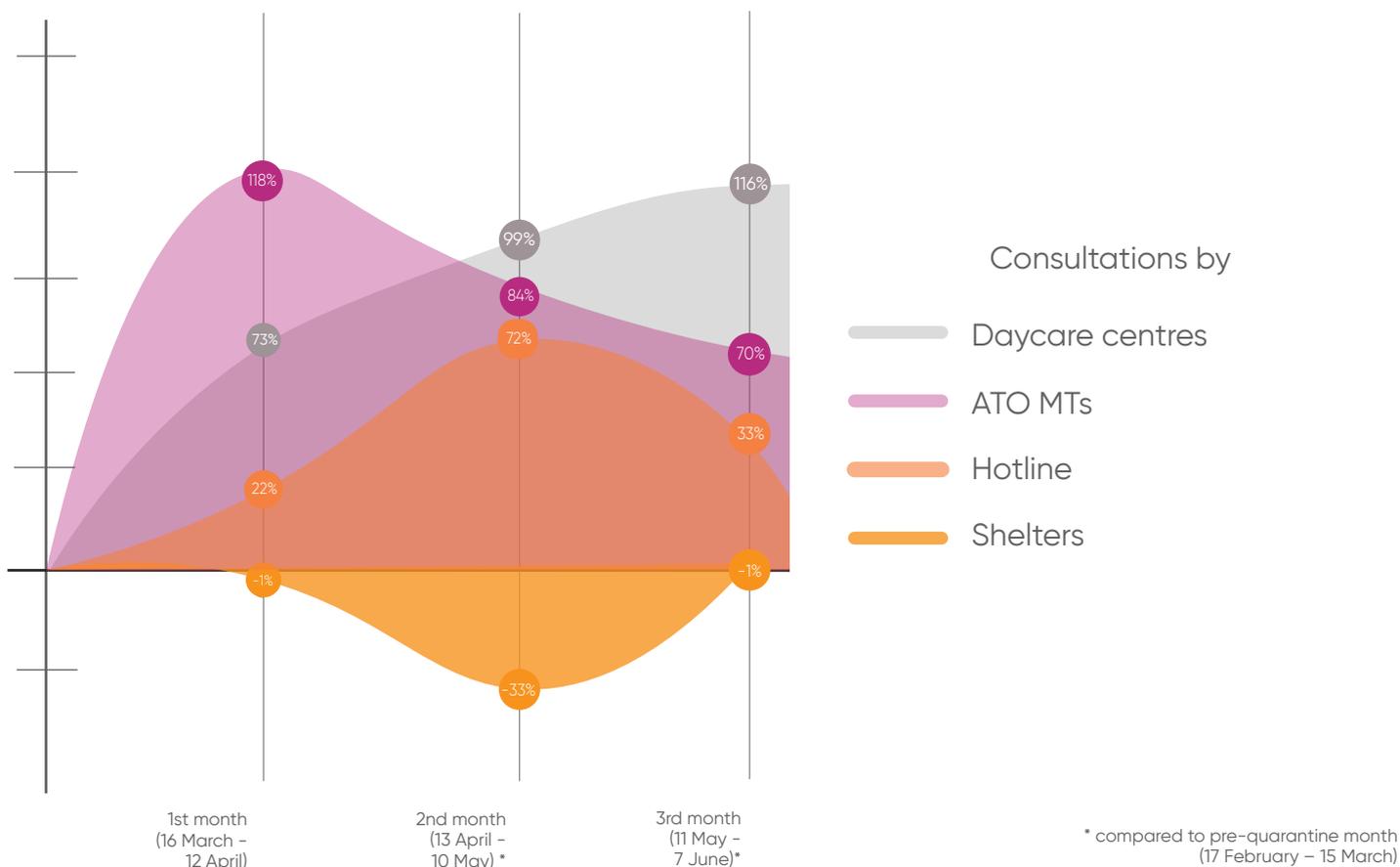


TRENDS IN GBV SERVICE PROVISION IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19



Upon introduction of quarantine in mid-March 2020, UNFPA-supported GBV service providers observed a significant surge in the number of requests for assistance. Swift adjustment and expansion of service provision modalities enabled services' prompt response to the growing demand from GBV survivors and people at risk. Over three months since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, services register dynamics that are specific to their operating environment. Shelters, given fixed availability of spaces, could not extend admission of new clients beyond their capacity and register a decrease in the number of consultations, in particular in 2nd month after quarantine introduction. At the same time, the hotline (La Strada-operated) addressed the highest number of calls due to mounting tensions in the household in the second month of strict quarantine and restricted movement. Fast to pilot alternative avenues for service provision, MTs on outreach support to families of ATO veterans responded to the surge in requests soon after the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. Easing of quarantine regime in 3rd month partially restored access to other services, including in-person consultations at daycare centres. Thus, offering complex information, psychosocial and legal counselling, daycare centres witness steady growth in the number of GBV survivors seeking assistance.



ARTISTIC REMINDER TO LEAD VIOLENCE-FREE LIFE IN MARIUPOL

On the initiative of UNFPA Ukraine, famous Ukrainian muralist Oleksandr Korban created a mural in Mariupol. The mural is the third in a series of wall artwork dedicated to raising awareness of people about the importance of GBV prevention and response. Earlier in autumn 2019, murals were painted in Mykolaiv and Lysychansk, as part of the UNFPA Ukraine project.

The mural in Mariupol is called "Towards Happiness". The heroine of the mural is the personification of all women who were able to break the cycle of violence and start a new life. The depicted woman looks to the future with hope and a slight smile. The bird that flew out of the cage symbolises the emotional state of the heroine – she escaped from a situation of domestic violence. The shimmering figures in the background merge into one fairy-tale picture and mean that the woman's world has become bright and joyful – happiness awaits her ahead.

The idea was inspired by the words of one of the women who received help in one of the UNFPA Ukraine shelters: ***"What can I advise women who find themselves in similar situations? Do not be afraid. Believe in yourself. And go on."***

SERIES OF EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE MEETINGS REACHED THEIR EQUATOR

In June, UNFPA Ukraine jointly with UNFPA Belarus launched a series of weekly online meetings of experts and practitioners in the field of DV/GBV response and prevention to exchange experiences and successful models for responding to gender-based violence, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The experts shared best practice in the operation of hotlines for DV and GBV survivors, insights on Romania's experience of adjusting GBV response in the COVID-19 context, and promising models of organising work with perpetrators. The three meetings witnessed active participation

of specialists from government agencies, public organisations and services involved in countering and preventing domestic and gender-based violence and received 4850 views on YouTube and Facebook.

In July, there will be three more meetings dedicated to the prevention of GBV towards and mistreatment of people with disabilities, organisation of GBV awareness-raising work and prevention initiatives and development of effective synergies with business in combating GBV.



VISIT TO KYIV CRISIS ROOMS

The Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Ukraine, Melinda Simmons, and the Honorary Ambassador of UNFPA Ukraine, Maria Efrosinina, visited the first crisis response rooms for GBV survivors in Kyiv.

"Combating gender-based violence is a priority for many European countries, including the United Kingdom, because it is impossible to build a society without human protection," said Melinda Simmons.

The importance of such a format of assistance as crisis rooms is difficult to overestimate because here a woman can receive emergency care – safety from the abuser and convenient space to plan further steps of breaking out of the circle of violence.

In two weeks of operation of the crisis rooms since their launch in late May, they have already served as a much-needed refuge for five women who have suffered from domestic violence.

15 CITIES TO BECOME FREE FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In spring, UNFPA launched new programme "Cities free from domestic violence" that focuses on developing effective and sustainable municipal systems of GBV response and prevention.

Addressing GBV systematically, UNFPA will support selected municipalities in strengthening multisectoral coordination, establishing GBV specialised services, and conducting awareness raising and prevention work.

As a result of the open call, competitive selection process, out of 32 applications from cities with 50k+ population from 12 project regions UNFPA identified 15 cities to take part in the programme in 2020/21.



EXTENDING GBV SERVICE PROVISION TO ISOLATED SETTLEMENTS AND ALONG THE CONTACT LINE

Since June, UNFPA Ukraine has been supporting seven municipal PSS mobile teams (established and funded by local authorities) in Donetsk and Luhansk regions (GCA) to conduct outreach work, enabling the provision of psycho-social support to GBV survivors residing along the contact line and in isolated settlements with no coverage of this type of services.

Jointly with its implementing partner – Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health, UNFPA provides capacity building to the mentioned MTs on the provision of PSS, new approaches and features of GBV response during COVID-19 quarantine (including through remote modalities), covers MTs operational costs related to visits to isolated settlements. It allows expanding the coverage of requested GBV services to vulnerable populations, strengthening their access to necessary assistance in remote communities and rural areas of conflict-affected Eastern Ukraine.

UNFPA will support development of municipal GBV response and prevention systems in 10 new cities – **Dnipro, Konstantynivka** (Donetsk region), **Kramatorsk** (Donetsk region), **Kremenchuk** (Poltava region), **Lviv, Melitopol** (Zaporizhzhia region), **Pokrovsk** (Donetsk region), **Poltava, Sievierodonetsk** (Luhansk region). UNFPA will also continue to provide technical support to 5 partners – **Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Mykolayiv and Odesa** – to facilitate further development of their systems and piloting new models that can be replicated nationally.