EVERY 3RD UKRAINIAN KNOWS ABOUT “BREAK THE CIRCLE” CAMPAIGN

Awareness-raising campaign “Break the Circle” lead by UNFPA Ukraine since 2015 continues to grow, shaping Ukrainian society perception of GBV.

In the spring of 2021, four visuals of the campaign with the messages debunking the most common myths on GBV were placed in all Ukrainian regions. As a result, 16% of Ukrainian society became sensitised by the messages against abuse and got to know the site rozirvykolo.org for receiving life-saving information.

Also, the latest campaign’s video of Ukrainian celebrities standing against GBV was broadcast on the ICTV channel that has national coverage. More than 11 million people have seen the video at least once and almost every fifth (17%) Ukrainian easily recalled the video and its message. It indicates that the video is made in an appealing format and compels the audience’s attention. “Thanks to everyone who took part in this project, this is so important. I watched the video a million times with tears in my eyes, it is very touching”, – user Natalia Kasian, commented on the video on YouTube.

In 2021, the “Break the Circle” campaign will keep on transforming the attitudes of Ukrainians towards GBV to help create a safe future for everyone.
CITIES AND COMMUNITIES FREE FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: NEW START

“Undoubtedly, domestic violence prevention and response in Ukraine are led at the national level. We take consistent steps and measures to minimise this vice. However, we must pay maximum attention to this issue at the regional level. Only consolidation of efforts will ensure a comprehensive, cross-cutting approach”

– Katerina Pavlichenko, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs.

In April 2021, UNFPA, with the support of the governments of the United Kingdom and Canada, launched a new cycle of the project “Cities and Communities Free from Domestic Violence”. It aims at developing effective and sustainable local GBV prevention and response systems. The project supports communities in establishing specialised services for GBV survivors, improving multisectoral coordination, prevention and awareness-raising work.

A year since its pilot in 15 cities supported by the UK, the project expanded assistance for the development of GBV response and prevention systems to communities. The open call for participation was met with high interest from cities and communities. UNFPA received 117 applications, which is 3.5 times higher than in 2020. Out of the pool of quality applicants, 15 cities and communities emerged successful demonstrating strong motivation to develop a systemic response to GBV, invest sufficient resources and ensure sustainability of results. The cities and communities became project participants for 2021-2024: Avanhard (Odesa region), Bila Tserkva (Kyiv region), Dobropillia (Donetsk region), Zaporizhzhia, Kalush (Ivano-Frankivsk region), Kropyvnytskyi, Lubny (Poltava region), Mariupol, Rokytne (Rivne region), Starokostiantyniv (Khmelnytskyi region), Ternopil, Uzhhorod, Khoroshiv (Zhytomyr region), Khotyn (Chernivtsi region) and Cherkasy.
Most of these cities and communities are the first to embark on the journey to building GBV response and prevention systems in their regions. Establishing a strong dialogue with the government at the onset is vital for the leaders of communities. For this purpose, on 27 May in Kyiv, UNFPA held a coordination meeting of city mayors, community heads and representatives of the national government. The meeting strengthened the dialogue between the government and local authorities in implementing state policy in the area of response and prevention of violence. The participants identified key challenges, taking into account the communities’ experience and capabilities, discussed possible solutions and determined further steps.

The coordination meeting also served to ensure swift onboarding of the new cohort of cities and communities by allowing them to learn about the project experience of the 2020 group of participants. As the project offers three-year technical support to each city with the deployment of GBV response and prevention system, both 2021 and 2020 cohorts discussed plans of their participation and shared hopes of seeing their communities growing free of violence.

“"The lack of the infrastructure in some communities or administrative units affects the access of GBV survivors to the essential services. The responsibility of local authorities regarding the services development and provision of support to survivors should be stipulated not only in the normative documents but also imprinted in the mind of community leaders”

– Olga Revuk, Deputy Minister of Social Policy.

In 2021, the Government of Ukraine allocated UAH 274.2 million to expand the network of specialised support services for GBV survivors. On 23 April, the Ministry of Social Policy started accepting applications of local governments for the state subvention.

To help communities make the most of this funding opportunity, UNFPA and the Ministry of Social Policy held a workshop for community leaders and representatives of state administrations. On 18 May, thirty representatives of communities from all regions of Ukraine gathered in Kyiv to exchange
practical insights on setting up specialised services, specifics of their operation and service provision. The participants explored opportunities offered by the state subvention and discussed expected timeframes for its implementation. This knowledge will facilitate the preparation of quality applications for the state funding to establish specialised services for GBV survivors – shelters, daycare centres, crisis rooms and mobile teams of psychosocial support.

The deadline to apply for the state subvention as announced by the Ministry of Social Policy is 11 June 2021.

The workshop highlighted both the governmental support for establishing the network of the essential services for GBV survivors and the wider context of developing comprehensive community systems of GBV response and prevention.

**INSIGHTS FOR BUSINESS TO MAINTAIN A SAFE WORKPLACE**

“Work is often the main island of safety for them, so it is necessary to ensure that every employee knows: here they will get help and support.

Training on combating domestic and gender-based violence is a good tool to raise awareness among employees on this topic and get many pieces of practical advice: how to identify a survivor of violence and how to provide assistance properly”

– Anna Borynets, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Danone Ukraine.

Domestic violence affects all life areas of those who suffer from it, including professional growth. Employers are increasingly recognising the way domestic violence affects employees and the workplace.

Recently, UNFPA Ukraine provided training for Danone Ukraine employees on combating domestic violence, its impact on survivors’ professional lives, and opportunities to assist. During the training, participants explored what domestic violence is and how to identify it. They also learnt how to interact with GBV survivors, respond safely and effectively, and refer survivors for specialised assistance. With increased workplace support, survivors may experience more economic security and be better able to leave abusive situations, which ultimately reduces the financial and resource costs for employers and society. The workplace is an ideal setting to provide support, encouragement and resources to survivors of domestic violence, with the potential to significantly improve their lives.

One of 32 signatories of the UNFPA Declaration for Gender Equality and Prevention of GBV, Danone Ukraine receives UNFPA technical support for improving corporate policies on GBV prevention and promoting internal social responsibility, including workplace GBV response and prevention mechanisms.

UNFPA Programme on GBV Response and Prevention is implemented with the support of the governments of the United Kingdom, Canada and Estonia.