

# **Evaluation of the Project: Integrated Response to Gender Based Violence Against Women in Serbia – Report**

Anamaria Golemac Powell, Dženita Hrelja Hasečić, Tomislav Novović, Olivera Vuković

27. 09. 2015

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors wish to acknowledge with their sincere thanks numerous staff members from the UN collaborating agencies as well as the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Social and Veteran Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Center for Social Work of Pancevo, the Center for Social Work of Novi Sad, the Primary School “Knjeginja Milica” - Novi Beograd, Šabac Grammar school and the Youth Center of Krusevac, then Astra, the Autonomous Women’s Center, Fund B92, the Alternative Girls’ Center, Center E8 and TV Forum Prijepolje for providing time, resources and materials to permit the development and implementation of this evaluation. Special thanks to the Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality of AP Vojvodina for their assistance in organizing activities through the whole of Vojvodina. We are particularly grateful to the UNJP management who, despite a heavy load of other pressing commitments, were so responsive to our requests on short notice. We would also like to acknowledge the many other stakeholders and client/beneficiaries who helped shape the design and implementation of this evaluation despite their busy schedules. It is the team's hope that this evaluation and recommendations presented in this report will positively contribute and help in designing further similar activities and initiatives and that it will support strengthening of the on-going efforts of the UN office in Serbia.

## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1: Introduction</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Section 1.1: Purpose and objectives of the project evaluation.....	8
Section 1.2: Scope of the evaluation.....	8
Section 1.4: Methods for data collection and analysis.....	10
Section 1.5: Limitations and risks.....	11
Section 1.6: Process overview .....	12
<b>Chapter 2: Evaluation findings</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Programmatic level – Outcome 1: .....	13
Programmatic level – Outcome 2: .....	22
<b>Chapter 3: Conclusions</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Recommendations</b> .....	<b>34</b>
On the programmatic level – Outcome 1: .....	34
On the programmatic level – Outcome 2: .....	35
On the National level: .....	35
On the Provincial level: .....	36
On the local level: .....	36
On the management/project level: .....	37

### List of acronyms and abbreviations

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>Description</b>
AP Vojvodina	Autonomous Province of Vojvodina
AWC	Autonomous Women's Center
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSW	Center for Social Work
DV	Domestic Violence
EVaW	Ending Violence against Women
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GEMs	Gender Equality Mechanisms
JP	Joint Program
MoESTD	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
MoLESP	Ministry of Labor, Employment, Social and Veterans Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MPTF	Multi Partner Trust Fund
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PSEEGE	Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SwV	School without Violence
VaW	Violence against Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNTF	UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
Wwp	work with perpetrators

## Executive summary

**Context:** This report presents the results of a Final Evaluation of the “Integrated Response to Violence against Women in Serbia” joint UNCT Project with a total of USD 1,199,648, out of which USD 999,648.00 was the contribution of the UN Trust Fund to End VaW and the three UN implementing agencies contributed with USD 200,000. The purpose is to provide information about the results of the joint UNCT project implementation in order (a) to inform the continuation or up scaling of the initiative and (b) to support, based on recommendations and lessons learnt extracted, enhancement of wider national response to VAW in Serbia. This is a mandatory final project evaluation required by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

**Objectives and scope:** The evaluation closely adheres to the UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN. This final evaluation covered the entire project duration period, with a focus on the main target beneficiaries, and implementing partners. The evaluation also covered results achieved at national and provincial levels as well in the selected municipalities. Five municipalities were selected by the evaluators to carry out the data collection in the field (see Annex 3 of the Inception Report for selection criteria). The evaluation assessed relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project and considered what works and why, highlighting intended and unintended results. This evaluation aims to provide strategic lessons to guide decision-makers and to inform stakeholders.

**Methodology:** A four-person team conducted the evaluation in two phases: inception home based and the data collection/evaluation in Serbia. The evaluation was based on non-random samples of respondents with qualitative data collection methods. All interviews followed informed consent procedures as required by the UN ethics guidelines for evaluators. The collection of evaluation data was implemented using five key activities: 1) Desk review of documents and financial and other pertinent programme data, 2) Site visits to targeted areas, 3) Semi-structured group and individual interviews with 10 stakeholders (including national counterparts, implementing partners and development partners), 4) 9 Clients/beneficiaries and 5) 4 individual and group follow-up interviews with former trainees in UNJP supported training events. The evaluation employs a simple logic model that organizes UNJP’s principal activities into a plausible sequence within each of respective Outputs and Outcomes. The analysis is based on a synthesis and triangulation of information obtained from the above-mentioned five activities.

Limitations of the evaluation include its inherently non-representative, qualitative nature due to the small, non-random sample sizes. The adverse timing, due to school and state institutions holidays, resulted in somewhat lower response rates for certain interview categories. A bias toward positive responses was noted in a large number of the interviews. All interviews were conducted in private without UNJP/UN agency staff present.

**Overview of achieved results:** It is safe to say that the project made significant progress in achieving intended results. Indeed almost all activities undertaken within the two identified outcomes yield positive results, achieved its targets and in some cases had positive unintended results where the local/regional partners continued to build upon the methods/initiatives established within the duration of this project.

Evaluation has confirmed that the Joint Project in Serbia has contributed significantly to building of integrated response to VaW in Serbia by improving capacities of key stakeholders to implement measures to address VaW, building strong partnerships between the UN, responsible governmental authorities and civil society. The reasons for the observed success of this project's activities, as well as for the extraordinary level of achievements of the results under two identified outcomes lies in the fact that the JP built their interventions directly on experiences of individual UN agencies' programmes in area of VaW and based on clearly identified needs and capacities at the local and regional levels. Furthermore, the precondition for success of the project implementation was solidified by ensuring strong partnerships between the implementing partners and the three participating UN agencies (UNDP, UN WOMEN and UNICEF), succeeding to include CSOs, on equal footing, into that partnership.

Evaluation has also considered UNJP to be partially successful in managing to address the issues raised in 2013 by the UN CEDAW Committee Concluding Observations for Serbia (CEDAW/C/SRB/CO/2-3), namely the lack of resources for the implementation of national action plans for multisectoral cooperation and the lack of permanent institutional mechanisms with capacities to prevent and protect women and girls/children from violence. As previously stated in one of the project's documents, this limited success in ensuring full support of the state level commitment is more of a testimony to the fact that the state has yet to tackle this issue with the necessary political commitment, visibility and resources, rather than project's weakness.

The project successfully implemented wide variety of activities under two pillars, protection and prevention in 50 municipalities in AP Vojvodina and Central Serbia<sup>1</sup> as planned in the original project proposal. Only one activity, under Outcome 2, Output 2.2. (2.2.6. Technical agreements with telephone provider on establishment of a unique nation-wide SOS hotline for reporting cases of violence) was not fully implemented.

Probably the biggest success of the UNJP can be seen in the way the project has continuously worked to address the challenges reflected in changing public discourse from stressing the importance of traditional family values at expenses of women survivors. Indeed, through activities under Outputs 1.1. and 1.3., project directly addressed social norms generally condoning gender inequality and VaW and with activities under remaining outputs worked to create enabling social and institutional environment that would contribute to reducing VaW in Serbia<sup>2</sup>. Also the activities under the remaining outputs, particularly those with the media and key stakeholders and service providers have succeeded in promoting an enabling social and institutional environment to reduce gender-based violence.

---

<sup>1</sup> In different municipalities, various components have been supported: multi-sectoral cooperation (30 municipalities), work with perpetrators' program (in 8 municipalities), work with schools (nationally and targeting 50 schools from 24 municipalities), social mobilization of youth groups (10 municipalities) etc.

<sup>2</sup> The project "Integrated Response to VaW in Serbia" is part of the larger effort of the UNCT in Serbia and the Government of Serbia, together with other development partners to address violence against women in Serbia. The project supported the implementation of the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence in the Family and in Intimate Partner Relationship, while at the same time supporting the Government of Serbia efforts to identify strengths and weaknesses of the institutional response to VaW and to define operational steps in aligning the service provision with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention.

The project has succeeded in expanding the existing mechanisms to prevent and end VAW by engendering the school curricula and addressing GBV, creating a new resource of peer educators, school mentors and teachers and developing research and monitoring instruments to be used by schools in targeted locations. Furthermore, the evaluation assessed that the existing mechanisms have been further expanded by introducing the accredited work with perpetrators program in the target locations as well as improved the work of CSW professionals by providing mentorship and professional development trainings utilising the existing expertise in CSOs. As for results related to improving the level of information of general public on GBV and available protection mechanisms, the evaluation team assessed that awareness has been raised to certain extent, in particular among the youth. The evaluation team, however, found that it was too early to assess a full impact of the engagement in active prevention of GBV by general public. Also, the evaluation team did assess that the project managed to raise visibility of GBV issues and protection mechanisms availability. In general, the project developed baselines that informed and could further inform the public discourse on GBV.

As to the expansion and consolidation of accessibility, provision and range of services in response to VAW, results have been achieved in establishing a solid basis for improved multisectoral response to VAW at local level. Whilst there had been successful local level practices in providing multisectoral response to VAW before the project, it was identified to be varied in its scope and standards implemented. The project succeeded in supporting the building of a more of a unified and standardised approach and methodology, based on the better understanding of the GBV concept and the requirements it placed on institutions and stakeholders in responding to it. The set of special protocols had been developed for line ministries for interested professionals who confirmed the protocols provided them with clear instructions in their work with VAW survivors and perpetrators. Case conferences were also found to be a good model for solving the most complex cases and their continuation was clearly demanded.

The evaluation team was able to conclude that the project had strengthened the cooperation between the CSOs who had been main providers of services in response to VAW and the health, social, education, police and justice institutions in addressing VAW. This was particularly visible in the way in which the project managed to utilise and enhance the existing expertise, support the accreditation and institutionalisation of the services and good practices at the local level. At the level of the AP Vojvodina, the evaluation team identified clear success in all areas of activity of the project. Moreover, full commitment and engagement of the main partner of the project in Vojvodina, PSEEGE, has yielded in positive unplanned results, in particular an important commitment of funds has been made for another secretariat, Health, to address VAW in the Province. This was also found to be a good practice of gender responsive budgeting for GBV. The findings at the level of AP Vojvodina show the level of results that can be achieved by a project intervention like this where it clearly builds on a long-term experience and expertise, backed by the political commitment.

Two focus areas, prevention and protection, identified in the UNJP project proposal have been adequately addressed during the implementation of this project. This is visible in particular in the way that the project strategic intervention was designed taking into consideration results of the previous good practices established between the individual UN agencies and relevant partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries. There was a clearly identified common goal of the UN agencies and their partners.

The project has also successfully implemented enriched information sharing, communication and advocacy strategies for a variety of stakeholders and target groups. The numerous public awareness raising activities, including media campaigns, mobilization of youth and peer educator activities supported by the project have resulted in a higher visibility of the SGBV issue and better informed general public about GBV and available protection mechanisms.

## **CHAPTER 1: Introduction**

### **Section 1.1: Purpose and objectives of the project evaluation**

This is the final evaluation of UNJP project “Integrated Response to Violence against Women in Serbia” that commenced in 2013. Project evaluation is commissioned in order (a) to inform the continuation or up scaling of the initiative and (b) to support, based on recommendations and lessons learnt extracted, enhancement of a wider national response to VaW in Serbia. This was a mandatory final project evaluation required by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. The main users of the evaluation include national stakeholders involved in the implementation of the project and other actors relevant for the advancement of the violence against women (VaW) agenda (relevant Ministries, Gender national infrastructure, local institutions and local self-governments, civil society, academia), UN agencies involved in the project and UNCT Serbia, and international partners supporting efforts to combat VaW in the country. It is expected that the evaluation results will also be of interest to the UN Country Teams in other countries undertaking joint efforts in this programmatic area.

The objective was to:

- a. Evaluate the entire project in terms of effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and impact, with a strong focus on assessing the results at the outcome and project goals level;
- b. Generate key lessons and identify promising practices for learning.

This evaluation consequently aimed to provide guidance for future UNJP programs in Serbia on VaWG and a continued role for UN in the context of support for the Government in its commitments toward attaining the goals of the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW recommendations for Serbia.

### **Section 1.2: Scope of the evaluation**

This evaluation covered the entire project duration period, with a focus on the main target beneficiaries, and implementing partners. The evaluation aimed to cover results achieved on both the national and provincial levels as well as on the level of the selected municipalities. Five municipalities were selected by the evaluators based on the criteria defined, the desk review of information provided on the local projects and on reported effectiveness of their implementation.

Project primary beneficiaries included women and girls, boys and men in general, women survivors of violence, men perpetrators of violence, school children and youth (girls and boys). Secondary beneficiaries include representatives from the institutions at three levels:

- National – Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education (Violence prevention unit, school advisors/coordinators for violence prevention and mentors), Institute for Social Protection, Criminal and Police Academy, Judicial Academy etc.
- Provincial – Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality of AP Vojvodina, and



- Local service providers form different systems (centers for social work, police, public prosecutor office, healthcare institutions, schools, women’s NGOs).

The final evaluation assessed relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project. It covered two broad pillars (prevention and protection) and three UN agencies’ work. This end-program evaluation also makes recommendation for the design of future UNJP operations on VaWG in Serbia.

### Section 1.3: Evaluation components, criteria and evaluation questions

This evaluation was designed to review the UNJP Outcomes, Outputs and activities by the two broad areas of activities: prevention and protection.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, three sub-criteria were reviewed to assess the level and quality of promotion of UN values from a human development perspective: i) level and quality of efforts in supporting policy dialogue on human development issues, ii) contribution to national ownership and iii) the level and quality of partnership.

Finally, the team assessed the impact of this project to the extent possible taking into account that project has just recently been closed. The team was able to assess project contribution to outcome level change only in domains where the evidence was available. However, a fully-fledged impact assessment, which requires a relevant baseline, and a comprehensive and systematic data gathering, would be beyond the timeframe and resources of this evaluation.

**Evaluation Questions and Evaluation Matrix:** As outlined in the evaluation TOR, a set of questions was recommended for each evaluation criteria. These evaluation questions were central to the conduct of the evaluation. With few exceptions, the original questions from the evaluation TOR were retained. Based on careful consideration by the evaluation team, redundant or duplicate questions were eliminated in order to streamline the evaluation process while retaining the intent of the TOR. As required by the evaluation UNJP guidelines, a detailed evaluation matrix was prepared which explains which data sources and methods were used to address each of these questions (see Annex 2 of the Inception report).

The evaluation reviewed, analysed and provided conclusions and recommendations on the following:

- The status of the corresponding UNDAF outcome, UNDP, UNICEF Country Programs and UN Women Projects in Serbia /specific outcomes and estimate the degree of project's contribution to it.
- The degree to which the project activities listed in the Project Document and RRF have been successfully implemented and the desired goal, outcomes and outputs achieved.
- Relevance of the Project in view of the national policy framework<sup>4</sup> for preventing and combating violence against women in Serbia.
- Factors that contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness.
- Efficiency (e.g. the approach to project management, including the role of stakeholders and coordination with other development projects in the same area).

---

<sup>3</sup> SeConS, Final Evaluation Inception Report (pg. 20), July 2015. Table 1 lists a clearly defined set of evaluation criteria.

<sup>4</sup> National Strategy for preventing and combating VaW in family and in intimate partner relationships and Set of protocols for cooperation and conduct of professionals in cases of VaW.

- External factors affecting the project and the extent to which the project was able to adapt and/or mitigate the effects of such factors.
- The approach to project management, including the role of stakeholders and coordination with other development projects in the same area.
- The extent to which the target beneficiaries have benefited from the project activities.
- The level of beneficiaries' and partners satisfaction with program implementation and results.
- Lessons learned and generated recommendations on possible modalities of work and potential for continuation or up scaling of this or future similar initiatives.

## Section 1.4: Methods for data collection and analysis

**Overview:** The collection of evaluation data was carried out through a variety of techniques ranging from direct observation to informal and semi-structured interviews and focus/reference groups, where feasible. The analysis was built on triangulating information obtained from various stakeholders' views as well as with secondary data and documentation reviewed by the team.

The evaluation was based on the five key activities:

- a) Desk review of the documents and financial and other pertinent project data.
- b) Site visits to the UNJP targeted areas.
- c) Discussions with the UNJP coordinator and the implementing UN agencies project managers;
- d) Interviews with stakeholders (including national counterparts, implementing partners and development partners)
- e) Interviews with the UNJP program Clients/beneficiaries for all focus areas (including training follow-up interviews with trainees in the UNJP supported training events).

**Stakeholder Involvement:** Meetings were held with 20 key stakeholders, including relevant State level ministers, civil society organizations, donor community as well as the implementing agencies. The objective of these meetings was to ensure an opportunity for the stakeholders to participate in the design, data collection, analysis and development of the recommendations.

**Site-visit Schedule:** Visits were made to the implementation agencies at the State, Provincial and local levels, selecting sites chosen on the basis of consultation with the stakeholders with attention to achieving a balanced review of the project activity and client/beneficiaries among the areas. 190 meetings/focus groups/survey interviews<sup>5</sup> were arranged also with representatives of beneficiary client groups, including women's advocates and youth representatives (see the attached site visits map and stakeholder table in Annex 3).

**Desk Review and synthesis by the two Outcomes per Outcome/output Matrixes:** The Desk review addressed two UNJP Outcomes with an assessment of the respective outputs and activities within each Outcome. The desk review was based on the evaluation criteria identified both in the TOR and the consequent Inception report. The desk review was implemented using a criteria matrix that covers all of the activities for each output (see Annex 3 of the Inception Report).

---

<sup>5</sup> This is a total number consisting of 109 survey interviews with boys and girls, 58 online questionnaires and 23 interviews and/or focus discussion groups.

**Training Follow-up Assessment:** A sampling frame was developed from all training events sponsored by the UNJP. A systematic random sample was taken to choose training participants in order to get as good balance as possible on trainings conducted within the focus areas and different UN agency inputs. A semi-structured questionnaire was developed to assess the extent to which trainees a) are still working in their respective focus area, b) are using the skills they learned, c) estimate number of clients they serve per year.

**Client/Beneficiary Interviews:** Using a qualitative semi-structured interview questionnaire, interviews were conducted with client/beneficiaries of activities conducted within each of the focus/activity areas. These interviews helped in assessing client satisfaction with the services they have received from the implementing agencies working within each of the focus/activity areas and helped to collect information on promising and innovative practices.

**Ethical Considerations:** The evaluation has followed the principles of the UN Evaluation Group's norms and standards (in particular with regard to independence, objectiveness, impartiality and inclusiveness) and was guided by the UN ethics guidelines for evaluators in accordance with the UNEG's Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. As noted above, the stakeholders were consulted during the inception phase concerning the design of the evaluation. All interviews were conducted in private and respondents were informed of the goals and objectives of the evaluation. All questionnaires were designed with a consistent set of precautions for informed consent that ensured respondents understood that participation was voluntary and confidential. Respondents were informed that none of their responses would be linked to their names. Arrangements have been made to ensure proper storage of completed data collection instruments until they are destroyed.

**Analysis:** Findings were validated based on the consistency of results across all data sources, with an attention to all of the evaluation criteria specified by the TOR. The analysis entailed triangulating information obtained from the desk review, the interviews (stakeholder, training follow-up and client/beneficiary) and other documentation. To the extent feasible, all interview data were entered on the same day they were collected into database using simplified coding with a provision for entering salient qualitative comments and key qualitative findings. Each focus area was reviewed for progress within their respective component activities; each activity was assessed based on a synthesis of the observed results in the desk review criteria matrix, interview data and analysis of related financial information.

## **Section 1.5: Limitations and risks**

**Limitations and possible biases of the approach:** There were several important limitations in the proposed methods. First, due to limited time and resources it was not feasible to collect representative samples. While there was an opportunity to use a systematic randomization process for some of training follow-up interviews, all the other samples were purposive and not truly representative of the target populations of stakeholders and client/beneficiaries. As noted above, the targeted number of interviews was not achieved, especially for the training follow-up interviews and client/beneficiary interviews. The evaluation was inherently qualitative in nature due to the small, non-random sample sizes. Due to the short time frame permitted to plan the evaluation and the adverse timing due to July-August school and institutional holidays, the response rates for certain interview categories were lower than desired. Short

time frame reduced both the number of interviews and length of time available for interviews. There are possible biases in the selection of respondents due to the requirement to select locations on a non-random basis. To avoid the possibility of bias from the presence of the UNJP staff, the evaluation team conducted all the interviews in private without any UN agency staff present.

**Justification for the evaluation methods used:** Despite its limitations, the methods used for this evaluation were appropriate, economical and efficient given the time and resource constraints. A rich set of data was obtained from all interviews and surveys. The evaluation obtained a diverse profile of interviewed people from key senior government officials to highly relevant local civil servants; the interviews were informative of the program as well as of the policy context and practical implementation issues.

## Section 1.6: Process overview

As outlined in the final TOR, the evaluation process was divided in four phases:

**Phase 1:** Desk review – The evaluation team collaborated with the UNJP team to identify and collect a wide range of relevant documents and data. These materials were the basis for a systematic desk review.

Stakeholder mapping – The evaluation team developed a sampling framework in cooperation with the UNJP team that covered all of the pertinent implementing agencies, and stakeholders associated with outcomes, outputs and relevant activities.

**Phase 2:** Data collection phase - As shown in the attached evaluation-planning schedule in Annex 3 an intensive 2-week evaluation mission was implemented from 30 August – 18 September 2015.

**Phase 3:** Drafting the Evaluation Report: The information collected was analysed and the evaluation team prepared the draft evaluation report within two weeks after the departure of the international evaluator from the country.

The following chapter will address the results of the data analysis obtained for each outcome and output and will review specific intended and unintended achievements. The final chapter will address the conclusions and lessons learned at the level of outcomes and at the policy level as well as provide the recommendations on possible improvements in the future planning of UN Joint projects in Serbia or other similar VaWG initiatives.

## Chapter 2: Evaluation findings

The following chapter provides evaluation findings and underlying evidence: first as overall findings (on project performance) and then as findings based on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and knowledge generation at the programmatic level, grouped per outcome of the project intervention. The project outcomes, which are the focus of the evaluation, are meant to contribute to the project overall goal to create a social and institutional environment that will contribute to reducing violence against women in Serbia. The evaluation team read the theory of change of the project as aiming

to improve indirectly the quality of life of women and girls by focusing on mechanisms to prevent and end VaW and improving protection from VaW.

### Programmatic level – Outcome 1:

**Outcome 1:** Expand and improve quality of existing mechanisms to prevent and end VaW

Output 1.1. New school GBV programs developed and implemented in schools

Output 1.2. Work with perpetrators of violence program introduced as a standardized social protection service within the MoLSP

Output 1.3. General public better informed about GBV, available protection mechanisms and engaged actively in preventing it

**Outcome 1:** With regard to introducing a new GBV program in schools, the evaluation team was able to confirm that the program has been developed and introduced in all 50 selected target schools. The original “School without Violence” program package has been engendered and a new SGBV module defined and finalized based on the feedback received from schools and SwV mentors<sup>6</sup>. Targets have also been reached in terms of creating the pool of 60 trained mentors and school advisors, to ensure further implementation and follow up of the school GBV programs, strengthening internal capacities of all school staff (teachers in particular) to address and adequately respond to needs of addressing the issues of GBV within the education system.

Of great significance is also the fact that within the duration of this project the GBV related indicators have been integrated within the package of instruments that measure safety/violence in school environment. The GBV related indicators were introduced as part of the new package of research instruments that closely assess gender roles and stereotypes in schools, which would further enable schools to develop appropriate interventions and measure progress<sup>7</sup>.

Support to coordination, planning and implementation of the violence prevention activities within MoESTD contributed to achieving Outcome 1 as it strengthened the institutional mechanism to prevent and respond to GBV violence by strengthening the capacity of the Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) of the MoESTD.

With regard to a set of activities pertaining to the work with perpetrators of violence, new programs of this type were introduced as a standardized social protection service within the MoLESVP, accredited in the Social Protection Institute and implemented in 8 CSW as a direct result of this project. The evaluation found that 6 out of 8 selected centers for social work implemented the individual and group therapy treatments for perpetrators. Still, in one CSW the professionals interviewed did not confirm that the service was introduced as a regular one as it was not funded out of the same budget as the other services and not performed during the regular work hours. The interviewed CSW professionals confirmed the success of the intervention plan as it provided well designed and delivered training activities, which were immediately followed by the implementation. The capacity building of professionals for work with

<sup>6</sup> UNCT NR 2015, pg. 10, Gender component of the SwV program reached 50 schools and based on the schools’ experience the manual was drafted and widely distributed at the end of the JP.

<sup>7</sup> The research instruments have been made available to all schools, as part of the MoESTD package for measuring safety of the school environment, and implemented in the 50 selected ones.

perpetrators in the selected CSWs exceeded the originally planned number of the CSWs.<sup>8</sup> This was explained as both the result of the high demand for knowledge on this subject as well as by the need to systematically address strengthening of capacities of CSWs in particular relating to provision of new services and extended mechanisms which include this group as well. As the project monitoring showed, these new services, the expansion of the mechanism to include work with perpetrators and the actual impact of the activity implemented have resulted in a decreased number of (repeated) cases of violence committed by the perpetrators that participated in these programs.<sup>9</sup> Yet, some interviewed stakeholders, notably among CSOs and judiciary, were not entirely convinced that such program could really be effective.

The activities such as setting up of the web-site portal, which provide easier access to information on all available protection mechanisms and contacts for all institutions and organizations providing services to survivors of violence at the local level; the realization of public events/round tables within the framework of international campaign “16 days of activism against VaW”; preparation of video documentaries and continued media and press analysis were all deemed to have contributed to keeping the issue of VaW in the public arena and at the forefront of policy discourse in particular at the local level. Several interviewed stakeholders and beneficiaries were of an opinion that general public was overall better informed about GBV following the project interventions. The evaluators concluded that also the strategy to conduct a countrywide training for journalists and editors on gender-sensitive reporting in cases of VaW contributed to that effect.<sup>10</sup>

The project intervention on capacity building and Training of Trainers (ToT) activities for peer educators/youth community groups was deemed to be successful.<sup>11</sup> The peer educators interviewed expressed their satisfaction with the training received and confirmed to be much more knowledgeable on the subject of gender roles, identities and stereotypes, gender based violence and its prevention and to have gained sufficient confidence and competence to continue training their peers and leading other youth community activities on the subject<sup>12</sup>, but also to engage in actively preventing GBV situations in their environment. The evaluation was able to confirm success of the communication and social mobilization

---

<sup>8</sup> It is reported that the project organized following trainings: Kragujevac professionals trained a group of 12 professionals from the following CSWs: 3 from Kragujevac, 2 from Arandjelovac, 4 from Čačak, 3 from Kraljevo. Niš professionals trained a group of 15 professionals from the following CSWs: 4 from Leskovac, 4, 3 from Pirot, 3 from Kruševac, 3 from CSW Niš and 2 PhD students from the Faculty of Philosophy (Department for Psychology); Belgrade professionals trained a group of 12 professionals from the following CSWs: 6 from Belgrade, 2 from Vršac, 2 from Niš, 2 from Subotica

<sup>9</sup> In the documentation provided by the project, it was reported that during the period September 2013 - December 2014 total of 228 perpetrators were individually interviewed in 495 individual sessions. Out of the total number of 75 perpetrators were admitted to the group therapy treatment, 85% of them did not commit violence during the treatment.

<sup>10</sup> It was reported that the project provided training/ capacity development support for over 60 journalists and editors; the key priority is to increase capacities to were trained on gender sensitive reporting on VaW throughout the country (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Vrnjacka Banja, Sjenica, Kragujevac, Alibunar, Prijepolje). Qualitative analysis of public discourse on VaW (baseline study and final evaluation) "Baseline qualitative analysis of media reports on VaW in the period 2010-2012" conducted and demonstrated slight positive changes in the analyzed period.

<sup>11</sup> Curricula and agenda for peer workshops were developed based on AWC's/Centre E8 programs on peer education.

<sup>12</sup> These activities were highly effective with about 36 young peer trainers (18 boys and 18 girls) trained, who in turn coordinated and mentored 427 peer activists in 10 locations (174 girls and 253 boys).

campaigns reaching out to young people through social media and face-to-face local community activities (round tables, street actions, panels and workshops, forum theaters and movie sessions etc.).<sup>13</sup>

**Relevance:** The interviews and discussions with beneficiaries of the project activities under this outcome confirmed that the project has addressed very relevant rights and needs of women and girls to live a life free of violence and have implemented relevant programming strategies in doing so. The project responded to the common but often misunderstood and tolerated problem of gender-based violence among children and youth and to the needs to sensitize and educate girls and boys in gender equality as recommended in the Research on GBV in Schools conducted in 2013 (pgs. 101-105) and 2015. The school GBV program was relevant as its modules reflect both prevention (understanding gender and gender dimension of violence) as well as response to GBV for boys and girls in the school and out of school settings. Relevance of this work was emphasized also by the fact that it addressed specific and local level issues, providing technical support to and utilization of existing expertise within the NGOs sector (women's rights and working with boys) and by directly contributing to the strengthening of the Violence Prevention Unit of the MoESTD as an institutional response to violence against pupils.

Developing the work with perpetrators program, ensuring its accreditation, preparing and publishing training materials and introducing new services for this group such as therapy treatments was highly relevant as it addressed an existing gap in the services provided, namely providing programs for perpetrators of violence with the aim to prevent repetition of violent behavior under the strategic goal of establishing tertiary prevention of VaW.<sup>14</sup> These activities were logical continuation and expansion of the results from the pilot phase (2011) when the first round of trainings was held based on the "Alternative to Violence" program.

The outreach work with youth and the activities to include new and old media in addressing VaW issues were highly relevant as they were part of the prevention strategy reaching out to boys and girls at the community and national levels, as well as the part of efforts to increase awareness among the wider public. Both advocacy and peer education work were assessed by the interviewed stakeholders and partners as very relevant as they raised their knowledge about issues such as gender/sex difference and gender roles and identities, with a focus on the stereotypical masculine identities as well as risky sexual behaviors, the subjects that were not otherwise addressed through school curricula.

**Effectiveness:** The evaluation team concluded that the project had achieved the set targets under the outputs of Outcome 1. The comprehensive strategy intervention to engender school program against violence, train and motivate teachers and students to organize various activities and strengthen monitoring and mentoring capacities of school staff to engage in prevention of and provide response to GBV was

---

<sup>13</sup> Each of the 10 communities organized at least 3 local awareness raising, IEC and/or mobilization activities lead by girls and boys for their specific peers. In addition, activities intensified for the International Youth Day (12th of August) and „16 days of activism against violence against women”, including public debates, distribution of promo material, dance performances, forum theatre performances, school lectures, sports tournaments, theatre play “Macho Men”, “Be a Man” club public actions with/for boys etc. These activities resulted in the production, printing and distribution of the materials on gender and GBV issues. The targeted number of 15,000 young people has been reached through social media campaign.

<sup>14</sup> National Strategy combating VaW pg. 43.

evaluated to be effective.<sup>15</sup> However, the preparation and printing of the manual was moved to the very end of the project in order to include feedback from the program implementation so its promotion and distribution to other schools still remains to be done. The stakeholders interviewed described the success of the project's intervention aimed at schools as mostly owing to the fact that it built on the previous excellent results of the work in the area of prevention and intervention to violence in schools. However, both documentary evidence and interviews with beneficiaries in selected schools clearly confirmed that this was primarily the local level success as the scope of engagement and achievements of the GBV program activities in and out of schools varied greatly among the local communities.

Same finding applies with regard to effectiveness of the work with perpetrators of violence program at the local level. The trainings for the CSW professionals working with perpetrators were assessed by the trainees as well designed and of a sufficient duration to be effective and comprehensive. It was also highly considered that the project ensured not only training delivery but also the actual work with perpetrators through group therapies. However, this service has not been nationally introduced as a standardized social protection service and interviewed professionals did not perceive the therapeutic work with perpetrators as a regular service of the CSW stating that it was not funded out of the same budget as other services and it was performed outside the working hours of the CSW. The therapy treatments were confirmed to be only offered in 6 out of 8 targeted CSW.

Public awareness, media campaigns, mobilization of youth and peer educator activities were effective and results of those were visible at the time of the evaluation as confirmed by the interviews and public survey. The web info-center on available protection mechanisms is functional and widely known, media campaigns within the "16 days of activism against VaW" produced a variety of different materials, which were presented in numerous public events that took place during the project implementation with over a large participation in these public events<sup>16</sup>. The large-scale public events organized by the UNJP managed to gather all relevant stakeholders.<sup>17</sup> The evaluation team assessed that the strategic intervention focusing on the local media outlets rather than the national ones were successful as effects of the intervention could be clearly observed at the community level. The interviews with project partners involved in journalist training and monitoring of the media reporting on VaW before and after the trainings confirmed that, overall, progress towards gender sensitive media reporting could be observed, particularly in terms of changed vocabulary, a shift of focus from sensationalism to more sensitive and victim-centered reporting as well as elimination of misogynist attitudes from the media in a number of communities. However, the

---

<sup>15</sup> As a result of the project intervention, out of 217 primary and 9 secondary schools in Serbia covered by the "School without Violence" program, 50 schools (35 primary and 15 secondary) had integrated the newly developed GBV program package into their regular work programs after 18 regional branches (30%) of the MoESTD had been trained to advise and monitor prevention of violence in schools with the focus on GBV. The Institute accredited this program for Development and Education and 60 mentors and head teachers (640 women and 216 men) were trained to implement preventive activities/workshops with pupils on gender and GBV in schools.

<sup>16</sup> In 2013, a video clip was prepared and presented at a public event (National conference on "Due diligence in combating VaW" held on 25th November 2013). In 2014, a video documentary produced by Karl Bostic and 10 public events were organized on V-day and 35 local level events during 16 days of activism campaign were organized in the same year (the video available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-yMBsN-eKg> ).

<sup>17</sup> Two national conferences were supported by the project: "Multisectoral cooperation as a model for institutional response to VaW" (April 2013) and "Due diligence in combating VaW (November 2013). They were able to gather all stakeholders: relevant ministries, health community center directors, directors of centers for social work, women's organizations, gathering together around 300 persons.



evaluation team was made aware that in the context of a large scale media privatization process just starting in Serbia there were concerns whether these effects would hold in the long term.

The curricula and agenda for peer out-of-school workshops on gender issues and GBV were developed, based on accredited programs on peer education developed by NGOs. A good pool of young peer trainers coordinated and mentored peer activists in 10 locations aimed at outreach activities at the local community level (round tables, street actions, panels and workshops, forum theaters and movie sessions etc.). Although this work was not without challenges, as not all NGOs fully supported the idea to target boys and men specifically, the project managed to implement the activities as planned. These activities resulted in the production, printing and distribution of the materials on gender and GBV issues that were widely distributed and appreciated. The social media campaigns were evaluated to be successful in reaching a wide population of young people. The online survey that the evaluation team conducted showed that a majority of respondents was able to name several public campaigns on elimination of VaW and a large number of messages that had effect on them. They deemed the campaigns and messages useful in providing information both to women seeking protection and general public.<sup>18</sup>

**Efficiency:** The evaluation finding on efficiency criterion for both outcomes relates to aspects of timeliness of the project interventions and the overall project management and steering structure success to ensure efficient project implementation. Namely, with regard to Outcome 1, the project documentation shows (annual work plans and project reports) and the evaluation team was made aware that no major delays and carry-over of the activities happened that could be caused by the project management and steering structure. The project team did request and was granted a non-cost extension to complete the activities but the evaluators were informed that it was mostly due to the fact that the 2014 floods in Serbia affected some of the communities where training and other project activities had been planned. The interviewed project partners involved in training police and media did mention that one out of 10 planned communities was not covered by the training due to the floods and that in general the project management showed well appreciated flexibility in the project activities implementation which eventually did not affect the work plan execution. Based on the semi-structured interviews, almost all of the respondents felt that the inputs and outputs were timely.

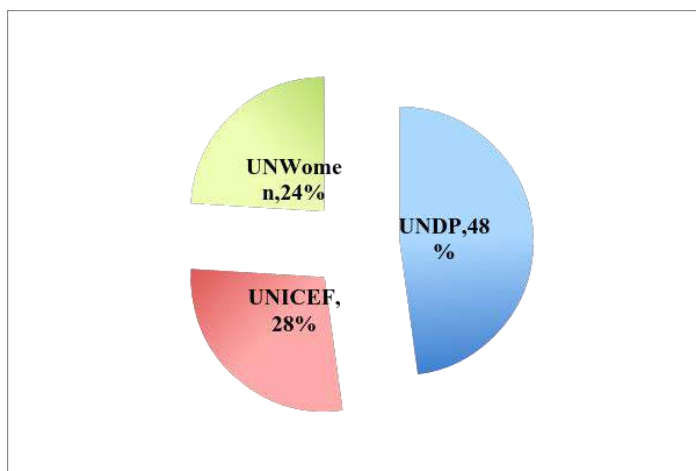
Respondents were asked to comment on the qualifications and capacity of the UNJP staff and how well they have partnered with implementing agencies. There was positive feedback on both of these issues. The UNJP staff was viewed as possessing high level of knowledge on GBV issues. Most of the partners have strong praise for the UNJP staff managing process until the mid 2015. UNJP's senior leadership, in particular the UNDP project manager who was also coordinating the project, was praised for being extremely proactive coordinators.

Based on stakeholder interviews, review of project deliverables, and analysis of the available UNJP financial data<sup>19</sup>, the team assessed that UNJP portfolio has been managed with fairly good degree of efficiency. Total approved budget for the project was USD 1,199,648, with the following distribution among the agencies UNDP USD 573,819, UNICEF USD 337,545 and UN Women USD 288,285.

---

<sup>18</sup> The details on the results of the online survey were provided further in the evaluation report.

<sup>19</sup> Due to limited access of evaluators to the individual agencies' financial reporting data, it was not possible to accurately estimate the disaggregated costs for individual project activities.



**Figure 1 Distribution of budget as per agency-managed activities**

The analysis of the budget structure indicated balanced distribution between management/ operational and activity related costs. All of the activities were implemented without major delays and re-allocation of funds. Still, the approved budget did not provide sufficient information on budget categories- for example, budget categories “technical assistance” or “monitoring and evaluation”. More specifically, the budget category VII Monitoring and evaluation totaled to USD 68,000, which was quite a high allocation and fairly surprising considering that the monitoring system for the project was not as systematic as a project of this size would require. However, this budget category included a number of baseline and endline researches that were carried out during the implementation of the project, including the final evaluation<sup>20</sup>. Still, the project did not establish a monitoring system as an internal management function to provide the management of the project and main stakeholders with early indications of progress, or any concerns or issues related to achievement of results. Although the implementation of the project was fairly efficient, lack of a monitoring system could be observed through weak evidences for some of the project results (e.g. in some cases partner reports were used as evidences, without further validations).

Overall budget was distributed between two outcomes: for Outcome 1, USD 322,000 was allocated and for Outcome 2, USD 513,555. For this modest amount of funding, given the scope and the size of the project, the UNJP has made a substantial progress towards combating VaW.

<sup>20</sup> For example: Baseline on available service provision and alignment with the Istanbul Convention requirements; Research on crucial aspects/requirements of the Istanbul convention – multisectoral cooperation; Baseline and endline study for monitoring the media; Baseline and endline study on attitudes towards gender roles and SGBV in schools, etc.

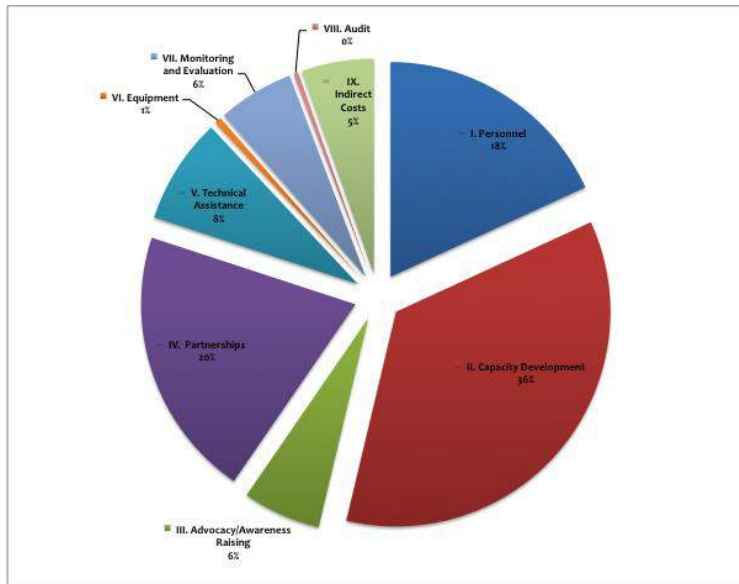


Figure 2 Allocation of funds per category of activities

**Sustainability:** The outputs achieved under Outcome 1 have significantly contributed to the development of capacities of the project partners and beneficiaries to ensure durability of their effects. Namely, the project's support to MoESTD to develop and ensure implementation of the procedure an Overview of the Procedure to be followed by Educational Institutions in Case of Violence against Girls and Family Violence which has contributed to the increase of the schools staff capacity to recognize, detect and prevent violence against girls in schools. Thanks to the project support, the Violence Prevention Unit which started as a project unit supported by UNICEF in 2012 became an official specialized group of the Ministry and was integrated into the official systematization of the MoESTD. It is now also capacitated to deal with GBV in schools and the training modules on GBV were accredited in the education system and recommended for the teachers' professional development<sup>21</sup>. The training and creation of the pool of experts in the education sector was part of a strategy for capacity building of the education system for violence prevention.

Selected trainers, teachers, peer educators and education advisors supported by the project have remained an institutional capacity for protection of children from violence in their communities, both in monitoring and supporting schools in violence prevention, thus enabling sustainability of the institutional response to violence in the education sector and strengthening violence prevention in schools. Manuals and training materials produced for teachers, pupils and schools have also remained a significant resource for further implementation of the GBV prevention program in schools. Representatives of all 18 MoESTD administrative regional units were trained to provide support in mainstreaming gender and GBV in the violence prevention and intervention programs in the education system<sup>22</sup> and sustainability of the developed package of instruments for the research in schools and their further implementation is ensured by the fact that the instruments developed for measuring safety/violence in schools as part of the MoESTD package are made available to all schools.

<sup>21</sup> UNCT NR 2015, pg. 12.

<sup>22</sup> UNCT RA Report, pg. 13.

As for the project's support to the introduction of therapy work with perpetrators, its success in obtaining accreditation makes a good basis for its future sustainability. Training materials which are now released and available on this subject area as well as the results achieved through the established capacities and regular application of the specialized knowledge provided through the project should ensure sustainability and replication of similar initiatives. Already some city authorities (namely those in Kragujevac and Novi Sad) pledged budget funds for the implementation of the work with perpetrators in 2015, which is certainly the first step towards the sustainability of the program and confirmation of definite demands to deal with this issue in a more systematic way. However, as already reported, some professionals still do not perform this program as a regular service of their CSW, so more efforts are needed to fully integrate this service into the regular work of the CSWs. The efforts to further ensure sustainability of these initiatives is also visible in the UNDP's continued support to the establishment of the National network for work with perpetrators programs (OPNA)<sup>23</sup>.

Sustainability of outputs achieved within this framework can be ensured since most of the local organizations/institutions have prioritized peer education activities in their strategies and are already applying for funds and support elsewhere. The NGOs are also planning to keep all the peer activists in the virtual network providing them with online support and guidance when needed and using peer trainers as a resource for future activities in the local communities. The evaluation team learned from the project implementers that after the UNJP implementation ended, 5 new projects in the area of VaW were being prepared as a direct effect of the UNJP.

**Impact:** By and large, the outputs under Outcome 1 have visibly influenced school staff, professionals dealing with women in the target centers, sensitized them on issues of gender equality and GBV so that now they can recognize peer and other forms of GBV. They are now also familiarized with steps they need to take in situations of GBV utilizing already existing mechanisms in their schools and at the community levels (whom to report violence to and when to report it). The staff and schools recognize their own role in the prevention of gender-based violence through recognition of personal attitudes and sometimes unintentional but persisting promotion of gender stereotypes and perception of gender roles within the education system. As the result of project activities they increased awareness of the need to approach boys and girls differently.<sup>24</sup> The evaluation team was able to confirm that trainers/mentors became key community resources for protection of children from violence and were active in municipal intersectoral teams for protection of children from violence and their response to schools when needed was assessed as adequate and timely.<sup>25</sup>

The change in attitudes of boys and girls towards gender issues has occurred as a result of the implemented GBV program activities in schools activities and evidence for this is found in the research on Changes in Attitudes towards Gender Roles and SGBV conducted in 2013 and repeated in 2015. Significant changes in the attitudes towards gender roles were found between the two studies manifested

---

<sup>23</sup> „OPNA – National network for work with perpetrators was established in March. It consists of the towns in which the work with perpetrators program was implemented (8 to 9 towns) where all together work on the introduction of the treatment in a systemic way.“ from the interview with the CWS professionals.

<sup>24</sup> UNCT RA, pg. 7

<sup>25</sup> Among them 6 are education advisors/violence prevention coordinators who are responsible for supporting and monitoring schools in violence prevention in their respective regions. They support schools in creating action plans as well as in school response procedures in the cases of violence. UNCT Report, pg. 14

as a higher degree of disagreement with the gender biased and stereotyped statements questioned<sup>26</sup>. These findings are also similar to the results of the survey that the evaluation team conducted among boys and girls in the primary and secondary schools, of whom about 85% had attended activities carried out as the part of the GBV program. Namely, the pupils questioned by the evaluators show a clear tendency against traditional gender roles and against GBV on a larger number of attitudes surveyed as compared to the attitudes found by the research carried out during the project: 109 pupils (59% girls), of whom 79 of the primary and 30 of the secondary school age answered the questions through the F2F survey which was carried out in two selected schools. 77% responded that the trainings received were clear and useful, 60% reported an increased interest in the topic after the training, 60% of pupils believe that they can now better recognize GBV, while 58% report less tolerance towards violence, including GBV in the past two years. Furthermore, 71% of pupils believe there has been a change in the response by teachers to GBV in the last two years, with 91% of pupils believing that teachers respond well in a case of GBV.

The engagement of VPU of the MoESTD in the GBV component was crucial for positioning gender equality and GBV higher on the MoESTD violence prevention agenda. It also helped strengthening/better understanding of gender and GBV components within the existing legislation in the education sector, professional development opportunities and monitoring. VPU also supports horizontal exchange between schools through the SVW school network.

Feedback on trainings provided under this output was overwhelmingly positive, in terms of their organization, delivery, relevance and effects. The evaluation team was able to conclude that they contributed to creating an important community resource for protection of children from violence (mentors, head teachers, peer educators) who are also often active in municipal intersectoral GBV teams. They also contributed to the change in attitudes of boys and girls, but also male and female teachers, towards gender issues and to their taking an active role in the protection of girls against violence (“I wouldn’t have done that before the training”) in and out of school setting. The state specialists interviewed stated the importance of their monitoring role and also mentioned plans (although nothing specific) to expand the programs to include more schools/communities. Having worked closely with the project staff, academics and NGO specialists involved in the research, training design and delivery activities, the senior specialists of the MoESTD confirmed that they significantly increased their knowledge on GBV and gender issues which they deemed valuable as an indirect effect of the project intervention. However, not all schools/communities responded equally well to the GBV program. Some responses by the school management/teachers showed a lack of interest in engaging further in GBV programs.

The professionals who were trained and who implemented group therapy work with perpetrators in CSWs were able to report positive effects of the program not only on perpetrators included, but also on women and children. Direct impact of activities related to work with perpetrators is observed as the expansion and improved quality of the services offered by the CSWs and as a decreased number of (repeated) cases of violence committed by the perpetrators that participated in the program. Results obtained in the interviews with the sample of 154 perpetrators that have undergone the WWP program in the selected CSWs showed that more than 80% of male perpetrators stopped using violence in family and in intimate partner relationships.

---

<sup>26</sup> Change in Attitudes Research, pg. 55; UNCT RA Report, 2015, pg. 13

As for the public awareness raising activities, some immediate impact could be observed through an increase in a number of visits to the key web-site/web portals and, overall, in increased knowledge, acknowledgment and understanding of GBV issues among general public in Serbia as indicated in the online survey conducted by the evaluation team. The online survey of general public in the locations where media events were held has shown that more than a half of respondents were informed about the website on the VaW protection services, safe houses and the SOS-lines. They listed fourteen different events that they had attended either at a public place or in the street, as well as 29 different messages that had the strongest impression on them. Most of them assessed the public awareness raising events on VaW and protective services as useful for women survivors of VaW to seek help and for informing general public on the issue of VaW. Namely, some correlation between the project activities on supporting public events and campaigns, together with the developing capacities for more gender responsive reporting, an increased presence of the topic in the media and the decrease in registered femicide cases has been highlighted in the project and partner documentation and confirmed by the interviewed project partners and clients. This finding was further strengthened by the fact that there was a limited involvement of other big state, local or donor funded projects in the same period that could have been impacting these results.

## **Programmatic level – Outcome 2:**

**Outcome 2:** Accessibility, provision and range of services in response to VaW expanded and consolidated

Output 2.1. Improved quality of general services and multisectoral institutional response to VaW at local level

Output 2.2. Improved system of specialist services in response to VaW

Output 2.3. Policy framework addressing VaW in AP Vojvodina revised

### **Overall finding related to Outcome 2:**

The project has managed to achieve most of the expected results in expanding and consolidating access to, provision and range of services in response to VaW, and principally those results expected at the local level. The evaluation team assessed that the quality of general support services and multi-institutional coordination was indeed enhanced at the local level primarily by delivering much needed and practice-focused trainings for judges, prosecutors and police officers<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, consultative support to legal professionals and CSWs have yielded visible results in raising the level and quality of discourse on GBV and achieving consensus on the use of protocols and procedures for addressing cases of DV and inter-institutional cooperation at the local level<sup>28</sup>.

The evaluation found that for an effective and sustainable response to VaW at the local level, the support by the national level institutions must be continuous. For example, due to an insufficient support and lack of commitment at the national level, the systematic tracking of cases of violence against women using the developed software based system will not be fully operationalized and sustained. The same was confirmed for the establishment of a unique nation-wide SOS hotline for reporting cases of violence. According to the project reports, the establishment of the SOS hotline has been delayed as it depended on

---

<sup>27</sup> Training was delivered in cooperation with the Judicial and Police Academy and the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior.

<sup>28</sup> 11 municipalities use local level protocols on procedures for addressing cases of DV and inter-institutional cooperation.

an extensive preparation work which was not completed before the end of the project implementation. Finally, the evaluation established that the level of information and awareness of individual roles and functions among key actors involved in providing response to VaW was significantly raised resulting in conclusions for actions consistent with the areas of project activities.

The largest progress and the best success in terms of impact and further multiplication of the results of this project is seen at the level of AP Vojvodina. The evaluation team assessed that at this level, the project had found an environment that was supportive, enabling and committed to addressing GBV in a systematic, coordinated and overall comprehensive way. The fact is that the institutions and CSOs in AP Vojvodina had been working on mainstreaming gender for a while now and therefore their work had been seen as naturally progressing. Moreover, the project management made use of the achievements and lessons learned of the previous VaW projects in Vojvodina in designing the UNJP. Therefore, it was confirmed by the evaluation that this project's added value was undeniable in that it had recognized the local capacities and the practices and attempted to support each partner building on the block that had already existed locally rather than building other parallel systems.

**Relevance:** The relevance of the activities on improving quality of general services and multisectoral institutional response to VaW at local level was confirmed both with respect to the key national policy documents<sup>29</sup> and to the needs they addressed. The interviewed professionals admitted the need for strengthening their capacities and knowledge on domestic violence, international documents and standards as well as working principles in the area of GBV. In addition, they expressed the need for the technical support on designing strategies, protocols and a necessary infrastructure that would enable them to work systematically on overcoming prevailing gender related prejudices, misbeliefs and stereotypes.

Furthermore, the activities within the above output were particularly and highly relevant as they addressed the need for the establishment of the concept of specialist services in response to VaW. The relevance of such an approach was further confirmed by the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in October 2013 and the subsequent entry of the Convention into force as of August 2014, which opened the possibility for the institutional recognition of specialist services and which envisages improvement and development of further services of emergency and long-term protection for victims of violence by establishing crisis centres, forming mobile teams or introducing a unique SOS number for women and children victims of violence.<sup>30</sup>

Relevance of the training and capacity building activities was confirmed as well, as it was indeed in line with the recommendations found in the strategic document and clearly based on the approaches and principles identified in international documents, keeping in accordance with scientific and professional knowledge and experience and aiming to be practical in a sense that they focused on training in concrete procedures (General protocol and special protocols). The evaluators confirmed the relevance of all activities under Output 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3, as there was a clear and identified need to improve the system of protection of women from violence by strengthening the response of general and specialist services: specifically, the need to strengthen the specialist service of telephone SOS helpline for women survivors

---

<sup>29</sup> The National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women in Family and in Intimate Partner Relationship- Strategic Area One and Strategic Area Three.

<sup>30</sup> The National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women in Family and in Intimate Partner Relationship (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 027/2011 of April 20th, 2011), pg. 40

of violence and the need to institute an integrated response to violence against women based on functional multisectoral cooperation. The interviewed professionals providing services in the state institutions and CSOs all agreed on the finding that the project intervention supporting strengthening of their capacities to provide better quality and timely services to women survivors of violence were highly relevant and needed. In case of AP Vojvodina, the relevance has proved even more observable in terms of the direct support to the drafting of the New Strategy on preventing and eliminating VaW.

**Effectiveness:** The project was found to be effective in building local level service providers' capacities and strengthening multisectoral work for protection of women from violence. Very positive effects were observed with regard to delivery of the training activities under this outcome.<sup>31</sup> Professionals' knowledge on VaW and institutional response, case conferences and coordinated community response in 11 municipalities<sup>32</sup> was assessed to be improved (as measured by pre- and post-assessments of knowledge) based mostly on the project activities and work done during 63 case conferences held in 11 municipalities within the reporting period. The innovative approach, problem-solving orientation, proven expertise and relevant experience of trainers, as well as the availability of tools and manuals to be used in their regular work, were highly appreciated by the professionals providing services that the evaluators interviewed.

The evaluation confirmed that the project was also effective in developing the software-based system. The system was adjusted to all requested demands such as universal records, electronic exchange of data among institutions, timely and linked actions of relevant institutions, rules of confidentiality. Although practical implementation has not yet begun, considering that the presentations of this software were organized in February and March 2015, the basic principles of this model have been included in the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating DV and Partner Relationship Violence against Women.

The project was also effective in the implementation of specialized trainings (using best international experiences, professionals from the UK) reaching out to 30 representatives from women's NGOs in Serbia and in work with the grassroots women's NGOs SOS helpline service providers, who constitute the network for establishing the national "SOS helpline" in providing them with small grants.<sup>33</sup> The grant recipients interviewed confirmed the necessity for continuation of this type of support as they consider the SOS helpline a vital VaW victim's protection service. With the aim to strengthen the development of the SOS Vojvodina helpline network, both in terms of quality of service and cooperation of network members, the project also organized strategic planning events.<sup>34</sup> The evaluation was able to confirm that the strategic planning and working meetings achieved several outputs: a Network's annual work plan for 2015 was developed, training curricula for the Network's volunteers was drafted, the cost of Helplines services was determined and the plan to build the Network's web site was drafted.

---

<sup>31</sup> During the project timeframe and in partnership with the Judicial Academy, a total 340 of judges and prosecutors were trained in an advanced programs for judges and prosecutors on VaW in family and in intimate partner relationships. Similarly, 205 police officers (35 female) were trained, in partnership with the Criminal and Police Academy, in advanced program for police officers on sexual and gender based violence. The activities with CSWs and legal professionals were also effective and as a specialized training for intersectoral cooperation was delivered in 30 towns (10 in Central Serbia and 20 in AP Vojvodina) and more than 1000 service providers benefited from the trainings provided by specialist women's NGO Autonomous Women's Centre.

<sup>32</sup> Irig, Stara Pazova, Kovin, Pancevo, Kanjiza, Backa Topola, Mali Idjos, Zrenjanin, Novi Sad, Nova Crnja and Sremska Mitrovica.

<sup>33</sup> The total amount distributed through the grants was US\$ 72.928.

<sup>34</sup> June 2013 in Novi Sad and May 2014 in Palic.



Finally, the evaluation team was able to confirm success of the comprehensive project strategic intervention at the AP Vojvodina level. The activities related to supporting the development of the New Strategy for preventing and Eliminating VaW in AP Vojvodina were successful and resulted in the adoption of the Strategy by the Provincial Government in December 2014.<sup>35</sup> As provided under the new strategy, the PSEEGE launched an Open call to Employers for New Employment of Women Survivors of DV, as the first such government program in the country, which has up to date resulted in the employment of 12 women survivors of domestic violence.

**Efficiency:** The evaluation finding on efficiency criterion for this outcome relates to aspects of timeliness of the project interventions and the overall project management and steering structure success to ensure efficient project implementation. As it was the case with regards to Outcome 1, information and project's documentation (annual work plans and project reports) showed only one major delay in setting up the SOS line at the national level, however the evaluation team was not made aware of any other major delays and carry-overs of the activities that could be caused by the project management and steering structure.

**Sustainability:** Overall the sustainability of most of the activities under this output was assured through the planned inclusion of these in institutional frameworks of relevant partners. The strongest sustainability is seen at the level of AP Vojvodina through linkage of results to Gender Responsive Budgeting and Gender mainstreaming processes. The sustainability of those results that depend on national level policy making and allocation of resources for continuation of those relevant activities should be the focus of the continuous lobbying and influencing work of all future VaWG programming in Serbia.

Sustainability of the training programs for judges and prosecutors can be said to be ensured, as the basic and advanced specialized curriculum on violence against women became an integral part of the regular training program of the Judicial Academy of Serbia. Where the training was provided through the Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality, sustainability is expected to be achieved through follow up trainings. Sustainability is also ensured by increased knowledge of professionals about the concept of DV, the need for case conferences and for the systematic cooperation of responsible agencies in the communities throughout the Serbia.

With regard to the software-based system for keeping records and tracking the institutional response to GBV, the evaluation established that its sustainability could be ensured only if the implementation started from the national level. The fact that the basic principles of this model have been included in the National Strategy implies a strong possibility of its implementation. However, the evaluation found that sustainability could be jeopardized if no timely financing by the Government is ensured. Sustainability of the results of the work on supporting the SOS services was found to be ensured, as they became a part of the regular activities of the respective CSOs. SOS telephone services are operational within all of the participating CSOs as their regular service. This was confirmed by checking the available phone numbers for the selected organizations.<sup>36</sup> Lastly, the sustainability of the activities at the level of AP Vojvodina

---

<sup>35</sup> The working group consisting of women's NGOs from Vojvodina, professionals with experience in innovative models of multi-agency response (judges, prosecutors, police, CSW), health experts, representatives of provincial secretariats responsible for the field of youth, education, health care and social policy and gender equality finalised the work in April 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Association of Roma women ""Osvit"", Nis- 018/515318; Fenomena, Kraljevo- 036-335-706; 066-335-706; Center for support to women, Kikinda- 0800 101010; SOS women's center, Novi Sad- 021/422-740; The Roma

was ensured as the PSEEGE provided for a good strategic approach and secured finance within the framework of its new strategy to be implemented in the territory of Vojvodina in the period 2015-2020.

**Impact:** The achieved outputs under this outcome have certainly had impact on improved capacities of professionals to recognize and deliver the “integrated response” to survivors of VaW as providers of general and specialist services. The impact could be observed also in increased knowledge of professionals and policemen about the basic principles in dealing with DV cases, normative and institutional framework for integrated response to DV, application of general and specific protocols in cases of VaW in domestic and partner-relationship context and accompanying procedures. The establishment of a system for tracking institutional response to DV, universal records and electronic exchange of data that resulted from the activities in Output 2.1. provide for the best possible protection for survivors, help avoid secondary victimization of survivors and ensure the survivor is safe through the implementation of efficient and effective interventions.

As evidenced in the project documentation, the actual impact of this project support can be observed at the two levels: 1) survivors of violence receive adequate and rapid support: during the first year of implementation of the SOS support service and the partner NGOs (these 11 specialist women’s NGOs) responded to over 5,000 survivors’ calls and provided direct support services to over 2,000 women survivors of violence; in addition, through their activities in local communities, these organizations reached over 20,000 individuals<sup>37</sup> and 2) in the decrease in the number of gender based violence cases with injuries or deaths<sup>38</sup>.

The impact of the consultative process at the level of AP Vojvodina can be observed in the fact that the comprehensive approach to the problem of GBV is now clearly visible in the new strategy on VaW at the level of the Province. On the more practical level, the impact can be seen as the improved and coordinated work of competent institutions and organizations in preventing and solving cases of DV and VaW, and as a better response to DV and VaW at the level of the Province. The immediate impact of the policy papers on economic empowerment of women survivors of violence is seen as the translation of the policy recommendations into new programs that were adopted and that are now being funded and implemented by the authorities for this purpose in particular.

**Knowledge generation:** There are important lessons learned from the project implementation that should be noted: a) creating new products: the research on gender attitudes and SGBV carried out in schools, as the first research of that kind in Serbia; two policy documents developed by the PSEEGE in AP Vojvodina on minority and marginalized women and on economic empowerment of women survivors of violence which introduced new programs that only few countries have developed and implemented so far; the program for the out-of school settings prepared by the NGOs Autonomous Women Center and Center E8 that included working with boys and men; the new SGBV module developed engendering the Schools without Violence program package; the General Protocol for Action and Cooperation of Institutions,

---

Center for Women and Children – Daje- 011 3987898; 063 340 365; Roma Association Novi Bečej – SOS helpline in national minority languages- 023/774-959; 023/775-843; Victimology Society of Serbia- 011 630 30 22; 011 228 80 40; 065 548 64 21 and Out of Circle – Belgrade 011/3448-045.

<sup>37</sup> Among these 11 organizations there are three Roma women’s NGOs (Osvit – Dawn from Niš, Association of Roma Women Novi Bečej and Daje), which provided direct support to as many as 1,128 Roma women.

<sup>38</sup> It is expected that the impact could be observed at this level, as the victims would be able to receive timely and swift support (reference to the Project progress reports).

Bodies and Organisations in the Situations of Violence against Women within the Family and in Intimate Partner Relationship and a number of various media contents; b) building consensus: multi-stakeholder joint programs such as UNJP especially on the issues such as VaW can be demanding, complex and costly, however the UNJP succeeded in building and maintaining trust among the UN agencies and with the GoS and CSOs around the shared goal; c) facilitating coordination: progressing towards expected outcomes with such a large number of stakeholders and partners, ensuring a wide coverage of population, institutions and territory is challenging for any joint program. The UNJP ensured good coordination by partnering with all key stakeholders at selected targets of intervention; d) developing capacities: The UNJP was successful in balancing the need to “get the job done” and the need to invest in systems that, in the longer term, lead to sustainability of the system. Any succeeding effort in the area should also be careful in making policy and investment choices that will focus on the longer term ability of the relevant actors to continue towards the same goal; e) investing in monitoring and evaluation on VaW in the country: M&E is best used as a learning intervention and therefore it was a good strategic choice of the UNJP to invest in the country’s effort to establish an M&E system on VaW to ensure that gaps can be addressed and that data generated can be used for ensuring sustainability and replication on scale.

**Alignment:** The project activities were aligned with the goals stated in the Country Partnership Strategy (UNDAF 2011-2015), which has mainstreamed gender and addresses gender equality and the elimination of discrimination on the basis of sex through all strategic areas. Most specifically, the results of the activities contributed to its Outcome 1 (Strengthened Good Governance) which seek to ensure that, “All branches of government at local and national levels are accountable, transparent and gender responsive” (outcome 1.1) and Outcome 2 (Sustainable Development and Social Inclusion Enhanced) which promoted “Increased access to and provision of quality basic social services (health, education, social welfare and affordable housing) for all, especially vulnerable and marginalized populations” (outcome 2.1). Indeed the project results under the two outcomes were directly contributing to achievement of the UNDAF outcomes.

**Responsiveness:** The main positive factor regarding sustainability of UNJP support to addressing VaWG has been indeed the careful planning on the basis of already established partnerships and programs with CSOs and relevant institutions that took place before the implementation phase. The responsiveness of UNJP to local and regional needs has secured a high level of ownership although there are different opinions as to the extent to which the UNJP has been successful in development of capacities, in particular for GBV. Most of the key stakeholders felt that UNJP initiative employed existing capacities rather than developed additional new capacities and competencies. In order to strengthen and develop new capacities, many respondents pointed to the need of addressing the development of specific institutional capacities (as per respective institutional mandates) to ensure effective and full functioning of the established mechanisms.

By working at the state, provincial and local levels the UNJP managed to respond well to the constant changes in the national development context. In particular, the UNJP managed to sustain its work to varying degrees through the period of its implementation, despite disturbances in the political, social and economic environment following the elections and the flooding respectively. Stakeholders cited UNJP’s responsiveness in being flexible enough to accept suggestions and recommendations and in responding to the rapidly changing demands related to organizing time sensitive-meetings.

## Chapter 3: Conclusions

**General Context:** The most recent prevalence of violence survey carried out in Serbia, the Mapping of Domestic Violence against Women in Central Serbia, published in 2010 within the UNDP project “Combating Sexual and Gender Based Violence” indicated that more than half of the women in Serbia have at some point in their life experienced family violence (54.2 per cent), while 37.5% have in the last 12 months<sup>39</sup>. Majority of the perpetrators were partners or husbands (physical: 71.7 per cent, psychological: 58 per cent, economic: 50.6 per cent). In cases of most severe violence, 96% of perpetrators were men<sup>40</sup>.

According to the same survey, a very small percentage of women (only 10.0%) asked for assistance when faced with family violence. Instead of seeking support of institutions, women more often tried alternative strategies e.g. to temporarily leave the household, divorce or separate from the husband/partner or to ask for informal help of their family, relatives, friends and neighbours. However, these approaches did not lead to long-term solutions, as most women returned to their home and adapted to the life with the violence. In effect, these decisions lead to considerable suffering and many physical and psychological health problems. Similar trends were recorded in Vojvodina, where the Victimology Society of Serbia conducted a survey on domestic violence for PSEECE within the UNTF funded EVaW project (Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2009). Survey findings indicated that domestic violence is a widespread phenomenon in Vojvodina as well, where over half of interviewed women have experienced some form of domestic violence.<sup>41</sup>

In order to prevent, reduce and eliminate gender-based violence, Serbia has ratified important laws and policies. The country’s priorities in combating GBV were outlined in the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women in the Family and in Intimate Partner Relationships. However, adequate resources and better coordination of the national mechanism for promotion of gender equality needs to be ensured and an action plan for the implementation of the national strategy for prevention and combating violence against women remains to be adopted. Whilst the strategic documents, a legal and institutional framework to protect women and children’s rights have been improved, practitioners from this field suggested that the protocols for multisectoral cooperation in the cases of violence although adopted did not work in practice. Moreover, assessment from the previous work pointed that protocols were not adequately presented to the workers in the sectors of education, medicine, social protection, police and justice, which led to the limited quality of services that were provided.

The UNJP program aimed to address exactly these and other shortcomings which were observed in the work with the partners in the past, such as the increase of the number of women killed by their partners in the last decades (most due to lack of emergency protection orders which were not issued promptly) or

---

<sup>39</sup> 33% of women have experienced more than one form of violence in their lifetime, while 3.4% of women have experienced all four of the forms measured. According to the findings, 15.8% and 11.4% of women have experienced economic violence in their lifetime and in the last 12 months respectively. Although the data is not gender disaggregated for the genders of the perpetrator, in general findings indicate that majority of the violence is committed by men (physical: 89.9 per cent, psychological: 79 per cent, economic: 85.3 per cent).

<sup>40</sup> UNDP. Mapiranje porodičnog nasilja prema ženama u Centralnoj Srbiji. [Access: <http://www.undp.org.rs/index.cfm?event=public.publicationsDetails&revid=023D302e-C8DA-e1C7-C296D5B8F3De466D>]

<sup>41</sup> UNICEF, MICS 2014, 2010.

lack of national women's helpline in place, the insufficient number of shelters and a chronic lack of centres for victims of sexual violence. UNJP also addressed the need for improved mechanisms for coordinating the collection and sharing of data between all relevant actors in the system. The project addressed all of the above listed issues and more importantly, it raised awareness on and addressed problems regarding the mechanisms of cooperation and ownership of the mandate over VaW, evident on other levels of government. Activities took place at the local levels identifying service providers' challenges, both in terms of budgets and resources to program and implement social inclusion policies and measures. Equally important, the project addressed the need to sensitize and educate girls and boys in gender equality which was identified in the research on GBV in schools<sup>42</sup> and the specific need of girls to be empowered and protected from SGBV. Implementing the "whole school" approach and designing trainings to reflect both prevention and response to GBV, the project also addressed the personal knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of teachers and school staff with a view of increasing their understanding of gender and gender dimension of violence.

To ensure the national ownership and remedy a rather unclear and changing situation of the institutional gender equality mechanisms occurring during the implementation of the project, combined with working directly with local level institutional and non-institutional partners, UNJP aimed at establishing the main partnership in the field of combating violence against women at the state level with the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Social and Veterans Affairs. Whilst the project opened a new policy chapter for the state authorities that recognized the relevance of the issue through the adoption of the policy documents, the project only addressed budgetary allocation issue at the level of AP Vojvodina and others remain yet to be assigned. What the project addressed was also the wide public interest on the issue of GBV at the national, provincial and local levels, it introduced a new social service (work with perpetrators program) and built new capacities and skills of general service providers (social workers, police officers, judges and prosecutors, healthcare workers) which were crucial and needed to start addressing VaWG in a systematic and more comprehensive way.

**Strategic level:** The UNJP was a joint effort of three UN agencies, UNDP, UNICEF and UNWOMEN. The three agencies implemented the project activities based on their mandate and the previous good record with their relevant partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries. The project strategic intervention was designed with their participation and it took into consideration the previous achievements of the projects combating VaW implemented in Serbia between 2005-2012. The theoretical framework for the strategic project intervention was uniformly gender based and thus fully consistent with the approach of the women's rights organizations and human rights organizations active in providing services to women survivors of violence, mostly domestic and in intimate partnership violence. The fact that the state institutions relevant for providing prevention and protection to women and girls/children from violence endorsed the same approach ensured building of the necessary trust and partnership among the implementing agencies, state institutions and civil society organizations sharing the common overall project goal.

The UNJP was coordinated by a highly competent Project Coordinator both as an expert on GBV and project manager. She was frequently mentioned in the interviews as being very active, visible, competent and responsive and was given credit for the success of the project. Coordination of activities and

---

<sup>42</sup> Research on attitudes towards gender roles and SGBV in Schools conducted in 2013.

cooperation among the participating agencies on different components during the project implementation was outstanding, Namely, the Project Coordinator was an acting Project Manager (e.g. performing day to day management of the project including operational and financial parts; monitoring, reporting, etc), while at the same time providing high level expertise and technical assistance required during the implementation of the project.

The original strategic intervention of the project was fully implemented as it was carefully planned and programed, based on a good problem analysis and selection of priorities to be addressed, so there was no need for changing it. The project was highly efficient in disbursement of funds as nearly all funds were spent by the end of the project. This confirmed well planned and focused management of the project. The fact that during the implementation the project management granted the PSEEGE request for more funds than originally planned showed clear understanding of the issues and good responsiveness of the project management to well argued demands of a successful and trustworthy partner.

The UNJP has successfully engaged a variety of existing expertise on the subject both in government and non-governmental organizations, including the academia in the training, research and monitoring and evaluation activities. The trainings provided were accredited and were overwhelmingly assessed as well designed, professionally delivered, effective in transferring knowledge and addressing specific and relevant issues, innovative (using films, photographs, etc.), interactive and practice oriented. Manuals and training materials produced from and for those events were evaluated as a very good reference material frequently used in the regular work (CSW, schools, peer education, police, media). Certain changes of attitudes and behaviors have been reported and observed by the professionals who completed trainings.

The UNJP territorial coverage included Central Serbia and AP Vojvodina. Having in mind that Vojvodina was much more advanced on ending VaW agenda than other areas of Serbia at the time of the preparation of the project, its position within the project was inevitably different and its experience was used as lessons learned for the development of the project intervention.

All in all the strategic approach of the UNJP was found to be effective in achieving the planned outcomes. Although it was confirmed by the evaluation that the UNJP continued where the previous GBV projects in Serbia ended, it is clear that the short period of only two years could not be sufficient for a desired change at the level of lives of women and girls/children to be free of violence to be observed throughout the country. The evaluation found, though, that a majority of respondents were able to confirm that a visible progress in the womens' life situation in general could be observed.

**Programmatic level:** The UNJP project was very relevant to needs, evolving priorities and international commitments of Serbia, notably those under the CEDAW and Istanbul Convention. The project was built on the good work of the previous UN-supported projects against VaW in the period between 2005–2012. Violence against women and girls was and is undoubtedly a huge problem in Serbia – as is elsewhere in the world – which demanded an integrated and sustainable response engaging a number of actors in the society.

Undoubtedly, within a rather short timeframe, the project achieved considerable results and changes, first and foremost in a selected number of communities, but also at the national level. As planned, it built capacities, expanded and improved mechanisms addressing violence against women and girls, demonstrated the need and the value of intersectoral cooperation, exchange of knowledge and

information, strengthened the valuable and necessary cooperation and complementarity of governmental and non-governmental providers of services to women survivors of GBV and improved data collection and data bases for better information management, sharing and monitoring of VaW. The project also reached out to the broader public, parents and youth with important information and messages. At a higher level, the project served to build trust between the government and NGO sectors in exchanging expertise and tightening cooperation in service delivery, which is a particularly striking achievement given a rather challenging relationship between the government and non governmental sector in Serbia.

The project strived to focus equally on expanding and improving the quality of mechanisms to prevent VaW and ensuring the availability, accessibility and use of reliable and confident services for women and girls/children already facing violence, mostly in their homes. On one hand, going away with gender stereotypes, increasing awareness of gender disbalance of power as a cause of violence and addressing gender inequalities in general, particularly among the youth, was chosen as an important prevention strategy, starting with children and young people. On the other hand, knowing how difficult it is for women victims of violence to escape domestic violence and other forms of gender based violence, recover from injuries and trauma, and achieve empowerment and economic independence, the project heavily supported improvement of both general and specialist service providers' capacities to protect women from violence at home and other life situations in targeted municipalities.

The project implemented activities in 50 municipalities in AP Vojvodina and Central Serbia. In different municipalities, various components have been supported: multisectoral cooperation (30 municipalities), work with perpetrators' program (in 8 municipalities), work with schools (nationally and targeting 50 schools from 24 municipalities), social mobilization of youth groups (10 municipalities) and so on.

**Outcome 1:** The project has succeeded in raising the level of information and awareness among boys and girls, teachers and school staff and social service providers as well as general public of gender inequalities and power imbalances as causes of violence against women thus enhancing their capacities to engage in recognizing, reducing and preventing VaW at the local level. The evaluation concluded that the strategic approach to work through schools in addressing gender norms, attitudes and behaviors of boys and girls with regard to GBV has proven important, however, challenges have been numerous. The “whole school approach” for the in-school capacity building has proven an effective strategy as only in this way can a safe and non-violent school environment be created. Yet, the evaluation team concluded that not all schools were ready to engender their already sensitive work against violence in and out of school setting and that among teachers, school staff and parents there were still deeply rooted gender stereotypes that would need to be systematically and continuously tackled. On the other hand, the project's support to the MoESTD has additionally sensitized and motivated the state education specialists to continue the good work they have done with the project through cooperation with all relevant actors in the field, both state and non-governmental, to expand the GBV program to include all schools in Serbia, but also to look deeper at the problem and try to find causes for the large variance in the achievements among the schools.

The work with perpetrators of VaW was reported as very relevant and important for the tertiary prevention of VaW and also in terms of its effects on women and children. It has been very challenging and demanding as it requires sufficient number of professionals with expertise for therapeutic work and a high level of motivation, as well as long-term commitment of human and financial resources. The project supported the work with perpetrators training and program to be introduced in a number of CSWs in

Serbia, however, it could not be evaluated as sustainable. The evaluation team concluded that it was not included in the regular services provided by the CSWs or funded out of the same budget as other services, if funded at all, so that a follow-up on this program would be needed.

The project has successfully implemented enriched information sharing, communication and advocacy strategies for a variety of stakeholders and target groups. Among these groups the youth were actively engaged in preventing VaW within peer education and youth community group initiatives also specifically addressing dominant masculine identities conducive to VaW. The numerous public awareness raising activities, including media campaigns, mobilization of youth and peer educator activities supported by the project have resulted in a higher visibility of the SGBV issue and better informed general public about GBV and available protection mechanisms. The web-one-stop-shop- info-center (<http://sigurnakuca.net/pocetna.4.html>) created as an orientation tool for the persons searching services in their community is well known and appreciated, while the academia and other specialists confirmed to use it as a knowledge resource center containing all relevant researches and studies on GBV in the country ([http://sigurnakuca.net/znanja\\_o\\_nasilju\\_nad\\_zenama/publikacije.327.html](http://sigurnakuca.net/znanja_o_nasilju_nad_zenama/publikacije.327.html)). The large scale public events organized by the JP managed to gather all relevant stakeholders. As an unintended positive effect of the project was also the motivation of NGOs (those not primarily orientated and identified as women's rights organizations) to continue addressing the issue of GBV and seek funding for it through new projects.

**Outcome 2:** The evaluation stresses that, at the local level in general, the results' achievement with respect to increased and consolidated accessibility, provision and range of services in response to VaW have been clearly observed, but they would not be fully sustained unless they receive much needed political and financial commitment and the support from the national level institutions. A legal and policy framework for multisectoral cooperation - vital for an integrated response to VaW – was established at the time of the start of the UNJP, which was able to provide support in its implementation. The evaluation team was able to conclude that the protocols were seen as contributing to a better protection for women and girls/children from violence, but they cannot be said to be entirely functional countrywide. Different stakeholders in different communities were identified as those needing further strengthening in the multisectoral cooperation (mostly health sector and prosecutor's office). This, unfortunately, proves that a system that will provide an integrated response to VaW is still not fully functional even in the communities where significant progress was made. The evaluation team, however, did not have enough evidence to come up with certain conclusions as to the key causes, but could generally conclude that the strategic interventions were well chosen and implemented, but that continuation of the efforts needs to be ensured.

Based on the documentation review and the interviews conducted, the evaluation team was able to conclude that significant progress towards the full implementation of relevant protocols and procedures resulting in a higher level of multisectoral cooperation in the community was observed among the police. Interestingly enough, the evaluation team was made aware that, despite the fact that not all members of police who received the training on GBV manifested a change in their attitudes, the change in their behavior in responding to GBV cases was clearly observed.

Stressing the importance of capacity building of professionals, negative factors were emphasized that influenced the effectiveness of the project implementation under Outcome 2 which were described as an



“institutional discontinuity”. They were reflected in the fact that it was not rare that professionals who had received trainings were soon assigned to tasks other than those dealing with VaW within their organization or moved to other jobs so they could not effectively apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills in providing protection against VaW. On the other hand, it was acknowledged that those trainees “were not lost”, but they have remained a good resource of sensitized and capacitated professionals who could raise awareness and disburse information on gender issues and GBV in their new environments and thus contribute to prevention from VaW and eventually bring about a social change of behavior more conducive to ending violence.

**National level:** Key conclusion of the evaluation team is that the project has not resulted in establishing full ownership and responsibility of the Government of Serbia over the ending VaW agenda. This was proved by a level of confusion and controversy among the key stakeholders (mainly the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the MoLEVSP) on the issue of the responsibility for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating DV and Partner Relationship Violence against Women. The impression was that requirements of the multisectoral work on its implementation is not uniformly understood and endorsed across the relevant government institutions. There is visible confusion over the question of who should be responsible for the operational coordination of potential future activities in the field. This is also partly due to the fact that the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating DV and Partner Relationship Violence against Women was considered ineffective, as it did not contain an action plan with a clear specification of responsible actors and deadlines for implementation. The evaluators were able to conclude that the change in the institutional organization and mandate of the state gender equality mechanism had a significant influence on the ownership aspect of the project achievements. This is highly relevant for the sustainability of the good results achieved even more so as all the key partners and beneficiaries agree that the project results were “seeds planted in fertile soil” and that it will take time and more efforts for the ultimate goal of a life without violence for women/girls to be achieved. Furthermore, the project is seen as very successful in achieving expected outcomes, on the other hand, no project can ensure sustainability of outcomes unless there is clear ownership and guidance by the key institutions and their commitment to continue what has been successfully started. This, however, does not entirely apply to the education sector, as those activities were seen more as adds-on to the ending violence in school program and thus a clear mandate of the MoESTD.

**Provincial level:** In AP Vojvodina, the Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality (PSEEGE), the UN Women partner, showed a well-developed strategic intervention approach in addressing VaW. The UNJP supported the development of a new and improved framework policy in Vojvodina. The new policy framework adopted on EVaW provides for a comprehensive response to the problem of VaW/GBV. With two new analytical products included in the Program, one focusing on economic empowerment of women survivors and the other tailor-made outreach program for women belonging to minority and marginalized communities, the PSEEGE can be said to have greatly advanced in providing guidance and best practice in addressing gender inequality priorities in the country. It was made clear to the evaluation team that the PSEEGE, specifically its Gender Equality Sector, is staffed by committed and competent specialists with a clear vision of the long-term goal of gender equality, who are recognized and appreciated in local communities as well having worked on addressing VaW in AP Vojvodina in the past eight years. Therefore, it was confirmed by the evaluation that this project’s added value was undeniable in that it had recognized the well developed capacities and practices and attempted

to support each partner building on the block that had already existed locally rather than building other parallel systems.

**Local level:** As already concluded, the local level success of the project has been significant. Most stakeholders interviewed reported satisfaction with the change brought about by the project outputs, most notable trainings and follow-up activities, as well as case conferences and in some cases availability of consultations with the specialists they were acquainted with during the project activities long after the project activities were completed. With regard to the intersectoral cooperation, some local communities, though, reported lack of hands-on support by the national level institutions, but were generally satisfied with the program they implemented and viewed it as a state endorsed program (education). Engagement of expertise present in local NGOs and their technical support to most of the activities was seen very positively with regard to sustainability of the project achievements in the local community. Multisectoral cooperation in providing general and specialist services in supported communities was concluded to be, though, of a varied success.

## Chapter 4: Recommendations

Based on project achievements and in view of continuation of the efforts in the area of combating VaW, the evaluation team submits the following recommendations for consideration:

### On the programmatic level – Outcome 1:

To further consolidate and improve the mechanisms to prevent and end VaW:

- Trainings and relevant activities aiming at gender and GBV sensitisation in schools should continue:
  - To bring about a social change for boys and girls that would ultimately result in GBV prevention among the youth, deeply rooted gender norms need to be addressed in a systematic and continuous manner at the school level.
  - Teachers need to undergo gender training to achieve a personal change of attitude as their system of values, attitudes and behavior shape young persons' perspective and behavior.
  - The schools staff led by psychologists and pedagogues need to take a leading role in monitoring and ensuring that gender equality policy is in place and ensured in the entire school and that all teachers are required to promote gender equality in the school.
  - Furthermore, investing in and strengthening youth peer education has been particularly important and useful for the secondary school aged pupils and those activities should be continued and encouraged in the school and out of it.
  - The Violence Prevention Unit within the MoESTD should continue operating as the strong policy and monitoring capacity, with adequate staffing and funding, in ensuring that gender equality and zero tolerance for violence is consistently promoted throughout the education system.
- A strong commitment for sustaining the work with perpetrators program is needed:
  - This work should not be restricted to the CSWs, but should include mental health professionals in private and state health institutions.
  - Setting up a network of professionals who provide therapeutic work to VaW perpetrators could help in exchanging information and expertise among the municipalities.

- A strong case for sustaining this service should be made using the data on decreased number of VaW cases in case of the perpetrators who underwent the therapy program.

### **On the programmatic level – Outcome 2:**

As mentioned before, most of the key stakeholders felt that the UNJP initiative employed existing capacities rather than developed additional new capacities and competencies. The evaluation found that there were significant varieties even among the municipalities which received relevant project support in strengthening general and specialist services to VaW survivors for the integrated response system to be fully functional countrywide. Thus, the evaluators have come up with the following recommendations:

- Protocols on intersectoral cooperation are generally regarded as important and effective, but they are implemented with very different levels of success and their observation needs to be strengthened at the level of the institutions involved.
- Therefore, the institutions should continue to be advised to adopt and implement internal procedures clearly identifying individual roles and responsibilities specifically with regard to VaW protection, with a strict supervision and accountability policy providing for sanctions.
- Further legislative amendments at the national level are still needed aiming at innovation of the criminal justice system in accordance with the Istanbul convention provisions.
- As the MoJ was not seen as being actively involved in the project implementation the evaluation recommends its stronger involvement in future efforts towards ending DV and GBV in the country.
- Trainings on DV and other forms of GBV for professionals in judiciary, health sector, social sector and police should become part of professional development curricula and should keep the same format as it has proven successful.
- The health sector should be paid special attention as for VaW victims it is the most frequent point of entry into a system of protection, while being a large and complex system itself.
- Case conferences for addressing cases of DV were unanimously assessed as very useful and effective and they should continue to be organized on a regular basis.

### **On the National level:**

- In selecting priorities to be addressed by project strategic intervention a higher degree of participatory planning by the GoS should be ensured.
- Clear division of responsibility for the implementation of intersectoral international or national strategies, such as the Istanbul Convention and the National Strategy on EVaW must be ensured and respected.
- GoS should clearly designate a government institution, body or individual to assume overall coordination and responsibility over the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and the relevant national strategic documents. New National Strategy on EVaW should be accompanied

with an action plan for its implementation clearly identifying each actor responsible for its implementation and specifying funding allocation for the planned activities.

- In order for the set of protocols to be implemented, internal procedures and a clear system of accountability within the institutions must be adopted and enforced.
- Tighter cooperation among the institutional actors must be encouraged and ensured in a form of regular meetings, ad-hoc gatherings when need arises and annual conferences to present and discuss identified issues pertaining to the implementation of the intersectoral protocols with conclusions and recommendations for action clearly identifying key stakeholders and deadlines.
- The Coordination Body for Gender Equality should be given a more prominent function in ensuring a true multisectoral approach and providing expertise in the implementation of the international and national commitments of Serbia to end SGBV.

### **On the Provincial level:**

- The best practice on EVaW developed and implemented at the level of AP Vojvodina can clearly show the way to go forward in other parts of the country as well.
- However, to replicate the practice would require a set of preconditions to be in place. It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to make recommendation to the GoS/UNCT to replicate the model implemented in Serbia, as it would require a deeper analysis of a much wider context in which this and other GBV programs were implemented. However, it is safe to say that this practice has proven effective, sustainable and of a large impact on the partners and beneficiaries as shown in the evaluation findings above.
- The evaluation team thus recommends this practice to be analysed in greater detail and findings to be used for future planning of activities aimed at ending SGBV and generally tackling persistent gender inequalities throughout the country.
- The work of the PSEEGE should continue to be supported aiming at enabling all the municipalities in AP Vojvodina to provide effective response to domestic violence and other forms of VaW. As a new measure introduced to provide a long-term response to violence and support, the program for economic empowerment of women survivors of violence should be carefully monitored and reviewed/adjusted if needed. The work with perpetrator program should be introduced and/or strengthened in all CSWs. Interventions targeting minority women and women from marginalized groups should be further supported to ensure a wide coverage of beneficiaries. Strengthening and expanding of the network of service providers aiming at exchange of services from different municipalities should continue. It is important that the continuity of the staff and expertise within the PSEEGE is preserved. In cooperation with the other secretariats, the PSEEGE could also provide expertise in engendering school programs to strengthen violence prevention work in schools as well as in strengthening violence protection in the health sector.

### **On the local level:**

- The strategic intervention of the project aimed mostly at improving the local services provision by supporting capacity development of the professionals and institutions. In the short period of two years and with a very limited resources it was not feasible for the project to cover all the municipalities in Serbia and AP Vojvodina. In order to overcome the problem of an uneven (hence unequal) availability of good quality general and specialist GBV protection services

throughout Serbia, an approach similar to the one developed by the PSEEGE could be used, i.e. the establishment of a network and exchange of services from different municipalities, while continuing to work in other municipalities.

- At the same time, capacity development activities should be continued, with an emphasis of case conferences and exchange of information among the service providers which have proven to be highly effective in improving the quality of the intersectoral cooperation.
- On the prevention side, the work with schools should continue in the form of support to the use of the program package and monitoring instruments that measure safety/violence in school environment by more schools.
- Overall, future project interventions should strive to strengthen the link between the local level practitioners and service providers with the national policy making in order to ensure evidence based policy, planning and funding of the efforts to end VaW in Serbia.

### On the management/project level:

- Even though current management approach ensured high quality results, the key stakeholders did observe some gaps in the coordination and communication among the three agencies during the activities. It is highly recommended in the future to put a management system in place with a clear role for the Project Manager. It will enable projects to depend less on individual abilities, capacities and engagement but more on well-established roles and responsibilities within the team.
- The role of the Project Manager should be emphasized, strengthened and recognized by all participating UN agencies and the Project Manager should be responsible for the overall management of the project.
- Considering the success of the GBV project, it is highly recommended to engage a Project manager with a solid technical knowledge in gender and gender based violence.
- A sound monitoring system as an internal project management function should be developed:
  - For the follow-up project, it is highly recommended to develop and introduce independent, comprehensive results oriented monitoring system. The purpose will be to keep the track whether the project achieves or is likely to achieve expected results.
  - Specifically, the future monitoring system for similar projects should: i) provide objective, verifiable evidence of progress towards and achievement of results and objectives; ii) enable insights to be drawn and shared about what worked well or what did not work well and why that was the case; iii) enable reflection on the context in which the Project is being implemented and how this affects programming and iv) provide the basis for fine-tuning, reorienting and planning future development efforts in the gender based violence sector.
  - First step, however, should be to develop a problem tree analysis, and based on this defined intervention logic. The Logical Framework should include adequate and measurable indicators (“SMART” indicators) and easy accessible however independent sources of verification. Use of project deliverables and project products to validate the same could be seen as unfitting as well as conflicting.

- Establish a risk management system:

In a complex and dynamic environments, as Serbia and the specific sector of gender based violence are, there is a need to constantly monitor risks and develop mitigation approach. This refers to the additional efforts, that must be taken by the Project Manager and the participating Agencies to lower the likelihood of the risk occurring and minimize the impact on the project if the risk occurred. It is highly recommended to perform in-depth assessment of all factors that can negatively affect the project, the likelihood to occur and possible impact on the project.
- Strategic reporting for the project should be in place:
  - The quality of reporting system within the GBV project was satisfactory, although some discrepancies were recorded between very strategic and more activity focused parts. For the next phase of the project, it is recommended to use best guidance to strengthen reporting and prepare more strategic reports, the United Nations Development Group's Results-Based Management Handbook - Strengthening RBM harmonization for improved development results (March 2010). The Handbook provides useful instructions for writing reports, including number of questions to consider while drafting.

**Report annexes:**

- ToR for the evaluation (Annex 1)
- Additional methodology-related documentation, such as the evaluation matrix and data collection instruments (questionnaires, interview guides, observation protocols, etc.) as appropriate (Annex 2.1 and Annex 2.2)
- List of individuals or groups interviewed or consulted and sites visited (Annex 3)
- List of supporting documents reviewed (Annex 4)
- Project or program results map or results framework (Annex 5)
- Summary tables of findings, such as tables displaying progress towards outputs, targets, and goals relative to established indicators (Annex 6)
- Short biographies of the evaluators and justification of team composition (Annex 7)
- Code of conduct signed by evaluators (Annex 8)