

January 2022

### GBV PROGRAMME: 2021 IN REVIEW

In 2021, UNFPA GBV Response and Prevention Programme expanded its geographic reach, introduced new models of service provision, innovative solutions and media products. This combination allowed expanding the programme reach and offering tailored support to GBV survivors and people in need.

In 2021, the number of participants of the “Cities and Communities Free from Domestic Violence” project has doubled compared to the previous year. The project expanded to central and western Ukraine, extending support to 30 municipalities across the country (28% of the country population).

During the year, UNFPA developed capacity of 946 duty bearers and service providers from 30 partner-cities, with a 25% growth compared to the previous year.

In 2021, UNFPA helped establish 26 specialised services for GBV survivors, demonstrating a four-time growth in a year. Over 23,650 GBV survivors across Ukraine benefited from quality assistance of the UNFPA-supported network of specialised services during the year.

In 2021, UNFPA launched a new strand of work on the economic empowerment of GBV



survivors. The project helped establish 10 social entrepreneurship initiatives (SEIs) that employ survivors of domestic violence and donate a share of income to GBV response and prevention work in their cities. In August 2021, UNFPA launched an online resource – Break the Circle Career Hub aiming to develop the professional potential and financial capacity of women survivors or at risk of GBV.

In November 2021, UNFPA held a national premiere of the documentary film “Break the Circle” about GBV survivors’ pathway to safety, consecutively screened in 48 cities and later released for the

national audience.

Through TV placement, radio programmes, outdoor advertisement and digital work in 2021, the “Break the Circle” campaign encouraged over 26.5 mln Ukrainians not to tolerate violence.

In 2022, the UNFPA GBV Response and Prevention Programme will continue extending access of survivors to quality assistance and transforming social norms to reduce tolerance of GBV. Stay tuned to hear about our ongoing work and new initiatives.

## STATE SYSTEM OF GBV RESPONSE & PREVENTION: 2021 IN REVIEW



In 2021, the number of cases of domestic violence registered by the National Police surged to 326,000, with 56% growth compared to 2020. The number grew by 4 times compared to 2017, when the law “On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence” was adopted.

Along with the growth in cases, the state response to domestic violence has also intensified. For example, the number of emergency barring orders issued by the police increased by over 19% compared to 2020. Similarly, the number of reports filed by police officers grew by over 10% and the number of perpetrators under police control increased by 11% compared to last year.

Ukrainian legislative and institutional framework fosters the development of specialised services for DV/GBV survivors, promoting a multisectoral approach, engaging healthcare, education and justice sectors to DV/GBV response and prevention work led by social services and police.

Several positive legislative and institutional changes took place throughout the year:

- The Parliament adopted the State Programme on DV/GBV response and prevention until 2025. Following the Programme, the state developed the Action plan and made relevant budget allocations.

In 2021, the Government allocated 274.2 million UAH (tentatively 1 million USD) to expand the network of specialised services across the country. 124 communities received state subvention to support the establishment of specialised services for GBV survivors.

- The Code of Administrative Offences saw amendments that strengthen the responsibility of perpetrators for committing acts of physical, psychological and economical violence. In addition, the amendments ensure that military and officers will be brought to responsibility for DV/GBV on general grounds.
- The Ministry of Social Policy adopted the Standard Programme for DV/GBV survivors to give the service providers a unified instrument to support the survivors.
- Provisions on DV/GBV response became a part of the Action Plan to National Human Rights Strategy 2023.
- The National Social Service established its branches in all regions of Ukraine and conducted awareness-raising on DV/GBV response for social specialists in communities.
- The number of police mobile groups of DV response grew to 86 (in the beginning of 2021,

there were 54 groups), and they are operational in 67 cities and towns.

Thus, the Government, civil society and experts have been strengthening policy, legal and coordination

frameworks to ensure a sound response to DV/GBV. Ukraine demonstrates notable progress towards elimination of GBV and enhances its prospects of becoming a leader of GBV response in the region.

## BREAK THE CIRCLE: GAINING NEW MOMENTUM IN SOCIAL MEDIA

” I want to thank you for maintaining this page and promoting zero tolerance to violence. This is really very important,”

– Solomia, Instagram user

In August 2021, UNFPA launched [the Instagram page](#) of the “Break the Circle” campaign. In 5 months, the page has gathered 3,707 followers involved through surveys in stories’ weekly. People regularly get life-saving information on ways to recognise and react to GBV. The resource also raise



awareness on underlying stereotypes fueling GBV and approaches to eliminate them. On average, the page reaches 192 429 Instagram users monthly.

In 2021, the average engagement rate of the “Break the Circle” [Facebook page](#) increased by 1.5 times. This translates to the fact that posts have become more appealing for the audience, facilitate active response, and spur discussion and re-evaluation of existing norms that tolerate GBV. Total number of the followers increased by 5,137 users. Currently, 14,776 Facebook users become sensitised to the topic of GBV weekly.

Notably, the majority (58.5%) of the audience of the Instagram page are users aged 25-34,

while on Facebook the majority (46%) constitutes subscribers aged 35-44. This confirms the initial assumption that informed the launch of the Instagram page – expanding the campaign’s reach of younger generation.

An active and popular Instagram page of the “Break the Circle” campaign created a strong platform for a tailored communication to foster zero tolerance to GBV.



## A CLOSER LOOK INTO GBV CASES



In the last quarter of 2021, UNFPA GBV Response and Prevention Programme improved its data collection mechanism from the specialised services. By January 2022, the programme received detailed qualitative data on 42 clients' cases. Shelters and crisis rooms from 13 locations across Ukraine shared non-personal data on the cases of women who have already left the facility.

UNFPA got a chance to explore the nature of clients' vulnerabilities, the services they received, and the extent to which the services were needs-based. This data and collection mechanism will serve as a reference point for the prospective case management system.

The information on 42 cases shows that the average age of women in shelters and crisis rooms is 41, with a significant range from 20 to 77. 9 women were not in full health when admitted (1 was sick, 6 had chronic illnesses and 2 had a mental disability). Most of the women were married and with children: 23 married or live with a partner, and 28 have children.

Data analysis demonstrated interlinkages between the type of violence and clients' marital status. The most common type of violence is psychological,

followed by physical (42 and 28 cases, respectively). While psychological violence was characteristic for families, physical violence was typical for living with a partner. Findings are in line with the data on perpetrators, all of whom are male, 18 are partners, while 16 – husbands. Given the little sample size, these conclusions are currently association claims. However, this data creates a comparison basis for the programme.

Among shelter clients, there were 5 women who live more than 50 km away from the service facilities. This is a likely indication that some communities deployed the mechanism of referral to available specialised services.

The majority of women (37) came to shelter or crisis room for the first time, while 5 have received these services before. Many women have also received other social services (11 women), hotline services (8 women) and daycare centre services (2 women). This means that clients of shelters have access to other types of assistance. 17 women were referred to the shelter or crisis room by stakeholders other than police (social services, mobile teams, authorised person in the community).

During the stay at the shelter or crisis room, women received psychological (19), social (17), and legal (14) services. 5 clients received employability assistance. After leaving specialised facilities, 35 women were referred for further assistance (social, legal, healthcare, and/or social housing services).

Enabled by the enhanced data collection tool, the analysis brings many details of the GBV survivors' profile, and the work done by shelters and crisis rooms. This allows designing effective support mechanisms, tailored to the needs of survivors.

## PSEAH CHAMPIONSHIP 2021: UKRAINE IN THE LEAD

In January 2021, UNFPA Executive Director Dr Natalia Kanem assumed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Championship on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH). Ukraine Country Office actively participated in this initiative. In particular, UNFPA organised a dedicated PSEAH meeting at the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) level, conducted ten community discussions and reached 12,188 people with PSEAH information.

- During the meeting at the HCT level, the members reaffirmed their commitments on PSEA and agreed to: (1) ensure PSEA training is conducted regularly for existing and new staff; (2) seek support from donors to promote zero tolerance of SEA vis-à-vis their partners; (3) tailor specific approaches on PSEA in the non-government controlled areas; (4) strengthen capacity of the field-based staff and implementing partners

on PSEA; and (5) explore the possibility of a unified approach to address the cases.

- UNFPA technically supported ten community discussions for local coordinators and consultants. Participants improved their knowledge on SEAH prevention and response, available reporting channels and survivor assistance. After the training, coordinators and consultants organised and facilitated local PSEA discussions.
- Within the PSEA Task Force, UNFPA and UN OCHA co-led the development of visual materials with PSEA-related information in three languages.

UNFPA launched a PSEAH advocacy campaign with the dissemination of these visuals through social media channels, reaching 12,188 people. Visuals include information on interagency reporting channel, Community-Based Complaint Mechanism, hotline numbers, and key messages: (1) No sex for assistance; (2) No sex with children under 18; (3) No sex with beneficiaries; (4) No bribe for aid; (5) No sex for a job; (6) You are fired! There is no second chance.

Even though the Championship is rotational as a role, UNFPA will continue championing strongly for the protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment.



## UNFPA HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO GBV

In 2021, the UNFPA project “Prevention and Response to GBV among most vulnerable men and women residing along the contact line in Eastern Ukraine” was vetted as a part of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). It envisages help to 112,018 GBV survivors in areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions GCA most affected by the conflict. The donors covered 68% of the original funding request, demonstrating dedicated support to bringing the best response in emergencies and finding sustainable solutions for GBV survivors’ instant help.

The main project activities focus on:

- **Assistance** – developing a network of accessible, affordable and accountable safe spaces for DV/ GBV survivors living in areas close to the contact line. This result in building trust in such services

among survivors and trigger their willingness to report their cases and seek help.

- **Protection** – capacity building and sensitisation of service providers, community activists; awareness-raising within the general population; strengthening accountability to affected population mechanism.
- **Resilience** – supporting the development of community-based early warning system, involving humanitarian actors, community activists; GBV coordination.
- **Access** – supporting targeted interventions, awareness-raising sessions and events in selected settlements.



UNFPA has already built core elements of a response mechanism as part of its humanitarian interventions and continued strengthening this mechanism. With that emphasis, assistance, community resilience, and improving access of humanitarian actors were put in the main focus.

## NOT LIMITLESS: NON-STOP TOUR

“These are the stories I heard from my friends but in whispers. Thanks to the heroines for their courage, it’s important to talk about this problem out loud so that together we can change it,”

– an exhibition guest

Launched in November 2020, the photo project “Not limitless” continues to raise Ukrainians’ awareness of the unacceptability of sexual harassment in public places. The project tells stories of 14 women who have experienced a breach of personal boundaries in public. The photos for the project were taken through cracks in the glass, symbolising the breach.

Even though widespread and psychologically traumatic, the problem of sexual harassment is rarely brought up in Ukrainian society. Aiming at the black heart of the problem, the project attracted much public attention and Ukrainian cities stood in line to host the offline exhibition.

By the end of 2021, the exhibition visited 16 cities and communities in all parts of Ukraine. Starting its journey in Kyiv, the project then moved to Kharkiv,

Special attention was given to supporting the most vulnerable population: people with disabilities, people living in rural areas, people living in isolated settlements (in particular 0–5 km, GCA) with limited access to government service providers, social services, and single women-headed households along the contact line. Considering the prevailing humanitarian situation, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, special attention was paid to ensure safe and secure ways of service provision to GBV survivors using existing access points such as healthcare facilities for delivering aid.

UNFPA acts as a leading agency in the GBV Sub-cluster, which is a coordinating structure for GBV response in the humanitarian context. It widened opportunities to achieve synergy between humanitarian and non-humanitarian partners, avoiding gaps and overlapping.

Mariupol and Melitopol. Throughout the year, the “Not Limitless” was presented in Berdiansk, Uzhhorod, Poltava, Kremenchuk, Zaporizhia, Kherson, Ternopil, Dnipro, Lviv, Starokostiantyniv, Avanhard and Kalush.

The most dedicated exhibition hosts were participants of the “Cities and Communities Free from Domestic Violence” project. Rokytno and Khoroshiv have already booked the exhibition for the first quarter of 2022.

With the exhibition touring for the second year, thousands of Ukrainians have been able to raise their awareness of sexual harassment and find the motivation to prevent it if exposed or witnessed.

