Existence of solid social guaranteed for the protection of domestic violence victims/survivors will have a preventive effect to a large extent, as it will allow them to confidently escape the violent environment.

Shelter Rules

During the survey information has been also collected with regard to the rules existing in the shelter in terms of how simple these rules are to be adhered to by the beneficiaries and whether any circumstances are create inconveniences. The questions concerned curfew, children's discipline, phone usage and time limitations of using shelter services (Table #10). The questions encompassed several possible answers the respondents were supposed to select from:

3= It was not a problem for me

2= It was a problem for me but it has been resolved

1= It was a problem and it has not been resolved to my satisfaction

0= Such rule did not exist or it does not concern me

Table #10

Problems related with rules concerning:	It was not a problem for me	It was a problem for me but it has been solved	The problem has not been solved to my satisfaction
Curfew	6		
Childcare	5		1
Children's discipline and monitoring	4	1	1
Time limitations of residing in the shelter			3
Opportunity to attend work and school	1	1	2
Opportunity to use the phone	6		
Contact with the perpetrator	3	2	

Shelter rules are not problematic for the beneficiaries, as they are quite flexible and take into account the condition of the beneficiaries. There have been cases when exceptions were made to the curfew as necessary, when a beneficiary was working late in a shop. As for the term of stay in the shelter, according to 50% of the respondents, it is a problem. One of them was expecting issuance of a protective order by the court to determine the term of the victim/survivor status, which would then

determine the term for the stay at the shelter (unless it exceeds the terms determined by the internal policy). Another respondent noted that her term of stay would expire in two months and she was very concerned thereof, as she did not know where to go upon discharge and how she would resolve the problem of residency.

In relation to going to work and attending school, one of the respondents expressed concern over commutation expenses as the shelter is located remotely: “I have to take children to preschool myself and I have to change three types of transport to come to the destination”. It was rather obvious that almost all women were in touch with perpetrators. One of them even claimed that she needed food for the child and the perpetrator was bringing it to the shelter.

Apart from the beneficiaries’ attitudes towards shelter rules, it was important to address the relations of the beneficiaries, both with the staff, as well as other beneficiaries and to analyze existing problems. The findings turned out to be fully satisfactory:

Table #11

Other problems related to the following:	It was not a problem for me	It was a problem for me, but it has been resolved	It has not been resolved to my satisfaction
Conflict with other women in the shelter	3		
Conflict with shelter personnel	4		
Lack of respect from the part of shelter staff	3	1	
Right to chose food menu	0		2
Difficulties related to shelter admissions	4		
Finding personal space	3		

Two respondents noted that the shelter was serving them with a vehicle as necessary, while two other beneficiaries stated that they had to organize their commute themselves. From the interviews it became evident that if commute is necessary for medical reasons, the shelter administration helps the beneficiaries with transportation, while when it is required to commute to preschool, work or other personal matters, the beneficiaries are organizing their commute on their own.

Persons residing in the shelter can file a complaint with regard to shelter rules or treatment through a complaint box located in each shelter and checked every 10 days by the State Fund. This way, the identity of the complainant remains unknown to the shelter administration.

We have further inquired with the administration on the ways to further improve shelter services. They named first re-establishment of the commission granting the DV victim/survivor status. During the

monitoring, the aforementioned commission was dysfunctional, however the new composition of the commission is being appointed at this time. The administration further pointed out the need for a single monetary assistance to the beneficiaries upon discharge from the shelter, in form of a social benefit. The beneficiaries in need of such assistance would be able to use it before being granted the status of socially vulnerable by covering the first month rent or purchase of necessary primary care items. This would facilitate the process of helping the victims/survivors to transition into a safe living environment. In addition, the need for capacity building of the staff has been pointed out. Even though all shelter personnel has been trained on violence against women issues, additional thematic training is needed based on the nature of the work performed.

Children Residing in the Shelters

It should be noted that during the monitoring, childcare issues were identified as one of the most important gaps. As a result of the evaluation it has been found that the shelter system is entirely focused on the protection of women victims/survivors of domestic violence, while similar level of attention is not being paid to childcare is, which may cause significant problems.

The number of children placed in the shelter together with their mothers is quite high, which requires discussion of childcare standards. According to the 2014 data, 32 dependents and 2 juveniles were residing in the shelter. The number of dependents aged under 18 residing in the shelters during the monitoring are indicated in the **Table #12** below:

Table #12

Under 1 year of age	1
1 to 5 years of age	5
6 to 12 years of age	3
12 years of age and above	0

Practice has shown that in the majority of cases, women leave their families together with their children and they are placed in state services together. Regardless of whether violence is directly inflicted on them, often the condition of children witnesses of domestic violence is as severe, as that of the direct victim and therefore, they require rehabilitation and a safe environment.

In order to collect information on child services in the shelters, the monitoring questionnaire also included questions in this regard to enable for a needs assessment and situation analysis. According to the **Table #13**, as expected, the condition of juvenile dependents on the victims/survivors has significantly improved after placement in the shelter:

Table #13

As a result of being placed in the shelter, I feel that my children....	Yes	Yes %	No
Feel better without violence	6	100	0
Better understand what has happened in the home	6	100	0
Feel more support	5	83	1

Undoubtedly, children feel better after being separated from a violence environment. However, as it was mentioned above, the existing services do not consider additional circumstances necessary for juveniles. It is evident that there is a need for introducing special standards adapted to children's needs. Furthermore, it should be taken into account that the children placed in the shelters are of different age groups – from infants to adolescents under 18 years of age. Therefore, a special approach is necessary to be developed by age groups. As the study has shown, one of the examples thereof is the lack of compliance of the shelter schedule with children's needs. In discussing existing problems with regard to shelter rules (**Table #10**), a number of respondents have pointed out the daily schedule of the shelter, as infants have difficulty waking up in the mornings for breakfast and going to sleep at the time determined by the rules (11 p.m.).

In addition, child nutrition has been stated problematic. As it turned out, the shelters offer a rather limited assortment of vegetables and fruit and fish is almost never served (only frozen fish filet) as well as other produce required for children. Healthy nutrition directly affects the adolescent's development and the state has the duty to provide complete services to persons under its care, especially to children. Bearing in mind the special needs of children, the child nutrition system must be improved to better meet children's, otherwise it can be argued that children's rights are being violated.

The table below shows the basic needs of women victims/survivors in terms of proper childcare. The psychological condition of the beneficiaries is poor and they require provision of such conditions, where they will be able to fully meet their children's needs.

Table #14

Assistance received during the stay in the shelter	# Assistance needed	% Assistance needed	% Received all assistance needed	% Partially received assistance	% Did not receive any assistance
For my child's (children's) safety	7	100	100	0	0
To focus on my children's desires and needs	8	100	67	33	0
To help my children when they are sad and have problems	6	100	67	17	17

To manage caring for my children	6	83	60	40	0
To resolve my children's health related problems	5	83	80	20	0

From the respondents with such needs, 60% believe that they did not receive relevant information on the childcare system, while their 20% has no information on this whatsoever. Some 50% named education related problems as unresolved and 20% think that their children's health related problems remain unresolved.

The shelters do not offer babysitter services, all parents being responsible for child rearing, which at a glance, should not give rise to any questions. However, it should be borne in mind that in case of deterioration of the mothers' health condition, some problems may emerge. One of the respondents with a minor child under one year of age, had suffered severe stress, but nonetheless she was ready to start working as a genitor to generate minor income. She was unable to do so because of the absence of babysitter services. It is difficult to ensure job placement or vocational education of women with minor children in the shelters as they are unable to leave the children even for limited periods of time.

Healthcare of Mothers and Children Residing in the Shelters

The shelters are equipped with medication determined by the shelter policy and they are managed by the nurse. The administration ensures accessibility of state healthcare services to mothers and children. In case primary or emergency medical assistance is needed, medical examination and relevant medication are provided, as well as in-patient treatment whenever required. However, when it comes to emergency medical services, if a beneficiary requires medication due to a certain disease, procurement of such medication must be done in accordance to the state procurement rules. The state procurement procedure is rather long and as a result, such medication cannot be provided on time.

The health condition of children requires special attention. During the monitoring, one of the respondents informed us that her child was prescribed by a doctor certain medication against a viral infection that was not included in the list of medication to be kept at the shelter. The child should have taken the medication (antibiotics) immediately, however due to the long state procurement procedure, the medication was only provided to the child after three days. As per the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the Georgian legislation, the state has the duty to provide children with necessary medical services. Such impediments are inadmissible. A mechanism must be created to ensure timely provision of medication to the beneficiaries.

In addition, there is no child psychologist in the shelters and no one works for their psychological rehabilitation. The shelter administration noted that, if necessary, the adult psychologist takes over this function. It is unclear however who should determine that there is such need, unless the child's condition is being evaluated. It is absolutely necessary that upon admission to the shelter, psychological

state of both, the mother and the child, must be evaluated and a relevant plan developed, so that children too have access to rehabilitation services. At this stage, we have the impression that children remain outside the system.

Living Conditions

The shelters are well equipped. All of them are clean and warm and have decent living conditions. The rooms are well set up and include children's beds. Sanitary norms are observed.

As per the shelter policy, the shelter locations are confidential and their addresses may not be disclosed to ensure that safety of the victims/survivors is protected. Furthermore, entrance doors in some shelters are made of iron and the shelters are further protected by 24/7 security guards. However, it should be noted that the addresses of shelters located in the regions are known to all interested parties locally and it is rather difficult for the shelter staff to maintain confidentiality due to the specifics of the rural settings. Therefore, it would be advisable to enhance security measures. For instance, the Gori shelter does not have an iron door and is not protected properly, which does not comply with safety standards⁷.

The shelter in Kutaisi is adapted to suit the needs of disabled beneficiaries in wheelchairs and it is well suited to serve victims/survivors with such special needs. Bedrooms, as well as bathrooms and the dining room are also adapted to their needs, which is rather encouraging. However, persons with other kinds of disabilities (such as mental, vision and etc.) cannot be admitted by any of the shelters.

We have further inquired of possible problems for representatives of religious minorities. One of the respondents was a Jehovah's Witness and based on her interview, we may argue that religious minorities are provided with space to perform their rituals and they do not feel any discomfort from the part of the shelter staff. The shelters are also able to bring in interpreters as necessary, if a beneficiary does not speak Georgian. Therefore, shelter services can be provided to Georgian speaking, as well as to ethnic Georgian, as well as to beneficiaries from other ethnic groups. During the monitoring, the ethnic backgrounds of the beneficiaries were as follows:

Table # 15

Ethnicity	Number of Respondents	% Respondents
Georgian	7	87.5
Azerbaijani	0	0
Armenian	0	0

⁷ Decree №183/N of the Minister of Labor, Health and Social Protection of Georgia

Other (please indicate)	1 (Russian)	12.5
Total	8	100

Conclusion

As a conclusion it should be noted that the shelters are providing high quality services when it comes to primary care and safety. However, in terms of psycho-social rehabilitation and preparedness for a long-term housing solution, there is room for improvement. Better planning of programs, psychological and social work must be ensured. The rights of children must be kept in mind and relevant standards must be introduced.

Recommendations

To the Parliament of Georgia

- Revise the term of placement of domestic violence victims/survivors in the shelters as determined by the Law of Georgia on the elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Assistance to the Victims/Survivors of Domestic Violence, to match the term of the domestic violence victim/survivor legal status;

To the Government of Georgia

- Integrate vocational education and employment state programs into the state policy aimed at supporting domestic violence victims/survivors;
- Take meaningful and efficient measures with regard to compensation of domestic violence victims/survivors, where provision of temporary housing measures will be considered prior to the inclusion in social assistance programs⁸;

To the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection of Georgia; the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

- Revise and enhance methods for the dissemination of information on the shelters; task the patrol and district police to provide information on the state services to the victims/survivors at the domestic violence scenes;

To the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection of Georgia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia; State Fund for the Protection and Assistance to the Victims of Human Trafficking

- In case of admission of a socially vulnerable person to the shelter, the social benefits should be suspended so that they are automatically resumed upon discharge from the shelter;

⁸ In practice, inclusion of a person into the social protection program requires on average 1-3 months. During this timeframe, beneficiaries having left the shelter remain outside the program;

- Revise the psycho-social rehabilitation plans for further enhancement and improvement;
- Revise child nutrition standards and add necessary products for children's development;
- Revise the rules for the procurement of medication and develop regulations that will enable the administration to provide beneficiaries with the necessary medication immediately;
- Establish rules for the recruitment of a caregiver or assistant as necessary to enable the beneficiaries to work and participate in vocational education and thus improve their general condition.

Hotline Services for Domestic Violence Victims/Survivors

In the framework of the monitoring of services, the hotline services have also been evaluated. The State Fund has established a hotline with the support by Un Women to provide consultations to the callers on domestic violence issues. The hotline works during 24 hours and it is anonymous. Due to the fact that the hotline is one of the key aspects of the protection domestic violence victims/survivors, it has been decided to analyze its services as well.

The hotline provides information related to domestic violence on relevant services and protection measures, including:

- Information on the shelters and existing services for the victims/survivors (as well as adolescents and children);
- Information on legal protection mechanisms from domestic violence (restrictive and protective orders);
- Information on legal proceedings: calling the police, collecting evidence, court proceedings;
- Information on social protection of juveniles;
- Information on healthcare services;
- Information on mental health (psychological, psychiatric) services;
- Information on NGOs and governmental agencies working on domestic violence issues.

In addition, the hotline provides relevant response in emergency cases, including but not limited to the following:

- ✓ Calling law enforcement/police upon consent of the alleged victim (beneficiary);
- ✓ Calling an ambulance upon consent of the alleged victim (beneficiary).

During the monitoring, the hotline employed 4 operators working in shifts on every fourth day. Each operator works for a 24 hour shift considering the nature of the services provided.

The hotline renders the following types of services: crisis intervention, legal consultation, psychological assistance, provision of information on the shelters or referral to the consultation center, as well as calling the police or ambulance as necessary and upon consent of the caller.

Personal data of the callers to the hotline are confidential. Only sex and age of the caller are being recorded. However, some respondents noted that in the majority of cases, the callers identify themselves. Each caller repeatedly calls the hotline on average 2-3 times to receive a full consultation and make a decision on the use of certain services. It should be noted that during the shelter monitoring, several respondents have noted that they were instructed by the hotline on how to get into the shelter and what the relevant procedures were.

In total, the hotline answered 766 calls during 2014, out of which 659 were made by women and 107 by men. During the monitoring, respondents were asked whether the hotline services were accessible to ethnic minorities. We have received different responses, however, it should be noted that the hotline operators do not speak any foreign languages. Therefore, it is unlikely that they are able to consult non-Georgian speaking callers.

Based on the principles of confidentiality, no referrals are made of the information received via the hotline to any of governmental agencies, as the confidentiality rules applies to the identity of the callers, as well as to all the circumstances surrounding the caller's specific case. Information on the calls received is recorded in a special journal from which statistical data are then processed. Consultation is free of charge and covers entire Georgia. However, after the law has been amended, the hotline services will be further improved and will become free of charge and specialized services by region will be introduced.⁹

During 2013–2014, the majority of the calls to the hotline concerned physical violence in terms of frequency followed by psychological violence, then followed by sexual and economic violence and lastly coercion. The most frequent callers are women followed by neighbors or relatives, while men and children call the hotline rather rarely. The duration of the calls is not limited.

The hotline staff has been provided with training a number of times and the operators are lawyers.

For a full-scale monitoring of the hotline, calls must be monitored using the so-called mystic customer methodology to assess in practice the qualification of the operators and efficiency of the consultation provided.

Recommendations

⁹ The Law of Georgia on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Assistance to the Victims/Survivors of Domestic Violence, article 21. 11

To the State Fund for the Protection and Assistance to the Victims of Human Trafficking

- Facilitate dissemination of information on the hotline services, especially in the regions;
- Ensure access of the hotline services to ethnic minorities;
- Take relevant measures to ensure free access of the hotline to all mobile operators and regional telephone lines.

Monitoring of Femicide

Female homicide is the most severe form of violence committed against women which is known as femicide.

Definition of femicide

In general, femicide is the deliberate murder of a woman due to her gender. Femicide is almost always committed by a man and has its own characteristics. In the most cases this crime is committed by a male partner or former partner and its precondition is domestic violence, threat and frightening, sexual harassment and such conditions when women have much less resources comparing of those available for male partner and is dependent on them.

2014 is the worst year due to the number of femicide in Georgia. The Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender's Office was monitoring the work of relevant governmental institutions with regard to the protection of women's rights and studied in details statistical data of femicide facts.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Main Prosecutor's Office of Georgia¹⁰ totally 34 women were killed in 2014 out of which 13 women were killed by a husband, ex-husband, partner (non-registered relationship), (crimes determined under the Criminal Code of Georgia, Articles 108, 109, 117). In addition one case of murder committed by a father in law of a daughter in law and two cases of homicide committed by a son of his mother were registered. In 2014 totally 17 homicides were committed against women. The crimes determined under Articles 108-109 of the Criminal Code of Georgia (out of wedlock) were committed against 17 women.

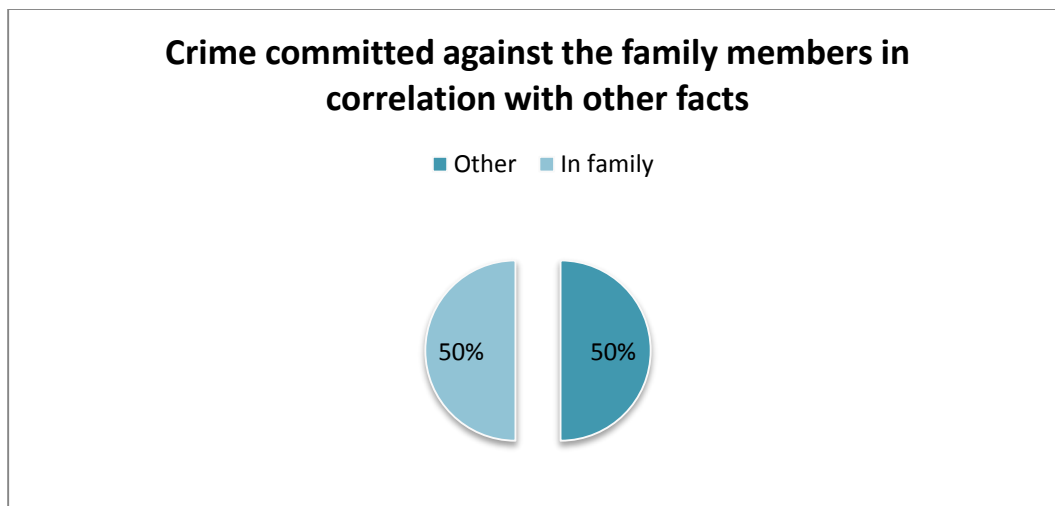
According to the information provided by the Main Prosecutor's Office of Georgia¹¹, the court hearing was completed on 9 cases out of 17 cases and the main hearing is undergoing on three cases.

¹⁰ Ministry of Internal Affairs; #541888/ #541934 / 12.03.2015

¹¹ Main Prosecutor's Office of Georgia; #13/16016; 17/03/2015

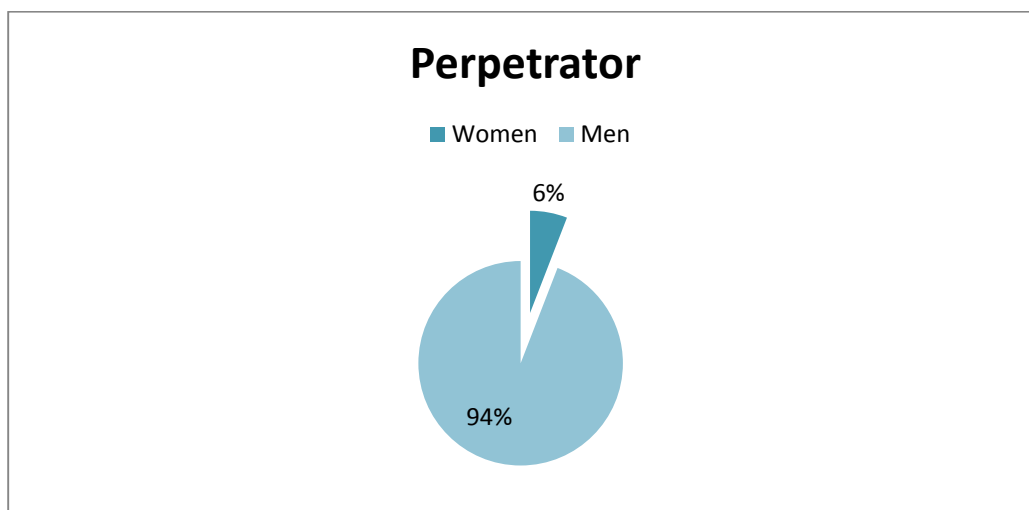
Criminal persecution has been terminated with regard to 5 cases due to the different grounds (one defendant died, two defendants committed suicide and two defendants were found mentally ill).

Evaluation of gender based crimes is very difficult due to the lack of crime classification based on gender. In the majority of cases important aspects that better clarify the crime characteristic, such as the relationship between the deceased and murderer or the motivation of a crime is not identified. But the data below shows that 50% of women killed in 2014 was caused by the domestic violence:



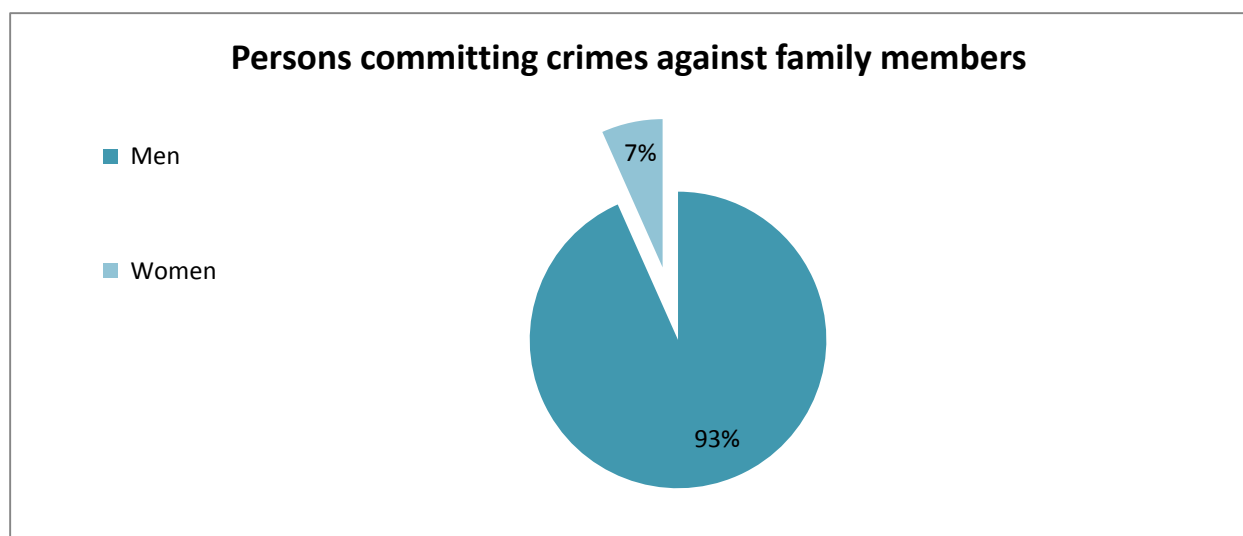
This division of percentage underlines very frightening tendency. As it was already mentioned above in the most of the cases femicide is a result of domestic violence. Due to the lack of materials it is hard to prove whether it was possible or not to avoid fatal results but it is assumed that conflict existed prior the murder occurred and no one was able to protect this woman.

Such high data of domestic crimes points out not to the increased crime rate but to the high data of gender based crimes. The study shows that in 94% of the crimes perpetrator is a man:



The results of different studies shows that femicide in the most of the cases is committed by men. In addition, the correlation between male and female prisoners is 97% to 3%¹² which underlines the general trend of higher crime rate among men compared to women. But it is very important to pay attention to the fact that the majority of crimes committed against women (killing) are committed by a partner, former partner or another family member. This gives us grounds to conclude that in Georgia femicide is committed in the name of intimate or/and honor and it is very unfortunate that latter reason in the most cases is the ground for the public sympathy towards the perpetrator.

Intimate femicide or homicide is the killing of a woman committed by an intimate partner or former partner. The study of the World Health Organization regarding the femicide committed in 2012 shows¹³, that 35% of killed women are victims of the intimate partner when only 5% of men are killed by female partner. The same study determines that 15% of murders committed in the world are qualified as intimate homicide. But this data is not complete due to the lack of detailed information. In addition, it is very important to take into the consideration the observation that the killing of an intimate partner by a woman is a result of self-defense when victim is trying to escape a perpetrator or fight back. The crime statistics committed by an intimate partner is the following:

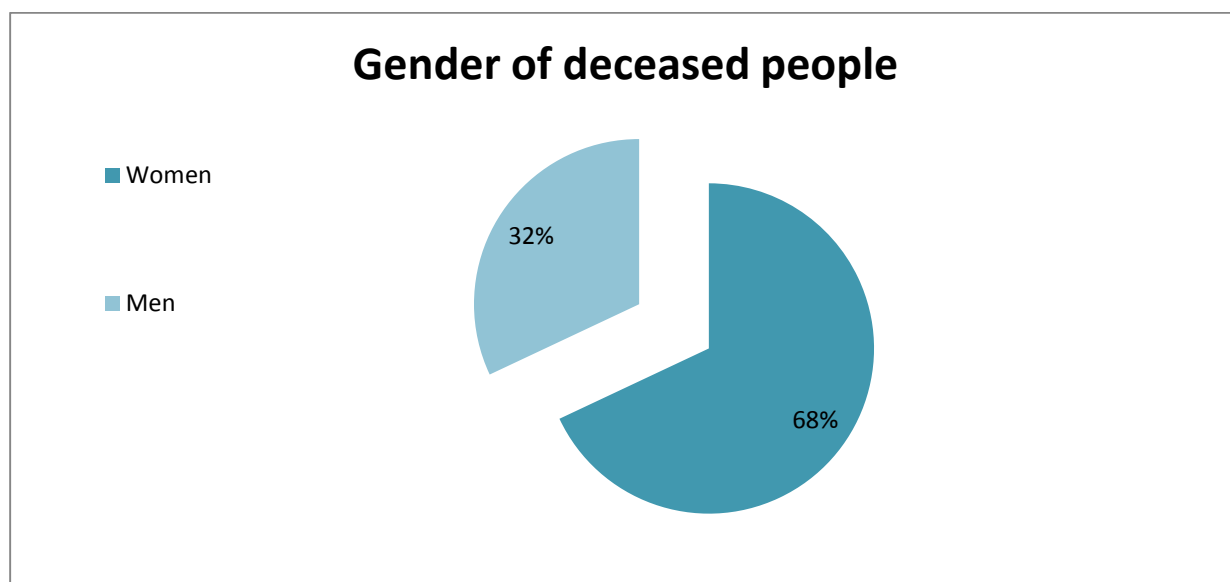


As it was mentioned above the data is not complete because in case of non-family killings the relationship between the victim and perpetrator is not identified, but the information collected in 2014 that partners and former partners were killed by 13 male and 1 female perpetrators is true. The data is in compliance with the world statics and proves that measures of protection of women, their role and importance need to be strengthened.

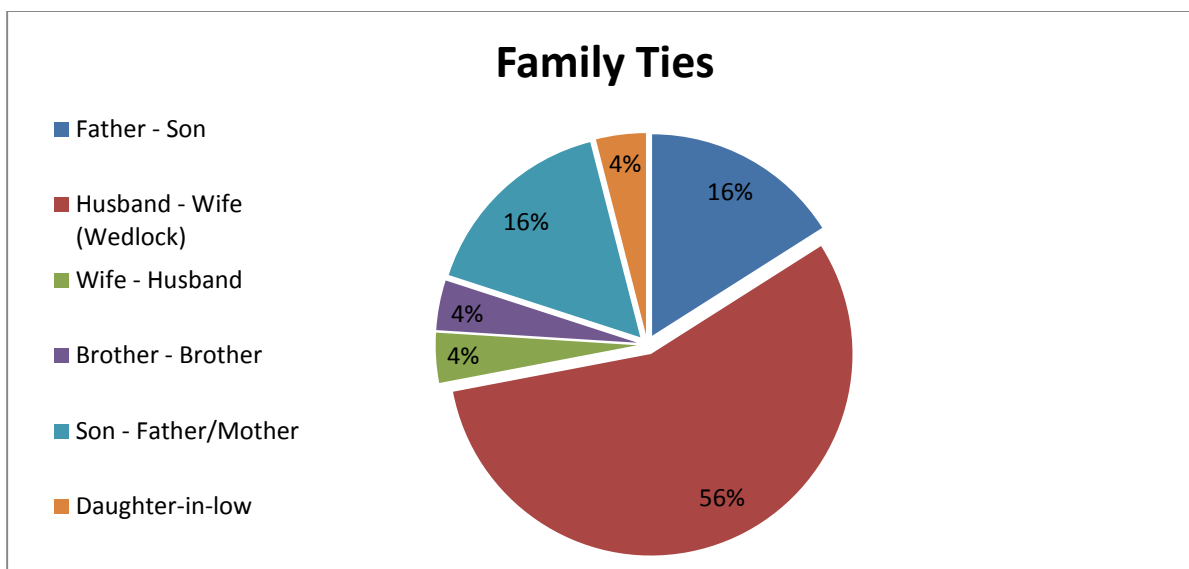
¹² Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance, 2013; Information is available on the website : http://www.mcla.gov.ge/public/files/pdf/text_14214085111.pdf (seen on 08.04.2015)

¹³ Understanding and addressing violence against women/Femicide/World Health Organization 2012

The gender of people killed as a result of domestic violence reinforces the same tendency- 17 women and 8 men were killed. The number makes clear that women are more vulnerable in the families, but in case of homicide of both genders male prevail among the perpetrators:



In order to have full picture we will share the statistics regarding the family ties of persons who died due to domestic violence. These data shows that in the most of cases, 56% victim is a woman:



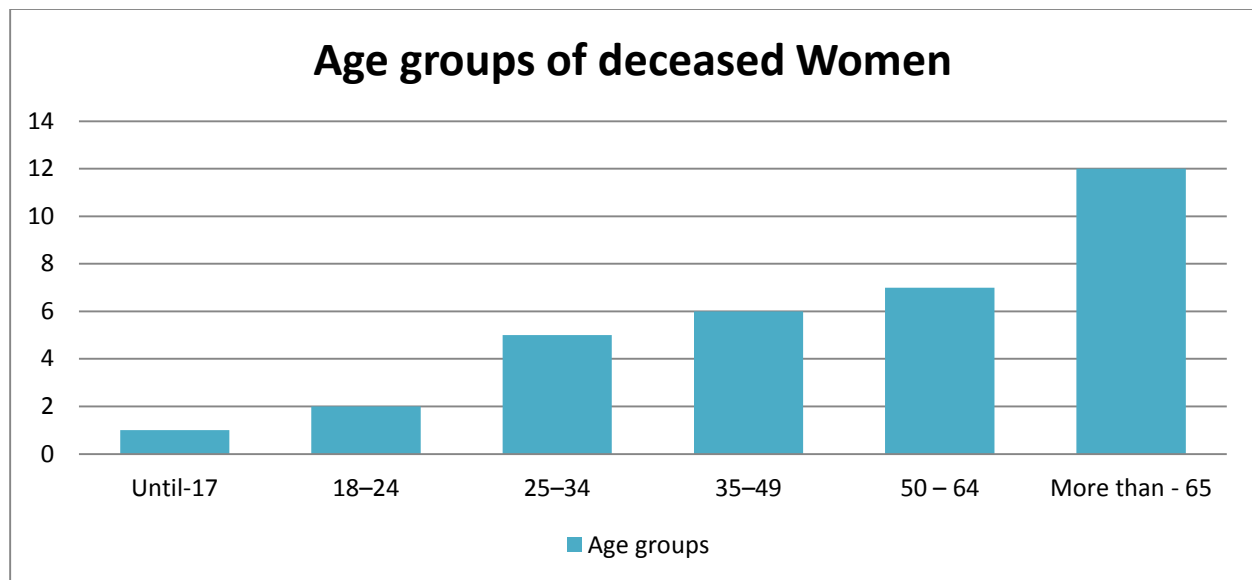
Honor killing as a rule is a crime committed by a man, the ground of which is jealousy and protection of so called “family honor” and is tied to the cultural aspects. There were several cases of honor killings in 2014.

This crime is distinguished by its cruelty. As it was already mentioned above women are killed because they are women and due to existed pseudo customs and traditions the opposite gender considers that they have power over them and they are authorized to decide their fate, in order to “save” their status, honor or to avoid undesirable behavior.

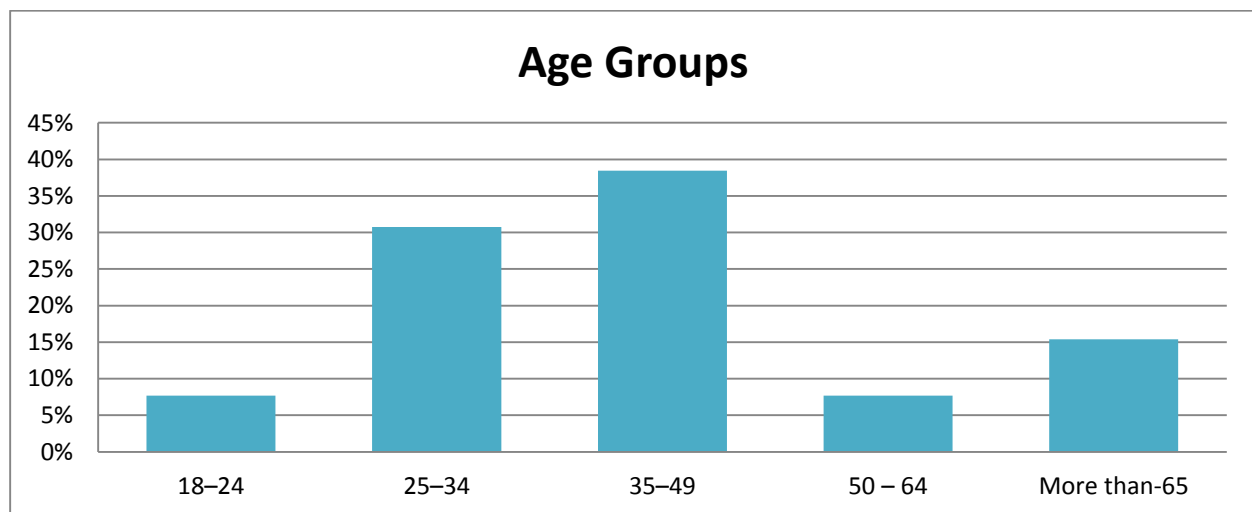
One very important data which is clear when analyzing women homicide is the identification of risk groups. World Health Organization has described in its publication the characteristics of a victim and perpetrator (killer), which underlines the high possibility of lethal end. In the United States scientists developed special questionnaire¹⁴ – risk assessment, which helps to identify the possible inclination of killing of a victim by a partner. This and similar mechanisms can be established in Georgia in order to identify possible victim in a timely manner and to provide them with appropriate help.

We studied the age groups of women killed in 2014 and identified that the most vulnerable are women in 65 and older age group which is also caused by the failure to protect elder people. Unfortunately they use the protection mechanism very rarely, their ability to fight for self-survival is very low and they become victims of violence most frequently.

¹⁴ Assessing Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide/ Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Rebecca Block, Doris Campbell, Mary Ann Curry, Faye Gary, Judith McFarlane, Carolyn Sachs, Phyllis Sharps, Yvonne Ulrich, and Susan A. Wilt



Though among the women killed by a partner or former partner as a result of domestic violence are women from 35-39 age group.



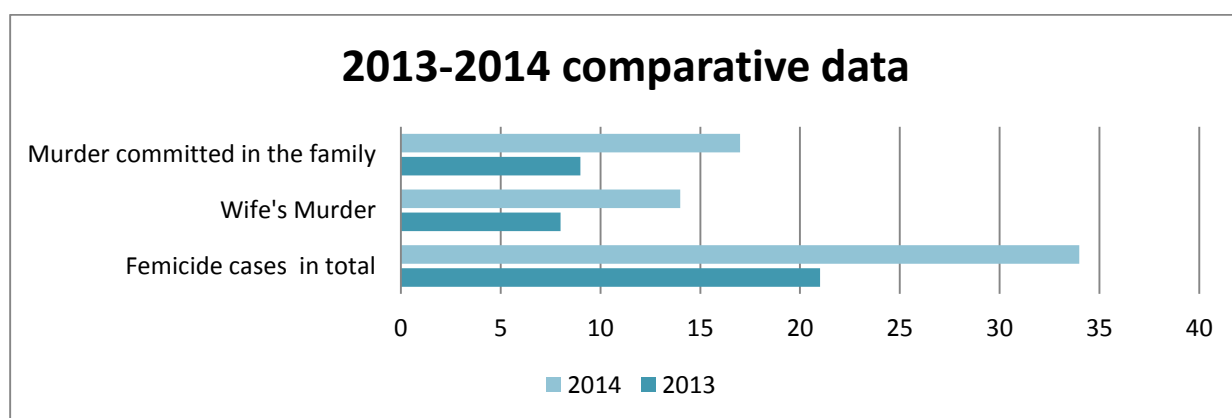
The collection of exact data and its analysis is necessary in order to overcome femicide and to decrease women killing. This study will give us detailed picture and will help to identify tendencies relevant to Georgia. The further steps shall be planned based on the analysis of data which will ensure the effectiveness. Both law-enforcement as well as healthcare institutions and judiciary shall be involved in the collection of detailed information. It is important to raise their sensitivity in order to help them to identify the problem and respond to it. It is important also to underline the role and importance of public participation in the process of fighting violence against women.

Often public is well aware of facts of violence but they avoid to inform law-enforcement institutions and leaves the victim face to face with the perpetrator. Raising public awareness with regard to

women's rights is one additional condition to prevent and decrease the number of tragic cases. Based on the recent experience we can conclude that with regard to each concrete case of female homicide that were publicized by the media public was talking about the victim's fault and in some cases the actions of a perpetrator were justified. The gender inequality is considered to be the main motivation of violence. In the cases of murder committed by ex-husband the reasons were jealousy and protection of male dignity, when nobody talks about the women's rights and their right to live in freedom.

Two cases were identified in the process of study when victims had reported the facts of violence to the law-enforcement institutions prior the death, but unfortunately did not receive adequate response. In addition, there was one fact of wounding of a victim who in the past reported the violence to the police. These tragic events prove what can be caused by ignorance of protective mechanisms and the failure to follow and provide adequate response to the reported facts of violence.

It is necessary to conduct intensive work in order to make the response to the cases of domestic violence more active and for the law-enforcement institutions to understand better their responsibility with regard to the victim protection. Especially due to the fact that female homicide has increased by 62% in 2014 comparing to the data of 2013, the cases of killing wives by a husband increased by 57% and crime committed against women in the family (killing) has increased by 53% comparing to the previous year data.¹⁵ Increasing statistics of women femicide is dangerous and especially important for the law-enforcement and other responsible institutions. The preventive measures shall be developed by processing of data and reveal of deficiencies and ways to avoid crime shall be identified.



The study of a problem by the Public Defender of Georgia reveals that the serious challenge is the lack of practice to identify a crime motivated by the gender and its qualification. This requires in depth study and analysis. The revealed violence facts determine that crime commission was motivated by the gender inequality, opinions about the gender roles of women and stereotype

¹⁵ The data has been developed based on the information provided through the correspondence submitted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs 22.01.2014 წლის #138331

approaches. It is very important to establish practice of evaluation and analysis of gender based violence.

Suicides committed as a result of domestic violence

The Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender of Georgia studied those cases of female suicide when according to the disseminated information the possible reason was the systemic domestic violence. The study showed that in the most cases this crime cannot be qualified as inducing to suicide because the facts of violence were not reported to the law-enforcement institutions prior the death of a victim. According to the information submitted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia due to the fact that crime determined under Article 115 (Inducing to Suicide) of the Criminal Code of Georgia requires study of huge materials and as a rule it is not done in details.¹⁶ Accordingly they failed to provide information with regard to this issue.

On March 19, 2014 Public Defender of Georgia was informed about the fact of suicide of 16 years old girl the possible reason of which was forceful marriage. The investigation of this issue was terminated by Telavi Regional Unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs due to the lack of actions determined under the Criminal Code of Georgia. Despite this, according to the media the precondition of the suicide was violence or forceful early marriage of a young girl.

On October 9, 2014 Public Defender of Georgia was informed about the suicide of Kh. J. According to the disseminated information she was beaten up in front of the village neighbors by the relatives of her husband after which she hang herself. According to the correspondence from Kakheti Regional Main Division the criminal investigation regarding the fact of inducing Kh.J to commit the suicide was terminated on September 28, 2014 due to the lack of actions determined under the Criminal Code of Georgia. The media revealed the facts that investigation was not informed about and later the criminal investigation was renewed and is still undergoing.

Public Defender of Georgia was informed regarding the suicide of 21 years old G.U on September 16, 2014. According to the disseminated information the deceased person has permanent conflict with her husband who was abusing her physically and verbally. Tbilisi Isani-Samgori District Unit started the investigation of the criminal case on the fact of inducing G.U to commit suicide. According to the investigation there were not occasions of domestic violence in the family before. In addition, neither deceased nor her family members reported to the police the fact of domestic violence.

The above mentioned and other facts of suicide give us grounds to conclude that one of the most severe results of the violence against women is the inducing to suicide and the most regrettable tendency is the complications with regard to punishment a perpetrator because of the termination of criminal investigation due to the lack of facts. This takes us back to the public attitude towards the domestic violence. Often neighbors and relatives are well aware of possible facts of violence but they

¹⁶ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia #541934; 12/03/2015

refuse to cooperate with investigation and prefer to keep the silence. It is obvious that results of such silence are very unfortunate. It is very important to continue to work with the public and raise their awareness and to apply the norms determined under the legislation in case of failure to report the crime when it is proved that person was aware of violence fact and rejected to report to the law-enforcement institutions.

Recommendations

Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

- The events necessary to raise the public awareness shall be planned in order to inform them regarding their role in the process of protection and rescue of victims of violence;
- The risk assessment methodology shall be established, which will allow appropriate agencies to identify and avoid violence in the timely manner.
- To register the statistical data of crimes committed against women, including homicide in a way that allows to identify the family ties determined under the law after the fact is registered;
- To register the statistics of facts of inducing women to commit suicide and to analyses the necessary data regarding the fact in order to improve preventive measures in future.

Prosecutor's Office of Georgia

- The in-depth analysis of femicide shall be conducted in order to identify among the reported facts crimes committed based on the gender and the ways to respond to them;
- To continue to work on public awareness issues. To apply the norms determined under the law in case of failure to report crimes when a person was aware of facts of violence and refused to report to the appropriate law-enforcement institutions.

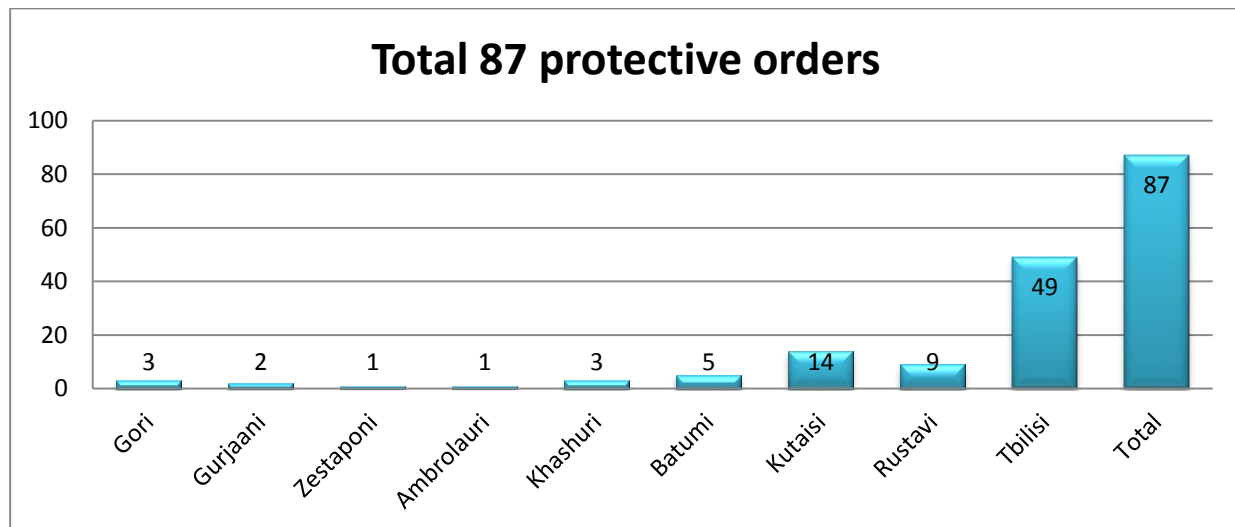
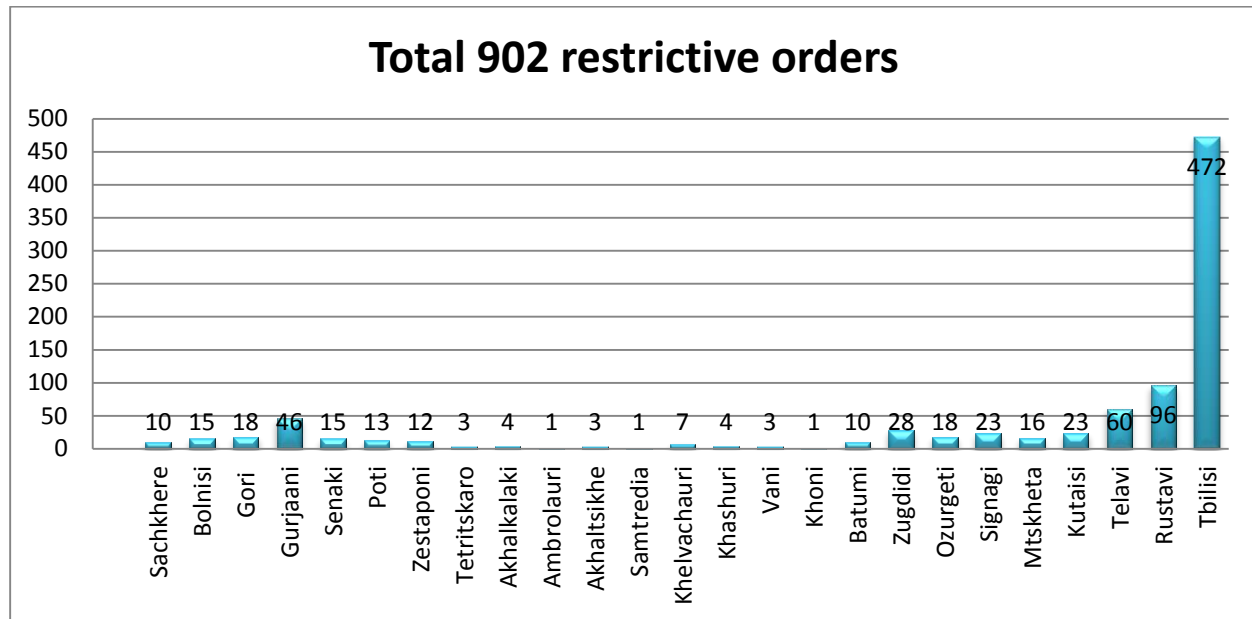
Evaluation of protection mechanisms from domestic violence

The Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender's Office of Georgia conducted two types of study in order to evaluate the effectiveness of protection mechanisms from domestic violence. In 2013 with the support of UN Women the evaluation of effectiveness of restrictive and protective orders was conducted and the method of qualitative research was used. In particular, individual interviews (18) and focus groups (13) were conducted both in Tbilisi as well as in the municipalities of Georgia (Zugdidi, Akhaltsikhe, Batumi, Tetrtskhara, and Telavi). In addition the copies of protective and restrictive orders issued by the common courts of Georgia and magistrate judges in 2014 were requested and the statistical study was prepared and tendencies revealed based on the research of these orders.

Analysis of Statistical Data

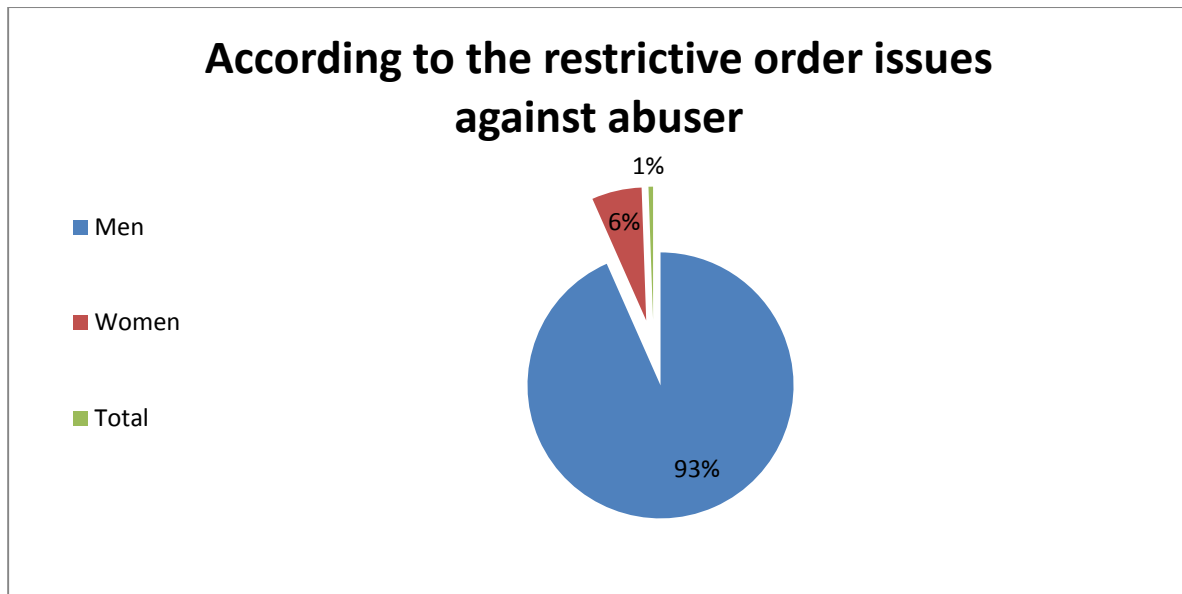
In 2014 in Georgia totally 87 protective and 902 restrictive orders were issued. Four protective orders and 17 restrictive orders were refused or were rejected based on other reasons determined under law.

The detailed statistics of restrictive and protective orders is the following:



In addition, the response of appropriate institutions to the facts of violation of protective and restrictive orders is very interesting. According to the data of territorial units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs there were 66 violations of Article 175² paragraph 1 of the Code on Administrative

Offences during 10 month in 2014 and 32 violations of paragraph 2 of the same article.¹⁷ The criminal prosecution was commenced against 5 persons based on the Article 381¹ of the Criminal Code of Georgia (**Non-compliance with demands and/or obligations provided by a protective or a restrictive order**).¹⁸ Gender differentiated statistical data with regard to restrictive order is the following:



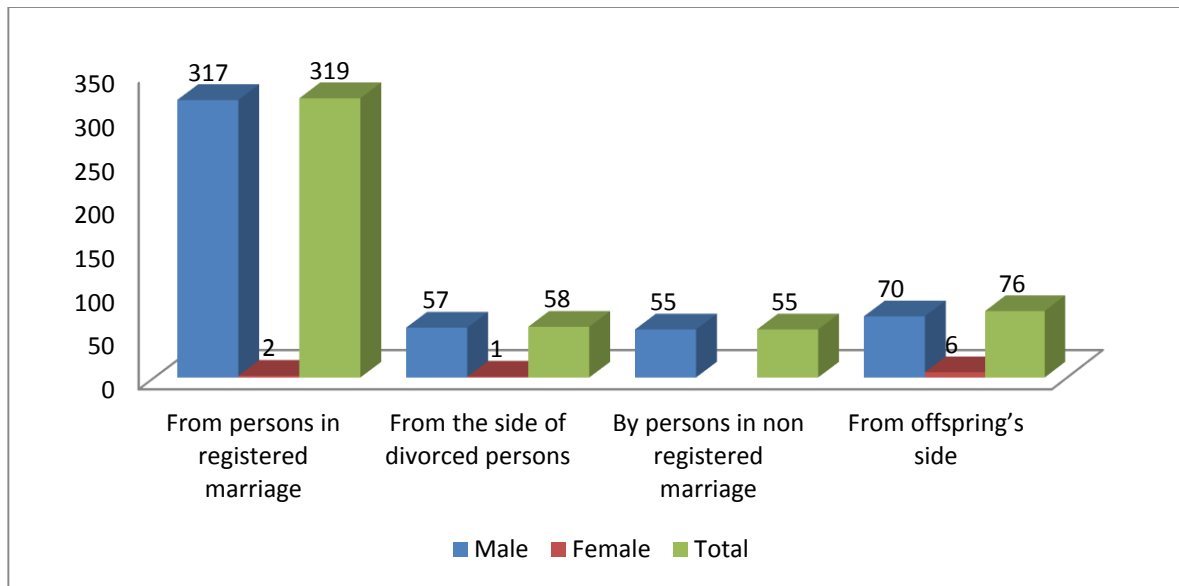
In the given case, like the ones described above, it is obvious that majority of domestic violence victims are women, male prevail among the perpetrators and compose 96%. This statistic is in compliance with the data of other countries and underlines the abusive attitude towards women due to the principal of gender disparity.

Based on the information provided to the Public Defender's Office Magistrate Courts of Georgia (except some) do not hear cases on approval of protective and restrictive orders. Restrictive order was issued only by the magistrate judge of Marneuli – 6, Borjomi Magistarte judge -1 and Khoni Magistarte judge – 1.

The evaluation reveals that during the domestic violence cases the most frequent are facts of violence from a partner. In addition the facts of violence from ex-partner are also frequent. The statistical data of the restrictive orders are the following:

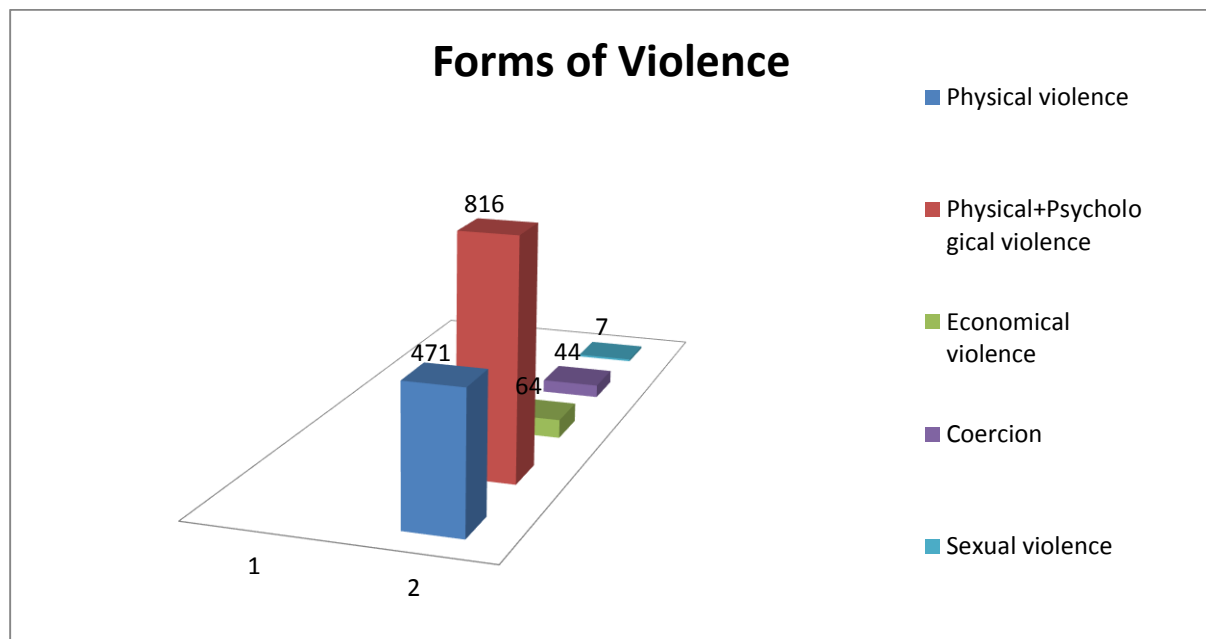
¹⁷ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia; #176433 / 26.01.15 / #564736; 16.03.2015

¹⁸ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia; #176433 / 26.01.15 # 564736 / 16.03.15



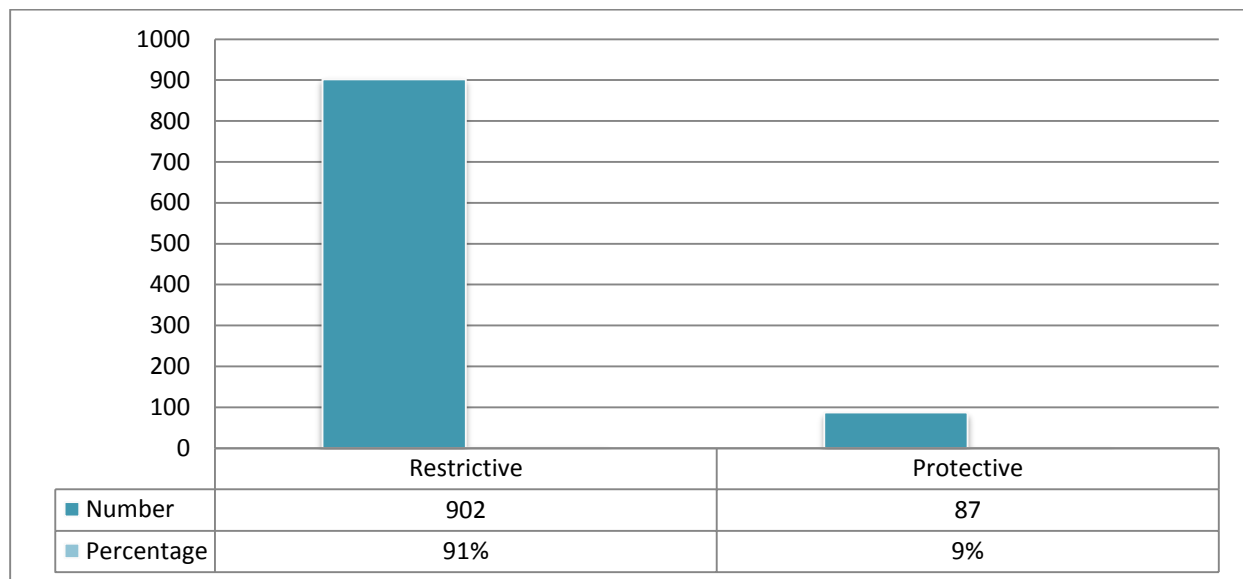
As it was mentioned above the number of orders issued against women is very limited and in the most cases perpetrators are men.

The analysis of protective and restrictive measures shows that they are issued in cases when there are evidences of both psychological and physical abuse (totally 881) and the least reported is the cases of sexual abuse and only 7 restrictive orders are issued in case of sexual violence.

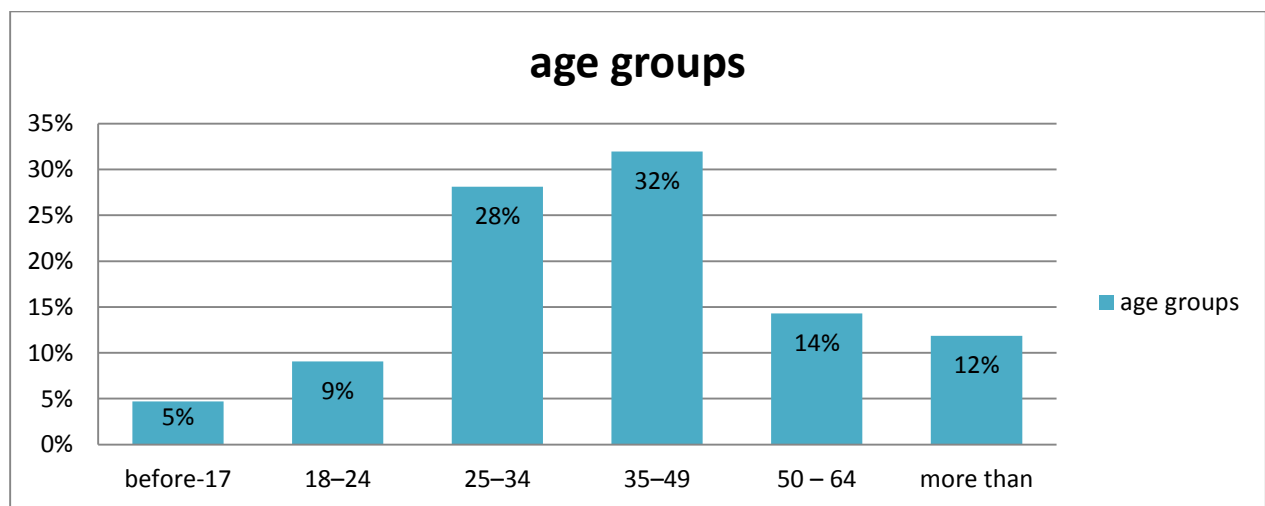


The correlation of protective and restrictive orders is very apparent. The number of restrictive measures issued in cases of domestic violence is 91% more than the number of protective measures (correlation is 9%).

We suspect that not everybody wants to use longer protective mechanism (order) after the term of restrictive order expires but such disparity is caused by the rule of issuing and approval of mechanism (orders). Restrictive order is the proactive measure issued by the patrol police for the protection of a victim and it is obligatory requirement determined by the law. In order to get protective order a victim personally (or through the other person) shall apply to the court. Many citizens are not even informed about this procedure. Raising public awareness regarding this opportunity will strengthen the measures of protection of a victim and prevention of violence.



The distribution of age groups was also interesting during the process of data processing. The results proved that like homicide statistic the person of 35-49 age groups represent the highest risk group of domestic violence:



We can suspect that such distribution is caused by the high application to the law-enforcement institutions by the representatives of this age group people because the data is based on the age of a

victim identified in the issued and approved protective and restrictive orders. In other words people from 35-49 age group apply more to the law-enforcement institutions than the others in case of domestic violence. It is important to direct the work into two directions: to raise the awareness of people of all age groups, especially young people and strengthen already established risk groups.

Findings of the research into protection mechanisms

In 2013 Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender's Office with the support of UN Women conducted the study on effectiveness of protective and restrictive orders. The qualitative method of research was used. In particular individual interviews (18) and focus-groups (13) were conducted in Tbilisi, as well as in Zugdidi, Akhaltsikhe, Batumi, Tetrtskhari and Telavi. Totally 62 respondents participated in the study.

The purpose of interviews was to collect detailed information from all units working with the victims of domestic violence that are authorized and have opportunity to impact the effectiveness of restrictive and protective orders. The researchers used purposive sampling method. In particular, the researchers with the help of state agencies identified those professionals that had experience of working on this issue in all regions of Georgia. Among them were:

- Representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia;
- First Instance Courts;
- Representatives of the Prosecutor's Office of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia;
- Non-Governmental organizations of Georgia, who have experience of serving the victims;
- Victims of domestic violence, that live in the state or NGO run shelters;

The collected data was studied by the qualitative research methods.

(Constant Comparative analysis, Glaser & Strauss¹⁹),

Identification of domestic violence cases

As the results of the research showed the fight against violence is complicated first of all due to its legislative definition. Meaning of the "domestic violence" creates obstacles for the law-enforcement institutions to respond in a timely manner and adequately.

According to the opinion of law-enforcement institutions the first obstacle for the safety measures to assist victims is the lack of information about the domestic violence in general and lack of detailed definition in Georgian legislation. All representatives of the law-enforcement institutions both patrol police as well as district police officers that were interviewed identify two definitions – conflict and violence. But they fail to distinguish these two terms based on the objective criteria. All of them say that the definition of the domestic violence given in the special law is very broad and includes

¹⁹ Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine Publishing Company.

emotional as well as other types of violence that can also be found in the moment of family conflict. Accordingly when arriving at the crime scene they decide upon their opinion whether the case is a family conflict or domestic violence.

Another group of law-enforcements think that the differentiation shall happen according to the character of the results caused by the act. But as it appears the results can also be widely interpreted and they can be lost. There were many cases when the representatives of law-enforcement institutions used “family conflict” and “domestic violence” as a synonym terms which is not in compliance with the instructions regarding the response to the cases.

The similar problem was raised whether the domestic violence case shall be heard according to the rule of administrative offences or criminal law. They underline that definition of domestic violence given in the special law is very similar to the definition of crime of domestic violence given in the Criminal Code of Georgia that it is almost impossible in theory to distinguish these two. In the most of the cases law-enforcement representatives were not aware regarding the opportunity to apply both criminal and administrative legal mechanisms.

Some judges think that there is no problem with separation if the issue is correctly presented. They think that orders are not sanctions but the mean to ensure victim with the safety in order to prevent future crimes. They consider that criminal persecution of domestic violence is the evaluation of past fact that already happened when issuing/approval of restrictive/protective orders serve the interest of neutralization of concrete crisis in present time and to protect the interests of a victim in future. Judges think that practitioners shall differentiate these issues by separation of their professional judgment from the strong public stereotypes:

„Police officer shall take a simple look at the problem, shall imagine that he/she is not in the family and the conflict is between two private persons (another environment) and shall switch off that part of thinking in the brain which was turned on until now – “Conflict between the family members is not our business”. We also had case to hear when patrol police officer directly said “when wife and husband are arguing nobody asks my opinion, I should leave”. If he/she considers family matter as the conflict between two individuals than it will be easier for them to identify crime and its features and decide whether it is disagreement or simple quarrel.”

Some of the law-enforcements think that single conflict is not violence and it is necessary to have repeated character. In addition they consider that separation of conflict from violence, in other words evaluation of fact, whether the violence really happened or not shall be decided by another institution or organization:

„You do not need my explanation that violence is no single conflict and fight that happens once, it requires to have status and to be approved that one side is correct and whether he/she is really victim

of violence or not. Domestic violence is frequent, in addition verbal abuse, one kick, (single) fact of beating, but to determine whether it is violence and to give a status it requires competent person, organization who can really prove it”.

The same is obvious from the information submitted by the victims. Most probably the omission was caused by the failure to identify and correctly define the event. In particular law-enforcement officers required perpetrator to fill out so called conflict card several times, restrictive or preventive order or other measures were not used which made the conflict deeper and prolonged it in time.

Response to Domestic Violence

One group of victims of domestic violence said that in some cases patrol police response was timely and arrived at the scene in few minutes from the call. In some cases employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and patrol police expressed respect and morally supported victims. The best example of proactive support by the patrol police was reported in Adjara. As victim mentioned patrol police officer not only helped victim when she called the hotline but also inquired her condition and safety later on:

„They fully supported me. . . He was very supportive. Police officer testified at the court hearing. He approached me and asked to call them if I am afraid or need help. They tried to do their best. I cannot say that they did not pay attention. I thanked them many times”.

Although there were facts registered when police showed its indifference or advised a victim to regulate relationship with the perpetrator:

„Last year I called police twice because violence acts were more frequent, almost every day I had bruises on eye or ear. Once my husband was beating me up on the street and police saw it and I asked them to take us to the police unit. They arrested my husband for 3 days. Police was laughing at me when I said that I was planning to make forensic examination and request his arrest . . . I approached police several times with the request to conduct examination. They failed to do so. Police is not authorized to arrest person longer than 3 days without grounds. What can I do? Violence continued after his release and I called hot line and told them to help me or otherwise I would kill him or he would kill me and police is not doing anything in this situation. Person on hot line requested to talk to the police.”

Study revealed number of cases of failure of police to provide with adequate response to the cases of domestic violence and when they failed to fulfill their obligation due to the family ties or friendship with the perpetrator.

„District police officer is the friend of my husband and I called patrol police but they sent district police officer. . . He issued restrictive order, when I asked him to give me the order he refused and sad that I can't do anything. Last time when district police officer saw me I was in a very bad

condition, I had many injuries . . . he only gave him reprimand. He forced me to sign the papers on refusal of his imprisonment and both threatened me that they would deprive me a child with the help of one investigator. Law-enforcement representatives failed to help me and prevent violence targeted at me."

One of the most important problems with the response to the domestic violence cases is the systemic monitoring of conditions of restrictive and protective orders. As law-enforcements mentioned the supervision of families where the violence was registered is done by the district police officer. But monitoring procedure is not regulated by a document and only depends on personal initiatives of the law-enforcement officers which from the beginning allow mistakes.

The lack of physical and human resources of law-enforcement institutions is one of the problems named with regard to the effective response to the domestic violence cases, which limits full-scale response possibilities. In particular, as the law-enforcement representatives of different regions say there are 2 police officers in each patrol police crew and they are obliged to monitor, protect and ensure safety of citizens in their territorial unit (several square feet). They are obliged to arrive immediately to the scene in case when call is made in one of the territorial units regarding the possibility of domestic violence. But due to the character of domestic violence they often have to stay and work intensively with the family (interview with a victim, interview with perpetrator, neighbors, family members, prevention of conflict and etc) and their territorial unit is not supervised which creates problems for the security of people.

Issuing order during night is another problem that needs to be addressed separately. According to the law-enforcement institutions it is difficult to separate victim and perpetrator for the security reasons during the timeframe of order. When perpetrator does not have separate place to live the separation of perpetrator and victim means to leave perpetrator on the street for entire night, which can provoke commission of a new crime by a perpetrator especially when perpetrator is under the influence of alcohol (which is very common in the cases of domestic violence). In addition health of perpetrator can be endangered in winter or cold weather when he will be outdoors without the supervision.

According to the law-enforcement representatives several years ago there were special rooms at the police stations for drunken people to get sober, which would be the best solution in such situations. Currently there is no such infrastructure available and in the most of the cases victims refuse to leave perpetrator outside at night, in cold weather or police has to improvise and resolve the issue which makes their work more difficult and forces them not to issue restrictive and protective order during night hours. Police officers say:

„Patrol police officer drives in the car and can you imagine me, chief of the police station with perpetrator in one room for entire night. I was listening to the drunken person talking and I did not know where to take him. There are no special rooms for drunken people so what can I do?“

The role of public institutions

Victims of domestic violence say that they do not ask assistance from the state until the situation is desperate and extremely complicated and when the interference of the police is the only way to save their lives and to terminate the health damage and bodily injuries. Very often the relatives and family members support such development of situation that has impact on free will of a victim.

„Neighbors witnessed violence but they did not call police, because they are cousins (tradition). I was most upset about my father-in-law. They said that it was my fault and their son was good“.

„At the end I was screaming for help and the door was closed. I did not care what would happen to this man the most important was for me to get help. Neighbors heard my scream but nobody called the police“.

Victims say that their prolonged patience and passive behavior is very much supported by their social environment and in some cases by the representatives of religion“:

„...How many time I left the family. . We were separated . . . and how many times they helped to reconcile with him – sometimes with help of church, sometimes with the help of other things. Priests were involved; everybody was involved. “

Passive condition of victims

Law-enforcements name the passive condition of victims as one of the reasons for aggravation and prolongation of domestic violence, which is expressed in failure to report the fact of violence, or canceling already made call and rejection of reported fact. As they say there are many calls made to the hotline during the day regarding the domestic violence but when police arrives at the reported address woman absolutely denies the fact of violence and as a rule say that such fact did not happen at all or she just wanted to “scare” perpetrator and that’s why she called the patrol police hotline.

As majority of police officers report in such cases they as a rule do not conduct in-depth investigation of a matter and leave the location. Because they explain “... **We do not study reasons . . . we study results**”. But unfortunately the research showed the significant deficiency of such approach. Victims realize post-factum, after a short period of time from the stress caused by the violence that their free will in the moment of violence is disabled. They are under the influence of many factors and cannot make decisions (report to the police) based on their interests. In particular, they are under the influence of reaction of physiological “numbness”²⁰. Due to the influence of relatives, public reaction

²⁰ Freezing, immobility - http://www.aic.gov.au/media_library/publications/proceedings/20/galliano.pdf

or fear of perpetrator they fail to fully express their position which they regret later and can see the results:

„My sister called patrol police, when she came and saw me in the blood, beaten, she did not allow him to approach me but when he saw me in this condition than he tried to beat up my sister. . .I rejected the violence even when my sister called the police”.

Especially important is the creation of special environment for victim interrogation by the police. This environment shall help to calm down and gain courage. It is necessary for the law-enforcement officers to be aware of the interview technique of victims of violence and to have enough time to gain the confidence of a victim.

It is very important to have female patrol police officer in the crew who as police officers say is much better in establishing effective communication with the victims of violence and more conscious of their requests and needs. We have to use Adjara region as the example of positive practice where the work of women patrol police officers is very effective (mixed response crew). Police officers think that it is much easier for the female victim of violence to communicate her problem with the female police officer. There are issues that victims usually do not report to the male patrol police officer and are more open to the females (for instance: sexual violence issues). The same has been proved by the victim interviews.

Victims say that one of the major reasons of failure to report to the police regarding the domestic violence is the fear of losing children, manipulation by the children – which is very frequently used by the family of perpetrator. Victims lack sufficient information and trust towards the legislation: ***„I did not think about calling the police because my mother in-law was always saying that they would deprive me right to see my child. I did not have house and I would be deprived parenthood right. There were several occasions when they asked me to leave a child with them and get divorce. I did not have any support to raise child in good conditions and that somebody would check and would deprive me the rights to see my baby at all. I knew about such case – how one woman lost her child – I was very afraid. I did not trust anybody back that time ”.***

Judges agree that in cases of domestic violence both parties try to manipulate children and it is very common experience. Juveniles, who are victims of emotional violence and manipulation usually, take side of one of the parents. Judges think that the best interest of a child shall be protected in this situation which shall be determined based on the circumstances as well as long term wellbeing of a child.

Victims' report that their and their children security is under threat and this threat increases highly when they have to return to the conflict environment in difficult social-economical conditions because they do not have other choice after the term of staying at the shelter expires. The same

reasoning is used when they refuse to leave violence environment and stay in the house with the perpetrator.

„... I would really kill him in case this violence continues . . . women like me need help. We have acute social conditions. At least house rent shall be paid through the assistance program. Now I think how to get back to my husband's house because I cannot leave my children on the street, I have to go back to the violent environment...”

Implementing preventive measures

The study results prove that prevention of domestic violence is the most important, critical and unresolved problem. Both victims as well as law-enforcement institutions agree on this matter.

The participants of the study speak about the prevention of domestic violence as general topic full of idealistic ideas. In particular, they say that prevention of domestic violence in Georgia generally can be achieved only by the improvement of social-economical condition of families. In contrary, as the study showed the measures of domestic violence shall be focused on targeted groups, shall be concrete and measurable.

The participants of the study revealed concrete risk groups of the domestic violence and the state is informed about these groups (but this information shall be checked and annually renewed). As one of the victims said one of the character of perpetrator's personality included his experience of war fight during the armed conflicts after which the human behavior and psychological condition requires rehabilitation/correction. In case of failure to do so the victim considers violent behavior to be unavoidable:

„They tell me that he has been in the war, he faught in Abkhazia and Iraq wars. May be he has been traumatized.“

Law-enforcements say about the post conflict regions that family conflicts can be related to this fact and that:

“There are many misarable people in this region, their houses were burned, they cannot find graves, they are nervous and the situation is tensed and in addition the economical situation is worst since than”.

Representatives of the non-governmental organizations talk about the lack of concrete preventive measures. NGO representatives say that special moment arises in the cycle of domestic violence when victim is informed and expects the violence targeted on her, but she cannot prove this. Accordingly she is under big emotional stress and unfortunately there is no effective protection mechanism of victim ensured by the state:

„Victims waits for the violence, she is aware that something will happen, but she does not have protective measure. Unless there is no critical situation, if there is no incident of violence she does

not have possibility of assistance and interference from the state and she is waiting, waiting for violence because she does not have any other chance to prove the violence;”

But the fact that it is necessary to have complex social and psycho-rehabilitation services for the elimination of violence shall be underlined. Preventive measures shall be distributed among several state institutions, because victim of violence has several needs to be addressed like protection of security, providing victims with residence, food, clothes and other needs and in addition they require psychological rehabilitation.

„When the needs are not satisfied psychological assistance cannot substitute it. Because I do not trust tomorrow, there is no psychologist that can prepare me when I am forced to go back from shelter to the hell, it is waist of resources. There is no service center that can help victim unless her security is not ensured for long term”.

Conclusion

The study revealed number of systemic or factual deficiencies. These problems are responses to the questions why the law on the paper is good and protection of a victim cannot be ensured in reality. Problems are so in-depth that they require time to be resolved but they need to be taken into the account in order to strengthen preventive measures in future and to make legislation more flexible in order for the law-enforcement institutions and other interested bodies to simplify response to the facts of violence.

The legal qualification of domestic violence cases can be identified from the main findings: it is obvious that law-enforcements see problems with the criminal law qualification of a fact, it is important to have exact definition, which will save them from subjective decision and will be adopted as general instruction for everybody.

It is important to establish further monitoring mechanism for responding to the fact which will allow appropriate state institutions to supervise families where the fact of violence was identified and to create information data base, which will provide helpful information for the planning of preventive measures. The security and safety of victims will be better ensured in case of monitoring and supervision and the recidivism will significantly decrease.

Public Defender of Georgia in his reports or proposals spoke about the importance of female police officers in cases of responding to domestic violence facts. The facts given above once more prove that female involvement in such cases increases the perspective of better management of situation.

The improvement of rehabilitation services for victims as well as perpetrators has been mentioned several times. The fact that psycho-social assistance programs require improvement is clear in each occasion where the victims of domestic violence require protection. Protection of victims is directly

connected to providing them with first aid and psychological assistance and without strengthening them none of the measures will have long-term effect.

And finally, despite the conducted or future reforms on legislative or executive level the public awareness remains as one of the most important issues. We face barriers on each stage, public harshly criticize women who try to protect themselves from perpetrator and as it was mentioned above sometimes even femicide is considered to be acceptable when it is committed in the name of dignity and honor. Public, neighbors, relatives, friends are those people who know better what is going on in the families of their close people and their indifferent approaches often damages the situation. It is necessary for each citizen to understand that instead of hiding problem they can really victims and even save their lives if the assistance will be provided timely.

Recommendations

Government of Georgia

- Unified statistical data shall be collected with regard to violence against women and domestic violence cases;

Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

- Detailed statistical data shall be ensured on violence against women and facts of domestic violence;
- The works targeted to raise and improve public awareness shall be strengthened and law-enforcement institutions upon receipt of call for the domestic violence shall disseminate information regarding the mechanisms and services available through the law in cases of domestic violence.
- Specialized structural units shall be created, that will be personally responsible to respond to the gender based crimes and facts of violence;
- The further mechanism of monitoring of domestic violence cases shall be established, which will include concrete instructions in order to minimize the risks of repeated violence cases.

Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs of Georgia

- Specialized social workers working on domestic violence cases shall be trained, shall be equipped with appropriate conditions and authority according to the amendments and changes to the Law of Georgia on “Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection of and Support to Its Victims”;
- The method of dissemination of information regarding shelters shall be reviewed and improved. Patrol police officers and district police officers shall be required to inform victims of domestic violence regarding the state services available to them;
- Guideline principles shall be developed for the doctors for identification of domestic violence cases and reporting them.