

The background of the entire page is a vibrant orange color. It features a complex pattern of thin, parallel lines in various shades of orange and yellow. These lines are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some lines running horizontally and others at various angles, creating a grid-like or woven appearance. The lines are more densely packed in some areas and more sparse in others, contributing to a dynamic and textured look.

RESEARCH AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:

the Experience of Local Communities
of Ivano-Frankivsk Region



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RESEARCH AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: the Experience of Local Communities of Ivano-Frankivsk Region

Ivano-Frankivsk
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The manual was developed by the Public Organization “Center for Political and European Integration Studies” at the request of the Representative Office of Hilfswerk International in Ukraine within the framework of the project “*Neighborhood Center for conflict-affected people in Western Ukraine*”, which is implemented by the Representative Office of Hilfswerk International in Ukraine with financial support from the “NACHBAR IN NOT” Foundation and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

This manual reflects Hilfswerk International’s deep and long-standing commitment to gender equality and human rights as core principles underpinning all of our work. Grounded in our belief that sustainable change begins with the empowerment of rights holders and the accountability of institutions, the manual was developed with the aim of transforming evidence, perspectives and lived experience into practical tools for action at the community level. To ensure strong local ownership and relevance, Hilfswerk International, in partnership with the NGO “Center for Political and European Integration Studies”, conducted an in-depth analysis and jointly developed context-sensitive recommendations addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence. Developed within the framework of our project, this manual is our contribution to building safer and more just communities where the rights and dignity of women, girls, boys and men are equally respected, protected and upheld.

*Stoyanka Manolcheva,
Gender Expert
Regional Manager, Hilfswerk International (Ukraine and Central Asia)*

This manual is the result of systematic work with local communities of Ivano-Frankivsk region in the context of war. It is grounded in real data and in the experience of local self-government bodies, social services and community members, including internally displaced persons who directly face the challenges of gender inequality and gender-based violence.

The material combines a necessary analytical framework with practical tools for everyday work, including recommendations, response algorithms, examples of solutions and approaches to effectiveness assessment. We offer this manual to communities as an applied resource for planning, interagency cooperation and managerial decision-making aimed at enhancing safety, justice and social cohesion — where the rights and dignity of every person have real meaning rather than remaining a formality.

*Oleksii Zaitsev
Head of the Representative Office of Hilfswerk International in Ukraine*

The research findings are particularly valuable in that they address the realities of small communities and villages where issues of safety and violence often remain invisible due to remoteness, closed social environments and limited access to support services. The text remains closely connected to people’s lived realities and accurately conveys the context in which decisions are made not in offices, but through everyday interactions among residents, local services, and community leaders. It is precisely this grounded approach that makes the material important for dissemination at the very first level of response — where even small changes can have a significant impact on feelings of safety, trust and support within the community.

*Vasyl Chornopyskyi
Project manager of the Representative Office of Hilfswerk International in Ukraine*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

IDP	Internally Displaced Person
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
CAB	Consultative Advisory Body
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
LSG	Local Self-Government Bodies
UN	United Nations
DLC	Difficult Life Circumstances
CSSFCY	Centers for Social Services for Family, Children and Youth

FOREWORD

Human rights are not only provisions of international documents or legal frameworks. Above all, they are a daily practice of dignity, equality and safety that begins in communities — where people live, work, raise children and shape a shared future. It is within the community that respect for human rights is either nurtured or diminished.

Today, as Ukrainian society faces the challenges of war, economic hardships and large-scale social changes, addressing gender-based violence has become particularly critical. This phenomenon knows no boundaries — it permeates all social spheres, undermining the foundations of trust, safety and justice. At the same time, local communities serve as the key environment where real prevention, detection and mitigation of violence are possible through partnerships between authorities, educational and social institutions, civil society organizations and active citizens.

This manual was prepared based on research conducted in six communities of Ivano-Frankivsk Region — Bohorodchany, Bolekhiv, Verkhovyna, Horodenka, Kolomyia and Perehinske. Its aim was to identify the real state of understanding of gender-based violence, assess the readiness of local structures to respond and determine needs, barriers and successful practices in the field of human rights protection.

The research included a series of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with representatives of local self-government bodies, consultative-advisory councils, civil initiatives and active community members.

We aimed to hear not just statistics, but the real voices of people — how they perceive equality and safety, how they assess existing support services, what prevents survivors from

accessing help, and which changes the community considers most necessary.

We asked:

- Are human rights respected in your community?
- Which groups are the most vulnerable?
- Do people know where to turn for help?
- What can authorities, schools and social services do to prevent violence?

The answers varied. Some respondents spoke about available support programs, while others mentioned indifference and fear. Yet all shared a common view: violence is not a private matter but a community issue, and it is at the community level that it can be prevented.

The purpose of this manual is to present the analytical results of the research and offer practical recommendations for communities striving to establish an effective system for preventing and addressing gender-based violence. This manual combines an analytical overview of the issues with practical tools: guidance for authorities, response algorithms, sample documents, methods for conducting gender analysis and checklists for cross-sectoral cooperation.

We are confident that this material will serve not only as a research output but also as a roadmap for further practical action. A safe community is not merely a territory free of violence, but a space where human dignity, mutual respect and active participation are valued.

This manual reflects the experience of communities in Ivano-Frankivsk Region, which are learning to build a society of equality, trust and protection — where every person has the right to safety and support.

WHAT IS GENDER EQUALITY?

Gender refers to the social characteristics, opportunities and relationships associated with how society perceives women and men, girls and boys. These characteristics and expectations are socially constructed, shaped by cultural and historical context and can change over time. Gender is not about biology; it is about the rules by which society allocates roles, resources and opportunities between women and men. What we often consider “natural” differences is frequently the result of historically variable expectations and norms shaped by culture, education, institutions and customs [4].

The gender perspective is not about “women’s rights in isolation”, but about how relationships between genders are structured in every area of community life. When these relationships become more equitable, the whole society benefits: tensions decrease, trust increases and human rights cease to be abstract — they are realized in everyday decisions.

Gender issues are present everywhere — from language and education to transportation and local budgets. They should not be dismissed as trivial or “a special topic for activists” — gender is a tool that allows us to reassess established processes and make policies genuinely effective for everyone.

Today in Ukraine, gender policy is only beginning to take concrete form. Despite existing declarations, many state and party documents still lack specificity: the needs of men and women are not clearly defined, mechanisms for implementing equality are absent and success criteria are not established [8-13].

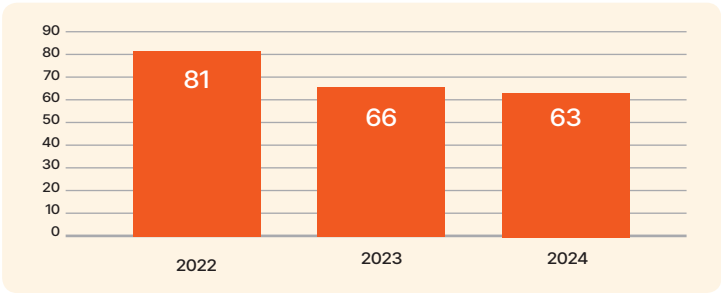
For a long time, the gender approach was limited to the logic of “helping women”. However, without a deeper, symmetric review of roles and conditions for men, such an approach does not work effectively.

Therefore, Ukraine needs a new approach based not on protection, but on equal opportunities — for everyone, regardless of gender.

The Global Gender Gap Index, published annually by the World Economic Forum, measures the extent to which women and men have equal access to resources and opportunities. It covers 14 indicators across four areas: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment. The index ranges from 0 to 1: zero indicates complete inequality, while one represents full equality. The value is read as the share of the “closed” gap, making it convenient to track progress over time and compare countries [1].

Ukraine is part of the European region, which generally has the highest level of gender parity in the world. One-third of European countries are in the global top 20, with leaders such as Iceland, Norway and Finland topping the rankings both regionally and globally. At the same time, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Cyprus are at the bottom of the European list. At the current pace, Europe could achieve full gender equality in approximately 67 years.

In 2024, Ukraine ranked 63rd out of 146 countries (the lower the number, the smaller the gender gap). For comparison, Ukraine was 81st in 2022 and 66th in 2023. Overall, the gender gap in Ukraine is decreasing each year.



Analyzing the data, it can be noted that the greatest improvement in the ranking occurred in education, where full

gender equality was achieved in 2024. In the economic sphere, Ukraine moved up from 62nd to 40th place among countries, while in the political category, it reached 91st place.

The weakest area remains health and life expectancy, where Ukraine dropped five places in the ranking, from 37th to 42nd.

Gender roles are not fixed. They depend on culture and change over time. Historically, society expected different behaviors from women and men. In patriarchal structures, women were primarily mothers, homemakers and caregivers, while men were fathers, breadwinners and protectors — those who secure resources.

Today, this picture is gradually changing. Work outside the home has become normal and socially acceptable for women, although they are still often expected to combine professional responsibilities with the main burden of domestic labor. Men are predominantly expected to fulfill the roles of a breadwinner and a leader. Fathers' participation in childcare and household duties often remains invisible.

The table below organizes typical problems and indicators of gender inequality in communities, their potential consequences and examples of practical actions for response. This material can serve as a supplementary tool for initial situation assessment, planning interventions and improving local policies and services.

Problem or signal	Consequence	Actions or solutions
In local practices, biased requirements regarding the appearance and behavior of women and men are maintained, setting different rules for the same situations.	Some residents systematically lose access to resources, influence and fair treatment in everyday interactions with community institutions.	Review local regulations and bring them in line with a public standard of equality; create simple and effective complaint and protection channels for all population groups.
In the language of professional communication and in official documents, stereotypical names of professions and forms of address persist.	Invisible barriers are formed to the participation of women and men in fields that have historically been associated with only one gender.	Introduce a style guide for institutions, use neutral forms of job titles and forms of address and regularly update document templates.

In certain decisions and communications, control over the bodies and sexuality of women and men is reproduced.	People's well-being and mental health deteriorate; distrust in authorities and social services increases.	Carry out systematic awareness-raising work and ensure access to support for those affected, including clear protocols for inter-agency cooperation and ensuring the accountability of perpetrators.
Paid work is officially recognized, while unpaid domestic and caregiving work remains almost invisible.	The economic contribution of some residents is underestimated and decisions on budgets and services are made on the basis of incomplete data.	Include accounting for hours of caregiving and household work in local analytics and develop support programs for families and people who provide care.
Women more often carry a double burden, combining work outside the home with the full range of domestic responsibilities.	Chronic fatigue reduces opportunities for education, retraining and career advancement, thereby reproducing inequality.	Expand childcare and eldercare services, introduce flexible work schedules and support a more even distribution of responsibilities within the family.
Domestic duties are often, by default, assigned to women, even when both partners are employed.	Economic activity and motivation decline, while the risk of family conflicts and burnout increases.	Conduct information campaigns on partnership-based roles and encourage fathers' involvement in caregiving through local programs.
Expectations regarding family roles are often not aligned between partners and extended families.	The number of everyday conflicts increases and the quality of mutual understanding among family members deteriorates.	Launch family counseling and mediation programs, as well as educational sessions on agreements and planning shared household responsibilities.
Some parents lack sufficient time and accessible support services.	Opportunities to continue education and participate in community life are reduced, especially for young mothers and fathers.	Expand the network of kindergartens, after-school care groups and social nanny services to reduce the burden on families.
Domestic violence persists as a large-scale problem with social and psychological roots.	People's safety and health are violated; traumatic experiences are passed between generations and undermine trust in institutions.	Ensure the availability of shelters and hotlines, train primary-level professionals, establish interagency protocols and monitor cases.
In the labor market, job advertisements and recruitment procedures sometimes imply a preferred gender for candidates.	Women and men lose equal access to prestigious and high-paid positions and occupational segregation is reinforced.	Adopt gender-neutral vacancy standards, conduct open competitions and implement blind résumé screening at the initial stage.

At the entry point into professions, stereotypes about "male" and "female" occupations persist.	Female and male candidates with equal qualifications are offered unequal starting positions and career development paths.	Train HR staff and managers to recognize bias and establish transparent criteria for assessing competencies.
Pay gaps persist despite similar requirements and levels of responsibility.	Income inequality accumulates over a lifetime and is reflected in pensions and social security.	Conduct pay audits, introduce job grading systems and implement open pay ranges with regular public updates.
At the promotion stage, the glass ceiling effect comes into play with no formal restrictions in place.	Women more often remain at middle-management levels, losing opportunities for influence and advancement.	Introduce mentoring programs and diversity targets, publish transparent promotion criteria and track progress.
In education and science, the "leaky pipeline" effect is at work, whereby at each successive level the share of women decreases.	The system loses trained female specialists and institutions fail to realize their full human resource potential.	Create return pathways after parental leave, support flexible employment formats and provide mentoring at transition stages.
In public consciousness, an attitude persists that even a successful female professional must primarily fulfill domestic roles.	Some women restrain their own ambitions, reducing innovation and the competitiveness of the local economy.	Implement leadership programs for women and support partnership-based family roles through positive examples and local media.
In politics and representative bodies, women are underrepresented, especially at higher levels.	Decisions are less likely to reflect everyday needs related to families, education, healthcare and basic infrastructure.	Encourage women's participation in advisory bodies and local self-government and ensure transparent conditions for access to electoral lists.
Party candidate selection procedures often remain opaque and resource-intensive.	New leaders from communities are less likely to be included on lists, reducing the renewal of political elites.	Advocate for the publication of selection rules, release open candidate rankings and support competition of ideas.
In public discourse, stereotypes persist about women's alleged inability to engage in politics.	Voter distrust increases and willingness to support female candidates declines even when programs and experience are equal.	Share success stories and hold open debates involving female experts and community representatives to change expectations.

Gender roles are shaped by culture and change over time. In patriarchal societies, women were traditionally expected to care for the home, while men were supposed to be a provider

for the family. The modern reality is somewhat different: women increasingly work outside the home, yet the expectation remains that they bear the primary burden of domestic labor. Gender equality means equal opportunities for all in careers, family life and society. Biological differences should not determine social status or rights. Stereotypes assigning specific roles to women or men are the result of historical perceptions, not nature.

Sexism often devalues women, limits their access to resources and opportunities and imposes standards of behavior and appearance. Household work, traditionally assigned to women, remains invisible in the economy. As a result, many women combine paid and unpaid labor without receiving proper recognition.

In the labor market, discrimination is formally prohibited, but inequality persists: women are more likely to work in low-paid sectors, have fewer opportunities for advancement and earn less due to career breaks related to childcare.

Women are also underrepresented in politics — not due to a lack of interest, but because of barriers such as opaque procedures, gender biases and lack of support. Only 6 out of 62 community heads in Ivano-Frankivsk Region are women [14]. Yet involving women in decision-making benefits communities by ensuring a balance of interests.

Equality will not happen automatically. Consistent action is required: changing rules, considering the needs of both genders in local policies and developing services that reduce the burden on families. Gender policy is not “about women” — it is about fairness and effectiveness for the entire society.

Stereotypes limit personal development and narrow economic and social opportunities. They deprive men of emotional closeness and pressure girls to pursue unrealistic beauty standards, harming their health.

This is not just an individual problem — it is a challenge for communities. When we evaluate people based on their abilities

and contributions rather than their gender, everyone benefits. Individuals gain more freedom of choice and the community gains more energy, trust and ideas.

Common myths oversimplify reality. Most “differences” between women and men are not natural, but arise from upbringing and social norms. Stereotypes narrow perspectives, suppress potential and make the system unfair.

The table below is not just a reference — it is a tool for change. Use it in education, personnel decisions and public communications. Revising gender perceptions is a path toward a fairer and more vibrant society.

Myth	Reality	Comment / Implications
Women are naturally more altruistic and compassionate	Social traits exist on a continuum in everyone. Both men and women can be caring or harsh	“Caring” behavior is more often encouraged in girls from early childhood
Men are selfish and incapable of empathy	Men are capable of empathy no less than women	They are often taught not to show emotions, so feelings are hidden
Only women keep peace in the family; men are aggressive by nature	The higher frequency of physical aggression among men is linked to social norms that approve of “strength”	Under certain circumstances, women can also display aggression.
Women are talkative; men are silent	There are no differences in the overall level of “talkativeness”	The difference lies more in content: women more often talk about relationships, men about events
Women are more emotional and “mentally weaker,” and more prone to mental disorders	Emotional sensitivity has no gender boundaries; mental disorders occur in everyone	Risk profiles differ by age and type of disorder, not by the “strength” of a gender
Housework and child-rearing are the prerogative of women	There are no natural “female” inclinations toward domestic labor.	In partnership-based relationships, family roles are interchangeable and planned according to time availability

A woman's happiness is impossible without a family and children; a man realizes himself outside the family	Fulfillment is possible in different spheres for everyone	Not everyone becomes a parent; a dignified life cannot be reduced to a single life scenario
Men seek sex, women — love; men are more prone to marital infidelity	The psychophysiology of arousal is similar; motivations differ individually	Double employment and fatigue reduce libido; the norms of the “double standard” are weakening
Youth and beauty are a woman's main assets; for a man, money and status are important	In different circumstances, preferences also differ, but this is not a “law of nature”	Cultural expectations reinforce the focus on status or appearance
Only a few women are capable of being leaders in business, politics and science	Women are not inferior to men in professional competence	There are successful examples in all fields — from science to leading countries

Gender is not just “about women and men”. It is the way society codes reality. From the color of a child’s pajamas to access to power — gender is present in symbols, roles, prohibitions, language, schools, families and even in self-identity. We do not choose our gender role — it is instilled in us from childhood. Through toys, clothing and “appropriate” behavior, a symbolic scheme of “masculine” and “feminine” is formed. This pattern takes root early and deeply, eventually reinforcing unequal value assigned to roles and professions.

What can communities do? First and foremost — stop depersonalizing the problem. It is necessary to collect data disaggregated by gender and age, train specialists to recognize risks, establish support pathways, assist survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Equally important is addressing the sources of bias: education, media and the conditions shaping choices. This is how the values of equality are transformed into tangible change.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ENSURING GENDER EQUALITY IN UKRAINE

The system for ensuring gender equality in Ukraine is built on a combination of the state's international obligations, national legislation and practices for their implementation at both central and local levels. Over the years of independence, Ukraine has established the basic legal and institutional conditions for promoting equal rights and opportunities for women and men. However, the effectiveness of this system largely depends on how well these norms are applied in the daily activities of government bodies, particularly local self-government authorities.

International Standards as the Basis of State Gender Policy

Ukraine is a party to key international treaties in the field of human rights and gender equality. At the center of these is the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) [3], ratified by Ukraine in 1980. The Convention obliges the state to eliminate discrimination based on sex in all areas of public life – political, economic, social, labor, educational and family spheres.

The ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW in 2003 expanded mechanisms for protecting women's rights by allowing individuals to submit complaints to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women after exhausting domestic legal remedies, as well as to initiate international investigations in cases of systemic violations [7].

At the same time, international standards do not have an automatic effect without full integration into national legislation

and administrative practices. The CEDAW Committee and the UN Human Rights Committee have repeatedly highlighted to Ukraine the gap between its declared commitments and the actual state of implementation — a challenge that remains relevant today.

Of particular importance for combating gender-based violence is the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention), ratified by Ukraine in 2022. The Convention establishes a comprehensive approach to addressing violence, covering prevention, protection of survivors, prosecution of perpetrators and the development of a coordinated state policy [4].

Unlike general non-discrimination standards, the Istanbul Convention sets specific obligations for the state regarding the development of specialized support services, interagency coordination and the involvement of local self-government bodies in implementing measures for prevention and response to violence. Its implementation requires active community participation, particularly in providing social services, conducting preventive work and ensuring access to assistance for survivors.

National Legislation on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination

The legal framework for ensuring gender equality in Ukraine is comprehensive and based on the Constitution of Ukraine, specialized laws, subordinate regulations and strategic policy documents. This system not only establishes the principles of equality and non-discrimination but also distributes authority between state bodies and local self-government authorities.

The Constitution of Ukraine enshrines the fundamental principle of equality of all citizens before the law. Article 24 explicitly prohibits any privileges or restrictions based on sex, forming the foundation for further development of legislation

in the field of gender equality and non-discrimination. The constitutional level establishes the state's obligation to create conditions for substantive, not merely formal, equality between women and men.

The primary specialized legal act is the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" (2005) [10], which defines gender equality as a direction of state policy and sets out general principles for its implementation. At the same time, the law has limited practical effectiveness, as it does not provide sufficiently clear mechanisms for oversight, accountability for violations, or tools to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing its provisions.

An important element of the legal system is the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine" which extends the prohibition of discrimination to all spheres of public life and covers both direct and indirect discrimination. The law defines discrimination as any action or inaction that leads to restrictions on the rights and opportunities of individuals based on sex and establishes the legal grounds for protecting victims.

Specific aspects of gender equality are regulated by specialized legislation in the fields of labor, social protection, education and healthcare. In particular, labor law provisions guarantee equal rights for women and men in employment and remuneration, while the Law of Ukraine "On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence" establishes a comprehensive mechanism for responding to cases of violence, including the provision of social services, protective measures and holding perpetrators accountable.

Legislation also recognizes the possibility of implementing positive actions – temporary special measures aimed at overcoming actual inequality and eliminating structural barriers. Such measures include, for example, gender quotas in electoral processes or programs supporting women in sectors where they are traditionally underrepresented. Positive actions

are viewed as tools for achieving equal opportunities, not as granting unjustified privileges.

Institutional mechanisms for protecting human rights play an important role in ensuring adherence to the principle of gender equality. A key element of this system is the Ombudsman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, who exercises parliamentary oversight of the observance of rights and freedoms, considers complaints regarding discrimination and facilitates the restoration of violated rights. Judicial protection is also an integral part of the mechanism for implementing anti-discrimination legislation.

In 2024, Law of Ukraine No. 3733-IX “On Amendments to the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offenses and Other Laws of Ukraine in Connection with the Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence” was adopted. These amendments aim to increase the effectiveness of law enforcement and judicial response, as well as to strengthen the protection of victims.

Key innovations include: extending the timelines for court consideration of domestic violence cases, reducing the risk of impunity due to procedural delays; expanding police powers for administrative detention of perpetrators; introducing separate liability for violence against minors; strengthening accountability for non-compliance with urgent restraining orders.

Overall, these changes shift the focus from formal responses to the actual protection of survivors and the prevention of repeated violence.

Ukrainian legislation defines the key actors responsible for preventing and addressing gender-based and domestic violence. These include the National Police of Ukraine, education authorities and institutions, healthcare facilities, as well as general and specialized support services for survivors. Their activities cover the identification of cases of violence, risk

assessment, documentation of incidents, informing survivors about available services, providing social, psychological, medical assistance and coordinating across different agencies.

Special protective measures provided by law are particularly important. These include urgent restraining orders issued by the police in cases of immediate threat to the life or health of survivors; restrictive orders applied by courts; preventive monitoring of perpetrators; and programs aimed at changing violent behavioral patterns. These tools allow authorities not only to respond to acts of violence that have already occurred but also to prevent their recurrence.

For local self-government bodies, these mechanisms require the continuous updating of local response protocols, training of specialists, ensuring interagency cooperation and making information about support services accessible to community members. It is at the local level that legislative norms are transformed into concrete actions, which directly affect the safety and well-being of survivors.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN IN LOCAL LIFE: CONTENT AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES

One of the most significant reforms on Ukraine's path toward Europe has been decentralization. It has already been recognized as one of the most successful reforms, including by the European Parliament. Ukrainian communities have not only expanded their powers but also begun aligning with European standards of local self-government, particularly the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

Among the key documents helping communities build fair and inclusive policies is the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life [15]. Developed by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, the Charter serves as a practical framework for translating the principle of equality into day-to-day governance decisions.

The Charter was supported by the European Commission within the framework of a gender cooperation program and its official presentation took place in 2006 in Innsbruck. Since then, hundreds of cities and communities across Europe have signed it — an opportunity now open to Ukrainian municipalities as well.

What does the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life contain?

Part/Section	Brief Description	Key actions / Tools
Part I. Principles	Basic guidelines for all signatories	• Equality of women and men as a fundamental right • Opposition to all forms of discrimination and disrespect • Balanced participation in decision-making • Eradication of stereotypes in political, economic, social and cultural spheres • Gender mainstreaming across all areas of work of local self-government bodies • Preparation of an Action Plan and programs with adequate resources
Part II. Implementation and commitments	Charter implementation framework	• Within up to 2 years after signing — develop and launch an Action Plan • Defined timelines, transparent procedures, accountability to the community and to Council of European Municipalities and Regions • Broad public consultations, regular reporting, and adjustments • Networking of signatories: mutual support and exchange of practices
Part III. Thematic commitments (30 articles, 9 blocks)	Policies and areas of application	
Democratic accountability	Equality as a prerequisite for democracy	Recognition of women's competence and creativity; institutional guarantees of participation.
Political role	Gender-balancing instruments	Advisory support for women; encouragement to vote and stand for election; parity in advisory and decision-making bodies; balanced appointments; accessible participation mechanisms (committees, neighborhood councils, e-democracy).
General foundations for ensuring equality	Non-discrimination and equal access	Gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in governance processes.
Role as an employer	Equality in human resources policy	Non-discriminatory recruitment; transparent pay; working conditions; reconciliation of professional duties with family responsibilities.

Public procurement and contracts	Procurement as a tool for equality	Requirements for suppliers and subcontractors to comply with equality standards
Role in service provision	Gender-sensitive municipal services	Design and monitoring that take into account the needs of different groups of women and men
Planning and sustainable development	Integration of a gender approach	Spatial planning, mobility, safety and environmental policies with a gender perspective
Regulatory role	Equality norms and procedures	Local regulations that guarantee equal opportunities
Bilateral relations and international cooperation	Partnerships to enhance impact	Experience sharing, joint initiatives and mutual support between local self-government bodies

The European Charter for Equality is not just a declaration of good intentions — it is a practical tool that turns the principle of “equal rights” into everyday governance decisions. It provides a clear framework for action: from values to plans, budgets, monitoring and concrete outcomes.

Communities that adopt the Charter commit to ensuring equal access for women and men in all areas of life — from political participation to sports, culture, transport, and environmental policy. There are no “male” or “female” formats — only comfort and safety for all residents.

A gender-sensitive approach in policy means considering the needs of different groups at every stage — from decision-making to evaluating effectiveness. For this to work, communities must regularly collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data and act based on evidence rather than assumptions.

The European Charter for Equality is not just a set of principles; it is a clear roadmap for action. It covers everything: from planning and budgeting to staffing, procurement and service quality. For Ukrainian communities undergoing decentralization, it is a practical methodology that helps build policies addressing the needs of both women and men across different social groups.

Through this approach, equality ceases to be just a value — it becomes a measurable outcome for which accountability is possible. This makes the Charter a powerful tool for communities seeking real change rather than formal declarations.

Education and Employment

Equal opportunities in access to education and careers within the education system. Improving curricula, developing civic education and removing stereotypes from content and teaching practices.

- Support for non-traditional career choices.
- Balanced representation at all levels of management.

Social Policy and Care

Gender equality in healthcare and social services, as well as in the care of children and people with special needs. Gender-sensitive budgeting of medical services that considers the different needs of women and men.

- Shared responsibility of both parents.
- Accessible care services.

Housing Policy

Access to housing, mortgages and prevention of homelessness with attention to gender differences. Recognize that women generally have lower incomes and fewer resources to buy or rent housing.

- Roadmaps for equal access.
- Decent housing conditions for all.

Culture, Sports, Mobility

Equal rights for women and men to participate in cultural, sports and recreational activities without imposing gender-specific formats. Ensuring transport services are accessible to all resident groups.

Ecology and Infrastructure

Implementing environmental policies with gender considerations. Infrastructure, routes, safety measures and ecological solutions should equally serve all resident groups.

In Ukraine, the process of signing the Charter is actively ongoing: as of today, over 80 local communities and 2 regional councils have joined the Charter, reflecting a growing institutional interest at the local level in promoting gender equality. Within Ivano-Frankivsk region, among the signatories of the Equality Charter are the Dolyna City Council (one of the communities included in our research) and the Rohatyn City Council.

According to the most recent available data, these councils have officially joined the Charter and, in doing so, have undertaken the commitment to develop a local Action Plan for implementing equality principles in their municipal governance.

WHAT IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: TYPES, MANIFESTATIONS AND CAUSES

Gender-based violence refers to any act or threat of action directed against a person because of their sex and/or socially expected gender role, which results in – or may result in – physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm. In international standards, GBV is considered a form of discrimination and a human rights violation, rather than a private conflict or an isolated incident [16].

A key feature of gender-based violence is control and the deprivation of autonomy, not just the use of force. Violence is used as a tool for subordination, maintaining inequality and reinforcing power roles between women and men. For this reason, GBV has a systemic nature and persists regardless of a society's level of development, economic conditions or cultural traditions.

In practical work, it is important to distinguish between the forms and types (contexts) of gender-based violence.

Forms of GBV describe the method by which harm is inflicted and include: physical, sexual, psychological, economic violence [9].

Form of Gender-based Violence	Brief description and typical manifestations
Physical violence	Beatings, strangulation, pushing, deprivation of sleep or food, use of objects or weapons. It is often accompanied by control and threats, with a high risk of escalation to serious injury or death.
Sexual violence	Any sexual act without voluntary consent: rape, coercion into sexual practices, sexual exploitation, harassment. It can occur in both private and public spaces.

Psychological violence	Humiliation, insults, threats, gaslighting, isolation, control over contacts and behavior, stalking (including online). It destroys the self-esteem and autonomy of the victim.
Economic violence	Control over income, prohibition from working or studying, denial of access to resources, accumulation of debt in the victim's name, financial dependence used as a tool of control.

Types of gender-based violence describe the nature of the relationship or environment in which the violence occurs, including: domestic violence, intimate partner violence, conflict-related sexual violence, stalking, online violence or exploitation and human trafficking.

Special attention is required for gender-based violence in the context of war, which is used as a tool of intimidation, punishment, and the destruction of social ties. Such acts are not merely “side effects” of armed conflict — they constitute serious international crimes and require systematic responses from both the state and communities.

Although gender-based violence disproportionately affects women and girls, men can also be victims, particularly those who do not conform to dominant gender expectations. This emphasizes that GBV is the result of unequal power relations and rigid social norms, not the individual characteristics of survivors [9].

Type / context of Gender-based Violence	Characteristics and examples
Domestic violence	Violence between family members or people who live or have previously lived together. It usually combines several forms of violence simultaneously and has a cyclical nature.
Intimate partner violence	Violence in current or former intimate relationships, regardless of cohabitation. It is often accompanied by jealousy, control, isolation and threats.
Conflict-related sexual violence	Rape, sexual slavery, forced “relations” or exposure used as a tool of war to intimidate, humiliate and destroy communities.

Stalking and online violence	Systematic intrusive following, surveillance, threats and control in real life or through digital technologies (social networks, messengers).
Sexual exploitation and trafficking	Recruitment, transfer and exploitation using vulnerability, deception or coercion. It is often linked to economic dependence and lack of alternatives.

General Note



In the practice of gender-based violence, a single type can include multiple forms of violence simultaneously. For example, domestic violence may combine physical, psychological and economic abuse.

For this reason, effective response by local self-government authorities requires distinguishing between the form of violence (what is happening) and the type or context (where and between whom it is happening).

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF ARMED CONFLICT AND COMMUNITY-LEVEL RESPONSES

The armed aggression against Ukraine has significantly transformed the social conditions of life for individuals and communities, greatly increasing vulnerability to gender-based violence.

Armed conflict is accompanied by constant psychological stress, loss of housing and employment, forced displacement, disruption of social networks, increased poverty and dependency on aid. Taken together, these factors create an environment in which the risks of violence rise, while access to protection and support becomes more difficult. In such conditions, local communities become the first line of response, playing a key role in identifying cases of violence and providing assistance to survivors.

The war context also broadens the spectrum of violence faced by civilians. Alongside direct combat, destruction of infrastructure, and humanitarian consequences, there is a rise in human rights violations with a distinct gender dimension. Gender-based violence in wartime includes violence by intimate partners and family members, as well as sexual crimes related to armed conflict, exploitation, forced labor and other forms of control and subordination.

A particularly prominent category of violations is conflict-related sexual violence. International experience shows that in armed conflicts, sexual violence is used as a tool of

intimidation, humiliation, and the destruction of social ties. It targets not only individuals but also the community as a whole, demonstrating impunity and the inability of the state to protect its citizens.

The Ukrainian context confirms this pattern: with the start of the full-scale invasion, the scale of such crimes has increased, while a comprehensive quantitative assessment remains difficult due to ongoing combat operations, occupation of certain territories, survivors' fear and the high stigma surrounding the issue.

The problem of gender-based violence during wartime is further exacerbated by systemic barriers to accessing information and assistance. In many communities, there is a lack of clear and accessible explanations about what constitutes violence, how to recognize it, and where to turn in case of threat. Educational, media and social institutions do not always give this issue adequate attention or present it in a fragmented manner. As a result, a significant portion of survivors do not identify their experiences as violence or are unaware of protection options.

Particularly vulnerable groups include women with children, internally displaced persons, girls and young women without family support, older adults and persons with disabilities.

An additional risk factor is the shortage of trained specialists. Even professionals who work directly with the population do not always clearly distinguish between conflict and violence, which can lead to tolerating abusive behavior or shifting responsibility onto survivors. Widespread gender stereotypes, undervaluing of women's labor, and the persistence of patriarchal norms also contribute to the normalization of control and violence, making it "invisible" in everyday life.

Armed conflict significantly increases the risk of violence in certain spaces and situations. These include frontline areas, locations with concentrated populations of internally displaced

persons, dormitories, temporary shelters and other crowded environments with limited access to safety. The combination of resource shortages, stress, loss of social control and distrust in institutions creates conditions in which the risk of both sexual and economic exploitation rises.

Taken together, these factors create a vicious cycle: a lack of knowledge and protective skills, distrust of institutions, weak or inaccessible services, stigma and the silence of survivors. Breaking this cycle is possible only through a comprehensive approach that combines public awareness, professional training, the development of support services and a consistent stance on zero tolerance for violence by authorities.

Over recent decades, international humanitarian law has clearly established sexual violence in armed conflicts as a crime subject to prosecution, including as a war crime or a crime against humanity. Ukrainian practice demonstrates the importance of early documentation of such cases, which allows not only the initiation of criminal proceedings but also the creation of an evidentiary and analytical base for future policies supporting survivors and providing restitution.

Features of gender-based violence during wartime

The context of war exacerbates structural inequalities and makes certain groups of the population more vulnerable. According to research conducted in communities in the Ivano-Frankivsk region, women with children, internally displaced persons, elderly people and persons with disabilities most frequently experience gender-based violence.

During wartime, the most common forms of violence include:

- Domestic violence, which increases in the context of stress, financial difficulties and psychological strain.

- Psychological violence which often remains unnoticed but has long-lasting negative effects.
- Economic violence, related to control over resources or dependence on aid.
- Sexual violence, including in situations of displacement and residence in temporary shelters.

Survivors often do not seek help, perceiving their own problems as “inconsequential” in the context of war, or due to fear of judgment, distrust of institutions and the lack of safe channels for reporting.

Challenges for Local Communities

Local Communities operate under conditions of limited resources and increased pressure on social, medical and educational services. Key challenges include a shortage of trained specialists, overloaded services, limited access to specialized support in rural areas and insufficient coordination among different response actors. The lack of clear local action protocols and low public awareness of available services further complicate effective response.

The Role of Local Communities in Response

Communities are the level of government closest to the people, enabling them to detect cases of violence more quickly and organize assistance. Responding to gender-based violence at the local level is a shared responsibility of local self-government bodies, social services, healthcare institutions, the police, educational institutions and civil society organizations.

The key tasks of communities include timely identification of violence cases, informing survivors about available support, organizing inter-agency coordination and creating safe conditions for reporting.

Area	Role of the local community
First line of safety	The community is the level of authority closest to the individual, where cases of violence are noticed most quickly and responded to promptly through community police, social services, healthcare, education, administrative service centers and local village heads.
Coordination Center	Local self-government bodies coordinate the interaction of all stakeholders: approve interagency protocols, information-exchange algorithms (including outside working hours), organize joint field visits and provide case management.
Policy and rights at the local level	The community adopts local programs and plans to counter GBV, integrates them into socio-economic development programs and aligns them with national documents, the Istanbul Convention and the requirements of Law No. 3733-IX.
Accessible services for survivors	At the community level, shelters, crisis rooms, and “one-stop shop” offices are created and maintained; medical, psychological and legal assistance is provided, along with social support and referrals to partner organizations.
Prevention as the norm	The community systematically conducts awareness campaigns, school programs and outreach with parents, businesses and religious communities, reducing stigma and the culture of silence around violence.
Staff training	Local self-government bodies organize regular training for police officers, educators, healthcare workers, social workers and village heads on identifying GBV, documenting cases, preventing re-traumatization and working with children.
Data and analytics	The community carries out local data collection and monitoring: types of requests, assistance pathways, response times, repeat cases and service accessibility indicators — forming the basis for management decisions and budgeting.
Budgeting and resourcing	The local community plans funding for services, co-finances state subventions, submits grant applications and engages the private sector and non-governmental organizations.
Inclusiveness and focus on vulnerable groups	The local level is best positioned to identify at-risk groups (children, people with disabilities, internally displaced persons, older adults, families of service members) and ensure physical accessibility and targeted services.

Work with perpetrators	The community can implement corrective programs, monitor compliance with emergency restraining orders and support the police in targeted interventions to prevent repeated incidents.
Political representation and a culture of equality	Through local councils, party procedures and advisory bodies, the community promotes gender parity, transforms communication standards and eliminates stereotypes within its own policies and services.
Resilience in wartime	In the context of war, the community ensures continuity of assistance, rapid documentation of crimes, protection of children and displaced persons and coordination with central authorities and international partners.
Integrative role	The local community turns the principles of equality and zero tolerance for violence into everyday practice — from emergency response and prevention to data analysis, financing and real safety for every individual.

Intersectoral Cooperation and the Role of Community Initiatives

In wartime conditions, no single service can provide comprehensive assistance to survivors on its own. Well-established intersectoral cooperation helps prevent retraumatization, speeds up response and builds trust in the support system. Community organizations and volunteer initiatives play a crucial role in this process, often being the first to interact with survivors, providing psychological support, guidance and helping them navigate available services.

Key Challenges and Next Steps

The war has demonstrated the need for the continuous updating of mechanisms for responding to gender-based violence and adapting them to crisis conditions. Local communities must combine emergency response with long-term preventive measures, invest in the training of specialists, develop service networks and engage with public opinion.

Thus, it is at the level of local communities that the first line of support for survivors of gender-based violence in wartime is formed. The effectiveness with which communities can protect their residents and mitigate the long-term impacts of the war on society depends on the consistency of their actions, a humane approach and openness to collaboration.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the research was to identify the key problems, needs and opportunities of communities in the Ivano-Frankivsk region regarding the protection of human rights, promotion of gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence. The study also sought to assess the level of awareness, perception and readiness of local institutions to respond to cases of violence.

To achieve this aim, six local communities of the Ivano-Frankivsk region were included in the study: Bohorodchany, Bolekhiv, Verkhovyna, Horodenka, Kolomyia, and Perehinske. The selection of these specific communities was based on a combination of strategic, social, institutional and geographic factors, ensuring the representativeness and comprehensiveness of the research.

Firstly, these communities differ significantly in terms of geography, demographics and socio-economic characteristics — from mountainous and remote areas (Verkhovyna) to large urban or mixed-structure communities (Kolomyia, Horodenka). This allowed the study to account for the influence of varying levels of service accessibility, infrastructure and socio-cultural characteristics on responses to gender-based violence cases.

Secondly, the communities demonstrate different levels of institutional capacity in addressing violence. Some already have established mechanisms for coordination among social services, police, healthcare and educational institutions, while others are still in the process of forming such structures. This enabled the research to examine both successful practices and key barriers typical of communities with different levels of development.

Thirdly, it was important to ensure a balance between urban, rural and mountainous communities, since the issue of gender-based violence manifests differently depending on the type of territory. In cities, there is more opportunity to access specialized services, but stigma remains high; in rural areas, trust in authorities and services is lower and the problem is more hidden. The sample allowed for analysis of both contexts, enhancing the comprehensiveness of the study and providing a more complete understanding of challenges and needs in different living environments.

Furthermore, all six communities demonstrated willingness to cooperate, participate in focus groups and provide access to relevant local structures which ensured the quality and depth of the collected data.

Thus, the selection of these communities made it possible to obtain a comprehensive and multifaceted picture of the state of prevention and response to gender-based violence in the region and to develop recommendations relevant to various conditions and types of local communities.

In line with the research aim, the following objectives were formulated:

- To assess how local community representatives understand and interpret the concept of “human rights”.
- To identify which gender-related issues are considered most pressing in their communities.
- To identify common forms of GBV perceived and reported by community members.
- To determine groups most vulnerable to manifestations of gender-based violence.
- To examine the main barriers that prevent survivors of violence from accessing support.
- To assess the level of readiness of local authorities and social services to respond to cases of gender-based violence.

- To assess the level of trust in service providers and the capacity of local structures to ensure protection.
- To determine the degree of public awareness regarding protection mechanisms and available support services.
- To document existing successful practices in preventing and countering GBV.
- To collect proposals for improving the situation in the field of human rights and gender equality.
- To develop recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of preventive and response within communities.

Implementation period: July 2025 — February 2026

Respondents: Women and men of different ages who, at the time of the study, were representatives of local self-government bodies (LSGs), civil society organizations (CSOs), consultative and advisory bodies (CABs), as well as active community members. This approach ensures objectivity in the information collected regarding current problems, challenges and the development status of the communities in which the research is being conducted.

Methods

The research was conducted using qualitative sociological methods, including:

- Desk review: This included analysis of legal and regulatory acts, strategic documents, local programs, open statistical data and analytical reports from government bodies, international and civil society organizations. Desk review was used to form the general context of the study, clarify local community specifics and develop data collection tools.

- Focus group discussions conducted with representatives of local self-government bodies, staff of educational institutions, administrative service centers, social workers and other specialists involved in providing social and humanitarian services.
- Targeted participant selection focused on engaging individuals with practical experience interacting with the population and working in social services and human rights protection.
- Standardized focus group guide comprised of 10 thematic questions covering human rights compliance, gender aspects, barriers to accessing assistance, service effectiveness, public awareness and existing successful practices.
- Qualitative content analysis included examination of in-depth interview materials, notes, quotes and documented emotional responses to identify common trends and key issues.

Research limitations

The research is based on a combination of desk analysis and qualitative data collection methods, which provided an in-depth understanding of practices and challenges at the community and individual levels, but does not aim for statistical representativeness of the entire population. The use of targeted participant selection and open sources may limit completeness of some data, while ensuring relevance and practical value of the findings. Results reflect the situation at the time of the study and should be considered within the dynamic context of wartime conditions.

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND INSIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

During the research on gender equality and gender-based violence in local communities, several common observations and insights were identified. These were shaped both by the socio-cultural context and by the institutional capacity of the communities. Each structural element of the study (desk review, interviews or focus groups) revealed multiple concrete aspects affecting the completeness and reliability of collected information, as well as the communities' willingness to discuss the issues openly. Based on a comprehensive analysis, the following generalizations were highlighted and will be discussed in more detail.

1. Sensitivity of the topic and low level of discussion

Gender-based violence remains a topic that many community members are reluctant to talk about. Respondents noted that in small settlements, there is a widespread belief that “family matters should not be brought to public attention”. This reduces the number of official reports and complicates documentation of the actual scale of the problem.

Typical quote:

“In our village, people are ashamed to talk, even if the problem exists. They are afraid of being judged or that 'shame will fall on the family'”

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2. Incomplete statistics and the “hidden” nature of violence

Social service workers acknowledge that a significant portion of GBV cases never enter official statistics, as survivors often do not seek help — neither from the police nor from social services. This leads to a situation in which the data available to communities represent only a fragment of the real picture. For example, official statistics from two communities (Bohorodchany and Bolekhiv) indicate around 30 reported GBV cases.

Interview quote:

“We only see the tip of the iceberg. Mostly, these are cases where the woman can no longer endure and comes for help because the situation has gone too far”.

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3. Varying levels of institutional capacity in communities

The research revealed significant differences in how communities organize their work to counter GBV. In some communities, multidisciplinary teams operate effectively, with established coordination between the police, social services and medical institutions. In others, there is a severe staff shortage, heavy workload on a single specialist and a lack of dedicated units.

Quote:

“We have one person handling all cases — as a specialist, psychologist, and coordinator. Physically, we just can’t process everything properly”

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4. Mental barriers and stereotypes about gender roles

Despite positive changes, some communities still hold ideas about “traditional roles” in the family, which affect how situations of violence are perceived. Violence is often justified as household conflicts or framed around the notion that someone “failed to fulfill their duties”.

These stereotypes directly influence the reluctance of survivors to seek help.

Typical statements from respondents:

"They didn't divide things between themselves — it's a family matter, let them sort it out"

"It's always been like this — a husband can raise his voice, but it's not considered violence"

5. Limited specialized services and logistical barriers

In some communities (Bolekhiv, Perehinske), there are no shelters or crisis rooms for GBV cases. As a result, survivors have to travel to the district center or a large city, making access to support difficult, especially for women with children or elderly people.

Quote from a local government officer:

"Even if a woman wants to go to a crisis room, she has to take the bus and after 6 p.m. there are no bus services"

6. Positive trends in awareness of the problem

At the same time, most communities demonstrate positive changes — increased awareness, more active work by services and the conduct of information campaigns, trainings and workshops. Respondents emphasized that people are more often seeking consultations, even if they are not ready to file a formal complaint immediately.

"Five years ago, no one went to social services just to talk. Now they come — it's a good sign; people aren't afraid"

HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE AND GENDER ROLES — ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

In most of the surveyed communities, respondents noted positive trends in the area of human rights and gender equality. According to them, over recent years, public awareness of women's and men's rights has significantly increased, tolerance for discriminatory statements and practices has decreased and local authorities have become more actively involved in supporting initiatives aimed at preventing violence and ensuring equal access to services.

"We have become much more attentive to human rights issues and it is no longer customary to divide matters into 'women's' and 'men's'"

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Stereotypes regarding "traditional" gender roles are gradually being dismantled in communities, with more families moving toward a partnership-based style of interaction. The younger generation shows a much higher willingness for equal distribution of responsibilities and women's participation in local decision-making processes has noticeably increased.

During in-depth interviews and focus groups, respondents mostly stated that there is no division into "women's" and "men's" roles within their communities. In their view, modern models of interaction in families and communities are based on equality, flexibility and mutual support. Study participants emphasized that household tasks — such as cooking or performing daily chores — are undertaken by whoever returns from work first or has more time. They present this approach as a way to avoid gender stereotypes and ensure a fair distribution of responsibilities.

"Young people think differently: for them, equality is just normal"

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At the same time, a deeper analysis of statements shows that alongside the declared equality, hidden or semi-conscious patterns of traditional role division still persist. Some female respondents described situations where men openly reproduce patriarchal ideas about "women's" responsibilities. Several women reported that any request for help with household chores is often met with assertions that domestic work is their responsibility and that they must "do everything themselves". Others noted that partners treat weekends as their own time for rest, while women continue performing daily duties without pause, since "she is a mother" — which, in the man's eyes, automatically implies full responsibility for children and the home.

"Women now participate more in decision-making and their opinions are listened to"

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These social expectations directly affect women's professional opportunities. The unequal distribution of household responsibilities often compels many women to take part-time positions or jobs with more predictable schedules. Respondents emphasized that they often prefer employment in public institutions where they can take sick leave or leave for their children's illness without obstacles. Thus, despite the declared commitment to equality, women remain the primary bearers of domestic and caregiving duties, reflecting the persistence of traditional gender roles.

The summarized quotes below illustrate the tension between proclaimed equality and real-life everyday practices:

"Formally, we do not divide chores into male and female; whoever can do it faster does it"

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"The person who comes home from work first prepares dinner for us, it's not a matter of gender"

"Everyone says there's no gender division, but sometimes we catch ourselves falling into old habits"

"When I ask for help, I hear that it's my responsibility and I have to do everything myself"

"It's his day off — he rests and I have no days off because I'm a mother"

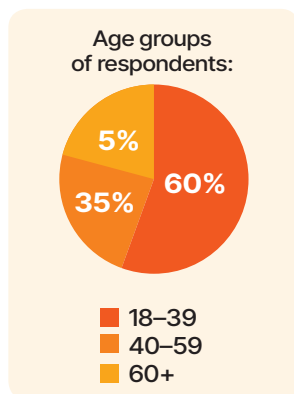
"I'm looking for a job where I can take sick leave without any problems because I have to take care of the children"

Study of Needs and Challenges through In-Depth Interviews and Focus Groups

In September–October 2025, as part of the project, a qualitative social study was conducted using in-depth interviews and focus groups to examine the state of gender equality, challenges in social policy and the situation regarding gender-based violence in the communities of Ivano-Frankivsk region. The study aimed to gather the perspectives of those directly involved in addressing social issues locally: representatives of local authorities, social services, non-governmental organizations and active community members.

Participants were from the following communities:

- Bohorodchany.
- Horodenka.
- Kolomyia.
- Verkhovyna.
- Bolekhiv.
- Perehinske.



Among the respondents were both women and men of various ages, ranging from 18 to 60+. Age categories of participants: the majority were 18–39 years old (young specialists, volunteers, activists); a significant portion were 40–59 years old (managers, social workers); a few were 60+ years old. Both women and men participated, with women predominating in governmental and social structures.

A large share of respondents were women aged 18–39 working in the social sector, local self-government or the non-governmental sector.

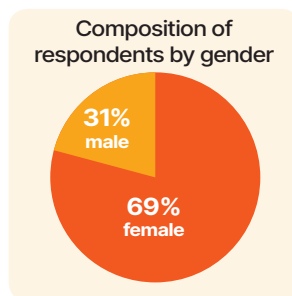
Overall, the profile of in-depth interview participants included:

- Local government representatives: heads of communities, heads of structural units, deputies.
- Social workers and heads of social services.
- Representatives of non-governmental organizations, initiatives, volunteers.
- Citizens actively involved in community life.

Participants often noted their involvement in implementing programs supporting internally displaced persons (IDPs), working with survivors of violence, organizing trainings and carrying out social initiatives.

The survey included both closed and open-ended questions. The main research topics included:

1. Community social issues: Including integration of IDPs, housing shortages, psychological trauma, unemployment and limited access to healthcare services.
2. Impact of war on vulnerable groups: Women, children, persons with disabilities and civilian men encounter specific challenges.
3. Gender Challenges: Shifts in traditional roles, increased domestic violence and discrimination in the labor market.



4. Community Awareness of Gender-Based Violence: Many residents are not fully aware of what constitutes GBV or the available mechanisms for support.
5. Access to Assistance: Availability of hotlines, mobile response teams, crisis rooms and day centers varies across communities.
6. Barriers to Seeking Help: Fear of retaliation from the perpetrator, economic dependence, gender-based shame, lack of trust in institutions and limited knowledge of available services.
7. Needs of Local Authorities: Shortage of trained specialists, insufficient funding, limited facilities and transportation challenges.

Gender equality is not only about women's rights but also about the safety and resilience of the entire community. The war exacerbates existing inequalities, so humanitarian aid and recovery programs must integrate a gender perspective.

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Many community members fear retaliation from perpetrators if they report incidents. Stigma and shame remain prevalent; many perceive domestic violence as a family "shame", or blame the victim.

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Survey results highlight active engagement of communities with vulnerable groups, namely internally displaced persons (IDPs), women, children, people with disabilities and military personnel.

In most cases, limited resources often prevent the authorities from monitoring compliance with protective measures or ensuring that victims actually receive protection.

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Most frequently reported problems:

- High levels of anxiety and psychological trauma.
- Economic instability.
- Reduced access to medical, social and educational services.
- Shortage of housing for internally displaced persons.
- Gender inequality in pay and employment.

- Increase in the number of cases of domestic and gender-based violence.

Men receive less support and face greater social condemnation, which often escalates into violations of dignity. Attitudes in interpersonal communication differ: women are more likely to receive assistance, while men are more often met with judgment and blame.

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Participants note that women often become the sole caregivers for children and elderly relatives and are forced to take on roles traditionally considered “male”. Men, particularly those who have been mobilized, face psychological pressure, a lack of support and stigmatization.

Overall awareness of gender-based violence has increased in recent years; however, distrust in the system persists, along with fear of retaliation, shame and economic dependence. Communities have hotlines, mobile teams and day centers, but there is a shortage of qualified specialists and sustainable funding. The effectiveness of the response largely depends on the level of training and capacity of specific services.

The problem is not limited to physical violence. Economic and psychological abuse, control and isolation are widespread. These forms of violence are often not perceived as a problem — and that is the most alarming aspect.

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The survey showed that most communities are already implementing gender equality programs, but these initiatives often require support from the state and international partners.

Overall, the study demonstrated that communities are actively engaged in introducing gender equality programs; however, it also revealed key needs for additional resources and stronger interagency coordination. Participants emphasized that overcoming gender-based violence is only possible with sustained support, in-depth awareness-raising efforts and adequate funding for relevant initiatives.

Gender Issues Identified by Respondents

During interviews and focus groups, study participants raised a number of gender-related issues that remain relevant for the local communities under review. Although some respondents declared equality between men and women, more detailed descriptions of real-life situations point to the presence of systemic challenges that significantly affect quality of life, social security and opportunities for development.

"As it happens here, it's not only men who are perpetrators. There are also cases where a man endures and stays silent because he feels ashamed to talk about it"

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1. Domestic Violence as a Two-Sided Issue

Respondents emphasized that in some communities there are cases of domestic violence not only perpetrated by men against women, but also by women against men (not frequently, but such cases do exist). This experience was described as less visible, since men are less likely to seek help due to fear of social stigma or an unwillingness to appear "weak".

"Women can also humiliate, control and restrict. It's just talked about less"

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2. The Gender Pay Gap and the Issue of Minimum Wages

Study participants repeatedly highlighted the existence of a significant pay gap, especially in sectors dominated by women — education, social work, culture and healthcare. A large share of such positions in communities is funded at the level of the minimum wage.

"In the public sector, almost everyone is on the minimum wage. Mostly women — and it's they who are supporting their families."

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Respondents noted that this demotivates people to remain in their professions and increases women's dependence on their partners.

"A woman works a full day but earns as if she were working half-time. This is unfair because the level of responsibility is high"

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3. Staff shortage: lack of specialists and the gender dimension

"There is a shortage of specialists. Women often have to cover several areas at once because there is simply no one else to do the work"

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One of the key problems identified by respondents is the staff shortage in communities — especially in the areas of education, healthcare, social services and local self-government. In many cases, women take on additional workloads due to the lack of personnel, working for two people or agreeing to expanded responsibilities without adequate compensation.

"There is a constant shortage of staff. Young people have left, and men are either at the front or abroad"

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4. Restrictions on men's freedom of movement

Respondents pointed to another issue with social and gender-related consequences: restrictions on men's movement due to the martial law regime. This affects both employment opportunities and the psychological climate within families, creating additional tension.

Men may experience feelings of powerlessness or frustration because they are unable to move freely or travel abroad for work ("labor migration" being a typical economic model for the region, where men travel to European countries for seasonal employment). At the same time, women are burdened with even greater administrative, family and household responsibilities.

"Men cannot leave the country and this creates tension: there are few jobs in the community, but the responsibility is great"

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The issues highlighted by respondents demonstrate the complex nature of gender-related challenges in communities:

- Uneven distribution of household roles.
- Bidirectional instances of domestic violence.
- Gender disparities in pay.
- Staff shortages that disproportionately burden women.
- Consequences of martial law that affect men and women differently.

“Due to movement restrictions, men are left with no way to move, while women carry everything on themselves”

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Taken together, this shapes a context in which officially declared equality often does not correspond to actual practices, which preserve a significant share of traditional gender roles and social expectations.

The most vulnerable groups in terms of gender-based violence

During interviews and focus groups in most communities, several social groups were identified as the most vulnerable to manifestations of gender-based violence. These include pensioners, children, women and individuals living in difficult life circumstances. Respondents emphasized that these groups are the ones that most often seek help, require additional protection mechanisms and face barriers in accessing services.

1. Pensioners

Pensioners, especially those who live alone or are in dependent relationships with relatives, are described as one of the most vulnerable groups. Cases of economic violence, neglect of their needs and control over their financial payments or social benefits are typical in several communities.

"There are many situations where an elderly mother or grandmother depends on her children, who may take her money and treat her rudely. People are afraid to speak out because they see no other way out"

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Pensioners often do not realize that economic or psychological humiliation is also a form of violence. Social service workers noted a low level of awareness of rights and of available protection mechanisms.

2. Children

Children constitute a separate, critically vulnerable group, both in terms of direct violence and the impact of a family environment marked by aggression or control.

"Children suffer first of all — not always physically, but they live in an atmosphere of fear. Even when parents argue, it is already a trauma"

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Examples of risks:

- exposure to domestic violence;
- physical punishment as a "method of upbringing";
- emotional neglect (especially in families where one parent has left for employment purposes).

Child protection service workers emphasized that the number of reports of psychological violence has increased, as well as the need for work with parents who are on the verge of risk.

3. Women

Women traditionally remain the most frequent victims of physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence. Some respondents noted that war, stress and socio-economic instability worsen the situation by increasing the level of conflict within families.

"Women turn to us most often. They are afraid, but they come because there is nowhere else to go".

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Common situations:

- Women with children who lack financial autonomy.
- Women whose partners have returned from the combat zone in a state of emotional exhaustion.
- Young mothers who are dependent on partners or parents.

In several communities, it was emphasized that women more often seek psychological support in particular and require long-term rehabilitation services.

4. Persons living in difficult life circumstances

A separate category includes people living in difficult life circumstances — persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, individuals at risk of addiction, the unemployed or those without stable income.

"If a person is in difficult life circumstances, they are the least protected. Even if violence occurs, they will not go to the police — they fear condemnation or the loss of assistance"

.....

Clarifications and examples:

- Internally displaced persons often face aggression due to material hardship and housing instability.
- Persons with disabilities are dependent on caregivers, which creates a risk of economic or psychological pressure.
- Individuals with addictions may become both victims and perpetrators, but often do not receive timely support.
- In several communities, it was emphasized that the DLC group has the least access to qualified legal and psychological assistance.

Barriers preventing survivors from receiving assistance

During interviews and focus groups in communities, a number of key barriers were identified that deter victims of gender-based violence from seeking professional support. These obstacles are both psychological and socio-economic in nature and largely determine the level of underreporting of the problem.

"In a small village, everyone knows everyone. If you seek help, the next day it will already be discussed across the whole district"

.....

1. Fear of judgment from the surrounding community

In small communities, there is a prevailing fear that disclosure will lead to judgment from neighbors, relatives or acquaintances. People fear losing their reputation or becoming the subject of gossip. This is one of the most common deterrent factors.

"Women often remain silent because they are afraid people will say: she is to blame, she brought it on herself"

.....

2. Stereotypes and ingrained mindsets

"Here, people are used to enduring things. They say: it happens in every family, there's no need to turn it into a tragedy"

.....

Some respondents emphasized that communities still hold entrenched beliefs about "family matters" that should not be "aired in public". Violence is often perceived as a domestic quarrel or a private conflict rather than a violation of the law.

"Some men believe that a woman should be obedient and that this is normal, and women are taught to endure from an early age"

.....

3. Financial dependence on the perpetrator

Economic dependence is one of the strongest barriers. Women who do not have their own income or who work part-time are often unable to support themselves and their children if they leave an abusive relationship.

Quotes from female respondents:

"Women often say: even if I wanted to leave, I have no money to rent housing or support my children"

"If I leave — how will I survive? Everything depends on him: the salary, utilities, groceries. I can't manage on my own"

4. Lack of one's own housing and a safe space

"There's nowhere to go. Even if I really wanted to escape from home, there is simply nowhere to spend the night"

For many survivors, there is no possibility to leave the home and temporarily live separately from the perpetrator. Communities often lack crisis rooms, and turning to relatives or friends is not always possible due to fear of judgment or complicated family relationships.

"You can't rent a room in the city on such a small salary. And there's no shelter in the community"

5. Mentality and normalization of violence

Among part of the population, tolerance toward violent behavior — especially verbal or economic — still persists. This leads to situations in which victims do not identify their experiences as violence.

"Many women don't even realize that this is violence. They think everyone lives like this"

Response of local authorities and social services to cases of gender-based violence

The study found that most communities have established mechanisms for responding to cases of gender-based violence, but their effectiveness largely depends on staffing capacity, resource availability and the level of coordination between services. Key response areas include monitoring families in difficult life circumstances, responding to calls, case management and participation in programs for perpetrators.

1. Rapid response to reports and on-site visits

"If there is a call, we always respond. Even if no formal report has been filed, we need to see the situation with our own eyes"

.....

In most communities, social services and the police carry out joint or individual visits to locations where violence has been recorded or suspected. Service workers note that they respond even when the survivor has not filed a report, but there is a signal from neighbors or relatives.

"The police arrive first, but we also get involved because we often need to work with children and assess risks"

.....

2. Family monitoring and prevention of repeat cases

Social services keep families under observation if GBV cases have already been recorded or if they are recognized as living in difficult life circumstances. Monitoring includes scheduled and unscheduled visits, phone check-ins, work with children and assessing family needs.

"When we see that the situation could repeat, we immediately involve the police or a psychologist"

.....

"We have a list of families at risk. We visit them periodically, even if no complaints are filed"

.....

3. Programs and work with perpetrators

All communities have programs for working with perpetrators — mainly correctional programs or psychological counseling. These programs are usually implemented in cooperation with social service centers and probation services.

"If a perpetrator is registered or has received a referral from the police or the court, they must attend correctional sessions. We explain that responsibility is not just about paying a fine"

.....

4. Protection and removal of children from dangerous environments

In cases where violence poses a threat to the life or health of children, social services, together with the police, temporarily remove children from the family. According to specialists, such decisions are made only as a last resort when other measures have failed.

"When there is a real danger, we take the children — that's an extreme but necessary measure"

.....

"Sometimes parents only realize the seriousness after the children are removed. But this is a matter of safety; you can't wait here"

.....

5. Coordination between services and a multidisciplinary approach

"It works well when all services exchange information. Then there is less chance that a warning will be missed"

.....

In communities where systematic cooperation is well established, cases of GBV are reviewed by multidisciplinary teams. Social workers, police officers, educators, medical

professionals, psychologists, and representatives of local self-government bodies are involved in the work.

"We have a team — we come together when a complex case arises. Each specialist looks at it from their own perspective"

.....

6. Information and prevention work

"We work with young people — explaining what violence is and where to seek help"

.....

"We see that people have started asking more questions. Information campaigns are producing results"

.....

Most communities conduct lectures, trainings and meetings in schools, work through social media and printed materials. These activities are aimed at raising residents' awareness of available services, protection mechanisms and possible ways to seek help.

Public awareness of protection mechanisms against gender-based violence

According to the study results, the level of awareness among community residents about mechanisms for protection against gender-based violence remains uneven, but overall shows a positive trend. In most local communities, there are communication channels that disseminate information about available services, service contacts, referral algorithms and the main indicators of gender-based violence.

In the Bolekhiv community, information on GBV is posted in the News section of the Children's Services and requires additional instructions.

"There are contacts on the council's website, but not all people know how to use them"

.....

The Horodenka community includes a separate section titled "Combating Domestic and Gender-Based Violence" and places

GBV-related materials within the social protection section where users can access action algorithms, a list of services and electronic reporting forms. The Bohorodchany community uses a mixed model: some materials are published in the news section, while others are placed under the “For Citizens” section, which ensures functional access but requires navigation.

The Kolomyia community clearly structures information under the category “Department of Social Protection of the Population”, which contains a dedicated subsection “Combating Domestic Violence” with instructions for survivors and recommended steps. The Verkhovyna community presents information on the district administration’s website through the “For the Public” block, which includes sections such as “Combating Domestic Violence”, “Combating Human Trafficking”, “Combating and Preventing Discrimination” and “Gender Equality”. The Perehinske community publishes materials on prevention and response in the “News” section, accompanying them with infographics and service contacts. In addition, a Roadmap for persons affected by domestic violence is provided.

At the same time, respondents noted that awareness often depends on the activity of specific professionals and the level of community participation in nationwide information campaigns.

1. Official websites of city and settlement councils

“It’s good that the information is open, but it needs to be seen not only by those who visit the website”

On the websites of local self-government bodies, basic information is usually published about:

- The procedure for reporting cases of GBV.
- Contact details of responsible services (police, Commission on Child Rights Protection, social services, child welfare services).

- Working hours of specialists.
- Informational leaflets and action algorithms.

In some communities, news about preventive activities, the results of campaigns and trainings is also published.

2. Participation in the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence” campaign

“During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, this topic is talked about everywhere — at schools, in institutions and out on the streets”

Most communities join the international “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence” campaign every year, which is one of the key tools for informing the public. During this period, the following activities are carried out:

- Thematic meetings in schools and libraries.
- Street actions and flash mobs.
- Distribution of informational brochures.
- Lectures and seminars on forms of violence and protection mechanisms.
- Publications on social media and in local media outlets.

“People perceive it better when they see an action or receive a leaflet — it’s somehow easier to understand”

These activities significantly increase the visibility of the issue and draw the attention of residents who had not previously been interested in GBV-related topics.

3. Street actions and events dedicated to the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

“At street actions, people actively stop, ask questions, and take leaflets”

Many communities also take part in information campaigns dedicated to the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. This makes it possible to broaden the scope of activities and include

issues of preventing violence, exploitation, unsafe migration and manipulative practices targeting vulnerable groups.

“Young people are especially interested — they ask many questions about how to recognize danger”

.....

Typical activities:

- Installations in central parts of the city.
- Meetings with young people.
- Flash mobs.
- Screenings of themed video clips.
- Consultation platform “Ask a Specialist”.

4. The role of the Service for Family, Children and Youth Affairs

“The Service for Family Affairs travels a lot to villages. People recognize them by sight and can contact them directly”

.....

Services for Family and Children Affairs perform an important function of primary contact and awareness-raising. They organize:

- Preventive lectures in schools.
- Meetings with parents.
- Work with families in difficult life circumstances.
- Information campaigns through libraries, cultural centers, and starostat (local administrative sub-unit of a local community).

“Things are explained to children in an accessible way, through games and training sessions — it works very well”

.....

In communities where such services are well-staffed and have professional specialists, the level of awareness is significantly higher.

5. Overall assessment of awareness

“There is much more information now, but not everyone sees it and not everyone wants to accept it. Continuous work is needed”

.....

Despite the overall positive trend, some respondents during in-depth interviews note that awareness still depends on:

- The level of digital literacy of residents.
- The activity of local services.
- Internet accessibility in remote villages.
- People's willingness to receive information and acknowledge the problem.

Successful practices in combating gender-based violence

Practice	Communities implementing it	Description
Mobile response teams	Horodenka, Bolekhiv, Kolomyia, Bohorodchany	Field visits, consultations, crisis support
Preventive lessons in schools	Bolekhiv, Perehinske, Verkhovyna	Meetings, safety lessons, trainings
Structured online sections	Horodenka, Bohorodchany	Guidelines, algorithms, infographics
Interagency coordination	Bohorodchany, Horodenka	Working group meetings
Active use of social media	All communities	News, announcements, campaigns

Bohorodchany Local Community

- Operation of a social support center where survivors can receive psychological and social assistance, as well as legal aid services.
- Active cooperation with the police (including district officers, police officers and juvenile prevention officers) and the Service for Children Affairs, particularly regarding work with families in at-risk groups.
- Informational and educational activities aimed at preventing and combating domestic violence. Special attention is paid to spreading information on how not to experience domestic abuse, the importance

of not keeping Special attention is paid to spreading information on how to avoid becoming a victim of domestic abuse, the importance of speaking out about domestic violence and conveying the key provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention).

- Awareness-raising activities to increase knowledge in remote villages.
- Monitoring cases — a simple GBV registry in the community for analysis and planning.

Horodenka Local Community

- Expanding access to social and psychological support through the establishment of a center and a mobile social-psychological assistance team for individuals affected by domestic violence and/or gender-based violence.
- Social support for families (or individuals) living in difficult life circumstances.

Social support is a comprehensive social service for an individual or family experiencing difficult life circumstances (DLC). To overcome these challenges or minimize their negative impact, the service includes an assessment of needs, based on which solutions to the main problems are determined.

Social support involves regular meetings and conversations, psychological assistance and help with document processing. In addition, it includes training and skill development aimed at increasing the independence of the individual or family, to ultimately overcome the consequences of DLC.

- Training of specialists (social workers, educators, local leaders) in recognizing risks and working with survivors.

Verkhovyna Local Community

Activities of the Social-Psychological Assistance Center. Over two years of implementing the initiative in the Verkhovyna community, notable results have been achieved in combating gender-based violence: 43 cases of GBV have been addressed with full social and psychological support for survivors, over UAH 300,000 was allocated for financial assistance and dignity kits, more than 1,040 informational sessions were conducted for residents of the district and 281 participants took part in psychological decompression sessions. In addition, to strengthen the professional capacity of the center's specialists, over 40 supervisions and training sessions were organized, ensuring sustainable, high-quality and sensitive support for survivors in the community.

One of the most successful practices of the civil sector in combating GBV in the Verkhovyna community has been the work of the charitable organization "Convictus Ukraine". Through a combination of an innovative approach, a professional team and close collaboration with local partners, the organization provides support and recovery services for individuals affected by violence or living in difficult life circumstances. The organization implements comprehensive assistance models, including individual consultations, preventive work with adolescents and educational activities for the community. It also actively collaborates with the police, family services and healthcare institutions.

Thanks to principles of tolerance, confidentiality, engagement of target groups, and non-political activity, "Convictus Ukraine" has become a trusted partner for the community, strengthening the local GBV response system and increasing awareness and trust among the residents of Verkhovyna.

Bolekhiv Community

- Gender-based violence prevention training for public and government employees. A training conducted with the International Medical Corps allowed local specialists to learn about gender, violence and response protocols, improving their professional qualifications.
- Operation of the social services system. There is a Family, Children and Youth Center which provides a basic level of assistance. This creates a platform for implementing GBV prevention programs.
- Existence of a human rights commission / council committee indicates that the community has an institutional mechanism for addressing issues of public order and social protection, which may also encompass cases of violence.
- Information transparency and public news about gender-based violence — publishing news about GBV training on the community's website demonstrates readiness to bring the topic into the public agenda and conduct educational activities.

Kolomyia Community

- Specialized services, day centers and crisis rooms operate for survivors of domestic or gender-based violence. At the community level, coordination councils and working groups bring together representatives from social services, police, education, healthcare and sometimes NGOs.
- Presence of organizations providing legal and psychological support for IDPs and survivors of violence.
- Kolomyia is among the communities equipped with specialized vehicles for mobile teams addressing domestic violence. These teams enable rapid, safe and confidential assistance, prevent re-traumatization and minimize barriers to service access. Respondents noted that these teams collaborate with the police, social services and medical institutions, enhancing the comprehensiveness of support.

- Educational outreach with communities and youth at the Community Cultural Center. Respondents emphasized the importance of information campaigns, trainings, school lectures and work with adolescents and educators.

Perehinske Community

- The community website contains informational publications on gender equality, including materials on equality in the economy and communications. Special attention is given to social inclusion in these materials.
- A social protection system is in place, with the relevant structural units.
- Schools actively implement lessons on safe behavior.
- The community has departments dealing with social issues.
- This highlights Perehinske's focus on gender equality, social inclusion, safety education and structured social support.

Preventive and Digital Activities of Communities

Community	Educational activities	Campaigns	Cooperation	Digital tools
Bolekhiv	Trainings in schools	"16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence"	Police, NGOs	E-reception office, social media
Bohorodchany	Lessons, meetings	"16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence"	Mobile response teams	Website, e-form
Horodenka	Seminars, trainings	"16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence", Children's Day	Patrol police	E-reception office, Facebook
Kolomyia	Parent clubs	"16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence"	Education sector, police	Social media
Verkhovyna	Work by social workers	One-off activities	Educational institutions	Community page
Perehinske	Trainings, prevention	"16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence"	Lyceums, community	Facebook

PROPOSED CHANGES FOR IMPROVING THE SITUATION AND EFFECTIVELY COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

To improve the situation and increase the level of safety in communities, it is necessary to implement comprehensive programs that combine social, psychological, legal and educational components. This will make it possible not only to ensure prompt responses to cases of gender-based violence, but also to create conditions for their prevention. The key directions for change should be:

1. Comprehensive social support programs

- Ensuring victims' access to social services through a "one-stop shop" model.
- Introduction of crisis assistance packages, temporary shelters and support provided by social workers.
- Development of mobile outreach team services in remote settlements.

2. Strengthening psychological support

- Regular work of psychologists in schools, administrative service centers and social services.
- Creation of support groups for women and families.
- Training specialists to work with trauma and crisis cases.

3. Active awareness-raising and information work

- Large-scale educational campaigns explaining what gender-based violence is, its signs and where people can seek help.

- Conducting trainings and meetings in schools, libraries and youth centers.
- Engaging churches, local leaders and the media to disseminate reliable information.
- Working through social media and local chat groups used by the community.

4. Coordinated work of all services

- Establishing systematic cooperation among social services, the police, healthcare providers, educators, Administrative Service Centers and civil society organizations.
- Approval of a unified interagency protocol for responding to cases of gender-based violence.
- Regular coordination meetings, joint trainings and case monitoring.
- Establishment of a permanent intersectoral working group.

5. Fostering a culture of zero tolerance for violence

- Development of civic engagement through microprojects, clubs, and school initiatives.
- Support for volunteers and training of opinion leaders.
- Promotion of the values of equality, mutual respect and safety across all community settings.

Directions for change in responding to gender-based violence at the local community level

Category of change	Nº	Focus area	Description of activities	Expected result
STRATEGIC CHANGES	1	Building a core group of active people	Creation of an initiative micro-group of 5–10 active individuals (social workers, librarians, teachers, healthcare workers, engaged residents). Regular short meetings (30 minutes once a month). Allocation of small areas of responsibility.	A stable, active core is formed that is capable of initiating and sustaining actions to prevent and address GBV.
	2	Encouraging participation through mini-projects	Introduction of a micro-initiative competition (UAH 5,000–10,000) for simple ideas (meetings, lectures, clubs, information campaigns). Low entry threshold — a brief application.	Residents are more willing to get involved due to quick, visible results.
	3	Transparency of decisions and openness of authorities	Open discussions on GBV issues, online broadcasts, short public reports, online form “Submit an idea for the community”.	Trust in authorities and the community's sense of influence increases.
SECTORAL CHANGES	4	Work through schools and youth centers	Engagement of teachers, homeroom teachers and psychologists. Safety days, lessons on personal boundaries and cybersecurity. Formation of youth leader teams.	Youth become more active and prejudices regarding GBV decrease.
	5	Church as a community partner	Thematic meetings with clergy. Joint messages: domestic violence is not a “family matter” but a social problem.	GBV is perceived as a socially important issue, not a private one.
	6	Development of women's and family clubs	Clubs at libraries and cultural centers. Topics: women's rights, psychological support, safety. Informal format.	Groups not ready for formal trainings become engaged.

COMMUNICATION CHANGES	7	Local examples and simple messages	Anonymized resident stories, videos "Where to turn for help in our community?", shared via messengers.	The barrier to seeking help lowers.
	8	Partnership with local businesses	Informational posters in cafes, shops, pharmacies. Joint campaigns and safety days.	It reaches residents who do not attend official events.
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES	9	Training volunteer guides	Training volunteers to accompany survivors to doctors, police, court. Shift work.	It provides real assistance and builds trust.
	10	Simplifying engagement mechanisms	Participation without registration, short events (30–40 minutes), convenient timing, children's corner.	Participation becomes accessible to a larger number of people.

There are no passive communities — only communities where people have never been offered a clear, simple, and realistic way to get involved.

We increase civic engagement when we:

- Reduce bureaucracy.
- Offer small opportunities with visible results.
- Create safe and friendly spaces for participation.
- Showcase successful examples.

Without systematic cooperation among services, accessible support, assistance, and ongoing awareness-raising efforts, a community will not be able to effectively counter gender-based violence.

Only the combination of social, psychological, informational and institutional efforts can help create a safe environment and increase the level of trust and engagement among residents.

SYSTEM OF SERVICES AND PREVENTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Services Available to Survivors

Mobile outreach teams

- Response to calls
- Provision of emergency assistance
- Initial consultation
- Transportation to a safe place

Available 24/7

Day support centers

- Group sessions and trainings
- Consultations with specialists
- Art therapy and relaxation
- Rehabilitation workshops
- Safe space for communication

Working hours: 9:00 am.–6:00 pm.

Psychological counseling offices

- Individual therapy
- Family counseling
- Trauma-informed care
- Psychological assessment

Qualified psychologists

Shelters and crisis rooms

- Temporary safe accommodation
- Meals and basic living conditions
- Confidential location
- Comprehensive support
- Preparation for independent living

Stay of up to 6 months

Social support for families affected by gender-based violence

- Coordination of services from various agencies
- Monitoring the family situation
- Legal assistance
- Material support
- Conflict mediation

SYSTEM OF SERVICES AND PREVENTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Educational and preventive measures

Trainings and seminars in educational institutions

- Classes for students on healthy relationships and equality
- Trainings for educators on identifying signs of violence
- Parent meetings on non-violent parenting

Information campaigns

- 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (25 November — 10 December)
 - Children's Day (June 1)
 - International Women's Day (8 March)
- Campaigns, flash mobs and publications*

Projects in cooperation with partners

Civil society organizations

- Legal education for the population
- Mutual support groups
- Advocacy campaigns

International organizations

- Project funding
- Exchange of experience
- Training for professionals

National Police of Ukraine

- Preventive conversations
- Informing people about their rights
- Joint activities

Regular coordination and reporting on project results

Additional preventive initiatives

- Mobile applications for reporting cases
- Videos and social advertising
- Publications in local media
- Theater performances
- Artistic projects
- Library-based activities

Resources and Support Needed by Communities to Effectively Address Gender-based Violence

Local community	Key problems / context	Required resources and support	Expected effect
Horodenka community	Insufficient funding for social services; low salaries for specialists working with GBV cases; high workload and staff turnover	Expanded budget financing for the social sector; stable funding for GBV prevention programs; increased salaries for social service workers	Strengthened community staffing capacity and improved quality of response to GBV cases
Verkhovyna community	A complex socio-economic context; lack of jobs; increase in family conflicts and GBV cases	Creation of new jobs or support for alternative income sources; state and regional economic support programs; additional resources for social services	Reduction of social tension and prevention of violence through improved economic conditions
Bolekhiv community	Lack of specialists to work with perpetrators; limited ability to address the root causes of violent behavior	Training of specially qualified specialists (psychologists, social workers, facilitators); resources to launch corrective programs; methodological and educational support from the region or state	Comprehensive GBV prevention approach with a focus on addressing the root causes of violence
Bohorodchany community	Insufficient response infrastructure; prevalence of psychological violence, often invisible; limited staffing resources	Additional funding for GBV programs and infrastructure; investment in prevention and response to psychological violence; expansion of psychologists and social specialists	Early detection of violence cases and increased effectiveness of prevention efforts
Kolomyia community	High workload for services; lack of material and technical resources	Provision of transport, equipment and technology; arrangement of premises for crisis rooms; increase in grant projects; strengthened cooperation with international organizations	Increased capacity of services and reduced financial burden on the local budget

Perehinske community	Lack of systematic response infrastructure; shortage of safe spaces for survivors	Strengthened state oversight of law implementation; creation of a shelter or crisis room; psychological support for survivors (Mobile response teams, additional specialists); technical support for social services	Formation of a comprehensive and sustainable system for responding to GBV cases
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Priorities in efforts to prevent gender-based violence

1. Education as a long-term strategy for changing behavioral patterns

Respondents unanimously emphasized that educational institutions — from kindergartens to employment centers — should play a key role in shaping non-violent behavior and promoting gender equality.

"Work needs to start at school. If a child grows up seeing that shouting and humiliation are considered normal, they will behave the same way in adult life"

.....

Education is viewed not only as the transfer of knowledge, but as a systematic process of fostering respect, empathy and skills for non-violent conflict resolution.

2. Family upbringing and promotion of non-violent interaction models

Many respondents emphasized that the family lays the foundation for how roles and behavioral norms are perceived.

"As long as a child hears at home: 'Be quiet, because Dad is angry', nothing will change. A different approach to upbringing is needed"

.....

The role of parents, their example and mutual respect form the foundation that either fosters tolerance or, conversely, reinforces power-based dynamics.

3. The role of the church as a moral guide

Respondents noted that in small communities, clergy have enormous influence — from shaping values to encouraging citizens to seek help.

“A priest can, with a single word, either support a woman or say: ‘Endure it because you are a wife’. It is very important that they also carry out educational outreach”.

.....

They specifically emphasized the need for the church not to urge “endure it for the sake of the family,” but to support survivors.

4. Control and effective response mechanisms

Some respondents stressed the need to strengthen monitoring of perpetrators and ensure the enforcement of decisions by the courts, police or social services.

“There are laws, but they need to be enforced. If a perpetrator does whatever he wants, there will be no prevention”

.....

Monitoring is viewed as a tool for preventing repeated incidents of violence.

5. Informing the Public and Overcoming the Culture of Silence

A large number of respondents believe that open discussion of the problem is the top priority.

“We need to talk about it more. Because here we’re used to staying silent and feeling ashamed. But when you know you’re not the only one, it’s easier to reach out”

.....

People need to know where to turn, what rights they have, which services respond and how protection is carried out.

6. Ending the war as a factor in reducing stress and violence

Respondents often drew a direct connection between the war and the increase in stress and aggression in communities.

"When the war ends, people will calm down a bit. Because right now everyone is on edge and this also contributes to violence"

.....

The return of military personnel, job loss and instability — all of this creates additional tension.

7. High-quality performance by service workers

By this, respondents meant not only professionalism, but also humanity, efficiency and compassion.

"If everyone did their job well in their own position, there would be fewer problems"

.....

It is important that social services, the police, Centers of Social Services for Families, Children and Youth and other institutions work clearly and without delays.

8. Preventive conversations as a tool for early intervention

Communities emphasize the need for regular preventive meetings — in schools, clubs, workplaces and healthcare institutions.

"It's always better to talk than to wait until someone gets beaten"

.....

Such conversations help identify problems at an early stage and reduce the risk of escalation.

9. Increasing the number of non-governmental organizations

Local non-governmental organizations play an important role in awareness-raising, psychological support, legal assistance and policy development.

"The more organizations like this there are, the more women will feel supported"

.....

Respondents pointed to the need to involve more civic initiatives, as they can fill the gaps that the state does not always cover.

TOOLS FOR ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNITY EFFORTS IN PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

1. Monitoring indicators (quantitative indicators)

- Number of registered GBV cases by category (physical, psychological, economic, sexual).
- Number of emergency and restraining orders issued by the police and courts.
- Number of repeated cases of violence involving the same individuals or within the same families.
- Number of survivors who contacted social services, the police, medical institutions or mobile teams.
- Number of survivors placed in shelters or crisis rooms.
- Number of individuals referred to perpetrator intervention programs and the number who actually completed them.

2. Qualitative indicators

- Level of survivors' satisfaction with the assistance received (anonymous surveys, interviews).
- Effectiveness of interagency cooperation: response time, clarity of procedures, information exchange.
- Quality of risk assessment conducted in each GBV case.
- Accessibility of information for the public about protection mechanisms (assessment based on website content, community pages, awareness-raising activities).
- Level of professional preparedness of specialists (competency assessment, participation in trainings, practical experience).

3. Institutional capacity of communities

- Availability of approved local programs or action plans to combat GBV.
- Number of specialists in social service centers, child protection services and mobile teams.
- Availability and equipment of crisis rooms or shelters.
- Provision of transport, premises and equipment necessary for prompt response.
- Amount of funding allocated to work with GBV cases and prevention activities.

4. Assessment of preventive work

- Number of information activities conducted (“16 Days of Activism Against Violence” campaign, lectures, trainings, anti-trafficking campaigns).
- Assessment of audience coverage (youth, men, educational institutions, starostat (local administrative sub-unit of a local community), etc.).
- Analysis of content on community social media pages and the number of views/interactions with materials.
- Cooperation with NGOs, community police officers, educational institutions and healthcare facilities.

5. Case assessment

- Analysis of individual cases (case studies) with a focus on:
 - Speed of response.
 - Coordination between services.
 - Outcome for the survivor (whether safety, temporary housing, and social support were ensured).
 - Compliance with procedures and the rights of the survivor.

6. Community involvement in assessment

- Public discussions on GBV-related issues.
- Surveys of residents regarding their level of awareness.

- Assessment of trust in the police, social services and local authorities.

In accordance with the Methodological Recommendations on implementing a gender approach and a human rights-based approach at the level of local communities (Order of the Ministry of Social Policy dated 27 December 2022 No. 359), when studying the situation of women and men and/or their groups, it is advisable to undertake the following actions:

- **Collection and analysis of data** on the needs of women and men and/or their groups, taking into account age, disability or belonging to low-mobility groups, place of residence, ethnic and social origin, citizenship, family and property status and other characteristics. The aim is to understand which services public policy can and should provide.
- **Gender analysis** of draft regulations and decisions governing the development of the local community, as well as already adopted decisions — in order to assess their impact on women and men.
- **Review of existing analytical materials.** Collection and systematization of materials from public authorities, research institutions, civil society and international organizations on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men across development program areas.
- **Consultations with stakeholders.** Engagement with civil society organizations representing community residents, including vulnerable groups of women and men, as well as women's organizations. Where applicable, cooperation is maintained with advisory bodies on equal rights and opportunities, countering human trafficking and preventing and combating gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence.

Who belongs to vulnerable groups under the Law of Ukraine “On Social Services”. These are individuals or families who have the highest risk of finding themselves in difficult life circumstances due to external and/or internal factors. Such factors include: old age; partial or complete loss of mobility or memory; incurable diseases and illnesses requiring long-term treatment; mental and behavioral disorders (including those related to the use of psychoactive substances); disability; homelessness; unemployment; low income; behavioral disorders in children due to parents’ divorce; evasion by parents or guardians of child-rearing responsibilities; loss of social ties (including during imprisonment); child abuse; gender-based violence; domestic violence; situations of human trafficking; damage caused by fire, natural disaster, catastrophe, hostilities, terrorist act, armed conflict or temporary occupation.

How to apply a gender approach and a human rights-based approach at the community level. These approaches are advisable to use when preparing draft decisions of local self-government bodies that regulate social relations, contain legal norms, are non-personalized in nature and are intended for repeated application. The goal is to ensure that policies equally take into account the needs of different groups of women and men.

Where to obtain data on the situation of women and men. Primary sources include official state statistical, financial and administrative reporting, as well as analytical reports and studies by public authorities, local self-government bodies, international organizations, research institutions and civil society organizations.

How to supplement data. When necessary, surveys and other field methods are conducted, such as focus groups, questionnaires, observation and interviews.

During the development of community development programs, it is also important to assess women’s and men’s

access — and that of their groups — to resources and services, as well as barriers that prevent their active participation in community life. This allows local policies and targeted support programs to be more accurately tailored.

Focusing on the community's gender profile enables the design of development programs that work for all residents — taking into account the real needs and differences between groups of women and men. The first step is honest analytics: not just recording problems, but identifying exactly where inequalities occur, which barriers exist and how to remove them.

Program design should first include a clear goal, along with coordinated strategic and operational objectives and tasks. These are formulated based on human rights and the principles of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Such a focus directly addresses the gender gaps identified during analysis, considers differences among various groups in the community and simultaneously ensures the realization of political, civic, economic, social and cultural rights. Ultimately, residents should gain equal access to goods and services and their opportunities for self-realization should expand.

Next, it is logical to move to specifics: determine priority activities that directly address identified imbalances and instances of discrimination. It is important not only to “fix” the problem but also to establish the criteria of success — equal outcomes for women and men. This is how initiatives are transformed from declarations into measurable change.

Community involvement is essential to ensure that decisions are viable. Participation mechanisms should be open to women and men from different groups, with special attention to vulnerable populations. Engagement goes beyond consultation — it is co-creation of solutions, which improves program implementation and builds trust.

Finally, the program must “see” its own progress.

To achieve this, gender-sensitive quantitative and qualitative performance indicators are established, aligned with Ukraine's Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Data collection for monitoring is carried out according to the list of indicators approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on December 02, 2020, No. 1517-p, "Issues of Data Collection for Monitoring Gender Equality". Thanks to this evaluation system, the community receives clear feedback and can adjust its course in a timely manner.

Component	What it entails	Expected result	How to measure / reference
Goal and objectives with a human-rights focus	Clear goal, strategic and operational objectives and tasks that take into account human rights and equal rights and opportunities for women and men	Reduction of identified inequalities; guarantee of equal access to goods and services; expansion of opportunities to realize political, civic, economic, social and cultural rights	Presence of clearly stated goals/ objectives; alignment of the program draft with human-rights principles
Priority actions to address gender gaps	Identification of immediate actions to eliminate gender gaps and instances of discrimination	Equal outcomes for women and men in target areas	List of actions with deadlines/responsible parties; comparison of results by gender
Community participation, including vulnerable groups	Mechanisms for engaging women and men and/or their groups in program implementation, with a focus on vulnerable categories	Improved quality of decisions and trust; consideration of the needs of different community groups	Number/quality of consultations; representation of vulnerable groups in the process
Gender-sensitive indicators and monitoring	Establishment of quantitative and qualitative indicators sensitive to gender differences; alignment with Sustainable Development Goals 2030; data collection according to the approved list of indicators	Transparent monitoring of progress; timely policy adjustments	Use of the list of indicators approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 02 December 2020 No. 1517-p; regular reports disaggregated by gender

The table helps design and evaluate social protection programs taking into account the differences in the situation of women and men. It structures indicators so that you can see not only “how much has been done” but also who exactly benefited and whether inequality has decreased.

Types of indicators and what they mean

- **Activity indicators** — track the implementation of actions (how many institutions, how many specialists, whether services are accessible, etc.). They answer the question: *Are we following the plan?*
- **Output (result) indicators** — record the immediate effect (how many people/families received services, their age, gender and location). Question: *Who actually received support?*
- **Quality (long-term result/impact) indicators** — show changes in community life (trends in vulnerable groups, access to assistance, gender gaps in income or coverage). Question: *Has it actually improved and for whom?*

Each indicator provides “breakdowns” by gender, age, type of settlement (city/village), local administrative unit, etc. This allows to see exactly where gaps occur: for example, services may be accessible to women in cities but less so to elderly men in villages; or accessibility may exist in the center but be absent in peripheral areas.

How to use indicators in the program cycle

1. **Planning:** select key indicators from the table according to your objectives, set baseline values (the “starting point”) and define target benchmarks.
2. **Implementation:** regularly collect data disaggregated by the relevant categories and track the execution of activities.

3. **Monitoring:** compare coverage for women/men and groups (age, disability, urban/rural) and look for “bottlenecks”.
4. **Evaluation:** analyze long-term changes and gender gaps; adjust activities, budget or access mechanisms as needed.

Data sources and measurement quality

Use official statistics, administrative reports from service providers and survey results (focus groups, questionnaires, interviews). To ensure comparability across periods, maintain consistent definitions, age groups and formats. Where possible, include **equality control indicators** (e.g., difference in average salaries of female/male service providers).

Points to pay attention to

- **Accessibility:** Track barrier-free access (accessibility standards) separately from actual accessibility for people with disabilities and low-mobility groups.
- **Territorial equity:** Compare indicators by local administrative units — this helps balance resources.
- **Data protection:** Anonymize personal data; for small groups, publish only aggregated values.
- **Connection to goals:** For each indicator in the table, specify which program goal it “covers” and what management decision it informs (e.g., expand a service, change a format, reallocate the budget).

Indicator	Main disaggregations	Units
Number of social service and support institutions/facilities (total; residential; rehabilitation; temporary stay; specialized support services for survivors of domestic violence/gender-based violence; comprehensive)	Type of settlement (urban/rural); by each village/ settlement district	units
Share of institutions with barrier-free access for persons with reduced mobility (ramps, sanitary facilities compliant with State Building Codes)	Type of settlement; by each settlement/district	%
Number of social service providers	Sex, age group (under 29; 30-44; 45-59; 60+); type of settlement	persons
Difference in the average monthly salary of women and men — social service providers	—	hryvnia
Number of social managers per 10,000 residents	—	persons / 10 thousand
Number of social service specialists per 1,000 (urban) / 500 (rural) residents	Type of settlement	persons / 1 000; persons / 500
Number of recipients of basic social services	Sex; age group (0-14; 15-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60-74; 75+); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of families in difficult life circumstances	Under social case management / not under social case management; type of settlement; by districts	units
Number of children in difficult life circumstances	Sex; age groups (0-3; 4-6; 7-14; 15-18); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of large families (3+ children)	Type of settlement; by districts/settlements	units
Number of children in large families	Sex; age groups (0-3; 4-6; 7-14; 15-18; 19-23); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons

Number of family-type children's homes	Type of settlement; by districts/settlements	units
Number of children in family-type children's homes	Sex; age groups (0–3; 4–6; 7–14; 15–18; 19–23); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of patronage families	Type of settlement; by districts/settlements	units
Number of children in patronage families	Sex; age groups (0–3; 4–6; 7–14; 15–18; 19–23); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of foster families	Type of settlement; by districts/settlements	units
Number of children in foster families	Sex; age groups (0–3; 4–6; 7–14; 15–18; 19–23); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of families raising children with disabilities	Type of family (complete; single mother; single father); number of children (1; 2; 3–5; 5+); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	units
Number of families with children where the mother/father is a person with a disability	Type of family; number of children; type of settlement; by districts/settlements	units
Number of Anti-Terrorist Operation / Joint Forces Operation / national security operation participants who have benefited from rehabilitation and resocialization programs	Sex; age group (18–29; 30–44; 45–59; 60+); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of children in families of Anti-Terrorist Operation / Joint Forces Operation /national security operation participants	Sex; age groups (0–3; 4–6; 7–14; 15–18; 19–23); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of persons aged 18+ newly recognized as persons with disabilities	Sex	persons
Number of persons with disabilities receiving state assistance for persons not eligible for a pension	Sex; type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Total number of persons with disabilities	Sex; age group (24–29; 30–44; 45–59; 60+); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons

Number of persons aged 70+	Sex; disability status; marital status (living alone); need for/ receipt of care; receipt of social services (within/outside the community); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons
Number of children with disabilities	Sex; age groups (0–2; 3–6; 7–14; 15–18; 19–23); type of settlement; by districts/settlements	persons

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES ON STRENGTHENING THE SYSTEM FOR PREVENTING AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Based on the interviews conducted, focus group research and analysis of response practices in the communities of Horodenka, Bohorodchany, Verkhovyna, Kolomyia, Perehinske and Bolekhiv, the following key directions for strengthening the system for combating gender-based violence can be identified.

"It turns out that the children and I are the ones who have to run away, while he just goes on living as if nothing happened"

.....

1. Development of Safety and Support Infrastructure

Not all surveyed communities currently have fully functioning shelters, so the priorities are:

- **Establishing crisis rooms** or temporary safe spaces.
- **Expanding opportunities for the temporary accommodation** of survivors in municipal social service institutions while ensuring confidentiality and minimum safety standards.
- **Developing a long-term strategy** — opening a day center or forming partnerships with regional institutions to guarantee the admission of survivors from the communities.

2. System of corrective work with perpetrators

- **Introduce or intensify programs for perpetrators provided by law**, in cooperation with the probation service, psychologists and social workers.
- **Develop a mechanism for removing the perpetrator from the family** in cases where there is a real or potential threat to the life and health of the victim. Such an approach minimizes stress and risks for the victim: instead of a woman with children having to leave her own home and lose her familiar environment, the perpetrator — whose behavior creates the danger — should be removed from the home.
- Therefore, a restraining order against the perpetrator, rather than relocating the victim, should be the basic response practice.
- Ensure clear monitoring of compliance with emergency and restraining orders, including oversight by the police and social services.
- Expand educational programs for men (sports clubs, veteran spaces, workplaces) aimed at promoting non-violent behavior models and responsible fatherhood.

Counteracting Stereotypes and Promoting Gender Culture

- Implement long-term campaigns against gender stereotypes aimed at ensuring an equal distribution of family responsibilities and promoting responsible fatherhood.
- Engage men through sports clubs, veteran spaces and youth centers, where issues of violence can be discussed openly.

- Introduce educational modules in schools aimed at fostering safe behavior, a culture of respect and non-violent communication.

3. Support for Vulnerable Groups

Since women, children, the elderly and people in difficult life circumstances are most often affected by GBV, communities should:

- Develop individual support plans that include social, psychological and legal assistance.
- Establish mobile social service teams, especially in communities where shelters for GBV survivors are unavailable.
- Promote women's economic independence through microgrants, vocational courses and support for micro-entrepreneurship.

4. Improvement of the Recording and Monitoring System

- Introduce a unified interagency registry or a coordinated data-sharing system for GBV cases.
- Conduct annual analytical reviews describing trends, structural issues, and recommendations.
- Ensure confidentiality of information to reduce underreporting and fear of seeking help.

5. Development of Family Support Services

- Expand access to family counseling, psychological assistance, mediation and support services.
- Create peer support groups for women, parents and children who witness violence.
- Develop social service centers, including psychological counseling offices and mobile consultation units.

An interview with the head of the Perehinske community, Iryna Liuklian, as an example of women's leadership

1. What measures does the Perehinske community implement to ensure equal access for women and men to resources, services and participation in decision-making?

The Perehinske local community ensures equal access for women and men to social, healthcare and administrative services. The community organizes public discussions and consultations with citizens and takes into account the opinions of different population groups when planning and implementing programs and budget decisions, thereby promoting equal inclusion in decision-making processes.

2. Is a gender analysis of residents' needs conducted when planning local programs or the budget?

During the planning of local programs and the budget, the needs of various population groups are taken into consideration, including social aspects (women, men, families with children, vulnerable categories). This ensures a fairer distribution of resources based on such analysis.

3. Are there elements of gender-responsive budgeting in the community and are they implemented?

Components of gender-responsive budgeting are taken into account through analyzing the impact of budget programs on equal opportunities for women and men, contributing to more socially balanced planning.

4. How is women's participation in local self-government ensured, especially in administrative sub-municipal districts and remote settlements?

Women have equal opportunities to work in local self-government bodies, public commissions, hearings and other mechanisms of participation in community life. The

majority of positions in the community are held by women. This also applies to the fields of education, healthcare and culture. It is important to note that women hold leadership positions in the community. The business sector is also largely represented by women. Regarding women's participation in deputy commissions, it is worth noting full equality, unbiased treatment and equal involvement in legislative activities. In addition, active informational outreach is conducted to engage a broad range of residents.

5. Are gender aspects considered when developing programs to support youth, entrepreneurship or education?

When developing such programs, the community takes into account the interests and needs of both sexes, ensuring equal access to opportunities for development, education, entrepreneurship and employment.

6. How does the Perehinske community respond to the needs of vulnerable population groups (women who have experienced violence, single mothers/fathers, etc.)?

The needs of vulnerable population categories within the community are assessed by relevant specialists from the Department of Healthcare and Social Policy, the Children's Services and the Local Center for Social Services (provision of social services). They provide support through a comprehensive range of social services, including consultations and assistance for vulnerable groups, while maintaining ongoing cooperation with community, district and regional institutions and organizations.

7. Is there a responsible person or structural unit in the community in charge of gender equality issues?

Yes, in the Perehinske settlement local community, a Department of Healthcare and Social Policy has been established. This department ensures the implementation of state policy regarding family support; equal rights and opportunities for

women and men; social integration of persons with disabilities; the protection of rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons. Coordination of the community's social initiatives is carried out within this department.

Additionally, by a decision of the Executive Committee on February 28, 2025, a Coordination Council on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence, Gender Equality and Human Trafficking was created in the community.

Its areas of activity include:

- Ensuring interagency cooperation among local self-government bodies, enterprises, institutions and organizations in implementing state policy in the fields of prevention and combating domestic violence, gender-based violence, gender equality and human trafficking.
- Coordinating the activities and interaction of entities carrying out measures to prevent and combat domestic violence, gender-based violence, gender inequality and human trafficking.
- Aligning measures in the field of prevention and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence, aimed at providing a comprehensive approach to overcoming domestic violence, promoting family values and increasing the effectiveness of interventions.
- Developing and/or reviewing proposals for settlement-level target programs and other acts related to the implementation of state policy on gender equality, prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence and countering human trafficking.
- Coordinating information and awareness-raising activities in the areas of prevention and combating domestic violence, gender-based violence, gender equality and human trafficking within the territory of the Perehinske settlement local community.

8. How is training for local government employees on gender equality and gender-based violence conducted?

Local government employees participate in training events, workshops and seminars, mostly organized by regional authorities and NGOs working in this field. These activities focus on gender equality, social policy and budgeting, enhancing the employees' competence in these areas.

9. Have there been cases where the community changed its decisions or programs after considering a gender analysis?

The community conducts evaluations of social programs and can make adjustments based on the analysis of the needs of different social groups, ensuring more effective and balanced implementation of policies.

10. What are the Perehinske community's future plans for implementing gender equality principles across all policy areas?

The community plans to continue integrating gender equality principles into strategic documents, development programs, budget processes and social initiatives, expanding mechanisms for citizen participation in decision-making and improving access to services for all residents.

GLOSSARY OF GENDER THEORY TERMS

- **Androgyny (androgynous personality)** — the combination in an individual of both feminine and masculine traits. An androgynous personality integrates the best aspects of both gender roles. The concept of androgyny was proposed in the early 1970s by American psychologist Sandra Bem. Psychological androgyny refers to high scores on both masculinity and femininity scales simultaneously. It is associated with high self-esteem, perseverance, effective parenting, achievement motivation and an internal sense of well-being. An androgynous individual has a rich set of gender-role behavioral patterns and flexibly uses them depending on circumstances.
- **Androgynousness** — the combination of high levels of femininity and masculinity in one person, regardless of biological sex.
- **Androcentrism** — a cultural tradition that reduces human subjectivity to a single male norm, presented as universal objectivity, while treating female subjectivity as deviation or marginal. It is not simply a “male perspective”, but the acceptance of male normative ideas and life models as universal social norms and patterns. Gender theorists and feminists use the term to critique cultures where “male” and “female” are opposed, weighted differently and organized hierarchically; the female is understood as “other” or ignored.
- **Biological (sex) determinism** — the principle that a person’s characteristics are determined by biological, natural factors.

Feminist criticism targets the arbitrary interpretation of these “natural factors” as immutable.

- **Bisexuality** — an individual’s emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to people of more than one gender.
- **Gender** — sex as a social category, as opposed to biological sex (sex). A social construct that encompasses the social opportunities available to each sex in education, professional activity, access to power, family roles and reproductive behavior. It is a fundamental dimension of society’s social structure; it relates not to anatomical or physiological differences, but to socially formed traits of “femininity” and “masculinity”. It is acknowledged that gender exists on a spectrum beyond the binary of male and female.
- **Gender asymmetry** — the disproportionate representation of social and cultural roles of both sexes (as well as perceptions of them) in various spheres of life. The source is hidden discrimination and patriarchal attitudes.
- **Gender discrimination** — any distinction, exclusion or restriction based on sex that affects or aims to affect the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other sphere, or the use of these rights by women, regardless of their material status, based on the principle of equality of men and women.
- **Gender democracy** — a system in which women and men participate as equals in rights and opportunities, enshrined in law and ensured by political-legal practice and institutions. It affirms equal social value of the sexes (principle of parity), equal rights, duties and responsibilities.
- **Gender dysphoria (gender identity disorder)** — a marked incongruence between a person’s experienced or expressed gender and their gender assigned at birth, which may cause clinically significant distress. Recognized as a health condition requiring appropriate support and medical care

rather than a moral or social failing. In accordance with the WHO ICD-11, gender incongruence is classified under conditions related to sexual health, reflecting a shift away from pathologizing gender diversity toward affirming individual experience and ensuring access to necessary care.

- **Gender (sex) differentiation** — the process of assigning different social significance to biological differences between men and women and using these differences as a means of social classification.
- **Gender economics** — a field of economic research that analyzes mechanisms of gender inequality in formal and informal employment sectors, the influence of political, trade and financial institutions on the status of men and women and develops indices or development indicators accounting for gender asymmetry.
- **Gender identity** — each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth. It includes the personal sense of the body and other expressions of gender such as dress, speech and mannerisms, and encompasses identities such as woman, man or non-binary. Gender identity is broader than gender-role identity and is not synonymous with sexual identity.
- **Gender ideology** — a system of ideas and beliefs about the organization of society and the relations between women and men as social groups; promotes a new culture of relations between the sexes to achieve social goals.
- **Gender history** — a specialized historical discipline studying the retrospective analysis of gender relations.
- **Gender culture** — the collection of gender-role values and norms of behavior, needs, interests and forms of activity, shaped by social organization, marital and family customs, traditions and religious beliefs.

- **Gender inequality** — a social system in which women and men have unequal access to rights, resources, opportunities and power, resulting in the systematic disadvantage of one group over another, typically to the detriment of women.
- **Gender policy** — the promotion of partnership between the sexes in defining and implementing political goals and methods in the activities of the state, political parties and civic-political associations.
- **Gender psychology (psychology of sex)** — a branch of psychology that studies characteristics of gender identity that determine social behavior depending on sex. It includes the psychology of sex differences and gender socialization. Perspectives include finding psychological similarities, studying strategies to overcome stereotypes and analyzing conditions for successful self-realization of women in professions and men in the family.
- **Gender equality** — the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys, encompassing equal access to resources, services and decision-making in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life, regardless of sex.
- **Gender system** — the institutions, behaviors and interactions assigned to individuals according to sex. According to I. Hirdman, it is the collection of “gender contracts” (for women — “housewife”, for men — “breadwinner” in a patriarchal hierarchy).
- **Gender (sex-role) socialization** — the process by which a person acquires the social-sex role assigned by society from birth.
- **Gender statistics** — data on the status of women and men in areas such as population, family, health, education, communications, employment, politics, etc.
- **Gender stratification** — the hierarchical distribution of economic and social resources according to sex.

- **Gender-related Human Development Index** — UN indicators measuring the status of women and men across key dimensions of human development: health and life expectancy, access to education and material well-being.
- **Gender conflict** — interaction or condition arising from contradictions between gender values, relationships and roles, leading to clashes of interests and goals.
- **Gender approach (gender dimension)** — a feature of the political culture of representative democracy: consideration of the interests of both social-sex groups; recognition that social phenomena affect women and men differently.
- **Gender studies** — an interdisciplinary practice that applies a gender approach to analyze social transformations and systems of domination. It includes sociological, psychological, ethnographic and other fields; studies socialization, patriarchal/egalitarian relations, identity and sexuality; analyzes not only differences but also power and dominance.
- **Gender (sex) roles** — patterns of behavior for women and men based on traditional expectations regarding sex; a set of norms and rules of conduct in a given situation. They change over time and vary across cultures.
- **Gender stereotypes** — conservative, widely accepted norms and judgments about the status, behavior, motives and needs of women and men; they reinforce existing gender differences and relations.
- **Gender strategies** — socially significant directions of action by institutions and communities aimed at promoting gender democracy and developing gender culture.
- **Genetic sex** — sex determined by the set of sex chromosomes.
- **Heterosexuality** — sexual orientation toward individuals of the opposite sex.
- **Homosexuality** — sexual attraction to individuals of the same sex and sexual contact with them.

- **Homophobia** — an irrational fear of and aversion to homosexuality and to lesbian, gay and bisexual people, based on prejudice.
- **Discrimination against women** — any distinctions, exclusions or restrictions based on sex that affect the exercise of women's rights and freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural, civic or other spheres, regardless of marital status.
- **Sex-based discrimination** — actions or inactions that constitute any distinction, exclusion or privilege based on sex if they aim to limit or prevent the recognition, use or equal exercise of human rights and freedoms for women and men.
- **Differential socialization** — sex-specific upbringing, where boys and girls are treated differently, encouraging behavior traditionally associated with their sex.
- **Domestic violence** — acts (or omissions) of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence committed within the family or household, between relatives, former or current spouses, or other individuals living (or having lived) in the same household but not in a marital or family relationship with each other. This also includes threats to commit such acts, regardless of whether the perpetrator resides in the same place as the victim.
- **Egalitarian state policy (gender equality policy)** — a policy aimed at creating equal conditions for individual self-realization in all social spheres, regardless of sex.
- **Economic violence** — a form of domestic violence that includes intentional deprivation of housing, food, clothing, other property, funds, documents or the ability to use them; leaving someone without care; obstructing access to necessary medical or rehabilitation services; forbidding work; forcing someone to work; prohibiting education; other violations of economic rights.

- **Emancipation** — processes of social mobility for women, associated with their recognition as a distinct social group and their movement from the private sphere into the public one.
- **Victim** — any individual subjected to violence, including domestic violence.
- **Women's entrepreneurship** — business managed or owned by women.
- **Women's movement** — social, cultural and political activities of women and women's groups aimed at protecting women's interests and transforming gender relations.
- **Womanhood** — see **femininity**.
- **Rape** — non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of another person's body using any body part or object; sexual intercourse involving physical violence, threats of violence or exploiting the helpless state of the victim.
- **Masculinity** — a system of traits traditionally considered male: alignment with biological sex, acceptance of gender stereotypes, adherence to “male norms” and typical forms of self-realization.
- **Matriarchy** — a social system in which family and political power belong to women.
- **Patriarchy** — the authority of the father (patriarch) over legally dependent family members. In feminist theory, it refers to a system of familial, social, ideological and political relations in which women are subordinated to men.
- **Stalking (persecution)** — intentional behavior involving repeated threatening actions directed at another person, causing them to fear for their safety.
- **Psychological violence** — a form of domestic violence that includes verbal abuse, threats (including threats against third parties), humiliation, stalking, intimidation and other acts aimed at restricting a person's free will, controlling

reproductive decisions or causing fear for personal or others' safety; it results in emotional insecurity, inability to protect oneself or harm to mental health.

- **Sexual revolution** — a mass reassessment of sexual morality norms and a relaxation of societal repression regarding intimate life (characteristic of the 1960s).
- **Repressive sexual morality** — a system of strict anti-sexual views in society.
- **Sexism (gender discrimination)** — prejudiced attitudes toward a person or group based on their sex; discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexism can be directed at women or men. Its ideas are closely related to racism, chauvinism and fascism.
- **Social activity** — behavior of social actors aimed at changing the social conditions of their lives.
- **Sexual harassment** — any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical sexual behavior, the purpose or consequence of which is to violate a person's dignity, including creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment.
- **Sexual violence** — a form of domestic violence that includes any sexual acts committed against an adult without their consent or against a child regardless of consent, or in the presence of a child; coercion to engage in sexual acts with a third party; other violations of sexual freedom or sexual integrity, including acts committed against or in the presence of a child.
- **Sexual identity** — a person's enduring pattern of emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to others, encompassing orientations such as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.
- **Sexual culture** — a component of culture encompassing marital and family traditions, beliefs, values and gendered behaviors.

- **Sexual role** — the acceptance and adherence by an individual to normative standards of sexual behavior in forming intimate relationships.
- **Sexual life** — the set of interactions between individuals, including sexual intercourse and other forms of interpersonal sexual communication.
- **Sexuality** — the characteristic of sexual desire, reactions and activity.
- **Difficult life circumstances (DLCs)** — situations in which families or individuals cannot independently overcome or minimize negative impacts, including circumstances such as domestic violence.
- **“Glass ceiling”** — invisible, formally unrecognized barriers that hinder women’s career advancement; caused by stereotypes of “second-class” status, perceived limitations of abilities and fear of success.
- **Sexual morality** — a system of moral norms regulating all aspects of sexual behavior.
- **Sex** — the set of anatomical and physiological characteristics that distinguish female and male individuals. Biological sex is determined by: genetic traits — chromosome set; gonadal traits — reproductive organs (women: ovaries and ova; men: testes and sperm); hormonal traits — women: estrogens; men: androgens; somatic traits — structure of sexual organs and secondary sexual characteristics.
- **Feminism (women’s movement)** — a theory of gender equality and a social movement advocating recognition of equal rights for women and men in family and public life.
- **Femininity (womanhood)** — a set of physical, psychological, and behavioral traits expected of women in a given society; traditionally contrasted with masculine traits (passivity, dependence, subordination, emotionality, tenderness, etc.).

- **Physical violence** — a form of domestic violence that includes slaps, punches, pushes, pinching, hitting, biting, as well as illegal detention, beatings, torture, causing bodily harm of varying severity, leaving someone in danger, failing to help a person in life-threatening situations, causing death and committing other violent offenses.

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5. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). “Women, Peace and Security”.
6. UN Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008). “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict”.
7. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: ratified by the Law of Ukraine dated June 05, 2003 № 946-IV.

National Legislation of Ukraine

8. State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men until 2030, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 12 August 2022 № 752-p.

9. Law of Ukraine “On Prevention and Counteraction to Domestic Violence” dated 07 December 2017.
10. Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” dated 08 September 2005.
11. Law of Ukraine “On Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence” dated 20 June 2022.
12. Operational Plan for Implementing the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men for 2025–2027, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in 2024.
13. Procedure for Interaction of Entities Implementing Measures to Prevent and Combat Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 22 August 2018 № 658.

Other Sources

14. Portal “Decentralization” / Ivano-Frankivsk region: <https://decentralization.gov.ua/areas/0342>
15. European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life: <https://gender.auc.org.ua/?p=90>
16. Countering Gender-Based Violence: <https://divchata.org/blog/protidiia-genderno-zumovlenomu-nasilstvu>

Appendix A.

Table “10 questions — key findings”

Nº	Question	Key Findings from Communities
1	How do you assess the state of human rights in your community?	Positive changes exist, but problems remain with access to justice and protection for vulnerable groups. Low legal awareness among the population.
2	What are the main gender issues you see in the community?	Dominance of patriarchal stereotypes, unequal distribution of household responsibilities, staffing shortages and restrictions on men's freedom of movement due to martial law.
3	Which population groups are most vulnerable in terms of gender-based violence?	Women with children, victims of domestic violence; people with disabilities; internally displaced persons (IDPs); adolescents; people in difficult life circumstances (DLCs); elderly individuals.
4	What barriers prevent GBV victims from accessing help?	Fear of community judgment; dominance of stereotypes; dependence on the perpetrator; distrust of police and courts; lack of specialized services in remote communities.
5	How do local authorities and social services respond to GBV cases?	Response exists but is often insufficient; lack of resources and specialists; weak interagency coordination.
6	Is there sufficient awareness in the community about mechanisms for protection against GBV?	Awareness is generally adequate, but some residents do not know about hotlines or crisis centers.
7	What successful practices (if any) can you name in combating GBV?	Educational training for youth, cooperation with NGOs, mutual support initiatives (women's groups, awareness-raising activities).
8	What changes or measures would you propose to improve the situation?	Establish crisis centers; awareness campaigns; psychological support for victims; increase accountability of officials; higher wages; improve employment opportunities.
9	What resources or support does your community need to effectively combat GBV?	Qualified psychologists and lawyers; program funding; transportation access to help centers; informational campaigns.
10	What should be the priority in preventing GBV?	Educational and awareness-raising prevention; support for victims; creating a safe community environment.

Appendix B.

Table. Types, Forms, and Consequences of Violence

Type of Violence	Forms of Manifestation	Consequences
Physical violence in the family	• Beatings, punches, bites • Twisting of arms • Hair pulling • Attempts to strangle • Torture and abuse • Causing burns • Throwing objects at the victim • Threats with any weapon • Denial of necessary assistance in case of illness or pregnancy	• Physical or mental health problems • Damage to honor and dignity of the affected family member • Death of the victim
Sexual violence in the family	Rape, including "marital rape" • Coercion into unwanted sexual contact • Sexual harassment • Sexual acts against children: • Corruption of children, involving children in child prostitution or child pornography, etc	• Physical or mental health problems • Damage to honor and dignity of the affected family member
Psychological violence in the family	• Verbal insults, threats of murder • Threats of injury, beating, or harm • Humiliation, stalking • Intimidation • Damage, destruction or hiding of personal belongings, objects, or jewelry	• Emotional insecurity, low self-esteem • Inability to defend oneself • Harm to mental and emotional well-being
Economic violence in the family	• Intentional deprivation of housing, food, clothing, other property, or funds legally due to the family member • Damage or destruction of property • Breaking into the home • Arson • Limiting or denying access to the family budget • Forcing a family member to perform heavy or impossible work • Economic exploitation	• Physical or mental health problems • Death of the victim

Appendix C.

Table: State, Municipal, and Non-Governmental Organizations and Institutions Providing Assistance to Individuals in Difficult Life Circumstances, Including Domestic Violence Situations and Child Rights Protection

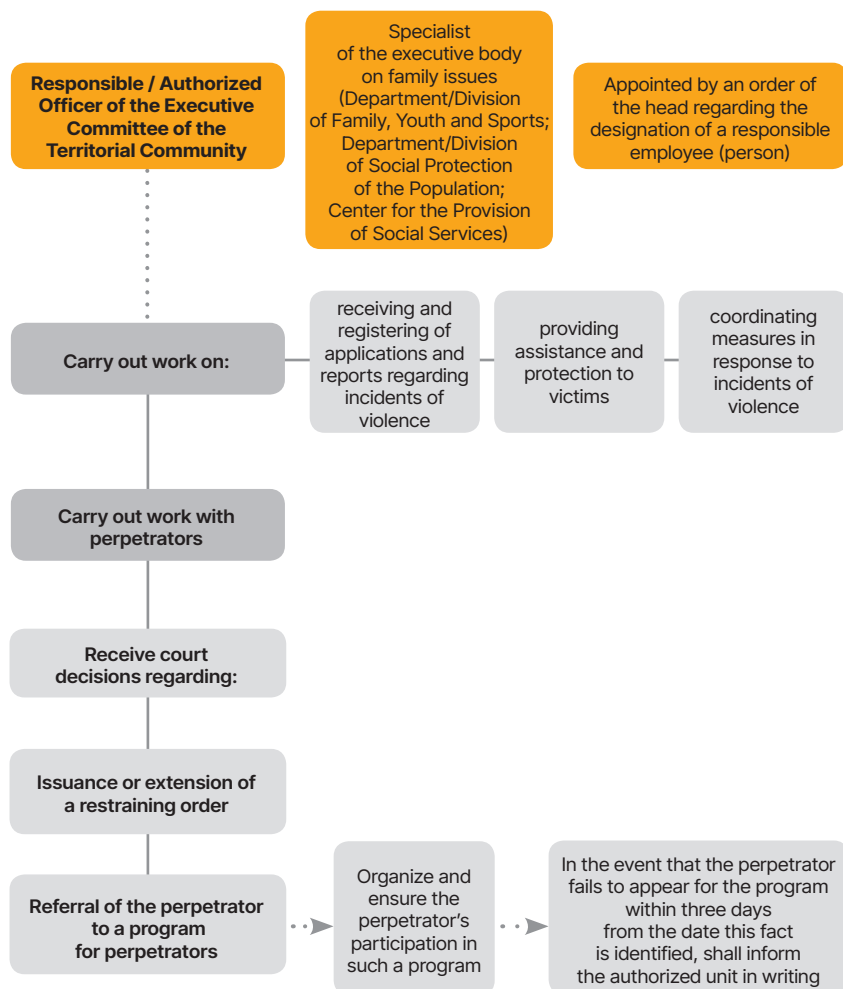
Name	Address, phone	Services Provided
Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Center of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth	76004, Ivano-Frankivsk, Hrushevskoho Str., 21 +38(0342) 53 91 07 if_ocsssdm@i.ua	Assistance to families, children and youth in difficult life circumstances through early identification, social support and implementation of responsible parenting practices and family preservation initiatives.
Center for Socio-Psychological Assistance	Verkhovyna, Kovalia Str., 1 +38(03432) 2 51 45	Psychological, social-pedagogical, legal, socio-economic and informational services. Protection of rights and interests of individuals in difficult life circumstances. Temporary shelter and meals for persons in crisis situations. Facility capacity: 30 places.
Center for Socio-Psychological Assistance for Victims of Domestic or Gender-Based Violence	Lesi Ukrainky Str., 80A, Rosokhach village, Ivano-Frankivsk region, 78151 Contact person: Social Work Specialist Oksana Susidko, +38(097) 841 33 88	Emergency (crisis) intervention, counseling, information services.
Day Center for Socio-Psychological Assistance for Victims of Domestic Violence	Symonenka Str., 3B	Socio-psychological and initial legal assistance, organization and support of mutual aid groups, conducting seminars and training aimed at overcoming the consequences of violence and restoring personal resources. It also carries out social-preventive work to prevent repeated cases of violence and promotes zero tolerance for violence in society. Informs the public about victims' rights and social services available at the day center.
Eleos-Ukraine – St. Olha Shelter (Lysetska community, Ivano-Frankivsk region)	Contact numbers: +38(067) 343 64 24; +38(068) 777 03 41; +38(068) 155 66 77; +38(0342) 59 91 57.	Accommodation for women (and children) affected by domestic or gender-based violence, as well as for persons displaced by war. Facility capacity: approximately 30 places.

Crisis Room: Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence	Contact number: +38(097) 936 91 38. Addresses are confidential for the safety of victims; access to the crisis room is possible only via referral from social services or the police.	24/7 intake for domestic violence victims. It provides psychological counseling, basic hygiene items and food packages for the duration of stay in the crisis room.
Mobile Team for Socio- Psychological Assistance for Victims of Domestic or Gender-Based Violence	Shevchenka Str., 77, Horodenka, Kolomyia district, Ivano-Frankivsk region, 78103. Contact person: Director of the municipal institution Ivanna Zolotarchuk, +38(068) 620 86 24	Assessment of the psychological state of the victim and risk of repeated violence. • Crisis and emergency intervention to immediately prevent or minimize the consequences of violence through emergency medical services, the National Police or transport to the Socio-Psychological Assistance Department. • Provision of psychological support, including for children, based on individual needs. • Development of safety action plans for victims. • Counseling on violence prevention, including coordination with specialists from other agencies, services, institutions or organizations if needed. • Providing information about the nearest medical facilities where emergency post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV/AIDS and treatment for sexually transmitted infections is available, including access to them within 72 hours after an unwanted and/or unprotected sexual contact (if needed). • Organizing social and rehabilitative support activities for victims. • Assisting victims in obtaining additional services (medical, social, psychological, legal, temporary shelter, etc.), including referrals to relevant general or specialized victim support services and/or other organizations when necessary. • Informing the perpetrator about the option to voluntarily participate in a program for perpetrators.

Regional Center for Free Secondary Legal Aid in Ivano-Frankivsk Region	Ivano-Frankivsk, Sichovykh Striltsiv Str., 25 +38(0342) 78 35 91	• Legal protection; • Representation of individuals entitled to free secondary legal aid in courts, other state bodies, local government bodies, and before other parties; • Drafting procedural documents.
Bohorodchany Legal Aid Bureau	Bohorodchany, Shevchenka Str., 69	
Bolekhiv Legal Aid Bureau	Bolekhiv, D. Halytskoho Str., 47	
Perehinske Legal Aid Bureau	Perehinske, Sahaidachnoho Str., 26	
Verkhovyna Legal Aid Bureau	Verkhovyna, I. Franka Str., 23	
Kolomyia Local Center for Free Secondary Legal Aid	Kolomyia, Shukhevycha Str., 59	
Municipal Institution "Center for Social and Psychological Assistance" of Bohorodchany Settlement Council	77701, Ukraine, Ivano-Frankivsk district, Ivano-Frankivsk region, Bohorodchany, Shevchenka Str., 53	
Mother and Child Home	77760, Ukraine, Bohorodchany district, Ivano-Frankivsk region, Horokholyna village, Ukrainska Str., 177a	Assistance to single women with children in difficult life circumstances
Government Hotline 1547	www.1547.ukc.gov.ua Phone: 1547	24/7 anonymous support for victims of domestic and gender-based violence
Center "La Strada — Ukraine" (Crisis Line)	Phones: • 0 800 500 335 (landline) • 116 123 (free of charge from the mobile phone) www.la-strada.org.ua	Online consultations, psychological support, legal aid
UNFPA Ukraine Support Centers («Break the Circle»)	Phone: 0 800 213 103 (daily 9:00 to 21:00) www.rozirvykolo.org	Shelter map, crisis room locations, advice, chat support

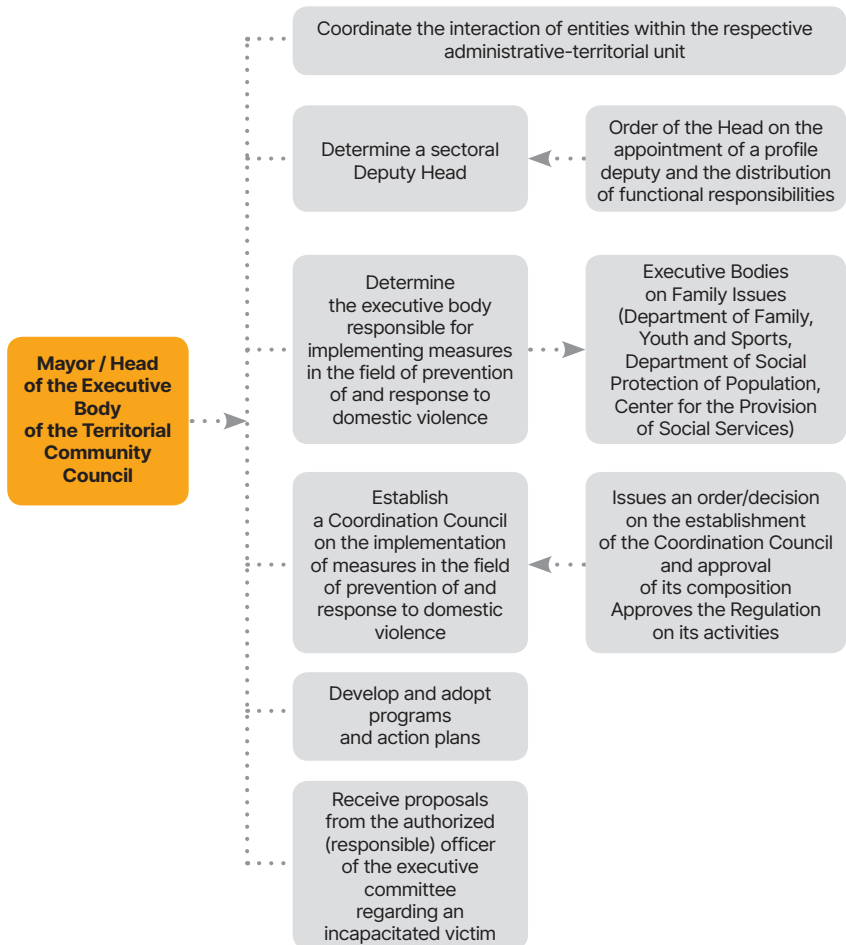
Free Legal Aid (Ministry of Justice of Ukraine)	Phones: • 0 800 213 103 • 0 800 50 27 57 www.legalaid.gov.ua	Legal assistance, protection of victims' rights
Ministry of Internal Affairs Trust Line (violence, human trafficking)	Phone: 0 800 505 501 or a short number 527 (from mobile)	24/7 anonymous support
Mental Health and Crisis Counseling Center (Minister of Health / partners)	Phone: 0 800 60 20 19	Psychologists provide support during crises (anxiety, panic, PTSD, violence)

Appendix D.
Algorithm for Response
of a Responsible/Authorized Officer
of the Executive Committee of a Territorial Community
to Cases of Domestic Violence



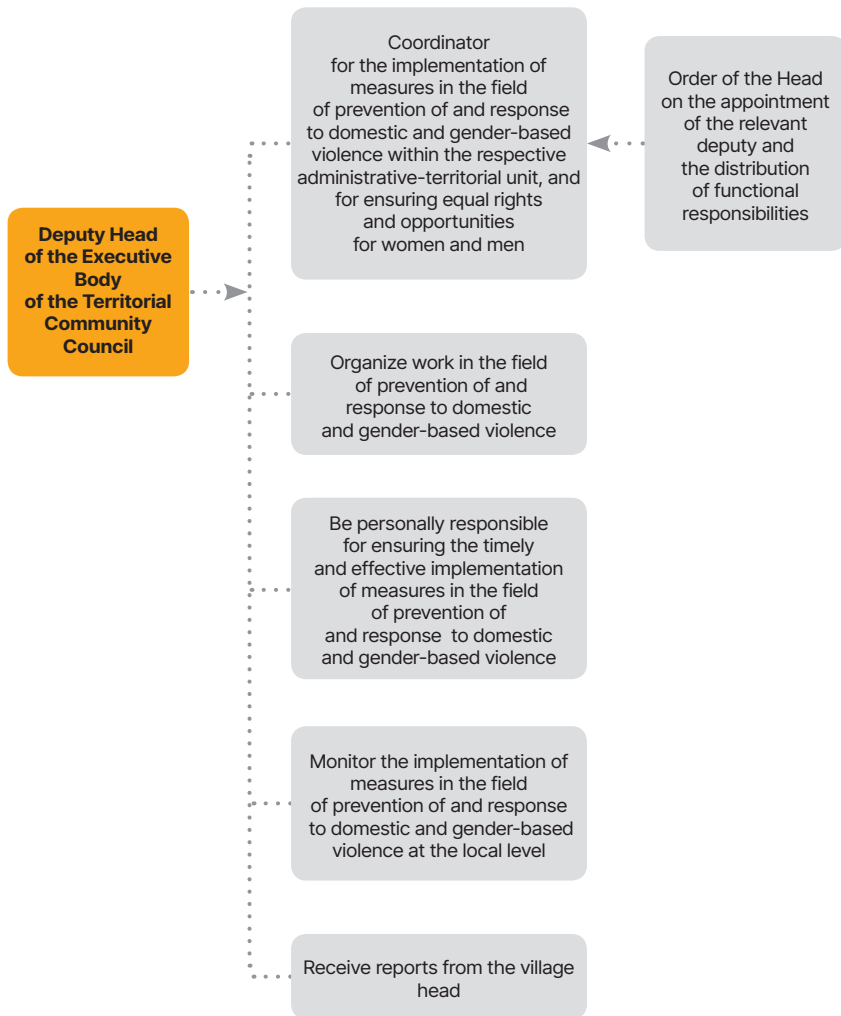
Appendix E.

Algorithm for the Response of the Mayor/Head of the Executive Body of a Territorial Community to Cases of Domestic Violence



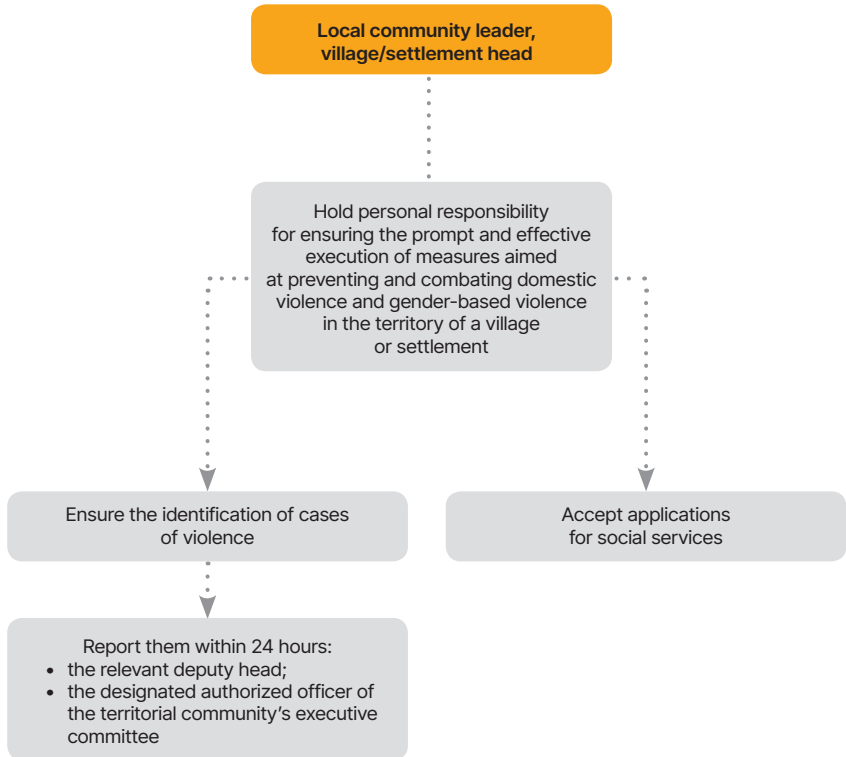
Appendix F.

Response Algorithm of the Deputy Head of the Executive Body of the Territorial Community Council for Cases of Gender-Based Violence



Appendix G.

Response Algorithm of the Village Head for Gender-Based Violence



Appendix H.
Response Algorithm for Cases
of Gender-Based Violence
(example of the Kolomyia Local Community)

1. Institutional Framework and Coordination

In the Kolomyia City Local Community, clear interagency cooperation is ensured in the prevention and response to domestic and gender-based violence.

To coordinate the actions of various services and implement state policy in this area, the city mayor established:

Interagency Council on Family and Gender Equality, Demographic Development, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Counteraction to Human Trafficking.

Council Composition:

- Representatives of the structural divisions of the city council
- Healthcare institutions
- Educational institutions
- National Police

Council Functions:

- Coordination of interagency response algorithms
- Monitoring cases of domestic violence
- Risk assessment
- Planning joint preventive measures
- Developing response mechanisms for complex cases.

Response Algorithm for Cases
of Domestic Violence

The community has established a clear step-by-step mechanism that enables victims to receive assistance as quickly as possible and in full.

Calling the Police

In case of danger or an act of violence:

- Call **102**, or
- Submit a statement in person at a police station.

Further actions by the police:

- Arrival at the scene,
- Issuance of an emergency restraining order (if necessary),
- Informing the relevant services,
- Entering the information into the Unified Register of Domestic Violence Cases.

2. Receiving Medical Assistance

In cases of physical or sexual violence:

- The victim should seek medical attention at a hospital or clinic,
- Medical staff document bodily injuries,
- Information is forwarded to the police in accordance with the law.

Medical institutions are often the first point where hidden violence is identified.

3. Protection of Children's Rights

If children are victims or witnesses:

- It is necessary to contact the Children's Services Department of the Kolomyia City Council.

Functions of the service:

- Assessment of risk to the child,
- Removal of children from the family in cases of real danger,
- Support for families in difficult life circumstances,
- Involvement of psychologists and other specialists.

4. Legal Assistance for Victims

Victims may receive:

- Legal consultation,
- Free secondary legal aid,
- Court case representation.

These services are provided by
the Kolomyia Local Center for Free Secondary Legal Aid
(Kolomyia, A. Mickiewicz Str., 8).

Practical Guide for Local Communities

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RESEARCH AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:

**Experience of Local Communities
of Ivano-Frankivsk Region**

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