



Combating gender based violence Project AZERBAIJAN

Combating Gender Based Violence Project, UNFPA Azerbaijan

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Conference on Combating Violence against Women held in Baku

On November 27, 2008 the Combating Gender Based Violence Project in Azerbaijan (GBV Project), UNFPA's Country Office, UNHCR and the State Committee on Family, Women and Children's Affairs (SCFWCA) hosted a Conference on "Combating Violence Against Women".

The conference brought the issue of combating violence against women in Azerbaijan to the forefront of public discussion and was covered by all major TV Channels and newspapers.

Conference speakers, included the Chair of State Committee

on Family, Women and Children's Affairs, professor Hijran Huseynova; UNFPA's Country Director for Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia and Turkey, Dr. Peer Sieben; UNHCR's Program Department Head, Mr. Ayaz Khan; the Head of Parliamentary Commission on Social Policy, MP Mr/ Hadi Rajabli; the member of Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights, MP Ms. Ganira Pashayeva; the Head of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Faiq Gurbanov.

In her speech professor Huseynova, described government's efforts aimed at combating violence against women and

emphasized the importance of strengthening national legislation on domestic violence. Ms. Huseynova issued a strong message calling the Parliament to adopt the Law on Domestic Violence. Her message was supported by MPs and government officials attending the conference.

Dr. Peer Sieben, emphasized the importance of UNFPA's collaboration with the Government of Azerbaijan on targeting population with customized campaigns and projects on gender equality and women's rights.

The conference speakers presented a wide spectrum of opinions on measures and policies necessary for combating violence against women in the country.

GBV Project in Azerbaijan and the XXI Century Without Violence against Women Project (Heydar Aliyev Foundation/UNFPA/SCFWCA) presented to the audience new PSAs addressing the issue of domestic violence.

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“Lets break the silence”, GBV Survey Team

From September to December 2008, for the first time in Azerbaijan the **Combating Gender Based Violence Project (GBV Project)** and the **State Committee on Family, Women and Children's Affairs (SCFWCA)** conducted a **country-wide Survey on Domestic Violence and Violence against women**.

The Survey examined the prevalence, roots and consequences of violence against women and specifically domestic violence in Azerbaijan. Local NGO the International Center for Social Research (ICSR) implemented the fieldwork.

Specially trained female interviewers collected data from 3000 women, (between 15 -59 years) all across the country. The Survey questionnaire (in

Azerbaijani and Russian) consisted of 200 questions and examined women's experience and attitudes towards physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence.

ICSR's Director, Dr Rajab Sattarov noted: "Strong support from the Cabinet of Ministers, SCFWCA and local authorities in all regions that we visited was crucial for successful fieldwork implementation".

Parvana Suhandani described her experience as the survey interviewer : "I was

surprised to discover that compared to the respondents from the rural areas the urban residents were more reluctant to discuss the issue of domestic violence. Silence is the main obstacle in fighting GBV in our country. Women feel that they should not discuss these issues outside the family circle. We need to help women to break this silence".

GBV Project is planning to present the key findings of the Survey at the end of January, 2009 and launch the National Survey Report in March 2009.



GBV Project reaches out to academic community

In order to attract the attention of local academic community to the issue of GBV and give impetus to further research of gender based violence in Azerbaijan UNFPA's Combating Gender Based Violence Project and Caucasus Research Resource Center (the program of Eurasia Foundation) jointly organised a series of events in November-December of 2008.

On November 21, 2008, at a round Table on "Grassroots responses to GBV: policy

implications" local NGO's working in the field of gender equality and women's rights shared with academic community members their experience of assisting GBV victims.

In his presentation on November 27, 2008 Dr. M Bagirzade (ICSR) described GBV Project's experience of measuring violence against women through quantitative research.

On December 4, 2008, Dr. Farideh Hayat

the author of a book "Azerbaijani Women in Transition" presented a lecture on "Gender and GBV in Azerbaijan: a Qualitative Approach to Research". Dr. Hayat introduced the audience to advantages and challenges of using qualitative research methods in studying gender based violence and shared her own experience of conducting research in Azerbaijan.

For more information please go to <http://crrc.az/index.php/en/56>

GBV Project releases 2 new PSA on Domestic Violence

The GBV Project in Azerbaijan developed two new PSAs promoting a single message of **Stopping the Violence Against Women (VAW)**. **Ulviyya Konul, renowned Azerbaijani film director** lead the production.

Featuring the daily interactions of fathers and sons first PSA emphasizes the importance of men's involvement and intergenerational education in stopping the violence against women.

The second PSA demonstrates how reluctance to cross boundaries of private

life results in impunity of the perpetrators and strengthens the isolation of the victims of domestic violence.

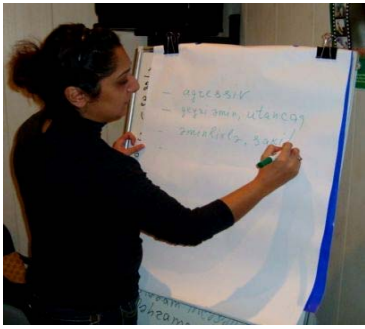
XXI Century without Violence against Women Project (UNFPA/SCFWCA/Heydar Aliyev Foundation) also recently issued two PSAs addressing the violence against women and domestic violence. In one of the productions renowned male



public figures (Olympics champion, famous writer, celebrated musician, the member of Parliament) call to stop violence against women.

Starting with mid November 2008 all four PSAs are aired on three leading national TV Channels. Watch all PSAs on www.azwomenviolence.org

Why Victim Support Groups?



GBV Project in Azerbaijan supported the local NGO in developing a new approach to assisting gender based violence victims in Azerbaijan.

“For more than eight years now WCC has

provided service to GBV victims. - says M. Azizova, director of the NGO Women’s Crisis Center, -As other organizations working with women subjected to GBV, we faced two main challenges.

First, women feel isolated and often find it difficult to admit their problems to legal or medical experts and women’s rights activists. Second, upon admitting the problem the victims often develop strong emotional and psychological dependence on the assistance providers. Sometimes that reinforces the client’s feeling of helplessness instead of strengthening her self-esteem.

The method of Support Groups trans-

forms the victims of violence from passive recipients of counselling to active supporters that render assistance to other people with similar experience. Moreover in the course of group sessions women learn to create support networks.

For WCC this is an opportunity to enhance our capacity in providing service for GBV Victims. We are excited that UNFPA’s GBV Project in Azerbaijan supported this initiative.”

Based on this valuable experience in March 2009 the GBV Project and WCC will issue a “Manual on organising Victim Support Groups” .

Contact WCC on (+99 412) 494 -3376

GBV Project releases a Documentary on Domestic Violence and Trafficking

In autumn of 2008 UNFPA’s Country Office in Azerbaijan, UNFPA’s GBV Project in Azerbaijan, the State Committee on Family, Women and Children’s Affairs and UNHCR’s Country Office in Azerbaijan collaborated to produce an educational documentary film on domestic violence and human trafficking in Azerbaijan.

The documentary, currently in the last stage of production, presents the story of

an ordinary woman, a single mother who is subjected to physical, psychological and economic violence in her own family. As a consequence of these hardships she becomes an easy prey for people involved in human trafficking.

Throughout the story the audience will be given important information on the means of legal and institutional protection for the victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. The audience will learn about

the practical measures that any individual can and should take to protect herself from domestic violence and human trafficking.

The GBV Project will be using the documentary in the Target Group Education meetings dedicated to raise the awareness of selected population groups about the problem of gender based violence. The documentary will be released in December 2008.

“16 Days of Activism against GBV” in Azerbaijan: regional campaign

As a part of the 16 Days of Activism on Violence Against Women campaign the GBV Project in Azerbaijan, the State Committee on Family, Women and Children’s Affairs and the XXI Century without Violence Against Women Project (Heydar Aliyev Foundation/UNFPA/SCFWCA) conducted the town-hall meetings on combating the violence against women all throughout the country.

A team of gender experts and women’s rights activists traveled from Sabirabad in

the South of Azerbaijan to Tovuz in the North, from small villages of Absheron to busy areas of downtown Baku conducting dynamic Question and Answer sessions that addressed the problem of domestic violence and violence against women.

Meetings brought together diverse groups that included community members, women’s rights activists, media representatives and local authorities. Gender team members distributed printed materials on GBV and demonstrated PSAs on Domes-

tic Violence. In their assessment of the campaign gender experts stressed that the fear to cross the family boundaries presents the main challenge in fighting GBV.

“People are reluctant to discuss domestic violence openly but they are keen on receiving more information” -

S. Abdulvahobova, gender expert

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Combating Gender Based Violence (SC) Project in Azerbaijan is a 3-year initiative aimed to create an enabling environment for reducing gender based violence in the society in order to support protection of human rights, gender equality and women's participation. The Project is funded by UNFPA and the Government of Norway and is implemented by

UNFPA Azerbaijan.

“Women on the Frontline” in Azerbaijani

UNFPA's GBV Project brings “Women on the Frontline”, a world renowned documentary series on GBV, to Azerbaijan.

Along with efforts to increase awareness and knowledge of the population about GBV in Azerbaijan the GBV Project introduces the general public to the international experience of combating GBV.

Domestic violence, trafficking in women and other forms of GBV are grave social diseases that affect societies across territorial, cultural and religious borders. Women on the Frontline - new documentary series released by

UNFPA, UNIFEM and Dev TV in 2008 will be translated into Azerbaijani, dubbed and aired on Azerbaijan's popular TV Channels. Introduced by Annie Lennox and shot by all-women crews in Austria, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal and Turkey, these films tell the stories of women who have survived abuses and now are willing to raise their voices against GBV.

GBV Project's PCU plans to prepare the series for the release in Azerbaijan in December 2008.

