



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



ASSESSING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN 6 MUNICIPALITIES OF WESTERN GEORGIA CONSOLIDATED REPORT

THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED WITHIN THE GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS)

PROJECT 72011421CA00001

BRIDGING THE GAP: PEOPLE TO PEOPLE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

JULY 2021



**This study is made possible by the generous
support of the American People through
USAID**

*(The contents of this study are the sole responsibility of
Fund “Sukhumi” and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID)*

CONTENTS

ASSESSING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN 6 MUNICIPALITIES OF WESTERN GEORGIA CONSOLIDATED REPORT	3
INTRODUCTION	3
PART I: STUDY METHODOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	3
PART II: MAIN FINDINGS	4
2.1. ECONOMIC SECURITY	4
2.2. PUBLIC SECURITY	7
2.3. EDUCATION SECURITY	8
2.4. HEALTH SECURITY	9
2.5. PHYSICAL SECURITY	10
2.6. FOOD SECURITY	13
2.7. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY	13
2.8. QUALITY OF POPULATION`S PARTICIPATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS	14
PART III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	15
<u>REPORTS OF INDIVIDUAL TARGET MUNICIPALITIES</u>	
KUTAISI MUNICIPALITY	19
TSKHALTUBO MUNICIPALITY	38
KHONI MUNICIPALITY	54
SENAKI MUNICIPALITY	72
ZUGDIDI MUNICIPALITY	88
TSALENJIKHA MUNICIPALITY	108

ASSESSING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN 6 MUNICIPALITIES OF WESTERN GEORGIA CONSOLIDATED REPORT

EKATERINE GAMAKHARIA

INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of two unresolved and frozen conflicts in the country, a difficult domestic political and rather dire socio-economic situation, there is always a risk of conflict and violence escalation. In addition, low levels of human safety and security, fear of losing jobs and income, weak health care guarantees, high levels of environmental pollution, increased rates of domestic violence and violence in society have a very profound impact on the population's psycho-emotional state. Moreover, the low level of human security in society increases aggression. As a result, it hinders the population's development and the opportunity for a dignified life, which poses an additional threat to the peace and stability of the country.

In the current situation, to avoid potential conflicts and destabilization in society, it is essential to thoroughly study and analyze the challenges facing the population, their causes, and possible escalation trends. This is exactly what Fund "Sukhumi" strives to achieve by developing sustainable mechanism for the Gender Responsive Early Warning System in its target municipalities.

Gender Responsive Early Warning System (GREWS)¹ involves identifying threats and collecting information about potential conflicts or crises, considering the specific needs and interests of women and men, systematizing and analyzing data, and developing a timely response strategy based on available data. The conflict early warning system should be based on the people's needs and priorities. Therefore, its effectiveness and success significantly depend on promoting development of communities/local population (women and men) and their direct engagement in collecting the information, analyzing the data and devising the recommendations to respond the problems.

The present needs study aims at identifying the problems and challenges facing women and young people in the Fund "Sukhumi"s target municipalities, highlighting their priority issues, developing effective response strategies, and advocating for positive change at local and central levels.

PART I: STUDY METHODOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Methodology: Needs assessment was preceded by capacity building of pre-selected community leaders in the target regions and strengthening their data collection and problem identification skills. Ninety women and young leaders from local communities in six target municipalities were involved in the data collection process.

¹ Gender Responsive Early Warning System (GREWS)

The study was conducted using **quantitative** and **qualitative** methods.

A questionnaire developed for the **quantitative research mainly consisted**, which mainly consisted of closed-ended questions and covered issues related to human security. The survey was conducted online. When questionnaire, respondents had the opportunity to choose several options from the answers indicated in the questionnaire or express an alternative opinion. **As a result, 1029 women** have been surveyed. **In addition, the focus group discussion technique and in-depth** individual interviews have been employed within the qualitative study using a pre-designed structured questionnaire. As a result, 24 focus groups and 24 in-depth interviews have been conducted, which mainly involved representatives of local self-government and non-governmental organizations, professional groups, and experts in various fields.

152 women have been interviewed through the focus group method, and 25 people via individual interviews. Sixteen of them were women and nine men. **177 people** were involved in the qualitative study. In total, the survey covered **1 206 citizens**. 1997 of them were women, including IDPs, locals, the socially vulnerable, and people with disabilities, mothers with many children and single mothers, teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs, community leaders, students, pensioners, young people, and local experts, etc.

The study covered the population of two regions of western Georgia, including six municipalities of Imereti and Samegrelo (Kutaisi, Tskaltubo, Khoni, Zugdidi, Senaki, and Tsalenjikha). With the engagement of female groups in the study, the gender-sensitive problems and acute issues relevant to women have been identified. Furthermore, respondents were selected considering different socio-demographic characteristics, which allows the data generalization. The study was conducted in **April-May 2021**.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the study: The age of the surveyed ranged from 18 to 65. The majority (39.3%) of women were from 18 to 30; 31.9% - under 31-45; 22.3% - 45-65 and a relatively small proportion, namely 6.5% were women over 65.

The majority of respondents (80.3%) are locals, and 19.2% - IDPs. However, it should be noted that **a large part of the local population surveyed in Zugdidi and Tsalenjikha municipalities are women and girls living in the villages at the conflict dividing line, which is about a third of the total number of respondents (31.9%).**

According to the social status, the total share of socially vulnerable people in the survey was 12%, mothers with many children - 6.1%, single mothers - 5.9%, and women with disabilities - 1.3%. Inclusiveness of people with different social statuses in the survey allows identifying the needs and priorities of specific vulnerable groups and the challenges they face.

According to employment type, 29% of respondents are unemployed, and 24.2% are employed by the state. According to the data in-depth analysis, the majority of those employed by the state are locals. It comprises 27.4% of the total number of the surveyed locals. The share of IDPs employed in the budgetary organization is twice as low (12.6%), which indicates the limited access of IDPs to state-funded services and the low level of their integration. The share of respondents employed in the private sector is 11.5%, while those employed in agriculture is 7.3%. Approximately the same number of respondents are engaged in the civil sector (7.1%), while 18% are students.

PART II: MAIN FINDINGS

2.1. ECONOMIC SECURITY

The economic security of people is a defining and integral part of the country's national security, stability and sustainable peace. Its provision is the most important task of the state, the whole society and the individual citizen. In the present need's assessment, the economic security of target groups was studied based on the population's access to various types of income, access to state programs for employment and economic empowerment, and the level of citizens' awareness of them.

- ❖ **Main source of income for families - For most surveyed women** (46.8%), the primary source of income is **salary**. According to the data analysis from six municipalities, 34%-63% of respondents indicate salaries. The share of women working in the budgetary organizations was highest in Kutaisi (63%) and lowest in Senaki (34%). Pension is an income for 24% of respondents, while for 21.8%, it is household income, and for 20.4%, money transfers from abroad. In addition, 12% of surveyed women receive IDP allowance; help from relatives 11.7%; 11.3% highlight small business income and 10.7% allowance for the vulnerable people. It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents who indicated salary as the primary source of income, 268 out of the 482 women, or 55.6%, in addition to salary indicated such sources of income as pensions, family benefits, remittances from abroad, IDPs' allowances, etc. It indicates that their current salary is insufficient to support household families and requires from the families mobilization of additional financial resources.

Factors hindering women's economic empowerment and ways to overcome the problem

- The main factors hindering the economic empowerment of women were the lack of job opportunities on the ground (64.3%), which is equally relevant for both locals (68.2%) and IDPs (67.7%). According to many respondents (58.8%), low financial income also significantly hinders women's economic development. Due to the lack of prospects for economic development in the country, the high rate of forced labour migration abroad indicates more than a third of women (35.4%). In addition, inflation and high prices are pointed out by 37%, and high-interest loans and credits by 24% of respondents. The respondents of qualitative survey noted that the interest rate on loans taken from banks to start a business is so high that in many cases, it makes obstacles for business proper operation and development. According to respondents, a business started with a bank loan is doomed to failure due to a high interest rate. Consequently, it causes women to refrain from taking a loan to start a business. **Furthermore, an insufficient number of free childcare support services**, including the lack of extended childcare services in schools and kindergartens, is considered by 17.3% of respondents as a barrier to women's employment. In addition, 15% of women report insufficient support to resume the businesses stopped due to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly during a qualitative survey. Respondents pointed out that the pandemic greatly affected people employed in the private sector and informal businesses. However, the state is making insufficient efforts to facilitate the rehabilitation of their activities. Most respondents considered state aid programs to support the pandemic-affected population to be inefficient and emphasized the need for tailor-made support an investment.

«According to 41.4% of women, the low level of security in the country is related to the growing trend of migration of women and the increased number of divided families. 39.2% of respondents

highlighted the increase in psychological problems, while 18.8% believe that many problems of human life contribute to increased family conflicts and cases of violence against women. 13.72% think that there are threats of depolarization and conflicts in society. At the same time, 12.41% think that the sense of insecurity is growing in the population.»

To facilitate women's inclusiveness in economic activities and create a favourable environment, women surveyed highlighted the need for affordable credits - 56.5%, the introduction of small business support programs - 54%, the importance of offering rural support programs - 41% and for business development - 36.6%. 26.4% of the respondents emphasized the need to offer more economic support programs from the local self-government. 43.3% of the respondents indicated the need to inform the population more about economic programs. In comparison, 16.6% of respondents believe it is necessary to offer consulting services to the beneficiaries and practical assistant in developing business plans, especially for women inexperienced running their own business. Qualitative research participants emphasized to ensure women's more engagement in entrepreneurship and sustainability of their business, it is essential to offer them more free training courses on strengthening entrepreneurial skills and provide grants to start a business to ensure women's greater inclusiveness in economic programs and business viability. In addition, female respondents noted that to promote employment of mothers with young children, it is essential to offer them home-based employment opportunity.

Awareness of women about state programs of economic empowerment and channels of information - 25.7% of respondents (mostly locals -76%) are not aware of state programs aimed at economic empowerment. The lack of information about state programs is significantly lower among the IDPs (24%). The most well-known programs for the surveyed women are: "Produce in Georgia" - 62%; various vocational training courses - 30.4%; programs of international/local non-governmental organizations - 28.1% and "Implement the Future" - 28.1%. The least known program for the respondents is the "IDP Livelihood Program" - 23.2%, mainly because the program is aimed at a limited target group. However, the awareness of the program among IDPs is relatively high. More than half of the surveyed IDPs (51%) have information about this opportunity.

Television and radio (53.4%), online media and social networks (50.3%), municipal websites (34%), neighbors and acquaintances (31.7%) are **the primary sources of information** for the majority of the population. The role of NGOs is also evident regarding sharing information (21.2.3%). Local MPs (7.2%), mayor's representatives in villages (8.2%), central government websites and Facebook pages (15.4%) were the least named channels of receiving information. In a qualitative study, respondents noted that the practice of informing the population online had improved significantly. Besides, information about exciting and important programs for the population can be found and received today via social networks and websites of state agencies. However, it was emphasized that, nevertheless, access to the internet resources of information is quite limited to specific categories of the population, including vulnerable groups, the elderly and the rural population, due to poor Internet coverage in some settlements, lack of appropriate technologies and/or insufficient skills. Consequently, **information leaflets and booklets and face-to-face meetings with government officials** remain a **desirable and acceptable form of obtaining information** about state programs. It is proved by the quantitative data.

The majority of respondents (74.4) named insufficient communication between the population and government agencies a barrier to accessing **information. IDPs (73.2%) and locals (76.4%)**

equally consider the factor as a problem. Restricted access to the Internet was noted by 8.2% of respondents, while 14.4% highlighted a lack of interest in central and local economic empowerment programs. **The indifference of a part of the population and lack of interest in state programs can be explained, on the one hand, by the distrust of the population and nihilism that they can be competitive and successful in the competition announced by the state.** On the other hand, there is insufficient information campaign to promote the programs and raise the population's interest.

2.2. PUBLIC SECURITY

The population's public security has been assessed by measuring the availability of adequate infrastructure in the target municipalities and the level of access to basic services for the population. In addition, citizens' attitudes towards the criminogenic situation in society, public order protection and tolerance have been studied.

- ❖ **Infrastructural problems** - 17.4% of women surveyed in the quantitative study believe that infrastructural problems threaten public security. The most priority infrastructural issues for the majority of women surveyed in the target municipalities include repair of internal roads (37.7%), improvement of transport services (34%), maintenance of sewerage system (27.6%) and drainage canals (26.6%), water supply system and providing access to quality water (26.9%). The problem of the non-functional sewerage system is especially relevant in Senaki municipality. At the same time, the issue of faulty water and limited access to water is most acute in the villages of Tsalenjikha municipality along the conflict dividing line and Tskaltubo municipality. According to the respondents, drinking water mainly becomes acute in summer, which especially negatively affects women. In addition to the fact that due to the lack of water, women have to bring it from a distance, it significantly complicates the household activities, which negatively impacts their psychological state and health. **The problem of public transport malfunction is especially acute for rural women and their families.** They are linked to all basic services (grocery and household stores, markets, hospitals, pharmacies, workplaces) nearby cities. The qualitative research has revealed that the lack of public transport in the villages of Tsalenjikha municipality adjacent to the dividing line and the limited traffic schedule of private vehicles (especially during the pandemic) forced the population to stop entrepreneurial activities. They had to travel from the countryside to the city by taxi, and consequently, it made their business unprofitable.

In addition, women are severely affected by such infrastructural problems as lack of **sidewalks (23%), outdoor street lighting (16.5%), squares/parks and entertainment** zones for children, which primarily concerns mothers with young children and reduces their sense of security. **lack of household services** (e.g. sewing shops and salons), perceived as a topical problem by 19,7% of the women living in the rural area, who in the condition of limited transport are forced to travel to receive the basic services in the nearest cities, which is additional financial burden for them. Qualitative research has also revealed the problem of the **lack of public toilets in cities and regional centres.**

- ❖ **Public order and the crime rate** - The number of women who focus on increasing crime is visibly high (68.1%). Deteriorated criminogenic situation equally affects the residents of all target municipalities (from 62% to 79%). However, it is noteworthy that this issue is mostly indicated by women living in Zugdidi (79%), Kutaisi (71.4%) and Tsalenjikha (75.8%) municipalities, and the least - by residents of Khoni municipality (54%). **The problem of alcohol and drug addiction is relevant for 48.1% of respondents.** Although the problem is considered acute by the population of all target municipalities (36%-63%), **the highest rate is recorded in Zugdidi Municipality - 63.4%.** It was found out that this problem is more relevant for IDPs (57%) compared to the local population (46%). According to the women in the qualitative study, alcohol and drug addiction are primarily caused by living in an unstable environment, difficult socio-economic situation, limited access to livelihoods and basic services. increases tensions, stress, aggression, and overconsuming alcohol and drugs among men and young people, exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic. Notably, 23.3% of respondents are concerned about **the risk of conflict escalation** in Georgia, which is practically equally distributed among IDPs (22%) and locals (23%). Faulty traffic was also named as a threat to public security (22.6%). During the qualitative survey, respondents emphasized the need to install “smart cameras” and “lying cops” - speed-limiting barriers in densely populated areas, especially near schools, kindergartens and places concentrated with children. According to them, high-speed vehicles take many people’s lives every year and severely affect the population’s psychological state (**Senaki and Tsalenjikha municipalities**). **Mothers of young children have drew particular attention to the absence of pedestrian paths or their transformation them into a parking zone, which significantly increases the risks and poses danger to them and their children when moving on the street.**

The high level of discrimination and intolerance in the country was indicated by 20% of the respondents. **Low level of participation of persons** of different political views in public life was pointed out by 13.6% which according to the respondents poses an additional risk for tension and destabilization in the country.

2.3. EDUCATION SECURITY

Particular attention was paid to issues of education. The level of population access to secondary and higher education and its quality was assessed.

- ❖ **Access to secondary education** - It is noteworthy that more than half of the respondents (51.3%) believe that their children, grandchildren or acquaintances only partially have access to quality secondary education. The level of access to education is positively assessed by 34.6% of respondents and entirely negatively by 9.1%. According to most respondents, access to quality secondary education is hampered by the low quality of education - 40%; low level of teachers` professionalism - 26%; inadequate technical equipment in schools and lack of specialized subject classrooms - 29%. According to more

than a third of respondents (34.6%), the poor quality of the Internet during the pandemic significantly hindered the educational process. It was highlighted by the residents of Zugdidi (54%) and Senaki (45%) among the six target municipalities. This problem was the least relevant for the population of Kutaisi (18.4%). 21% of respondents, **most of whom are Tsalenjikha Municipality residents (36.3%)**, complain about the faulty infrastructure of schools, in particular the depreciated school buildings, non-functional sewerage system and limited water supply.

- ❖ **Learning process quality management problem during the Covid-19 pandemic** - During the qualitative study, part of the respondents raised the problems teachers and students face during distance learning, which affected the quality of education. One of the significant challenges schools faced after the pandemic was students and teachers' access to the Internet and relevant technical devices (**computer, mobile phone, tablet**). Unfortunately, due to the problematic social background in the country, a large number of students and teachers did not have access to the technical equipment. This problem was particularly acute for large, vulnerable families and rural schoolchildren. One of the main obstacles to the distance learning process was **the lack of technical and digital skills in teachers and students**. Teachers found it difficult to adapt to the new platforms and manage them technically. The students also did not have enough knowledge and skills to run this or that program independently. Thus, it significantly reduced the quality of the learning process.
- ❖ **Access to higher education** - Most respondents state that their family members and acquaintances have access to quality higher education (48.7%). However, 45.2% believe that they have only partial access. Furthermore, 6.1% believe that they do not have access to higher education, which was most emphasized by the population of **Tsalenjikha Municipality** (23.8%). Among the reasons that hinder access to higher education were: high tuition fees - 42%; free housing inaccessible to students from the region -27.2%; lack of vocational guidance courses in schools, which prevents entrants from choosing the right profession - 21.5%. The low quality of education was highlighted by 8.6% of the respondents. Their largest share comes from Kutaisi municipality (49.4%).
- ❖ **Lack of programs supporting youth extracurricular development** - The young people and their parents participating in the qualitative study stressed the need to introduce policies tailored to the needs of different groups of young people. Respondents focused on the need to introduce municipal programs focused on youth development and leadership. Residents of Senaki, Tsalenjikha and Zugdidi municipalities particularly noted the **lack of youth spaces** where they will have the opportunity to gather, spend their free time productively or receive non-formal education. Respondents also focused on the deplorable infrastructure of libraries in the villages and the importance of their development. In addition, the need to set up open-air sports arenas for children and youth, cultural centres or multi-profile art clubs in the villages, especially in IDP settlements and villages along the ABL, was emphasized.

2.4. HEALTH SECURITY

- ❖ Health security is one of the most critical dimensions of human security since good health is “the key tool for creating human life, livelihood and a dignified life” (UNHCR, 2013). Creating conditions free of health risks for the population and access to quality medical services is a fundamental human right and plays a crucial role in social cohesion and stability. In the present study, health security was assessed based on the population’s access to medical services.
- ❖ **Healthcare problems** - The vast majority of respondents in the target municipalities (79%) named high prices for medicines as the most pressing health care problem. According to the respondents, it significantly hinders the ability to fight diseases and poses a threat to the health and lives of the population. 40.3% of respondents also consider poor quality medical services as a treat for health. 34.1% of surveyed women are concerned about the lack of free medical examinations in rural areas. Lack of awareness of the population about health care programs is considered a problem by 25.7%. The scarcity of information is mainly mentioned by the residents of Zugdidi Municipality (39%). 16.3% of women consider the shortage of medical staff (23.8%) and the lack of primary care facilities a threat to health. **Focus groups respondents living in Zugdidi, Senaki and Tsalenjikha municipalities paid particular attention to the poor condition of ambulatories.** The infrastructural equipment, medicines and medical staff on the ground were highlighted. **In Zugdidi municipality,** the respondents pointed out the need to rehabilitate the ambulatories in the village of Koki and the need to open a renovated but dysfunctional and inactive abandoned ambulatory in the village of Khurcha. **Poor conditions of ambulatories were also highlighted in Senaki Municipality. The respondents also emphasized the absence of outpatient clinics in the villages of Tsalenjikha Municipality.** According to the respondents, while many older people live in the village, for whom on-site medical care is crucial, it is still not possible to provide the villages with ambulatories, equip and provide them with **proper equipment, and staff** and put them into operation. A significant challenge is the lack of pharmacies in the villages and limited access to medicines.

The lack of free medical screening programs for girls and women is a topical issue for 19.3% of respondents. 12.8% of women consider the population’s low awareness about reproductive health as a problem. 7.4% of respondents are concerned about the lack of targeted health care programs for IDPs and women affected by the conflict. Besides, the focus groups highlighted the need to provide access to free health care packages and medicines for individual vulnerable groups, including the elderly.

- ❖ **Treatment methods in case of health deteriorating** - Most respondents noted that the universal healthcare program mainly covers (38.7%) treatment costs. The number of people who start self-treatment in case of health deteriorating (35.3%) is alarming. According to in-depth analysis, it is noteworthy that the majority who start self-medication are women between the ages of 18 and 30 (40%) and 31-45 (34%). 9.6% of respondents prefer non-traditional ways of treatment and turn to folk healers. It might be reasoned by the relatively low cost of this treatment method and a high level of trust from the population. 11.9% of the respondents use private insurance. However none of the mothers and mothers with many children were found among the respondents who used the private insurance. It

indicates the generally limited access to employment for this category of women and/or the lack of competitiveness of such types of employment, which provides additional social packages to employees.

2.5. PHYSICAL SECURITY

- ❖ Experience shows that political or pandemic-induced tensions in the country and complex socio-economic background directly impact the situation of women in the family, which is often manifested in physical, psychological, and other types of violence against them. In the present study, physical security was assessed by studying the topicality and scale of domestic violence against women in the target regions, identifying the most common forms of violence, the public awareness about existing protection services and access to these services.
- ❖ **The topicality of the problem of domestic violence - Although** most respondents acknowledge the severity and urgency of the problem, 40.7% of them claim that domestic violence against women is relevant in their community; at the same time, 10.2% say that this topic is highly relevant. The data show that it remains a taboo and undisclosed problem. It is evidenced by the respondents' refraining to express their position on the issue. 22% of surveyed women said they had "no answer" to this question, while 27% said that the issue of violence against women was not relevant in their community. The urgency of gender-based violence was most emphasized by women aged 18-30 (38%) and 31-45 (31.7%), and least by women over 65 (5.5%). Which clearly shows the deeply-rooted stereotypes of the older generation. According to them, domestic violence against women is a personal matter of the family and is not publicly discussed. It is noteworthy that the urgency of the problem was most acknowledged by the women surveyed in **Zugdidi** (58.4%), **Senaki** (43.1%), Khoni (40.5%) and Kutaisi (37.3%) municipalities, and the least - in Tsalenjikha (28.6%) and residents of Tskaltubo (35%). It's provided readiness of women to break down existing stereotypes about domestic violence and willingness to discuss the topic openly.
- ❖ **Common forms of domestic violence -** The majority of respondents - 58.5% - consider psychological violence the most common form of violence, 21.9% report economic violence, and 18% physical. As for sexual violence, only 1.7% of respondents indicated it. **It shows that it is taboo to talk** about this form of violence. It is related to the lack of recognition of the problem and the population's low awareness of sexual violence. Qualitative research data show that despite the gradual disintegration of women's subordinate role in the family, customs still prevail in society, especially in villages and places remote from large cities. They establish different behaviors for men and women. According to them, a man is a decision-maker on all family matters, and a woman is obedient, patient and submissive. Besides, qualitative studies have shown that women refrain from exposing domestic violence and avoid possible societal pressures. It is primarily related to fears about living independently with children dependent children. The women pointed out that a short staying period in shelters and one-off state assistance is insufficient to lead an independent life. Consequently, it makes them endure violence.

❖ **Population`s awareness and access to protection mechanisms and support services**

Nearly one third (30%) of surveyed women have information about existing victim support services. It means that they are aware of the services provided, their location and contact information. At the same time 36% indicated that they are familiar with only some of them. The share of women who have no information about victim support services and legal mechanisms for protection from violence is high - 33.8%. The number of surveyed women uninformed about services in the target municipalities ranges from 23.5% to 48.6%. The highest rate was observed in Khoni (48.6%) and Tskaltubo (38%), and the lowest in Senaki (23.5%) and Tsalenjikha (29.4%) municipalities.

It should be noted that the population has more information about the hotline (52.1%) than other services. **However, 20%** of respondents are also **aware of NGOs working on violence and their services** which it may be explained by the active work of CSOs with the population. Only 7.8% of women have information about **shelters** run by the state and NGOs, and 8.1% about **crisis centres**. The population is **least familiar** with the **municipal** victim support services and programs (3.9%) and the **State Legal Aid Services** (4.4%).

44.3% of the respondents named social networks as **the most common source of information**. The majority of them are women aged 18-30 (53.7%) and 31-45 (30%). **Despite the fact that** large number of respondents highlight the openness and accessibility of information on social networks and the websites of relevant government agencies or civil society organizations. The qualitative survey, provide the limited access of population on electronic and digital resources especially in villages and places remote from large towns. This indicates the need to disseminate printing information and conduct face-to-face meetings with women. **35.7% of respondents get information from radio and television, while 12.8% are informed during meetings with NGOs**. 3.2% get information from announcements and newsletters in public places, and only 2.2% said that they received information about victim support services from government agencies. It is noteworthy that quantitative data have shown that **access to victim support services is a problem** regardless of whether the population has information about support services. The majority of respondents (57.6%) believe that the existing services are insufficiently available to the population, while 9.3% think they are not available. Only 32.9% underlined that they have access to services. It is interesting to observe distribution of the answers the answers according to the respondents` location. For instance, the data breakdown has revealed that the problem of access to services is much more acute for women in the municipalities of Khoni (70%), Zugdidi (62%) and Tsalenjikha (60%), in particular in the ABL villages.

❖ **Women`s attitudes towards municipal programs directed to support victims of domestic violence**

Over the years, progress has been made in introducing and strengthening municipal services and relevant institutional mechanisms to respond to and prevent violence against women in self-governing units. For example, a housing rental program implemented in all target municipalities, or promoting vocational training and co-financing programs for victims of violence in Zugdidi Municipality; also, the first local interagency commission established in the City Hall of Zugdidi aimed to improve coordination and exchange of information between representatives of agencies responsible for violence issues and civil society organizations. However, it is still evident that a

large part of the population does not have relevant information about the available services or believes that these programs are not sufficient to meet the needs of victims.

According to the quantitative survey, most respondents (32.6%) **are only partially aware** of the victim supporting municipal programs. Furthermore, 30% are not informed about these services. It indicates the need to conduct information campaigns to better and more widely inform the population. In addition, 17.2% of surveyed women believe that the municipal services are insufficient and it is necessary to diversify programs and tailor them to the specific needs of victims of violence (14.3%). Only 10% indicated that **municipal programs supporting victims of domestic violence are sufficient**.

During the qualitative study, respondents identified **the need to diversify existing victim support programs and introduce long-term victim assistance services**. According to the respondents, **one-off assistance does not allow the victim to start an independent life in the long run**. According to some respondents, on the one hand, it is crucial to increase the stay in the shelter so that she can adapt to the new environment and prepare appropriately for independent life. On the other hand, it is vital to offer victims relevant vocational training programs, promote their employment by contacting a potential employer or provide grants to start their own business.

2.6. FOOD SECURITY

In the present research, food security has been assessed by access of population to safe and nutritious food necessary to maintain an active and healthy life.

❖ Food security risk factors

The study has shown that food security is one of the most critical and topical problems for women and families. According to the surveyed women, food security is threatened by many factors and problems in the country - including the socio-economic problems faced by the population, climate change and environmental problems. The loss of jobs by a large part of the population during the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions imposed on transport by the state particularly affected food security. It led to a scarcity of financial resources, an increase in the population's vulnerability, and a significant limitation of their mobility. The above factors have a profound impact on the population's access to food. In the quantitative study, most respondents (89%) believe that **high prices for products** threaten food security. A large part of respondents (73.8%) state that they **do not have access to quality food products**. **The lack of grocery shops in the respondents' settlements** is highlighted by 14% of surveyed women. It primarily affects rural women, including those living near the ABL, who have to move to cities for food and household products. The pandemic-induced restrictions on public transport significantly increase the price of products for them. It puts them in a challenging economic situation, as most of them have to travel by taxi.

2.7. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

Environmental security refers to the permissible level of natural factors' negative impact on the environment and humans. In the present study, we studied the respondents' attitudes to their living environment's ecological and sanitary condition and the priority issues that threaten their environmental security.

- ❖ **Assessment of ecological and sanitary condition and ecological threats facing the population** - 62% of the respondents assess the sanitary and ecological conditions in their living environment as normal. However, it should be noted that some women assess the current situation as **bad** (21.2%) or **very bad** (9.2%), and only 7.1% think that the situation is **good**. It is noteworthy that the situation mainly was assessed as “**very bad**” **was mainly assessed** by the residents of Kutaisi and Tsalenjikha municipalities.
- ❖ **For most of the surveyed women (33.7%), the most acute environmental problem is air pollution**, which is mostly highlighted by women living in Kutaisi and Tsalenjikha municipalities. 27.7% of the respondents complain about the non-functionality or absence of drainage pipes, to which the respondents living in Senaki municipality paid special attention during the qualitative study. A faulty sewer system is a serious problem for 23.7% of respondents. 14.8% of respondents focused on the problem of access to clean water, which is a particular priority for the residents of Tsalenjikha and Tskaltubo municipalities. The qualitative study has also revealed the problem of stray dogs in the settlements, which threatens the population` life and health. The need to increase the number of garbage bins and garbage trucks and increase the intensity of landfill emptying was emphasized. Some respondents in the study mentioned the negative impact of environmental and sanitary disorders on women`s reproductive and population`s health.

2.8. POPULATION`S PARTICIPATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS

- ❖ **Citizens` participation and inclusiveness at the local level** - The study results revealed a rather low level of citizens` inclusiveness and communication with local self-government representatives. The majority of respondents (65.3%) have never applied to a local government or other government agency to resolve personal, work related official or public issues. 20.1% say that they do not believe that the government will respond adequate and solve the problem if the issue is raised. 34.7% of the respondents indicate that they applied to the local self-government and specific government agencies to solve the problem.

For most respondents (42%), the most common form of communication with the local government is participation in the general settlement meetings. The qualitative survey respondents say they have the opportunity to inform individual government officials about problems in a particular community or family and get interesting information they need about municipal programs.

Notably, 30% of respondents use the electronic form of communication, which has become especially relevant in terms during the Covid-19 pandemic. Unfavourable is the number of respondents who attend the City Council sessions - 7.9%, listen to the mayor`s reports - 8.4%, participate in the petition - 5.5%, participate in the meetings of Civil Advisory Council, Gender Council or the Council of Persons with Disabilities or involved in the process of Participatory -2.8%. According to the qualitative data, to increase citizens` inclusiveness, it is important to provide population with information advanced, to mobilize them and promote the existing form of citizens` participation to increase population inclusiveness.

38.4% of women in the quantitative study believe that **local practice does not involve studying**

the specific needs of vulnerable populations and assessing their satisfaction with the municipal programs. 29.3% of respondents believe that local **government does not adequately address the specific needs of vulnerable groups.** In contrast, 32.2% of surveyed women think oppositely. They stressed that the needs of vulnerable groups are adequately addressed in local programs.

❖ **Impact of increased threats to human safety on the population`s condition**

- The low level of human security in society increases the degree of the population`s vulnerability, which it hinders their development and opportunity for a dignified life and negatively effects on populations life standards and well-being. According to 73.1% of surveyed women, a high level of insecurity **increases stress and tension in society** and instils hopelessness and fear of the future (45.6%), contributing to deteriorating health (44.4%). According to 41.4% of women, the low level of security in the country is related to the growing trend of migration of women and the increased number of divided families. 39.2% of respondents highlight the increase in psychological problems, while 18.8% believe that many problems of human life contribute to increased family conflicts and cases of violence against women. 13.72% think that there are threats of depolarization and conflicts in society. At the same time, 12.41% think that the sense of insecurity is growing in the population.

PART III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study has revealed the population`s high level of vulnerability to different categories of human security in the target municipalities. Women and their families face many acute economic and social problems. Unemployment rate is high, access to quality health care and education is unsatisfactory. Most of the respondents are worried about infrastructural problems in their settlements, including faulty sewerage system, uninterrupted access to clean water, malfunction of internal municipal transport and many other problems. Low level of the population about state or local programs and the need to strengthen citizens` participation at the local level are highlighted.

The following actions are recommended to respond to the challenges identified in the study:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic strengthening

- Provide capacity building trainings on entrepreneurship and business project management skills and business development grant programs for ensure women`s economic empowerment and access to employment;
- When developing women`s economic empowerment programs, pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable groups and the barriers that hinder women`s participation in economic projects;
- Create a favorable business environment to support women`s (e.g., exemption from taxes for a year after starting a business, maintaining social status, revoking the requirement for co-financing, etc.);

- Provide the appropriate consulting service centres in the municipality, which will inform the population about state or local economic programs, explain the conditions of the competition in detail and provide practical assistance in filling out applications;
- Create and develop existing childcare services to stimulate women's employment (develop daycare and evening childcare centres, open extended and summer groups in kindergartens and schools); Encourage and support social entrepreneurship, cooperatives and business incubators and enhance the municipality's role in this regard.

Access to education

- Compulsory training of teachers, the school administration whole staff, by offering systematic professional development training;
- Assess the infrastructural condition of rural school buildings and provision of an appropriate rehabilitation of depreciated buildings;
- Assess and improve water supply, sanitation and hygiene conditions;
- Equip district centres and rural schools with appropriate technologies and computer equipment and provide with relevant field classes; Organize digital and computer skills training courses for teachers in the rural schools to enable them to realize their technological equipment and computer resources fully;
- Provide appropriate internet packages for teachers and students in areas with low internet coverage and actively work on providing these communities with high-speed internet;
- Launch computer equipment or smart phone distribution programs for students with low socioeconomic status;
- Create a preferential system of higher education tuition fees for students living in villages and districts;
- Create student cities and offer free or semi-paid accommodation to students based on their success and achievement in their studies, considering the social status of the family; It is also desirable to properly assess existing dormitory conditions and study how safe and adapted the existing infrastructure is for women and girls;
- Arrange open sports arenas for children and young people in district centres and villages, opening multidisciplinary sport and art clubs, and solve the infrastructural problems of libraries;
- Create youth spaces in villages, where young people will have the opportunity to gather and spend their free time productively and/or receive non-formal education;
- Stimulate youth inclusiveness in local self-government and diversify/introduce youth development programs.

Access to healthcare

- Assess the infrastructure, technical and human resource needs of village ambulatories, especially of those along the ABL, and take appropriate measures to ensure their smooth operation;
- Mobilize and provide transportation of mobile medical groups quarterly and provide ambulatory/diagnostic examinations and medical consultations to vulnerable people living in rural areas, especially the elderly, persons with disabilities, single mothers and large families;
- Pursue reproductive health policies and provide unhindered access to information and contraceptive services for women and their families about family planning services and contraceptive methods, including the training of physicians, especially those working in rural ambulatories, and their inclusiveness in reproductive health awareness-raising campaigns.

Prevention and effective response to violence against women

- Develop long-term support programs for women victims of violence, including their professional development/training and employment component;
- Form interdisciplinary commission at the local level, composed of professional and independent experts (e.g. NGOs working on the issues of violence against women, psychologists, lawyers), which will be responsible for discussing and making decisions on funding of women victims of violence through the municipal programs.
- Raise the gender awareness of local officials, increase their sensitivity to gender equality, and insure gender mainstreaming in local policies and programs;
- Ensure active consultation with relevant NGOs and women victims of violence in developing programs for victims.

Public and environmental security

- Promote sanitation in the city (maintenance of sewerage systems and drainage pipes, increase the number of garbage bins and garbage trucks and increase the intensity of garbage disposal, placement of public toilets, transfer of homeless animals to shelters);
- Install “smart cameras” and “lying policemen” on the central highway and near schools to enhance human security;
- Take care of the improvement of ecological conditions (increase of recreational zones, planting of evergreen trees, improvement of squares and parks);
- Increase state control and monitoring of the environment and tighten and enforce penalties for negative environmental impact on individuals or enterprises;
- Regularly inform the population about the impact of ecological conditions and environmental factors on human health - especially women and children;

- At the national and local levels, with the active inclusiveness of international organizations and local civil society organizations, introduce educational programs on environmental protection and ecology, conduct information campaigns - pay particular attention to working with the younger generation.

Creating an adapted environment for the inclusiveness of people with disabilities

- Develop appropriate programs to ensure the social integration of persons with disabilities, participation in the decision-making process and their socio-economic development;
- It is vital to help children with disabilities, especially those with disabilities living in rural areas, to provide economic activities for their family members at home; provide an adapted environment for people with disabilities.

Increasing the effectiveness of municipal programs and citizens` participation

- Integrate the needs and priorities of vulnerable groups, including women, into local policies and projects;
- Introduce gender budget and implement targeted programs aimed at improving the women`s rights;
- Pay special attention to consultation and collaboration with vulnerable groups at all stages of planning, implementation and assessment of priority projects for the local community to ensure women`s participation and inclusiveness;
- Maximize informing the population about the programs through local television, radio, municipal websites and social networks, and provide those having limited access to electronic platforms with relevant information in printed form (in shops, pharmacies, markets, administrative buildings, etc.);
- Introduce service efficiency assessment standards in the municipality to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of existing services on the population. Consequently, it is possible to create electronic assessment forms to obtain information about the population`s satisfaction with service quickly and at minimal cost;
- Local self-government representatives should carry out active negotiations with local internet providers to ensure internetization or Internet signal boosting;
- For the socially vulnerable population and those living in the internet coverage area, but being unable to pay the internet fee due to lack of money, subsidize the internet fee by the state;
- Create special service centres and/or mobile technical groups in the self-governments, which will serve the population and provide practical assistance/instruction on electronic systems; facilitate the development of appropriate skills in the population to receive information on services on the Internet and use them.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS) KUTAISI MUNICIPALITY

LARISA SHENGELIA

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

STUDY AIM AND METHODOLOGY

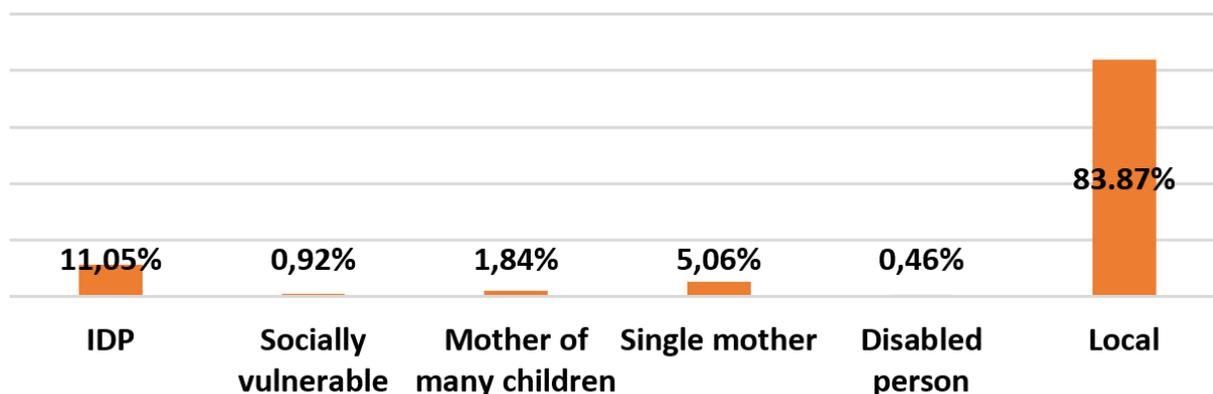
Women aged 18 to 65 living in Kutaisi Municipality participated in the citizens' needs survey, including IDPs, locals, socially vulnerable people, mothers with many children and single mothers, people with disabilities, young people, pensioners, teachers of schools and preschools, local experts in self-government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

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

BLOCK I: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

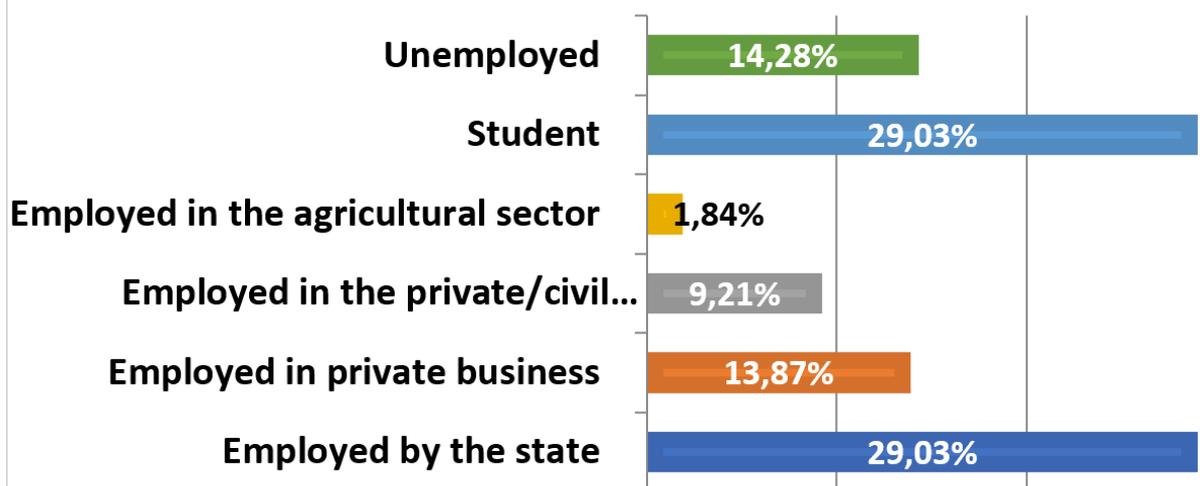
According to the socio-demographic status, among the respondents of the quantitative survey were 182 local women (83.87%) and citizens with special status: IDPs - 24 (11.05%), socially vulnerable 2 - (0.92%), mother of many children - 4 (1.84%), single mother - 11 (5, 06%), a person with disabilities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

Socio-demographic status



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

ACTIVITY TYPE

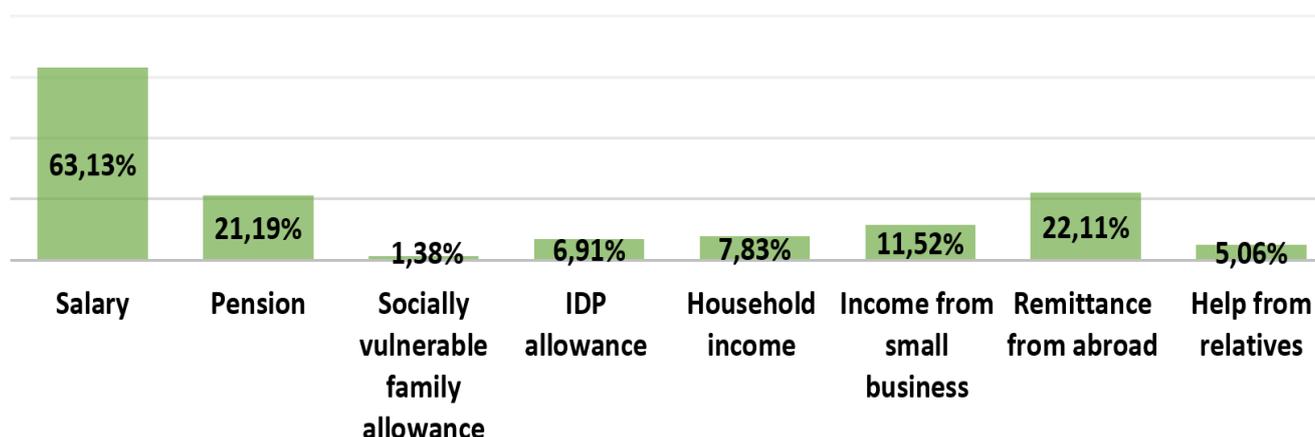


BLOCK II: ECONOMIC SECURITY

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

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

THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME

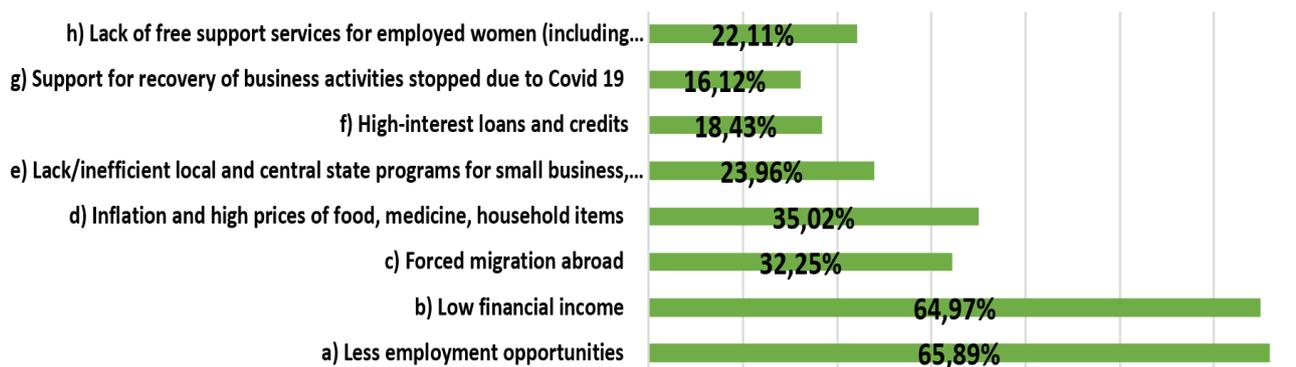


In the economic security block, it was essential to identify barriers to women's economic empowerment.

143 (65.89%) respondents pointed out fewer employment opportunities during the analysis. Low financial income was reported by 141 (64.97%) and forced migration abroad by 70(32.25%). Inflation, high prices of food, medicine, household items are mentioned by 76 (35.02%). Lack/ inefficient local and central state programs hinder small business, entrepreneurship development according to 52 (23.96%). 40(18.43%) respondents report high-interest loans and credits. Support for recovery of business activities stopped due to Covid 19 is pointed out by 35(16,12%).

The quantitative survey has shown that the lack of free support services (including extended child care services in schools and kindergartens, for single mothers, for large families) is an obstacle to the economic empowerment of employed women. It prevents women from being actively involved in economic activities - 48 (22.11%). This number includes 2 IDPs (4.16%), 43 locals (89.58%), 1 mother with many children (2.08%) and 2 single mothers (4.16%). (Diagram 4)

Obstacles hindering the women's economic empowerment

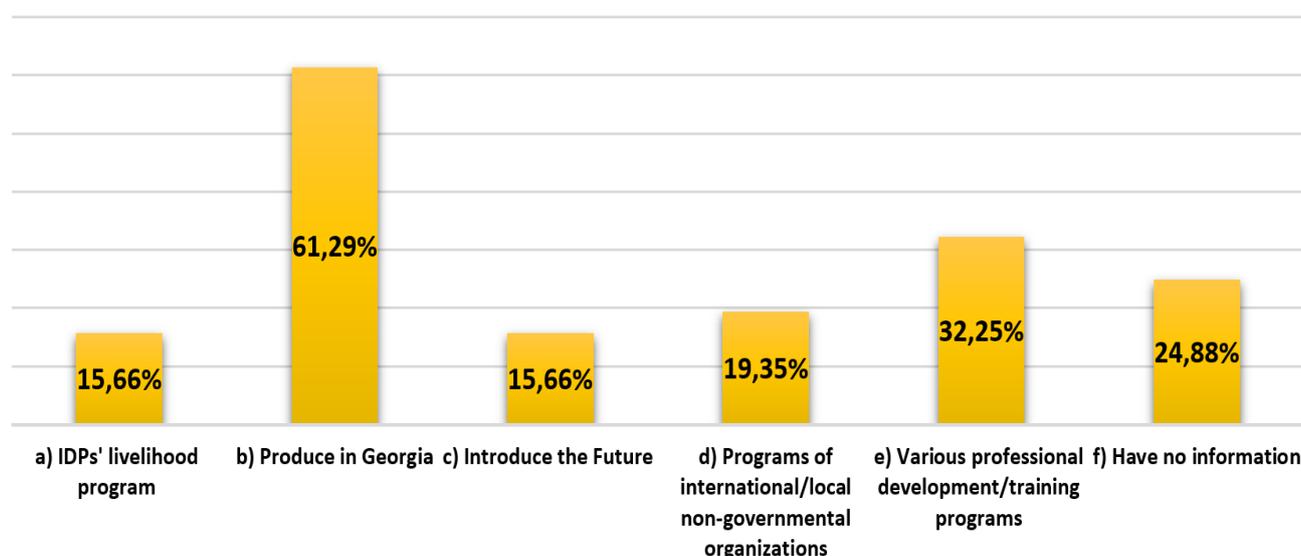


The focus groups confirmed all these reasons, but the following opinion was also expressed:

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

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

Socio-economic empowerment state programs



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

Focus groups emphasized this question as well.

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

The focus was also made on supporting mothers:

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

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

We can see that 139(64.05%) respondents receive information from online media and social networks through the survey. Television, radio is a source of information for 109 (50.23) respondents. Neighbors/acquaintances were reported by 68 (31.33%). Municipality/central government/ministry website/Facebook page is a source for 33(15.20%) surveyed. NGOs are reported by 25(11.52%) and information leaflets/information boards in the community by 18(8.29%) ones. The fewest answers were the representative of the mayor in the community - 7(3.22) and local MP - 6(2.76%).

Qualitative research has also revealed the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

I.Sh., male, City Council representative: Improvement of infrastructure, social and health

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

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

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

Qualitative study has confirmed problem of poor communication:

N.Ch., a woman of 45,

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

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

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

M.K., a woman of 47: The local government must be interested in making its programs public. Not everyone can get e-versions on local programs. Therefore they should disseminate this information in public.

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

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

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

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

BLOCK III: FOOD SECURITY

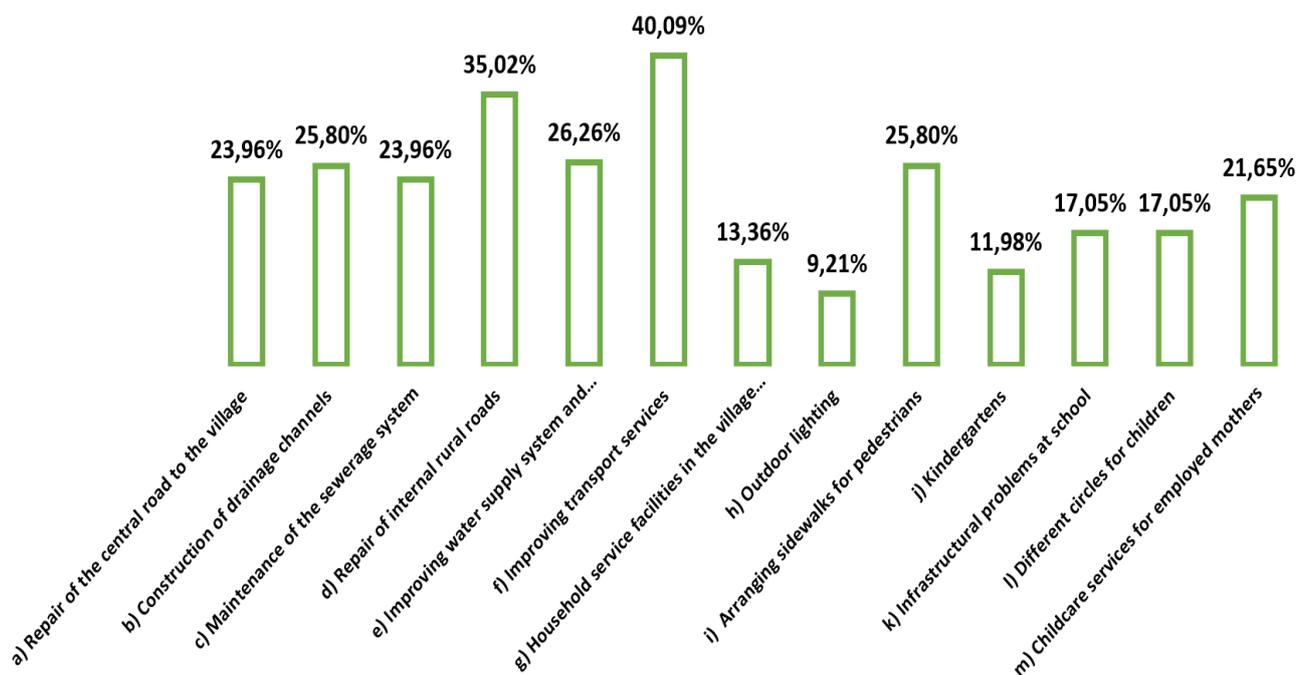
Food security is one of the most important components of human security. The survey has also shown that women are very concerned about this issue. The majority of respondents -183 (84.33%) (including 22 (12.02%) IDPs and 151 (82.51%) locals) indicate high prices for products. Absence of quality products bothers 169(77,88%) respondents, including 17(10, 05%) IDPs and 143(84, 61%) locals. About the absence of a grocery store nearby complain 11 (5.06%) respondents, including 1 (9,09%) IDP and 10(90.90%) locals.

Significant answers were given to this question in the focus groups.

BLOCK IV: PUBLIC SECURITY

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

Which issue is more priority and topical for you and the women in your community?



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

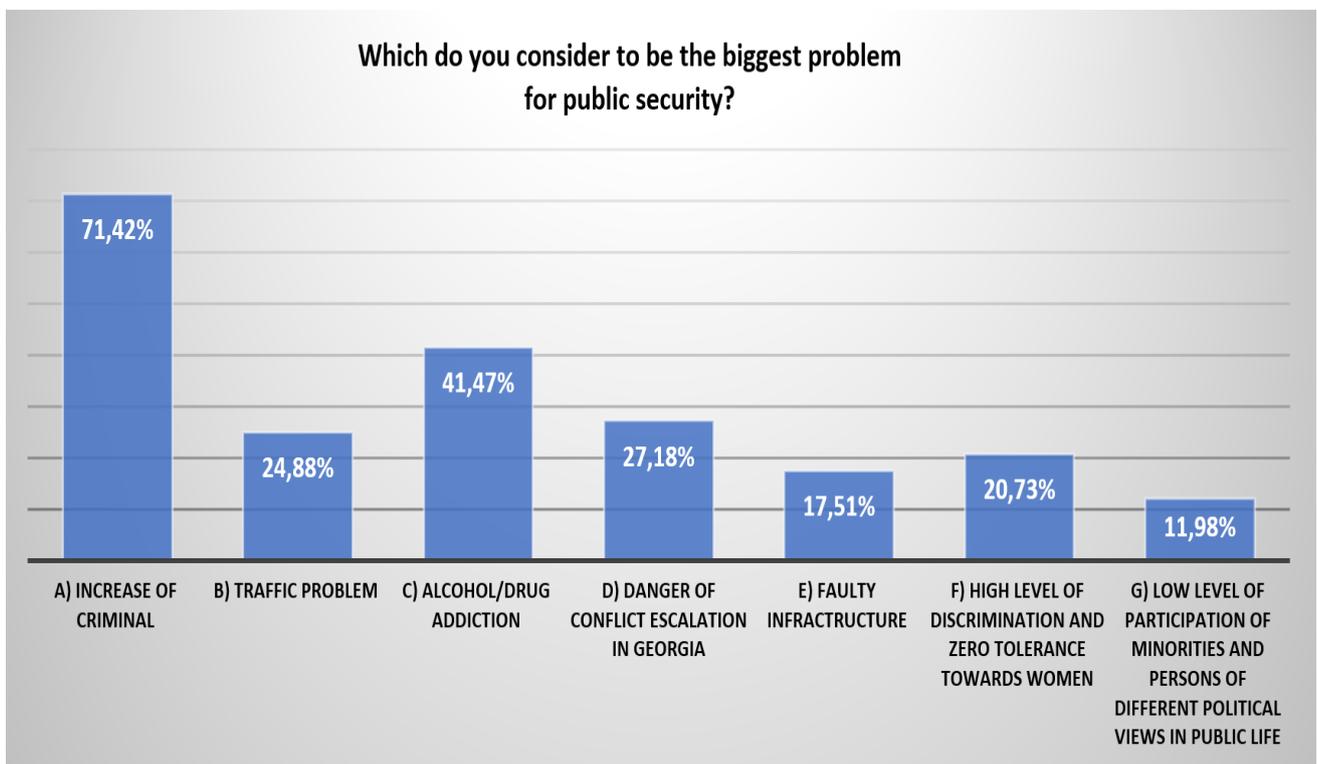
I.Sh., man, City Council representative: Current problems are: unemployment, lack of qualified staff in the region, internal and external migration, infrastructure, social and health programs, tourism development.

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

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

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

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



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

We could identify its reasons through the quantitative survey: 117 (53,91%) respondents point out the low quality of education. 74 (3410%) respondents emphasize an insufficient number of professional teachers. Faulty school infrastructure (depreciated, old building, faulty sewerage system, lack of water, etc.) is mentioned by - 29(13.36%). School is far from home for 18(8.29%) respondents. Lack of appropriate technical equipment in the school (computers, internet, specialized subject classrooms (physics, chemistry, biology, etc.) is reported by - 49(22.58%), whereas poor Internet connection (for distance learning process) is a problem for – 40(18.43%) interviewees.

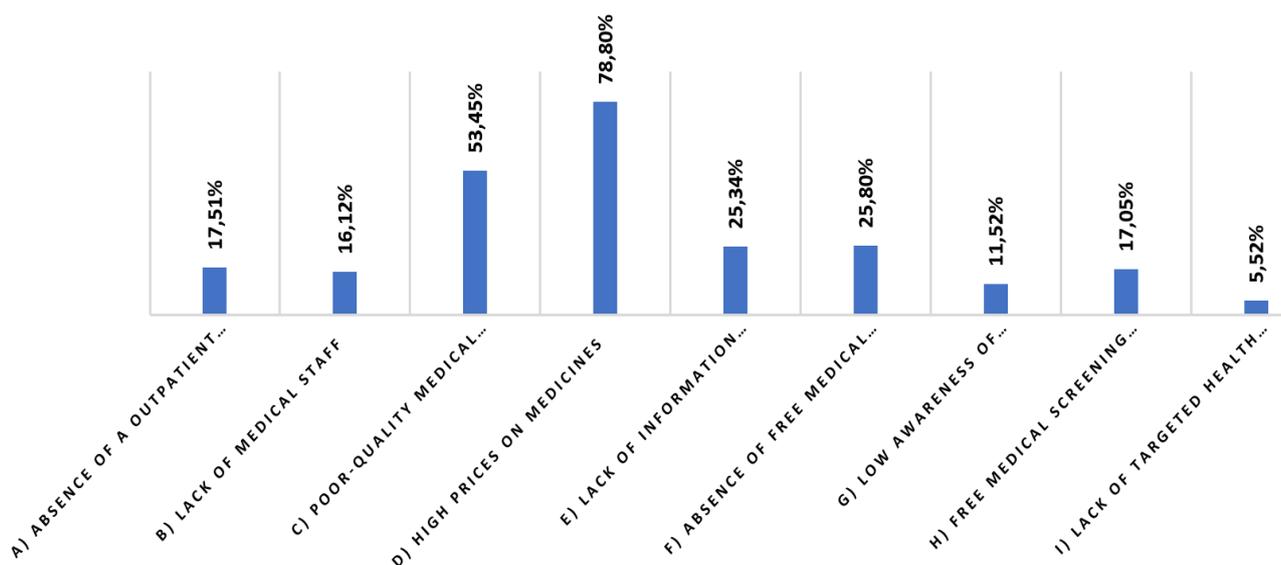
E.F., a woman of 60: It is essential to support gifted children with unique skills in the arts. They have parents, but it is not easy for them. They can do nothing to help.

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

BLOCK V: HEALTH SECURITY

During the quantitative research, priority and topical problems were identified. 38 (17.51%) of the surveyed women consider the absence of an outpatient medical center in their community, including 3 (7.89%) IDPs and 34 (89.47 %) locals. The lack of medical staff is indicated by 35 (16.12%) respondents, including 7 (20%) IDPs and 26 (74.28%) locals. 116 (53.45%), including 12 (10.34%) IDPs and 97 (83.62%) locals, speak of poor-quality medical services. High prices on medicines are the most pressing problem for 171 (78.80%), including 21 (12.28%) IDPs and 140 (81.87%) locals. Lack of information about healthcare programs is relevant for 55(25,34%), including 6(10.90%) IDPs and 47(85.45%) locals. The absence of free medical examinations on the ground in villages is a priority issue for 53(25.80%), including 4(7.54%) IDPs and 47(88.67%) locals. Low awareness of reproductive health is pointed out by 25(11.52%) respondents (all locals). Free medical screening programs for girls and women is problematic for 37(17.05%) women, including 3(8.10%) IDPs and 31(83.78%). The lack of targeted health care programs for IDP and conflict-affected women is relevant for 12(5.52%), including 4(33,33%) IDPs and 8(66.66%) locals. **(Diagram 8)**

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING HEALTH PROBLEMS IS MORE RELEVANT AND A PRIORITY IN YOUR FAMILY OR COMMUNITY?



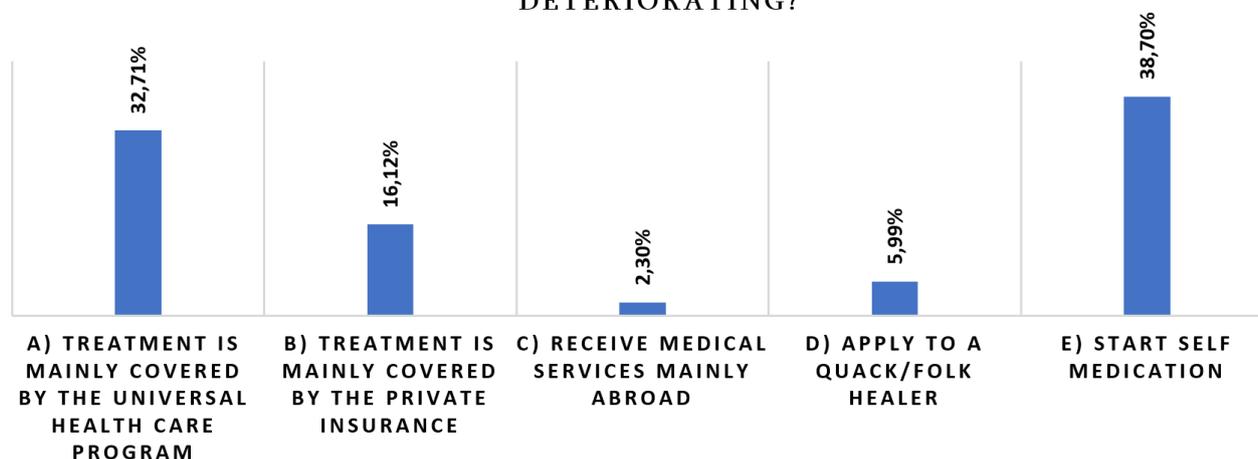
The qualitative research data also confirms the results obtained by quantitative research.

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

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

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

HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM WHEN YOUR HEALTH IS DETERIORATING?

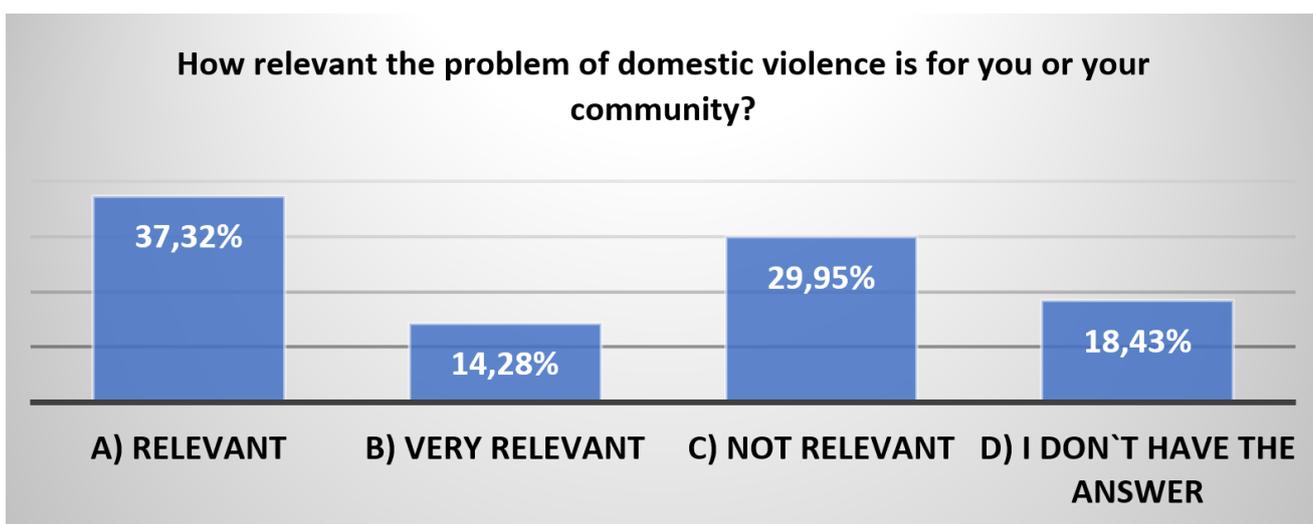


Talking about health problems was also relevant for the qualitative research participant.

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

BLOCKVI: PERSONAL SECURITY

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



Attitudes towards the problem were expressed during the focus groups:

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

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

L. Kh., a woman of ၁၆, employed: I have been cooperating with Fund “Sukhumi” for 15 years. This topic used to be taboo. There is more awareness today. Many services are involved in solving the problem. It is important to save even one victim.

One participant even shared her story with the audience.

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

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

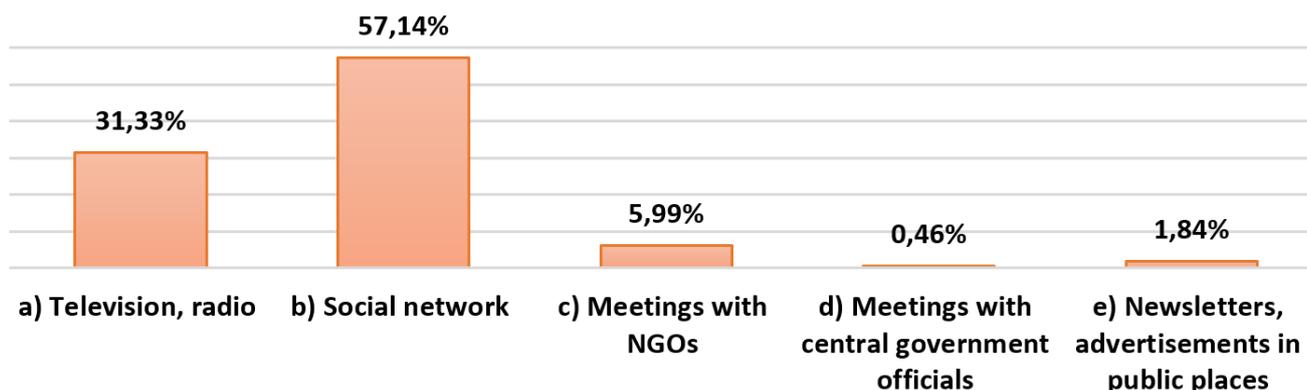
Survey analysis shows whether the respondents have information about support services for victims of violence. 68 (31.33%) women are informed and 70(32.26%) (6 (7.59%) IDPs and 69 (87.73%) locals) ones do not have information. 70(32.26%) respondents have some information.

A list follows this question:

21(9.67%) are aware of state and NGO crisis centres, whereas 10(4.60%) have information about state and NGO shelters. 13(5.99%) respondents are informed about State Legal Services. 101(46.54%) interviewees are aware of a hotline, 24(11.05%) have information about NGOs and their services. 1(0.46%) has information about municipal services, and 18(8.29%) are informed about NGOs working on violence issues.

The survey participants pointed out the source of information they get about support services for victims of violence or potential victims. The data are as follows: television, radio - 31,33(၁၈), social network - 124(57.142%), meetings with NGOs - 13(5.99%), meetings with central government officials - 1(0.46%), newsletters, announcements in public places - 4(1.84%). **(Diagram 11)**

From what source did you get information about support services for victims of violence or potential victims?



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

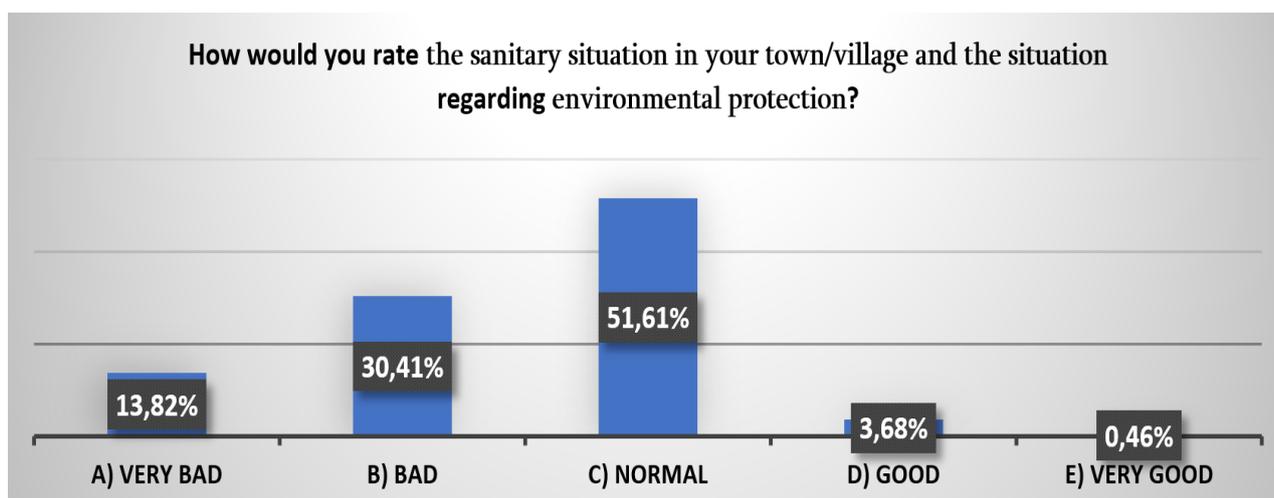
Quantitative study 17 (7.83%) participants think that **the programs implemented by the local self-government to address violence against women** are sufficient. However, they are insufficient for 41(18.89%) ones and partially sufficient for 64(29.49%). However, 67(30.87%) respondents do not have any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

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

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

BLOCK VII: ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

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



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

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

The focus group participants talked about specific environmental problems:

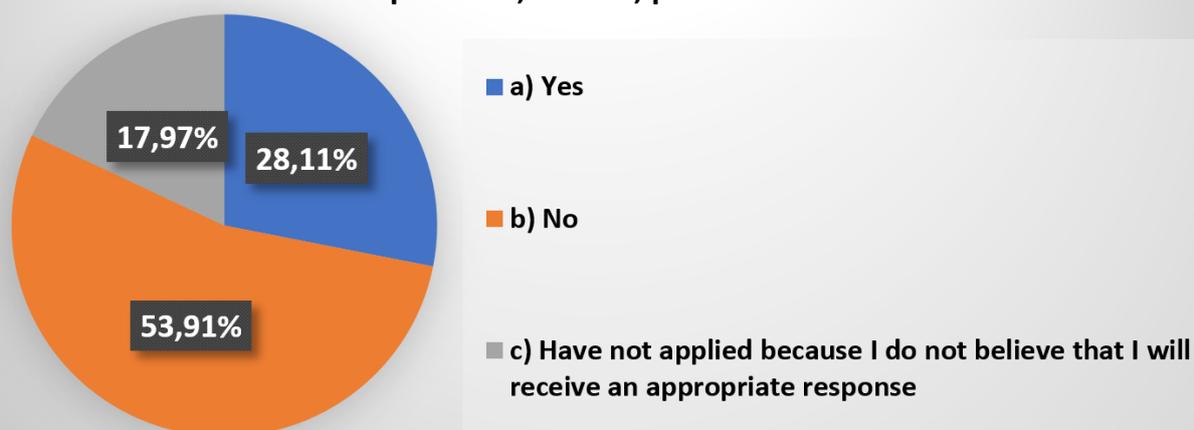
T.G., a woman of 62, IDP, employed: There is a metallurgical plant in Tabukashvili settlement. Terrible exhaust pollutes the air. I am very actively fighting against this problem. They have filters, but they cost extra money, and they avoid using them. Exhaust is released at night.

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

BLOCKL VIII: GENERAL QUESTIONS

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

Have you applied to the local self-government or any other state to solve any personal, official, public issue?



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

K.K., male, a local expert in infrastructure: There have been referrals from the population and apartment owners' association to benefit from the City Hall programs. There are 20 to 30 written requests per day.

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

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

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

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

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

The study assessed the extent to which the services and programs provided by local governments are tailored (or reflect) to the specific needs of vulnerable groups. However, 110 (50.69%) think that the practice of assessing the specific needs and satisfaction of vulnerable populations with programs is not introduced. For 56 (25.80%), programs do not address the specific needs of individual vulnerable groups, whereas 51 (23.50%) point out that local programs address the specific needs of vulnerable groups.

The qualitative research analysis has revealed:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

N.Ch., a woman of 45, employed, disabled person: We had several programs. These were educational programs to teach people with disabilities playing on various instruments, opening computer and foreign language courses. The City Hall funded us, we did three-month courses, and I do not want it to be in vain. Employment is an unresolved issue for us. Wherever I sent a CV and said that I need some work, I can speak, but I can not walk. I can go anywhere if the environment is adapted. We permanently ask the government to arrange the environment so that

we can move. New buses have arrived, but you need to get to the bus. There are so many kerbs, and you can not reach the stop. If I make someone help me, it is not an adapted environment. We fight to attract attention. We can do a lot, but we need support.

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

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

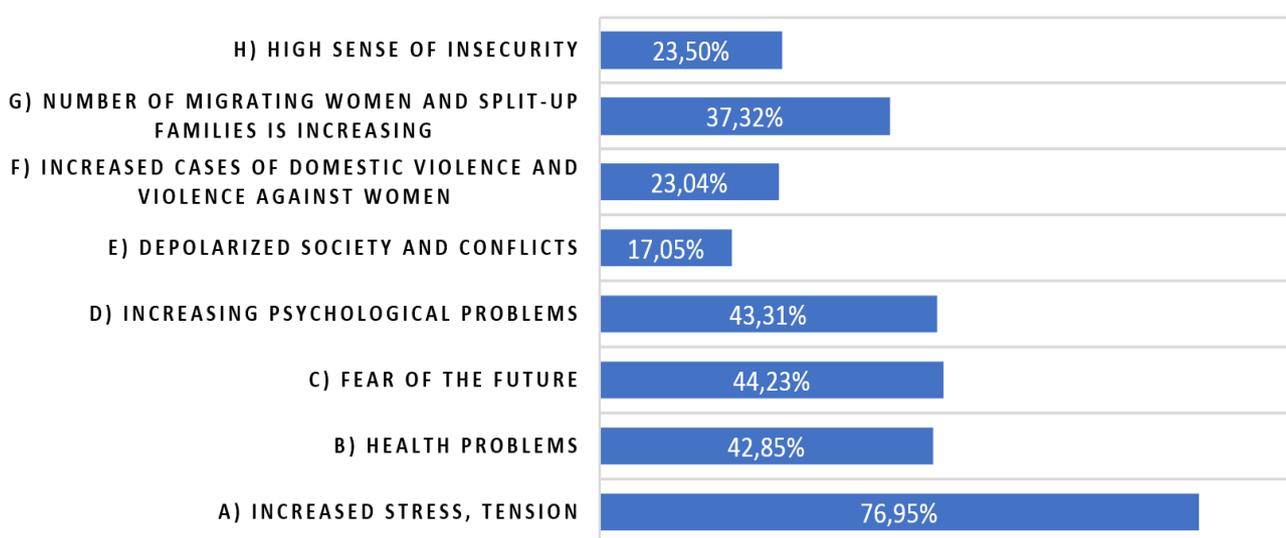
The quantitative study participants have also stated their opinion on how the increased threat to human security affects the state of the population:

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

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

(Diagram 14)

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



RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS) TSKHALTUBO MUNICIPALITY

KHATUNA GOGUA

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

THE AIM AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Aim of the research: Cultural-Humanitarian Fund “Sukhumi” conducted a research from April 1 to April 25, 2021 in Tskaltubo Municipality. The aim of the research was the assessment of the quality of human security and gender needs of the population (women). The needs were assessed based on the analysis of the data obtained from the research, identifying relevant findings, trends and developing the necessary recommendations.

Research Methodology: The research was conducted in a format of quantitative and qualitative data collection. A pre-designed questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The data was collected in the form of Google, and qualitative data in the form of focus groups and in-depth interviews. Totally 4 focus groups and 4 face-to-face interviews were conducted with local experts (self-government representatives).

BASIC INFORMATION

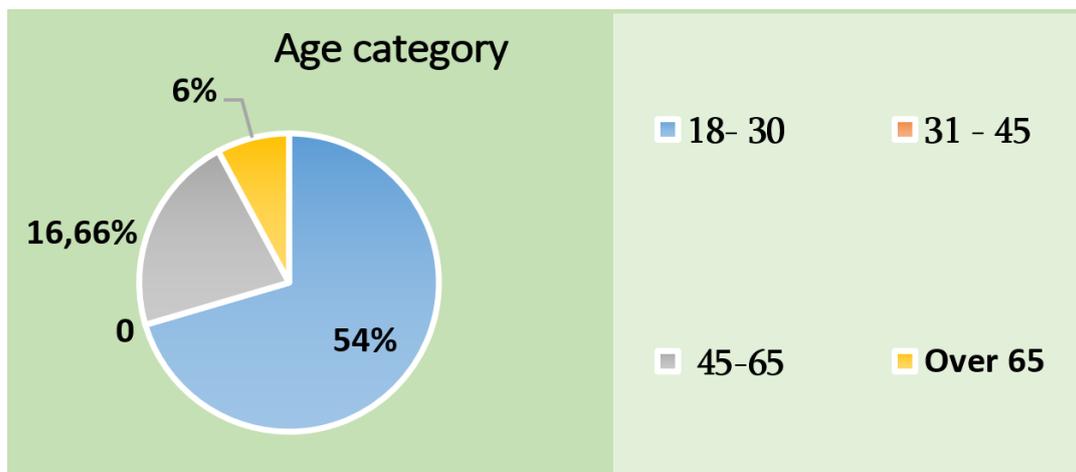
In order to collect quantitative data, 150 women were involved in the online survey process. 33 people participated in the process of collecting qualitative data, including one man (local expert). Since the survey aimed to study the needs of women, the target group was women. A small exception were the experts, involved in the format of face-to-face interview. The research identified the main threats, the existence of which decreases the degree of human security in women.

Totally 183 people (182 women, one man) were involved in the survey conducted in Tskaltubo Municipality.

BLOCK I: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH

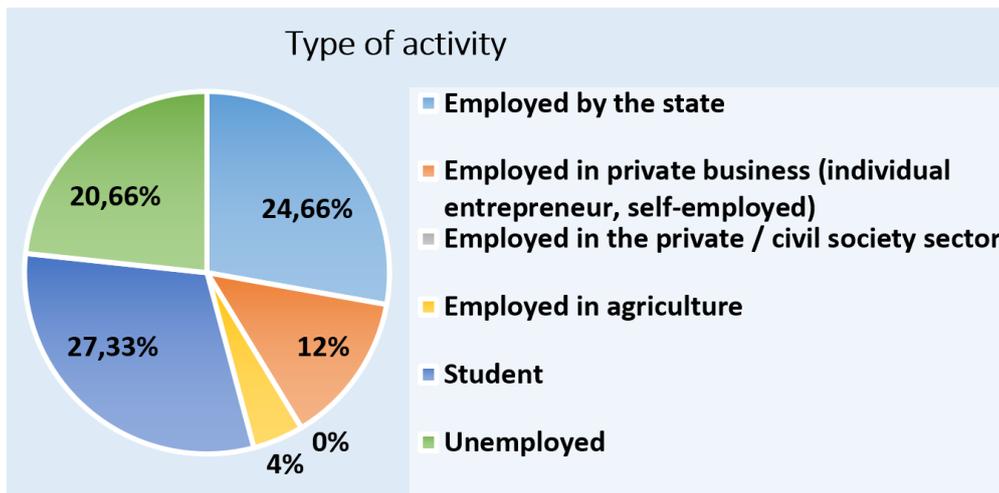
The main target group of the given needs research were women in the age category from 18 to 30 with the following socio-demographic characteristics: IDPs, locals, Socially unprotected, mothers with many children and single mothers, persons with disabilities and their families, teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs, community leaders, pensioners, young people, local experts, etc.

The average age of surveyed respondents was as follows: 54% in the age category from 18 to 30. 22.66% covered the age category from 31 to 45. From 45 to 65 years old -16.66%. Over 65 years old - 6% and 1 respondent did not mention the age (**Diagram 1**).



According to the Social Status, the majority of respondents - 78% were locals. IDPs from Abkhazia - 12%. 12% of the respondents are socially unprotected, 2.66% - mothers with many children. The number of women with the status of single mothers is 4%, 0.66% are people with disabilities.

According to the type of activity, the survey shows high activity from the side of students, 27.33% of respondents were students. Based on the above mentioned, we may think that the positions of young people occupy an important place in the obtained data. The majority of respondents 24.66% fall into the category of employed by the state. This figure of unemployed women is slightly behind - 20.66%. Then comes the number of employed in private business -12%. 4% are engaged in agricultural work (**Diagram 2**).



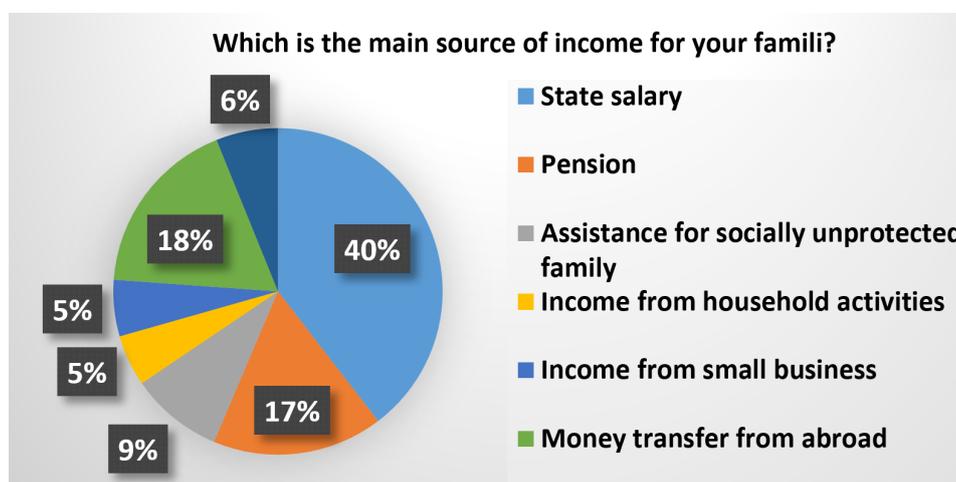
BLOCK II: ECONOMIC SECURITY

Based on the data accumulated in this block, it is clear how stable the indicator of women economic security is and, mainly, what income it is based on. The majority of respondents -52% rely on salary received from the state. Money transfers from abroad are used by 23.33%, for 22% the main source of income is the pension. 15.33% consider that household activity is the main source of income. 12% live on the amount received from the allowance defined by the status of the socially vulnerable, 8% rely on the assistance from a relatives.

It is important to note that according to the data obtained by the segregation of IDPs and local women, the source of income for 85.89% of locals is the state salary, while only 5.12% of the IDPs receive a salary. It is noteworthy that for a large part of IDP women, the source of income to date is the IDP allowance and other incomes, which is also confirmed by the materials obtained from the focus groups:

“Until now, my family’s source of income is the IDP allowance, or if relatives send us money from Russia. Two children graduated from high school, but they have no job. They started a small business, but it is not stable. It is difficult to get the job in public service, there is a lack of jobs. Everyone is trying to go abroad. Family should have income to plan something”. – M.P. 62 years old, IDP, employed.

(Diagram 3)



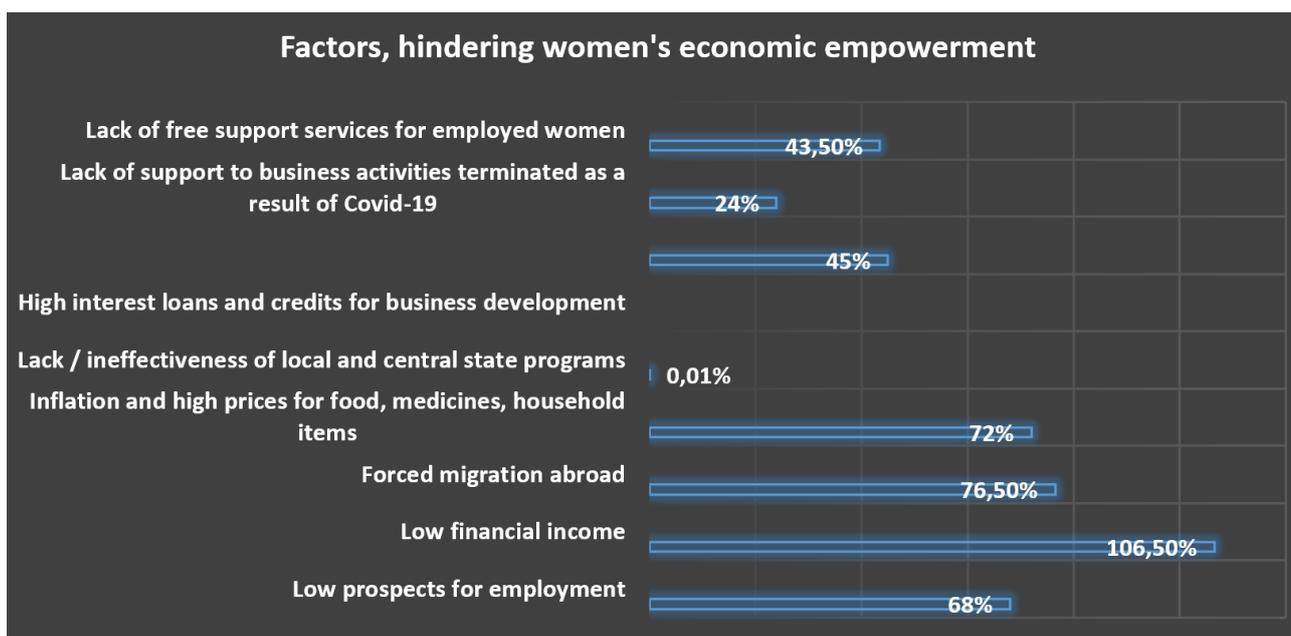
According to the survey, in addition to salary, money transfers from other countries are a major source of income. This once again highlights the urgency of women’s migration in Tskaltubo Municipality and underlines the benefits of employment for women abroad, which is one of the most important guarantees for families’ income.

The qualitative data obtained in parallel with the quantitative indicator show that among the prior problems in the **economic index of human security are the loss of jobs, which is related to the decrease of their family income.** The women involved in the research clearly point to the negative impact of the pandemic, which exacerbates the feeling of negative expectations.

“The pandemic created serious financial problems to families. Despite the lack of jobs, people still managed to find a livelihood: some worked in the market, some - on daily jobs, some as a caregiver, a cleaning lady. Such works completely disappeared and everything was closed. There is a terrible fear of what to do, what will happen tomorrow, what to eat, what to live on”. - M.D. 43 years old, IDP, employed.

“Most of the young people stopped studying because their families could not pay their education fees. Many issues became problematic in families, for example, someone stopped building houses, someone changed their mind about getting married and so on, a lot of new problems arose”. – M.D. 36 years old, local, socially unprotected.

In the data obtained from the quantitative survey, among **the factors hindering women’s economic empowerment**, the highest rate 68% was given to lack of prospects for employment. Low financial income is considered a hindering factor for 47.33%, 34% believe that forced migration to foreign countries slows down the prospects for women’s economic empowerment. 10.66% of respondents believe that there are no support programs for the recovery of activities, terminated during Covid-19, which significantly hinders the development of economics. High-interest loans and credits are considered to be a barrier for 20%. 19.33% consider, that there are no free support services for single mothers, families with many children, which is a significant barrier in terms of economic empowerment (**Diagram 4**).



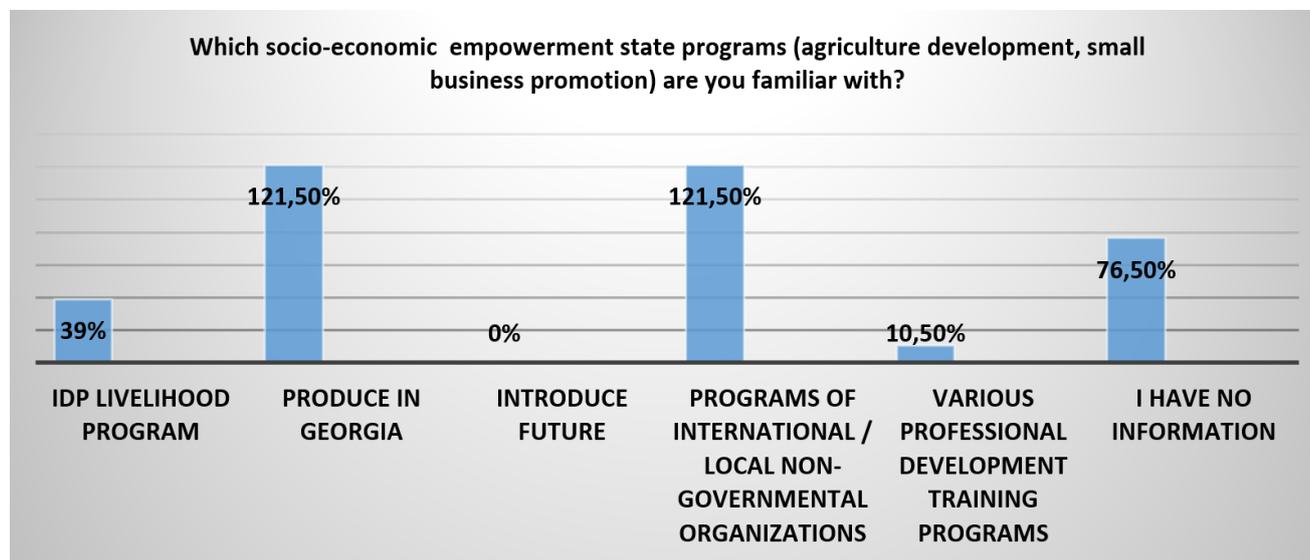
According to the part of the respondents, responsibility for mentioned problems is responsibility of the state, which is confirmed by the data obtained from the qualitative research.

“After the problems caused by the pandemic, the people have no offer from the state, how to return to the previous condition, it is impossible to start the business again if there is no support from the government. The loans were suspended, but you have to pay the suspended loans with higher rates”. - E.D. 54 years old, local, unemployed.

In the qualitative data, the respondents indicate the need to introduce support programs for women, which is related to the Prolongation of time in kindergartens.

“If a woman does not have anyone to held in the family, she can not start working. If a woman is not given more benefits in the field of employment, or the working hours of kindergartens are not prolonged, a woman with minor children will never be able to start working, she will be totally hindered.” - T.K. 32 years old, local, mother with many children.

How much do women know about the state programs aimed at promoting socio-economic empowerment, which program do they remember the most? Survey data on this question confirm that 54% of respondents are familiar with the program “Produce in Georgia.” 54% are aware of the programs of international / local non-governmental organizations. The livelihood program for IDPs is familiar to 17.33%. 4.6% have information about various professional development training programs, while 34% of respondents have no information at all about existing programs. In the category of the uninformed, mainly local women are leading. The data obtained once again demonstrates the need to introduce and develop a new format in terms of informing. **(Diagram 5)**



The majority of respondents -54.66% believe that accessible loans are needed to create a favorable environment for promoting family farming, small business, and self-employment; 48.66% prefer small business support programs. 46.66% think that the existence of grant programs from the state is an important factor. Rural support programs are preferred by 40%. 19% think there should be business promotion programs. 14% prefer the availability of consulting services. 2.66% believe that more information is needed on the existing state programs.

According to the obtained data, it is important to implement municipal grant programs to promote self-employment.

Based on the research data, it is possible to determine the source of information about state programs. **It turns out that the main source of information regarding the economic programs proposed by the local and central government is the municipality's website and Facebook page.** This is confirmed by 52% of the respondents. 50.6% use online media outlets and Facebook pages to get information. 38.66% receive information through television and radio. 17.33% name non-governmental organizations primarily. 3.33% mention neighbors and acquaintances. 9% are informed from the website of the central government / ministry. It is noteworthy that only 9% of respondents name the Mayor's representatives and 4.66% - local deputy.

These data are significantly supported by the answers obtained by collecting the qualitative data:

"The municipality has a website where any interested person can enter and see all programs, find out what he is interested in. Many people have internet, but they are lazy to search" - M.T. 65 years old, local, employed.

"Our settlement does not have complete information about what kind of assistance the City Hall provides. They know more about the areas they are interested in. Personally, I get information from neighbors, the internet can be used, but many do not have the internet, or do not know how or where to find these programs" - T.G. 54 years old, IDP, employed.

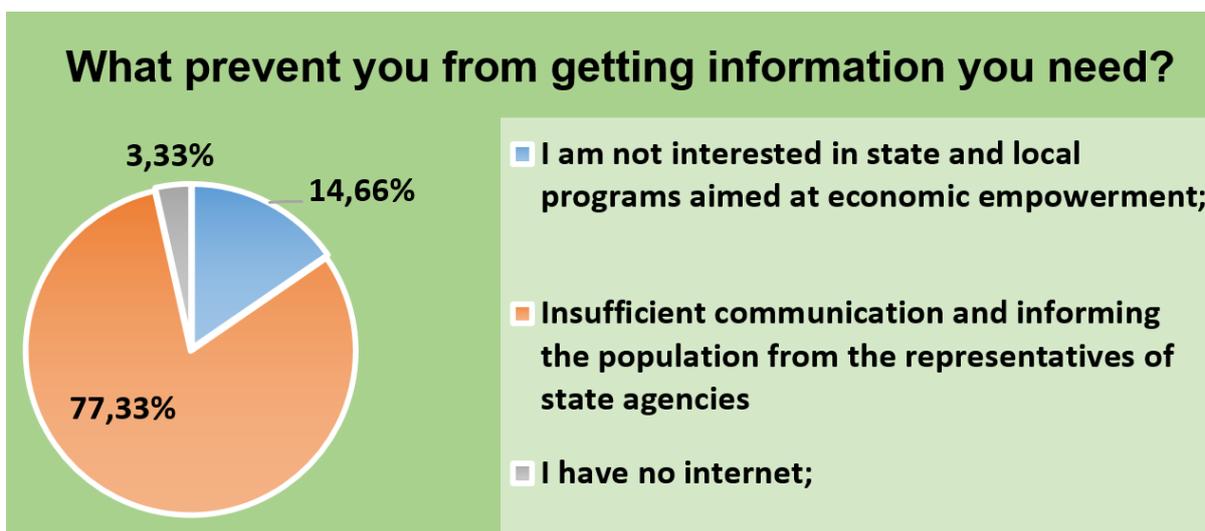
"Those who are interested in the necessary information, find it themselves. I have seen a satisfied citizen who has benefited from a program of medic. "One woman told another, and so the information spread like a pandemic," M.B. 57 year old, mother of many children.

"Personally, I get information about the existing programs through the internet, and if I want to clarify something, I go directly to the City Hall. I always get comprehensive answers on the spot" - M.G. 41 years old, unemployed, socially vulnerable.

"For example, I am a mother of three children and when my third child was born, the social service called me and told me that my child is entitled to financial assistance in the amount of 150 GEL per month for 2 years, of course I went and received the assistance" Mother with many children, socially unprotected.

What prevents women and her family members from getting information they need? It is noteworthy that, a high rate of respondents - 77.33% indicate that there is insufficient communication between the population and representatives of government agencies. It should be noted that 14.66% of respondents are not interested in state and local programs aimed at economic empowerment, which is based on the nihilistic attitude of the society, low civic activism. 3.33% admit that they have no internet at all and stay out of this information service (Diagram 6).

"Women have lack of activity, someone has to activate them. When they find out that someone has won concrete program, they regret and say "Why I did not know it"? You did not know because you have not even asked. This is the truth, do not blame others". - N.D. 39 years old, employed, local.



What should be done to change the existing picture, the interviewed women offer their own versions:

“Majoritarian deputy should be more involved in the information process. He should meet the population not once a month, but once a week and speak about specific problems”. – M.D. 42 years old, employed, IDP.

“People should be more informed, it needs to activate several resources. We had a TV channel in Tskaltubo and it was very good. Existence of TV channel would solve a lot of problems in terms of providing information”. M.P. 46 years ol, employed, local

BLOCK III: FOOD SECURITY

Food security is one of the most important segments among human security components. The survey also clearly shows that the abundance of dangerous elements and the risks in this area in particular exacerbate women’s anxiety. The majority of respondents say that their family members do not have access to quality and varied food products. **90.66% consider the high cost of food to be the biggest threat. Then comes the lack of quality product, which worries 75.33% of respondents.**

BLOCK VI: PUBLIC SAFETY

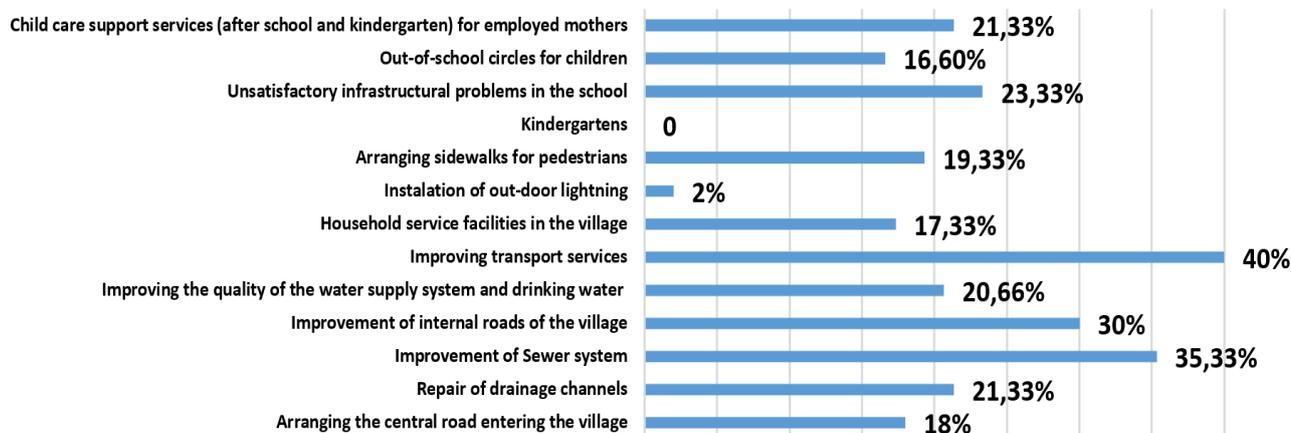
Public safety is quite extensive with its components and the combination of threats in this segment is due to the abundance of infrastructural, economic and social problems.

Quantitative indicator directly tells us that infrastructural problems in Tskaltubo municipality: roads, shortage of drinking water, faulty sewerage system - are the most urgent and prior for groups of women and indicate a high level of violation of their rights.

40% of respondents say that the issue of improving transport is important to them. 35.33% focus on the maintenance of the sewerage system. 30% believe that the improvement of internal rural roads is a priority. Unsatisfactory infrastructural problems in the school worry 23.33% of the

respondents. Child care support services are a priority for 21.33%. The same number of people note that drainage channels requires attention. Lack of water supply and lack of drinking water poses problems for 20.66%. Lack of sidewalks for pedestrians is a significant problem for 19.33%. 16.6% believe that out-of-school circles for children should exist (Diagram 7).

Which issues is prior and topical for the women in your community?



This data also coincides with the position taken from the in-depth interview - the expert touches the issues of roads malfunction and water problems:

“The most important problem for the population of Tskaltubo municipality, especially for the rural population, is the rehabilitation of roads and the arrangement of drinking water. There are wells used by the population in the main part of the villages. In summer and late autumn the waters dry up and there is almost no water in the wells. The existing problems cannot be solved all together, because there is a lack of finances in the budget”, - a local expert, the self-government representative.

The quantitative indicator is followed by the qualitative data obtained through focus groups: the information obtained from the discussion makes the needs of women clearer:

“The problem of sewerage system is acute in our city. We know that all this is connected with serious amount of money, but it should have been arranged somehow! This problem is still unsolved”. – D.G. 39 years old, local, employed.

“A woman can not live without water. As soon as summer comes, water shortage starts immediately. They changed the system as if to solve the problem, but there is still a lack of water, in the city as well as in the villages”, A.P. 61 years old, local mother with many children.

The list of women’s problems, women’s needs includes the provision of entertainment places for children.

“Central Park is far from my precinct. The problem is the improvement of children’s entertainment places, thank God we have a lot of children, they come from different precincts and children’s entertainment places should be arranged better, in such places mothers are calmer, because the safety of our children is protected”. E.K. 32 years old, employed.

One part of women mention, that concrete program should exist not only for mothers with four or more children, but for other categories of mother too, as their vulnerability should also be taken into account.

“I am a mother of 3 children, therefore, I am not considered as mother with many children. If I have a fourth child, I will be considered as mother with many children, I raise 3 children and I have no one to help me, no one helps my category, there are no benefits, if you are socially unprotected, you will get into the program”. – M.G. 31 years old, unemployed, local.

Problems with single mother status have been identified.

“I am a single mother, but I do not have the status. I have no official document. Many women have this problem and I think official status should not decide everything. For years, I have been raising a child alone and because I have no status, I have no benefits. If the child has the surname of mother, then the mother is considered single. This creates many problems”. – N.M. 50 years old, unemployed, IDP.

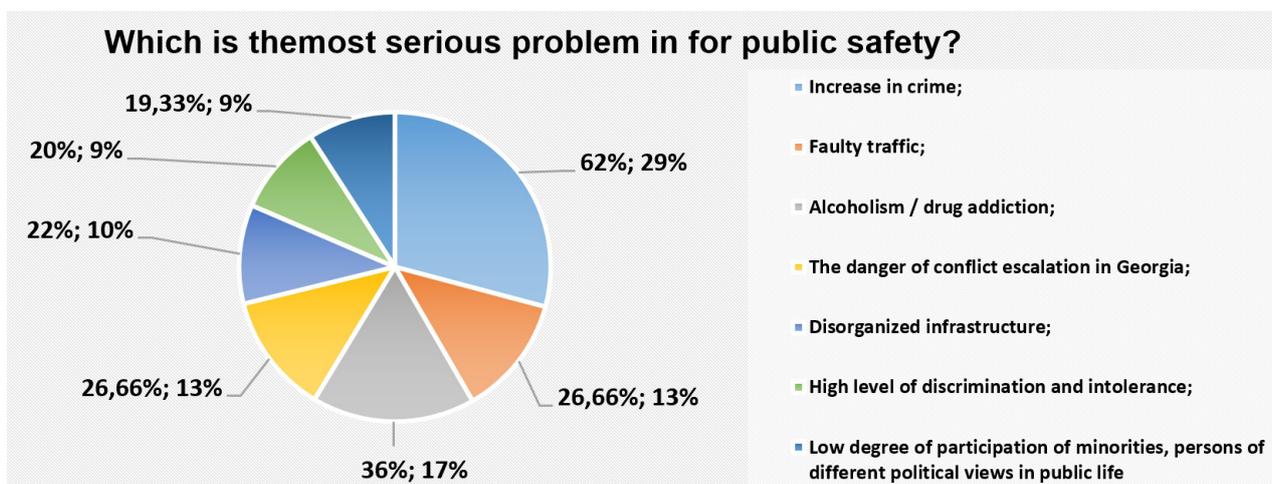
The list of needs includes local social packages for pensioners.

“Therapeutic massages in Tskaltubo are known to everyone, but many Tskaltubo residents cannot manage to use this service, because it is quite expensive for pensioners. I have always dreamed and still have a suggestion for the local City Hall to have a social package or co-financing program for this category”. – N.M. 54 years old, employed, local.

Qualitative data highlighted the need for another vulnerable group:

“After becoming 18 years old, when a person with disabilities stays home, all ways of employment are closed for him. Under the age of 18, the state takes care of this category. After 18 their need is less taken into account and they face many barriers in life. I was in one of the organizations in Kutaisi and I was very pleased that they were learning to make handicrafts. It is desirable to have similar programs in Tskaltubo as well”. - Kh.D. 54 years old, local, parent of a person with disabilities.

The urgency of the problems in the field of **public safety** was clearly reflected in the quantitative indicator. More than half 62% of women surveyed believe that increased crime seriously increases their fears. 71% of them are locals, 10% - IDPs. The next place is given to alcoholism and drug addiction - 36% .26.66% see a serious threat in the development of conflicts escalation in Georgia. 22% mentions disorganized infrastructure. 20% notice a high level of discrimination in the society. 19.33% think that minority participation in public life is low.



“We see that apartments have been robbed. We have lots of problems and additionally the fear of someone rushing into our houses is too much. Everything will affect our health in the future”- N.D. 65 years old, local, socially unprotected.

“There are many car accidents, there are no traffic rules, everyone is given a driving license and they do not know how to drive, lots of young people died, it is very hard”. – N.G. 62 years old, IDP.

The data from the survey shows the problems related to **access to education** in the list of women’s needs.

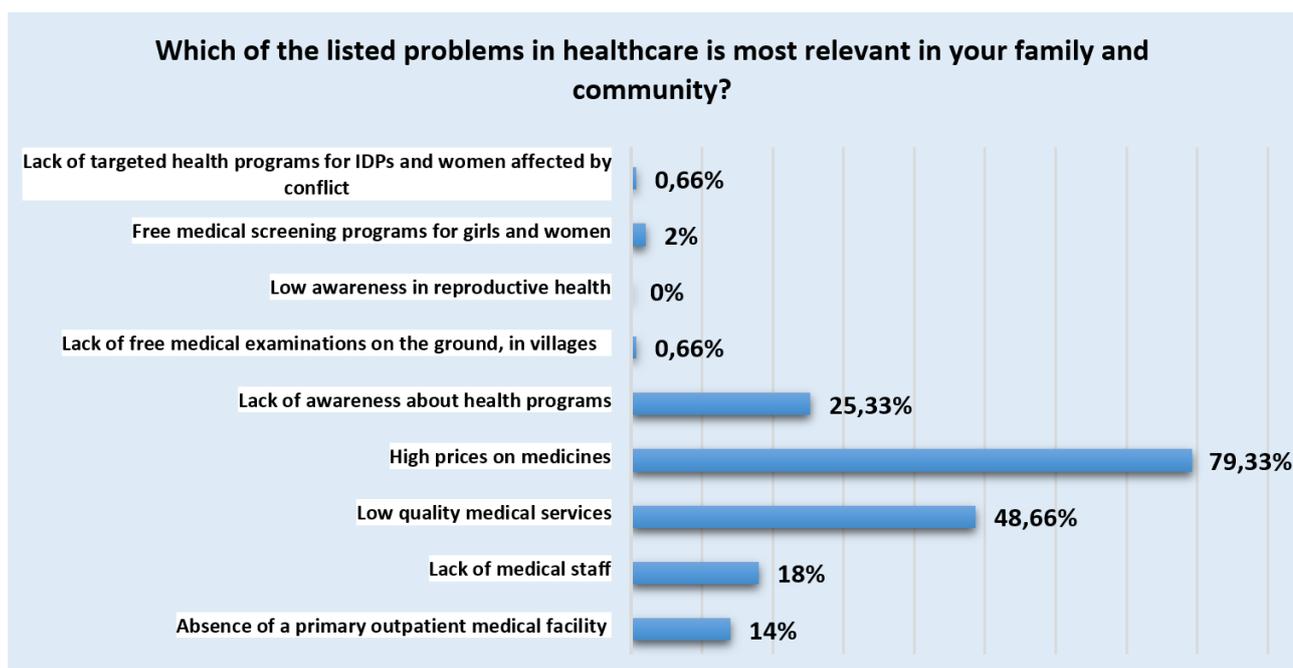
Majority of respondents - 38% state that the problem is the low quality of teaching. 35.33% mention that schools do not have the appropriate equipment, specialized subject classrooms. 28.66% believe that number of professional teachers is insufficient. 27.33% state that there is no proper school infrastructure, 26% think that the lack of high-quality internet to provide a remote process often leads to serious shortcomings in terms of education. 8.66% think that school is far from house, which creates problems with getting an education.

BLOCK V: HEALTH SAFETY

The release of one of the circles in the chain of integrated human security systems cause new risks and is directly or indirectly related to the emergence of new risks in the health security segment. The danger increases even more. The figures show that a large proportion of women surveyed - 79.33% - clearly confirm that high prices for medicines exacerbate health risks.

48.66% of the respondents name the lack of free medical services in the list of priority problems, which is a serious signal from the society and indicates the need for reforms in this direction. 25.33% directly inform us that the public is not informed about healthcare problems, which is considered to be one of the most serious problems.

According to 18%, the lack of medical staff is considered a topical problem and the pandemic clearly showed it (**Diagram 8**).



“The pandemic has shown so many things that we did not know before, first of all, we do not have enough medical staff, although we were not ready for the pandemic, but we could not retrain medical staff and we still have a lack of staff in case of necessity”. - N.D. 69 Years old, local.

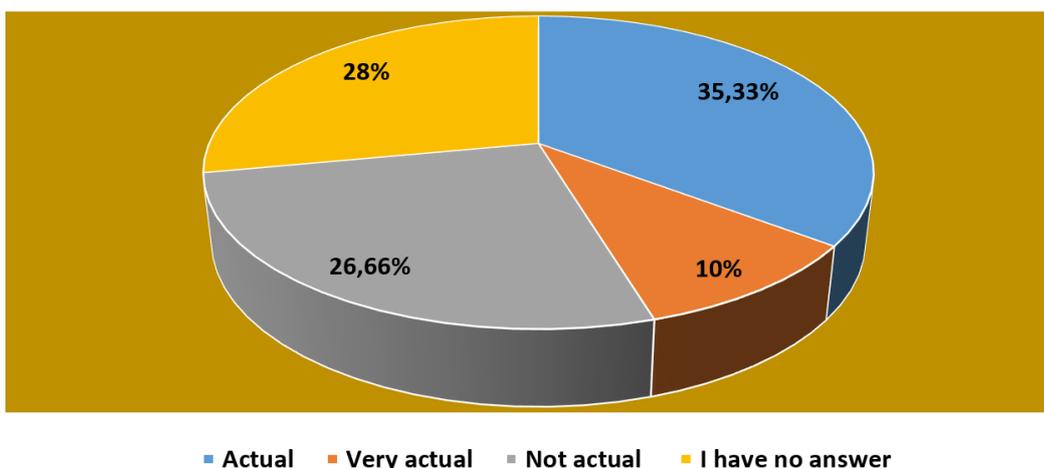
“Why do all the complicated operations have to be done in foreign countries. So much money is paid per operation. They should train our local staff, let our students go abroad and give more jobs to the professionals”. - B.G. 51 years old, pensioner, IDP.

To the question, how they manage to solve the problem during health deterioration, it should be noted that 44% of respondents carry out in self-medical treatment. The obtained data reveals that this answer was given by women at the age from 40 to 65. 34.66% mainly use universal health care - most of them are local. 13.33% of respondents (local and IDP women) address those medicare, who treat at home, which may be caused by relatively low prices or a high degree of reliability. 4.66% use private insurance - most of them are local women. It is noteworthy that single mothers, mothers with many children are not in the category of private insurance beneficiaries. Envisaging the current reality, this picture is not a surprise, as private insurance is a luxury for this category.

BLOCK VI: PERSONAL SECURITY

The topic of domestic violence plays an important role in the personal security component. The imbalance in the received responses indicates that work is still being done in this direction. The majority - 35.33% of the respondents, believe that the problem of domestic violence is actual. 10% think - very actual. Among those who call the problem very urgent, 73.52% are local and 11.76% - IDP. 26.66% do not recognize the urgency of the problem. 28% have no answer to this question. Still unformed positions regarding this problem are based on public mood, which is supported by qualitative data (**Diagram 9**).

In your opinion, how actual is the problem of domestic violence for you or in your community?



“We face lot of problems: increased prices for products, medicines, unemployment, the problem of violence has moved to the background, women’s concerns have increased”. V.D. local, Pensioner.

“It is necessary for women to be informed about their rights, they should know that the state will

take care of them. There is a lack of information in this regard, in most cases the victim does not know what to do, what levers can be used". – D.S. 47 years old, local.

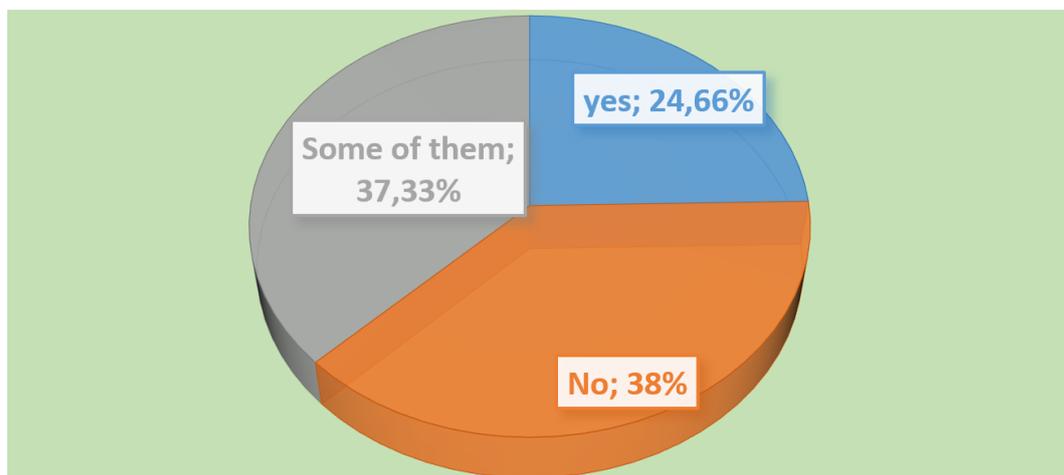
Quantitative data confirms that the most common form of psychological violence in society is manifested in verbal abuse. This opinion is shared by 62% of respondents. It is followed by 24.66%, who consider economical type of violence to be predominant, which is manifested in the prohibition of cash management, manipulation with funds. Demonstration of force, beating and humiliation is named by 11.33% of the respondents. The quantitative indicator clearly shows that the problem of domestic violence is actual for 35.33% of the respondents. 10% consider this problem to be very urgent. A radical position is fixed in the answers of other respondents. 26.66% confirm, that the problem is less actual. 28% are not ready to give a positive or negative answer to this question. The data obtained indicate the need to strengthen the work in terms of informing.

The survey shows that 62% believe that the most common form of violence is psychological violence. 24.66% state that economical violence is quite spread. 11.33% consider physical violence to be a common form and 0.66% name sexual violence.

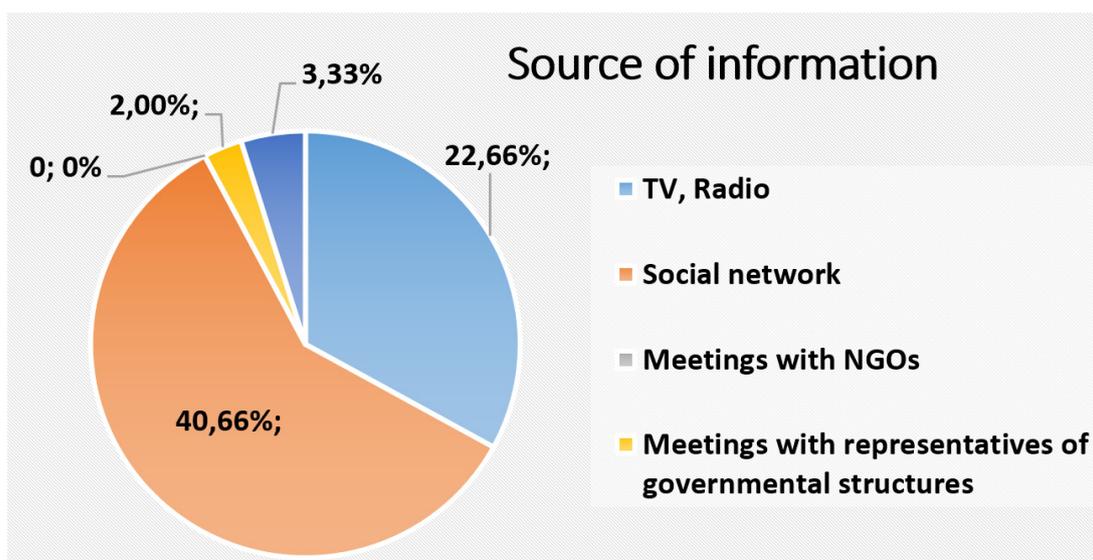
On the background of current reality, it is important to understand how well informed the population is about **victim support services**. 24.66% say they have information about such services. 38% is informed about some of them, 3.33% have no information at all.

The answers show that the majority of respondents - 81.08%, are aware of the existence of a hotline. 18.91% are familiar with non-governmental organizations and their services. Municipal services are familiar for 10.81%. 10.81% are familiar with shelters based on state and non-governmental organizations. 5.4% have information on crisis centers, the same number knows about the activities of legal services (**Diagram 10**).

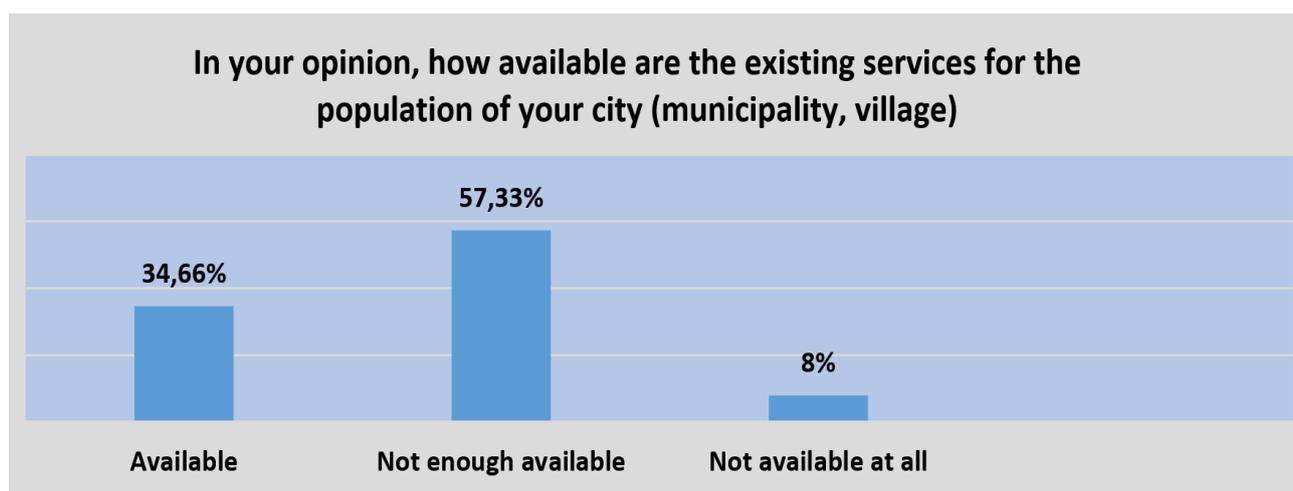
DO YOU HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT VIOLENCE VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES?



About 40.66% name social networks as the source of information regarding victim or potential victim support services. 22.66% receive information from radio and television. The same number - 22.66% receives information from NGOs. Newsletters, ads are the primary source of information for 3.33%, 2% receive information from the central government representative (**Diagram 11**).



The survey shows **how accessible the existing services** are to the population. 57.33% say it is not available enough; for 8% is not available at all. Availability is confirmed by 34.66% (**Diagram 12**).

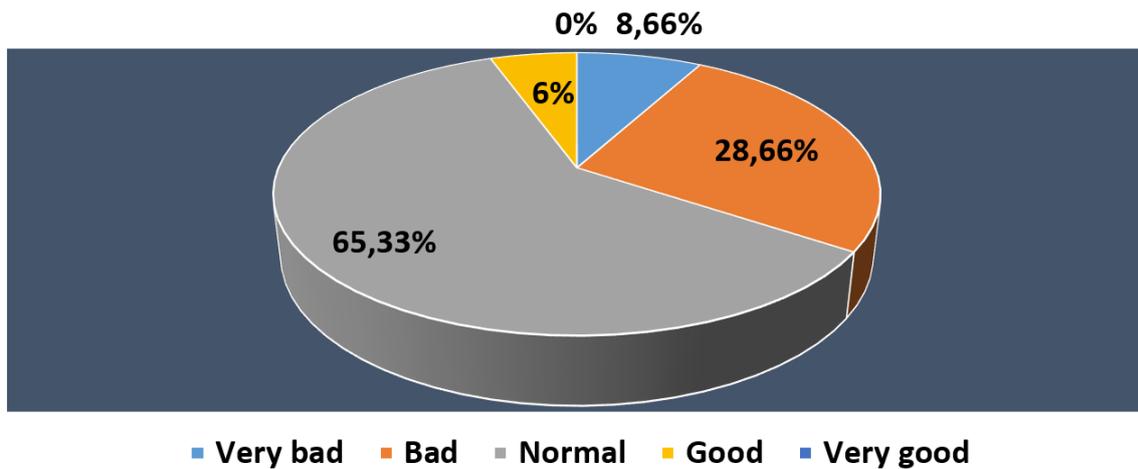


How sufficient are the programs introduced by the local self-government to respond to violence against women. To this question, 26.66% say that is partially sufficient. 17.33% confirm that it is quite sufficient. 15.33% state that the existing services are insufficient. According to 10.66%, it is necessary to diversify the programs.

BLOCK VII: ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

The threats in the ecological segment cause the concern of the respondents, to the question: **what is the sanitary situation in your town / village and the situation in terms of environmental protection**, 28.66% state that it is a bad situation. According to 8.66%, the situation is very bad. According to 6.53% - normal, 6% call the situation good (**Diagram 13**).

What is the sanitary situation in your town/village and the situation in terms of environmental protection



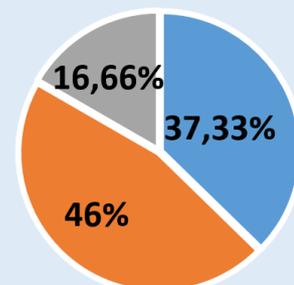
The most important problem among environmental problems is the malfunction of sewerage systems - 36%. The absence of drainage pipes is named by 30%. Polluted air is considered the most harmful by 25.33%. Improper access to clean water is named by 0.86%.

BLOCK VIII: GENERAL QUESTIONS

Against the background of the above-mentioned problems, what is the relationship of the population with the self-government, whom they address and with what intensity, the results of the research confirm the information on these issues: 46% have not applied to the self-government. 16.66% have not applied because they do not believe in a proper response. 37.33% say they had communication with self government (Diagram 13).

Have you addressed the local self-government or other state structures for the solution of personal, job or social issues?

- Yes
- No
- I have not addressed as I do not believe it will be responded appropriately



The next question reveals what form the women or their family members use to communicate with the local government.

35.33% attend settlements or villages meetings. 23.33% use the electronic form. 15.33% use City

Council sessions for communication. 13.33% listen to the reports of different departments of the City Hall, 10.66% participate in the civil budgeting, 2% apply to the advisory councils.

48% of respondents think that local programs address the specific needs of vulnerable groups. 28.66% say that the practice of assessing the specific needs and satisfaction of vulnerable populations with programs is not introduced. 23.3% believe that local programs do not reflect the specific needs of individual vulnerable groups.

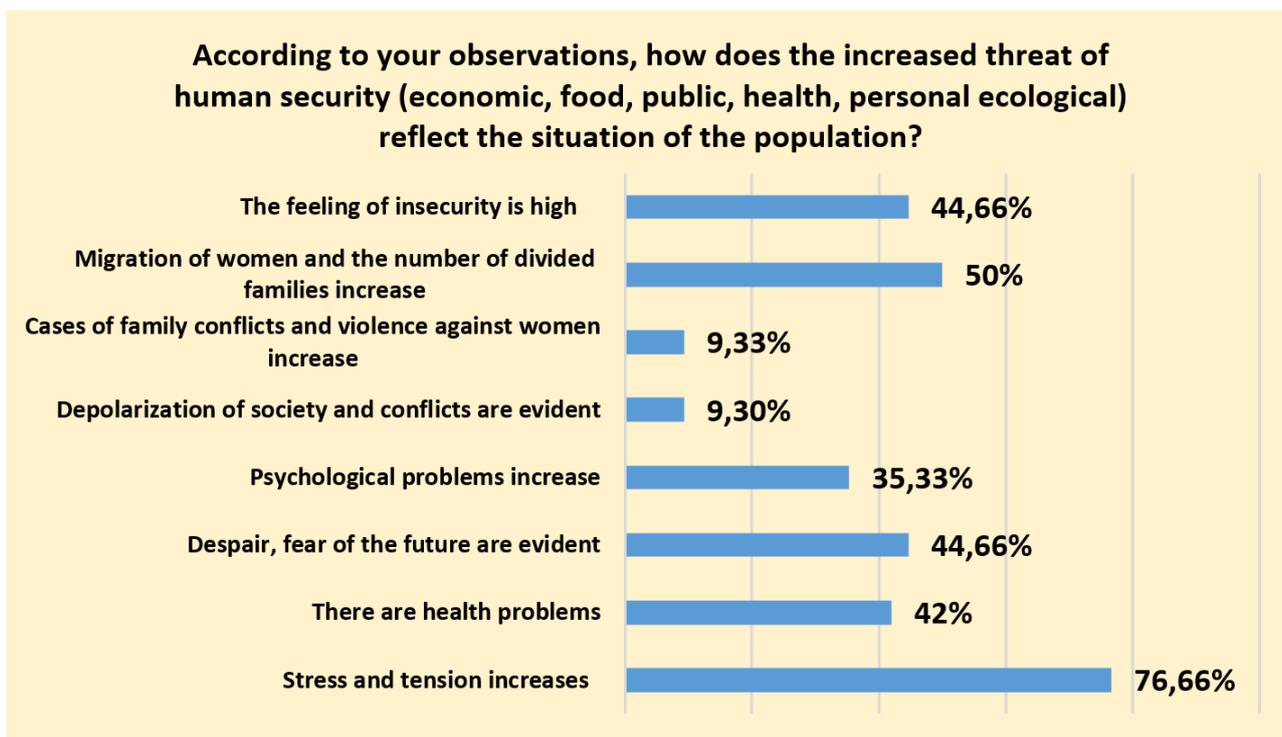
“Socially unprotected people have assistance programs. I have tested it on myself and I am very satisfied. My family member, my grandmother needed funding - half of the amount for operation was funded and I am satisfied”. – N.D. 32 years old, local, socially unprotected.

“To tell you the truth, I learn more about the programs from the neighbors and if necessary I go to the City Hall and write a statement. My mother-in-law had an operation a year ago and 50% of the amount was funded by City Hall. It happened in 24 hours”. – D.S. 49 years old, local.

“If thy were closer to the population, they would know more about their needs, all programs are necessary of course, but these programs should be changed every year, new ones should be added, we do not feel that”. – M.D. 64 years old, IDP.

“People do not know much, the booklet should reflect, where a person should go for treatment of concrete disease, what assistance he will have. For example, my neighbor, a mother of three children, did not even know she had some assistance until she came to the municipality because of a problem”. - R.D. 39 years old, local.

What is caused by the listed problems, that are fixed in all segments of human security. The survey shows that the increased threat to human security has a negative impact on the condition of the population. 76.66% believe that stress, tension has increased. 44.66% indicate hopelessness and fear of the future. A feeling of high insecurity worries 44.66%. 42% notice the abundance of health problems, 35.33% - psychological problems.9.33% indicate cases of increased family conflicts and violence against women.



CONCLUSION

Based on the data obtained, the problems of infrastructure, sewerage system, water supply, internal transport malfunctions are special priorities for women in the municipality. The data also shows the need to introduce programs to support women's economic development. The diversity of information delivery tools to municipal programs, victim assistance services is highlighted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ **Study the needs of women in order to create a Gender Responsive Early Warning System**
- ❖ **Introduce and launch of local municipal projects to provide economic support to women and their economic empowerment**
- ❖ **Support of the grant programs encouraging women's initiatives to support small businesses**
- ❖ **Promotion of the development of household activities to support self-employed women**
- ❖ **Introduction of relevant projects in the municipal budgets by determining the priority of infrastructural problems**
- ❖ **Strengthening of educational and informational activities on women's rights, local services of domestic violence, through relevant campaigns to raise public awareness.**
- ❖ **Increase of the effectiveness of healthcare programs, introduction of programs aimed at women/girls' needs on the ground.**
- ❖ **In order to increase access to medical screening programs, it is important to introduce the practice of conducting these programs on the ground, in the villages.**
- ❖ **Informing the public about central and local healthcare programs by distributing relevant information flyers and information booklets.**
- ❖ **Involvement of civil society in the process of local budget formation, support of the initiatives of women groups, activists and strengthening of gender aspects in the budget.**

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS) KHONI MUNICIPALITY

LARISA SHENGELIA

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

STUDY AIM AND METHODOLOGY

Study aim: In Khoni municipality, from April 1 to April 25, a survey was conducted to assess the population`s (women`s) human security and gender needs.

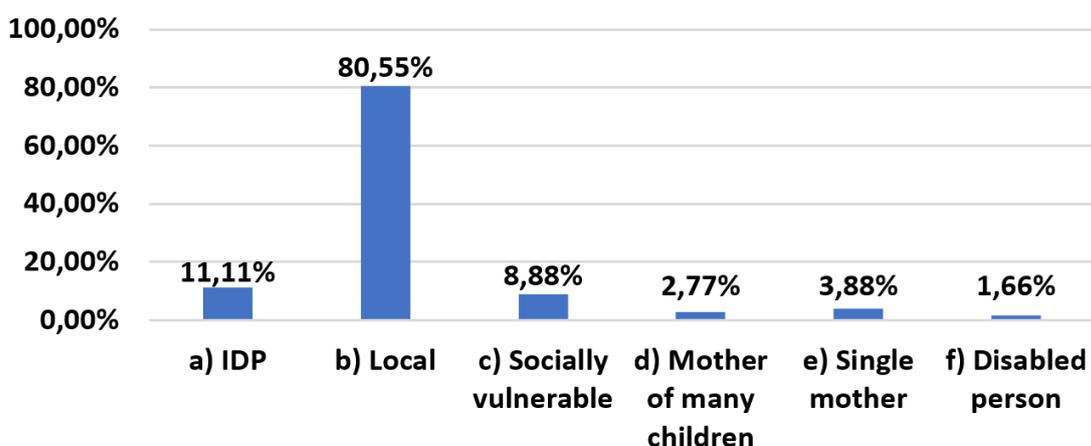
Study methodology: The study was conducted through pre-designed quantitative and qualitative questionnaires. A survey of 150 people was provided to collect quantitative data. However, 180 people were interviewed, 4 focus groups and 4 in-depth interviews with local experts (self-government representatives) were conducted regarding qualitative data. A man and 4 women participated in the interview, while 24 people participated in the focus group.

BLOCK I: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

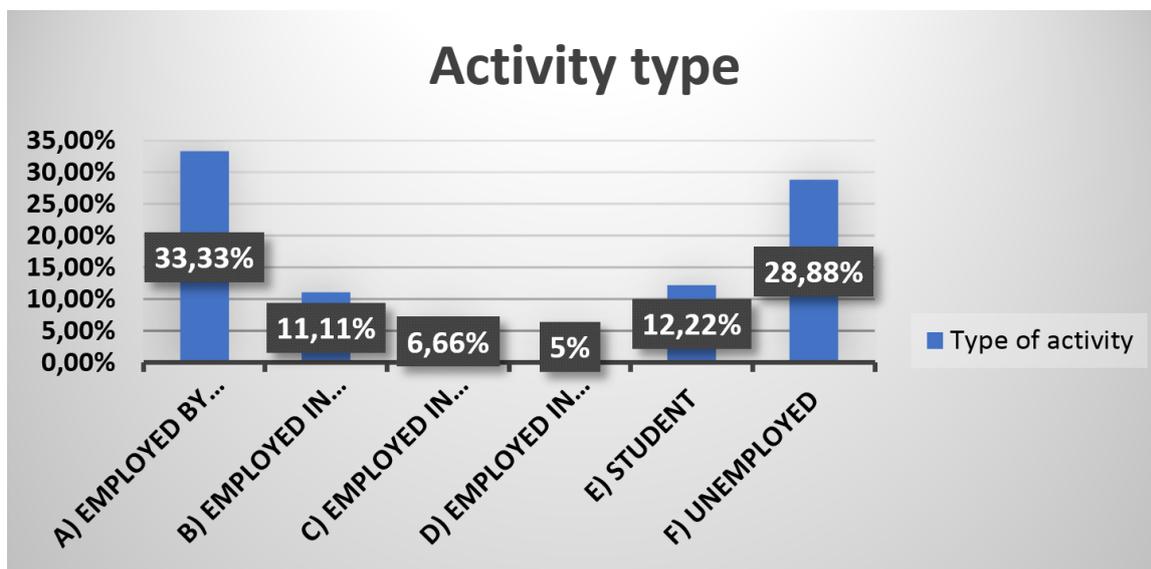
The target group of the quantitative research consists of women aged 18 to 65 with different statuses, including IDPs, locals, socially vulnerable people, mothers with many children and single mothers, people with disabilities, young people, pensioners, teachers of schools and preschools, local experts in self-government issues, etc. The age of the respondents was distributed as follows: from 18 to 30 - 82 (45.55%), from 31 to 45 - 63 (35%), from 46 to 65 - 29 (16.11%) and over 65 - 6 (3.3%).

According to the socio-demographic status, the indicator is as follows: IDP - 20 (11.11%), local - 145 (80.55%), socially vulnerable - 16 (8.88%), mother of many children - 5 (2.77%), single mother - 7 (3.88%), disabled person - 3 (1.66%). (Diagram 1)

Socio-demographic status



According to the type of activity, the data are as follows: employed by the state - 60 (33.33%), employed in the private/civil society sector - 12 (6.66%), employed in the agricultural sector - 9 (5%), student - 22 (1.11%), unemployed - 52 (28.88%), including: IDP - 9 (17.30%), local - 34 (65.38%), single mother - 0, mother of many children - 1 (1.92%). (Diagram 2)

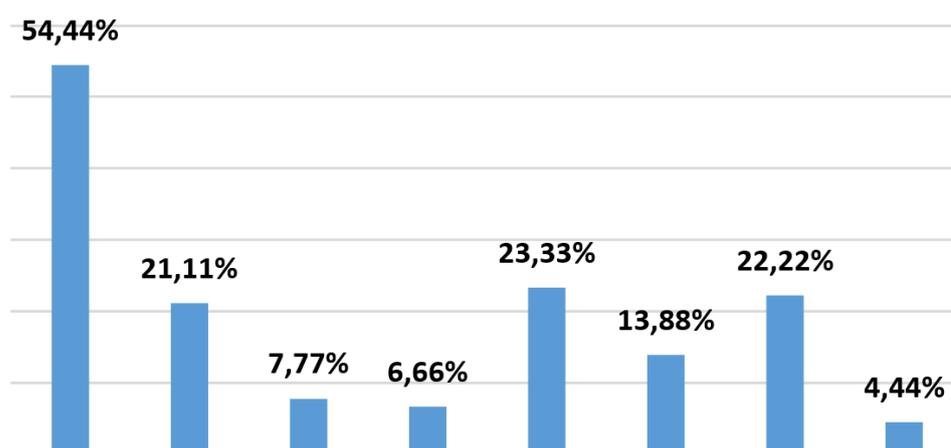


BLOCK II: ECONOMIC SECURITY

According to the quantitative study, for the majority of the Khoni municipality population main source of income is salary - 98 (54.44%), including 5 (5.10%) IDPs and 92 (93.87%) locals, 3 (3.06%) single mothers, 1 (1.02%) mother of many children. Besides, other sources are: pension - 38 (21.11%), socially vulnerable family allowance - 14 (7.77%), IDP allowance - 12 (6.66%), household income - 42 (23.33%), income from small businesses - 25 (13.88%), remittances from abroad - 40 (22.22%), assistance from relatives - 8 (4.44%).

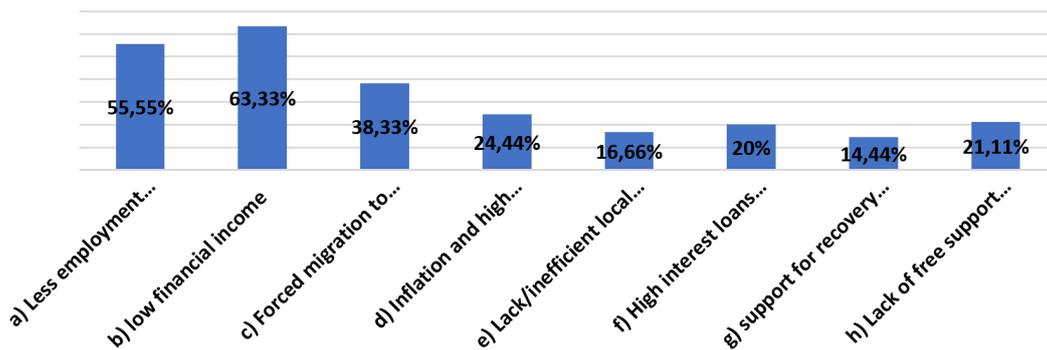
There are five (5) mothers of many children. The source of income for 3 of them is a household, 1 - a pension and remittances from abroad, and 1 - a salary and an IDP allowance. There are 7 single mothers (one receives a salary, one receives household income, one receives salary, pension and remittance from abroad, 1 - salary, pension, 1 - pension and remittance from abroad, 1 - remittance from abroad, income from the household). (Diagram 3)

What is the main source of income for you and your family?



The participants identified obstacles hindering the economic empowerment of women as well. They are as follows: fewer employment opportunities - 100 (55.55%), low financial income - 114 (63.33%), including 14 (12.28%) IDPs and 93 (81.57%) locals; forced migration abroad - 69 (38.33%), inflation and high prices of food, medicine, household items - 44 (24.44%), lack/inefficient local and central state programs for small business, entrepreneurship development - 30 (16.66%), high-interest loans and credits - 36 (20%), support for recovery of business activities stopped due to Covid-19 - 26 (14.44%), lack of free support services for employed women (including extended child care services in schools and kindergartens for single mothers, large families) to enable them to be actively involved in economic activities - 38 (21.11%), including 4 IDPs (10.52%), 31 locals (81.57%), 3 single mothers (7.89%) and 2 mothers of many children (5.26%). (Diagram 4)

What are the obstacles hindering the women's economic empowerment?



Focus group participants talked about issues that would help empower women.

T.P., a woman of 27, employed: It is essential to train women professionally and promote their employment. In addition, a particular group must work on successful marketing.

N.J., a woman of 55, housewife: It is necessary to overcome the cultural-religious and social obstacles on the way to women's empowerment.

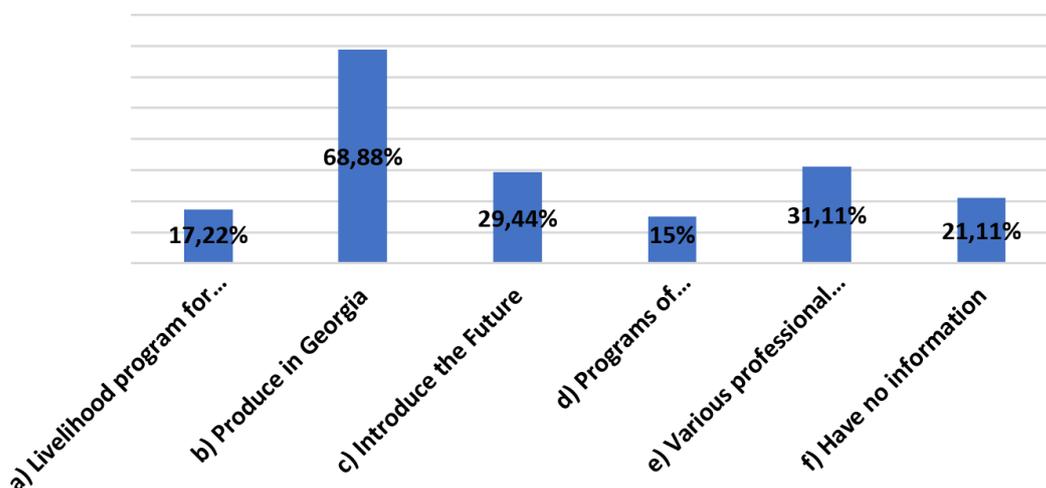
I.B., 63, Female, teacher: Women are often uninformed about free courses.

S.G., a woman of 22, employed: Some finances are necessary to support the activity.

N.K., a woman of 54, employed: It is good to allocate small grants in villages and communities to be employed.

To what extent are women aware of the state programs promoting socio-economic empowerment, and which programs are they primarily aware of? The data obtained from the survey showed that they best know Produce in Georgia - 124 (68.88%), including 13 IDPs (10.48%) and 106 locals (85.48%), various professional development/training programs - 56 (31.11%), Introduce the Future - 53 (29.44%), IDP livelihood program - 31 (17.22%), programs of international/local non-governmental organizations - 27 (15%), 38 respondents (21.11%) do not have information. (Diagram 5)

Which socio-economic empowerment (agricultural development, small business support) state programs are/were you aware of?



112 (62.22%) respondents, including 14 (12.5%) IDPs, 88 (78.57%) locals, believe that affordable loans are necessary to create a favorable environment for promoting family farming, small business and self-employment, support through grant programs is also considered by 54 (30%) respondents, 51 (28.33%) of them make focus on small business support programs, the existence of rural support programs is significant for 79 (43.88%), local self-government programs to support agriculture, greenhouses 46 (25.55%) and support for other types of activities are emphasized by 73 (40.55%), 29 (16.11%) respondents consider consulting services and assistance in writing business.

The survey has shown that 104 (57.77%) interviewees get information through the municipality website/Facebook page. Online media, social networks are also available for 82 (45.55%). Television and radio is a source of information for 81 (45%). Neighbors/acquaintances were named by 52 (28.88%) of them. Central government/ministry website/Facebook page was identified by 36 (20%), mayor's representative in the community is a source of information for 19 (10, 55%), information received through NGOs was reported by 14 (7.77%), 10 (5.55%) of them chose information leaflets/information boards in the community, and 9 (5%) is informed by local MP.

The women had a different opinion regarding informing. Some of them think that everyone is informed, while others see less awareness in the population.

A. Sh., a woman of 32, socially vulnerable: The municipality is the primary source of information for the majority of the population.

A.P., a woman of 30, employed: I have been informed about the existing service in recent years. As a result, the population has become more informed about the existing local programs. In addition, the employees of the local municipality and non-governmental organizations make a significant contribution to it.

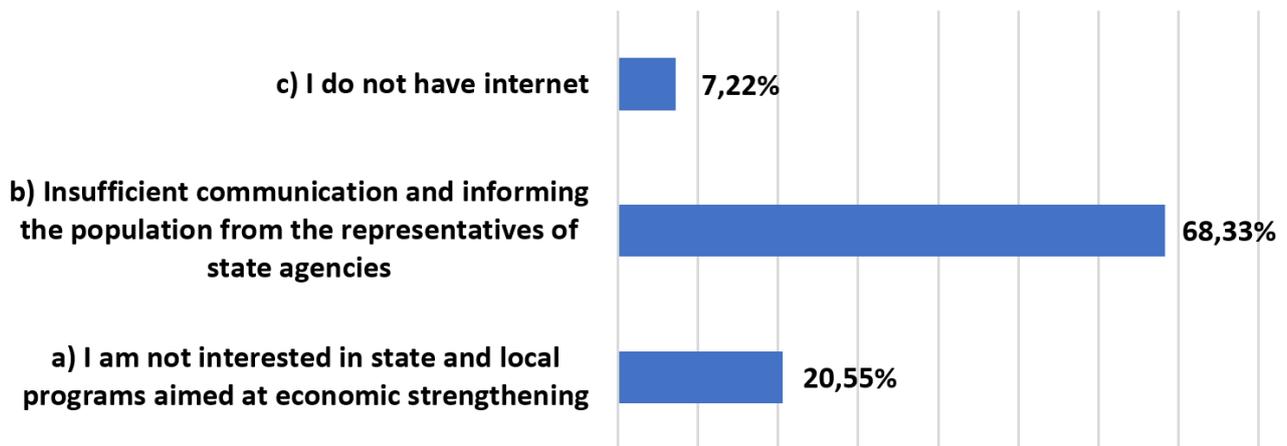
S.E., a woman of 22, single mother, employed: Young people and individuals who use social media are more informed than vulnerable groups.

N.K., a woman of 54, employed: Our population is aware of social and health services. They get information via the internet or neighbors and enjoy services.

M.P., a woman of 37, employed: The whole municipality (local 140 beneficiaries and through the internet) knows about the social program "Charity House".

123 (68.33%) of the respondents, including 17 IDPs (13.82%) and 99 locals (80.48%), consider the lack of communication and informing the population from the representatives of state agencies as an obstacle to obtaining the necessary information. 37 (20.55%) of them are not interested in state and local programs aimed at economic strengthening, including: 3 IDPs (8, 10%) and 33 local (89.18%) and 13 (7.22%) report the lack of internet access, including: IDPs - 0, local - 9 (69.23%), socially vulnerable - 3 (23.07%), single mother - 1 (7.69%). (Diagram 6)

What prevents you from getting the necessary information?



One of the disruptive factors is considered to be the internet problem.

K.K., 58, employed: Pensioners do not have access to the internet. That is why we need more contact with the population, more information and a PR campaign.

BLOCK III: FOOD SECURITY

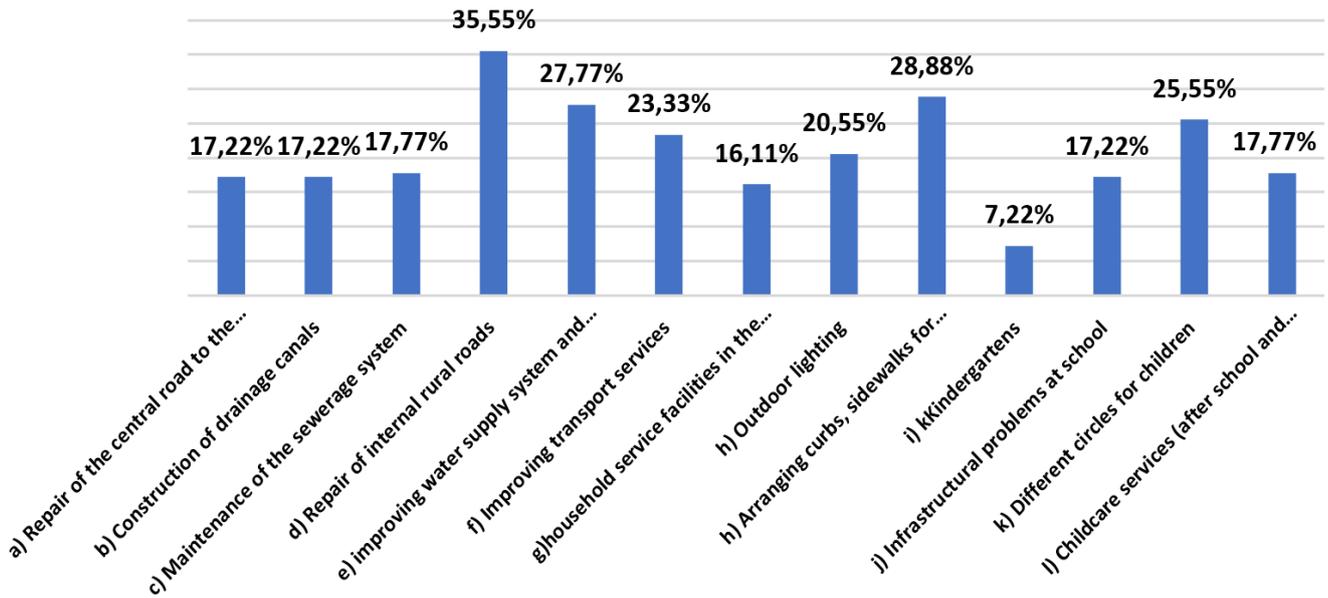
Food security is one of the most important components of human security. When asked which factor poses the greatest threat to food security for you - 171 (95%) respondents, including: 20 IDPs (11.69%), 145 locals (84.79%) mentioned expensive products, absence of quality products bothers 128 (71.11%) respondents, including: IDPs - 12 (9.37%), local - 110 (85, 93%), about absence of a grocery store nearby complain 20 (11.11%) respondents, including: 3 (15%) IDPs, 15 (75%) local respondents.

BLOCK IV: PUBLIC SECURITY

The most relevant issue for the public security for the respondents in Khoni Municipality is a

repair of internal rural roads - 64 (35.55%), arranging curbs, sidewalks for pedestrians - 52 (28.88%), improving water supply system and drinking water supply is vital for 50 (27.77%). The answers according to their priority were arranged as follows: different circles for children - 46 (25.55%), improving transport services - 42 (23.33%), outdoor lighting - 37 (20.55%), maintenance of the sewerage system - 32 (17.77%), childcare services (after school and kindergarten) for employed mothers - 32 (17.77%), repair of the central road to the village - 31 (17.22%), infrastructural problems at school - 31 (17.22%), construction of drainage channels - 31 (17.22%), household service facilities in the village (salon, sewing workshop, etc.) - 29 (16, 11%), kindergartens - 13 (7, 22%). (Diagram 7)

Which issue is more priority and topical for you and the women in your community?



Different issues were emphasized during the qualitative research.

E.J., a woman of 36, local expert: We have one-time health and social assistance and various social programs. There are no people in the municipality who have addressed and been refused to help. This year, several major infrastructure projects will be completed within the framework of the Regional Development Fund (e.g. outdoor lighting, drainage canals). Some initiatives will definitely be considered in next year's budget.

G.M., a man of 33, local expert: A critical problem today is the Covid pandemic, and all the structures are involved in the fight against it. Healthcare is fully mobilized.

T.B., 42, woman, local expert: Employment is the first and most relevant problem. Low salaries are also a problem. For example, salaries in kindergartens are so low that it is still a problem for the employee. We also have a problem with education. Vocational training centers is a good finding. Training courses should be provided according to local needs.

M.G., a woman of 51, local expert: During a pandemic, priority is given to health and social issues. We were able to mobilize all the resources quickly to deal with Covid 19. Volunteer groups took lunch to those over 70. We helped 470 families along with the business sector.

T.P., a woman of 27, employed: People face problems such as lack of access to medical care, family conflicts, increased migration.

A. Sh., a woman of 32, socially vulnerable: The cause is the political and economic instability in the country.

I.B., a woman of 63, employed: In my community, restoring the squares and mini-stadiums is a priority. For an educated young person, sports activities are necessary. In addition, people need a place where mothers can take their little ones for a walk. So far, I have been sceptical about resolving these issues. However, with the help of Fund "Sukhumi" and the developed electronic petition, I think we will solve these two issues.

NK, a woman of 25, MA student: Young people who have received higher education and acquired the desired professions can not use their knowledge and experience in our city. There are no job opportunities here. As a result, the city is losing right-minded youth resources.

SG, a woman of 25: The most actual problem for me is transportation. Municipal transport does not work, and I have to walk to the city every day to get to work on time.

S. E., a woman of 22, employed: Economic and food problems are a priority. I am employed, but the salary is not enough. In addition, food prices are increasing, and we can not afford to buy them.

E. U., a woman of 30, employed: Due to the epidemiological situation, we study and work online. But, unfortunately, we do not have access to fast internet in our community.

M. P., a woman of 37, employed: I live on a central road, and street lighting is crucial for me. Sidewalks should also be repaired.

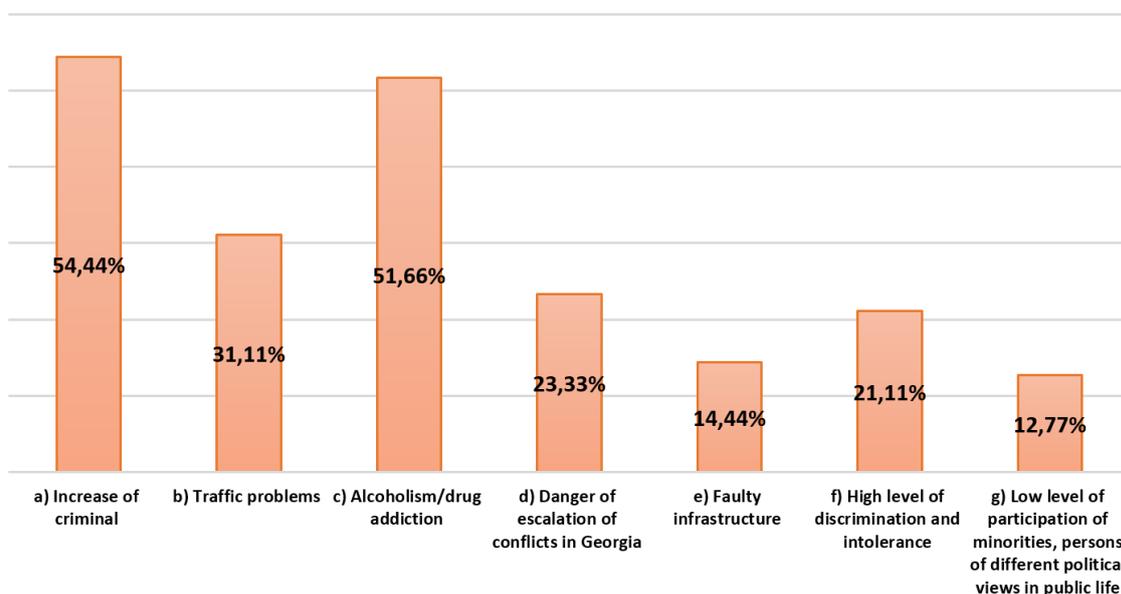
A. Ts., a woman of 40, employed: I live on a central road, and there are dangerous turns. Accidents resulting in casualties are common. Therefore, it is necessary to arrange an artificial barrier.

I.J., a woman of 50, employed: It would be good to have a children’s playground.

M.M., a woman of 50, employed: Land cultivation and a tractor service is the most relevant issue for us.

Quantitative research shows that there significant threats for the Khoni Municipality population is the increase of criminal - 98 (54,44%), including IDP - 14 (14.28%), local - 76 (77.55%). No less dangerous is alcohol/drug addiction - 93 (51.66%), including: IDP - 14 (15.05%), local - 71 (76, 34%). As for traffic problems, it bothers 56 (31,11%) participants. The danger of conflict escalation in Georgia is reported by 42 (23.33%). A high level of discrimination and intolerance towards women is emphasized by 38 (21.11%). Faulty infrastructure is dangerous for 26 (14.44%). The low level of participation of minorities and persons of different political views in public life is emphasized by 23 (12.77%). (Diagram 8)

Which do you consider to be the biggest problem for public security?



To the question - “Do your children, grandchildren, or acquaintances have access to quality higher education?” the following answers are recorded: 84 (46.66%) women mentioned partially, including 9 (10.71%) IDPs, 70 (83.33%) locals, 2 (2.3%) single mothers, mother of many children - 0. 8 (9.52%) are socially vulnerable. 82 (45.55%) respondents have access to quality education. Quality education is not available for 14 (7.77%) respondents, including 1 (7.14%) IDP. 12 locals, one of them is socially vulnerable (85.71%), single mother - 0, mother of many children - 0.1(7.14%) socially vulnerable, disabled person -0.

Through quantitative research, we could also find out impeding reasons: low quality of education was reported by 86 (47.77%), few professional teachers is pointed out by 50 (27.77%), faulty school infrastructure (depreciated, old building, faulty sewerage system, lack of water, etc.) is mentioned by 28 (15, 55%), school is far from home for 11 (6.11%), lack of appropriate technical equipment in the school (computers, internet, specialized subject classrooms (physics, chemistry, biology, etc.) is reported by 38 (21.11%), poor Internet connection (for distance learning process) is mentioned by 56 (31.11%).

The survey data showed that 94 (52.22%) respondents have access to higher education. It is partially accessible to 75 (41.66%) respondents and not available to 11 (6.11%).

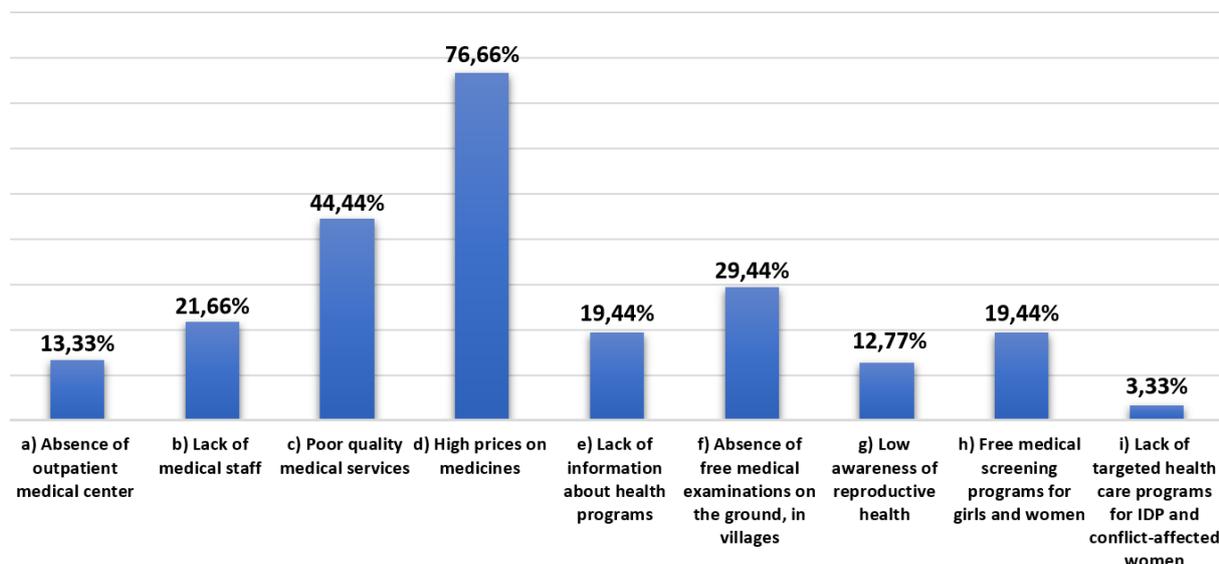
The respondents emphasize the following problems preventing getting higher education: 33 (18.33%) think that there are no vocational guidance courses in schools, which prevents the entrant from choosing the best profession, free accommodation in the city is an obstacle for 46 (25.55%), the high tuition fee is reported by 87 (48.33%) and low-quality tuition is a problem for 14 (7.77%).

BLOCK V: HEALTH SECURITY

The quantitative research did not ignore the problems in the field of health care. The participants mentioned the current and priority problems for them:

- Absence of outpatient medical center is a problem for 24 (13.33%) women, including: 7 (29.16%) IDPs, 16 (66.66%) locals. Lack of medical staff is reported by 39 (21.66%), including: 6 (15.38%) IDPs, 32 (82.05%) locals. Poor-quality medical services is a problem for 80 (44.44%), including: 9 (11.25%) IDPs, 66 (82.5%) locals. High prices on medicines are the most pressing problem for 138 (76.66%), including 14 (10.14%) IDPs, 113 (81.88%) locals. Lack of information about health programs is relevant for 35 (19.44%), including: 2 (5.71%) IDPs, 30 (85.71%) locals. The absence of free medical examinations on the ground in villages is a priority issue for 53 (29.44%), including 5 (9.43%) IDPs, 44 (83.01%) locals. Low awareness of reproductive health is pointed out by 23 (12.77%), including 2 (8.69%) IDPs, 18 (78, 26%) locals. Free medical screening programs for girls and women is problematic for 35 (19.44%), including 3 (8.57%) IDPs, 26 (74.28%) locals. The lack of targeted health care programs for IDP and conflict-affected women is relevant for 6 (3.33%), including 0 IDP and 6 (100%) locals. (Diagram 9)

Which of the following health problems is more relevant and a priority in your family or community?



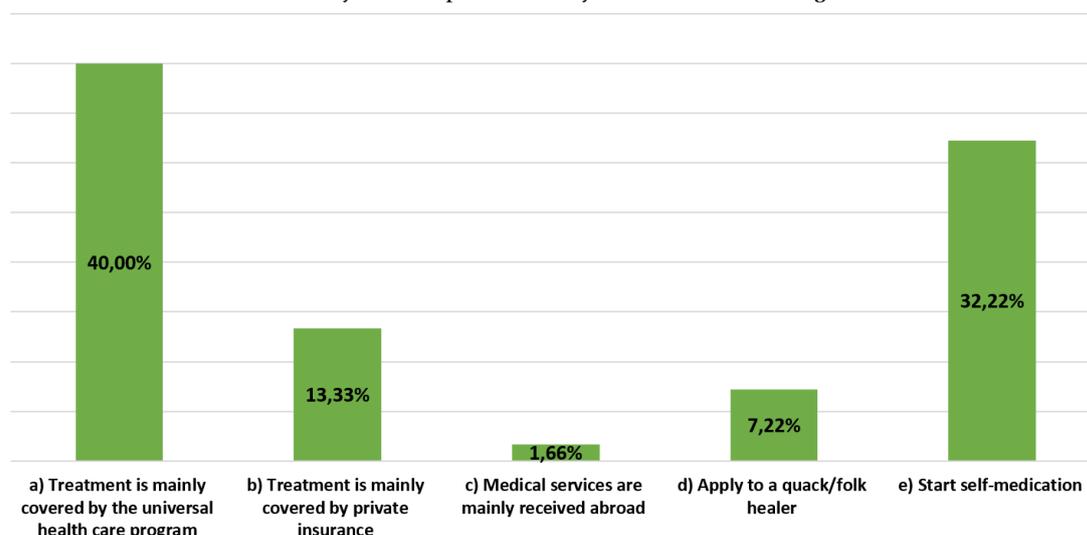
Healthcare problems have been identified through a qualitative study.

M.G., a woman of 51, local expert: We conducted a survey and found that we have 1046 beneficiaries with disabilities. As for Covid 19, all Khoni dwellers are given 150 GEL as one-time assistance to undergo any medical examination.

L.K., a woman of 59, local expert: Medical packages for the blind, cancer patients (malignant tumours), persons with disabilities, inpatient and outpatient services with medications have been increased. We have renewed the council of persons with disabilities. The mayor is its chairman, and the council has developed a particular program.

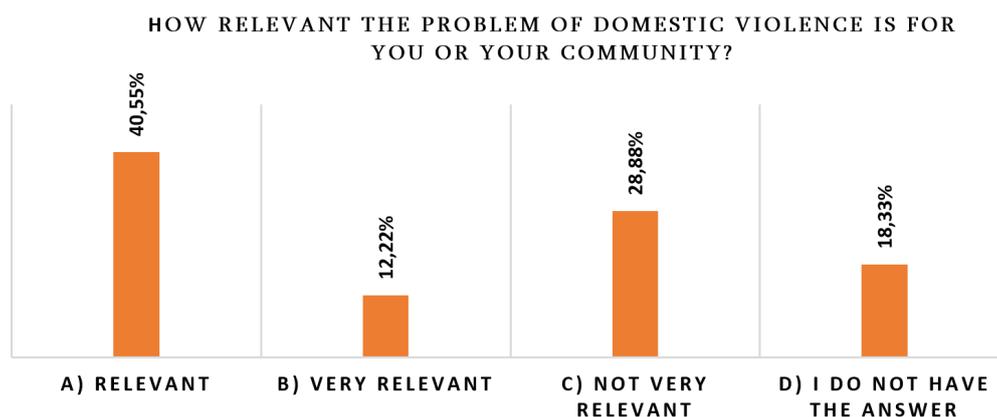
It was interesting how women manage to solve a problem during a health deterioration. The following answers have been recorded: for 72 (40%) treatment is mainly covered by the universal health care program, 24 (13.33%) benefit from private insurance, 3 (1.66 %) receive medical services mainly abroad, 13 (7.22%) apply to a quack/folk healer, 58 (32.22%) start self-medication, including 8 IDPs (13.79%), 46 (79.31%) locals. (Diagram 10)

How do you solve a problem when your health is deteriorating?



BLOCK VI: PERSONAL SECURITY

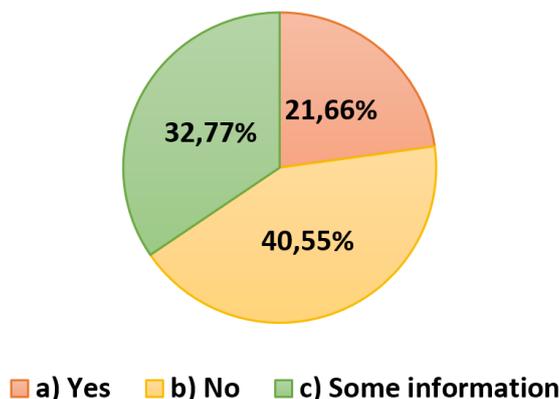
Quantitative research has revealed the problem of domestic violence. The research has shown that the problem of violence is considered urgent by 73 (40,55%), including: 10 (13,69%) IDPs, 57 (78,08%) locals, 2 (2.73%) single, 3 (4.10%) mothers of many children, 7 (9.58%) socially vulnerable ones and 22 (30.13%) unemployed respondents. The problem is very relevant for 22 (12.22%), including: 4 (18.18%) IDPs, 17 (77.27%) locals, 1 (4.54%) single, 0 mother of many children, 1 (4.54%) socially vulnerable and 4 (18.18%) unemployed respondents. For 52 (28.88%) respondents it is not relevant and 33 (18.33%) ones do not have answer, including: 2 (6.06%) IDPs and 29 (87, 87%) locals. (Diagram 11)



The survey has also represented the data on the most common form of violence. The answers to this question are following: physical (beating, etc.) is pointed out by 31 (17.22%), the majority of respondents 115 (63.88%) emphasized psychological violence (humiliation, verbal abuse, swearing, neglect, etc.), economic violence (manipulation of funds, financial dependence on one family member, seizure of money, ban on cash management, etc.) is reported by 32 (17.77%) and sexual (rape, sexual harassment) by 2 (1.11%).

Survey analysis shows whether the respondents have information about support services for victims of violence. 73 (40.55%), including: 9 (12, 32%) IDPs, 56 (76, 71%) locals do not have information. 59 (32.77%) have information about some services, and 48 (21.66%) women are aware of them. (Diagram 12)

Do you have information about support services for victims of violence
(location, telephone, what specific services it provides)?



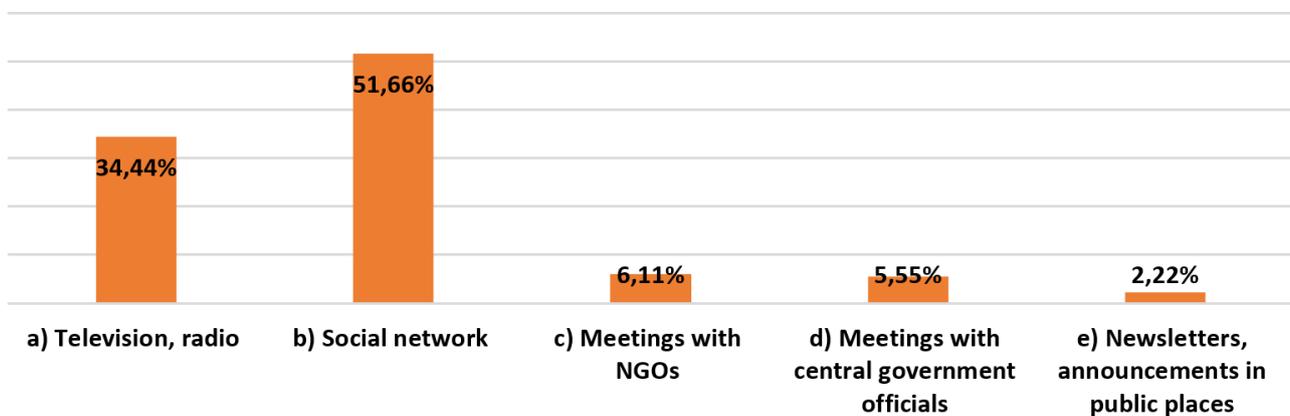
If you are aware, list them:

- State and NGO crisis centres - 8 (4,44%);
- State and NGO shelters -13 (7,22%);
- State Legal Services - 5 (2,77%);
- Hotline - 96 (53,33%);
- NGOs and their services - 14 (7,77%);
- Municipal Services - 14 (7,77%);
- NGOs working on issues of violence - 10 (5,55%).

E.J., a woman of 36, local expert: We have a program to rent an apartment for a victim of violence, which is a novelty in our budget. We try to provide information to people through social networks or meetings.

The survey materials have revealed the source of information they get information about support services for victims of violence or potential victims. The responses were distributed as follows: television, radio is a source of information for 62 (34.44%) women. In most of the answers, 93 (51.66%) respondents pointed out social networks. Meetings with NGOs is a source of information for 11 (6.11%) and meetings with central government officials for 10 (5.55%) respondents. Newsletters, announcements in public places were pointed out by 4 (2.22%). (Diagram 13)

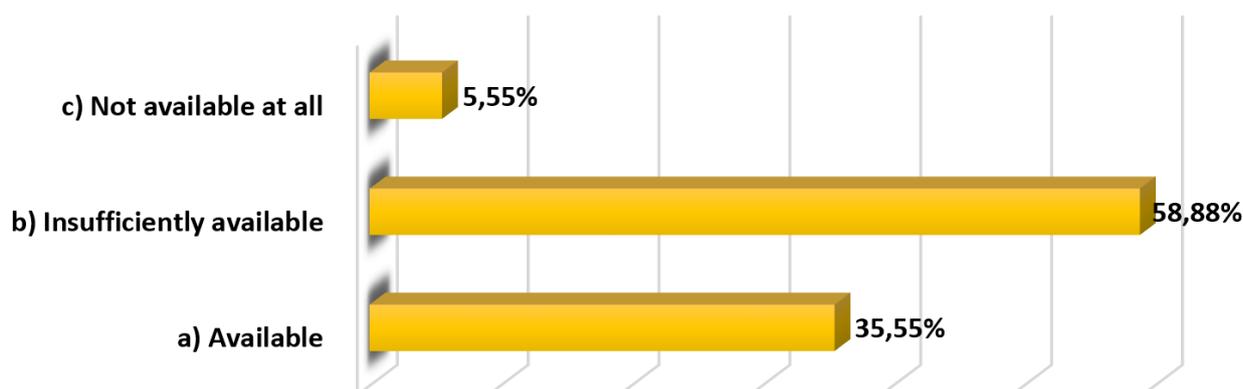
From what source did you get information about support services for victims of violence or potential victims?



T.B., a woman of 42, local expert: The active part of the population has more information. However, there is a second category - less informed. Many do not have access to the internet. At the time of Covid 19, when we moved to remote work, this became more apparent. A large percentage do not have internet access. Nevertheless, information is available, and its primary source is the internet. If a person wishes, s/he can get it.

106 (58.88%) respondents of the quantitative survey believe that the existing services are not available to the population, 64 (35.55%) consider it accessible, 10 (5.55%) do not consider it available at all. (Diagram 14)

In your opinion, how available are the existent services to the population of your city (municipality, village)?



According to the quantitative survey participants` opinion, the programs implemented by the local self-government to address violence against women are partly sufficient 56 - (31.11%). On the other hand, 55 (30.55%) women do not have information about the mentioned local self-government programs, 35 (19.44%) consider them insufficient, for 17 (9.44%) of the respondents they are sufficient and 17 (9.44%) talk about the diversity of the programs and the adaptation to the specific needs of the victims of violence.

Qualitative research has revealed the following answers:

TP, a woman of 27, employed: It is necessary to inform the population more, if necessary, not to abstain from referral.

A.Sh., a woman of 32, socially vulnerable: Programs are never sufficient, though they are pretty effective.

N.J., a woman of 55, housewife: They are not sufficient because violence against women continues.

T.N., a woman of 28, student, employed: The problem is that the female victim has nowhere to go, there are shelters in some regions, but even there, the victim can stay for some time and then she is left without shelter.

I.B., a woman of 63, teacher: Today, many women are victims of violence, and they have a feeling of insecurity. They can not apply to law enforcement agencies. Many do not know how to behave at this time.

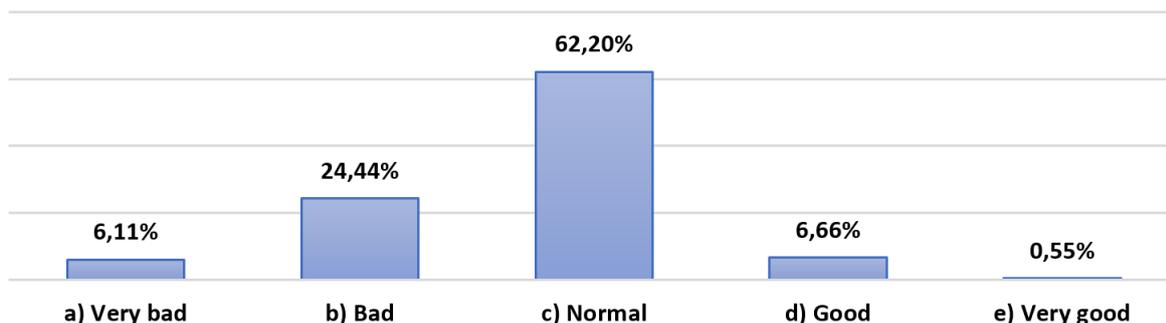
S.G., a woman of 22, employed: Violence response programs are not sufficient, and they need to be further developed. In addition, community`s awareness should be raised, and they should not refrain from the referral if necessary.

N.K., a woman of 25, M.A. student: The statistics of violence against women are alarming. Various discussions and trainings addressing violence should be actively organized, and competent persons should be invited. Women victims of violence will be informed about the programs or organizations that protect them.

BLOCK VII: ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

Quantitative survey participants assessed the sanitary situation in their town/village and the environmental situation as well. 11 (6.11%) respondents marked a very bad situation, the situation is bad for 44 (24.44%) respondents, the current situation is considered normal by 112 (62.2%) respondents, 12 (6.66%) women rated it well, meanwhile, and 1 (0.55%) is satisfied. (Diagram 15)

How would you rate the sanitary situation in your town/village and the situation regarding environmental protection?



Among the most relevant environmental problems in the community, the participants named: polluted air - 70 (38.88%), poor access to clean water - 25 (13.88%), sewage system malfunction - 30 (16.66%), lack or malfunction of drainage pipes - 55 (30.55%).

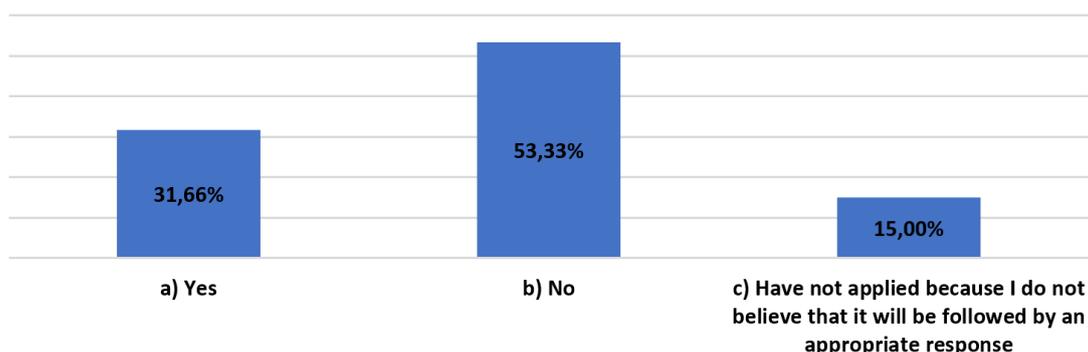
A qualitative study has also revealed some views on environmental issues.

K.K., a woman of 37, employed: A significant problem is an ecological condition caused by vehicle emissions.

BLOCK VIII: GENERAL QUESTIONS

What kind of communication the population have with the local government and whether they have applied to the local self-government or any other state body to solve any personal, official, public issue, the respondents gave the following answers: 57 (31.66%) answered “yes”, 96 (53, 33%) respondents have not applied, 27 (15%) respondents have not applied to them because they do not believe that they will receive an appropriate response. (Figure 16).

Have you applied to the local self-government or any other state to solve any personal, official, public issue?



A qualitative study has identified several categories of people: some have addressed and resolved their problems, some have not addressed, some have not addressed yet but hope for support.

T.N., a woman of 28, student, employed: I have addressed the local self-government for social assistance, medical assistance, and they have granted my requests.

T.Ch., a woman of 85, employed: I have addressed them, and they have helped me.

I.B., a woman of 63: I have applied, and I have been funded. They did not neglect my appeal, and now, my street has outdoor lighting.

S.G., a woman of 22, employed: I have not applied. If I need it, I will apply. I hope there will be an appropriate response from them.

E.U., a woman of 30, employed: Relatives around me applied to the City Hall to fund the operation, and they have been provided with assistance.

A.Ts., a woman of 40, employed: I have addressed to them, and there was a prompt reaction.

M.P., a woman of 37, employed: I applied to them to fund expensive medical tests, and I was funded.

M.M., a woman of 50, employed: I need to be operated, and I was partially funded, and my health condition is satisfactory now.

To the question “What form of civic engagement did you use to communicate with the local government?”, the answers are as follows: settlement/village meetings - 70 (38.88%), attendance at the City Council session - 5 (2.77%), listening to the Mayor’s reports, City Hall services - 12 (6.66%), petition - 12 (6.66 %), Mayor’s Advisory Council, Gender Council, Council of Persons with Disabilities - 8 (4.44%), civil budgeting - 3 (1.66%), electronic form of communication (email, window for sending a letter on the municipality’s website) - 70 (38.88%).

It appeared that some of the focus group respondents use different forms, while some are dissatisfied with the fact that the government does not study their needs, and there is a lack of communication.

T.P., a woman of 27, employed: We receive information from village representatives.

K.K., a woman of 37, employed: Communication and consultations with citizens are not frequent. They do not study the population’s satisfaction as well.

TP, a woman of 28, employed: The local or central government study population`s needs more or less studied, though not so often.

T. Ch., a woman of 85, employed: Economic problems hit the state. Everybody talks about the problems, but nobody studies the reasons.

I.B., a female teacher of 63: The rural population suffers from a lack of communication. A strong state stands on a strong village. So, social programs must be tailored to the village.

N.K., a woman of 25, M.A. student: The approach regarding communication and consulting is different in a village and city. Most people do not even know about the free circles of the League

of Youth Unions in my village. However, many gifted children are unable to go to these circles due to a lack of money.

G.M., a man of 33, local expert: Our municipality is small, and we have close communication with the population. We are always ready to listen to their problems. We do not need special reception days for this. We try to solve problems and not limit ourselves to just reviewing the applications.

E.J., a woman of 36, local expert: Self-government informs the population through the Internet, website, Facebook page and information meetings. The official reception days with the mayor are Tuesday and Thursday. Municipalities can not afford to conduct surveys. It is quite an expensive pleasure. However, we are successfully cooperating with the NGOs that work in this direction, and we use the results of their studies very well. The recent monitoring aimed to identify the degree of transparency, efficiency, and inclusiveness of the City Hall work and study the current situation in this direction. We have successfully implemented two projects within the Fund “Sukhumi” project framework, and now we have a hotline in the municipality and a modernized website. These two services are very effective. Population referrals and inclusiveness have increased. Local visits and a hotline are available. Besides, written referrals are very effective.

M.G., a woman of 51, local expert: Rural meetings are often held, and the represented problems are always promptly responded to.

The question: “To what extent are the services and programs provided by local authorities tailored to (or reflect) the specific needs of vulnerable groups?”, was answered as follows: local programs address the specific needs of vulnerable groups - 78 (43.33%), programs do not address the specific needs of individual vulnerable groups - 49 (27.22%), the practice of assessing the specific needs and satisfaction of vulnerable population with programs is not introduced - 53 (29.44%).

T.B., a woman of 42, local expert: The Adult Education Center in Khoni is tailored to the needs, there are free computer, accounting and language courses.

M.G., a woman of 51, female, local expert: We try to tailor the social program to each person. Due to the referral, we changed the rehabilitation program for autistic children. It used to serve children from 0 to 7. Now the program includes children up to 15. There are 16 autistic children in total, each of whom is given 200 GEL every month. Children are our priority, and we decided to set up a child support department at City Hall to study children’s problems thoroughly. We are thinking of creating a temporary residence in Khoni, where the beneficiary will stay for 10 days. The City Hall will fund her apartment rent and three meals a day. Up to 30 letters are received at the City Hall every day, so the work is routine.

L.K., a local expert, 59: We give 50 GEL a month to beneficiaries with severe visual impairment. There are 56 such people in Khoni. The reintegration program is also effective. The children we brought back to the families feel comfortable. This program aims to empower families. We have helped 4 such families. The program has been working for 3 years. We give 1500 GEL to each family a year. There is a guesthouse in Khoni, where one of these families lived, and with the money received from this program, the mother was able to leave the hotel with her children and start a new life.

T.P., a woman of 27, employed: Women need to be economically empowered - they leave the country to find work.

K.K., a woman of 37, employed: People with disabilities find it challenging to get a job because they do not have the proper equipment in the city.

T.N., a student of 28, employed: In the regions, mainly people with disabilities need help.

A.P., a woman of 30, employed: Nowadays, all the target groups, large families and socially vulnerable ones need help with specific local programs.

S.E., 22 years old, employed: As for me, people with disabilities are the target group that most needs to be helped with similar programs.

S.G., 22 years old, employed: For me, the priority segment is elderly, for whom medication is vital.

N.K., 25 years old, M.A. student: I would emphasize gifted young people. They need to realize themselves so that they do not have to migrate to other cities or countries. They need our support, and their support is the way to success for our country and community.

Quantitative research has also revealed how the increased threat to human security affects the state of the population. 136 (75.55%) believe that stress, tension are increased. Health problems are relevant for 76 (42.22%) respondents. 79 (43.88%) women have a fear of the future. 66 (36.66%) believe that psychological problems are growing. Society is depolarized for 21 (11.66%) women. Cases of domestic violence and violence against women are increasing, which is reported by 29 (16.11%) respondents. 70 (38.88%) report an increase in the number of migrating women and split-up families. 24 (13.33%) respondents have a high sense of insecurity. (Diagram 17)



RECOMMENDATIONS

During the qualitative study, respondents discussed the challenges in their community or the municipality in general and their solutions. Based on them, the following recommendations can be suggested:

- The local government should implement programs focused on women's economic empowerment;
- It is desirable to establish small enterprises in cooperation with the local government, where women will be able to study and work in certain activities;
- It is desirable to increase the women's inclusiveness in the elaboration of municipal programs;
- More live or online communication is desirable to identify and study local problems;
- It is desirable to encourage local or central government officials to meet with women and promote their economic empowerment through appropriate programs;
- It is desirable to study the effectiveness of existing programs, make appropriate adjustments and develop new programs based on needs;
- It is desirable to activate electronic communication in the municipality as much as possible: hotline, petition;
- The active cooperation of the local government with the youth center and the center for adults is encouraged, which contributes to the involvement of more people, including vulnerable groups, in free educational circles or courses;
- It is necessary to solve various problems (creating a home care service; outdoor lighting; so-called artificial barriers on the roads; arranging a lying police officer; arranging children's playgrounds and squares; facilitating land cultivation) according to the needs identified during the research.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS) SENAKI MUNICIPALITY

KHATUNA GOGUA

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

THE AIM AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Aim of the research: The main foundation for the establishment of high standards of human security in the society is the protection of human rights envisaging gender characteristics, which should be based on the identification of problems existing in this area and the needs research.

The aim of this research is to study the needs of women in Senaki Municipality and to assess the quality of human security according gender characteristics based on the analysis of the obtained data.

The research was conducted by the Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi" from April 1 to April 25, 2021. During the preparation of the order, 18 people were involved in the field work, who were

retrained through pre-trainings and workshops. The survey included representatives of Senaki Municipality local self-government, authorized persons of culture, infrastructure, gender, social departments as target experts. The Fund “Sukhumi” thanks the above-mentioned persons for their support and information.

Research Methodology: The research is based on the analysis of the materials, obtained by consolidating quantitative and qualitative results.

A pre-designed questionnaire was used to conduct the quantitative research. Which was placed in Google form and the survey process was conducted in online format. A focus discussion model and method of 4 in-depth interviews were used to obtain qualitative data.

BASIC INFORMATION

The questionnaire of quantitative research consisted of 8 blocks, the first block mainly reflected the demographic characteristics, the questionnaire of the other blocks was related to determining the quality of human safety according to economical, food, public, health, personal, ecological segments. The last, the eighth block combines general questions. 153 women were involved in the process of quantitative survey in Senaki Municipality. Totally 28 persons, as respondents, were involved in the process of collecting qualitative data, including one man (local expert).

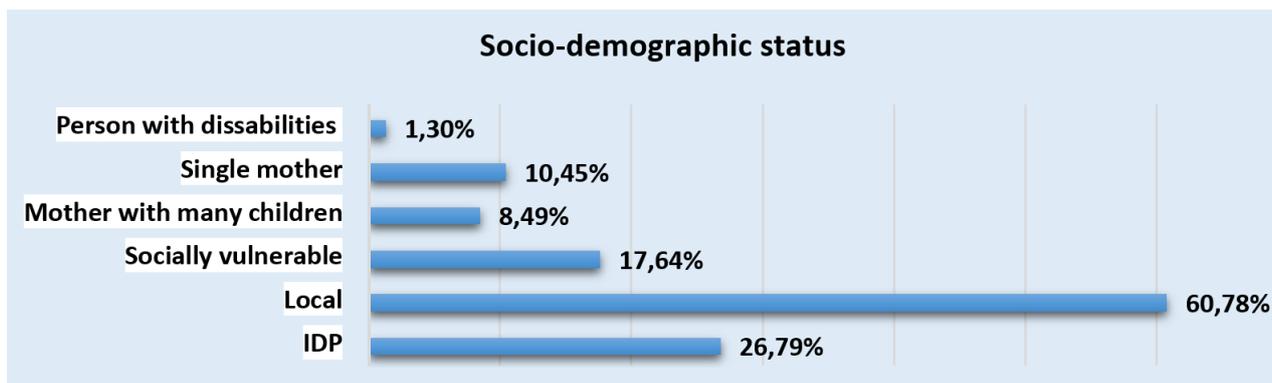
Totally 181 people (180 women, one man) from Senaki Municipality participated in the survey.

BLOCK I: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH

According to the socio-demographic characteristics, the research included: IDPs, locals, socially vulnerable people, mothers with many children and single mothers, persons with disabilities and their family members, teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs, community leaders, students, pensioners, youth, local experts, etc.

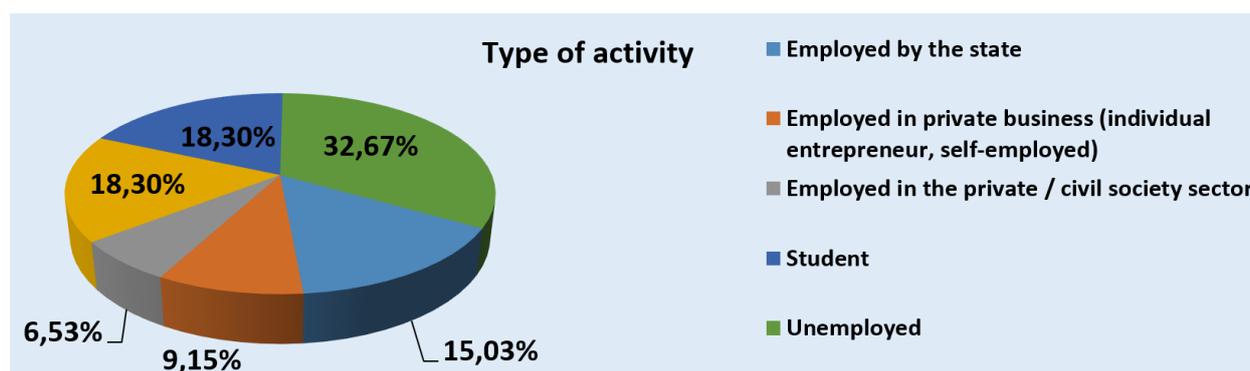
The average age of respondents in the research was distributed as follows: 35.06% of respondents in the age category from 18 to 30 were women. A similar number - 35.06% was observed in the age category from 31 to 45. 21.42% of the total number fell into the age category from 45 to 65. A relatively small part of women - 7.84% are over 65 years old.

According to the Social Status, the majority of survey respondents - 60.78% are locals, 26.79% - IDPs from Abkhazia, and 17.64% are socially vulnerable people. It is important, that 8.49% of women were included in the survey with the status of mothers with many children and the number of women with status of single mothers was 10.45%, which allow us to study the needs of this vulnerable group. 33% of respondents are socially vulnerable. The survey identified 1.30% of women with disabilities, although this number is also valuable in identifying the needs of these vulnerable groups (Diagram 1).



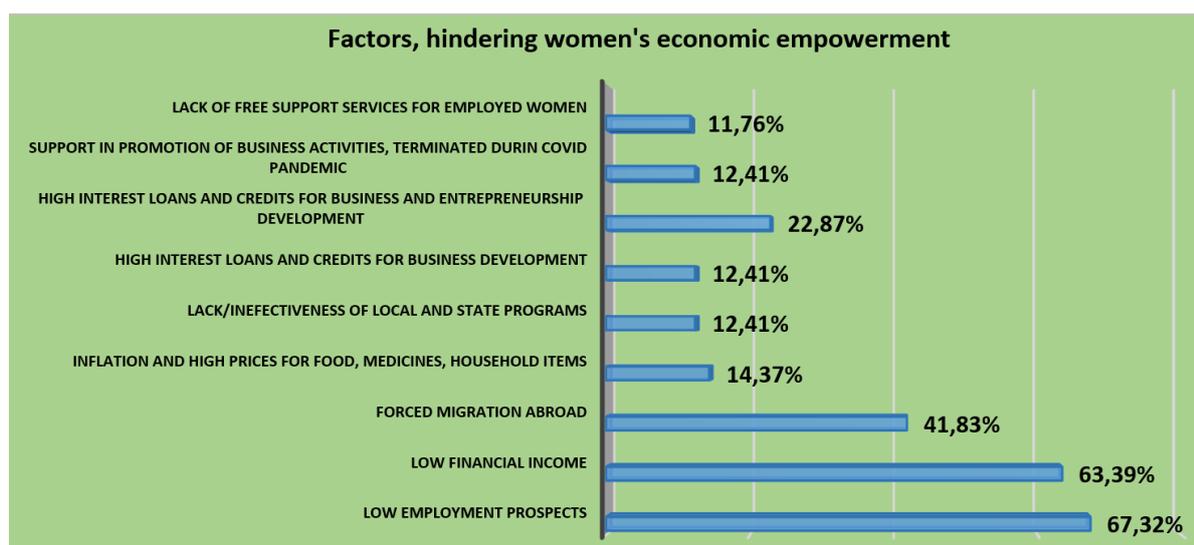
According to the type of activity, 32.67% of the survey respondents are unemployed. Then comes a total number of students -18.30%. 16.99% of the general indicator is engaged in agricultural work. The number of persons employed by the state is slightly behind the mentioned data - 15.03%. 9.15% of respondents fell into the category of those involved in private business. The number of women employed in the private / civil society sector was 6.53%. 1.30% of retired women fell into the category "other".

If we look at the diversity of categories we can assume that the obtained data represent the needs of women working in almost all fields (Diagram 2).



BLOCK II: ECONOMIC SECURITY

Economic empowerment is based on financial income of the family, which is often determined by income stability. The picture obtained from the survey shows to what source is the financial income of the population tied to. 33.98% of the respondents consider salary as the main source of income. For 25.49%, money transfers are the source of family income, which is based on the high migration of women from this municipality to different countries. Pension is the main source of income for 22.97%. 14.97% are engaged in the household business and are supported by the income received from it. 15.03% use the assistance of relatives. 14.37% receive income from small business, the allowance for socially vulnerable family was noted by 12.41%. (Diagram 3).



Low employment prospects were cited as a significant hindering factor to women's economic empowerment by 67.32%. These data are slightly higher than 63.39%, who believe that low financial income is hindering factor to economic empowerment. 41.83% consider that, such a barrier is forced migration from the country. Inflation and high prices are considered to be a hindering factor for economical empowerment for 14.37%, while 22.87% of the respondents name high-interest loans and credits. 12.41% of respondents say that there is no environment promoting business, in the opinion of exactly the same number of respondents, it is impossible to restore the business, terminated due to a pandemic, without the support of the state. If women are not supported in terms of employment, even with childcare services in kindergartens and schools, in these conditions, single mothers and mothers with many children will find it very difficult to be involved in economic activities - 11.76% of respondents agree with this opinion.

“Those who can work, leave Georgia. You can not find anyone for help, if anything happens. A while ago a neighbor on my street died and they could not find men to help. Now the migration of women has also increased. What will make our economy prosperous? There are no working people left “- M.B. 57 years old, employed, local.

“Banks have high interest rates, those who started a business with a loan taken from the bank, all went bankrupt. Now everyone is intimidated, no one trusts the banks “- M.B. 42 years old, IDP.

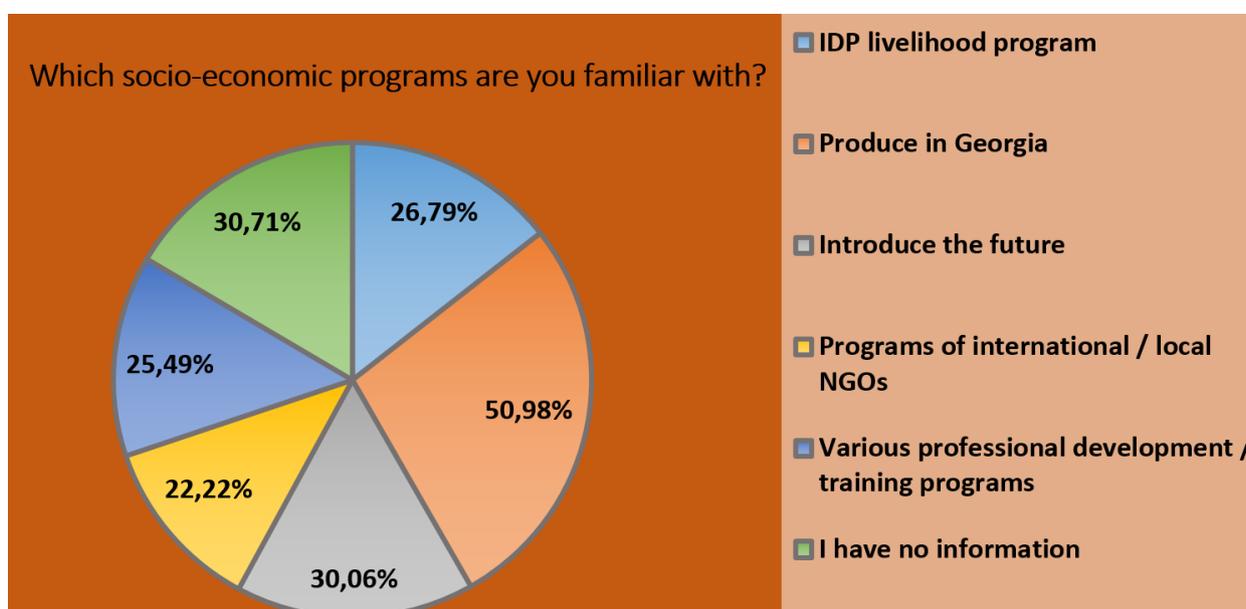
Qualitative data show that the pandemic has become one of the most serious obstacles to the development of the economy. According to the participants, it is necessary to create new support programs to overcome this barrier.

“If you stop a business for a year, it is finished for sure. It is very difficult to start all over again without assistance from the state. More and more programs are needed now to enable people to start the business again. Single assistances can not change anything “- F.D. 61 years old, local, employed.

The obtained data shows **how much the population is informed about the state programs of agricultural development, small business promotion.** The majority of respondents (50.98%) remember “Produce in Georgia”, 30.06% were familiar with the program “Introduce the Future”. 26.79% of respondents have some information about IDP livelihood programs. 22.22% say they

have information about the programs of international and local NGOs. 25.49% of the total number are familiar with various professional training programs. Against this background, a serious imbalance is created by the statement of citizens, who have no information about such programs at all. Envisaging the reality, that such a contingent is 30.71%, the need for dissemination of information is clear.

What is most needed to create a favorable environment for promoting family farming, small business, and self-employment? - The majority of respondents - 59.47% name available loans. Small business promotion programs can create a favorable environment - this is the opinion of 53.59% of respondents. 43.13% believe that the abundance of grant programs would have a significant effect in this regard. 35.94% of respondents consider the introduction of rural support programs as a solution. According to 21.56% support for agriculture, greenhouses and other types of activities would create favorable conditions for the development of the household business. 6.53% request consulting services in drafting business projects. 29.41% directly indicate that the population needs more information about existing state programs (**Diagram 4**).



If we look at the data obtained, it is clear that concrete part of citizens still need a serious informing, to fill the information deficit. At the same time, it is obvious that a significant part of the respondents have information about state programs. The next question provides an opportunity to find out **where citizens find information about economic programs**. 45.09% of the respondents name radio / television as the first source. 40.52% use the website of the municipality and get information from there. The same number says that they rely on online media outlets and social networks. 22.22% use the information sheet and information boards as the first source, and for 26.79%, a neighbor or acquaintance becomes a provider and disseminator of information. A relatively small part - 11.11% use the information received from the Mayor's representative.

The survey confirms that 16.33% use the websites of the Central Ministry. Only 1.37% name the NGOs as the first source, which may be due to the lack of local NGOs in Senaki Municipality. **To fill this gap, it is important to increase the role and mission of the non-governmental sector as a disseminator of information.**

“The village attorney is the main source that provides the population with the latest information. Communication of any citizen with the Mayor of the municipality is available. The population also spreads information among themselves”- N.G. 49 years old, local, mother with many children.

“The population is not informed about many programs implemented by the municipality. It should be printed in the form of booklets and distributed to the population, as a large part of the population does not have the skills to use the Internet”. - D.G. 34 years old, IDP, socially unprotected.

“If the Internet is not available to the population, it has a village attorney and can get comprehensive information from him. During the rural meetings, the population participates to address an important issue for the village. Social networks also allow to addresss the Mayor and write about their problems. There is also a City Hall hotline where the population receives comprehensive information”- D.L. 34 years old, local, employed.

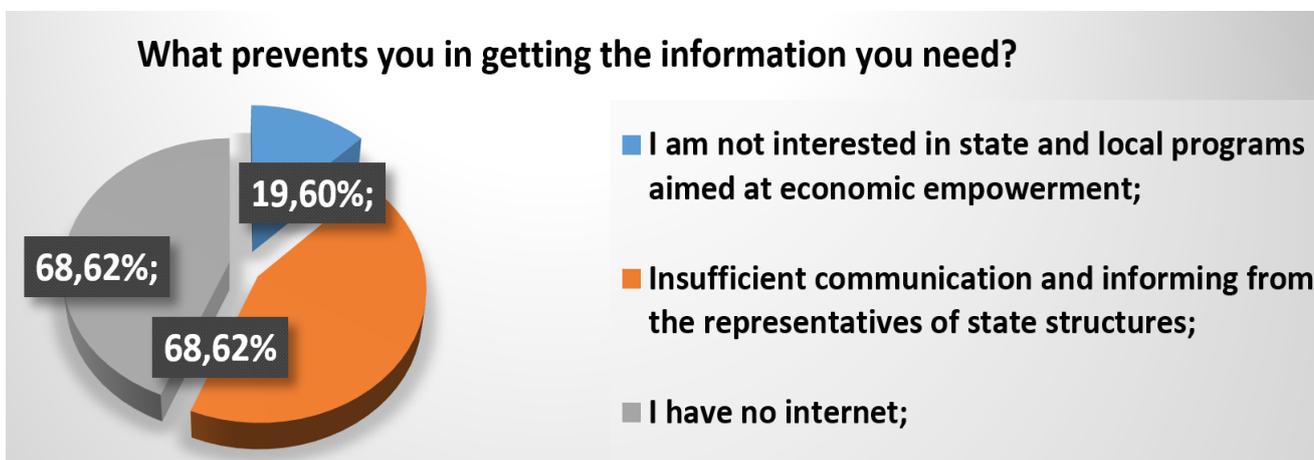
“The main source of information for me is the official website of the City Hall. All activities carried out by the City Hall are given here. This information is available to those interested, but it should be envisaged that this service is not available to majority of middle-aged people living in rural areas and therefore it is desirable to introduce other alternatives”- I.R. 38 years old, local, employed.

“As a pensioner, I do not have access to the Internet and therefore I receive information mainly from neighbors, relatives. Booklets can be published at the beginning of each year, where all the programs of the City Hall will be given. It will be more available. M.S. 68 years old, socially unprotected, local.

Interesting versions are offered by the category of respondents, who can not or do not get the necessary information. **What prevents you from getting the information you need?** - 68.62% of the respondents clearly state that there is insufficient communication between the population and government officials. 19.60% are not interested in state and local programs, which is based on nihilism and mistrust.

“I do not believe in such programs, you will take part in the competition and then such people will win, you will be surprised” – M.F. 37years old, unemployed.

Also noteworthy is the fact that 9.80% can not receive information due to lack of internet. Those who have the internet, also do not have the relevant skills to search for the necessary information on the electronic portal (**Diagram 5**).



“We can not understand anything on the Internet, because we do not have it. Even if we have the Internet, only Facebook is not enough, more than half can not enter the site, where such programs are given” – M.D. 61 years old, pensioner, socially unprotected.

“Senaki City Hall has a very good Facebook page. Information is available to everyone. Unfortunately, sometimes the population itself is less willing to do it. In most cases, the population does not have enough knowledge, how to use the existing services”. – M.K. 48 years old, local.

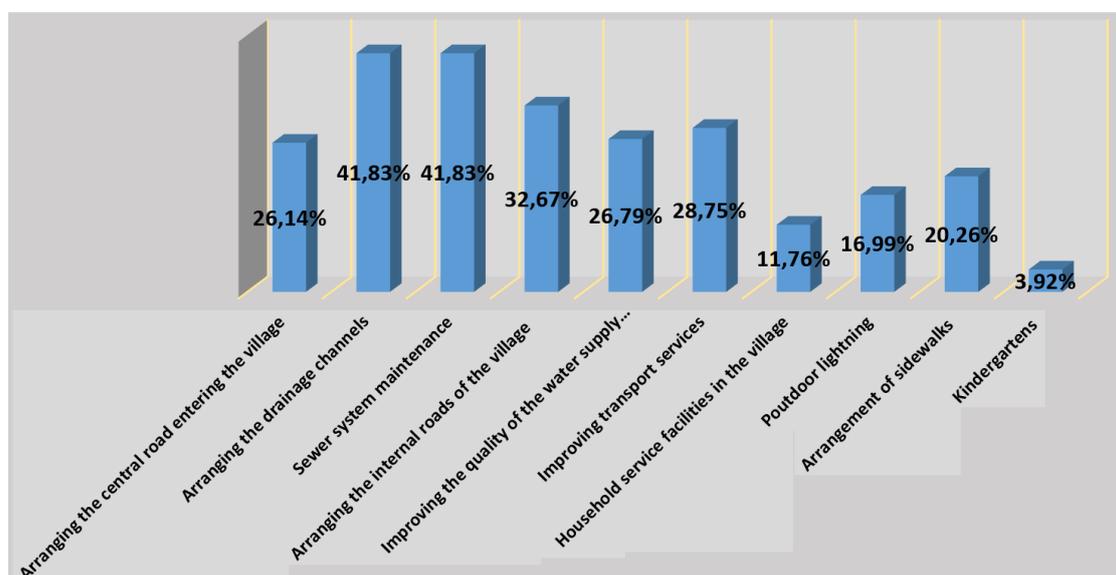
BLOCK III: FOOD SAFETY

The threats existing to the food safety component are mainly related to the price and quality of food products. 83.66% of respondents including 21.09% IDPs and 50% - locals see great threat in the high cost of products. For 68.62%, the lack of quality products is a particular threat. 12.41% name the absence of a product store nearby their settlement, as the main problem, which raises the risk, existing in the food safety component.

BLOCK IV: PUBLIC SAFETY

The survey in the public safety component is mainly based on the identification of prior problems in the community. Respondents had the opportunity to prioritize the most actual issues. The obtained data show that 41.83% list the absence of drainage channels in priority issues. 35.29% name the maintenance of the sewerage system as a priority problem. 32.67% consider the arrangement of rural internal roads as a topical issue for the community. For 28.75%, improvement of transport services is a priority, 26.79% are concerned about improving the quality of the water supply system and drinking water. Arrangement of sidewalks is considered a significant problem for 20.26% of respondents. 16.99% indicate the need for outdoor lighting. 11.76% consider the lack of household services sewing houses, salons in the village - as a topical problem. Absence of out-of-school circles worries 13.72% of respondents. For 11.76% of working mothers, child support services are relevant (**Diagram 6**).

Which issue is prior and topical for the women in your community



The data obtained from the focus interview participants coincides with quantitative data. As it turns out, the absence of drainage and sewerage system poses a serious threat to the population, especially women in the security component. A specific community is also named, for example, the IDP settlement, the so-called “military city”, where the problem is more visible.

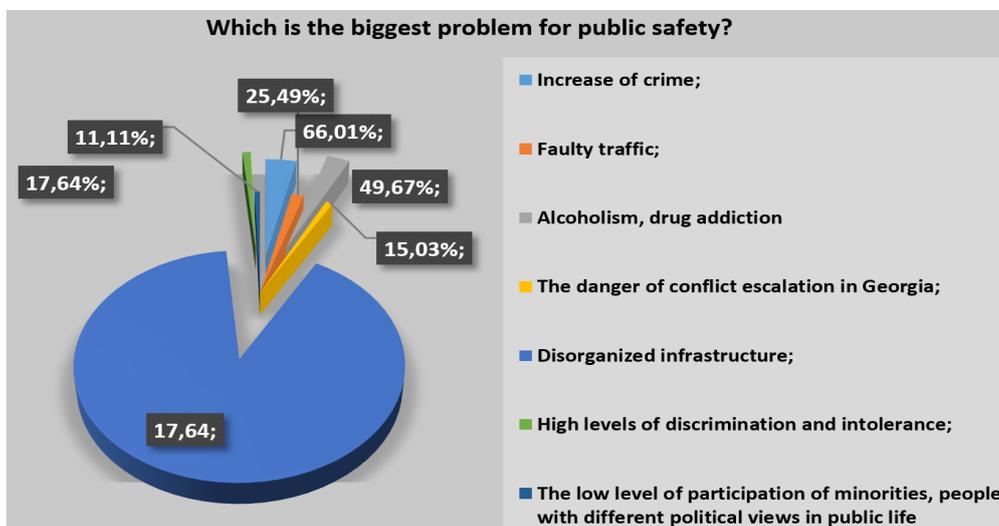
“The main problem in Senaki is the lack of separation of drainage and sewerage canals. For example, this problem exists in the IDP settlement, the basements are filled with water during rains. The streets are completely flooded. In 2008, repair works were carried out, as a result of which the old sewerage system was demolished and a new one was built, which does not flow into the central collector, because it reclined back, which causes the flow of sewage masses into the drainage channel. M.S. 45 years old, IDP.

“There is a small resource of drinking and technical water in the village. The village has no water supply, and from spring to autumn the water level in wells and boreholes decreases. At this time of the year, the population draws technical water from the river Tekhura, and is forced to buy drinking water. We have applied to the City Hall several times, but they do not have the financial resources to solve this problem”.

Citizens’ positions are fully shared by the local expert. According to the information received from the face-to-face interview, the infrastructural problems are still a serious problem for Senaki Municipality:

“The lack of a sewerage system is a priority problem for the municipality. Sewer canals flow into the drainage canals and this causes, of course, the greatest inconvenience and discomfort. The problem is complicated by the lack of a proper water supply system. In the central districts of the city, in fact, the water supply is inadequate, there are frequent shutdowns due to repair works or accidents, which irritate the population”. V.P. local expert.

A high degree of public safety is based on a sense of security, of stability. To the question: **What do you consider to be the biggest problem for public safety?** - the high rate - 66.01% of surveyed women name the increase of crime. 25.71% of them are IDPs, 59.40% are local. Women are particularly concerned about the prevalence of alcoholism and drug addiction in the community - 49.67%. Faulty traffic frightens 25.49% of respondents. Disorganized infrastructure is a particular concern for 17.64%. 15.03% of respondents are concerned about the danger of conflict escalation in Georgia. 17.64% believe that the high rate of discrimination in the society is a serious problem. 11.11% notice the low level of participation of minorities, people with different political views in public life (**Diagram 7**).



“There is a road in our community, where there is a sharp turn. Road accidents are frequent in this place. It is desirable to install “smart cameras” or so-called “Lying policeman” - a speed limit barrier, which avoids tragic accidents. These problems also affect the psychological condition of the population “- M.S. 49 years old, local.

“Due to the malfunction of the access road to the kindergarten, it is difficult for parents to take their children to the kindergarten, because the road is the central highway, where the so-called trailers move with high intensity and due to the lack of sidewalks for pedestrians, movement is dangerous” V.D. 34 years old, local, mother with many children.

“There is practically no sidewalk in the vicinity of the hotel “Versailles”, there is no space for parking, which blocks the pedestrian road. Previously, the traffic here was one-way and the situation was more or less better. It is desirable to restore this previous regulation” – N.K. 56 years old, local.

Access to qualified education is an indicator of a high degree of public safety. The data obtained from the survey show that 64.05% have only partial access to education. This category includes single mothers - 14.28%, women with many children - 10.20%. Only 23.52% say that they have access to education, answers of 12.41% is negative.

Among the main reasons in negative answers 49.67% name the incomplete process of remote learning and low quality of internet. 26.14% consider low quality of teaching as a serious reason. 24.83% see the problem in the number of insufficient professional teachers. 15.68% say that school is far from their houses. According to 4.57%, faulty school infrastructure significantly reduces access to quality education.

“I think the issue of education is problematic in our community. Children do not have internet, cannot attend lessons during the pandemic, and can't follow educational process. The village representation should promote the internetization of the villages “- V.G. 39 years old, local.

“There is no stadium in the village, there is no need to talk about the village library. We have a club, but it is not arranged. What can young people do?! ”- Ts.P. 44 years old, local, employed.

“I have three children and a lot of problems with education. I can not hire additional teachers in all subjects. It is expensive and I do not have much money”. – M.D. 31 years old, single mother.

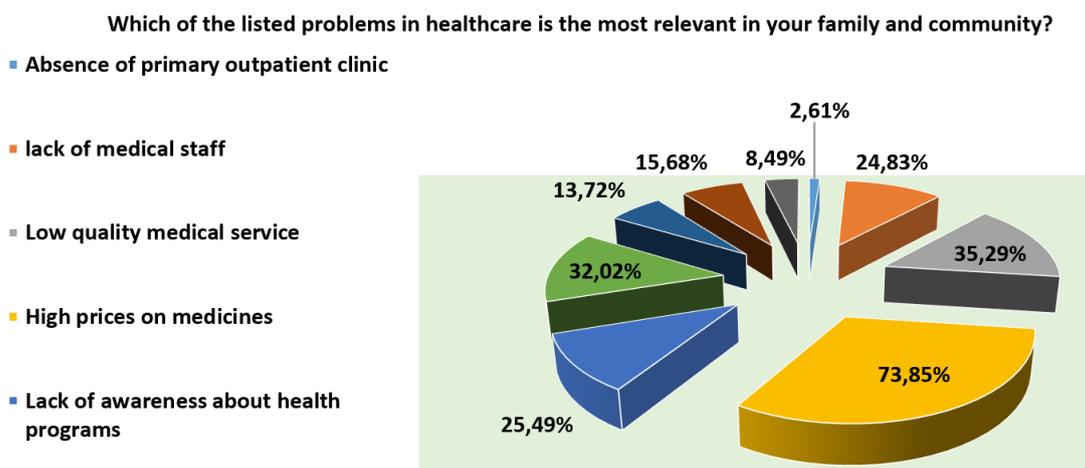
“I am sorry for the young people, you will not find one interesting place in all Senaki for young people, where they could gather and arrange events. The IDP settlement has a community organization, there are many programs for young people. There should be more such community organizations, young people should have possibility to realize themselves”- M.S. 36 years old, local mother with many children.

The survey reveals how much higher education is available. According to the information received, 64.05% say that it is partially available. 33.33% have a positive answer. 6.53% believe that they do not have access to higher education. 47.71% underline high fees as the main reason, 28.75% admit that free accommodation is not available for students coming from the region, which is a serious problem. According to 18.95%, there are no profession orientation courses in schools, which hinders the high school student to choose the best profession for him.

BLOCK V: HEALTH SAFETY

A high coefficient of health safety is often determined by the abundance of health programs, free screening programs, the presence of professional doctors, quality medicines and treatments. The figures from the survey actually reflect the attitude of women towards the problems in this area and show the **urgency and priority of health problems in their families or communities**. A large proportion of respondents - 73.85% clearly indicate that high prices for medicines are a particular threat to them. 35.29% are frightened by poor quality of medical services.

32.02% are concerned about the lack of free medical examinations in rural areas. 25.49% say that the population does not have information on health programs, which further complicates the situation in this area. 24.83% see elements of risk in lack of medical staff. Absence of free medical screening programs for girls and women is a particular priority for 15.68%. 13.72% think that the population has a low awareness of reproductive health and considers this problem a priority. 8.49% think that the lack of targeted health care programs is a topical issue for IDP and conflict-affected women (**Diagram 8**).



The abundance of problems in the field of health care is well reflected in the information obtained from qualitative data:

“There is an outpatient clinic in the village, but we cannot take patients because there are no conditions, the infrastructure is faulty. The elderly find it difficult to move around the city, so if it is not too difficult they do not go to the doctor. There is no pharmacy in such a big village. This is a problem of the whole village” - M.S. 59 years old, local, Senaki.

“It is necessary to inform the elderly about the state programs of universal health care, as well as about medical and social programs at the local level. My mother has been sick for a long time? Her pension is not enough for medicines. I just recently learned about the medicines, which cost one GEL. Such information should be known to the population” - S.D. local, socially vulnerable.

“Most of the elderly have poor health condition. Therefore it is important to increase access to medical services and medicines. It is also important to study the medical needs of the socially vulnerable and the elderly at the local level, where the village attorney and village deputy should be actively involved”. – M.A. 59 years old, local.

“The situation is aggravated by the daily increase of prices for medicines, pension is not enough to buy them. It would be good if the prices of medicines are regulated and do not fluctuate every 10-15 days. Despite the fact, that there are cheap medicines for pensioners according to the Ministry of Health, but the list does not include many medicines that I need systematically.”- M.S. 66 years old, IDP, pensioner.

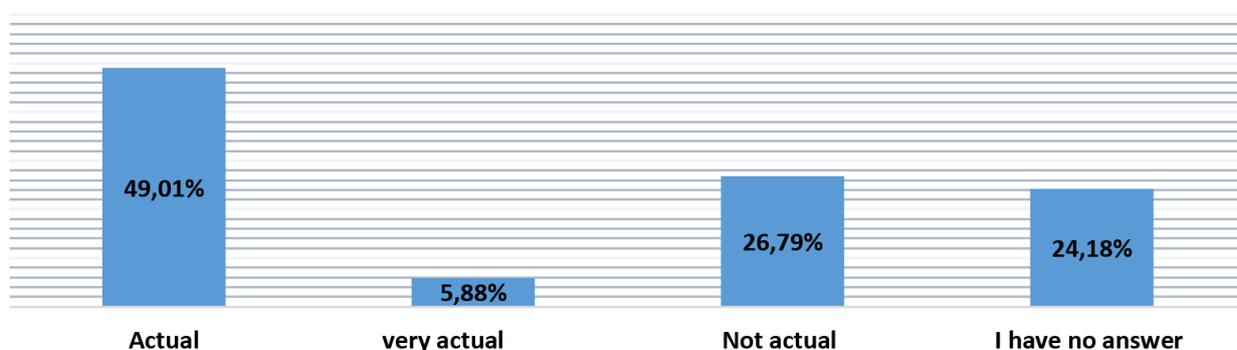
How do the population manage to overcome the above-mentioned problems, what means do they use in case of health problems? - The survey shows that 39.86% of treatment costs are mainly covered by the universal health care program. It is noteworthy that according to the data obtained, 33.98% carry out self-treatment, which is caused by a number of reasons.

“No one goes to the doctor timely”. Only when you can not stand on your feet , you address the doctor, or we carry our diseases and work as long as we can. We treat ourselves as long as our health allows us, when the condition worsens, only then we go to the doctor”- M.B. 48 years old, employed, local.

BLOCK VI: PERSONAL SECURITY

The main focus of this block was on the problem of domestic violence: the survey unequivocally confirmed that 49.01% consider domestic violence to be topical and 5.88% to be very topical. However, it is noteworthy that for 26.79% of respondents the problem is not relevant until today. Even more alarming is the position of 24.18% who say, that they have no answer to this question at all (Diagram 9).

In your opinion, how actual is the problem of domestic violence for you or in your community?



61.43% of respondents named the psychological violence as the most common form of violence, while 19.60% believe that the most common form is physical violence. 18.95% of respondents claim that economic violence is also quite disseminated form of violence.

“Gender equality is heard everywhere, but culture and traditional attitudes present women’s functions quite differently in terms of family and entrepreneurial activities. Woman in the kitchen, - man in outer activities. Such a tendency is still strong in the village”- M.Ch. 57 years old, local.

“A woman should work in a family, it is the opinion of men in the village. Women’s position is not envisaged in decision making, income is in husbands’ hands. Gender equality is just on a sheet of paper. Psychological violence is not considered as violence” – L.G. 32 years old, local.

It is important to find out what kind of information the population has about **victim assistance** services and where they get information from. A majority 50.32% of respondents say they know some of them. As 20.26% say they are familiar with the existing services. 29.41% have no information.

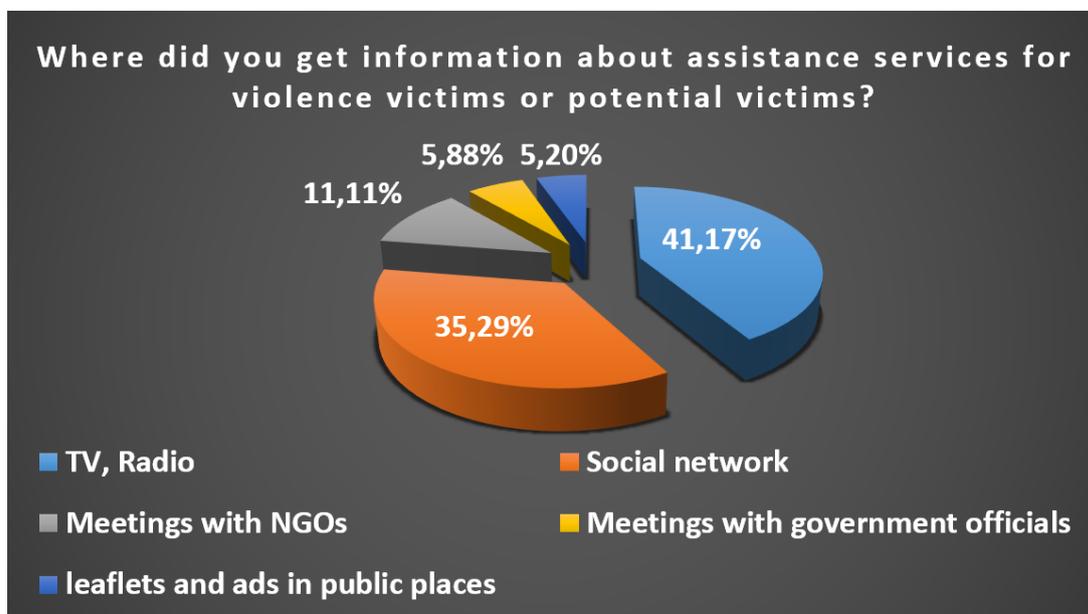
48.38% of those who gave positive answers, state that they know the hotline number from the victim support services. 12.90% know the existence of a shelter. Same percentage owns information about municipal services and free legal services. Only 6.45% are aware of the services of non-governmental organizations. None of the respondents has information about crisis centers.

“The programs that exist in our municipality are quite effective. The problem is that the population is not aware of these programs. It is desirable to introduce the programs to the population”- M.D. 42 years old, socially unprotected.

“Now, at this meeting, I heard that there exist concrete assistance and support for women - victims of violence. I would like to know more about such programs, how to get information about them and whom to address. Does our attorney know about this? He should tell us”- V.G. 32 years old, local.

“There is a program in Senaki municipality called the Program of Violence Victims. Victims of violence, who will present protecting order from the police, are given a single assistance in the amount of 200 GEL. The victim can be either a woman or a man. Within the framework of this program, the City Hall provides the victims of violence with accommodation”, - local expert.

TV channels, as the source of information about violence victims assistance services is named by 41.17%. 35.29% of respondents receive information from the social network. NGOs are named by 11.11%, while only 5.88% receive information from central government officials. 5.2% name public places and information leaflets (**Diagram 10**).



An interesting question is how accessible the existing services are to the population. The positions of the surveyed women were expressed as follows: 48.36% stated that they are not available enough, 44.44% confirmed the availability, and 48.36% said that they are not available at all.

To what extent are the programs to respond to violence against women implemented by the local self-government sufficient - a survey of this issue confirms that 43.79% think that it is partially sufficient. 18.95% are not familiar with any program at all. 15.68% confirm that the programs that work in self-government are quite sufficient. 11.11% think that it is important to diversify these programs and adapt them to the specific needs of violence victim.

The focus - group participants also speak about the need for diversity the programs and confirm the need to conduct meetings with self-government.

“The format of the meeting between self-government and population should become necessary. There should be public meetings with the group of population. However, it happens that a personal problem needs to be addressed. In this case, I prefer an individual meeting” - V.L. 31 years old, local.

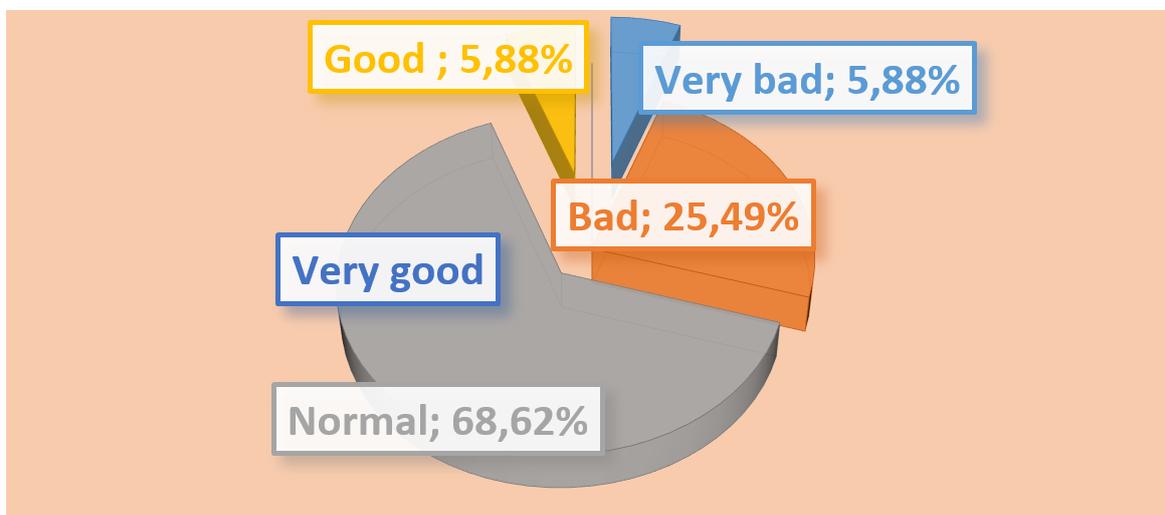
“The local government must gain the trust of the population. For this, it is necessary to get acquainted with local problems. More activity is needed. Citizens should not address the government only in case of solution of existing problem, they should also have communication before the problem”. - M.Kh. 51 years old, local, socially unprotected.

“The main thing is to make communication with the population more effective. The information format should be chosen. Volunteer groups can be formed according to the districts, which will provide information to the population”- D.Z. 48 years old, IDP.

BLOCK VII: ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

In the segment of ecological safety, women are concerned about the unsatisfactory situation that exists in their community in terms of sanitary and environmental protection. Despite the fact that the majority - 68.62% thinks that the current situation is normal, 25.49% give a negative assessment and call the current situation bad. For 5.88%, the ecological situation is very bad (Diagram 11).

WHAT IS THE SANITARY SITUATION IN YOUR CITY/VILLAGE IN TERMS OF ENVIROMENTAL SECURITY?



Among the most important environmental problems are: sewer system malfunction - 30.71%, lack or malfunction of drainage pipes - 26.14%. According to 29.41%, the air is polluted. For 13.72%, inadequate access to clean water is the main problem.

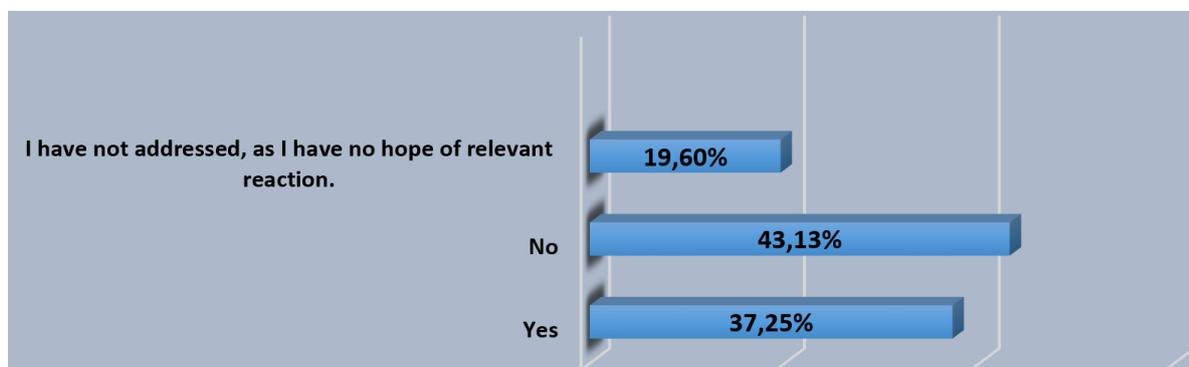
“The territory of the railway is polluted, as this facility is the property of the Railway Department, Senaki City Hall has no right to carry out infrastructure works (lighting, cleaning). People are moving in this area and they have serious discomfort”, D.S. 42 years old, local, employed.

“The sanitary-hygienic condition in our settlement can lead to the deterioration of the population’s health. There are risks of spreading infectious diseases. Polute water, which flows into drainage canals, is drunk by cattle. The population is fed with the meat and milk of these cattle. Of course, there is a danger of infectious diseases. If we take into account the fact that babies are fed with this milk and milk products, the situation is even more difficult”- M.D. woman, IDP, socially unprotected.

BLOCK VIII: GENERAL QUESTIONS

The general questions include issues that reflect the role and the intensity of communication of local self-government in addressing the problem of human security.

To the question, have you applied to the local self-government, or to another state body to solve a personal, official, public issue/problem? 43.13% of surveyed women said they have not applied. The opinion of 19.60% is also negative, citing distrust as the reason and saying that they have no hope of reaction. Communication with self-government is confirmed by 37.25% of respondents (**Diagram 12**).



“During the 2013 flood, my house was seriously damaged. At that time, the City Hall paid enough attention to me, but the problem is still unresolved. We have the conclusion of gelologists that the house is located in a landslide zone and life there is dangerous. Then this issue had no continuation” – M.D. 54 years old, local.

“During my mother’s illness, I asked for help and the second issues was to clean the drainage channel next to my house. Not a single problem was solved. Great was damage during the flood. That was years ago and today I already think that local authorities can not solve such problems. Consequently, I am not active in communicating with them. Moreover, I have no desire to have communication with them”. - M.S. 49 years old, local.

“When I had the operation and was given the documents to submit the request for funding to the City Hall, I deliberately did not apply to the City Hall, I did not have hope for funding”. – S.G. 61 years old, socially unprotected.

50.98% name the village assembly as the **most effective format for communication with local government**. Qualitative data also confirm that the population receives the most necessary information from these congregations. It is worth noting that, 26.14% use the electronic form of communication. The number of respondents who attend City Council sessions is 6.53%. The same number hears the Mayor’s reports, are involved in the budgeting process and participated in the petition.

How do the programs provided by the local government meet the specific needs of the vulnerable population? - The quantitative indicator obtained by the survey confirms that 46.40% think that the local programs address the specific needs of vulnerable groups. 26.14% of respondents believe that the programs are not designed for vulnerable groups. 27.45% refrain from categorical assessments and state that there is no practice of assessing the specific needs and satisfaction of vulnerable populations with their programs, which would give us a definite answer to this question.

Data from qualitative information confirms that budget programs based on population needs research and reflecting the interests of all vulnerable groups are becoming increasingly important.

“It is necessary to conduct researches based on the needs of the population. I have not heard anything about such activities. Communication with the population should not be implemented only during the elections. This should be systematic and programs should be developed as a result of the research”- S.D. 42 years old, local”.

“There is no program for a person in my condition. I had a stroke and can not work. I am not given a disability pension due to my age. I can do a job that does not require physical activity. Maybe programs will be developed for people in my category that will help our civic integration”. – M.D. 53 years old, local.

The increased rate of human security in economic, food, public, health, personal, environmental directions has a negative impact on women’s health and is reflected in various problems. 79.73% of women confirm that stress and tension in the community is increased. 49.01% focus on health problems.

47.05% record that hopelessness and fear of the future is a serious problem. The same number of respondents point to psychological problems. According to 30.71%, the existing problems alarmingly increase the migration of women. 13.72% mention increased facts of domestic violence and cases of violence against women, 13.72% are particularly frightened by the depolarization of society and conflicts. According to 12.41%, the feeling of insecurity is very high.

Conclusion: According to the obtained data, it is important to expand communication with the population in order to raise awareness of local programs in the municipality and to take into account the interests of various vulnerable groups by studying the needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To introduce relevant programs in the local budget to solve priority infrastructure problems.
- To study local needs by considering gender aspects and elaborate appropriate programs.
- To establish volunteer groups to improve communication with the public and inform the population about self-government programs.
- To support youth initiatives.
- To establish community organizations and introduce youth programs.
- To introduce the student programs in order to increase access to education in the field of education.
- Infrastructure maintenance and equipping of medical health centers in villages in order to eliminate the threats in the health safety component.
- Installation of “smart cameras”, “lying policemen” on the central highway in cooperation of local government and relevant structures in order to raise the security level of people.
- To introduce programs for the provision of medicines for the elderly in the social programs of the City Hall.
- Screening programs in the villages in order to prevent women’s and girls’ health.
- To establish mobile medical teams for the elderly citizens.
- To inform citizens, women about local programs for the protection from domestic violence and assistance to victims by printing information leaflets and informational materials.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS) ZUGDIDI MUNICIPALITY

LALI SHENGELIA

INTRODUCTION

The Gender-Oriented Conflict Early Warning System (GREWS) implies the study of community needs and the establishment of an early response system in terms of the potential risks. The introduction of this (GREWS) system with a gender-oriented approach significantly reduces the risk of developing violence and conflict in society, facilitates the establishment of democratic principles.

Due to the unstable political environment of the country, the low social-economic rate, the fear of losing the job and income, environmental pollution, unstable guarantees for health care, the increased rate of violence and other threats limit the person's freedom of choice, hinders the possibility of high quality life and significantly increases the risk of violence and conflict in the society. In order to neutralize the aforesaid risks, early intervention and response are important.

The Gender-Oriented Early Warning System (GREWS) represents an important tool in terms of early response to problems in society as well as improving the quality of human security.

The determination of potential risks of conflict shall be based on a study of the population needs through a gender approach, the assessment of which and the inclusion in the early warning system will create a sense of sustainable peace and stability in the society.

The study conducted by the foundation "Sukhumi", on the "**Needs Assessment of Women and Youth under the Gender-Oriented Conflict Early Warning System (GREWS)**" will promote to identify women and youth priority problems and establish an appropriate early warning (GREWS) mechanism at the local level.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY AND METHODS

Assessment of the population needs is very important, in order to base the municipal programs on and to allocate budget funds to address them. Assessment of the gender need and the quality of human security was carried out in Zugdidi Municipality within the framework of the project "Overcoming the discord – among people initiatives for conflict resolution" of the foundation of "Sukhumi".

The initiative group of women created within the project was actively involved in the study. In April 2021, the members of the group passed through a special training and performed work using a quantitative and qualitative methods.

The quantitative research implied filling of an online questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of eight blocks: demographic data, economic security, food safety, public safety, health safety, personal security, environmental safety, general questions. Similar questions were developed for a qualitative research that was conducted by the focus group and with the use of the in-depth individual interview tool.

The study aims at assessing the quality of human security and gender needs of the population in Zugdidi Municipality and providing specific recommendations based on the gained information.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

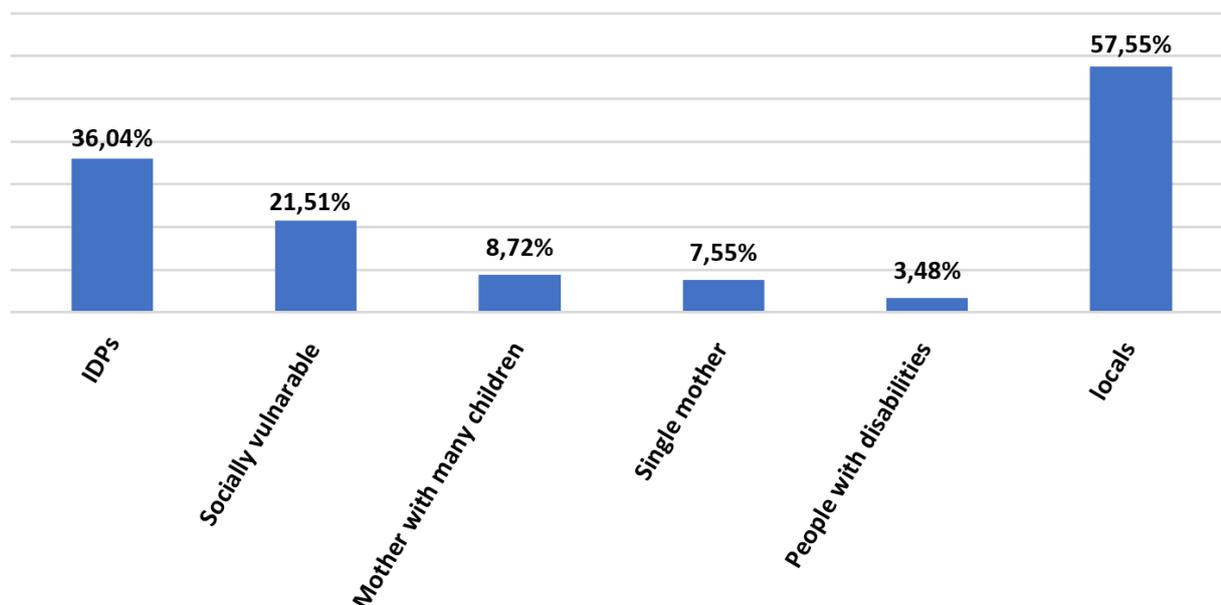
FIRST BLOCK. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC OF THE STUDY

150 women were supposed to be involved in online quantitative research, but the questionnaire was completed by more of them 172. Their age data are as follows: 18 to 30 years -33 (19.18%), 31 to 45 years-66 (38.37%), 46 to 65 years -53 (30.81%) and over 65 years - 20 (11, 62%).

For the purpose of qualitative research, 4 focus groups were held with the local social groups. 21 women were participated in the focus –groups. Simultaneously, 4 in-depth interviews were conducted – local experts were selected as respondents – 2 women and 2 men. The information obtained from the qualitative research will be used to confirm or strengthen the results of the quantitative research.

The most of the women involved in the quantitative research were locals - 99 (57.55%), there were citizens with particular status as well: IDPs -62 (36.04%), socially vulnerable -37 (21.51%), mothers with many children - 15 (8.72%), single mothers-13 (7.55) %), person with disabilities -6 (3.48%).

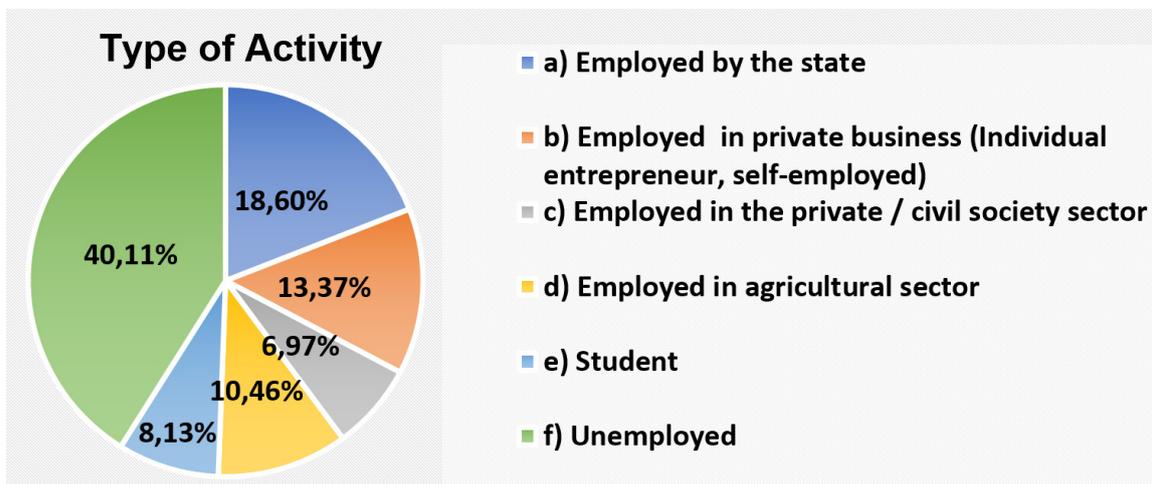
Quantitative Research Respondents



Single mothers and mothers with many children as well as socially vulnerable women, representatives of the budget organizations, youth, persons with disabilities or their family members, IDPs participated in target focus groups for qualitative research.

The picture reflecting the working status (primary work) of the quantitative research respondents are as follows:

Employed by the state -32 (18.60%), employed in private business (individual entrepreneur, self-employed) - 23 (13.37%), employed in the private / civil society sector - 12 (6.97%), engaged in agriculture- 18 (10.46%), student -14 (8.13%), unemployed -69 (40.11%). Among the unemployed: 22 are IDPs (31.88%), 43 - local (62, 31%), 1 single mother (1.44%) and 8 mothers with many children (11.59%).

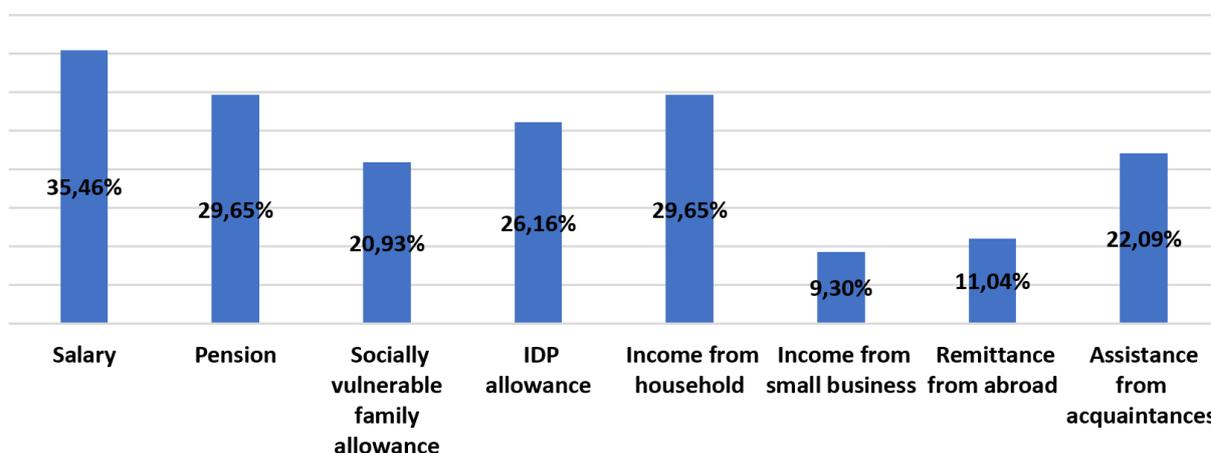


SECOND BLOCK. ECONOMIC SECURITY

Based on the questions grouped in this block, it became possible to determine the economic stability of women, to identify the hindering and strengthening factors for their economic empowerment. It was established, that the source of income for most of them (35,46%) is salary, the main income for an equal number of respondents is household (29,65%) and pension (29,65%). The income of a significant part of the respondents is based on state support: IDP allowance (26, 16%) and socially vulnerable family allowance (20, 93%).

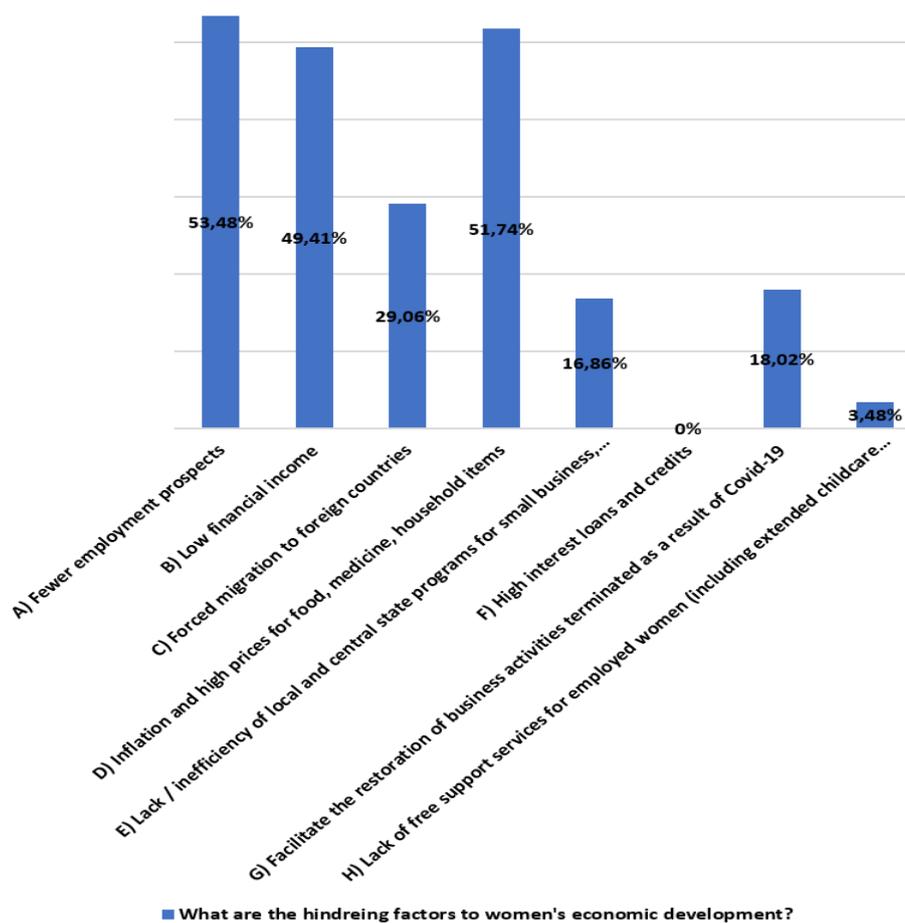
It is noteworthy, that 22,09% are depended on relatives' help, while for 11,04% remittances are meaningful from abroad, and very few (9, 30%) rely on small business income.

The main source of family income



Among the hindering factors of economic strengthening, the highest percentage of responses comes to lower employment prospects - 53.48% (53, 48%). Low financial income was mentioned by almost half of the respondents - 49.41%. In terms of the hindering factors, the following were defined as well: forced migration abroad - 29.06%, inflation and high prices for food, medicine, household items - 51.74%, lack of local / central government programs / inefficiency for small business, entrepreneurship development - 16.86%. 18.02% of respondents state that there is no support for restoring the business activities halted due to the Covid-19.

The absence of free support services for employed women (including extended childcare / services in schools and kindergartens, for single mothers, mothers with many children) is considered as a hindering factor as well, that impedes women to be actively involved in economic activities.



The data that were obtained during the qualitative research, even more emphasized the hindering factors, and among them were defined the problems caused by the pandemic - lose of jobs and consequently, loss / reduction of income. The work to be done that would contribute to the economic empowerment of women was also mentioned:

“Many people lost their jobs due to the Covid-19. Women used to go to daily group work, they can no longer afford to go in this regard and this causes a lot of problems. It would be good for them to do something that would help their economic growth” (A.N., 38, employed).

“I have a small child and if I am employed in a family, it will be better, because I cannot leave my child” (NS, 42, IDP, housewife).

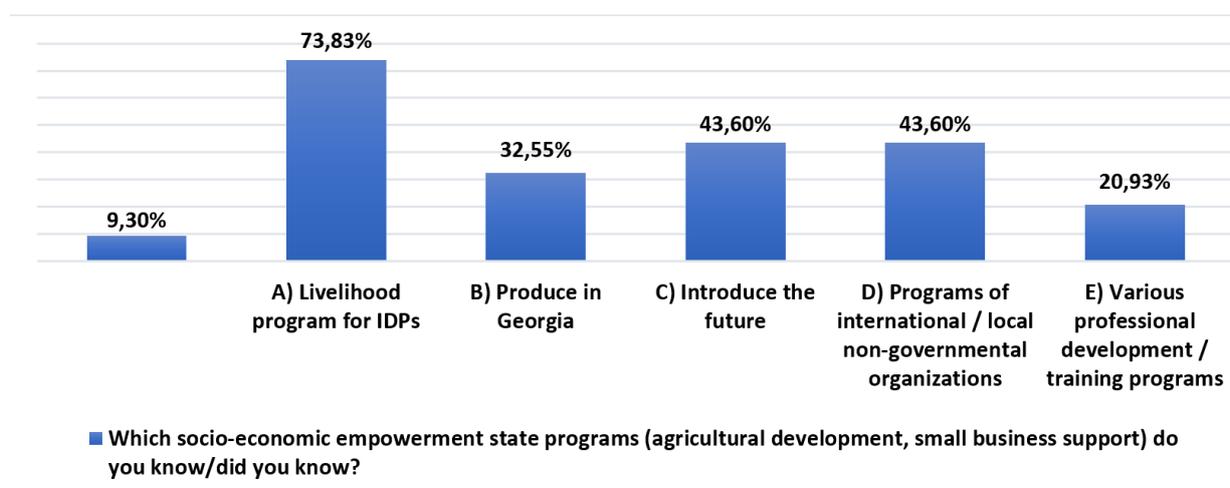
“I had a project, I have space and I was going even to employ IDPs living in the neighborhood. It

did not work. Such projects should be financed” (M.K, 52, local, employed).

“Training and grant competitions will facilitate the women empowerment. For example, sewing and culinary courses and further small funding” (ZH.J., 46 years old, IDP, employed).

“We have enough space in Ganmukhuri to create sewing courses and empower women” (Kh.N., 27, IDP, socially vulnerable).

According to the survey, it was found out, that women are most familiar with the program “Produce in Georgia” - 127 (73.83%), IDPs among them 49 (38, 58%) and locals - 73 (57.48%). The quality of information in relation to other programs is represented as follows: 43.60% informed on various professional development / retraining and international / local NGO programs. As for “Introduce the Future” - 32.55% have information on this program, only 9.30% have heard about the IDP livelihood program, and 20.93% of respondents have no information at all.



Respondents’ attention was focused on needed of supporting the household, small business and self-employment. The highest rates were recorded in small business support programs (57.55%) and affordable loans (51.16%). The respondents also mentioned: rural support programs (38.95%), grant programs (36.04%), local self-government programs (24.41%).

It is also notable, that the population of the municipality wants to receive more information and advice. 53.48% of the respondents stated that more information is needed in terms of the existing state programs, while 31.97% highlighted consulting services and assistance in writing of business projects.

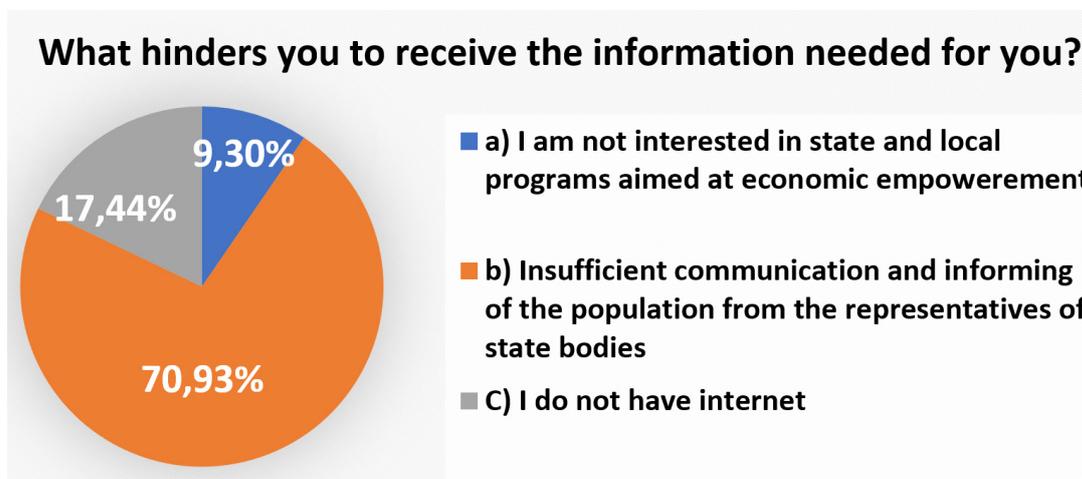
Pursuant to the study, it was possible to find out, how people got the information on economic programs offered by local and central governments. The survey revealed, that for the majority (67.44%), the primary source is television and radio. 22.67% get information from the municipality website and Facebook page. Data on other sources were distributed as follows: NGOs (48.25%), neighbors / acquaintances (38.95%), online media outlets, social networks (37.79%). For one part of the respondents, the information is delivered by the representative of the mayor in the community and the local MP (15.11%), and 11.62% read about economic programs on the information sheets or on the information boards in the community.

Various source of information were also outlined on the focus groups:

- Mainly, I got information from my friend, non-governmental organizations.

- The population uses the social network.
- I teach at school, I get information from the school and municipality.
- Information is received from local authorities, MP.
- Representative of the village, MP, representatives of the various services of the City Hall meet with the population and consequently, there is no lack of information.

There are factors, that hinder obtaining of the necessary information. Including, the highest rate (70,93%) was outlined in that direction, that there is insufficient communication as well as informing of the population from the representatives of the government bodies. For 17,44%, this hindering factor is the absence of Internet (the most part of this respondents are socially vulnerable and IDPs). It was also clarified, that 9,30% are not interested at all in terms of the programs aimed at economic empowerment.



„absence of Internet impedes us to get information“ (Kh.B., 27 years old., IDP, Socially vulnerable).

This is the excerpt from one of the respondents' response, though, others had the same opinion as well, and it was mentioned even during the in-depth interview, that vulnerable category does not have access to the Internet.

THIRD BLOCK. FOOD SAFETY

The food safety is one of the most important among the safety components of human. So, questions are included to the study in this regard.

To the question – what is the factor that mostly poses the greatest threat to the food safety for you –women circled the most priority 2 versions and consequently, the responses were distributed as follows:

Expensive products - 88,37%, including: IDPs - 38,15%, locals - 55,92%

Lack of quality products -72,09%, including: IDPs - 43,54%, locals - 50,80%

Absence of the product store in the vicinity - 25%, Including: IDPs -16,27%, locals - 79, 06%.

According to the answers, it is revealed, that the majority of respondents cannot afford to buy qualitative food products. No less alarming is the reality for women that the prices for products

have been raised. There are certain and quite serious threats to this component of human safety, which represent a special concern for women and this was justified by the survey as well.

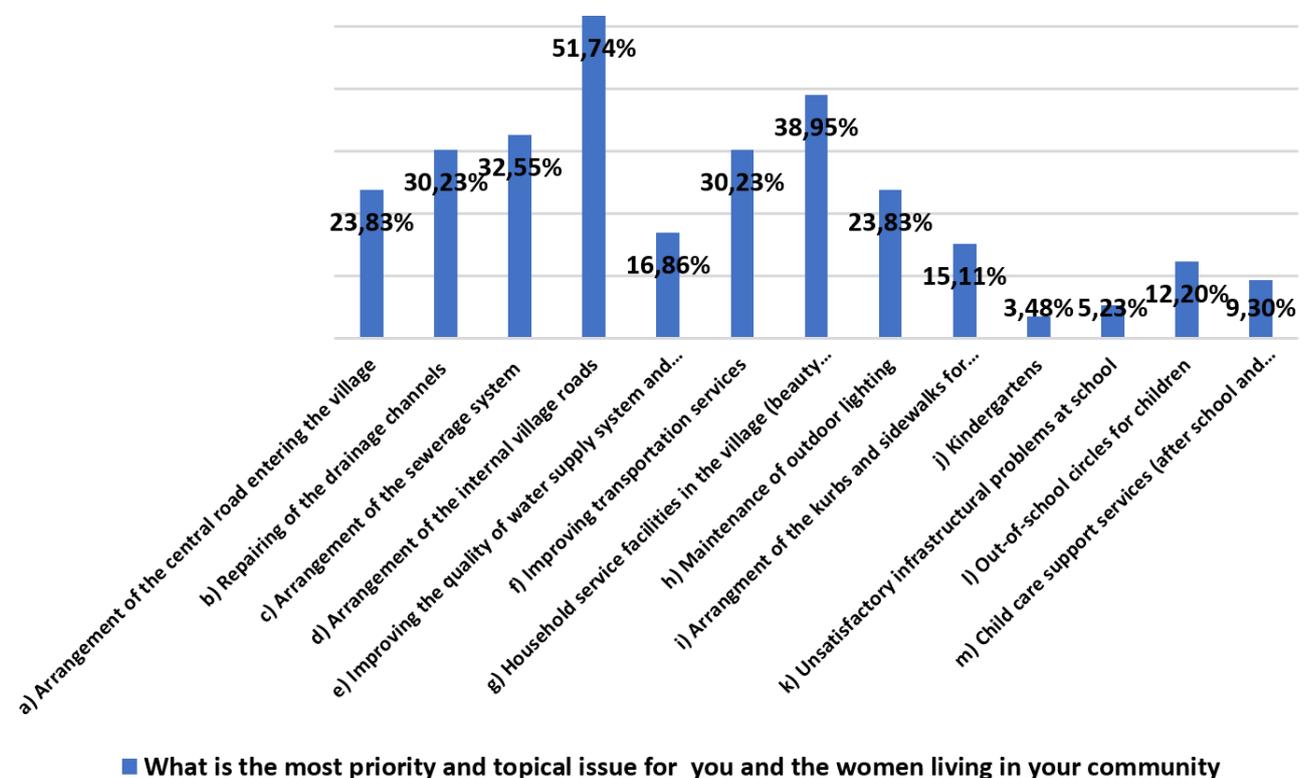
FORTH BLOCK. PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety comprises all the components according to which human rights should not be violated and should be protected from public threats.

Pursuant to the answers of 172 women interviewed in Zugdidi Municipality, it is clear, that their public safety is not guaranteed and this is caused by the existing problems. Infrastructural problems are especially urgent for them: arrangement of the rural roads or central entering road to the village (51.74% and 30.23%), maintenance of sewerage system (32.55%) and etc. No less important is the improvement of transportation services (30.23%), the improvement of the water supply system and the quality of drinking water supply (16.86%). (16,86%).

The number of respondents (38, 95%) pays attention to the issue, that there are no household service objects in the village (beauty salon, sewing, etc.), as well as the outdoor lighting (23.83%), curbs and sidewalks (15.11%).

Especially, the number of mothers who are not satisfied with the school infrastructure (5.23%) should be mentioned, they do not like, that there are no out-of-school circles for children (12.20%) and cannot benefit from childcare support services (after school and kindergarten) for employed mothers (9.30%).



Qualitative research data clarified these problems and revealed the attitude of the respondents towards them:

„The main problem is unemployment and the pandemic has been added. We were moved to new apartments, but there is still water in the basements, and there are many problems in this regard”.

„There are very bad roads in the Ingiri, there are drainage systems. We do not have water in well all. Water flows by the door, and we are not allowed to use it, it is said that it is owned by the city”.

„The problem of the population living in the Ganmukhuri IDP settlement, is the connection of the central water and malfunctioned sewerage system“.

„There is no pharmacy in the community, as well as the bank. This hindering factor became especially noticeable within the period of the pandemic”.

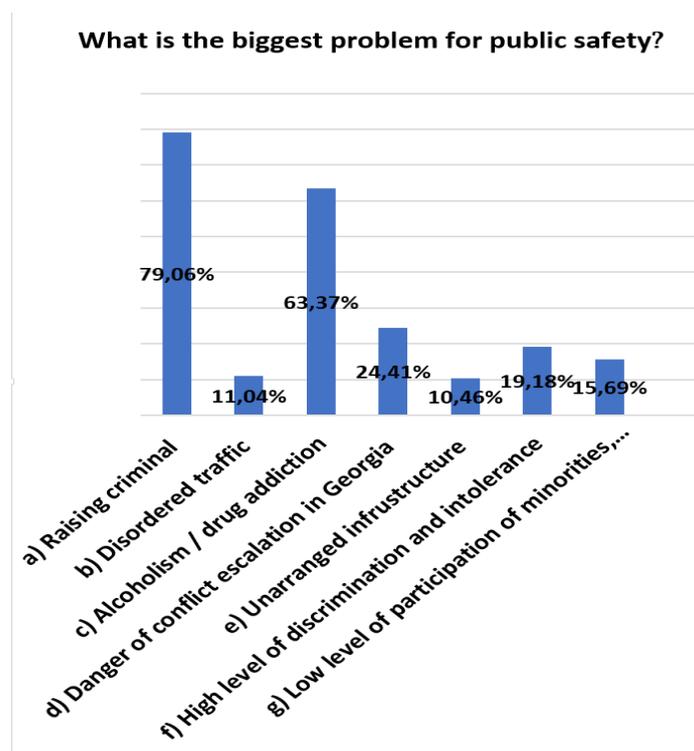
„Seeds have been handed out in the population and there is no equipment for processing of vegetables”.

The respondents of the in-depth interview also focused on the existing problems:

“The social problem is the most priority, with the principle of chain reaction, it has a serious impact on many other directions. Social problems in the field of education have been revealed, especially in the conditions of the pandemic. The Ministry of Education and Science has created a good platform that facilitated teachers in order to conduct lessons in a virtual classroom. The problem, that was encountered by our colleagues was access to the Internet. Parents, due to their financial problems (many lost their jobs due to the pandemic), were unable to purchase internet packages, some of them did not have a computer or telephone to attend online lessons (local experts in education issues).

“The municipality implements up to sixty different sub-programs in this direction. From September 1, 2020, we have been added a new direction and a new responsibility - the Department of Child Protection and Support. It is a department with six permanent staff and this is another new challenge for our service, the municipality (local expert on social and health issues).

Respondents had the opportunity to outline the existing threats and in this regard, we received the following picture: The majority 79.06% worry on rising criminal, alcoholism and drug addiction is considered as a threat by 63.37%, the threat of conflict escalation is indicated by 24.41%. Other data were distributed as follows: unarranged traffic (11.04%), disordered infrastructure in Georgia (10.46%), high level of discrimination and intolerance (19.18%), low level of participation of minorities, persons with different political views in public life (15 , 69%).



The research revealed a special attitude of women towards the issue of education. According to 31.97%, quality secondary education is available, while 9.30% answer this question in a negative form. The focus was made on the reasons, among which, due to the pandemic conditions, low quality internet is in the first place (to ensure the distance learning process) - (54.65%). Important reasons are also: the low quality of teaching (38.95%), the lack of professional teachers (25%), the unarranged school infrastructure (16.27%). For 13.37% the problem is that the school is far from house, while 24.41% noted that the school does not have the appropriate technical equipment (computers, internet, specialized subject classrooms).

Numerous comments on the Internet were also made during the focus groups. This problem has become particularly acute within the pandemic conditions of online learning. Internet malfunctions have impede the involvement of students and teachers in lessons. Along with the problems, information was also provided on the support program:

„Pursuant to the decision of the Mayor, a program supporting the talented young people has been introduced, the sub-program represent the support especially for those students who study abroad, is defined at three thousand GEL and accrued once. This program and financial budget code comprises different programs: mayor’s scholarship, promoting the departure of people with different talents, support for children and young people (City Hall representative).

Respondents also discussed on access to higher education. 34.30% believe that it is accessible, 5.23% had a negative attitude, while the rest indicated a third version of the answer: “partially”. Among the problems, the following answers are presented with a high percentage: high tuition fees (39.53%) and free accommodation available to students in the city from the region (37.20%). It was also noted, that there are vocational orientation courses at schools (19.18%) and the low quality of teaching (2.90%).

FIFTH BLOCK. HEALTH SAFETY

Health safety is particularly important for respondents and this has been clearly illustrated by the quantitative research. High prices for medicines represent the particular concern for women, which was outlined by the 77.32% of respondents, including: 36.09% IDPs and 58.64% locals. 41.27% complained about the lack of free medical examinations on the spot, in the villages. 40.11% indicated on unawareness of health programs, most of them (59.42%) are locals.

There are other issues that were highlighted by the surveyed women:

Absence of primary outpatient medical center - 12.20%, including: IDPs - 52.23%, locals - 42.85%.

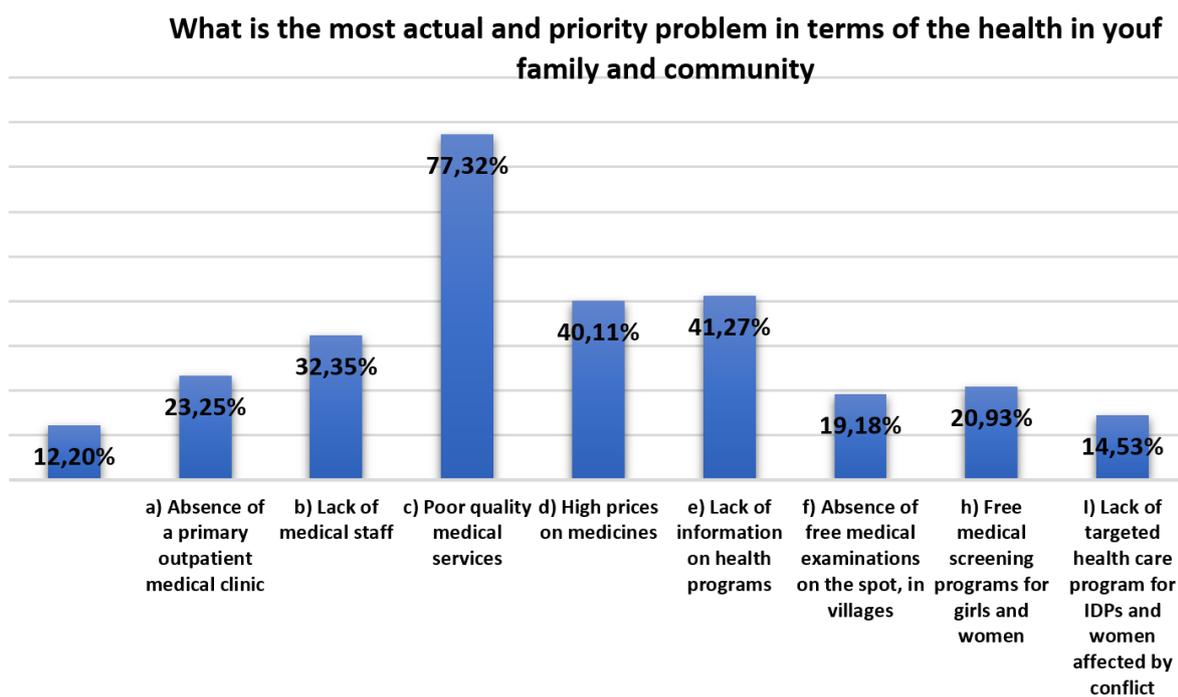
Lack of medical staff - 23.25%, including: IDPs - 25%, locals - 67.5%.

Poor medical services -32.55%, including: IDPs -23.21%, locals 51.78%.

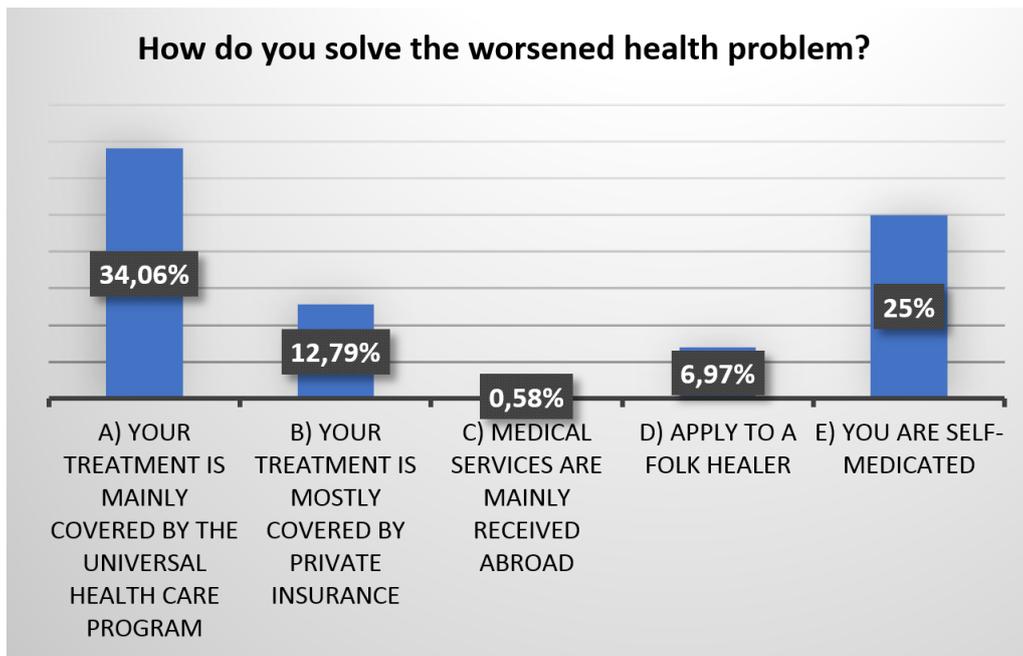
Low awareness of reproductive health -19.18%, including: IDPs - 24, 24%, locals - 72.72%.

Free medical screening programs for girls and women - 20, 93%, including: IDPs - 38.88%, locals - 52.77%

Lack of targeted health programs for IDPs and women affected by conflict - 14.53%, including: IDPs - 68%), local - 24%.



As it was established by the quantitative research, the number of participants are assisted by the universal health program to solve the worsened health problem (34.06%), 25% are self-medicated and 12.79% use private insurance. There is a category that refers to a folk healer (6.97%), and the only woman among the respondents said that she mainly receives a medical care abroad (0.58).



Within the frames of the focus group, the participants also talked about the problems in terms of the health and support from the municipality. It was noted, that it is necessary to rehabilitate the outpatient clinic of Koki. There should be a pharmacy in the village and the most demanded medicines as well. The representatives of the focus groups indicated, that they and they and their acquaintances needed an assistance in the field of the healthcare and they received it.

- I addressed to the healthcare program and they financed expensive medicines.
- Operation of my spouse was financed by 70%.
- I would like to outline the healthcare program. My sick sister was involved in a caregiver program and also used a medication program.

Information on healthcare support and local programs was also stated in an interview with a local expert:

„One of the programs of Zugdidi Municipality, home care program to elderly people, which facilitates the elderly citizens, who do not have family members and are not able to solve hygiene and living problems. One-time assistance in an amount of one hundred Gel, has been replaced by the service, that is much more expensive. There are more than 100 beneficiaries. Periodically they are visited by a qualified team. There is a doctor in the multidisciplinary group, who provides consultancy and assistance to them. The population of both the city and community is engaged in the program. We launched a new program last year - Early Detection of Thyroid Cancer. 888 women with high risk, who did not have any specific symptoms, were provided with quality medical service, were diagnosed and in all cases the prognoses were trustworthy. The screening center is an achievement of the region, a serious investment of the Caritas Czech Republic and the government” (local expert on social and health issues).

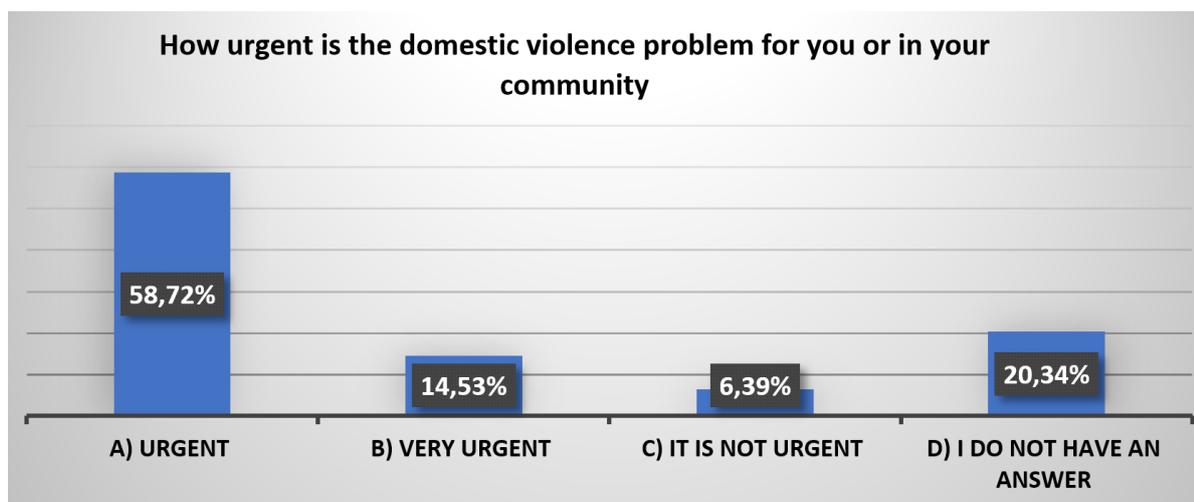
SIX BLOCK. PERSONAL SAFETY

Domestic violence is one of the serious threats in terms of the personal safety. The problem is not topical for 11 respondents (6,39%) and 35 (20,34%) do have the answer at all.

For the most part, violence is an actual threat in the community. More precisely, figures are broken down as follows:

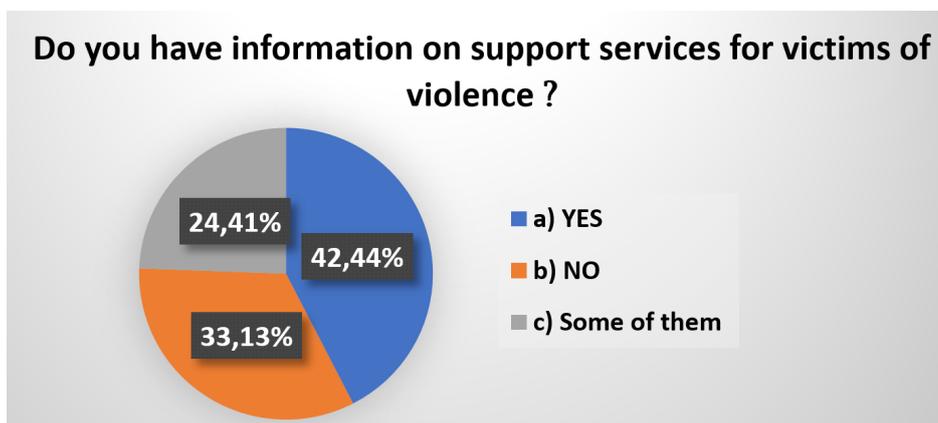
Actual for - 101 (58, 72%,) including: IDPs- 35 (34,65%), locals - 64 (63,36%), including: a single mother - 7 (6,93%), socially vulnerable -23 (22,72%), a mother with many children - 9 (8,91%), unemployed-38 (37,62%)

Very actual - 25 (14,53%), including IPDs - 13 (52%), locals- 9 (36%), a single mother - 3 (12%), socially vulnerable - 4 (16%), a mother with many children - 3 (12%), unemployed - 8 (32%)



All form of the violence were brought up, but, according to the participants, psychological violence is the most common in the community 88 (51,16%), physical and economic violence were outlined with the same percentage rate (23,83%). As it turns out, there is also a sexual violence (1,16%).

The victim support services are of utmost importance in the event of violence and access to information in this regard is essential as well. It was revealed, that the majority (42,44%) have relevant information. As concerns the specific services, the list is as follows: the respondents know about the hot line (36,04%), NGOs services (16,86%), crises centers on government and non-governmental level (12,79%), shelters on the base of the state and non-government organizations (9,88%), state legal services (4,65%). Unfortunately, they do not know anything on municipal services.

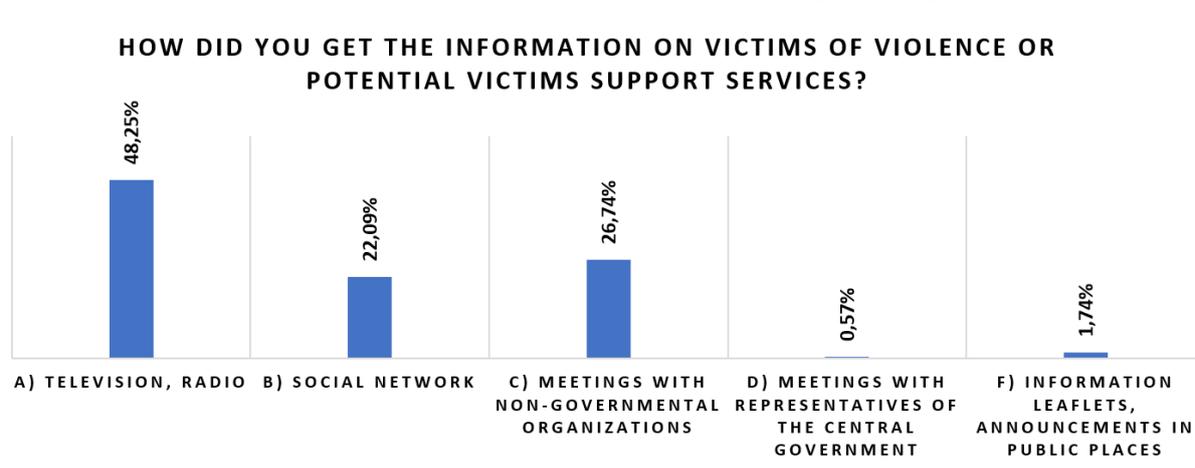


In this regard, full information was gained through the in-depth interviews, although, these programs are not known by many of them yet.

„We have a number of programs in the City Hall, that have been implemented over the years, due to those challenges and realities, that our population face with. There is a Rehabilitation Crisis Centre for women and domestic valance victims. The projects that we commenced with the civic sector became more sustainable, i.e. when multi-sectoral interest was revealed. The number of beneficiaries of the shelter – the number of women and children is increasing from year to year. An interagency commission is functioning as well (police, prosecutor’s office, local government, non-governmental sector), which has been raising awareness in this directions for years” (City Hall representative)”.

„We have a day centre and a shelter. Since, the regulations have been lifted, the number of beneficiaries have been rising. Violence seems to be reduced during the regulations. In fact, it did not decreased, they did not call, may be were unable to call. Zugdidi Municipality is one of the flagships compared to other municipalities, for instance, in terms of both the sensitive gender and violence issues. The program one-time assistance to victims of violence has been introduced in Zugdidi. If earlier, the municipal amount was - 800 Gel and was given to the victim after submission of the relevant document, nowadays, the various sectors are foreseen: how many children does he/she have? What are the conditions? and etc. the program works and that is very good. The shelter is a regional and beneficiaries came from entire Samegrelo as well as from Abkhazia” (local expert on violence issues).

(1,74%). Respondents mostly have information about victims of violence or assistance services of potential victims by TV or radio (48.25%). Other sources have been revealed as well and these are: Meetings with NGOs (26.74%), Social Networks (22.09%), Meetings with central government officials (0.57%), information leaflets, announcements in public gathering places (1.74%



The local experts consider, that the population is informed on these issues.

„The population is informed by local representatives, MPs. All in the information is transparent on the social network“ (representative of the City Hall).

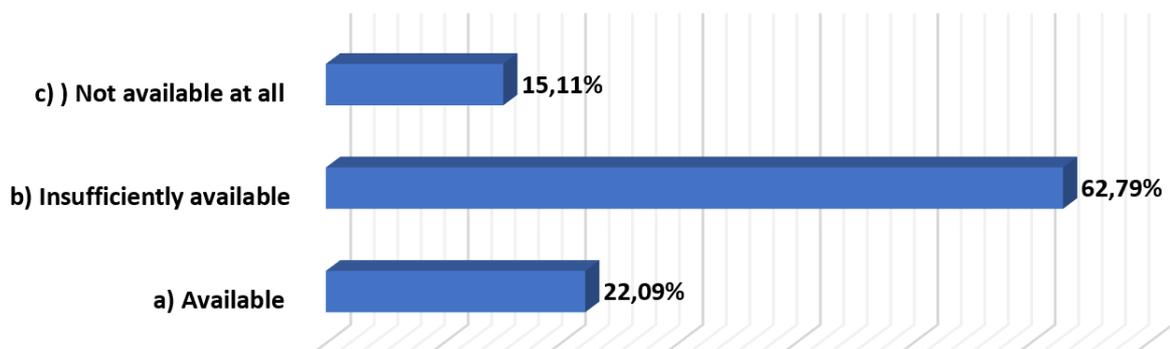
„The victim of violence calls -112 and the police takes her to us, but there are cases, when they do not call to the police, because she does not want a husband to be detained and directly goes to the shelter. The day center is visited by the women, who do not need the shelter, but they are in need of certain services, a course of psychotherapy, the help of

a lawyer, a social worker. The information of police, they already know from TVs, videos, messages. There are cases, when they directly address to the municipality, or they have a restraining order and the police officer tells, that they can receive some service in the municipality. Information is got by acquaintances as well, someone is a friend, or neighbor and so on". (local expert on violence issues).

„I like to appeal with one wisdom „when you are aware – it means, you can”, so, that is a strategy of both self-government and citizen. We use all the resources at our disposal. We have different kinds of communication forms – in addition to the standard form, a citizen can apply with the statement, both personally and electronically, there is a publishing house, that is delivered to citizens in a form of the newspaper. Social network and hot line are active as well” (local expert on social and health issues).

To the question – How are the existing services available for the population of your city (municipality, village) - three options of the answer were outlined: available - 38 (22.09%), insufficiently available - 108 (62.79%), not available at all - 26 (15.11%).

How the existing services are available for the population of your city (municipality, village)?



According to a small part of the participants (2.90%), the programs implemented by the local government in order to respond to violence against women are sufficient, 22.67% consider it as insufficient, while a larger share (38.37%) indicates the answer: partially. A category was identified that did not acquire the information about the mentioned local government programs (18.02%), while for the same number of people it is necessary to diversify the programs and to tailor them to the specific needs of the victim of violence (18.02%).

The materials of the qualitative research also presented some interesting moments:

„we were actively addresses by the women victims of violence. Zugdidi was one of the first municipalities, which introduced the programs of support. From 100to 800 Gel, one-time, may be a symbolic mechanism from the first aid. Shelters and support programs are more effective and long lasting for women victims of violence” (representative of the City Hall).

“In terms of the violence, there is an apartment rental program and one-time assistance. Our beneficiaries are benefited from this. The apartment program is good, but the amount is small, for 100 and 150 GEL in Zugdidi you can no longer find anything with normal living conditions to live with children“ (local expert on violence issue).

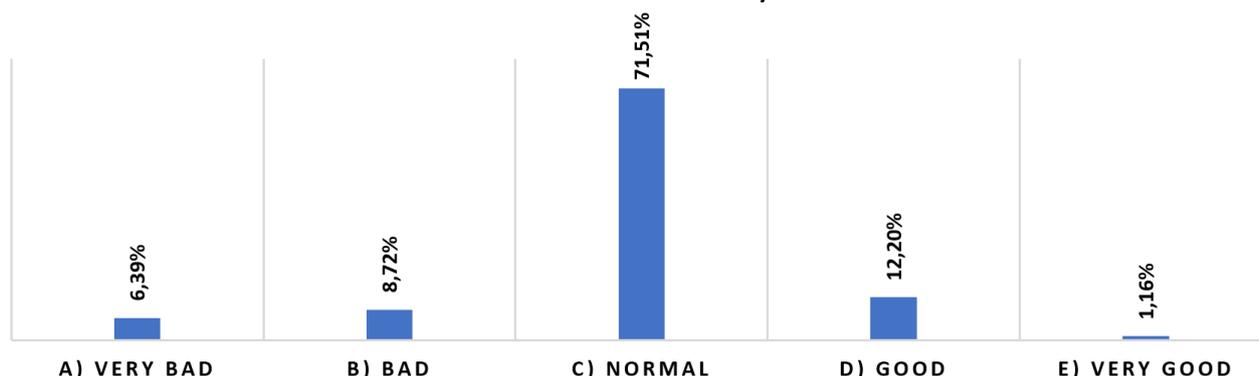
„we have a co-financing program for projects. One of the applicants wrote the program for women victims of violence, with the prospect of mastering the profession in accounting and in terms of the other directions and to be employed as well. More than 80% beneficiaries of the program started working. During the project funding and commission review we are focusing on the issue, not to give the fish to our beneficiaries, but to teach them fishing, in order to strengthen and be able to support their families independently.”(local expert on social and health issues).

According to the focus group participants, the programs implemented to respond to violence are sufficient, and some contributions are made by the non-governmental organizations - through trainings and projects. According to the second part, the programs are insufficient.

SEVENTH BLOCK. ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY

Environmental safety is a very important segment of human security and the current situation is a subject of concern. However, for the vast majority of respondents (71.51%) the sanitary situation in the city / village and the situation in terms of environmental protection are normal. A small part thinks that the situation is bad (8, 72%) and even less believes that it is very bad (6, 39%).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT SANITARY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATIONS IN YOUR CITY/VILLAGE?

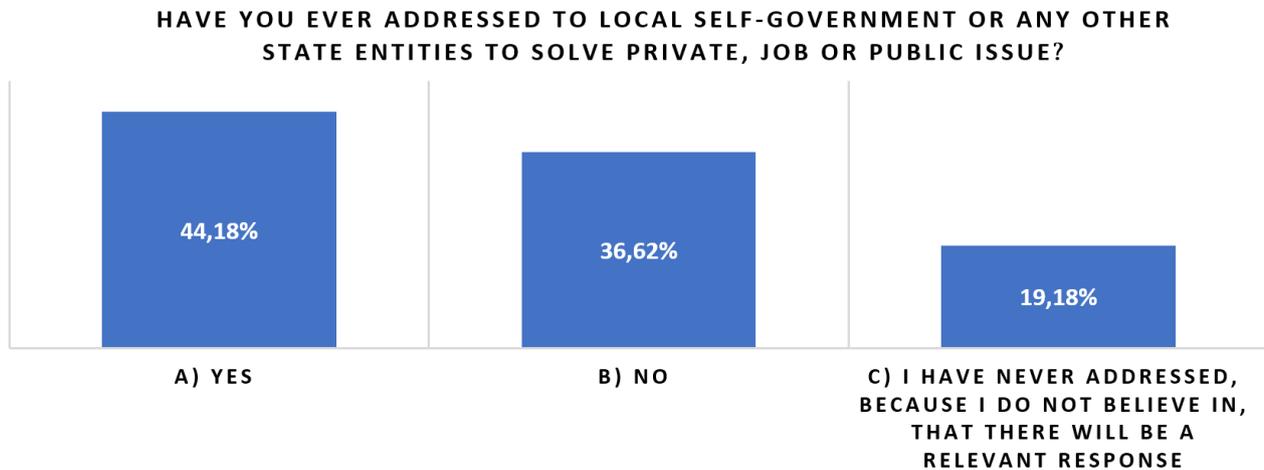


Women brought up several problematic issues in the focus groups:

- *We are bothered by street dogs, there are excrements in the entrance halls, and insanitary conditions.*
- *There is no an animal shelter, we contacted to certain people several times and they get used to take them, vaccinate and return back.*
- *There is an insanitary situation as well as the water problem. Access to disinfections is necessary. The following answers were found to the question - which of the following is the most important environmental problem in your community: polluted air (29,09%), inadequate access to clean water (11,04%), disordered sewerage system (25%), absence/unarranged drainage pipes (34,88%).*

EIGHT BLOCK. GENERAL QUESTIONS

In order to achieve the human safety, a special role is given to cooperation with the local self-government. It was turned out, that 44,18% of the respondents addressed to tackle their problems, while 36,62% did not. As for, 19,18 did not address, because of the lack of confidence. They do not believe, that the proper response will be followed to above mention.



The participants of focus group defined problems, that were settled in virtue of the local government:

- I addressed to infrastructural assistance and received an instant positive response.
- The water pump damaged for the New Year in the settlement and we were without water. With the help of the Mayor, it was bought from the reserve fund in a day – there was an instant response from their side.
- We were in need of an infrastructural help and we were always received a positive answer to all our requests. I am very satisfied in this regard.
- Toilets of the Koki public schools were repaired, roads were rehabilitated as well.
- Cemeteries of the village were fenced.

The opposite opinions were also mentioned:

- During each rainy period, water does not flow to the drainage pipes, I applied in written form, as well as directly, but it is still unresolved. We are told, that it would be done, but it is 5 years, since it has not done. Yes, there was a response, but without result.
 - My child as a student of the village on the brink of the conflict, received funding. Eventually, it was turned out, that two years of tuition fee must be paid. I addressed to the City Hall, governor, I wrote a letter to the Ministry of Education, but there is still no answer.
 - I have applied for one-time allowance, but I have not received neither positive nor negative decision so far.
 - If we bother them, we are promised, but no one is doing anything for us.
 - I had my own greenhouse, I addressed to the City Hall, that the wind destroyed everything, enclosed photos as well, but no reaction at all.
- I bake cakes, I want to earn for myself, but that's nothing.*

Respondents use various forms of civic involvement for communication with local government, especially - mostly – settlement/village meetings (61, 04%).

One part has (16,86%) electronic correspondence, and the second one (7,55%) attends the meetings in the City Municipal Assembly. As concerns the other forms of involvement - listening of the reports of the mayor and services of the City Hall, petition, the Mayor's Advisory Board, the Council of the Gender, the Council of Persons with Disabilities, civil budgeting – percentage rate ranges from 0,58 to 7,55 percent.

Respondents of the focus groups and in-depth interviews focused on the involvement forms as well:

“I participated in the meeting of the Rural Support Program, where the improvement of internal roads was discussed. The meeting was attended by the Mayor of the Municipality, Giorgi Shengelia and his representatives.”

“I attended a meeting of the Rural Support Program. Roads and footbridges were done.”

“The doors of self-government are open for citizens. All forms are acceptable to us: meetings, direct communication or statements. Our programs are known to everyone, but the outdoor meeting revealed even a few citizens who had no information. This is a natural phenomenon and therefore, it is impossible to be happy with the format you have. As for the Covid-19 pandemic, we ensured a humanitarian assistance to 5,000 families with donations from the municipality and the private sector. There was a psychological help. The hotline did not stop, citizens called us in a 24 hours mode. Together with the products we provided the right information. They felt that self-government was on their side. At the end of 2020, the Social Protection Department was added a gender equality function, a person responsible for gender issues was designated. Despite the pandemic, the department conducted serious research in various areas, including gender analysis. This year we think to expand this research, to cover other directions as well. One of the achievements is that contact groups of women have been trained in all administrative units, who will be our ambassadors, so we try to get information on current gender issues, challenges in order to enable to the self-government to solve their problems ”(local expert on social and health issues).

“Citizens actively attend village meetings and discuss a number of issues on the spot. There are many forms of citizen involvement. There are forms prescribed by the law, at the same time the City Municipal Assembly was able to introduce good projects. These are also a kind of mechanisms of involvement. Civic budget and green budget, which means fixing specific issues, drafting the projects, holding elections. These projects are supportive mechanisms for enhancing cooperation between self-government and citizens. Complying of interests or differences in opinions represent a culture of relationship” (representative of the City Hall).

20.93% of respondents think that local programs refer to the specific needs of vulnerable groups 38.37% believe that the situation is the opposite.

Qualitative research revealed, that what has been done so far and what needs to be done for the specific needs of vulnerable population.

“I would say more about people with disabilities, they do not have a transportation, the ability to move. For example, a person using a wheelchair called a taxi, but he/she was refused because they knew his/her number and were lazy about the simple service ”(Zh.J., 46, IDP, employed).

Other vulnerable groups were also observed: families with many children, lonely elderly people, socially vulnerable, orphans, single mothers.

„All programs of the City Hall are tailored to the beneficiaries: the socially vulnerable, the person with disabilities, the lonely elderly people. The information is provided by the village trustees, we are applied by a neighbor or family member who submits the application. The commission gets familiar with the situation on the spot. We have to increase the funds every year as the number of applications increases. For example, if in the last year it was 65, this year we have 70 funded children and 6 is waiting. We have up to 120 citizens involved in the rent program. We have a house building program. If a citizen has a plot of land, we will build a house. This is a sustainable accommodation program. The construction of the house costs several thousand GEL. We satisfy the construction of 20 houses a year. Our municipality fits into certain frameworks. We shall distribute these funds as correctly as possible. We were addressed by parents who have children with diabetes. There is also a Council of Persons with Disabilities, a Civic Council, and a Gender Equality Council. These councils provide us with recommendations, in which directions shall be commenced a new program” (representative of the City Hall).

“You can not determine who needs help less and more. Emphasis should be made on economic empowerment, as well as on employment. More attention needs to be paid to agriculture, even to equip with equipment, with tractors that could cultivate the land and make it accessible. There are other problems as well. Let’s say the victim has to leave the shelter, we apply to the municipality where he/she is registered (Zugdidi only helps people with registration in Zugdidi). When we ask whether they have anything to help, we are told, “We have nothing.” We were not applied and we did not take it into account. When we tell them, how to address you when you do not have anything. “When we have, then we will take it into account.” They are not able to provide a flexible budget or are not sensitive to the community ”(local expert on violence issues).

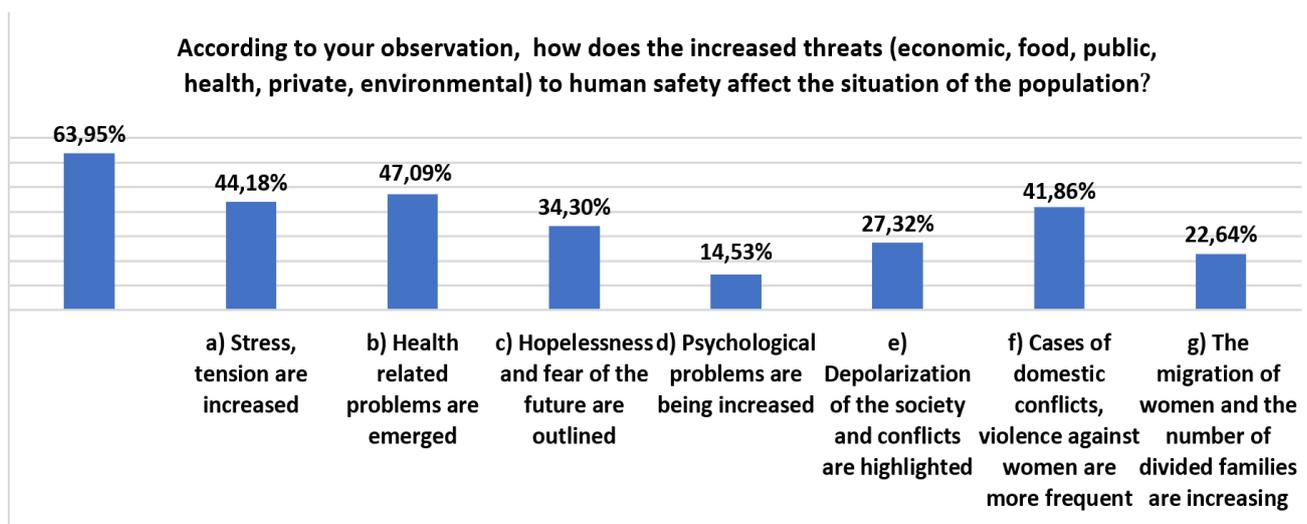
“The most vulnerable group is the socially vulnerable population, especially in the pandemic conditions. These people often worked in exchange for daily wages and were left without poor income. They have families, children whose lives are affected by social problems. Employment of the population even in small enterprises and support of family farms would reduce the existing problems. Needs are studied by questioning of the population, studying their data. Data on pupils with special needs and disabilities are also periodically collected at schools. Home learning is provided by the school if needed. Information is sought from schools, for example, on wheelchair users, children with hearing problems and their needs are met. The needs of the population have been more or less studied, just to tackle all the problems are related to finances “(local expert on education issues).”

“People with disabilities are the most serious challenge. In 2024, when the law comes into force and we will be required to offer a service, we should not be with empty hands, we should have a smooth system. Every year we have our main message. This year it is - quality. We have a lot

of programs. For example, a home care, caregiver program involves providing money to care for a person lying in a bed with limited capacity or a person with disability, using a wheelchair. We want to provide quality service to these citizens. We have databases in all programs. Content analysis of these databases are carried out throughout the year. We communicate with dozens of people every day.

We indicate the actual problems that have not been reflected in our program yet. Then, when it comes to working on the budget process, we meet with stakeholders, experts in the field on all specific issues. We ask the sector of the society that has experience of working with this particular problem or group, we make the final decision and initiate a program or sub-program. We realized earlier that just like in this form, only in a building, stationary communication could not give us complete information, so we had different formats of meetings: focus groups, outdoor meetings, even started the “bridges”, but the pandemic hindered us. We actively cooperate with non-governmental organizations working in this direction. It was achieved through joint efforts that we replaced the one-time cash assistance, that we had for people with disabilities, with utility bills co-payment. Accordingly, from year to year we do not have inviolable programs, we always try to refine, to introduce new initiatives, and foundation for all these are the analysis, research and communication with representatives of various sectors of society “(local expert on social and health issues).

As it turns out, the increased threats to human security (economic, food, public, health, personal, environmental) have a negative impact on the condition of the population: **the majority of respondents (63.95%) believe that stress is increased.** Threats cause a lot of problems, primarily it is related to health (44.18%). Women’s migration and division of the families are increased (41.86%), pessimism is outlined (47, 09%), psychological problems are risen as well - 59 (34.30%), domestic conflict and violence against women are frequent - 47 (27, 32%), Increases), sense of insecurity is high- 39 (22.64%).



RECOMMENDATIONS

Needs assessment for women and youth in Zugdidi Municipality has been conducted through the Gender-Oriented Conflict Early Warning System (GREWS). According to the work of the women's initiative group of Zugdidi, a huge number of information that shall be taken into account has been collected and on the bases of it, recommendations have been developed for local governmental and non-governmental entities:

- Spread of information on existing municipal programs electronically or in print manner.
- Monitoring of the existing municipal programs, study of efficiency, correction and development of new programs.
- Active and permanent cooperation with the population from the self-government, in order to study the needs of different groups.
- Development of the municipal programs for women's economic empowerment.
- More involvement of the society in budget discussion, development of new programs
- The special attention shall be paid to the women's initiatives living along the dividing line of the conflict region
- Maximum delivery of information on different offers (course, contests) for vulnerable groups
- Vocational training of the women and financial support in terms of the small funds
- To carry out preventive measures against women/domestic violence
- Advocacy of the priority issues for women at the municipal and central levels by the Gender Equality Council
- Active cooperation of the local self-government with non-governmental and business sectors to solve the problems of population
- More use of electronic resources for informing
- Promotion of Internet accessibility and teaching of relevant skills for interested people
- Provision of socially vulnerable families in IDPs' collective centers with preferential Internet
- Settlement of social and infrastructural problems
- Full/partial education funding assistance for the students from vulnerable families
- Promoting the development of family farms, family hotels
- Provision of the quality medical service in all villages rehabilitation of outpatient clinics, opening of pharmacies, mobilization of groups of doctors)
- Opening of household service centers in villages (beauty salon, sewing salon, shoe repair)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH GENDER RESPONSIVE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (GREWS) TSALENJIKHA MUNICIPALITY

GURANDA GVANTSELADZE

INTRODUCTION

The Gender-Oriented Conflict Early Warning System (GREWS) implies the study of community needs and the establishment of an early response system in terms of the potential risks. The introduction of this (GREWS) system with a gender-oriented approach significantly reduces the risk of developing violence and conflict in society, facilitates the establishment of democratic principles.

Due to the unstable political environment of the country, the low social-economic rate, the fear of losing the job and income, environmental pollution, unstable guarantees for health care, the increased rate of violence and other threats limit the person's freedom of choice, hinders the possibility of high quality life and significantly increases the risk of violence and conflict in the society. In order to neutralize the aforesaid risks, early intervention and response are important.

The Gender-Oriented Early Warning System (GREWS) represents an important tool in terms of early response to problems in society as well as improving the quality of human security.

The determination of potential risks of conflict shall be based on a study of the population needs through a gender approach, the assessment of which and the inclusion in the early warning system will create a sense of sustainable peace and stability in the society.

The study conducted by the foundation "Sukhumi", on the "**Needs Assessment of Women and Youth under the Gender-Oriented Conflict Early Warning System (GREWS)**" will promote to identify women and youth priority problems and establish an appropriate early warning (GREWS) mechanism at the local level.

THE AIM AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Aim of the research: Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi" conducted a research from April 1 to April 25, 2021 in Tskaltubo Municipality. The aim of the research was the assessment of the quality of human security and gender needs of the population (women). The needs were assessed based on the analysis of the data obtained from the research, identifying relevant findings, trends and developing the necessary recommendations.

Research Methodology: The research was conducted in a format of quantitative and qualitative data collection. A pre-designed questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The data was

collected in the form of Google, and qualitative data in the form of focus groups and in-depth interviews. Totally 4 focus groups and 4 face-to-face interviews were conducted with local experts (self-government representatives).

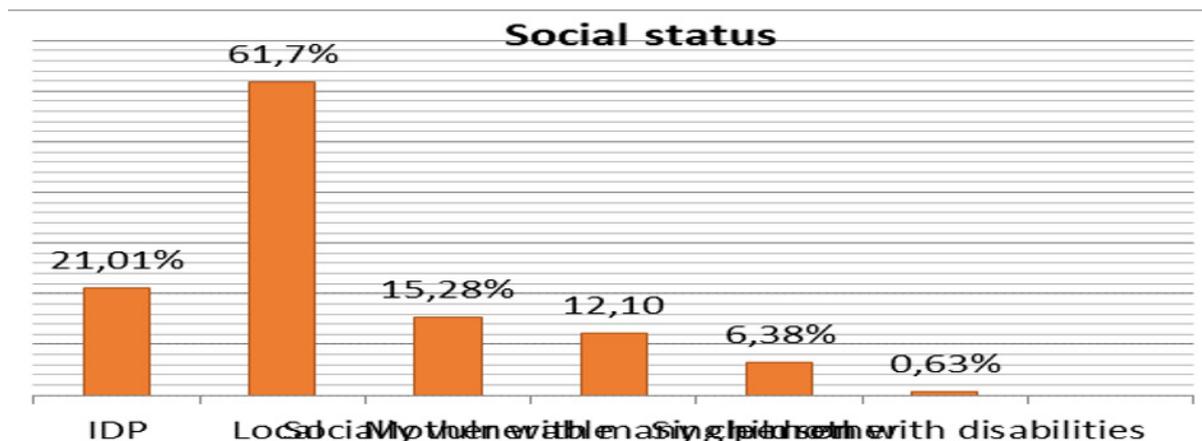
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY

A survey on citizens' needs involved women aged 18 to 65 living in Tsalenjikha Municipality, including IDPs, locals, socially vulnerable people, mothers with many children and single mothers, persons with disabilities, youth, pensioners, teachers of schools and preschool institutions, local experts in self-government issues. There were 157 women involved in the quantitative research, while 4 in-depth interview were carried out for the qualitative research with local experts (1 man and 3 women) and 4 focus group discussions with local women (30 women in total).

The participants involved in the quantitative research were divided by **age** as follows: the majority are represented by the middle-aged people - 18-30 years - 29.30%, 31-45 - 36.30%, 46-65 - 28.66% and over 65 - 5.74 %.

According to the **Social status**, 21.01% of respondents are IDPs, 61.7% - locals, 15.28% - socially vulnerable, 12.10% - mothers with many children. 6.38% of the respondents are single mothers and only 0.63% are people with disabilities.

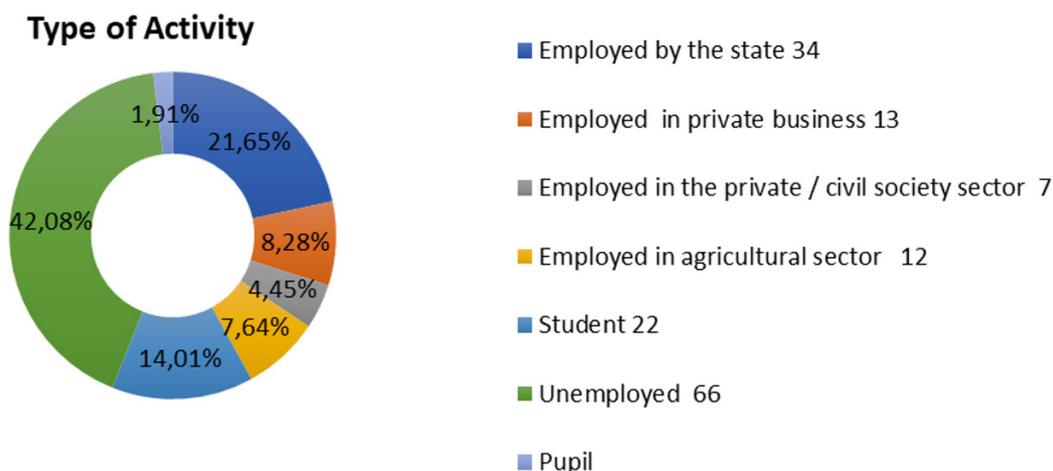
Figure#1



According to the employment status, the majority of respondents are unemployed 42.08%, also a large share comes from state employees, whose rate is 21.65%, 14.01% of beneficiaries are students, 8.28% are employed in private business, 4.45% are hired in the private / civil society sector, while 7.64% are engaged in agricultural work and 1.91% are students.

It is noteworthy, that **the data among the unemployed people according to social status was distributed as follows**: 37,11% locals and 45,45 - IDPs. As concerns, single mothers and mothers with many children, this figure among them are given as follows: unemployed single mother 50% and mother with many children - 47.36.

Figure #2

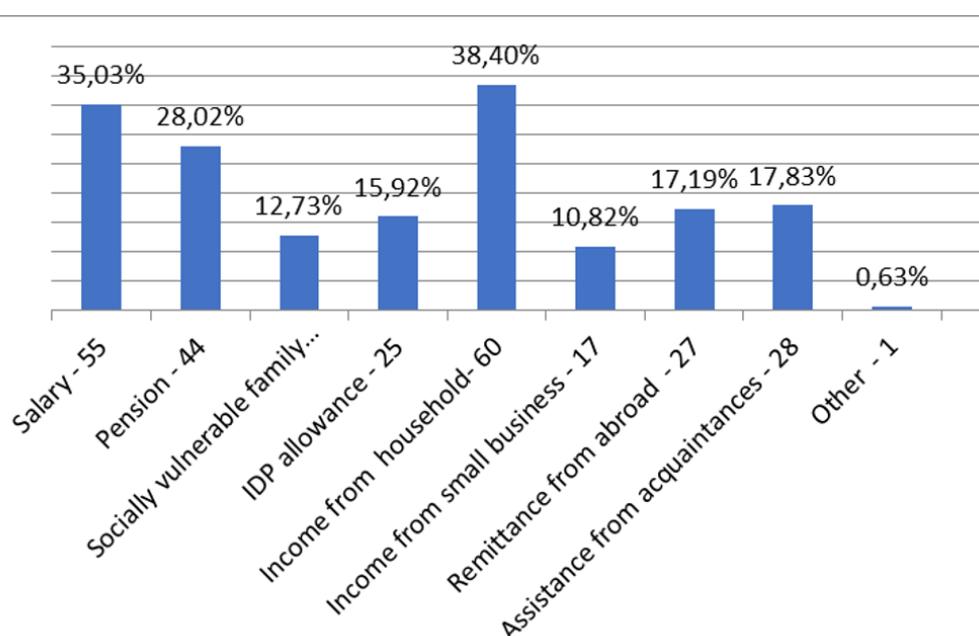


1.ECONOMIC SECURITY

According to the results of the quantitative research, for the majority of the population of Tsalenjikha Municipality, **the main source of the families' income** is the income received from household - 38.4%, also, a large share is distributed on state-paid beneficiaries - 35.03%. The pension was named as the basic income source by 28.02%. The state aid was distributed on the interviewed social groups as follows: socially vulnerable family allowance - 12.73%, IDP allowance - 15.92%. 17, 83-□. 10.82% keeps family with income from small business, 17.19% of respondents depend on migrants, and 17.83% are sustained with the help of the relatives.

It is interesting to **see the state remuneration rate for IDPs and local communities**, after analyzing the data we received the following picture: 27.27% of IDPs and 56.71% of locals benefit from the state remuneration. The source of income for mothers with many children and single mothers is mainly represented by pensions, state remuneration, household, remittances. The source of income for 42.10% of mothers with many children is a pension, the same number of mothers with many children benefits from household and state remuneration - 36.85%. As concerns, the single mothers, the source of income for 36.85% of them is a pension, and for 40% - remittances, 30% receives social allowance.

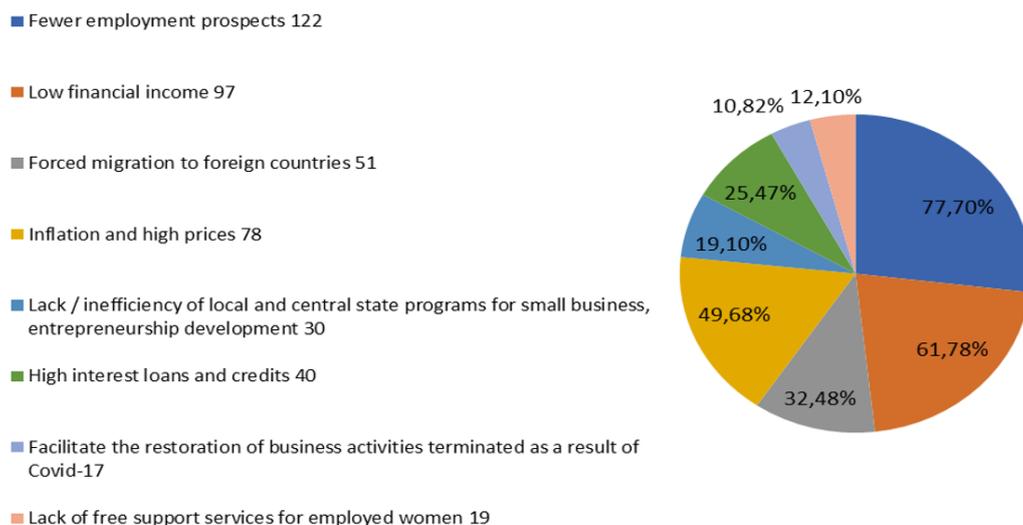
Figure #3



In the Economic Security Bloc, it was crucial to identify the hindering factors that exist for **women's economic empowerment**. In this regard, the less perspective of employment was named as the most important factor, which is significant for 77.70%. 61.78% allocated low financial income, while for 49.68% inflation and high prices for food, medicine, household items were a hindering factor. Then comes forced migration to foreign countries -32.48%. 25.47% of women believe that high-interest loans and credits obstruct their economic development. The following points were named as less important: Shortage / inefficiency of local and central state programs for small business, entrepreneurship development - 19.10%, assistance in restoring the business interrupted by Kovid-19 - 10.82% and lack of free support services for employed women - 12.10%.

It was turned out, that less employment prospects are significant for 75% of IDPs and 79% of locals. As for low financial income, the data were indicated as follows: IDPs - 63.65% and locals - 61.85%. The forced migration to foreign countries was outlined in the data, where we obtained the following figure: IDPs - 42% and local - 30%. No less important were inflation and high prices for food, medicine, household items, where the answers were distributed as follows: IDPs - 48.50% and locals - 66%. Interesting in identifying gender needs is the lack of free support services for single and large mothers. In order to reveal the gender needs, it is interesting to know how **important is the lack of free support services** for single mothers and mothers with many children as well. This problem was found to be less sensitive for single mothers, while it was named as the crucial hindering factor for mothers with many children - 26.35%

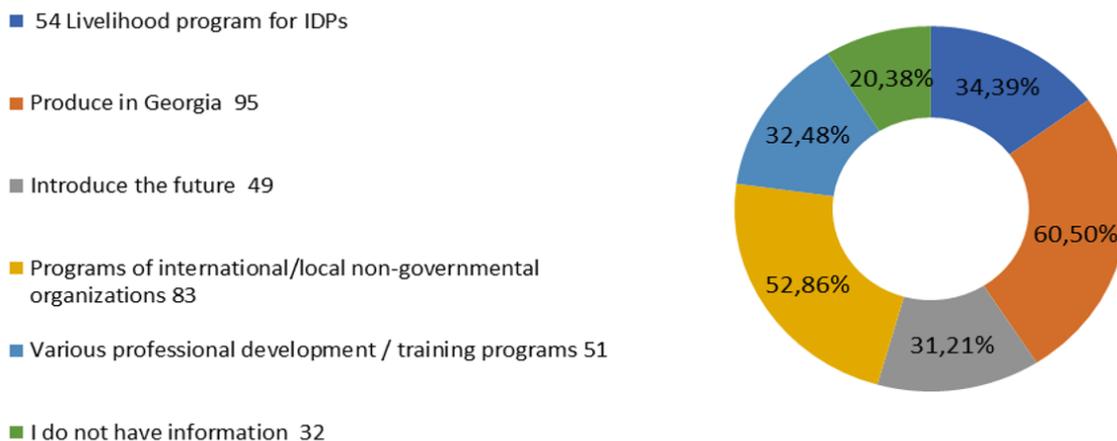
Figure #4



To the question, which are the **state socio-economic empowerment programs the interviewed beneficiaries have information on**, we received the following answer: 60.50% of the respondents are familiar with the program “Produce in Georgia”. 52.86% of the respondents have information on programs of international / local non-governmental organizations, and 34.39% know about the IDP livelihood programs. 32.48% are aware of various vocational development / training programs. As concerns, the state program “Introduce Future”, 31.21% have information on it, while 20.38% of the respondents do not have information about such programs at all. According to the results of the quantitative research, two priority directions have been revealed: “Produce in Georgia” and programs of international / local non-governmental organizations. The IDP and local community rate were distributed as follows: 57.60% of the IDP community is familiar with both directions,

62.90% of locals know about the program “Produce in Georgia” and 51.55% - on programs of international / local non-governmental organizations.

Figure #5



In order to improve the economic situation, it is important to **create a favorable environment for family farming, small business and self-employment**. In this regard, 64.33% considers that affordable loans are necessary, while 62.42% think that small business promotion programs are no less important. The share of IDPs and locals in these two outlined issues was almost equally distributed. Availability of affordable loans is important for 69.70% of IDPs and 62.90% of locals, while 65% of locals and 60.61% of IDPs paid attention on small business support programs. 45.85% of the quantitative research participants believe that rural support programs are of utmost importance as well, and 26.75% prioritizes grant programs. Local self-government programs were named to support agriculture, greenhouses and other types of activities, which were found to be significant for 30.57% of respondents. Low awareness of the population on state programs was clearly observed, which was observed by 52.86% of respondents. Only 12.10% responded to consulting services and assistance in business projects creation/writing.

During the qualitative research, **important issues for women’s economic development** have been observed: “It is necessary to facilitate women’s vocational training. There are women in the village who want to be specialized in the profession or raise their knowledge. Their help is important in this regard ”(Kindergarten employee, local, 55 years old).

“I want to start a small business, but I cannot afford it due to the lack of funds. If there is support, it will give us an incentive to implement any kind of project” (Teacher, local, 57 years old).

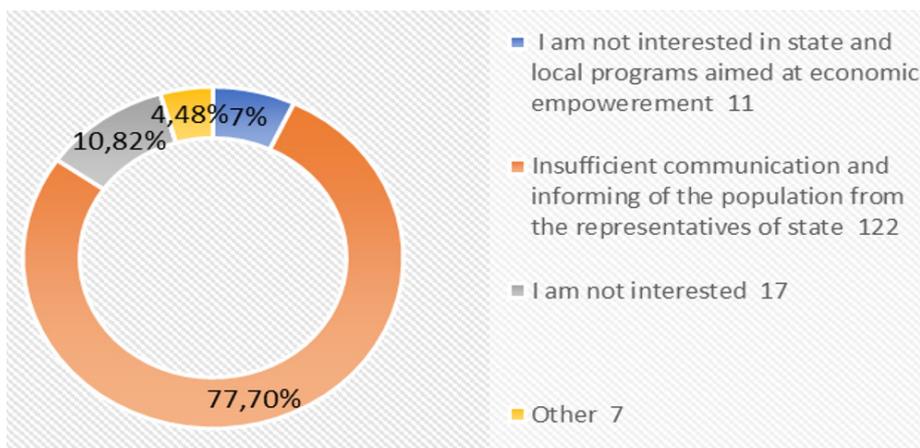
“It would be great, if someone implements any measures in our village: raised awareness in this direction, assistance in project writing, provision of interest-free or low-interest loans, co-finance, etc.” (Unemployed local, 30 years old).

The survey showed that 75.15% of the population **receives information** about the above-mentioned programs through television and radio. Also, online media outlets, social networks (59.87%) and neighbors and acquaintances (35.03%) were named as the primary source to gain information. 31.84% of respondents obtain information from non-governmental organizations. As for the involvement of local self-government, 22.92% note that they receive information through the website of municipality and Facebook page, 11.46% are informed with the help of local MPs

and only 8.91% receive information through leaflets and information boards. The lowest rate was observed in terms of information dissemination by the mayor's representatives in the communities - 5.73%. As concerns, the central government and the ministry, 14.01% of respondents receive information from their website and Facebook page.

77.70% of the respondents name insufficient communication and informing the population from the representatives of state agencies as a **hindering factor to obtain necessary information**. The problem of internetization is also named as a significant one - 10.82% of respondents indicated it as a priority. 7.0% named low interest of the population toward economic enhancement state and local programs as an obstacle as well.

Figure #6



Responses to the question: **Insufficient communication according to social status and informing the population from the representatives of state agencies**, are defined as follows: IDPs - 23.71%, locals - 81.44%. 6.06% of IDPs surveyed and 16.50% of locals “are not interested” in this regard. 9.29% of locals and 18.18% of IDPs have a problem with internetization.

As it was clarified from the qualitative survey, the most of the participants have no information on local services. Periodically, the local municipality surveys the population needs, meets the interested groups of the population on the spot and on the bases of the obtained information determines the priority directions of the rural development program. However, according to the members of the group, they have never sought the proper information on their own initiative, to familiarize with the self-government programs. They suggested that the best way is more communication and active collaboration among community members and public figures.

“The population should have information about all the programs that the municipality has outlined in its plan. The situation is particularly bad in terms of the medical field, expensive examinations are not financed, only one-time assistance is provided” (Housewife, local, 23 years old).

“Recently, during the relationship with the foundation “Sukhumi” we have heard that the municipality has stipulated some money for the rehabilitation of schools, we demanded and the roof of the school was replaced. So awareness is important” (Teacher, local, 50 years old).

„We do not have any information regarding existing programs of municipality. We have no information on social, infrastructure, education and other programs. We only meet the representatives of the self-government during the rural program and they often come with preliminary decided programs”. (Local housewife, 57 years old).

„We do not acquire information on how the needs are studied, or who works on such issues, probably the trustee. However, it is clear that this is insufficient. Maybe municipality has some form developed in this direction, I do not know” (Housewife, local, 42 years old).

“We do not have information on how our needs are studied. Probably, the trustee of the village is working on such issues with the majoritarian MP, to whom the population addresses with statement on various problems, such as assessing the social status of the family, health problems or other issues” (Teacher, local, 42 years old).

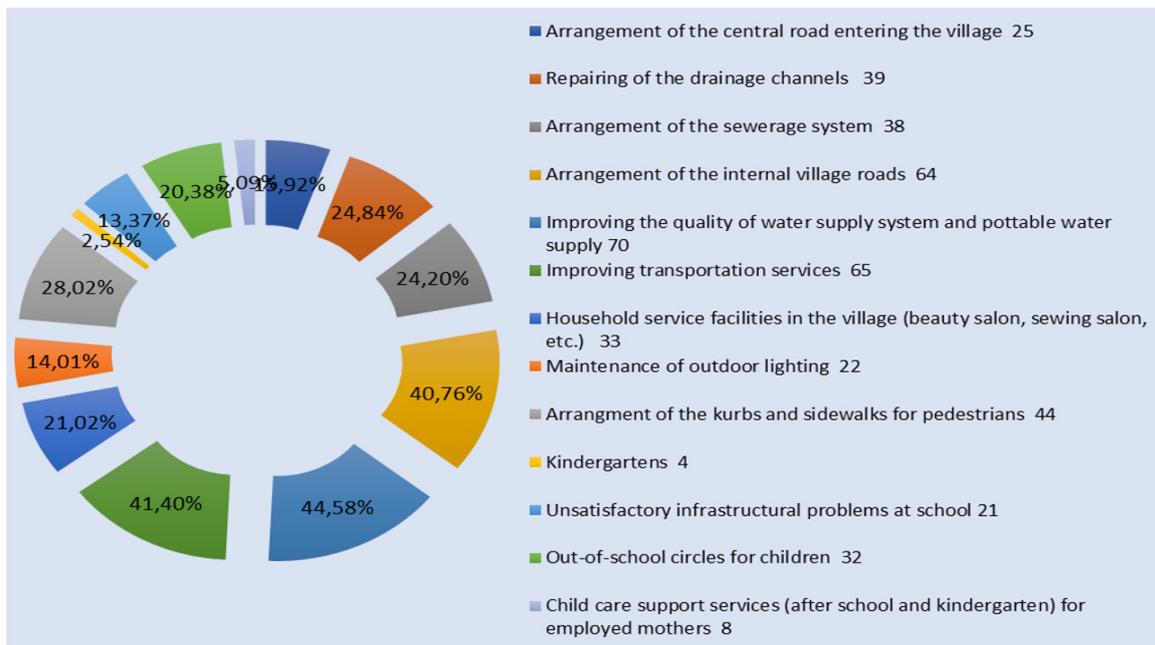
Local experts also emphasize the need to inform the population: “a citizen should know what kind of social aids are available from the state and the municipality, what projects are being implemented in terms of infrastructure in the village. For example, rural programs start in villages, and before the beginning of these programs, meetings were held in all villages. Residents were invited to the meetings. The population itself does not know what should have been done in that district, village. It is necessary to involve the population in the state and municipality deeds” (Representative of the city municipal assembly).

2. FOOD SAFETY

The subject of food safety is a priority gender issue. On the question, **which factor poses the greatest threat to food safety for you**, 92.99% answered that the important factor is high prices on products, and 73.88 – responded the lack of quality products. 24.84% named the absence of a grocery store nearby. In these responses, the proportion of IDPs and locals was distributed as follows: High prices on products represent a significant threat to 94.85% of locals and 84.85% of IDPs. While the availability of quality products is a priority for 60.60% of IDPs, a lower indicator was observed in terms of the local community - 5.15%. Regarding the absence of the grocery store nearby, the data is allocated equally for both social groups: locals - 24.75% and IDPs - 24.25%.

3. PUBLIC SAFETY

Among the women involved in quantitative research in Tsalenjikha Municipality, **three issues are named as the most relevant for public safety**, with the following percentages: improvement of water supply system and potable water supply - 44.58%, improvement of transportation services - 41.40% and improvement of inside rural roads - 40.76%. In terms of infrastructure improvement, for 28.02% arrangement of curbs and sidewalks for pedestrians is important. The following issues are significant for the almost equal number of respondents: construction of drainage canals - 24.84%, maintenance of sewerage system - 24.20%, household service objects in the village - 21.02%, arrangement of the central entrance road to the village - 15.92% and maintenance of outdoor lighting - 14.01%. The survey identified unsatisfactory infrastructure problems in the school, which is important for 13.37% of respondents, as well as the importance of circles out of school for children (20.38%). A relatively low percentage was revealed on issues such as child care support services (after school and kindergarten) for employed mothers (5.09%) and kindergartens as well (2.54%). **Figure #7**



The acute infrastructural environment of the **local community** was observed by focus groups, which is related to the unarranged or complete unsolved water supply to the population in the community.

“The hindering factor is the unarranged water supply at the head, there is even talk that the water is polluted and useless for drinking. This water is still not available to everyone because the village is mountainous. The way out in such places is a well, which is expensive” (Kindergarten employee, local, 55 years old).

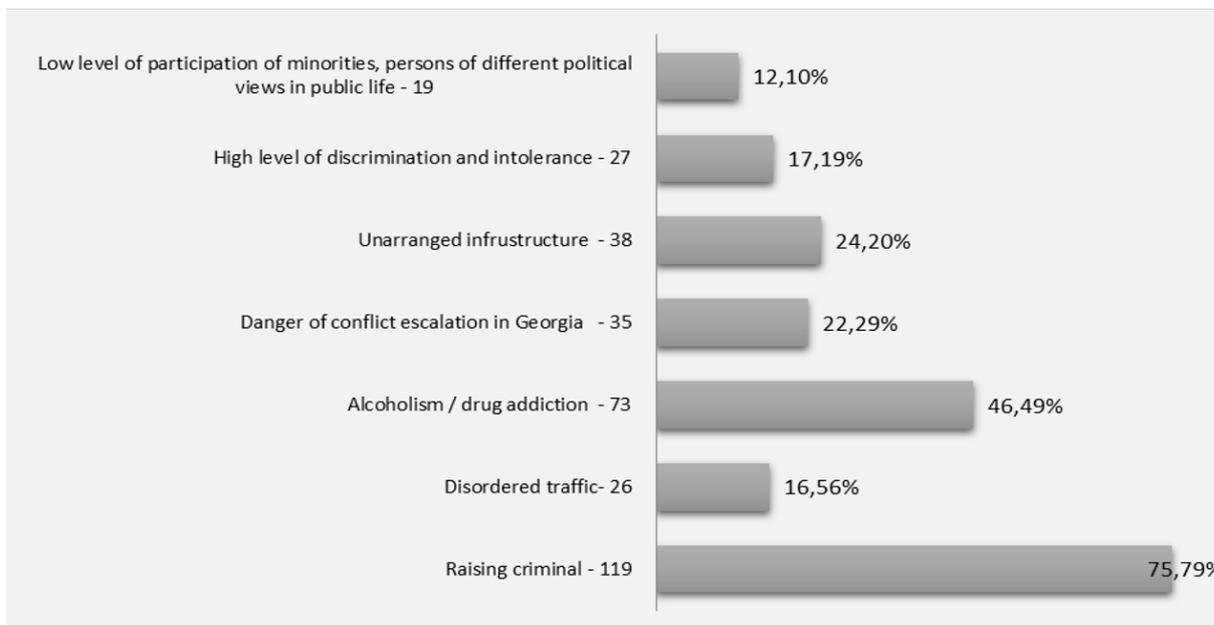
The most of the attendees talk about the infrastructure problems of the school and they see the solution in the construction of a new school. *“Our school is also important because students study here from Abkhazia, in particular, from the village of Saberio, who are still unable to attend learning process. These children and their families really need relevant support from our government. Environment where the school process will be attractive to them” (Housewife, local, 37 years old).*

“There was talk that the basic school should be transformed into a secondary school, i.e. students should finish twelve classes on the spot, not to have to go to another village. Children have difficulties to adapt to new environments. Students are victims of the bullying” (Housewife, 42, local).

The focus was made on the problem of public transportation: *“There is no transport that impedes the movement of the population. There are private minibuses, but in the event they do not have enough passengers, they can refuse to transport them. These minibuses used to make two races, but after the pandemic, when the road to Abkhazia was closed, passengers were reduced and drivers switched to one race. Of course, this situation has affected us badly and we have to use taxis. Many women, who use to take out household products in Zugdidi, stopped taking them out” (Housewife, local, 57 years old).*

As a quantitative research shows, **the following threats are not less important for the population of Tsalenjikha Municipality** : increase in crime - 75.79% and alcoholism / drug addiction - 46.49%. Unarranged infrastructure was named as important for public safety by

24.20% of respondents. Escalation of conflicts in Georgia is considered as a threat by 22.29% of respondents. 17.19% of respondents highlight high levels of discrimination and intolerance as a threat, while unorganized traffic is a threat for 16.56%. 12.10% note the low degree of participation of minorities, people of different political views in public life as an important for public safety. There are crime and alcoholism mostly observed in the answers. It was interesting for us, how this rate was distributed among IDPs and local respondents. As a result of the analysis, we have the following figures: increase of crime is deemed as a threat by the 71.13% of the interviewed locals and by 60.60% of the IDPs, and 49.50% of locals and 42.43% of IDPs name alcoholism and drug addiction. **Figure #8**



Pursuant to the quantitative research, the degree of access to education has been determined. To the question, whether their children, grandchildren or acquaintances have access to quality secondary education or not, the answer of 58.59% polled was - partly. 58.76% out of them are locals and 51.52% IDPs, 54.16% socially vulnerable, 47.37% mothers with many children and 30% single mothers. Quality secondary education is not available for 10.20%, out of which, according to the socio-demographic status the following picture is clear: local - 5.15%, IDPs - 21.21%, socially vulnerable - 20.83%, single - 30% and only 5.26% with many children. 31.21% of respondents state that their children, grandchildren and acquaintances have access to quality secondary education.

Quantitative research allowed us to find out the reasons: 29.29% of the respondents named low quality of education, 12.10% - insufficient number of professional teachers, for 36.30% the priority is unarranged school infrastructure, 4.45% think that the reason is that the school is not near the vicinity of the house. 47.13% of the respondents consider the absence of appropriate technical equipment in the school as a problem, and 36.30% consider low quality internet to provide distance learning process.

In terms of access to higher education, the survey revealed that 48.40% of respondents' family members and acquaintances have access to higher education. Only 9.55% do not agree with this, 42.03% think that it is partially available. In terms of the higher education, the following

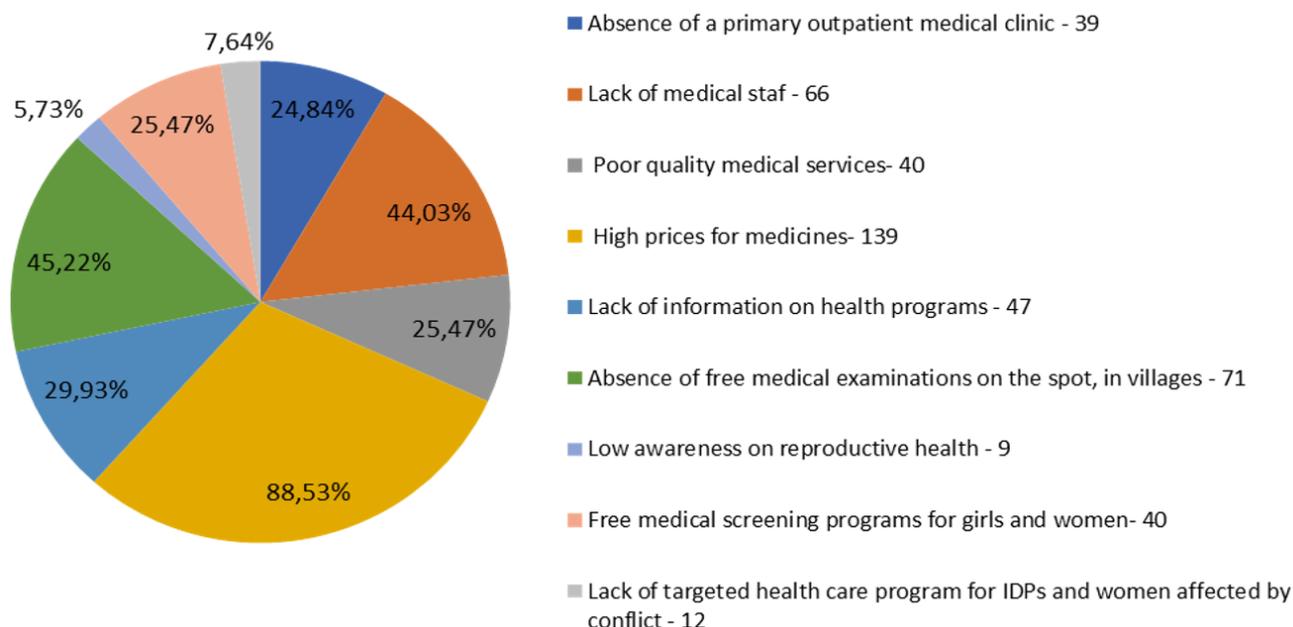
problems were identified: there are no vocational guidance courses in schools - 23.56%, free accommodation is not available for the student in the city from the region - 34.39%, high tuition fees - 38.85% and low quality education - 2.54%.

The problem of internetization was raised in the qualitative research by participants as well. This was emphasized as a hindering factor to both secondary and high education: *“Internet malfunctions have impeded the involvement of students and teachers in online lessons. We use “Silknet” internet, but it does not work well and we have to buy internet packages. We addressed to the company MAGTI, but in vain. The deputy of the village notified us, that tender was announced and the winner was the company “Silknet” and that the problem was tackled. It was another frustration” (Housewife, local, 40 years old).*

4. HEALTH SAFETY

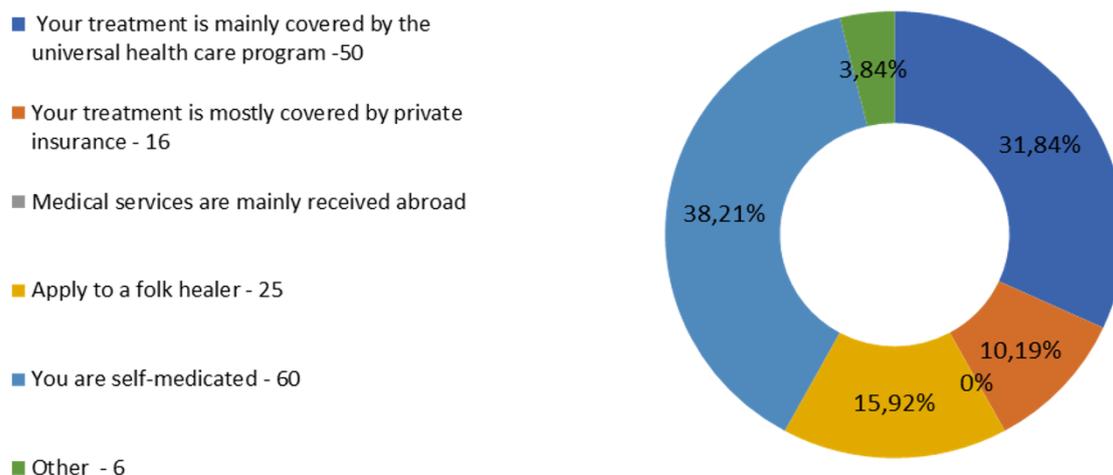
The quantitative research referred to the **health problems**. The interviewed women had the opportunity to identify the priority and actual issues in families and communities. The absence of a primary outpatient medical point is a problem for 24.84% and the lack of medical staff for 44.03%. 25.47% name the problem of poor quality medical services. Quite a large part - 88.53% named high prices for medicines as a problem, while for 45.22% the problem is the lack of free medical examinations on the spot, in the villages. 29.93% of the respondents indicated the low level of awareness. Low reproductive health awareness was named here as well by 5.73%. 25.47% of respondents have a problem with free medical screening programs for girls and women. Only 7.64% stated a shortage of targeted health programs for IDPs and women affected by conflict.

Figure #9



In the whilst of the existing health care problems, in terms of the research it was interesting how do the women of the quantitative research manage to solve the problem during the deterioration of the health. It was turned out, that treatment for 31,84% is mainly covered by the universal health care program, while 10,19% are covered by private insurance and 15,92% refer to a healer (wise woman) and 38,21% are self medicated.

Figure #10



The health care problems were considered as urgent by representatives of the qualitative research:

“I would emphasize the children with chronic diseases, they need special attention, often they do not receive proper medical care due to lack of funds. It is necessary to study the needs of such children” (Teacher, local, 58 years old).

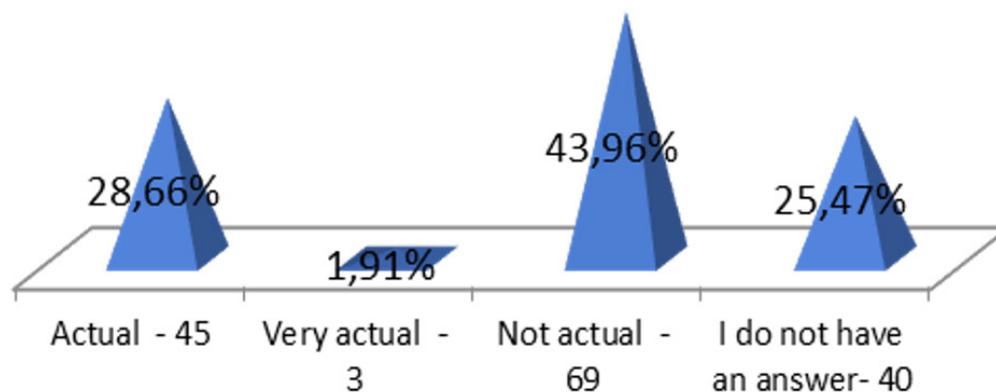
“Attention should be paid to people with health problems, lonely elderly, single mothers. The allowance received by them is meager and does not meet their needs” (Teacher, Local, 36).

„We do not have an outpatient clinic in the village, which creates an additional problem” (Teacher, local, 60 years old).

5. PERSONAL SAFETY

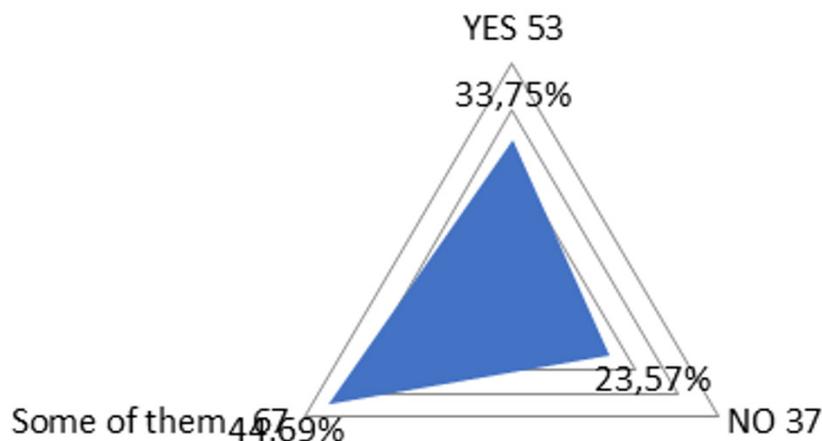
Within the frames of the quantitative research were revealed sensitive problems such as: **domestic violence issue and informing the population of Tsalenjikha Municipality in this regard**. The survey showed that 28.66% consider the problem of violence to be urgent, 1.91% to be extremely urgent, 25.47% have no answer, and 43.96% of the respondents do not consider the problem to be actual.

Figure #11



61.15% of the participants name psychological violence as the most common form of violence, 29.30% - economic violence, 9.55% - physical. It was observed during the research that 33.75% have information on support services for victims of violence, 23.57% know nothing, and 44.69% have information about some services.

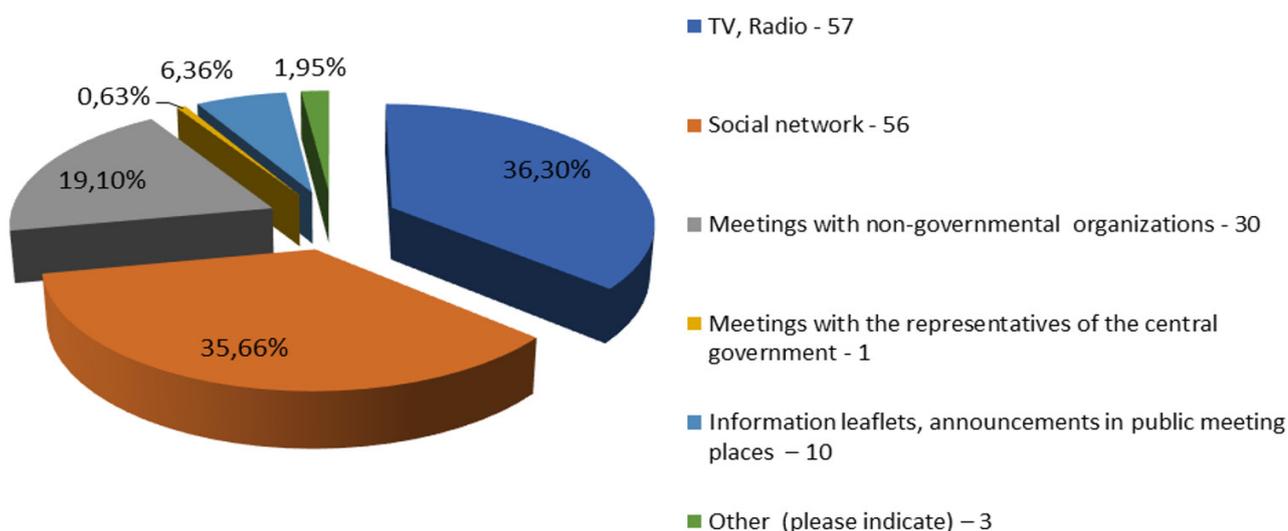
Figure #12



The participants have no information at all on hotline and municipal services from listed services. They are most informed about NGOs and their services (24.16%), NGOs working on violence issues (12.50%). Participants have information on shelters based on state and non-governmental organizations (7.5%), crisis centers at the governmental and non-governmental level (4.16%) and state legal services (3.33%).

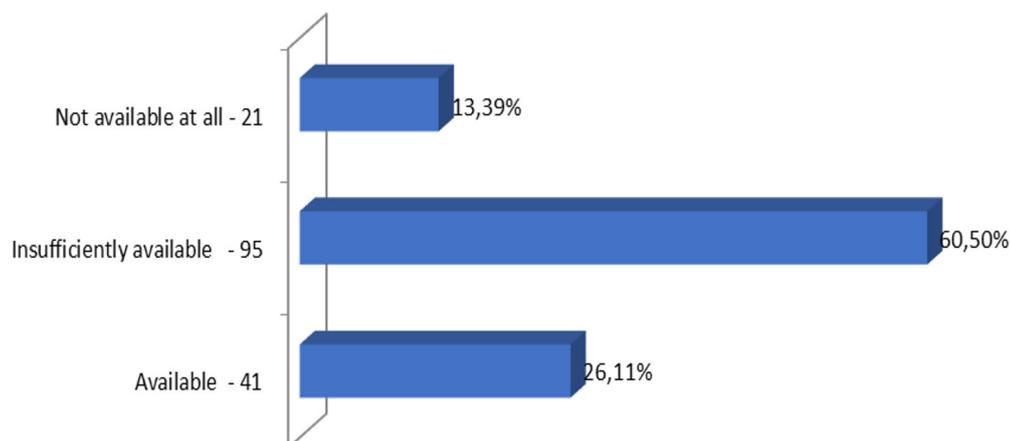
It was emphasized that the **beneficiaries received information about the services of victims of violence or potential victims from the following sources**: 36.30% - TV and radio, 35.66% - social network, meetings with non-governmental organizations - 19.10%, meetings with central government representatives - 0, 63% and 6.36% leaflets, announcements in public meeting places.

Figure# 13



How affordable are existing services to the population of the Tsalenjikha Municipality, 60.50% of the population considers that they are not available enough. 26.11% believe that these services are available, while 13.39% reports that they are not available at all.

Figure #14



26.75% of the quantitative research participants believe that **the programs implemented by the local self-government to respond to women and domestic violence** are partially sufficient, 14.64% think that it is not sufficient, and 9.55% consider that it is sufficient. 24.84% do not acquire information about the mentioned programs of the local self-government, 24.22% think that it is programs diversification is necessary and to adapt them to the specific needs of the victims of violence.

Focus group discussions referred to domestic violence and existing challenges in this regard. While assessing the response to the violence against women, it was mentioned that much remains to be done in this direction. The reason of problem unsolved, on the one hand, is the established mentality in the society. It was also suggested that more support and assistance from the state would be the best solution to raise public awareness and establish mutual assistance. Moreover, it was mentioned that many cases of violence against women remain without responses. Society is accustomed to ignoring the facts of violence in everyday life and the role of local self-government is unclear:

“We only know that we have to call 112. It turns out that there are various victim assistance services and we are notified about them only while meeting with you. There should be an appropriate service that will work in the community in this direction” (Housewife, local 40 years old).

“In general, the issue of violence is a closed topic in the village, there is no appeal for some reasons, we are less informed about the programs implemented to respond the violence. It is necessary to diversify such programs in order to raise awareness amongst the people in this direction” (Teacher, local, 50 years old).

The self-government makes sits effort to promote the prevention of domestic violence within its competence. This was outlined during the individual interviews with local experts:

“It is the second year since we have a program for the protection of victims of domestic violence in the social program. We donate 200 GEL once to whom applies to us as a victim of domestic violence. Last year, in 2020, we were addressed by three citizens, to whom we provided financial assistance in an amount of 200 GEL. No one has applied yet, maybe it is a mental issue, maybe there is a domestic violence, but no one wants to reveal it. Whoever addressed to us, we assisted” (City Municipal Assembly representative).

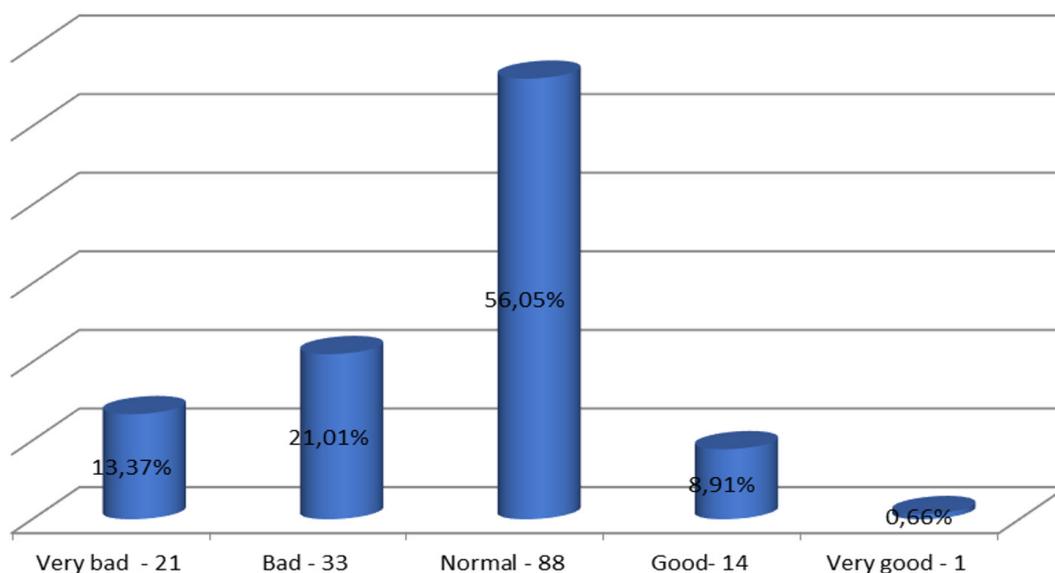
“There are fewer complaints in terms of violence problem in our municipality, there is still a stigma.

We had three cases last year, this year we do not have any at all. The reasons are insufficient level of awareness, the feeling of fear as well as what kind of response there might be if they address on this fact” (representative of the City Municipal Assembly).

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY

Participants of the quantitative research assessed sanitation and environmental condition in their city/village. As a result we received the following data: 13,37% consider, that there is a difficult situation in this regard, 21,01% believe that situation is bad, 56,05% or respondents assess as normal and only 8,91% evaluated as good, 0,66% as very good.

Figure #15



In the community, following was named as the acute problem: polluted air - 28,66%, improper access to clean water - 32,48%, unarranged sewerage systems - 15,94%, absence of drainage pipes 36% or malfunction - 22,92%.

In terms of the environmental safety during the qualitative research the problems caused by the absence of garbage was identified. *“Garbage is thrown on the street, on the river bank and pollutes the river and environment. There is one litter bin near the dividing line of Abkhazia and vehicle comes for only it, but litter bins are really needed near the school, kindergarten, the shops in the center”*(Housewife, local, 42 years old).

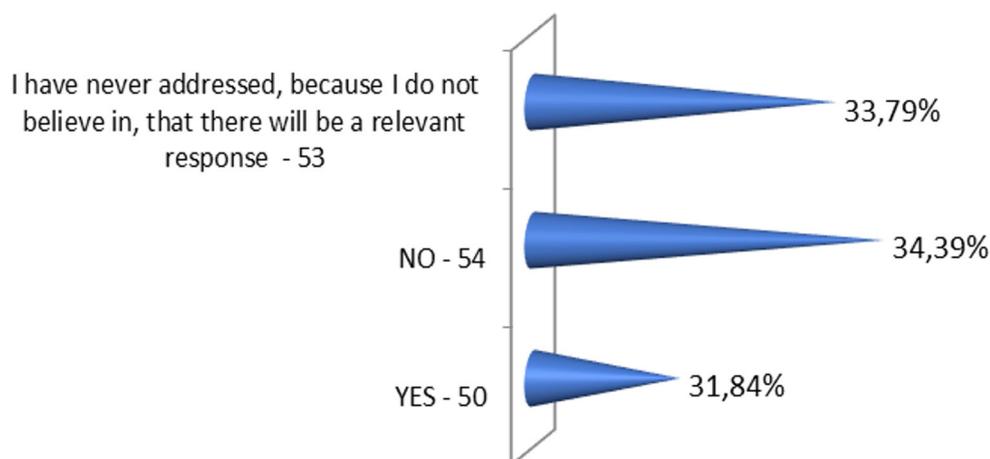
“The problem is the lack of drainage systems. The access road to the school is flooded even during the little rain and the children have difficulties in moving. To solve the problem, we applied to the village administration, both in writing and orally, but it still unresolved. We were redirected to the Road Department ” (Teacher, local, 42 years old).

7. GENERAL QUESTIONS

Within the frame of the quantitative survey, the respondents were given the opportunity to express their opinion on ***whether they applied to the local self-government or another***

state body to resolve any personal, job, public issues. 31.84% answered “Yes”, 34.39% answered “No” while 33.79% did not apply because they do not believe that they will be responded accordingly.

Figure #16



Those, who used the local self government resource in order to solve the certain issue **The following forms for civic engagement are used to communicate with local government:** settlement/village assemblies - 49,68%, attendance in City Municipal Assembly - 5,73%, listening of the reports from the mayor, City Hall services - 6,36%, petition - 2,54%, Mayor’s Advisory Board, Gender Council, Council of Persons with Disabilities - 3,82, electronic form of communication - 31,85%. It was assessed **how the services and programs provided by local governments are tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable populations.** 14.64% of respondents believe that local programs address the specific needs of vulnerable groups, while 35.70% think that the programs do not reflect the specific needs of individual vulnerable groups. 48.68% think that the practice of assessing the specific needs of vulnerable population and programs for assessing their satisfaction is not implemented.

Citizens consider that the needs of vulnerable groups are inadequately reflected in the programs and the level of awareness about these programs is low, but the following comments were indicated in individual interviews: *“While compiling the municipal budget, the needs of the people are taken into account, and work is underway on what can be included in the next year’s budget. The municipality conducts research to study the needs of the population, the submitted applications are considered”* (City Municipa Assembly representative).

“Information on the programs available in the municipality is posted on the official website of the City Hall. The population is informed by the heads of the social service of the City Hall and the administrative unit as well” (City Hall representative).

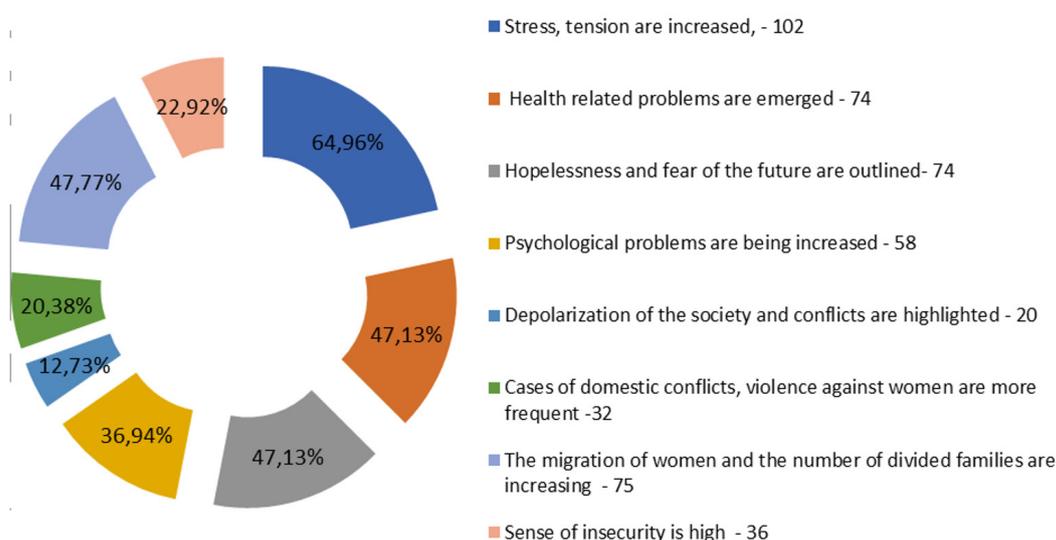
The comments were made on programs needed to be refined hereby:

“In my opinion, the vulnerable groups are most needed in help, such as lonely elderly people who have taken pension in advance and in fact, are left without means of support. Also, young families who are raising children, are unemployed and do not know how to deal with the problems. Unfortunately, they are not involved in any of the programs. Such families should be researched and provided some kind of assistance. In such situation, the facts of violence are frequent as well - the economic problem often leads to violence” (Representative of City Municipal Assembly).

“Assistance with local programs is mostly needed to socially vulnerable families such as: people with disabilities, orphans and single mothers and the elderly people. If I could afford, I would implement a program to provide a housing program for homeless people, especially, a program of examination and treatment of the dangerous diseases” (City Hall representative).

The participants of the quantitative research expressed their opinion on **how the increased threat in terms of the human security affects the situation of the population**. 64.96% of respondents stated that the stress is increased, tension, 47.13% think that health related problems are appeared, 47.13% think that hopelessness, fear of the future are expressed, 36.94% report that psychological problems increases. Other data are as follows: depolarization of society and conflicts - 12.73%, increased cases of domestic conflicts, violence against women - 20.38%, increased migration of women and the number of separated families - 47.77%, high sense of insecurity - 22.92 %.

Figure #17



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the assessment of the quality of human security and gender needs of the population in Tsalenjikka Municipality, it was revealed that the communication system is important between the local self-government and the population, especially for disseminating the information on programs and services. This will help to reflect the population needs in the local budget and solve their everyday problems.

- It is important, that the practice of information dissemination to be widely introduced by municipality on all programs and municipal services in the local budget, in this regard, it is appropriate to use all available resources of the self-government (Facebook, website, media outlets, direct meetings with the population);
- While developing local programs and service planning, maximum consideration of the priority needs of vulnerable groups living in the municipality and introduction of a system for determining the degree of population satisfaction;

- It is essential for citizens to have access to the details of the planned City Council assemblies, public hearings, village meetings and other meetings and issues to be discussed - through the media, social media and the website, which will increase public engagement in local political processes;
- Elaboration of a program at the local level for development of small and family businesses, which will gain economic stability to women;
- Establishment of a system of consultation and vocational guidance by the local government for women who want to start their own business - with the help and involvement of the non-governmental sector working in this profile;
- In terms of the health care, to review programs stipulated by the local budget and to provide/ support of vulnerable groups with accessible diagnostics and treatment;
- Creation of affordable tuition fee system for students living in villages;
- To raise the problem of internetization both at local and central levels and promotion of high quality education by problem solving.



Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi"

Consolidated report elaborated by – EKATERINE GAMAKHARIA

The reports on specific municipalities were summed up by –
KHATUNA GOGUA, LARISA SHENGELIA, GURANDA GVANTSELADZE AND LALI SHENGELIA

Translation:

NG GEORGIA, DIANA KUSIANI AND SALOME DEMETRADZE

Editor - Lali Shengelia

Layout - Lia Kostava

Address:

**Office space #2, #29b, A. Mitskevich str. Tbilisi, Georgia
#6 Mgaloblishvili str. Kutaisi, Georgia**

e-mails: womansukhumi@gmail.com;
fundsukhumitbilisi@gmail.com

web page: www.fsokhumi.ge

facebook page: www.facebook.com/fsokhumi/