



FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

“Building Bridges of Life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan”

The Republic of Azerbaijan

Project duration - 01.01.2016 - 31.12.2017

Project period covered by evaluation - 01.01.2016 - 30.11.2017

Implementing agent: Azerbaijan Young Lawyers' Confederation

Donor: UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

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March 2018

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALC	Azerbaijan Lawyers Confederation
AZN	Azerbaijani Manat
AYLU	Azerbaijan Young Lawyers Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DV	Domestic Violence
ER	Evaluation Report
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender based violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
IR	Inception Report
MLSPP	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population
RBM	Results Based Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SCFWCA	State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs
UN Trust Fund	UN Trust Fund on Violence Against Women
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Evaluation Team expresses its gratitude and appreciation to all stakeholders whose valuable opinions and feedback on the AYLU-implemented project “Building bridges of life for the women survivors of domestic violence in Azerbaijan” funded by the UN Women/TF on VAW have been of substantial contribution for the purposes of this report. The Evaluation Team also acknowledges the support rendered by the AYLU’s management and project coordination unit during the data collection process. And finally, the Evaluation Team is thankful to all community members and project’s direct beneficiaries who kindly shared their stories on how the subject project made a difference in their lives.

Disclaimer

The Evaluation Report has been developed by an independent evaluator. The analysis presented in this report reflects the views of the author and may not necessarily represent those of the AYLU, its partners for the project or the UN Trust Fund.

INTRODUCTION

This Evaluation Report (ER) represents the last specific output of the evaluation of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) funded project “Building Bridges of life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan” implemented by Azerbaijan Young Lawyers’ Union in close partnership with the Government.

The ER presents the findings of the evaluation assignment as required by the respective Terms of Reference (ToR) document. In addition to this, the ER represents a document that is well suited to be used while designing similar intervention strategies for addressing GBV both in Azerbaijan as well as other countries with similar socio-economic and political context. The ER is divided into several chapters:

- Chapter 1 elaborates on the project background and provides context specific information alongside the project description in line with the available project documents.
- Chapter 2 focuses on the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation as described in the Terms of Reference document as well as presents the information on the final version of evaluation questions alongside evaluation criteria.
- Chapter 3 provides the detailed information on the evaluation methodology including the overall evaluation design, data sources, description of data collection methods, sampling strategies, as well as the limitations and challenges the evaluation team faced during the implementation phase. This Chapter also presents the information on the composition of the evaluation team. The Chapter concludes by the illustration of ethical considerations that have guided the evaluation process.
- Chapter 4 presents the findings of the evaluation alongside the detailed analysis per evaluation criteria.
- The ER concludes with the Chapter V on the Conclusions and Recommendations.
- The final version of the TOR, the evaluation matrix, the final version of the Results Monitoring Plan, the Beneficiary Data Sheet, the evaluation instruments, the list of supporting documents reviewed, the list of persons interviewed are attached to the ER as Annexes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Azerbaijan Republic has demonstrated commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women through inter alia creation of an enabling legal environment for the advancement of women and combating the cases of gender based violence and discrimination. The Law on Prevention of DV was adopted in 2010, however the national implementation mechanism has not yet been developed.

The analysis of the project background documents alongside the reports on the socio-economic and political context in Azerbaijan indicates that the conceptual framework for the particular outcomes and outputs of the project “Building Bridges of life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan” was designed to contribute to the Government’s efforts on elimination of gender based violence in the country. The project was initiated by the local NGO Azerbaijan Young Lawyers Union (AYLU) in close partnership and cooperation with Azerbaijan Lawyers’ Confederation (ALC), the Government - the State Committee for Family, Women and Children’s Affairs (SCFWCA) and with the financial support from the UN Trust Fund.

The project aimed at addressing this problem by setting up a pilot shelter that was expected to provide the women with free legal, medical and psychological support services as well as refuge from violent partners/family members if needed; enhance socio-economic capacities of these survivors of violence through range of business development and income generation strategies to ensure sustainability of the action; and launch community awareness campaign with active involvement of men and boys in the target region to contribute to utilization of services offered by shelter. The selection of the strategies proposed for the implementation of this project was guided by the rationale that only a coherent approach to the problem of preventing and addressing DV inclusive of series of interrelated activities such as sensitization of the population, capacity building of the service staff and economic empowerment of women with active involvement of the Government partners is capable of preventing and addressing DV in a sustainable way.

As per the UN Trust Fund evaluation policies the subject evaluation aimed at providing AYLU, national stakeholders, and the donor agency as well as the wider audience with an independent assessment of the progress of the project towards the expected outputs and outcomes set forth in the results framework of the project document.

The evaluation has taken place during the period of September-December 2017 and focused on the outcomes and outputs achieved throughout the implementation period. The evaluation team has assessed the project’s progress since early January 2016 as compared against the intended results. Particular consideration has been paid to the extent to which the project design and the theory of change used during the project implementation provided the most relevant modalities for reaching the intended project objectives. The scope of the evaluation has included the following core evaluation criteria: Effectiveness, Relevance, Efficiency, Sustainability, Impact, Knowledge Generation.

The major approaches to inform the evaluation methodology were based on assessment of the project success as regards what effective techniques have been used to contribute to effective and efficient implementation of the project as well examination of the failures that have had place

and the causes of these failures. The results-based management approach (RBM) was used in the course of the evaluation and the strategic interventions utilized were assessed using the baseline data and indicators developed by the project coordination unit upon the project inception. The evaluation team also paid particular attention to how the resources allocated for the purposes of the project by both the donor and implementing agent have been strategically managed to enhance the expected impact. The evaluation adopted a transparent participatory approach to ensure that the views and opinions of all relevant national stakeholders, local authorities, community leaders, project's direct and indirect beneficiaries as well as other parties involved and affected by the project are actively sought and the data collected from these groups is used to inform the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

The subject assignment applied combined methods of evaluation with the use of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to secure effective measurement of the project impact. This included the desk review of the available project documents and other literature including the reports of the UN charter and treaty body monitoring bodies; as well as the field work including individual semi-structured interviews, in-depth key informant interviews, the focus groups and on-site observations where possible. Such an approach has been chosen to facilitate the validation of the data and findings which is elaborated in detail in the below sections.

The data collected for the purposes of this evaluation is based upon the primary and secondary data sources. The secondary data has been gathered from the project documents and other available literature. The primary data has been collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants representing project partners and beneficiaries, semi-structured interviews with project beneficiaries, focus group discussions with project beneficiaries and on-site observations.

The field work has concentrated in both the capital city of Baku where the vast majority of the project stakeholders and the project coordination unit is based and the district of Absheron where the centre is located and where the project's awareness raising campaigns have been held.

The series of sampling techniques have been used for the purposes of this evaluation project including a purposive sampling method for selecting the partners as well as stratified random sampling method for the in-depth semi-structured interviews with the project beneficiaries. Overall, 47 in-depth semi-structured interviews and 8 focus group discussions have been held.

Six separate interlinked evaluation criteria were identified and the main findings under each are summarised below.

Effectiveness

The project had a clear intervention strategy and theory of change to address the needs of the project's main beneficiaries. The analysis of the data collected during the evaluation process shows that a good deal of progress was achieved towards the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs. The project was able to set up a model shelter and services to provide support and referrals to the victims of GBV, although the advocacy for Government replication of the model

was still underway during the evaluation. The project managed to provide protection and support to the significant proportion of women victims of GBV seeking assistance through the shelter's services. 448 women in total were provided with different support services as compared against the project's target of 220. The project boosted the capacities of 10 staff members of the shelter through the series of the training sessions held by the international experts well recognised in the field. The project also managed to sensitise 2,600 community members and 1,400 men and boys through the information sessions on the causes and consequence of GBV. The analysis of the available data indicates increase of information and awareness as regards the concepts of gender, GBV, available protection mechanisms, etc. among the community members (87% in community groups and 72% in male groups). In addition to this, the participants also seem to have become more sensitive towards the intervention schemes enabling the women to benefit from refuge and support services offered by the shelters, although the findings indicate that there is the need to put more emphasis on awareness campaigns targeting the male groups per se. The project's commitment as regards economic empowerment component was also fulfilled. 103 women beneficiaries of the center's services took part in the economic empowerment trainings over the course of 2 years and 30 women established and run a small business of their own. While the project's intervention strategy to boost economic independence of the women was relevant, the analysis of the available data shows that the sustainability of this specific component was not adequately ensured. The interviews held with the women recipients of small grants as well as the shelter's staff have confirmed that the battered women are in the vast majority of cases lacking the necessary capacities for running business in a sustainable way, and hence are in need of a more relevant programmes tailored specifically to their capacities and ability to independently continue their work. The issue of alternative child care services is also to be considered, since the women with small children also faced challenges in reconciling the issue of child care and work. Series of internal and external factors contributing to the success of the project were noted. These included close engagement of the Government representatives throughout all project stages, availability of the legal framework on GBV prevention and response, support from the UN agencies operating in the country and closely engaged in GBV advocacy with the Government. The delays with the endorsement of the policy framework on GBV prevention and response, lack of common understanding between the major actors in the field including the Government and civil society as regards the issues concerned, prevalent attitudinal barriers among the decision makers and general public were identified as the main inhibiting factors for successful achievement of all project results. The evaluation team observed that the project could have placed more emphasis on partnerships with the CSOs to leverage the available resources for the purposes of improved advocacy action.

It has also transpired that the organization doesn't seem to have the institutional mechanism of M&E and the tools and mechanisms drafted in the course of implementation of different activities are project driven and are guided by the requirements and expectations of a particular donor agency. Although the availability of the strict rules and guidelines by the UN Women/TF on VAW as regards the project implementation and related data collection has alleviated the negative effect of this finding on this particular project, the evaluation team observed that there is the need for AYLU's staff to further develop their skills and capacities for the purposes of effective project monitoring in the future.

Relevance

The issues of GBV and access to the related services alongside the need for raising the awareness of community members and men on the cases of domestic violence and the women's empowerment component were confirmed as pressing issues highly relevant in the current Azerbaijani context. The feedback collected during the evaluation reveals that the women victims of GBV still find it hard to get provided with the adequate shelter services (temporary refuge and protection, legal, psychological and medical support, referrals, etc.) in the absence of the effective referral mechanism for GBV prevention and response. Hence, the project's intervention to improve the technical and human capacities of the shelter was acutely needed.

It has also transpired that there are considerable differences in the attitudes people hold toward the issues of GBV and its victims what in turn can contribute to the effective utilization of the services offered at the shelter by targeting real and potential perpetrators of DV. According to the information collected, the majority of the project strategies identified were realistic, relevant to the needs of the target groups as well as adequate for the achievement of the pre-defined project targets. The data gathered from the project beneficiaries and the stakeholders have confirmed the findings of the desk review indicating that the conceptual framework for the particular outcomes and outputs of the project was designed to contribute to the Government's efforts on elimination of gender based violence in the country.

However, while the project's economic empowerment component was assessed as an important strategy aimed at boosting self-confidence and independence of the women victims of GBV, the relevance of the intervention scheme used does not seem to be specifically tailored to the needs of the women victims of GBV which has negative implications for the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project.

Efficiency

The annual project targets were realistic both in terms of the timeline and the available human and financial resources. The project had adequate management and accountability structures as well as detailed planning process involving annual and semiannual reporting schemes necessary for regular monitoring of all project components. The project's human and financial resources seem to be justified given the scope of the project and the list of the activities planned and held. In terms of human resources, the project seems to have employed a cost-effective strategy of having a limited number of permanent project employees who were receiving salaries on a regular basis.

Overall, there seems to be a balanced share of the costs between the project components. The expenses for the management and monitoring appear to be within the reasonable percentage necessary for effective coordination of the projects incurring similar costs. Reasonable amounts seem to be allocated for the purposes of the shelter's day to day operations. The costs for awareness raising constitute the biggest proportion of the costs incurred. But the analysis of the feedback retrieved from the beneficiaries and project stakeholders enable the Evaluation team to state that the amount is reasonable, given very low awareness of the population on the causes and consequences of the GBV as well as available protection mechanisms. The partnerships the project has been able to maintain with the Government officials have contributed to the timely implementation of the project activities and the prospects for its policy level sustainability. However, the prospects for partnerships with the local CSOs could have been better explored and utilised to boost the successful advocacy for the project's goal.

The efficiency of the project's economic empowerment component is questioned. While the project placed the main focus on provision of grants for small women-owned business enterprises, the project's efficiency could have been further boosted by an alternative strategy that could have

included the set of activities not only aimed at the development of skills and production of certain items for the market, but also envisioning establishment of links between the producer/skilled women and the market as a part of a comprehensive value chain approach. In addition to this, although both the evaluation and the previously held audit indicate that in general the project resources were used effectively, the financial and accountability procedures necessary for successful implementation of similar projects were underdeveloped.

Sustainability

The capacity building trainings for the staff of the shelter on GBV identification and response as well as active engagement of both AYLU staff and the representatives/focal points from the Government in all project stages have contributed to increased capacities at both individual and organisational levels. The project has also contributed to building the NGO skills as regards the development of effective intervention strategies for public outreach on such a sensitive and taboo topic as GBV. The close engagement of the Government stakeholders at all levels of project implementation has also successfully paved the way to sensitisation of policy and decision-makers which seems to increase the likelihood of further policy action as regards replication of effective model of the shelter developed in the framework of the project. The improved capacities of the shelter's staff and the Government partners to run similar projects is expected to contribute to effective coordination of the institutional response to GBV beyond the project lifetime. While the partners engaged acknowledged the model shelter set up in the framework of the project as a good model to be further replicated, the financial sustainability seems to be highly unlikely, given the limited Government resources, shortage of available funding opportunities from donor community as well as the challenges with the project's economic empowerment component the fruits of which are not likely to survive beyond the project lifetime. However, the increased capacities of the shelter's staff and the availability of a shelter to assist the victims of GBV is expected to sustain the positive changes by enabling more and more women and girls continue benefiting from the shelter's services.

Impact

In addition to the immediate outputs and results of the project, there were series of unintended positive and negative consequences identified by the evaluation team. One of the observations is that while the project has offered survivors encouragement and improved mechanisms to report incidents of DV and obtain legal and other necessary assistance, the programs that provide women with greater independence or legal options sometimes increase tension within the home due to the abuser's anger over lack of control, insecurity, or feeling threatened (particularly in the case of DV).

Some of the respondents noted that the communities are not always happy with this type of institutions since they consider these to be ruining family institution in the country. The international expert Prof. Akin who conducted the capacity building training in the framework of the project noted with concern that one of the shelter's major limitations is that the institution acts both as a referral centre and as a shelter, which makes the location easily identifiable for the family members.

The establishment of trust with women survivors of domestic violence has been identified as an important unintended positive consequence of the project. Overall, women believe they have a good working relationship with the implementing partners. This is an essential and difficult accomplishment, as women survivors of DV have issues with trusting people. Another unintended

positive consequence is the exceptionally strong collaboration between partners: the project staff and shelter staff. There exists a clear “spirit of unity” in working on domestic violence issues between the partners and this shared sense of purpose and collaborative spirit is most certainly a key factor in terms of accomplishing results.

Knowledge generation

Taking into account the context of the cases of DV (culture, ethnicity, etc.) several indications of best practices and key challenges to strengthen intervention effectiveness, reach, and sustainability have been identified. As is the case with many development projects, the target beneficiaries should constitute a part of the participatory process for designing the intervention strategies to ensure that the planned activities not only reflect the needs of the vulnerable groups, but also take into account their capacities for making the project outcomes more efficient and sustainable. Yet another lesson learnt is that more partnerships with the stakeholders should be sought for the purposes of increased awareness of the project progress and results as well as secured commitment of the stakeholders to the project goals.

The interventions designed for community members and especially through engagement of men and boys (interventions addressing norms of masculinity) could be regarded among the promising practices that the evaluation team has been able to identify in connection with violence prevention in Azerbaijani context.

Series of recommendations have been drafted for the attention of the implementing agency and the Government for ensuring effective follow-up to the shelter’s operations beyond the project lifetime.

Effectiveness

It is crucial that AYLU continues advocacy efforts with the Government for the replication of the shelter’s model across the country. The draft Roadmap being currently developed should contain well documented evidence on the progress, challenges and mitigation strategies and is to be shared with the Government for the follow-up action.

Relevance

Although strong alignment of the project with the national context and relevant state policies and programmes has been observed, it is important that any future interventions planned by either the Government or NGOs focus on more consultations with the direct project beneficiaries at all phases of project implementation including at the design level. It is important that the targeted beneficiaries constitute an integral part of the reference group designing a particular intervention strategy. This is expected to ensure that the project is not only specifically targeted to the needs of the main beneficiaries, but is also informed by their views on the most relevant interventions to address those needs. This finding is to be reflected in the Roadmap developed in the framework of the project.

Efficiency

It is important that any future interventions employ alternative strategies to obtain the results in a more cost effective way. The internationally acknowledged best practices as regards particularly the economic empowerment of the GBV victims should be thoroughly researched. To further boost the efficiency of similar interventions in the future, the assessment of the market opportunities should be held and the prospects for the effective value chain approach should be explored. More efforts should be paid to consolidation of efforts with other agencies including local NGOs having sufficient expertise and knowledge in the field of economic empowerment projects. This finding is to be reflected in the Roadmap developed in the framework of the project.

Sustainability

It is important that any future interventions have a detailed and clear action plan for sustainability of the related project interventions is developed from the very onset of the project. To compensate for this gap, it is highly recommended that the existing partnerships should be further maintained to ensure that the efforts to develop effective policy frameworks are informed by the lessons of this project. In this regard is important that AYLU continues its advocacy efforts to push the Government for the adoption of the policy framework on GBV prevention and response including inter alia through concerted efforts to share the Roadmap produced as an effective model for replication as soon as the funding becomes available. The future efforts should also be directed towards advocacy and awareness raising targeting both the decision makers and the general public on the issues of GBV. Extensive support by the Members of the Parliament should be followed up to guarantee that they take leadership to ensure political commitment over these issues beyond the project lifetime.

Impact

It is important that the precautionary measures are undertaken while designing the programs that provide women with greater independence or legal options since these interventions could sometimes increase tension within the home due to the abuser's anger over lack of control, insecurity, or feeling threatened (particularly in the case of DV). The respective mitigation strategies should also be envisaged. For the purposes of safety any future plans for the replication of this model should ensure that to the extent possible the shelter is not serving as a point of referral on GBV cases. This finding is to be reflected in the Roadmap developed in the framework of the project.

Knowledge generation

Since the project is almost over one of the most crucial recommendations is to contribute to the sustainability of the project outcomes and outputs by generating the knowledge that will capture both good examples and lessons learnt as a roadmap to guide further interventions on this and similar issues. The Roadmap and the findings of this report are to be extensively shared with all concerned project stakeholders to contribute inter alia to replication of the project's effective approaches. In addition to this policy level recommendation, it is also highly advised to make the project products (materials produced for capacity building trainings, GBV information sessions, etc.) available for the purposes of similar interventions as well as with the purpose of institutionalisation of the knowledge and information produced. It is expected that the findings of the evaluation and the recommendations provided herein will be effectively utilised by

the Government of Azerbaijan, the civil society actors and other development agencies for the design and implementation of similar strategic interventions aimed at GBV prevention and response.

CHAPTER I

CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Republic of Azerbaijan is located on the western shore of the Caspian Sea and is having land borders with Russia, Iran, Turkey, Armenia and Georgia. The country spreads across a territory of 86,600 km. The country's population totals up to 9,858,860 persons. 53 per cent of the population resides in urban settlements and 47 per cent lives in rural districts of the country. The distribution of the population by sex reveals almost equal numbers with 50.1 per cent of female population and 49.9 per cent of males. Youth constitute almost third of the population. Azerbaijan is a multiethnic country with Azerbaijanis (ethnic Turks) constituting a little over 90 per cent of overall population living side by side with over a dozen of other nationalities including the

Lezgins, Russians, Talish, Avars, Tatars, Tats, Georgians, Jews, Kurds, and others.¹ The state language is the Azerbaijani, but education in native languages of the minorities is also allowed in the schools that are located in the districts with predominant majority of the ethnic minorities. The majority of the population is Shia Muslims by religious background.²

Azerbaijan regained its independence in October 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The newly established republic was determined to demonstrate its intention to build a democratic state where the rights and freedoms of all would be protected. With this in mind, the Government ratified eight of the nine core international human rights treaties including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).³

The Government of Azerbaijan Republic has demonstrated commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women through inter alia creation of an enabling legal environment for the advancement of women and combating the cases of gender based violence and discrimination.

To ensure that the legislation is in place to prevent and address the widespread cases of violence against women in domestic settings the Law of Azerbaijan Republic on Prevention of Domestic Violence was adopted in 2010. The Presidential decree calling for harmonization of national legal acts with the provisions of the Law was issued following the adoption of the Law.

Although the Government is trying to address and eliminate the instances of gender based discrimination through a variety of legal and policy measures, the pervasive gender stereotypes and attitudes are still prevalent in the country. The findings of the research held within the last decade reveal that the men are still expected to be the families' main breadwinners and decision-makers within both society and family while women are first and foremost mothers, persons who should take care of domestic affairs, individuals with the status of "inferior sex".⁴ The traditional views and attitudes that are based on the series of sex, sexual, sex role and compound stereotypes

¹ State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan www.stat.gov.az

² Ibid

³ International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (entered into force 1969, accession by Azerbaijan 1992); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (entered into force 1976, accession by Azerbaijan 1992); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (entered into force 1976, accession by Azerbaijan 1992); the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (entered into force 1981, accession by Azerbaijan 1995); the Convention Against Torture (entered into force 1987, accession by Azerbaijan 1996); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (entered into force 1990, accession by Azerbaijan, 1992); International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (entered into force 2003, accession by Azerbaijan 1999); Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (entered into force 2008, ratified by Azerbaijan 2009). The Republic of Azerbaijan signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on 6 February, 2007, but has not yet ratified it.

⁴ UNDP/SCFWCA (2007) *Azerbaijan Human Development Report Gender attitudes in Azerbaijan: trends and challenges* Baku, Azerbaijan; UNFPA/SCFWCA (2011) *National Survey Report on Violence Against Women in Azerbaijan* Baku, Azerbaijan; UNFPA/SCFWCA (2011) *Qualitative Assessment of Violence Against IDP Women in Azerbaijan* Baku, Azerbaijan; UNFPA/SCFWCA (2014) *Mechanisms Behind Skewed Sex Ratio at Birth in Azerbaijani Population* Baku, Azerbaijan; UNFPA/UNHCHR (2015) *Assessment of the Implementation Status of Treaty Body Recommendations on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the Republic of Azerbaijan*

as regards women and their respective roles in both the family and the society continue shaping the dynamics of gender relations in Azerbaijan thus contributing to further perpetuation of widespread instances of violence and discrimination against women in all fields including education, employment, health, etc. While the national legislation is providing the guarantees of formal gender equality, the prevalence of discriminatory attitudes and customary practices is seriously impeding the advancement and empowerment of the women as well as leading to revival of old and occurrence of new harmful traditional practices.

The adoption of the above mentioned Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence is commendable since it stipulates that the cases of violence against women taking place within the domain of family affairs are subject to external intervention by the state. In addition the Law sets the framework for follow-up action to ensure that the women victims of domestic violence are provided with effective preventive, protective and rehabilitative services.

Nevertheless, series of major challenges that should be dealt with immediately to render effective protection and support to the victims of violence still remain. First of all, the available evidence illustrates that the Law does not set the exhaustive framework for criminalization of domestic violence. First and foremost, the law does not differentiate as to which acts of domestic violence should be subject to criminal prosecution and which should be addressed through administrative procedures. The Criminal Procedural Code has no specific provisions to address the particular needs and rights of women victims of domestic violence. The law specifically mentions the State's duty to "assist in normalization of relations between parties and resumption of family affairs" (art.7.4), which can be interpreted as privileging mediation and reconciliation over the protection of women's human rights.⁵ In practice, the lack of clarity on this and series of other legal provisions results in law enforcement personnel not taking appropriate action.

Despite the fact that the Law on Prevention of DV was adopted in 2010, the national implementation mechanism has not been yet developed. Both the National Strategy on Prevention of Domestic Violence and the National Action Plan on Prevention of Domestic Violence developed with support provided by the UN agencies operating in the country are still pending approval at the Cabinet of Ministers. The unexpected devaluation of the national currency has seriously affected the economic growth indicators having major negative consequences for several major Government projects including inter alia the ones on social protection of the population.⁶ This situation has also affected the process of endorsement of the National Action Plan on GBV prevention and response since the document elaborated on the series of major measures that required big amounts of financial allocations. The Government found itself in a situation when it could no longer support the adoption of this important framework given the financial constraints faced.

⁵ Manjoo R. (2014) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences: Mission to Azerbaijan*

⁶ CESD (2015) *Devaluation of Azerbaijani National Currency: Causes and Consequences* Available at: <http://cesd.az/new/?p=9237> (last accessed on 04.10.17)

Thus, the following observations have been made as regards the local socio-economic and political context that had led to the development of the conceptual framework of the subject project:

- Although there was some political will to support the development of an effective legal and policy framework as regards GBV prevention and response, the financial constraints faced by the Government following the drastic devaluation of the national currency impeded the endorsement of the major policy framework document on the topic;
- The women victims of domestic violence continued facing multiple obstacles to access mechanisms of redress, including quality legal aid, counselling services and shelters. Although the Law on prevention of DV refers to the establishment of public support centers for victims of DV to provide them with legal and medical assistance, psychological rehabilitation, social protection and allowances, and emergency shelter, among others, on a no cost basis, the progress on this was very little. The number of support and referral centers was very limited and those were mainly the NGO-funded ones extremely depending on donor funding.
- There was not a single state-funded shelter to accommodate the victims of violence. During her visit to Azerbaijan in December 2013 the Special Rapporteur on VAW noted that “the lack of shelters throughout the country was alarming and represented a major obstacle in the protection chain”.
- There was no 24/7 national helpline for the victims of DV. Only few NGO-funded helplines were in place and those services were heavily dependent on donor funding.
- The effort to ensure societal transformation to address the traditional gender roles and stereotypes limiting the personal, social, economic, and political freedom of women in Azerbaijan were not systematic and consistent. Although the nation-wide research on the prevalence rates of domestic violence was held in 2008 and the Demographic and Health Survey held in 2006 included a separate chapter on prevalence of domestic violence, no systematic data collection was put in place ever since to assess the actual extent of the phenomenon, the dynamics over time as well as the effectiveness of the measures undertaken.
- The national institutional capacities as regards provision of support to the victims of GBV were under-developed. The NGOs providing support services were under staffed, under capacitated and experienced major lack of financial resources.
- While the problems related to the effective enforcement of the legal framework remained, the law enforcement and judicial operators were also lacking a gender perspective in the cases of violence commonly resorting to mediation as a major means of dispute resolution in the first place. The low number of female staff in the criminal justice sector could be described as a factor contributing to inappropriate handling of such cases.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The analysis of the project background documents⁷ alongside the reports on the socio-economic and political context in Azerbaijan indicates that the conceptual framework for the particular outcomes and outputs of the project “Building Bridges of life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan” was designed to contribute to the Government’s efforts on elimination of gender based violence in the country. Since addressing the whole array of the problems identified in the previous section was beyond the scope and purpose of the project given inter alia the financial considerations and lack of adequate human resources, it was decided to place the major focus on addressing this problem through creation of a model shelter for the women victims of violence in one of the districts with the highest prevalence rates of intimate partner violence.

The project “Building bridges of life for the women victims of DV in Azerbaijan” was initiated by the local NGO Azerbaijan Young Lawyers Union (AYLU) in close partnership and cooperation with Azerbaijan Lawyers’ Confederation (ALC), the Government - the State Committee for Family, Women and Children’s Affairs (SCFWCA) and with the financial support from the UN Trust Fund.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

AYLU is the local NGO and the main implementing party for the project. The organizational records show that AYL U was founded in February 19, 1999 and rapidly established itself as one of the most active human rights NGOs in Azerbaijan with around 700 members.

SCFWCA is the main Government partner for the project. SCFWCA has the lead responsibility for policy on women and gender equality. It was established by Presidential Decree at the ministerial level on 6 February, 2006, and replaced the State Committee for Women’s Issues, which had been operating as a state body on women’s issues since 1998. The SCFWCA is the only national machinery responsible for formulating and pursuing State policy on all aspects of women’s rights and empowerment, along with the implementation of CEDAW. Close engagement of the Government partner implied strong project ownership beyond the project life.

ALC is the local consortium of the lawyers and organisations with the legal profile operating in the country.

UN TRUST FUND: *Established by UN General Assembly resolution 50/166 and administered by UN Women on behalf of the UN System, the UN Trust Fund awards grants to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governments for initiatives that demonstrate that violence against women and girls can be systematically addressed, reduced and, with persistence, eliminated.*

⁷ Project documents (Project Concept Note, Full-fledged proposal, Grant Agreement, semi-annual and annual reports produced to date, etc.)

UN WOMEN is the leading UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

The available project records reveal that several local and international experts as well as civil society organizations were also partnered throughout the project implementation to increase the project impact, ensure smooth flow of operations as well as contribute to project effectiveness.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND THE THEORY OF CHANGE

The project documents including the main application package indicate that the main goal of the project was *“to assist women/girls in Absheron region of Azerbaijan with improved protection and response to domestic violence through community support for prevention and provision of a sustainable model shelter and services (a range of preventive, protective, and rehabilitative services through providing temporary refuge and psychological, medical, legal assistance)”*.

Hence, this project aimed at addressing this problem by setting up a pilot shelter that was expected to serve three main objectives:

- to provide the women with free legal, medical and psychological support services as well as refuge from violent partners/family members if needed;
- to enhance socio-economic capacities of these survivors of violence through range of business development and income generation strategies to ensure sustainability of the action;
- to launch community awareness campaign with active involvement of men and boys in the target region to contribute to utilization of services offered by shelter.

The project documents indicate that the selection of the strategies proposed for the implementation of this project was guided by the rationale that only a coherent approach to the problem of preventing and addressing DV inclusive of series of interrelated activities such as sensitization of the population, capacity building of the service staff and economic empowerment of women with active involvement of the government partners is capable of preventing and addressing DV in a sustainable way. Hence, the three major outcomes and series of related outputs and activities were identified to support the national priorities for combating DV:⁸

Project outcomes	Project outputs
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⁸ Although the list of activities and outputs is grouped by the outcomes these are expected to contribute to, it transpires from the initial analysis of the available documentation that all project outputs and activities were complementary in nature and were expected to be closely interrelated and interlinked

<p>Outcome 1. Women and girls at risk of, or experiencing DV have access to an equipped shelter with effective support and rehabilitation services by December 2017</p>	<p>Output 1.1. The shelter for the survivors of DV in a position to respond to their needs is available</p> <p>Output 1.2. The staff of the shelter covered by the project's capacity building trainings have better knowledge and skills to identify and support the victims of DV</p> <p>Output 1.3. The women survivors of DV can benefit from the services offered by the shelter</p> <p>Output 1.4. The women survivors of DV and other women/active community members covered by the project's economic empowerment trainings have knowledge and skills on establishing and running a small business of their own including through the small grants mechanism</p>
<p>The main activities designed to generate the outputs under the Outcome 1. included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a model referral mechanism to provide women survivors of DV with preventive, protective and rehabilitative services through institutional capacity building of a shelter for the victims of DV and its service provision staff. The availability of such a shelter was expected to first of all provide the women with a refuge from a violent intimate partner/other family member as well as free legal, medical and psychological support as needed. • To ensure sustainability of the Action the women beneficiaries of the services provided at the shelter were expected to be engaged in the series of vocational trainings and career advice services to reduce their economic dependency which usually constitutes a major factor impeding the women from applying for help in case of violence. • It was also planned that the trained beneficiaries would be empowered through the series of small funds granted to them for the purpose of the women-led community development initiatives. Above all, the economic empowerment of women was expected to serve as both preventive and recovery measures by addressing inter alia self-esteem and self-confidence issues of women survivors of DV. <p>According to the project documents the following results were expected to be produced upon successful implementation of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 10 (ten) staff of the shelter in the target region will be provided with thorough knowledge, skills and competencies to better assist the victims of DV; • 220 women will benefit from the services offered by the shelter; • 100 women victims of DV as well as active community members-women in the target region will be provided with enhanced knowledge and skills for business development through trainings on financial literacy, computer and managerial skills; • at least 30 of these women will be provided with small grants to initiate the business of their own. 	

<p>Outcome 2. Local CSOs, FBOs and key community members/leaders take action to change attitudes and behaviors in the community to support women and girls right to live a life free from violence, including referrals to the shelter services by December 2017</p>	<p>Output 2.1. The local CSOs and FBOs have better knowledge and capacities to work as agents of change for achieving behavioral and attitudinal changes regarding DV in the target communities</p> <p>Output 2.2. The community members covered by the project's awareness raising information sessions have better understanding of the DV, its negative consequences for the communities, and the available protection mechanisms including the services offered by the shelter</p>
<p>The main activities designed to generate the outputs under the Outcome 2. included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to increased sensitization of the population towards the issues of GBV as well as ensure effective utilization of the services offered at the shelter, the extensive awareness raising campaigns on gender equality, domestic violence as well as the related protection mechanisms were planned to be held in the target region. The project team hoped that the perpetrators of domestic violence would also benefit from the project through the awareness raising sessions for the community members since the sessions were expected to target the actual and potential perpetrators of violence as well. <p>According to the project documents the following results were expected to be produced upon successful implementation of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 2,000 women and men in the target region will be sensitized on the topics of gender equality, rights of women and men in families and services available at the shelter; • at least 1000 men and boys in the target region will be sensitized on the topics of gender equality, rights of women and men in families, and services available at the shelter, as well as the particular roles men can and must implement to prevent and address the problem of DV; • at least 3,000 copies of awareness raising materials on gender equality, rights of women and men in families, domestic violence, and services available at the shelter will be published and extensively distributed among the community members in the target region; 	
<p>Outcome 3. The Government (Cabinet of Ministers) supports policy and institutional measures (documented in a roadmap/action plan) to continue the shelter and its services in order to sustain and replicate the model, beyond the life of the project.</p>	<p>Output 3.1. The partnership and joint monitoring of results with the Government is held through grass-roots and high level advocacy events/meetings</p> <p>Output 3.2. Analytical framework (draft roadmap) on the organization of the shelter's services is developed to support the following replicability strategies</p>

The main activities designed to generate the outputs under the Outcome 3. included the following:

- Conduction of series joint advocacy and monitoring meetings;
- Development of a guide for replicating similar interventions in the future

According to the project documents the following results were expected to be produced upon successful implementation of the project:

- One roadmap/guide on the organization of the work in similar shelters/centers will be developed;
- at least 12 advocacy events held to ensure sustainability of the action beyond the life of the project.

PROJECT's TARGET REGION

Absheron region was identified as the major target region for the purposes of the project. The selection of the region was guided by several factors. First of all, as the related evidence based data suggested the region exhibited the highest prevalence rates of physical and sexual violence against women, notorious for the patriarchal attitudes and behaviours prevalent among the local population as well as accommodated certain proportions of IDP population. The rationale behind the IDP women being included was based on the findings of the countrywide survey (National Survey report on Violence against Women, UNFPA/SCFWCA, 2011) revealing that the women from IDP communities were at a much greater risk of being subject to DV due to facing more socio-economic hardships as a result of limited educational and career opportunities thus becoming more dependent on their husbands and in-laws as well as more vulnerable to DV. The region is also unique regarding the prevalent attitudinal and behavioral impediments stemming from the highly religious views of the local population. The considerations of vicinity to the capital city of Baku were also taken into account to ensure close and consistent monitoring of the project activities held by both the implementing agency and the Government partner engaged. It was also expected that the selection of the region that was close enough to the place where the project implementation unit is located would ease the financial burden of regular on-site visits thus further contributing to cost-effectiveness of the proposed project.

PROJECT's TARGET GROUPS/BENEFICIARIES

The project specifically targeted the women that have been subjected to different forms of domestic violence perpetrated by an intimate partner (physical, sexual, emotional, economic). Overall, 220 adolescent girls, young and adult women survivors of violence within the age range of 10-60 were expected to directly benefit from the services provided through the improved operations of the shelter. The project also envisioned a small economic empowerment component targeting these women and about 30 women were expected to be selected for the purposes of the small grant projects to be implemented in the second project year.

In addition to this to contribute to the effectiveness of the project interventions undertaken within these two years few more secondary beneficiaries have also been identified. This included 10 non-governmental organizations and 8 faith-based groups that were supposed to take most active part in the project's awareness raising component targeting 2,000 community members with mixed background and 1,000 men and boys.

The representatives of the Government including the policy and decision-makers were expected to support the project implementation and be a part of the exit strategy to ensure sustainability and national ownership beyond the project life.

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

The project represented a two-year initiative (2016-2017). The project commenced as of early January 2016 and according to the project documents and related work plans will run through the end of December 2017.

PROJECT BUDGET

Budget and expenditure of the project:

Outcomes	Outputs	Project planned	Actual expenditures (year 1)	Actual expenditures (year 2-until Nov. 2017)
Outcome 1	Securing shelter and hiring staff	2,000	2,000	0
	Capacity building trainings for shelter's staff	22,000 8,000 (AYLU)	22,000 7,763	0
	Provision of services and refuge to GBV victims	71,200	27,720	41,980
	Conduction of economic empowerment trainings and grants for small projects	66,000	4,000	62,000
Outcome 2	NGO capacity building for grass roots advocacy	4,500	4,500	0
	Awareness raising in the communities	138,000 9,000 (AYLU)	66,470	71,486
Outcome 3	Partnership meetings	10,500	2,565	2,213
	Development of the roadmap	1,500	0	1,500
Management	M&E	21,000 3,000 (AYLU)	6,000	8,616
	Audit	14,500	0	14,500
	Personnel and other costs	68,800	28,134	33,546

Total costs		440,000	163,388	235,841
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The total project costs seem to constitute 440,000 USD with the 420,000 USD to be received from the donor⁹ and 20,000 USD as a contribution from AYLU, as the main implementing agent. According to the grant agreement the amount of 420,000 USD was supposed to be transferred to AYLU in portions subject to successful implementation of the project components and approval by the donor of the respective programme and financial reports.

CHAPTER II

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

As per the UN Women evaluation policies the subject evaluation aimed at the following:

- To provide AYLU, national stakeholders, and the donor agency as well as the wider audience with an independent assessment of the progress of the project “Building Bridges of Life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan” towards the expected outputs and outcomes set forth in the results framework of the project document;
- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability and impact of the approaches adopted in the course of the action;
- To explore how the project has been positioned to effectively contribute to the Government efforts to prevent and address GBV in the country;
- To capture the key lessons from the project and draw a set of practical and feasible recommendations that could be utilised for the purposes of similar strategic interventions in the future.

It is expected that the findings of the evaluation and the recommendations provided therein will be effectively utilised by the Government of Azerbaijan, the civil society actors and other development agencies for the design and implementation of similar strategic interventions aimed at GBV prevention and response.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The evaluation has focused on the outputs and outcomes achieved through the implementation of the project to date. The evaluation has covered almost entire project duration from 2016 to 2017 (present).

The evaluation has taken place during the period of September-December 2017 and focused on the outcomes and outputs achieved throughout the implementation period. The evaluation team has assessed the project’s progress since early January 2016 as compared against the intended

⁹ USD 376,650 out of the total amount have been disbursed by the donor to date

results. Particular consideration has been paid to the extent to which the project design and the theory of change used during the project implementation provided the most relevant modalities for reaching the intended project objectives.

The scope of the evaluation has included the following core evaluation criteria: Effectiveness, Relevance, Efficiency, Sustainability, Impact, Knowledge Generation.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and knowledge generation has constituted core evaluation criteria for the subject assignment. The guiding questions have been as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions (including mandatory and additional questions marked in <i>Italic</i>)
Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how? 2. Was the project effective in delivering desired/planned results? 3. To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached? 4. How effective has the project been in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results were achieved? 5. To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes. 6. What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How? 7. To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why. 8. To what extent did the Project's M&E mechanism contribute in meeting project results? 9. How effective were the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project? 10. What are the future intervention strategies and issues? 11. <i>To what extent did the outputs and activities contribute to the achievement of the project outcomes?</i>

Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was the project relevant to the identified needs of the beneficiaries? 2. To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs of women and girls? 3. To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls? 4. What and how much progress has been made towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project (including contributing factors and constraints); 5. Were the inputs and strategies identified, and were they realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the results? 6. <i>To what extent was the project's conceptual framework responsive to the changes in the national development context?</i>
Efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the Project Document? 2. Was the process of achieving results efficient? Specifically did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred? Were the resources effectively utilized? 3. Did project activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors? Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs? 4. Could a different approach have produced better results? 5. How was the project's collaboration with its partners, other CSOs and government? 6. How efficient were the management and accountability structures of the project? 7. How did the project financial management processes and procedures affect project implementation? 8. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project's implementation process?

Sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project? 2. How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends? 3. Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach? 4. How were capacities strengthened at the individual and organizational level (including contributing factors and constraints)? - Describe the main lessons that have emerged? 5. What are the recommendations for similar support in future? (Nb. The recommendations should provide comprehensive proposals for future interventions based on the current evaluation findings). 6. <i>To what extent is the Government as well as other stakeholders willing to replicate the approach utilised by the project?</i>
Impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?
Knowledge Generation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls? 2. Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries that have similar interventions?

EVALUATION TEAM

The overall guidance to the project evaluation has been provided by the project coordination unit. The evaluation reference group has been composed from the start of the evaluation process. The group has been composed of the representatives of the project, national stakeholders and the donor agency. The main functions of the reference group has be as follows:

- To provide the evaluation team with relevant information and documentation on the project;
- To facilitate the access of the evaluation team to key informants and beneficiaries during the field phase;
- To discuss the reports produced by the evaluation team;
- To advise on the quality of the work done by the evaluation team;
- To assist in feedback of the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation into future programme design and implementation.

The **evaluation reference group** has provided ongoing feedback for quality assurance during the development of the ToR, preparation of the inception report and is also expected to take active part in the process of evaluation and during the development of the final report. AYLU has provided the evaluation team with all the necessary documents and reports including through referrals to web-based materials. AYLU management and staff were constantly available for interviews and technical assistance as appropriate. The organization also provided necessary additional logistical support in terms of providing space for meetings, and assisting in making appointments and arranging travel and site visits, when it was necessary.

The Evaluation team per se included the following consultants:

Ms. Turana Aliyeva has been selected through a comparative selection process to guide the evaluation process in her capacity of the Evaluation Team Leader. Ms. Aliyeva will be responsible for provision of the expertise in the programmatic areas of the evaluation. The expert will also be responsible for drafting the inception report, taking part in the data collection and analysis work during the design and field phases. She will also be responsible for drafting the draft and final evaluation reports based on the data collected and the inputs from all stakeholders.

Mr. Rauf Rahimov and Ms. Elnara Piriyeva, both qualified in the field of data collection and having adequate knowledge and experience with different interviewing techniques, will assist the Evaluation Team Leader with the data collection and analysis work during the design and field phases. The matching sex composition of the support staff (male to male, female to female) will ensure the adequate response rates during the data collection stage.

CHAPTER III

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The major evaluation criteria (effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, impact and knowledge management) and the respective questions elaborated on elsewhere in this report have guided the development of the evaluation methodology. Few more questions to be addressed through the evaluation have been added by the Evaluator to the list of the mandatory evaluation questions given her previous experience with similar evaluation projects.¹⁰

The negotiations held between the evaluation team and the project's implementing agent have led to the general agreement that the major approaches to inform the evaluation methodology will be based on assessment of the project success as regards what effective techniques have been used to contribute to effective and efficient implementation of the project as well examination of the failures that have had place and the causes of these failures. The results-based management approach (RBM) was used in the course of the evaluation and the strategic interventions utilized were assessed using the baseline data and indicators developed by the project coordination unit upon the project inception. The evaluation team also paid particular attention to how the resources

¹⁰ See the evaluation questions marked in *italic* in the preceding section

allocated for the purposes of the project by both the donor and implementing agent have been strategically managed to enhance the expected impact.

The evaluation adopted a transparent participatory approach to ensure that the views and opinions of all relevant national stakeholders, local authorities, community leaders, project's direct and indirect beneficiaries as well as other parties involved and affected by the project are actively sought and the data collected from these groups is used to inform the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

The subject assignment applied combined methods of evaluation with the use of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to secure effective measurement of the project impact. This included the desk review of the available project documents and other literature including the reports of the UN charter and treaty body monitoring bodies; as well as the field work including individual semi-structured interviews, in-depth key informant interviews, the focus groups and on-site observations where possible. Such an approach has been chosen to facilitate the validation of the data and findings which is elaborated in detail in the below sections.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collected for the purposes of this evaluation is based upon the primary and secondary data sources. The secondary data has been gathered from the project documents and other available literature. The primary data has been collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants representing project partners and beneficiaries, semi-structured interviews with project beneficiaries, focus group discussions with project beneficiaries and on-site observations. Desk review has been undertaken at the very inception of the evaluation process to provide a solid understanding of the local context including the facilitating factors for the project and the barriers, the project, its implementation phases, main goal and objectives, as well as the progress. The main documents that have been reviewed are annexed to the report.

The evaluation team maintained constant collaboration with AYLU throughout all stages of the evaluation process to locate a wide range of relevant project documents, reports and data. The available project data and materials constituted the major basis for the process of systematic desk review.

The evaluation team developed a detailed sampling framework to locate and identify all potential stakeholders that were closely engaged in the project activities and could have provided the necessary feedback and information for assessing the quality of implementation.

The full list of all documents reviewed is provided in the Bibliography of both the IR and the final Evaluation Report. The vast majority of these documents have been reviewed by the evaluation team for the purposes of development of the IR.

- The field work has been focused on collection of the data from the key institutions, communities and individuals that have been engaged in the project from the very initiation date. These included:
 - In-depth semi-structured interviews with the project implementation unit, key informants/partners from the Government, local authorities, donor community, NGOs engaged

- In-depth semi-structured interviews with project beneficiaries (direct and indirect project beneficiaries including the women victims of DV benefitting from the centre's services, women taking part in the small grants programme, staff of the shelter). Alongside these interviews, the testimonials were also collected as regards the difference the project has made in the lives of participating stakeholders. This was mainly done through the semi-structured interviews and some of the quotes have been used in the final report to help highlight the major findings.
- Focus group discussions with project beneficiaries (participants of the economic empowerment trainings, awareness raising sessions) have provided the information for the purposes of qualitative analysis of project results. The information collected during focus groups assisted the evaluation team in eliciting primary information about the effectiveness, timeliness of the project, as well as further understand the needs and expectations of the target. Specific project related topics were developed and introduced for the group discussions.
- On-site observations were also used. Series of visits were paid to the shelter, the communities where the information sessions were held, as well as few women-run small business projects. By using this component the evaluation team was provided with the opportunity to observe how some of the remaining project activities were implemented and whether there were gaps between the envisioned activities and the real implementation of the project.
- Drafting the evaluation report. The data and information collected both at the inception stage as well as during the second stage of the evaluation was thoroughly analysed and the evaluation team drafted the initial version of the evaluation report for the review of both the implementing agent and the donor.

The questionnaires for the interviews as well as the guides for the focus group discussions are annexed.¹¹

The field work will concentrate in both the capital city of Baku where the vast majority of the project stakeholders and the project coordination unit is based and the region of Absheron where the centre is located and where the project's awareness raising campaigns have been held.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES UTILISED

The series of sampling techniques have been used for the purposes of this evaluation project.

Thus, first of all, a purposive sampling method was used for the selection of the participants for the in-depth semi-structured interviews with partners. According to the information received from the project coordination unit this group of the stakeholders mainly consists of the focal points per agency that have been engaged in all related negotiations and implementation stages. Hence, the proportionality of the sample was not of importance in this case as the evaluation team needed to reach a targeted sample quickly to be able to retrieve the necessary information from the people closely engaged in project implementation. The selection of this sample was done after reviewing the programme and project documentation and was further triangulated with the AYLU.

¹¹ See Annex 3

The sampling for the in-depth semi-structured interviews with the project beneficiaries was done through the stratified random sampling method. The primary project beneficiaries (women/girls survivors of violence) were one of the major groups that the evaluation team targeted to solicit more information as regards the benefits they received during the project implementation period. A random stratified sampling was formed for this group of project direct beneficiaries. The stratas were identified based on age groups (adolescents (10-19); young women (20-24), & adult women) and the type of intimate partner violence they have been subject to (physical violence, sexual violence, psychological/emotional violence, economic violence). The numbers needed for the interviews were randomly selected from each group.

The evaluators also collected information as regards the project's economic empowerment component that targeted women beneficiaries of the services provided by the shelter. The training sessions on economic empowerment were conducted for project direct beneficiaries (women/girls victims of DV). For the purposes of evaluation, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with this group of project direct beneficiaries. The stratified convenience sampling was formed for this purpose (women who applied for grant and were successful). Given the difficulties of probability sampling method with the women participants of the economic empowerment trainings many of which have already left the centre and could be difficult to track and brought to participate in the focus groups, the convenience sampling method was used in this particular case. A small sample of the women who applied for the grant but were not successful was also added. The comparative data from both groups helped a lot to test the transparency process used by AYLU while selecting the grant.

Service providers of the shelter were also among the groups targeted by the evaluation. The service providers had specialist trainings aimed at improving the quality of the provided services by equipping them with up-to-date evidence based skills and knowledge in the sphere of VAW/G. The results of pre- & post-tests filled by the training participants before and after the training were evaluated. In addition to this, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 service providers who joined the trainings in the frames of the project.

For the evaluation of project's awareness raising component several focus groups were held. The evaluation team has decided that no rigorous probability sampling methods would be used with the focus groups (the participants project's awareness raising sessions with communities and male groups). The sampling was guided by the consideration of the post-FGD with comparison, where the convenience sampling was used for the participants that were available and willing to participate and share their feedback.

Guided by the criteria of representativeness of AYLU's ongoing activities and considerations of the project's repetitive impact the on-site observations targeted the centre and the places where the small grant projects of the women were still ongoing.

Overall, 47 in-depth semi-structured interviews and 8 focus group discussions have been held:¹²

¹² See Annex 4 for the list of the persons interviewed. The identity related information of the project's direct and indirect beneficiaries taking part in the semi-structured interviews and focus groups is provided, but this info is to be treated with utmost confidentiality given reservations voiced by the target women.

Stakeholders/beneficiaries	No of in-depth semi-structured interviews	No of focus groups
Project implementation unit	3	
Project partners, including other donor agencies	11	
Women beneficiaries of center's services (4 adolescents (10-19); 4 young women (20-24), & 4 adult women)	12	
Women beneficiaries of grants programme (5 women who applied for grant and were successful and 5 women who applied but weren't successful in getting the grant)	10	
Shelter's staff	10	
Participants of community awareness raising		3 with men 3 with women
Participants of awareness sessions with male groups		2
Donor agency	1	

VALIDATION METHODS

As mentioned elsewhere in this ER the evaluation team has used an array of methods to cross compare the findings. First of all, this included the use of different data sources as elaborated in detail in the above sections. In addition to this, the initial findings have been discussed with the project team and the main Government partner during the de-briefing session to ensure that their feedback, suggestions and comments are duly incorporated therein.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

The evaluation team collected the evidence ensuring that everything is written in the form of the notes. The informed consent was sought in all cases. The responses generated from the key informant in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews and focus groups have been analysed by arranging them in thematic areas benchmarking the main objectives of the evaluation. The

evaluation team has summarised the various opinions shared, assessed the degree of consensus or disagreements over the issues concerned and synthesised the themes/patterns in line with the project outcomes and outputs, expected results and the factors associated with GBV. The draft report has been shared with the project team and the key stakeholders and the final report will be informed by the respective feedback of all engaged parties.

LIMITATIONS AND RISKS

The evaluation team has tried to ensure that the evaluation methodology developed minimised to the extent possible the risks and limitations common for similar evaluation projects including inter alia through the comprehensive data collection plan to ensure validity and reliability of the data collected and analysis plan for the evaluation. This was envisioned especially for the outcomes and outputs for which the results data may not be available or difficult to obtain to draw sufficiently grounded causal inferences given the sensitivity of the topic and special circumstances of the main beneficiary groups the project worked with.

Although the vast majority of the project documents and related data were made available for the review of the evaluation team, few challenges were faced in this regard. One of the major gaps was related to the absence of certain documents to track the progress including field monitoring reports. The interviews with the project team have revealed that the AYLU has no practice of drafting these reports and the related reporting is usually supported by the related financial records.

Another limitation is related to the sampling methodologies used. As described elsewhere in this report, the limited availability of the financial and human resources as well as the limited timeframe for the evaluation assignment impeded collection of representative samples across all project outcomes and outputs. While the representativeness of the sample was fully ensured with the main project beneficiaries (abused women), the evaluation team had to apply the purposive sample with the main project partners and the participants of project information sessions.

Nevertheless, to mitigate the risk of a response bias, the evaluation team conducted all these meetings and FGDs without the representatives of the AYLU. In addition to this, the evaluation team used the data collection techniques enlisted above to work towards ensuring that the base-lines, targets and indicators for the project outputs and outcomes are carefully tracked whenever available.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation team abided by all ethical standards required for conducting this type of evaluation projects. The principles outlined in the “Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation” developed by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG)¹³ have guided the evaluation process. In addition a non-exclusive list

¹³ UNEG *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation* Available at: <http://www.unevaluation.org/> (last accessed on 08.10.17)

of major papers produced by international development agencies have also been consulted.¹⁴ More specifically, the evaluation team ensured the following:

- Guarantee the safety of respondents and the research team.
- Apply protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of respondents.
- Select and train the evaluation team members on ethical issues.
- Provide referrals to local services and sources of support for women that might ask for them.
- Ensure compliance with legal codes governing areas such as provisions to collect and report data, particularly permissions needed to interview or obtain information about the issues concerning GBV.
- Store securely the collected information.

The sensitivity of the issue at stake as well as the vulnerability and safety concerns of the people the evaluation team will interact with were the key determinants for such an approach. Hence, the evaluation team ensured that the confidentiality of both the respondents and the information gathered was fully ensured. The written consent was obtained in all circumstances. The people engaged in field data collection were fully oriented in the related ethical considerations. The privacy of the respondents during the data collection stage was also ensured to secure an enabling environment for maximum response rate and due to the safety considerations.

¹⁴ WHO (2003) *Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women* Available at: www.who.int/gender/documents/violence/who_fch_gwh_01.1/en/index.html (last accessed on 29.09.17); Jewkes, R., E. Dartnall and Y. Sikweyiya (2012) *Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on the Perpetration of Sexual Violence* Sexual Violence Research Initiative. Pretoria, South Africa, Medical Research Council. Available at: www.svri.org/EthicalRecommendations.pdf (last accessed on 29.09.17); *Researching violence against women: A practical guide for researchers and activists* November 2005, Available at: http://www.path.org/publications/files/GBV_rvaw_complete.pdf (last accessed on 30.09.17); WHO (2007) *Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies* Available at: http://www.who.int/gender/documents/OMS_Ethics&Safety10Aug07.pdf (last accessed on 01.10.17)

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS PER EVALUATION QUESTION

EFFECTIVENESS

1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?

The analysis of the data collected during the evaluation process enables to state that overall the project's goal, outcomes and outputs have been achieved. The project managed to provide support to the significant proportion of women victims of GBV seeking assistance with improved protection and support through the services provided by the shelter. According to the shelter's registry 448 women in total were provided with different support services as compared against the project's target of 220. *The project team's decision to focus on provision of support services through already operational NGO-run centre has contributed to the success of the action.* The organisation already had a relatively well-functioning mechanism of support and has been acknowledged by both the Government and the civil society actors. However, the center's operations were dependant on donor funding only. According to the data collected during the individual interviews with the women survivors of the GBV as well as the relevant partners from the development community, by providing support to maintain the operations of this shelter the project managed to successfully realise one of its main objectives on assisting the victims of GBV that were in need of temporary refuge as well as legal, psychological and medical support. One of the interviewed NGO experts stated that "while there are major delays in the Government action regarding creation of an effective referral mechanism for the GBV victims, thanks to donor funding this centre serves as the only place where the abused women could find refuge, food, medical and legal support, as well as support with restoration of lost or stolen legal documents." The project also managed to boost the capacities of 10 staff members of the shelter through the series of the training sessions held by the international experts well recognised in the field. The review of the pre and post training questionnaires filled in by the participants indicates improvement in the responses to the questions regarding the different forms of GBV, the main principles of work at the shelter, rapport building strategies necessary in the course of the work with the abused women, national legal provisions concerning the phenomenon as well as their personal perceptions regarding the dynamics of gender relations in the country.

In addition to this, the project's commitment as regards conducting economic empowerment trainings for the women beneficiaries of the shelter's services as well as provision of small grants for the group of abused women was also fulfilled. The project data shows that overall 103 women beneficiaries of the center's services took part in the trainings over the course of 2 years and 30 women were selected to establish and run a small business of their own. While the project's intervention strategy to boost economic independence of the women was relevant, the analysis of the available data shows that the sustainability of this specific component was not adequately ensured. *The interviews held with the women recipients of small grants as well as the shelter's staff have confirmed that the battered women are in the vast majority of cases lacking the necessary capacities for running business in a sustainable way, and hence are in need of a more relevant programmes tailored specifically to their capacities and ability to independently continue their work. The issue of alternative child care services is also to be considered, since the women with small children also faced challenges in reconciling the issue of child care and work.*

The project records show that 2,600 community members and 1,400 men and boys were covered by the project's sensitization sessions on the causes and consequence of GBV and the available

protection schemes. The review of the pre and post evaluation materials from the information sessions indicated significant increase of awareness (87% in community trainings and 72% in male groups) as regards the concepts of gender, GBV, importance of Government intervention in the cases of abuse, etc. The data obtained from the FGDs was of greater significance for the purposes of the current evaluation given the considerations of longer term effect of the knowledge and information shared during the information sessions. *74% of the FGD participants (59 persons in total) were able to correctly address the questions on available GBV protection mechanisms. Almost similar numbers of the participants displayed more tolerant attitudes towards the intervention schemes enabling the women to benefit from refuge and support services offered by the shelters.*

Alongside these project components the high level and grass roots advocacy was held to ensure policy and institutional measures to support the operations of the shelter in the future. *Mobilisation of civil society actors for joint advocacy to ratify the Istanbul Convention should be acknowledged as an example of good practice in this regard.* The interviews with the project stakeholders (UN and NGOs) have demonstrated that the ratification of the Convention is of high potential to pave the way for the establishment of an effective referral mechanism for GBV prevention and response. Hence, to scale up the project's advocacy strategies the project managed to mobilise a group of 32 NGOs to submit a joint petition calling the Government to ratify the Convention. The follow-up interview with the Government representatives revealed that the Government is now considering the financial implications associated with the ratification process. It has also been acknowledged by the project beneficiaries and stakeholders that the project results and targets have been realistic and achieved successfully by the end of the project lifetime.

2. Was the project effective in delivering desired/planned results?

The project has been effective in delivering the planned results. Both the quantitative data obtained and the feedback received from the project staff and beneficiaries indicate that *the project's targets as regards support services provided to the victims of GBV (448 women assisted versus the target of 220), capacity building trainings held for the staff of the shelter (10 staff members), project's economic empowerment (103 women covered by the trainings versus the target of 100 and 30 women benefitting from the small grants programme), awareness raising (2,600 community members reached versus the target of 2000 and 1,400 men and boys reached versus the target of 1,000) and policy dialogue components have been achieved.* There was adequate planning regarding the timeline for the execution of the action, the necessary human resources to execute the planned actions as well as the overall costs necessary for the effective implementation of the project components. *The review of the data obtained from the interviews with the project stakeholders, the FGDs with the community members and the interviews with the battered women demonstrate that the actions and interventions planned were tailored to address the needs of the project's target groups. According to the respondents the lack of effective support services and poor institutional capacities to identify the cases of GBV and provide needed assistance as well as widespread attitudinal barriers concerning the issues of GBV both in the communities and within the service sector impede hundreds of battered women from seeking support services when faced with the instances of GBV.* Hence, the availability of this shelter and its service providing personnel has been crucial for rendering needed support services for the victims of GBV. The project planning was also adequate to ensure complementarity of the strategic interventions undertaken. The feedback collected from both the project beneficiaries and the

stakeholders reveals that they are satisfied with the outcomes of the projects as regards the support provided to GBV victims, as well as impact made through extensive awareness raising campaigns and coordination with other partners active in the field.

3. To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?

The project targets as regards the intended numbers have been fully reached. One shelter was selected for the purposes of the project in line with the predefined objectives. The decision to direct the project resources to supporting the already established shelter given the considerations of time necessary for establishment of a new center/shelter was strategically correct since this decision has enormously contributed to the success of the project team that has not had a track record as regards direct provision of services to the victims of GBV. The focus on work with this shelter has ensured project's easy outreach to the battered women per se. 10 staff members of the shelter were trained through the series of capacity building trainings held by the international experts. This indicator is in line with the pre-defined target. The analysis of the training evaluation reports as well as the interviews held with the selected staff members indicate that the trainings have contributed to the increased sensitivity of staff members regarding the issues of GBV, increased knowledge as regards different forms of GBV, interlinkages between these forms as well as the strategies to be used to effectively support and refer the women. One interviewed staff member acknowledged that it came as a surprise to her that "there may be linkages between psychological violence/persistent controlling behaviour of a partner and serious intestinal problems in women." Overall, 448 women victims of domestic violence have been assisted through the services provided at the shelter by the trained personnel during the project lifetime within the two year timeframe. This number exceeds the pre-defined target of 220. The interviews with the shelter's director and staff have revealed that the average number of 200-250 victims is supported by the shelter on an annual basis. They attributed such an inflow of the victims to the fact that the shelter is 1 of the 2 shelters working in the country that provide support services to the victims. According to them, the shelter also intakes the women referred to them by the Government agencies including the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In line with the project targets, 103 women beneficiaries of the shelter's services have been provided with the trainings on economic empowerment and business skills. Out of these women 30 women were given support to run the business of their own that included but were not limited to the following: a small beauty salon in the village, a small product compartment at the market, a small pastry shop, a homemade jam shop, a small tailoring business, a small chicken broiler service, etc.

To support these interventions through high level and grass roots advocacy, 2,600 community members versus the target of 2,000 and 1,400 men versus the target of 1,000 were sensitised by the project's information sessions on GBV causes and consequences as well as the available GBV protection schemes. Although both the project timeline as well as the absence of resources and longterm evaluation doesn't enable the Evaluation Team to judge on the impact of the sessions as regards the attitudinal and behavioural changes, the analysis of the available data as well as the meetings with several participants of these sessions indicate that the participants were able to correctly address the questions regarding the causes and consequences of GBV as well as the available GBV protection schemes. *The representatives of 18 civil society organisations were also engaged in the project's sensitisation sessions to ensure sustainability of the action. However, according to the information received during the evaluation the project had difficulties reaching out to 8 faith-based organisations. Only 1 faith-based organisation interested in the*

topic was located and actively engaged. The project has also been effective in securing the support of the high level decision and policy makers who not only attended the sessions and meetings organized but also actively contributed to the high level discussions dedicated to the necessity of prompt adoption of the related policy framework on GBV prevention and response initiated by the SCFWCA.

4. How effective has the project been in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results were achieved?

The analysis of the data collected during the interviews and FGDs reveals that the project was able to address the needs of the project's main target groups. The interviews with the randomly selected sample of the women who were the direct beneficiaries of the project have demonstrated that these women have been able to benefit from the protection and support services offered by the shelter. These women have been referred for the shelter's services by either the Government agencies (SCFWCA, Ministry of Internal Affairs Police departments, etc.) or through the informal support networks including the relatives or neighbours. The numbers are as follows: referrals from the media agencies (62), police (54), General Office on combating human trafficking (62), SCFWCA (10), hospitals (4), other NGOs (22), through social media channels (128), referred by friends, neighbours (106). The stories of physical abuse and intolerable controlling behaviour by the intimate partners further complicated by economic hardships and alcohol abuse constituted the major reason why these women were trying to escape the violent relationships.

Form of violence/abuse	Number of women subjected to violence/abuse
Physical	238
Psychological	62
Economic	68
Sexual	4
Stalking	16
Blackmailing	6
Children taken away	16
Searching for her husband	6
Evicted from house	32

According to the interviewed women, despite strong family support networks in Azerbaijan, some women find it very hard to go back to the parental house given the financial issues, lack of space to accommodate both herself and her children as well as the impossibility of cohabitation with the families of their siblings already residing there. Some of the women staying at the shelter said that they were welcome to be back at the parental house, but on a condition to leave their children behind. One of the interviewed women stated that both herself and her daughters were able to find a safe haven in this shelter, following abuse by an intimate partner and in-laws. According to her "It's twice as humiliating to know that you are literally evicted from your own

house given some very silly reasons... And given the circumstances and economic hardships I knew that I won't be able to stay for long time at my parents' or brother's house. These days people find it hard to sustain themselves, let alone the relatives in need and without any prospects to work or get engaged in income generating opportunities." Almost all interviewed women acknowledged that while they were happy with the support they were provided, and said that they wish the shelter had more resources and capacities to accommodate more women and for longer periods of time. One of the interviewed women stated that "It's exactly at times like this when we have no place or friend to turn to that the Government's intervention is most needed. When a relative or a neighbour is providing support this will not last for long time. Besides, I know that I become indebted to them, and I don't want this to be the case. I am truly thankful that I've been able to get into this shelter during the hardest parts of my life. They were really very supportive. And although I know that I need to leave one day, at least I've been able to psychologically recover to get back to life."

While the need for the temporary refuge and subsistence was a major factor bringing the women to the shelter, according to them the staff of the shelter also provides significant support as regards certain legal proceedings in the issues of divorce, filing claims for property rights or financial allowances for child support, etc. Out of the women staying at the shelter, 374 were provided with psychological support, 14 were pregnant at the time they got into the shelter and the staff arranged the safe delivery of the children in collaboration with the health institutions, 19 women were helped with different medical interventions/surgeries, 8 treated for the lung disease at a relevant health institution.

The support with legal documents included: attaining birth registration of the children (36), restoration of personal ID (40), filing successful complaint with provision of birth allowances (10), filing divorce (52), filing the case for allowances (62), determination of fatherhood (16), filing complaints for property rights (26), restoration of property rights (24), support with receipt of social allowances (18), filing complaint for receiving the children back (24), filing violence related cases with police (8), support to pass the borders with a child without father's permission (1), restoration of other documents (14).

It transpired that all of the women who have escaped the violent relationships were in acute need of economic support. *Although the resources available were not sufficient to provide financial support to all beneficiaries of the shelter's services, 30 women managed to start running the business of their own.*

5. To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.

The feedback collected from both the beneficiaries and project stakeholders indicates that the project has been effective in generating positive changes in the lives of many women who applied for the centre's services during the project's lifetime. One of the interviewed women said: "I know that the conflict situations may take place in every family and this is inescapable... However, when the conflict becomes unmanageable and when you feel that you have no strength to tolerate the situation, you would usually seek support of your parents, siblings, close relatives who would not send you back and will try to provide support you need. This shelter has become such a refuge for the women who have no place to go and no close relatives to seek help from." The analysis of the data collected suggests that *the availability of such a centre has been crucial*

to provide temporary shelter and support to many women, some of which had no place to go and seek help from. The staff of the shelter indicates that rarely would a woman be cognisant that the cases of psychological abuse or controlling behaviour committed by an intimate partner constitute the cases of domestic violence that are in fact punishable by the law. It transpires from the shelter's records that *the vast majority of the women seeking support were the victims of physical abuse that had reached a scale when it was no longer tolerable.* The support provided by the project to maintain the operations of the shelter has been beneficial to many women that got a temporary place to stay to, as well as benefitted from the services offered here.

Although the project's economic empowerment component is to certain extent questionable given the lack of documented evidence as regards the criteria used for selection process, lack of relevant business mentoring to the women willing to and having received an opportunity to run a business of their own, as well as sustainability of the action overall, it transpires to be a source of motivation and encouragement for the women who have always been economically dependant on either their fathers, or brothers, or husbands or other male relatives. *Although the available evidence suggests that such a scheme is of great potential for boosting the self-confidence in the battered women, more consideration is to be paid to developing an effective model of economic empowerment in the future that will be informed by the capacities of the women to ensure sustainability of the efforts undertaken.*

6. What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How?

The information received from both the project staff, beneficiaries and the stakeholders indicates that there have been several factors that contributed to the success of the project.

According to the interviewed partners the project enjoyed high level Government support that has been crucial for successful running of project's awareness raising component. The SCFWCA was the main Government partner for the project. The project also enjoyed support from several members of the Parliament. Some of the interviewed stakeholders from the civil society sector noted that the organisations willing to do similar activities in both Baku and the regions have to obtain an official permission letter from the President's office and follow-up support letters from the local executive committees which was not the case with this project given the high level support already secured. *This made it possible for the project's trainers to easily mobilise local communities for the purposes of information sessions on such a sensitive topic as GBV without any impediments that may have been created by the local authorities since the project was already positioned as the one initiated in close partnership with the Government.*

The existence of the Law on Prevention of the DV as well as the recent Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee (2015) with strong emphasis on the necessity to promptly develop the effective national response and referral mechanism for GBV prevention and response has also been among the enabling factors that has made it possible for the project team to demonstrate that *the proposed project was aimed at contributing to fulfilment of national priorities and Government's commitments to the international human rights treaty body mechanisms.* According to the information provided by the representatives of the Government, the information on this project would be included into the next CEDAW report as a good model of Government-NGO partnership for assisting the GBV victims. Although for the time being there seem to be no opportunities for the Government funding to follow to support the shelter's operations, the NGO running the shelter was granted a consultative status to be represented in the NGO council organised under the auspices of the SCFWCA in the capacity of the expert agency on the topic of

GBV prevention and response. This development is expected to pave the way for the replication of the shelter's model in the future.

The project also seems to have benefitted from the support provided by the UN agencies operating in the country and particularly UNFPA that is currently the lead UN agency advocating for establishment of the national GBV response mechanism. The interviews held with the related officials have revealed that *UNFPA provided advice and recommendations with several project components including the relevant expertise with the capacity building training for the staff of the shelter, training materials for the awareness sessions in the communities, guidelines on the strategies involving engagement of men for addressing GBV, etc.*

The delays with the endorsement of the national policy framework on GBV response and referral mechanism have been among the major constraints. The number of the civil society actors working solely on the issues of gender equality and GBV is very limited to boost the effective advocacy campaign in the country. In addition to this, the information collected during the interviews with the NGOs indicates that *the active engagement of the NGOs is also complicated by the marked deterioration in the sustainability of CSOs in Azerbaijan following several years of relative stability.* Many dimensions of CSO sustainability have been affected by the restrictive amendments that were made to the laws governing civil society –including the Law on Grants, Law on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Law on Registration of Legal Entities and State Registry, and Code on Administrative Offenses.

The attitudinal barriers regarding the issues of gender equality and GBV in Azerbaijan should also be counted among the impeding factors. *The evidence collected during the interviews suggests that the situation is twice as complicated by the lack of common understanding on the issues concerned between the major actors in the field including the Government and the civil society.* While both parties agree that the measures are to be promptly undertaken to eliminate the phenomenon of GBV by creating an effective response and referral mechanism, there are major arguments as regards the intervention strategies including the legal provisions, etc. One of the interviewed representatives of the international organisations stated: “Many decision makers are still against repealing the issue of family reconciliation from the Law on Prevention of DV. We haven't still been able to persuade them that this is absolutely necessary given the lack of capable personnel to assess the risks that may be posed by an abusive partner when the family is reunited. They think that the endorsement of these provisions could pose threats to the family institute in Azerbaijan.” The topics of GBV and gender equality are still among the taboo topics and are very sensitive to be discussed both politically and socially. The delays in the adoption of the National Strategy on Prevention of Domestic Violence, the limited knowledge of MPs and other decision-making actors and the government officials on the prevalence rates, causes and consequences of domestic violence, lack of systematic data collection on DV as well as inadequate human resources in a capacity to manage the cases of DV referrals should also be mentioned among the factors impeding effective implementation of the activities aimed at building the capacities to combat DV in the country.

7. To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why.

As described in the response to the previous question one of the major impediments for ensuring effective support and rehabilitation services for the victims of DV has transpired to be linked to the absence of an effective national policy framework on GBV prevention and response. Although the project was not specifically aimed at major policy level interventions, the data collected shows that the project team has successfully led the advocacy efforts for contributing to

the efforts on legal and policy change. *In addition to the regular advocacy meetings held with the project partners and high level officials, in early 2017 AYL*U initiated a petition to the Parliament on behalf of 32 civil society organisations including AYLU demanding to promptly ratify the Istanbul Convention on prevention on DV. This was done in response to the growing number of GBV cases taking place in the country. The follow-up interview with the Government representatives revealed that the Government is now considering the financial implications associated with the ratification process.

It transpires from the interviews that AYLU is not the only organization advocating for legal and policy changes regarding the issue of GBV prevention and response. The last years have witnessed more efforts in this regard. However, the financial constraints faced by the Government following the recent economic crisis caused by the drop of oil prices have impeded the process of endorsement of many social programmes and plan incurring significant financial costs. Hence, *it is expected that the draft Roadmap being currently prepared by AYL*U in collaboration with the local expert community will present yet another piece of evidence to persuade the Government in the need to promptly endorse the national policy framework on GBV prevention and response.

8. To what extent did the Project's M&E mechanism contribute in meeting project results?

The review of the available project data and the interviews with project staff and beneficiaries indicate that the project had a pre-defined monitoring framework that has guided the process of implementation. In addition to the project timeline documents that have constituted the integral parts of the application package, the project team developed a set of M&E instruments that have been shared with the Evaluation team. The analysis of these instruments and the project data reveals that *the project team had a clear understanding as regards the types of regular qualitative and quantitative data needed for successful monitoring of project implementation process to assess the dynamics of activities and make necessary interventions as needed.*

The checklist/registry for the victims of GBV benefitting from the shelters services was developed. The pre and post tests for the purposes of the capacity building trainings for the staff as well as the information sessions on GBV prevention and response mechanisms were developed and used per session. The accurate accounts of the project's economic scheme were also put in place.

The interviews with beneficiaries and the stakeholders have also revealed that regular monitoring visits and on-site observations of the project activities were also held. However, *the Evaluation team was not able to locate the field trip reports which is among the major project shortcomings as regards the component on M&E.* In general, it transpires that the organization doesn't seem to have the institutional mechanism of M&E and *the tools and mechanisms drafted in the course of implementation of different activities are project driven and are guided by the requirements and expectations of a particular donor agency. The availability of the strict rules and guidelines by the UN Women/TF on VAW as regards the project implementation and related data collection has alleviated the negative effect of this finding on this particular project. Although the evaluation team observed that there is the need for AYL*U's staff to further develop their skills and capacities for the purposes of effective project monitoring.

The analysis of project records though indicates that AYLU was successful in submitting the semiannual and annual reports to the donor (except for the final report that was due when the project is over). The organization had only minor deviations as regards the predefined targets. *The*

data also shows that the project team benefitted from the comments and recommendations of the donor as well as the audit findings and introduced the necessary revisions to the implementation approach, especially as regards the financial operations.

9. How effective were the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?

The available project documents show that the project had a very clear intervention strategy and theory of change, that was developed to address the needs of the project's main beneficiaries. *The project framework had three major outcomes, seven outputs and a comprehensive list of activities that the outputs aimed at achieving.*

AYLU utilised several major strategies and tools in the course of implementation of this project. *One of the major strategies utilised was that of capacity building to increase the knowledge and skills of the staff of the shelter on how to better identify and assist the victims of GBV.* The data obtained during the analysis stage indicates that this method was very useful in a sense that it contributed to the development of the shelter's human resources, building on their existing skills and knowledge, as well as engaging them in the processes of learning and adapting to the change to enable them to perform in a more effective way. In the long term, this strategy is expected to contribute to the sustainability of the action beyond the project lifetime. *As noted elsewhere in this report, the review of the pre and post training questionnaires filled in by the participants indicates significant improvement in the responses to the questions regarding the different forms of GBV, the main principles of work at the shelter, rapport building strategies necessary in the course of the work with the abused women, national legal provisions concerning the phenomenon as well as their personal perceptions regarding the dynamics of gender relations in the country.* The staff seemed to be confident enough sharing their feedback as regards this project and its capacity building component. One of the interviewed women also noted that "The vast majority of the people coming to work at the shelters like this are those enthusiastic individuals that may at time lack the relevant academic background or even skills to effectively handle the cases. Hence, it's important that the organisations invest more into similar capacity building components." The staff also expressed the wish that future intervention strategies on capacity building are complemented by the study tours to the countries with a well established network of support and referral centers.

The economic empowerment strategy used by the project has been acknowledged by the representatives of local NGOs to be quite effective. The evidence based data shows that financial sustainability is among the major factors that enable the women victims of DV to resort to respective protection mechanisms without the fear of violence escalation. *With this in mind, the project has employed economic empowerment as a part of a holistic model that should be sensitive to the full range of DV issues.* The rationale for this strategy was also to ensure that DV services focus not only on advocacy, safety, health and legal counselling but also on workforce development strategies such as vocational training and business development opportunities. However, for such an important strategy to be effective series of factors should be paid particular consideration. The criteria for selection of the beneficiaries should be clearly documented to ensure that all the relevant checklists and other supporting documents used during the selection process are available to be able to judge on the transparency of the selection, the regular mentoring for the women running such a business should be available, the aspects of business initiatives run by the women contributing to retaliation of violence should be carefully considered, and the mechanism for sustainability should be ensured. *It is particularly in the absence of these mechanisms that the small businesses established and run by the women in the framework of this project are not expected to*

be effectively sustained beyond the project lifetime when the funding is over. This was an observation made by the shelter's staff. One of the interviewed social workers employed at the shelter noted that "While this intervention logic used by the project is good given the intent, we need to be more realistic. You cannot expect an uneducated, unskilled mother of three children to be able to run a business, deal with the tax systems, ensure proper financial management. It would be very helpful if similar projects aim at trying to provide these women with specific skills and make sure that there are linkages established between the projects and employment markets, where their services could be effectively offered."

Awareness raising strategy used by the project to educate the local community members on the causes and consequences of the GBV as well as the available protection mechanisms is believed to be one of the most successful interventions to achieve the expected results in the context of such countries like Azerbaijan. The data collected shows that these sessions have created an enabling environment for exchange of information thus leading to improved mutual understanding on the issue required for lasting behavioural change in the community through addressing prevalent socio-cultural barriers.

The evidence suggests that AYLUN was also able to successfully utilise the Government support it enjoyed for the purposes of the policy dialogue held at the Parliamentary level. *It is hoped that this specific intervention and AYLUN's advocacy will contribute to the adoption of the amendments to the Law on prevention of DV and other relevant pieces of national legislation to ensure improved protection measures for the victims of GBV.* The interviews with the representatives of the Government and the member of the Parliament who were closely engaged throughout the implementation stage reveal that there is a political will to take these issues further following the extensive advocacy held by different international development agencies and civil society actors. However, more documented evidence is needed as regards the validity and expected effect of the proposed approaches and intervention strategies. It is therefore crucial that the Roadmap produced in the framework of this specific project clearly documents the strategies employed, the challenges faced, the mitigation strategies that worked well, as well as the lessons learnt.

10. What are the future intervention strategies and issues?

The project team found it difficult to comment on the future intervention strategies given the fact that the project is wrapping up in a couple of months and *the prospects of its follow-up with additional funding from either UN or other international development agencies seem to be rather scarce.* Nevertheless, *the team seems to be determined to continue exploring the opportunities for scaling up some of the project interventions including mainly the high level policy advocacy and awareness raising components.* The project team is also looking forward to the recommendations of the evaluation report as well as the project Roadmap for guiding further interventions. *In any case, the feedback collected from both the project staff and beneficiaries, as well as the project partners indicates that the project was able to set up a model shelter and services to provide support and referrals to the victims of GBV. It is now crucial that the results of the project are clearly documented and shared with the Government alongside other advocacy actions planned to be undertaken.*

11. To what extent did the outputs and activities contribute to the achievement of the project outcomes?

Overall, *the data collected during the evaluation process indicates that the outputs and activities have in general been well designed to contribute to the project outcomes.* And the necessary amendments introduced to some of the strategies in the course of the action have further boosted this process.

To start with the first outcome that has been concerned with the improved access of the women and girls at risk of violence to the adequately equipped shelter, the project documents show that the project was initially aiming at setting up a new shelter, recruiting the staff and building the skills and knowledge of the staff to better assist the victims of GBV, ensuring that the battered women have information about the services of the shelter and are accessing these services, as well as boosting the women's economic independence to mitigate the risk of further retaliation of violence. The interviews with the project's stakeholders as well as the project staff reveal that the decision to shift the focus to supporting the already established shelter has been very timely and adequate, since given the local context related challenges including the costs to be incurred for setting up a new shelter in the absence of Government funding and support, the bureaucratic challenges and paper work necessary for the establishment of the shelter per se. The data collected during the individual interviews with the project partners have revealed that the recruitment of the relevant staff and utilisation of the center's services by the battered women wouldn't have yielded the results project has managed to have to date and the vast majority of the project targets most probably wouldn't have been met given the available project timeline and resources. The respondents were univocal in the opinion that it would be really very challenging to set up a new shelter given the target this project aimed to reach in the absence of the national referral mechanism to assist the victims of the GBV as well as the predominant attitudinal barriers that still continue shaping people's perceptions as regards inadmissibility of state intervention in family conflicts. The public union "Clean World" was acknowledged by all respondents from the partner agencies as the only organization that provides the shelter and refuge to the battered women seeking support from across the country and the organization has a track record of expertise assisting victims, including inter alia through well established partnership frameworks with the local health institutions and the departments of internal affairs/police. *The selection of this shelter for the purposes of the project has contributed to the success of the smooth implementation of other related activities under this specific outcome including the capacity building for the staff, the provision of support services to the abused women as well as the attempts to ensure economic independence of the women.*

The information obtained from the project beneficiaries and the stakeholders indicates that AYLU's strategy to sensitise the staff of local civil society actors on GBV prevention and response mechanisms have contributed to their active engagement in the course of the awareness raising sessions held thereafter in the communities and with the male groups. It transpired from the interviews and FGDs that although the predominant majority of the NGOs in Azerbaijan are mainly engaged in the awareness raising projects, the issue of GBV requires particular consideration, since it doesn't only require expert knowledge on all related issues and mechanisms, but also obliges a person to carefully consider his/her perceptions so that the personal attitudes do not impact the message they aim to send to the local communities. One of the trainers from the local NGOs stated: "AYLU's strategy to both build upon our knowledge as regards the issues concerned and share with us the training materials and handouts for further dissemination was very useful and time saving." A representative of the faith based organization closely engaged in the awareness raising sessions for the male groups stated: "I have been actively working with different community groups within the last 10 years mainly on the issues of child rights and gender equality. I've done several trainings on the GBV components too. However, it was a com-

pletely eye opening experience to raise these questions in the groups of men and boys and observe how difficult it was for many youth to openly condemn the cases of intimate partner violence, given the dominance of a completely different approach in the communities they belong to. This was a completely new approach to me, and I felt that in some cases we indeed need to change some of the strategies used before to be able to achieve long lasting changes as regards the issues of gender based violence. And the work with male groups per se is an absolute must in this regard.” *The active engagement of the CSOs is also expected to contribute to the sustainability of the action beyond the project lifetime as well as ensure lasting behavioral changes as well as further utilisation of the shelter’s services by the local communities.*

The feedback collected from the relevant stakeholders as well as the high level officials shows that *their active engagement in the meetings held during the project’s lifetime have contributed to their sensitisation as regards the issues of GBV prevention and response.* A representative of the Government noted in his interview: “We are pleased to observe that many decision-makers whom we managed to closely engage in the project become more sensitive and understanding towards the issues concerned. While initially the members of Parliament had major reservations as regards many issues concerning protection of the victims, family reconciliation, etc., slowly but surely they change their opinions. And this is good, since we get more advocates to speak the same voice with us in the future.” However, there is an acute need to present tangible evidence to the Government on the proposed model as well as the recommendations for follow up given the lessons learnt by the project. It is expected that the draft roadmap alongside this evaluation report will serve this purpose.

RELEVANCE

1. Was the project relevant to the identified needs of the beneficiaries?

There is no doubt about the relevancy of the project goal and objectives. Gender based violence and access to such services as shelter, psychological support, legislative support, social work services were confirmed as pressing issues. According to the evidence based data women survivors of DV do not seek redress and protection in case of violence (National Survey report on VAW, UNFPA/SCFWCA,2011). Due to absence of national mechanism on provision adequate preventative, protective, and rehabilitation services women & girls continue experiencing physical, psychological, sexual suffering and economic deprivation. In numerous interviews with the project staff, staff of the shelter and women survivors of domestic violence it was mentioned that the project activities were relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries. *As such, the evaluation team considers the concern for supporting the shelter for the victims of domestic violence to provide quality services, for raising the awareness of community members and men on the issues of domestic violence alongside with the women’s empowerment component of the project as a highly relevant theme in the current Azerbaijani context.* Importantly, the interviewed staff of the center, community members & direct beneficiaries of the project also shared this sentiment. All interviewed beneficiaries of the project shared that they received help securing their own safety, some of them received help with divorce issues, with documentation (shelter’s social worker assist women in getting IDs for their children), with referrals to health services, schools, child care services, etc. As stated elsewhere in this report, the predominant majority of the beneficiaries of the shelter’s services were the women subjected to physical violence by their intimate partners. This finding from the shelter’s registry was also confirmed by the feedback shared by the staff of

the shelter and a sample of the beneficiary women unanimously stating that the shelter has become a refuge for both themselves and their children when they had no other place to go. Almost all interviewed beneficiary women unanimously shared their satisfaction with the shelter's services and the level of competence of the staff who were also very supportive to get them through during the most difficult times of their life.

2. To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs of women and girls?

In the frames of the project the close collaboration was established with the shelter for victims of domestic violence and the free legal, medical, and psychological support services as well as refuge from violent partners were provided by the center. To ensure the quality of the services international experts in the sphere of domestic violence conducted a series of trainings and workshops for the staff of the shelter. *The analysis of the pre- and post-training evaluation forms demonstrate the positive change in knowledge and approaches of the shelter members to the issues of domestic violence. As stated elsewhere in this report, the review of the pre and post training questionnaires addressed by the participants indicates significant improvement in the responses to the questions regarding the different forms of GBV, the main principles of work at the shelter, rapport building strategies necessary in the course of the work with the abused women, national legal provisions concerning the phenomenon as well as their personal perceptions regarding the dynamics of gender relations in the country.* By supporting and building the capacity of the shelter's service providers the project attempted to build a model referral mechanism to provide women survivors of domestic violence with preventive, protective, and rehabilitative services. *The availability of such a shelter is crucially important and relevant for meeting the needs of women survivors of domestic violence to have a refuge from a violent intimate partner, free legal, medical, and psychological support.* It needs to be noted that the observations of the CEDAW Committee called upon Azerbaijani government "to ensure that women and girls victims of violence have access to immediate means of redress and protection, including a sufficient number of adequate shelters in all regions" (2015).

In order to ensure the sustainability of the project the women beneficiaries of the shelter were provided with the series of vocational trainings and career advice services to reduce their economic dependency which usually constitute a major factor impeding the women from applying for help in case of violence. *By empowering women survivors of DV there was an attempt to meet their needs for economic independency and keep them away from abusive relationships in future.* In addition, if appropriately implemented, the economic empowerment of women can serve as both preventive and recovery measures. The staff of the shelter confirmed that usually the initial assessment of women victims of DV reveals low self-esteem and low self-confidence among the needs of the victims, that need to be addressed as a part of rehabilitation process and by providing women with the means of self-sufficiency it is possible to equip them with most powerful tools in addressing domestic violence.

It is with no doubt that the extent of domestic violence depends on culture and mindset of people who act like a "third side" in the cases of domestic violence (it could be other family members, relatives, friends, community members, others that surround the cases of domestic violence). *Therefore, the project's strategy on extensive awareness raising campaigns on gender equality, domestic violence as well as the related protection mechanisms have been relevant for addressing the indirect needs of victim population of domestic violence.* Within the project there was an attempt to increase sensitization of the broader community towards the issues of GBV as well as ensure effective utilization of the services offered at the shelter.

3. To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?

The analysis of the project documents as well as the feedback collected from the project staff and shelter's staff shows that the staff of the shelter was provided with the series of capacity building trainings by an international experts in the field of domestic violence *which does contribute to the provision of ongoing quality services by shelter staff even beyond the project lifetime*. While the analysis of the pre and post training questionnaires has revealed increased knowledge of the staff as regards the training components, it is particularly noteworthy that the increased knowledge in the sphere of initial assessment in the cases domestic violence was new for the shelter staff and they have incorporated the initial assessment process into their procedures of serving the victims of domestic violence following the mentioned trainings. This is an important observation given the fact that many battered women and girls in the country continue tolerating the instances of violence and abuse given the lack of services specifically tailored to address the protection and support needs of this category. This was also acknowledged during the FGDs and interviews with the sample of the women staying at the shelter who stated almost unanimously that although the availability of the legal framework is good, it's not enough to protect them. One of the women stated: "When I first faced an abuse, I was very hesitant to go to police. We know what these people say when we get there. For them, a good woman should not complain of her husband. For them you should not take the trash out of your house. For them, a woman is to once enter the house of her husband in white (eg, wedding dress), and to leave just once, also in white (eg, only when she dies)..."

Thus, the availability of this shelter is very important to continue providing support and protection services to those most in need.

Additionally, extensive awareness raising campaigns on gender equality, domestic violence as well as the related protection mechanisms were held in the target region with the purpose of contributing to increased sensitization of the population towards domestic violence related issues.

The comparative analysis of the data collected through the FGDs conducted with some of the participants of these campaigns as well as with those who were not provided by these campaigns revealed considerable differences in the attitudes people hold toward the issues of GBV and its victims. The community members who have participated in the information sessions held in the framework of the project demonstrate more tolerant attitudes towards the shelter's services and seem to be supportive which in turn can contribute to the effective utilization of the services offered at the shelter.

4. What and how much progress has been made towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project (including contributing factors and constraints);

As stated elsewhere in this report, the analysis of the data collected indicates that project managed to achieve progress as regards the outputs and outcomes. The project data shows that 448 women as compared to the project target of 220 were provided with improved protection and support through the services provided by the shelter. *To contribute to realisation of this objective, the project managed to boost the capacities of the staff of the shelter through the series of the training sessions held by the international experts well recognised in the field*. In addition to this, the project's commitment as regards conducting economic empowerment trainings for the women beneficiaries of the shelter's services as well as provision of small grants for the group of abused women was also fulfilled. *The collected evidence suggests that the project was able to sensitive*

the local communities in the issues regarding GBV. Almost 4,000 community members were educated through the information sessions on causes and consequences of the GBV as well as available protection mechanisms. The review of the pre and post session questionnaires as well as the data collected during FGDs indicates greater degree of awareness as well as more sensitive attitudes. It has also been acknowledged by the project beneficiaries and stakeholders that the project results and targets have been realistic and achieved successfully by the end of the project lifetime.

The Government support for the action has been of enormous help as regards the smooth implementation of the project activities including conduction of the awareness raising sessions in the region which could be regarded as a necessary prerequisite and good opportunity for ensuring sustainability of project interventions. The representatives of the partner Government agencies were closely engaged through all project implementation stages by providing crucial support with the organization of the information sessions in the local communities.

However, the analysis also reveals the project had several weak points too including gaps in the economic empowerment component as well as under-developed financial and accountability frameworks of the implementing organization which could also be regarded as threats for the implementation process. As stated elsewhere in this report, the interviews held with the women recipients of small grants has confirmed that the battered women are in the vast majority of cases lacking the necessary capacities for running business in a sustainable way, and hence are in need of a more relevant programmes tailored specifically to their capacities and ability to independently continue their work. The issue of alternative child care services is also to be considered, since the women with small children also faced challenges in reconciling the issue of child care and work. The problems faced by the NGOs could also be among the threats that are highly likely to negatively affect the sustainability of NGOs as well as their active participation in the related advocacy efforts.

5. *Were the inputs and strategies identified, and were they realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the results?*

The analysis of the data collected reveals that the project had a very clear intervention strategy and theory of change, that was developed to address the needs of the project's main beneficiaries. *The project framework had three major outcomes, seven outputs and a comprehensive list of activities that the outputs aimed at achieving.* The project strategy was developed to achieve *qualitative long term impact* (capacity building for shelter's staff, accumulation of knowledge and expertise through economic empowerment interventions, etc.), as well as *quantitative results* (information sessions for community members, information sessions for male groups, publications developed and distributed among the target population, etc.).

As stated elsewhere in this report, the feedback collected from the project partners confirms that in the vast majority of cases the people working at similar support centers are enthusiastic persons that may at times lack the relevant academic credentials and relevant expertise to provide effective support services to the victims. Hence, the capacity building component of the project was a crucial intervention strategy to secure increased institutional capacities for assisting the victims of GBV both during and beyond the project lifetime. The analysis of the related project documents reveals that the training programme aimed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of women's shelter staff that has a central role in protecting women and their children who have been exposed to GBV and supporting and empowering them to continue their life away from violence, providing survivors

with appropriate psychological, social support and enrich shelter staff's understanding with international experience. The training aimed to enrich shelter staff's capacity with central and critical themes in psycho-social support, shelter management, and case management, international good practices focusing more on practical issues and working with children. The training covered the following topics: case studies, shelter management, international good practice examples, women's empowerment in shelter, establishing women's consulting center and its coordination with the shelter, mobilization of and cooperation with other related institutions, legal situation and sample cases from Azerbaijan, working with children, trauma, secondary trauma, burn out and coping strategies. The training programme was drafted following the needs assessment held.

According to the information collected, all project strategies identified were realistic, relevant to the needs of the target groups as well as adequate for the achievement of the pre-defined project targets. The project aimed to address the existing gaps in the national GBV protection mechanisms by trying to establish a shelter which will be well equipped both technically and in terms of human resources to accommodate the needs of the GBV victims not only in the course of the project, but also in the longer term. To sensitive the communities towards the GBV issues as well as contribute to the increased utilisation of the shelter's services, the project employed a realistic awareness raising strategy in the local communities. The project has also attempted to establish an economic empowerment scheme to boost self esteem and self confidence of GBV victims. All in all, the final Roadmap to be produced in the framework of the project and encompassing comprehensive information on both the best practices and lessons learnt is expected to represent a strategic guideline for similar interventions in the future.

6. To what extent was the project's conceptual framework responsive to the changes in the national development context?

The data gathered from the project beneficiaries and the stakeholders have confirmed the findings of the desk review indicating that the conceptual framework for the particular outcomes and outputs of the project was designed to contribute to the Government's efforts on elimination of gender based violence in the country. Since addressing the whole array of the problems identified was beyond the scope and purpose of the project given inter alia the financial considerations and lack of adequate human resources, it was decided to place the major focus on addressing this problem through creation of a model shelter for the women victims of violence in one of the districts with the highest prevalence rates of intimate partner violence. This was a realistic and adequate intervention strategy that resulted in operations of a model shelter that would be likely to be replicated in the framework of the GBV response and referral scheme being currently actively negotiated by the Government following the advocacy of international development agencies as well as the recommendations of the international human rights treaty body mechanisms on the subject matter. It is therefore crucial that the comprehensive information on this model including the lessons learnt and the mitigation strategies employed is well documented to guide similar intervention strategies to be undertaken by the Government.

EFFICIENCY

1. How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the Project Document?

The evaluation has revealed that the targets set for the project were realistic as regards the timing to ensure effective implementation. *The data collected during the evaluation process indicates*

that there was an accurate and detailed planning process involving annual planning and semi-annual reviews. Such an approach enabled the project team to regularly monitor the progress, make necessary interventions to mitigate the risks as well as ensure that the necessary resources were adequately spent. The availability of such a monitoring and planning process has contributed to the timely implementation of all planned activities.

The interviews held with the project team and the main project stakeholders shows that an effective project management strategy was in place including the Project Manager, the Project Assistant, the Finance Assistant as well as a group of local and international experts/consultants contracted as necessary. This approach has contributed to effective implementation of project activities and achievement of expected results. This was also among the findings of the project audit commissioned by the UN Women that stated that the project was in fact implemented in accordance with the project objectives reflected in the project documents and that the activities were completed in line with the timeframes specified in the respective project documents.

The evaluation team assessed the budget structure of the project that has revealed a fairly balanced distribution of costs between the project management, operational and monitoring related activities. No accounts of major delays of re-allocation of funds were observed.

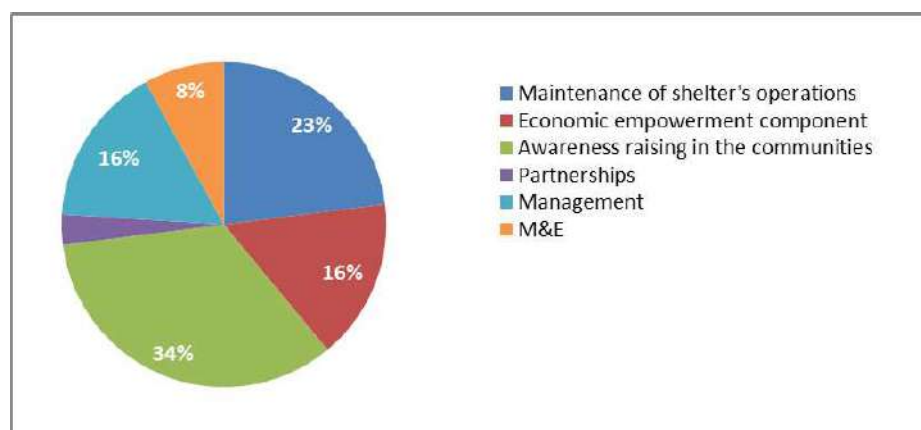
The review of the documents produced in the framework of the project including the materials for distribution during the information sessions, the guidelines and documents for the staff of the shelter, etc. shows that *those are of adequate quality to address the needs of the targeted beneficiaries.*

2. Was the process of achieving results efficient? Specifically did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred? Were the resources effectively utilized?

The analysis of the project documents as well as the interviews held with the project staff and the stakeholders identify that the human and financial resources that were utilised were justified given the scope of the project and the list of the activities planned and held.

In terms of human resources, *the project seems to have employed a cost-effective strategy of having a limited number of permanent project employees who were receiving salaries on a regular basis.* The staff of the shelter also received honoraria from the project on a regular basis which have in fact contributed to successful operations of the centre. The consultants for the trainings and information sessions were contracted on activity-wise basis.

Overall, the project budget was distributed as follows:



Overall, *there seems to be a balanced share of the costs between the project components.* The expenses for the management and monitoring appear to be within the reasonable percentage necessary for effective coordination of the projects incurring similar costs. Reasonable amounts seem to be allocated for the purposes of the shelter's day to day operations as well as the economic empowerment component. The costs for awareness raising constitute the biggest proportion of the costs incurred. But the analysis of the feedback retrieved from the beneficiaries and project stakeholders enable the Evaluation team to state that the amount is reasonable, given very low awareness of the population on the causes and consequences of the GBV as well as available protection mechanisms. The budget allocated for the purposes of partnerships constitutes only 3% of the overall project budget. The analysis of the available project documents as well as the feedback collected from the partners shows that the project could have fostered more effective advocacy by facilitating an arrangement bringing together other civil society actors and international development agencies working on similar topics. Although there were some scattered initiatives, more systematic approach could have been taken by creating more synergies between and among different organisations and projects. This could be done through joint conferences, campaigns, etc. *The evaluation has found that more resources could have been allocated for partnerships component for the purposes of sustainability of the efforts.*

Although it is the subject of the audit assignment to review in detail the accuracy of the costs incurred, the analysis held by the Evaluation team shows that *the vast majority of the results achieved to date seem to justify the costs incurred in the framework of the project implementation.* The interviews with the beneficiaries indicate that the expenditures incurred were in fact in conformity with the approved project budget and almost no major deviations have been identified. *The review of the audit report confirms this finding stating that the costs incurred were duly supported by properly approved vouchers and other supporting documents.* This statement holds true as regards the project team costs that were geared towards ensuring successful implementation and management of the project, the costs for maintenance of the shelter's services to ensure that the women victims of GBV have a place to go to and seek help from, the costs of the awareness raising sessions that have contributed to increased sensitivity of the local communities as regards causes and consequences of the GBV as well as their awareness of the GBV protection mechanisms.

As for the costs incurred for economic empowerment component, though this intervention scheme has had a great potential for boosting self-esteem of the battered women as well as supported their economic independence, series of challenges have been identified by the evaluation team as regards the sustainability and cost-effectiveness of these efforts. The analysis of the available and collected data as well as interviews held with the stakeholders and beneficiary women show that a similar intervention strategy should go way beyond provision of financial resources for running a small business. *The Evaluation team is of the opinion that an alternative strategy could have been taken by providing these women with certain skills such as computer literacy, accounting skills etc. and linking these women to the potential employers.* This is also supported by the finding that the battered women are in the vast majority of cases lacking the necessary capacities for running business in a sustainable way, and hence are in need of a more relevant programmes tailored specifically to their capacities and ability to independently continue their work. *The issue of alternative child care services is also to be considered, since the women with small children also faced challenges in reconciling the issue of child care and work.*

3. Did project activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors)? Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs?

The analysis of the data collected from the stakeholders has identified no duplication with other similar interventions taking place in the country. The project's timeline seems to coincide with the UNFPA's project on combating GBV in Azerbaijan. However the interviews with the relevant officials have revealed that the UNFPA-run project was mainly focuses on production of nationally representative evidence and data on GBV prevalence rates as well as policy level changes as regards GBV response strategies. Hence, the activities held in the framework of these two projects could have been regarded as complementary and not duplicative.

However, the evaluation reveals that more efforts could have been taken by the project team to develop a closer cooperation strategy among these and other similar projects to increase the impact of the interventions undertaken.

4. Could a different approach have produced better results?

As reflected elsewhere in this report, the predominant majority of the project interventions were necessary and adequate to the needs of the project beneficiaries. And the project team has identified effective strategies to respond to these needs. *The only major observation is related to the economic intervention component that could have been held in a more cost-effective and sustainable way.* The interviews with the project team indicate that the project aimed at creating a successful model of support for GBV victims supported by the economic empowerment component, rather than simply providing support services to the victims. This would require time, resources as well as well functioning networks of cooperation with the stakeholders, Government, civil society organizations, etc.

5. How was the project's collaboration with its partners, other CSOs and government?

The evaluation has revealed that the project managed to establish and maintain effective partnerships with the stakeholders including the Government, civil society organisations and other partners. These partnerships have been effectively utilised by the project for boosting the progress and bringing the necessary knowledge and expertise for the benefit of the project. *The partnerships the project team has been able to maintain with the Government officials have greatly contributed to the timely implementation of the project activities and the prospects for its policy level sustainability.*

6. How efficient were the management and accountability structures of the project?

As stated elsewhere in this report, the review of the available project data and the interviews with project staff and beneficiaries revealed that the project had an adequate management and accountability structures necessary for the implementation. *The availability of a pre-defined monitoring framework that has guided the process of implementation have contributed to the timely implementation of the activities.* The analysis of these instruments and the project data reveals that the project team had a clear understanding as regards the types of regular qualitative and quantitative data needed for successful monitoring of project implementation process to assess the dynamics of activities and make necessary interventions as needed. *It could also be stated*

that the annual project targets were realistic both in terms of the timeline and the available human and financial resources.

The available data shows that the financial management of this project was carried out in compliance with the internal financial and accountability frameworks of AYL. It transpired that the organization was not using a competitive selection process for the recruitment of consultants as well as procuring services. *AYL seems to have undertaken a corrective action as regards this issue following the findings of the financial audit.* The same concern was also related to the extensive use of cash payments to the vendors.

The analysis of the data gathered also shows that the project underwent a financial audit that came with unqualified findings. *The findings showed that the project resources were used effectively, however series of recommendations were provided to improve the financial and accountability procedures necessary for successful implementation of the project.*

7. How did the project financial management processes and procedures affect project implementation?

The review of the UN Women commissioned financial audit report reveals that there were series of challenges that could have negatively affected the project implementation. *One of the major issues identified was related to the non-competitive procedures used for the award of contracts. In addition to this, the excessive use of cash payments and weaknesses in management of staff contracts were highlighted as the main problems.* However, the project team has provided the evidence that the necessary amendments were introduced to the financial management structure following these findings. *In addition to this, the use of cash payments at the time also seems to be justified by the problems faced by the NGOs following the series of restrictive amendments by the Government to the NGO legislation.*

8. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project's implementation process?

One of the major strengths of the project implementation process is related to *the fairly well developed project structure with the activities and outputs contributing to the successful achievement of the project outcomes* for the benefit of the project beneficiaries.

The Government support for the action has been of enormous help as regards the smooth implementation of the project activities including conduction of the awareness raising sessions in the region which could be regarded as a necessary prerequisite and good opportunity for ensuring sustainability of project interventions.

However, the analysis also reveals the project had several weak points too including gaps in the economic empowerment component as well as under-developed financial and accountability frameworks, which could also be regarded as threats for the implementation process. The problems faced by the NGOs could also be among the threats that are highly likely to negative affect the sustainability of NGOs as well as their active participation in the related advocacy efforts.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project?

The data collected during the evaluation process enables the Evaluation team to comment on the likelihood of institutional and financial sustainability of this project. Thus, first of all, *close engagement of the Government stakeholders at all levels of project implementation has successfully paved the way to sensitization of policy and decision-makers which seems to contribute to further policy action as regards creation of effective response mechanism on GBV response. As noted elsewhere in this report, the feedback collected from the project partners including the Government representatives indicates that the project was effective in making the decision-makers closely engaged in the project to become more sensitive and understanding towards the issues concerned by being able to observe the real case situations, interact with the victims and staff engaged in this work, interact with international experts, etc. This was also evident in the latest discussions organised at the Parliament. As one of the interviewed respondents noted: "The people who initially had major reservations as regards many issues concerning protection of the victims, family reconciliation, etc., slowly but surely seem to be changing their opinions."* The lessons learnt from this project, the roadmap to be developed as well as the joint advocacy with the NGOs for the ratification of Istanbul Convention have all been among the good examples of the efforts to mainstream the GBV issues into policy frameworks to ensure the institutionalization of project approaches in the future. *The capacities of the shelter's staff and the Government partners to run similar projects have also been improved.* This is evident from the feedback collected from the project's partners. A representative of the SCFWCA noted: "The added value of these projects is that they contribute in many ways to good governance in public sector, since we as the Government personnel get the opportunity to get engaged in project design, project monitoring, and other related components. By being exposed to these, we also get the tools and guidelines that could effectively be replicated in the future in the course of other development projects and programmes." These are expected to contribute to effective coordination of the institutional response to GBV beyond the project lifetime.

As for the financial sustainability, the project proposal aimed at ensuring that a well-functioning model of shelter would be presented to the Government to open revenues for future funding. The feedback of both the AYLUs and the stakeholders interviewed demonstrates that the likelihood of financial sustainability of the project beyond the project lifetime is very scarce. Given the economic crisis caused by the reduction of oil prices it is unlikely that the Government could provide additional budgetary allocations to this issue in the next couple of years. Taking this into account the donor support seems to be acutely needed, however more advocacy is to be done for this including through a more tailored approach to address specific issues of GBV and the economic independence of battered women.

2. *How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends?*

As stated elsewhere in this report the project managed to produce positive changes in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level by contributing to improved capacities of the shelter to assist the victims of GBV with protection and support services. The project data shows that the women applying for the centre's services were provided with shelter services, supported with regaining custodianship of their children, received support with the documents and allowances, etc. The number of the awareness raising events held and the publications produced and distributed among the local communities have been of an enormous importance given the generation of public

interest in the issues regarding GBV prevention and response. *Although the financial sustainability seems to be highly unlikely*, given the limited Government resources, shortage of available funding opportunities from donor community, the increased capacities of the shelter's staff and the availability of a shelter to assist the victims of GBV is expected to sustain the positive changes by enabling more and more women and girls continue benefitting from the shelter's services..

3. Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach?

The evaluation team has identified several major factors that are to be further fine tuned to improve the prospects of sustainability for this project. Although very limited timeframe is left until the project's end, *it is important that AYLU continues its advocacy efforts to institutionalize the model of the shelter that was used in the framework of the project.* This will contribute to replication of the model in the rest of the country. It is also possible that this approach could open some prospects for limited Government funding to follow. *In addition to this, additional sources should be identified to ensure that the shelter gets more time to maintain its services until institutionalization. The economic empowerment component should go beyond mere provision of resources to the battered women which has already proven itself as less effective in terms of sustainability, but should focus instead on providing the women with the skills and knowledge in computer literacy, accounting, etc. and linking them with the labour market and potential employers.*

4. How were capacities strengthened at the individual and organizational level (including contributing factors and constraints)? - Describe the main lessons that have emerged?

The project has contributed to increased capacities at both individual and organizational levels. The capacity building trainings for the staff of the shelter have been of major importance. In addition to this, both AYLU staff and the representatives/focal points from the Government closely engaged in the project have gained skills for project management and monitoring. It has also transpired from the interviews with the NGO representatives that the project has contributed to building their skills as regards the development of effective intervention strategies for public outreach on the sensitive and taboo topics. The NGOs were unanimous in the opinion that the issue of GBV requires particular consideration, since it doesn't only require expert knowledge on all related issues and mechanisms, but also obliges a person to carefully consider his/her perceptions so that the personal attitudes do not impact the message they aim to send to the local communities. The participants acknowledged that AYLU's strategy to both build upon their knowledge as regards the issues concerned and share the training materials and handouts for further dissemination was very useful and time saving.

The review of the data and information collected from the project beneficiaries and stakeholders indicates that there are several lessons learnt that should be taken into account while designing similar projects in the future. Thus, first of all, *the role of partnerships should not be underestimated especially with regards to creating effective synergies between the CSOs, the academia representatives and the policy makers to ensure that the efforts to develop effective policy frameworks are gender responsive and informed by the real needs and expectations of the target groups, that the policy makers may not be aware of. As noted elsewhere in this report, the analysis of the available project documents as well as the feedback collected from the partners shows that the project could have fostered more effective advocacy by facilitating an arrangement bringing together other civil society actors and international development agencies working on*

similar topics. Although there were some scattered initiatives, more systematic approach could have been taken by creating more synergies between and among different organisations and projects. This could be done through joint conferences, campaigns, etc.

It has also transpired that *the internationally acknowledged best practices should be thoroughly researched* while designing project components, most importantly the economic empowerment scheme that seems to be among the less sustainable components. Particular consideration in this regard is to be paid to the set of activities that will not only include the development of skills and production of certain items for the market, but will also establish links between the producer/skilled women and the market *as a part of a comprehensive value chain approach*.

The information collected also shows that the situation is also complicated by the lack of common understanding on the issues concerned between the major actors in the field including the Government and civil society. Given that the topics of GBV are very sensitive to be discussed both politically and socially and there are no NGOs specifically advocating for this issue, *more concerted efforts are to be put in place to bring these issues on the political agenda in the country* and it is expected that the project's Roadmap will contribute to this process.

5. What are the recommendations for similar support in future? (Nb. The recommendations should provide comprehensive proposals for future interventions based on the current evaluation findings).

The Evaluation team is of the opinion that the majority of the strategies employed in the framework of this project have been adequate to the needs of the target groups and were able to produce positive changes in the lives of the people concerned. However, series of recommendations are to be taken into consideration while designing similar strategic interventions in the future.

Thus, first of all, although the project have partnered with civil society actors, *the future efforts should also be directed towards advocacy and awareness raising on the issues of GBV with particular emphasis on human rights accountability frameworks*. To back up this initiative, the capacity building events should target the local NGOs to boost their potential to lead more coordinated work on the subject matter through the reference to the existing international human rights monitoring mechanisms. The issues of accountability constitute an integral component at every stage of a human rights-based approach which is inclusive of meaningful participation of all affected populations and grass roots organisations at all levels of decision-making, implementation and monitoring of GBV projects and programmes.

The analysis of the strategic interventions undertaken as well as the challenges faced and the mitigation strategies utilized to address those challenges revealed that *the series of factors need to be considered to ensure increased capacities to prevent GBV through delivery of inter-agency services*. It is crucial to accompany these efforts by the large scale sensitization campaigns. Given the limited NGO capacities to run such a campaign, these efforts should be through leveraging the existing resources and capacities and by engaged a wide range of stakeholders including the Government and international development agencies.

Extensive support by the Members of the Parliament should be followed up to guarantee that they take leadership to ensure political commitment over these issues beyond the project lifetime. Though financial resources are very scarce, the project is recommended to maintain cooperation it has been able to establish in its position as one of the main actors in the field of GBV prevention and response in order to sustain the project's objectives on the political agenda of the Government.

6. To what extent is the Government as well as other stakeholders willing to replicate the approach utilized by the project?

The interviews held with the project team and the Government stakeholders have revealed that there are several other agencies in the field that are determined to continue advocacy efforts for establishment of effective GBV prevention and response mechanism. The active engagement of UN and a few other NGOs testifies that there are good prospects for AYLU's interventions to keep the issue on the agenda of the policy makers. In addition to this, the Government is under the obligation to build an effective national referral mechanism for GBV victims given its commitments under the CEDAW and UPR mechanisms. Hence, taking into consideration this as well as the years of successful advocacy efforts led by different agencies, the Government acknowledges the problem and does not seem to be in the state of denial. However, the financial considerations following the economic crisis impede the Government from adopting a resource-wise framework. In the light of these considerations, *it is important that AYLU continues its advocacy efforts to push the Government for the adoption of the policy framework on GBV prevention and response including inter alia through concerted efforts to share the Roadmap produced as an effective model for replication as soon as the funding becomes available.*

IMPACT

1. What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?

The culture and context where domestic violence is taking place needs to be thoroughly considered before developing intervention strategies to tackle the related issues. Based on the feedback collected from the project stakeholders and community members it was revealed that *while the project offers survivors encouragement and improved mechanisms to report incidents of DV and obtain legal and other necessary assistance, they can also cause tensions as communities and individuals may have differing perceptions about the role of outside assistance, legal intervention, and other services in what they consider to be family issues.* AYLU's staff that was responsible for awareness raising campaign of the project noted that programs that provide women with greater independence or legal options sometimes increase tension within the home due to the abuser's anger over lack of control, insecurity, or feeling threatened (particularly in the case of DV). One of the interviewed staff members said: "Some of the people are not happy with our services since they consider us ruining family institution in the country. The international expert Prof. Akin who conducted the capacity building training to us noted with concern that one of our major limitations is that we act both as a referral centre and as a shelter, which makes our location easily identifiable for the family members. We face the cases when the partners or even the women's parents accuse us of enabling the family separation by providing an alternative space for the women to stay in." In response to this, future projects dealing with DV need to pay attention in terms of balancing their support for survivors to seek legal remedies and other services related to DV incidents with, on the other hand, respecting and working within socio-cultural norms and community systems that are deemed acceptable within the existing community context.

The evaluation team identified an important unintended positive consequence of the project which is the establishment of trust with women survivors of domestic violence. The feedback received from the direct beneficiaries of the project by the evaluation team indicates that, overall, women believe they have a good working relationship with the implementing partners. *This is an essential and difficult accomplishment, as women survivors of DV have issues with trusting people.*

Another unintended positive consequence that the evaluation team found was the exceptionally strong collaboration between partners: the project staff and shelter staff. There exists a clear “spirit of unity” in working on domestic violence issues between the partners what is a rare case to observe today in the country. The experience in the sphere of domestic violence of the shelter staff and advocacy and funding opportunities provided by AYLU was the central component of the partners’ work. This shared sense of purpose and collaborative spirit is most certainly a key factor in terms of accomplishing results.

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

1. *What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls?*

Taking into account the context of the cases of DV (culture, ethnicity, etc.) there are some indications of best practices and key challenges to strengthen intervention effectiveness, reach, and sustainability. The intervention strategies to address violence against women and girls are ultimately trying to change deep-rooted power relations between conventional roles of men and women in the society. *Therefore, in order to achieve sustainable success for all interventions across forms of violence and across the levels of the social ecology the central requirements has to be “to do no harm.”*

The targeted beneficiaries are to constitute a part of the participatory process for designing similar intervention strategies to ensure that the planned activities not only reflect the needs of the vulnerable groups, but also take into account their capacities for making the project outcomes more efficient and sustainable.

In addition to this, particular consideration is to be paid to the economic empowerment strategies that are likely to target such disadvantaged groups of women as *the GBV victims*. *The internationally acknowledged best practices should be thoroughly researched while designing similar components. To ensure success of the intervention strategy in this regard attention is to be paid to the set of activities that will not only include the development of skills and production of certain items for the market, but will also establish links between the producer/skilled women and the market as a part of a comprehensive value chain approach.*

More partnerships should be sought for the purposes of increased awareness of the project progress and results as well as secured commitment of the stakeholders to the project goals.

2. *Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries that have similar interventions?*

The cases of violence constitute a product of maladaptive interaction/relations between/perceptions of several parties and therefore the appropriate intervention to tackle the issue definitely implies the consideration of various facets of the issue that do contribute to and maintain the problem (culture, stereotypes, perpetrators of DV, victims of DV, “third side” in a face of community members, relatives, other family members). *The analysis of the data collected as well as the feedback received from the stakeholders indicates that the interventions designed for community members and especially through engagement of men and boys (interventions addressing norms of masculinity) could be regarded among the promising practices that the evaluation team has been able to identify in connection with violence prevention in Azerbaijani context. Men and boys, however, need to be engaged at all levels and across all forms of violence for several reasons. First, such violence is primarily a result of underlying gender norms and structures, and*

“gender” includes women and men. Trying to change gender norms therefore must also include both women and men. This is all the more important when one recognizes that rigid norms related to gender and power differentials mean that many men feel pressure to prove their manhood by using violence against women or other men. Second, the nature of violence is an interactive exchange between a woman or girl who experiences the violence and a perpetrator. A focus solely on women and girls places the onus of responsibility of addressing violence on them, leaving the perpetrator out of the equation. Including them in any effort to address such violence is essential. *Men and boys themselves have many motivations for ending men’s use of violence against women and girls and promoting gender equality: the women who face violence are often, after all, their mothers, daughters, or partners (Katz 2003).*

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this evaluation was to provide an independent assessment of the progress of the project “Building Bridges of Life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan” towards the expected outputs and outcomes set forth in the results framework of the project

document. Six separate interlinked evaluation criteria were identified and the main findings under each are summarized below.

EFFECTIVENESS

The project had a clear intervention strategy and theory of change to address the needs of the project's main beneficiaries. The analysis of the data collected during the evaluation process shows that a good deal of progress was achieved towards the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs. The project was able to set up a model shelter and services to provide support and referrals to the victims of GBV, although the advocacy for Government replication of the model was still underway during the evaluation. The project managed to provide protection and support to the significant proportion of women victims of GBV seeking assistance through the shelter's services. 448 women in total were provided with different support services as compared against the project's target of 220. The project boosted the capacities of 10 staff members of the shelter through the series of the training sessions held by the international experts well recognised in the field. The project also managed to sensitise 2,600 community members and 1,400 men and boys through the information sessions on the causes and consequence of GBV. The analysis of the available data indicates increase of information and awareness as regards the concepts of gender, GBV, available protection mechanisms, etc. among the community members (87% in community groups and 72% in male groups). In addition to this, the participants also seem to have become more sensitive towards the intervention schemes enabling the women to benefit from refuge and support services offered by the shelters, although the findings indicate that there is the need to put more emphasis on awareness campaigns targeting the male groups per se. The project's commitment as regards economic empowerment component was also fulfilled. 103 women beneficiaries of the center's services took part in the economic empowerment trainings over the course of 2 years and 30 women established and run a small business of their own. While the project's intervention strategy to boost economic independence of the women was relevant, the analysis of the available data shows that the sustainability of this specific component was not adequately ensured. The interviews held with the women recipients of small grants as well as the shelter's staff have confirmed that the battered women are in the vast majority of cases lacking the necessary capacities for running business in a sustainable way, and hence are in need of a more relevant programmes tailored specifically to their capacities and ability to independently continue their work. The issue of alternative child care services is also to be considered, since the women with small children also faced challenges in reconciling the issue of child care and work. Series of internal and external factors contributing to the success of the project were noted. These included close engagement of the Government representatives throughout all project stages, availability of the legal framework on GBV prevention and response, support from the UN agencies operating in the country and closely engaged in GBV advocacy with the Government. The delays with the endorsement of the policy framework on GBV prevention and response, lack of common understanding between the major actors in the field including the Government and civil society as regards the issues concerned, prevalent attitudinal barriers among the decision makers and general public were identified as the main inhibiting factors for successful achievement of all project results. The evaluation team observed that the project could have placed more emphasis on partnerships with the CSOs to leverage the available resources for the purposes of improved advocacy action.

It has also transpired that the organization doesn't seem to have the institutional mechanism of M&E and the tools and mechanisms drafted in the course of implementation of different activities are project driven and are guided by the requirements and expectations of a particular donor

agency. Although the availability of the strict rules and guidelines by the UN Women/TF on VAW as regards the project implementation and related data collection has alleviated the negative effect of this finding on this particular project, the evaluation team observed that there is the need for AYLU's staff to further develop their skills and capacities for the purposes of effective project monitoring in the future.

RELEVANCE

The issues of GBV and access to the related services alongside the need for raising the awareness of community members and men on the cases of domestic violence and the women's empowerment component were confirmed as pressing issues highly relevant in the current Azerbaijani context. The feedback collected during the evaluation reveals that the women victims of GBV still find it hard to get provided with the adequate shelter services (temporary refuge and protection, legal, psychological and medical support, referrals, etc.) in the absence of the effective referral mechanism for GBV prevention and response. Hence, the project's intervention to improve the technical and human capacities of the shelter was acutely needed.

It has also transpired that there are considerable differences in the attitudes people hold toward the issues of GBV and its victims what in turn can contribute to the effective utilization of the services offered at the shelter by targeting real and potential perpetrators of DV. According to the information collected, the majority of the project strategies identified were realistic, relevant to the needs of the target groups as well as adequate for the achievement of the pre-defined project targets. The data gathered from the project beneficiaries and the stakeholders have confirmed the findings of the desk review indicating that the conceptual framework for the particular outcomes and outputs of the project was designed to contribute to the Government's efforts on elimination of gender based violence in the country.

However, while the project's economic empowerment component was assessed as an important strategy aimed at boosting self-confidence and independence of the women victims of GBV, the relevance of the intervention scheme used does not seem to be specifically tailored to the needs of the women victims of GBV which has negative implications for the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project.

EFFICIENCY

The annual project targets were realistic both in terms of the timeline and the available human and financial resources. The project had adequate management and accountability structures as well as detailed planning process involving annual and semiannual reporting schemes necessary for regular monitoring of all project components. The project's human and financial resources seem to be justified given the scope of the project and the list of the activities planned and held. In terms of human resources, the project seems to have employed a cost-effective strategy of having a limited number of permanent project employees who were receiving salaries on a regular basis.

Overall, there seems to be a balanced share of the costs between the project components. The expenses for the management and monitoring appear to be within the reasonable percentage necessary for effective coordination of the projects incurring similar costs. Reasonable amounts seem to be allocated for the purposes of the shelter's day to day operations. The costs for awareness raising constitute the biggest proportion of the costs incurred. But the analysis of the feedback retrieved from the beneficiaries and project stakeholders enable the Evaluation team to state that

the amount is reasonable, given very low awareness of the population on the causes and consequences of the GBV as well as available protection mechanisms. The partnerships the project has been able to maintain with the Government officials have contributed to the timely implementation of the project activities and the prospects for its policy level sustainability. However, the prospects for partnerships with the local CSOs could have been better explored and utilised to boost the successful advocacy for the project's goal.

The efficiency of the project's economic empowerment component is questioned. While the project placed the main focus on provision of grants for small women-owned business enterprises, the project's efficiency could have been further boosted by an alternative strategy that could have included the set of activities not only aimed at the development of skills and production of certain items for the market, but also envisioning establishment of links between the producer/skilled women and the market as a part of a comprehensive value chain approach. In addition to this, although both the evaluation and the previously held audit indicate that in general the project resources were used effectively, the financial and accountability procedures necessary for successful implementation of similar projects were underdeveloped.

SUSTAINABILITY

The capacity building trainings for the staff of the shelter on GBV identification and response as well as active engagement of both AYL staff and the representatives/focal points from the Government in all project stages have contributed to increased capacities at both individual and organisational levels. The project has also contributed to building the NGO skills as regards the development of effective intervention strategies for public outreach on such a sensitive and taboo topic as GBV. The close engagement of the Government stakeholders at all levels of project implementation has also successfully paved the way to sensitisation of policy and decision-makers which seems to increase the likelihood of further policy action as regards replication of effective model of the shelter developed in the framework of the project. The improved capacities of the shelter's staff and the Government partners to run similar projects is expected to contribute to effective coordination of the institutional response to GBV beyond the project lifetime. While the partners engaged acknowledged the model shelter set up in the framework of the project as a good model to be further replicated, the financial sustainability seems to be highly unlikely, given the limited Government resources, shortage of available funding opportunities from donor community as well as the challenges with the project's economic empowerment component the fruits of which are not likely to survive beyond the project lifetime. However, the increased capacities of the shelter's staff and the availability of a shelter to assist the victims of GBV is expected to sustain the positive changes by enabling more and more women and girls continue benefiting from the shelter's services.

IMPACT

In addition to the immediate outputs and results of the project, there were series of unintended positive and negative consequences identified by the evaluation team. One of the observations is that while the project has offered survivors encouragement and improved mechanisms to report incidents of DV and obtain legal and other necessary assistance, the programs that provide women with greater independence or legal options sometimes increase tension within the home due to the abuser's anger over lack of control, insecurity, or feeling threatened (particularly in the case of DV).

Some of the respondents noted that the communities are not always happy with this type of institutions since they consider these to be ruining family institution in the country. The international expert Prof. Akin who conducted the capacity building training in the framework of the project noted with concern that one of the shelter's major limitations is that the institution acts both as a referral centre and as a shelter, which makes the location easily identifiable for the family members.

The establishment of trust with women survivors of domestic violence has been identified as an important unintended positive consequence of the project. Overall, women believe they have a good working relationship with the implementing partners. This is an essential and difficult accomplishment, as women survivors of DV have issues with trusting people. Another unintended positive consequence is the exceptionally strong collaboration between partners: the project staff and shelter staff. There exists a clear "spirit of unity" in working on domestic violence issues between the partners and this shared sense of purpose and collaborative spirit is most certainly a key factor in terms of accomplishing results.

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

Taking into account the context of the cases of DV (culture, ethnicity, etc.) several indications of best practices and key challenges to strengthen intervention effectiveness, reach, and sustainability have been identified. As is the case with many development projects, the target beneficiaries should constitute a part of the participatory process for designing the intervention strategies to ensure that the planned activities not only reflect the needs of the vulnerable groups, but also take into account their capacities for making the project outcomes more efficient and sustainable. Yet another lesson learnt is that more partnerships with the stakeholders should be sought for the purposes of increased awareness of the project progress and results as well as secured commitment of the stakeholders to the project goals.

The interventions designed for community members and especially through engagement of men and boys (interventions addressing norms of masculinity) could be regarded among the promising practices that the evaluation team has been able to identify in connection with violence prevention in Azerbaijani context.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Series of recommendations have been drafted for the attention of the implementing agency and the Government for ensuring effective follow-up to the shelter's operations beyond the project lifetime.

Effectiveness	It is crucial that AYLU continues advocacy efforts with the Government for the replication of the shelter's model across the country. The draft Roadmap being currently developed should contain well documented evidence on the progress, challenges and mitigation strategies and is to be shared with the Government for the follow-up action.	SCFWCA, AYLU
Relevance	Although strong alignment of the project with the national context and relevant state policies and programmes has been observed, it is important that any future interventions planned by either the Government or NGOs focus on more consultations with the direct project beneficiaries at all phases of project implementation including at the design level. It is important that the targeted beneficiaries constitute an integral part of the reference group designing a particular intervention strategy. This is expected to ensure that the project is not only specifically targeted to the needs of the main beneficiaries, but is also informed by their views on the most relevant interventions to address those needs. This finding is to be reflected in the Roadmap developed in the framework of the project.	SCFWCA, other Government agencies, civil society organisations, expert community, direct beneficiaries/vulnerable groups of women
Efficiency	It is important that any future interventions employ alternative strategies to obtain the results in a more cost effective way. The internationally acknowledged best practices as regards particularly the economic empowerment of the GBV victims should be thoroughly researched. To further boost the efficiency of similar interventions in the future, the assessment of the market opportunities should be held and the prospects for the effective value chain approach should be explored. More efforts should be paid to consolidation of efforts with other agencies including local NGOs having sufficient expertise and knowledge in the field of economic empowerment projects. This finding is to be reflected in the Roadmap developed in the framework of the project.	SCFWCA, other Government agencies, civil society organisations, expert community, trade unions

Sustainability	<p>It is important that any future interventions have a detailed and clear action plan for sustainability of the related project interventions is developed from the very onset of the project. To compensate for this gap, it is highly recommended that the existing partnerships should be further maintained to ensure that the efforts to develop effective policy frameworks are informed by the lessons of this project. In this regard is important that AYLU continues its advocacy efforts to push the Government for the adoption of the policy framework on GBV prevention and response including inter alia through concerted efforts to share the Roadmap produced as an effective model for replication as soon as the funding becomes available. The future efforts should also be directed towards advocacy and awareness raising targeting both the decision makers and the general public on the issues of GBV. Extensive support by the Members of the Parliament should be followed up to guarantee that they take leadership to ensure political commitment over these issues beyond the project lifetime.</p>	SCFWCA, other Government agencies, civil society organisations, expert community
Impact	<p>It is important that the precautionary measures are undertaken while designing the programs that provide women with greater independence or legal options since these interventions could sometimes increase tension within the home due to the abuser's anger over lack of control, insecurity, or feeling threatened (particularly in the case of DV). The respective mitigation strategies should also be envisaged. For the purposes of safety any future plans for the replication of this model should ensure that to the extent possible the shelter is not serving as a point of referral on GBV cases. This finding is to be reflected in the Roadmap developed in the framework of the project.</p>	SCFWCA, other Government agencies, civil society organisations, expert community
Knowledge generation	<p>Since the project is almost over one of the most crucial recommendations is to contribute to the sustainability of the project outcomes and outputs by generating the knowledge that will capture both good examples and lessons learnt as a roadmap to guide further interventions on this and similar issues. The Roadmap and the findings of this report are to be extensively shared with all concerned project stakeholders to contribute inter alia to replication of the project's effective approaches. In addition to this policy level recommendation, it is also highly advised to make the project products (materials produced for capacity building trainings, GBV information sessions, etc.) available for the purposes of similar interventions as well as with the purpose of institutionalisation of the knowledge and information produced.</p>	SCFWCA, other Government agencies, civil society organisations, expert community

ANNEXES:

ANNEX 1: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ANNEX 2: Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

Azerbaijan Young Lawyers Union (AYLU) is a non-governmental non-profit organization. AYLU was founded in February 19, 1999 and rapidly established itself as one of the most active human rights NGOs in Azerbaijan with around 700 members.

AYLU is planning to conduct the independent evaluation of the project “Building bridges of life for the women victims of DV in Azerbaijan” as part of its 2017 work plan, and in accordance with the UN WOMEN evaluation policy.

As per the UN WOMEN’s evaluation policy, the proposed evaluation serves three main purposes:

- i. To 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;
- ii. To support evidence-based decision-making;
- iii. To contribute important lessons learned to the existing knowledge base on how to accelerate implementation of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence of the Republic of Azerbaijan with particular emphasis on the provision of protection, support and rehabilitation services to the victims of DV.

The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent evaluators in close cooperation with AYLU senior management and the project staff.

Background information on the Project

Azerbaijan Republic has traditionally been a conservative society with deeply rooted religious and family traditions. As a result, the cases of discrimination against women and acceptance of domestic violence are widespread and are accepted as normal part of domestic affairs. The findings of qualitative research held by the UN office in Azerbaijan revealed that physical violence constitutes 29% in certain districts of the country while the indicators of sexual violence reach almost 12% with the cases of emotional violence and controlling behaviour constituting 81% among ever-partnered women. The findings also demonstrated that there are series of important factors that impede women – victims of domestic violence from seeking redress and protection. Only 1% of women applied to public institutions for assistance and found their services as not helpful and ineffective. Although the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan was adopted in 2010, the effective national referral mechanism on GBV prevention and response is still lacking. As a result, hundreds of women continue experiencing physical, psychological, sexual suffering and economic deprivations due to the absence of shelters where they could be offered temporary refuge, protection and rehabilitation. In addition, the lack/absence of educational and professional qualifications of women makes them economically dependent on husbands and such a dependency further impedes them from seeking redress and protection from violence.

Therefore, the proposed project aimed at addressing this problem through creation of a model shelter for the women victims of violence in one of the districts with the highest prevalence rates of intimate partner violence. The project “Building bridges of life for the women victims of DV in Azerbaijan” was implemented by the local NGO AYLU in close partnership and cooperation with the Government and with the financial support from the UN WOMEN.

The main goal of project was to assist women/girls in Absheron region of Azerbaijan with improved protection and response to domestic violence through community support for prevention and provision of a sustainable model shelter and services (a range of preventive, protective, and rehabilitative services through providing temporary refuge and psychological, medical, legal assistance). The evidence based data shows that women survivors of DV do not seek redress and protection in case of violence (National Survey report on VAW, UNFPA/SCFWCA,2011). Hundreds of women continue experiencing physical, psychological, sexual suffering and economic deprivation due to absence of national mechanism capable to provide them with adequate preventive, protective, rehabilitative/reintegration services. Therefore, this project aimed at addressing this problem by setting up a pilot shelter to provide the women with free legal, medical and psychological support services as well as refuge from violent partners/family members if needed. The socio-economic capacities of these survivors of violence have been enhanced through range of business development and income generation strategies to ensure sustainability of the action. To prevent domestic violence as well as contribute to utilization of services offered by shelter extensive community awareness campaign with active involvement of men and boys was held.

The project represented a two-year initiative (2016-2017) and specifically targeted the women that have been subjected to different forms of domestic violence perpetrated by an intimate partner (physical, sexual, emotional, economic). The strategies proposed for the implementation of this project were based on the understanding that only coherent approach to the problem of preventing and addressing DV inclusive of series of interrelated activities such as sensitization of the population, capacity building of the service staff and economic empowerment of women with active involvement of the government partners is capable of preventing and addressing DV in a sustainable way. Such a harmonized approach strived to support national priorities for combating DV and was implemented through the following three interrelated outcomes:

- Women and girls at risk of, or experiencing DV have access to an equipped shelter with effective support and rehabilitation services by December 2017.
- Local CSOs, FBOs and key community members/leaders take action to change attitudes and behaviors in the community to support women and girls right to live a life free from violence, including referrals to the shelter services by December 2017.
- The Government (Cabinet of Ministers) supports policy and institutional measures (documented in a roadmap/action plan) to continue the shelter and its services in order to sustain and replicate the model, beyond the life of the project.

Establishment of the equipped shelter, conduction of capacity building trainings for the staff of the shelter, provision of support services to the women victims and survivors of DV, conduction of awareness raising campaigns in the local communities, conduction of capacity building trainings on economic empowerment for the women who have benefitted from the shelter's services, provision of small grants to the women survivors of DV as well as conduction of high-level meetings with decision-makers were among the major project activities to produce the expected results.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The final evaluation will include endline data collection and analysis. Data must be collected and analyzed at least per indicator of project goal, outcomes, and outputs from the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) of the project. The consolidated data on endline data as well as baseline data (already completed) need to be included in the final evaluation report (*by using the template specified in Annex 4B*).

The final evaluation will also look at the following areas: Project activities, project outputs, project management, and engagement of other CSOs and key duty bearers. It will address the results achieved, the partnerships established, as well as issues of capacity, approach and the extent to which the project, as implemented, has provided the best possible modalities for reaching the intended objectives, on the basis of the results achieved to date

The objectives of this evaluation *are as follows*:

- a. To provide AYLU Office, national stakeholders, and the donor agency as well as the wider audience with an independent assessment of the progress of the Project towards the expected outputs and outcomes set forth in the results framework of the project document;
- b. To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the approaches adopted;
- c. To provide an analysis of how the project has positioned itself to add value in an evolving national development context;
- d. To draw key lessons from project and provide a set of clear and forward looking options leading to strategic and actionable recommendations for the similar strategic interventions in the future.

The evaluation will focus on the outputs and outcomes achieved through the implementation of the project to date. The evaluation will cover the entire project duration from 2016 to 2017 (present). The evaluation is expected to take place during the period of October-December 2017.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability as well as coordination will constitute core evaluation criteria for the subject assignment. The guiding questions will be as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Mandatory Evaluation Questions
Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how? 2) Was the project effective in delivering desired/planned results? 3) To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached? 4) How effective has the project been in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results were achieved? 5) To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes. 6) What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How? 7) To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why. 8) To what extent did the Project's M&E mechanism contribute in meeting project results? 9) How effective were the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project? 10) What are the future intervention strategies and issues?
Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Was the project relevant to the identified needs of the beneficiaries? 2) To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs of women and girls? 3) To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) What and how much progress has been made towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project (including contributing factors and constraints); 5) Were the inputs and strategies identified, and were they realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the results?
Efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the Project Document? 2) Was the process of achieving results efficient? Specifically did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred? Were the resources effectively utilized? 3) Did project activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors? Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs? 4) Could a different approach have produced better results? 5) How was the project's collaboration with its partners, other CSOs and government? 6) How efficient were the management and accountability structures of the project? 7) How did the project financial management processes and procedures affect project implementation? 8) What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project's implementation process?
Sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project? 2) How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends? 3) Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach? 4) How were capacities strengthened at the individual and organizational level (including contributing factors and constraints)? - Describe the main lessons that have emerged? 5) What are the recommendations for similar support in future? (Nb. The recommendations should provide comprehensive proposals for future interventions based on the current evaluation findings).
Impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?
Knowledge Generation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls? 2) Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries that have similar interventions?

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

Data Collection

1) Proposed evaluation design

The evaluation will be summative in nature and will employ the use of quantitative and qualitative methodology.

2) Data sources

Sources of data through which the evaluation be conducted are desk study and review of all relevant project documentation including:

- Project documents (including project proposal)
- Annual work-plans
- Project progress reports
- Annual project reports

3) Proposed data collection methods and analysis

Data collection methods employed and analysis of data will be garnered through:

- In depth interviews to gather primary data from key stakeholders using a structured methodology
- Focus Group discussion with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders
- Interviews with relevant key informants

4) Proposed sampling methods

The sampling methods proposed are:

- Stratified Random Sampling
- Purpose Sampling
- Quota Sampling
-

5) Field visits should be carried out to partner organizations, meetings (including end of project review meeting) etc.

Validation mechanisms

The Evaluation Team will use a variety of methods to ensure the validity of the data collected. Besides a systematic triangulation of data sources and data collection methods and tools, the validation of data will be sought through regular exchanges with AYLU project staff.

Stakeholders' participation

The evaluation will adopt an inclusive approach, involving a broad range of partners and stakeholders. The evaluation team will perform a stakeholders mapping in order to identify both AYLU's direct and indirect partners. These stakeholders may include representatives from the government, civil-society organizations, the private-sector, UN organizations, other multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and most importantly, the beneficiaries of the programme.

EVALUATION ETHICS

The evaluation must be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation' <http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines> . It is imperative for the evaluator(s) to:

- Guarantee the safety of respondents and the research team.
- Apply protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of respondents.
- Select and train the research team on ethical issues.
- Provide referrals to local services and sources of support for women that might ask for them.

- Ensure compliance with legal codes governing areas such as provisions to collect and report data, particularly permissions needed to interview or obtain information about children and youth.
- Store securely the collected information.
- Ensure the accuracy and credibility of the evaluative information produced, evaluators and adhere to the highest technical standards appropriate to the methods used.
- Display honesty and integrity in their own behavior, and attempt to ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process
- Respect the security, dignity and self-worth of respondents, program participants, clients, and other evaluation stakeholders.

The evaluator(s) must consult with the relevant documents as relevant prior to development and finalization of data collection methods and instruments. The key documents include (but not limited to) the following:

- World Health Organization (2003). *Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women*. www.who.int/gender/documents/violence/who_fch_gwh_01.1/en/index.html
- Jewkes, R., E. Dartnall and Y. Sikweyiya (2012). *Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on the Perpetration of Sexual Violence*. Sexual Violence Research Initiative. Pretoria, South Africa, Medical Research Council. Available from www.svri.org/EthicalRecommendations.pdf
- Researching violence against women: A practical guide for researchers and activists November 2005 http://www.path.org/publications/files/GBV_rvaw_complete.pdf
- World Health Organization (WHO), 'Ethical and safety recommendations for researching documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies' 2007, http://www.who.int/gender/documents/OMS_Ethics&Safety10Aug07.pdf

EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation will have three specific deliverables. All deliverables will be drafted in English. All reports should follow structure and detailed outlines provided in the UN WOMEN EVAW Trust Fund's guidelines: Guidelines for Baseline/Endline Data Collection and Final External Project Evaluations.

KEY DELIVERABLES OF EVALUATORS AND TIMEFRAME

	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Description of Expected Deliverables</i>
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1.	Evaluation inception report (language of report: English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inception report provides the grantee organization and the evaluators with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the evaluation and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset. • An inception report must be prepared by the evaluators before going into the technical mission and full data collection stage. It must detail the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection/analysis procedures. • The inception report must include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product. <p>The structure must be in line with the suggested structure of the annex of TOR. It must also contain a) a stakeholder map; b) the evaluation matrix (including the final list of evaluation questions and indicators) ; c) the overall evaluation design and methodology, with a detailed description of the data collection plan for the field phase.</p> <p>At the end of the design phase, the evaluation team leader will present a design report (including evaluation matrix, data collection and analysis methods) based on the template provided in the <i>UN WOMEN VAW Trust Fund's guidelines: Guidelines for Baseline/Endline Data Collection and Final External Project Evaluations</i>.</p>
2.	Draft Evaluation Report (language of report: English)	Evaluators must submit draft report for review and comments by all parties involved. The report needs to meet the minimum requirements specified in the annex of TOR. The grantee and key stakeholders in the evaluation must review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria.
3.	Final Evaluation Report (language of report: English)	Relevant comments from key stakeholders must be well integrated in the final version, and the final report must meet the minimum requirements specified in the annex of TOR. The final report must be disseminated widely to the relevant stakeholders and the general public.

COMPOSITION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation will be carried out by a team consisting of **Evaluation Team Leader, and support personnel**. All team members should be committed to respecting deadlines of delivery outputs within the agreed time-frame.

Evaluation team leader will be responsible for the production and timely submission of the expected deliverables of the evaluation including baseline report, draft and final evaluation reports. She/he will lead and coordinate the work of the evaluation team and will also be responsible for the quality assurance of all evaluation deliverables. The Evaluation team leader will be a local expert in evaluation of development programmes with the following necessary competencies:

- Evaluation experience at least 5 years in conducting external evaluations, with mixed-methods evaluation skills and having flexibility in using non-traditional and innovative evaluation methods
- Expertise in gender and human-rights based approaches to evaluation and issues of violence against women and girls
- Experience in collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data

- A strong commitment to delivering timely and high-quality results, i.e. credible evaluation and its report that can be used
- A strong team leadership and management track record, as well as interpersonal and communication skills to help ensure that the evaluation is understood and used.
- Good communication skills and ability to communicate with various stakeholders and to express concisely and clearly ideas and concepts
- Excellent analytical and writing skills
- Fluency in English is required

The Evaluation leader is expected to provide the recruit the support personnel as s/he deems necessary.

The work of the evaluation team will be guided by the Ethical Guidelines reflected in the UN WOMEN VAW Trust Fund's guidelines: Guidelines for Baseline/Endline Data Collection and Final External Project Evaluations.

ANNEX 3: Evaluation tools/guides

In-depth Interview guide for project staff

Name and surname	
Organization	
Position	
Interview date and time	
Region/city	

AYLU-3 persons

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, feel free to decline responding to any question that you are not feeling comfortable with. You are also free to stop interview if you no longer want to answer the questions. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. What was your particular role in this project?
2. How do you perceive this Project? Were the goals and objectives and activities of the project clear to you?
3. In your opinion, did the project achieve its goals and objectives? Please elaborate.
4. To what extent have the direct beneficiaries of the project - women survivors of violence been engaged in the project planning?
5. In your opinion, was the project able to address the lack of quality protection and support services in Azerbaijan? Please elaborate.
6. Do you think the model developed in the framework of the project made any contribution to the development of state policies to combat DV in the country? (if “YES”, ask the next two questions. Otherwise, skip them)
7. How would you assess this contribution? (PROBE: was this contribution negative or positive). Please elaborate.
8. Do you think the knowledge and skills provided to the target audiences within the framework of the project had changed level of awareness of the target groups as regards DV? Please elaborate.
9. Do you think the increased knowledge and skills on DV have contributed to any attitudinal or behavioral changes in the community? Please elaborate.
10. Do you think that the men engagement component was a successful approach? Please, specify your answer.
11. How many community members benefited from the component? (disaggregated by sex)
12. Do you think the information materials developed in the frames of this project were adequate to specific needs of target population? Please elaborate.

13. Do you think that the economic empowerment component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy in the framework of this project? Please elaborate.
14. How many women benefited from this component?
15. And what criteria did you use for selecting the women for the purposes of the grant programme?
16. Do you think that the economic empowerment component of the project was successful? Please elaborate.
17. Do you think the capacity-building training for the staff contributed to building institutional capacity to address DV in the country? Please elaborate.
18. To what extent has the government (all relevant government ministries or departments) been engaged in the project planning, implementation, and results?
19. To what extent have the NGO partners been engaged in the project planning, implementation, and results?
20. Do you think the project contributed to increased coordination and cooperation in combating DV? Please elaborate.
21. Please bring specific examples of coordination and cooperation in combating GBV produced by the project activities.
22. What challenges have you encountered in the course of project implementation? And what were your mitigation strategies?
23. In your opinion what enabling factors contributed to the success of the project, if any?
24. What are your best practices?
25. What are your main lessons learned?
26. Do you think that the results achieved in the frames of the project are sustainable? Please elaborate.
27. What is your strategy for ensuring the sustainability of the outputs and outcomes?
28. In your opinion, if you were asked to name only one claim to fame of this project, what would that be?
29. If you were to start this project from the very beginning, what do you think has to be changed or improved (recommendations, suggestions)?
30. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your name in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the transcripts of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.*

In-depth Interview guide for project partners

(the State Committee for Family, Women and Child Affairs -3 persons, ALC -1 person, other civil society agencies involved – 3 persons, National Parliament - 1 person, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population - 1 person), international development agencies - 2 persons

Name and surname	
Organization	
Position	
Interview date and time	
Region/city	

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, feel free to decline responding to any question that you are not feeling comfortable with. You are also free to stop interview if you no longer want to answer the questions. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. Have you heard about the AYLU's "Building bridges of life for the women survivors of DV" project in Azerbaijan?
2. In your opinion, did the project achieve its goals and objectives? Please elaborate.
3. To what extent have you been engaged in the project planning, implementation, and results?
4. In your opinion, was the project able to address the lack of quality protection and support services in Azerbaijan? Please elaborate.
5. Do you think the model developed in the framework of the project made any contribution to the development of state policies to combat DV in the country? (if "YES", ask the next two questions)
6. How would you assess this contribution? (PROBE: was this contribution negative or positive). Please elaborate.
7. Do you think the knowledge and skills provided to the target audiences within the framework of the project had changed level of awareness of the target groups towards DV? Please elaborate.
8. Do you think the increased knowledge and skills on DV have contributed to any attitudinal or behavioral changes in the community? Please elaborate.
9. How do you perceive the men engagement component utilised by this project? Please, specify your answer.
10. Do you think that the economic empowerment component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy? Please elaborate.
11. Do you think the awareness raising component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy? Please elaborate.

12. Do you think the capacity-building training for the staff contributed to building institutional capacity to address DV in the country? Please elaborate.
13. Do you think the project contributed to increased coordination and cooperation in combating DV? Please elaborate.
14. Have you had a chance to actively participate in regular coordination/cooperation meetings held by AYLU for the implementation of this project? Please elaborate.
15. Are there any significant or critical gaps in the project that require adjustment if the project is continued? (What are the existing gaps in this sector/area requiring intervention that are not already being addressed by the project or by other agencies/ state, local and/ or international organizations?)
16. Do you think that the results achieved in the frames of the project are sustainable? Please elaborate.
17. In your opinion, if you were asked to name only one claim to fame of this project, what would that be?
18. If AYLU was to start this project from the very beginning, what do you think had to be changed or improved (recommendations, suggestions)?
19. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your name in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the records of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.*

In-depth Interview guide for donor representative

UN Women - 1 person

Name and surname	
Organization	
Position	
Interview date and time	
Region/city	

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, feel free to decline responding to any question that you are not feeling comfortable with. You are also free to stop interview if you no longer want to answer the questions. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. What was your role in this Project?
2. In your opinion, did the project achieve its goals and objectives? Please elaborate.
3. In your opinion, was the project able to address the lack of quality protection and support services in Azerbaijan? Please elaborate.
4. Do you think the model developed in the framework of the project made any contribution to the development of state policies to combat DV in the country? (if “YES”, ask the next two questions)
5. How would you assess this contribution? (PROBE: was this contribution negative or positive). Please elaborate.
6. Do you think that the economic empowerment component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy? Please elaborate.
7. Do you think the awareness raising component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy? Please elaborate.
8. How do you perceive the men engagement component utilized by this project? Please, specify your answer.
9. Do you think the capacity-building training for the staff contributed to building institutional capacity to address DV in the country? Please elaborate.
10. Do you think the project contributed to increased coordination and cooperation in combating DV? Please elaborate.
11. Have you had a chance to actively participate in any coordination/cooperation meetings held by AYLUs for the implementation of this project? Please elaborate.

12. Are there any significant or critical gaps in the project that require adjustment if the project is continued? (What are the existing gaps in this sector/area requiring intervention that are not already being addressed by the project or by other agencies/ state, local and/ or international organizations?)
13. Do you think that the results achieved in the frames of the project are sustainable? Please elaborate.
14. In your opinion, if you were asked to name only one claim to fame of this project, what would that be?
15. If AYLU was to start this project from the very beginning, what do you think had to be changed or improved (recommendations, suggestions)?
16. Is there any likelihood that UN Women may be willing to contribute to continuation of the project? Please elaborate.
17. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your name in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the records of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.*

In-depth Interview guide for staff of the shelter

10 persons

Name and surname	
Interview date and time	
Region/city	

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, feel free to decline responding to any question that you are not feeling comfortable with. You are also free to stop interview if you no longer want to answer the questions. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. What was your role in this Project?
2. How do you perceive this Project, its goals and objectives?
3. Were you somehow involved at the design phase of the project?
4. In your opinion, was the project able to address the lack of quality protection and support services in Azerbaijan? Please elaborate.
5. Do you think the model developed in the framework of the project made any contribution to the development of state policies to combat DV in the country? (if “YES”, ask the next question)
6. How would you assess this contribution? (PROBE: was this contribution negative or positive). Please elaborate.
7. Do you think the knowledge and skills provided to the target audiences within the framework of the project had changed level of awareness and knowledge of the target groups towards DV? Please elaborate.
8. What are the main principles of your shelter’s work?
9. What services are provided to the women and children staying at your shelter?
10. What support do you provide to the women leaving the shelter?
11. Which agencies are making referrals to your shelter?
12. In your opinion, have the capacity building trainings you attended contributed to the increase of your knowledge and skills for better assisting DV victims? Please elaborate.
13. Do you think the capacity-building training for the staff contributed to building institutional capacity to address DV in the country? Please elaborate.
14. Do you think that the economic empowerment component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy? Please elaborate.

15. Do you think the awareness raising component of the project was a necessary intervention strategy? Please elaborate.
16. Have you noticed any increase or decrease in the number of applicants to your center following this project's intervention? Please elaborate.
17. Have you had a chance to actively participate in regular coordination/cooperation meetings held by AYLU for the implementation of this project? Please elaborate.
18. Are there any significant or critical gaps in the project that require adjustment if the project is continued? (What are the existing gaps in this sector/area requiring intervention that are not already being addressed by the project or by other agencies/ state, local and/ or international organizations?)
19. In your opinion, if you were asked to name only one claim to fame of this project, what would that be?
20. If AYLU was to start this project from the very beginning, what do you think had to be changed or improved (recommendations, suggestions)?
21. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your name in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the records of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.*

Interview guide for women beneficiaries of the centre's support services

12 persons (4 adolescents (10-19); 4 young women (20-24), & 4 adult women)

Name and surname	
Interview date and time	
Region/city	

According to the information we have, you have been one of the recipients of the shelter's services. Hence we would like to ask you several questions to improve the design of similar projects that are likely to be implemented in the future. Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions undertaken in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, note that all opinions and thoughts expressed by you will be used for the purposes of general analysis of the situation and there will be no single case of reference to your personal identity information. Please, feel free to decline responding to any question that you are not feeling comfortable with. You are also free to stop the interview if you no longer want to answer the questions. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. How have you heard about the shelter's services?
2. Did you apply to the shelter yourself or were you referred by someone?
3. What form of IPV had you been subjected to: physical, sexual, emotional or economic?
4. In your opinion, why did your partner subject you to abuse?
5. Has economic factor/hardships anyhow contributed to the violence that you have been subjected to? Please specify your answer.
6. What specific support were you provided with at the shelter? Please specify.
7. Are you satisfied with the support they have given you? Please elaborate.
8. Do you think that the people surrounding you and the community members were supportive? Please specify.
9. Do you think this project has contributed to the escalation or reduction of violence in your family? Please specify.
10. Have you participated in the project's business skills development trainings? If yes, have you applied for the grant? (if yes, go to the next question).
11. Do you think the procedure for selecting the projects for funding was transparent?
12. What would be your recommendation for the similar intervention strategies in the future?
13. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your name in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the records*

of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.

Interview guide for women beneficiaries of the small grants programme

10 persons

According to the information we have, you have been one of the recipients of the shelter's services. Hence we would like to ask you several questions to improve the design of similar projects that are likely to be implemented in the future. Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions undertaken in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, note that all opinions and thoughts expressed by you will be used for the purposes of general analysis of the situation and there will be no single case of reference to your personal identity information. Please, feel free to decline responding to any question that you are not feeling comfortable with. You are also free to stop the interview if you no longer want to answer the questions. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. How have you heard about the shelter's services?
2. Did you apply to the shelter yourself or were you referred by someone?
3. What form of DV had you been subjected to: physical, sexual, emotional or economic?
4. In your opinion, why did your partner subject you to abuse?
5. Has economic factor/hardships anyhow contributed to violence that you have been subjected to? Please specify your answer.
6. What specific support were you provided with at the shelter? Please specify.
7. Did you participate at the business skills development training?
8. What was your project about (the project you have applied for)? Please tell us a little more about your project?
9. What was the outcome of your application (positive or negative)? If negative, probe why, and then proceed to question 16. If positive proceed to question 10.
10. What specific support have you received by the project manager/assistant for implementing your project? Specify.
11. Are you satisfied with the support they have given you?
12. Do you think that the people surrounding you and the community members were supportive? Please specify.
13. Please describe which factors have contributed to your success with this project?
14. Please describe which impediments you have had and what were your mitigation strategies used to address these risks?
15. Will you continue this project beyond the life of the project? If YES, how?

16. Do you think this project has contributed to the escalation or reduction of violence in your family? Please specify.
17. If you were to grade the economic empowerment as a means for protecting women from GBV on 1-2-3-4-5 scale (1 is not useful at all, 5 is extremely useful), which grade would you assign to it?
18. What would be your recommendation for the similar intervention strategies in the future?
19. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your name in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the records of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.*

Focus group guide for community members

Participants of the project's awareness raising component - 7 focus groups (max 6-8 persons each)

Interview date and time	
Region/city	

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this focus group meeting that is aimed at assessing the impact of the interventions in the framework of UN WOMEN funded project on combating DV in Azerbaijan. Please, note that the feedback we receive from you will enormously contribute to more improved design and implementation of similar intervention strategies in the future. Please, note that all opinions and thoughts expressed by you will be used for the purposes of general analysis of the situation and there will be no single case of reference to your personal identity information. Please, feel free to leave the discussions if you no longer want to take part. We thank you in advance for your time and efforts to help us.

1. What do you know about the problem of domestic violence in Azerbaijan?
2. Have you heard about the AYLU's "Building bridges of life for the women survivors of DV" project in Azerbaijan? (if "YES", ask the next question)
3. To your knowledge, what was the main goal of this project?
4. How would you define the term gender?
5. In your opinion what is DV?
6. Do you think that DV is a matter of internal affairs of a family? Specify your answer.
7. Would you interfere/do something if there is DV in your neighborhood? Specify your answer.
8. Do you think that the Government/state agencies should interfere in cases of DV? Specify your answer.
9. Is there any piece of legislation in Azerbaijan that protects from GBV? Specify your answer.
10. Have you heard of any shelters that provide assistance to GBV victims? Specify your answer.
11. Do you think that the women subjected to GBV should apply to such centers? Specify your answer.
12. How do you see your own role in addressing GBV in your community?
13. Do you think the knowledge and skills provided to the target audiences within the framework of the project had changed sensitization of the target groups towards GBV? Please specify.

14. Have you ever applied/referred someone for the services offered by the project shelter?
15. Have you/or the person you referred for the center's services been satisfied with the support received? Please, specify your answer.
16. Do you think that engaging men into the efforts to combat GBV is important? Specify your answer.
17. What other strategies and activities should be implemented to minimize GBV in the country?
18. What kind of support should be provided to victims of GBV?
19. What knowledge and skills on GBV should be developed in the community?
20. What do you think has to be changed or improved with similar intervention strategies (recommendations, suggestions)?
21. *And finally, do you have any reservations for including your names in the list of the stakeholders that will be annexed to the final evaluation report? Please note that the records of this interview will not be included into the report and the information you provide will only be used for the purposes of analysis without revealing any identity related information.*

ANNEX 4: Interviews and FGD participants

Stakeholders/beneficiaries	No of in-depth semi-structured interviews
Project implementation unit	Ali Farzaliyev, Project Coordinator Nick Nwolisa, Project Assistant Yelena Qrisay, Project Accountant
Project partners	Ali Huseynov, MP Sabina Manafova, Head of International Relations Department, SCFWCA Elgun Safarov, Head of Research and Information Department, SCFWCA Aynur Veysalova, Senior Adviser, SCFWCA Nezaket Zeynalova, Head of Sector on the work with the victims of trafficking, MLSP Nadir Adilov, Azerbaijan Lawyers' Confederation Javid Shahmaliyev, Center for Socio-Cultural Studies Mehriban Zeynalova, "Clean World" Public Union Bahija Aliyeva, Programme Analyst, UNFPA
Women beneficiaries of center's services (4 adolescents (10-19); 4 young women (20-24), & 4 adult women)	for confidentiality purposes, the names of the women have been shared with the donor in a separate attachment
Women beneficiaries of grants programme (5 women who applied for grant and were successful and 5 women who applied but weren't successful in getting the grant)	for confidentiality purposes, the names of the women have been shared with the donor in a separate attachment

Shelter's staff	Mehriban Zeinalova – Director Gulnara Rzayeva - Obstetrician/Gynaecologist Elbura Zaynalova - Lawyer Gulnara Orujova - Lawyer Gulnar Agayeva - Social worker Nargiz Kerimova - Social worker Matanat Rahimova - Social worker Yaqut Mammadaliyeva - Social worker Solmaz Akkubayeva - Psychologist Shahla Valiyeva - Psychologist
Donor agency	Mildred Garcia, Programme Specialist, UN Women/TF on VAW

ANNEX 5: Evaluation Workplan

PHASES/DELIVERABLES		RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Design phase	Preparation and submission of an inception report	Evaluators	15 October
Field phase	Conducting data collection and analysis	Evaluators	15-30 October
	Debriefing meeting on the preliminary findings.	Evaluators	5 November
Synthesis phase	Production of the first draft final report.	Evaluators	10 December
	Comments by AYLÜ and UN WOMEN	All parties	20 December
	Production of the Final Report	Evaluators	31 December
Dissemination and Follow-up	Sharing the report with the stakeholders	EM	20 January

	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Description of Expected Deliverables</i>
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1	Evaluation inception report (language of report: English)	The inception report provides the grantee organization and the evaluators with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the evaluation and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset.
2	Draft Evaluation Report (language of report: English)	Evaluators must submit draft report for review and comments by all parties involved. The report needs to meet the minimum requirements specified in the annex of TOR. The grantee and key stakeholders in the evaluation must review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria.
3	Final Evaluation Report (language of report: English)	Relevant comments from key stakeholders must be well integrated in the final version, and the final report must meet the minimum requirements specified in the annex of TOR. The final report must be disseminated widely to the relevant stakeholders and the general public.

ANNEX 6: Results and Monitoring Plan

Statement of Project Goal, Outcomes and Outputs	Indicators for measuring progress towards achieving the project goal, outcomes and outputs	Data collection methods	Baseline data	Targets	Timeline of baseline data collection	Endline data	Timeline of endline data collection
Project Goal. Women and girls in the Absheron region of Azerbaijan will experience improved protection and response to domestic violence through community support for prevention and provision of a sustainable model shelter and services	Number of survivors of DV and women and girls at risk, who benefit from the preventive, protective and rehabilitative services offered by the shelter	Review and analysis of the registry of the shelter	0	220	November 2015	448	November 2017
	Number of women survivors of DV who have been economically empowered by establishing and running a small business of their own in the framework of the proposed project	Interviews with the women - recipients of small grants, focus groups with community members, informal group discussions	0	30	November 2015	30	November 2017
	Number of men and women in the target community who consider state interventions on the cases of DV acceptable	Consultations with project partners, interviews and focus groups with community members	0	2000	November 2015	2600	November 2017
Outcome 1. 220 women and girls at risk or experiencing DV have access to an equipped shelter with effective support and rehabilitation services	Number of shelters providing improved preventive, protective and rehabilitative support to the women survivors of DV established in the framework of the proposed project	Review and analysis of project documents, review and analysis of the related policy documents/protocols	0	1	November 2015	1	November 2017
	Number of staff with increased knowledge and skills on how to help the women survivors of DV	Interviews with project partners, interviews with shelter's staff, review and analysis of the available project documents and training records	0	10	November 2015	10	November 2017

	Number of women survivors of DV and active community members with increased knowledge on economic empowerment to reduce their economic dependency from partners	Review and analysis of related project documents, in-depth interviews with the women who have established the business of their own, interviews with project partners, focus groups with community members	0	100	November 2015	103	November 2017
Output 1.1. The shelter for the survivors of DV in a position to respond to their needs is available	Number of the shelters established and operationalized in the target region	Review and analysis of project documents, review and analysis of the related policy documents/protocols	0	1	November 2015	1	November 2017
	Number of shelter's staff covered by the capacity building trainings on how to identify and support the women survivors of DV	Interviews with project partners, interviews with shelter's staff, review and analysis of the available project documents and training records	0	10	November 2015	10	November 2017
Output 1.2. The staff of the shelter covered by the project's capacity building trainings have better knowledge and skills to identify and support the victims of DV	Number of women survivors of DV who have been admitted for the services offered by the shelter	Interviews with project partners, interviews with shelter's staff, review and analysis of the available project documents, review of the shelter's registry	0	220	November 2015	448	November 2017
Output 1.3. The women survivors of DV can benefit from the services offered by the shelter	Number of women survivors of DV who have been admitted for the services offered by the shelter's services	Interviews with project partners, interviews with shelter's staff, review and analysis of the available project documents, review of the shelter's registry	0	220	November 2015	448	November 2017

Output 1.4. The women survivors of DV and other women/active community members covered by the project's economic empowerment trainings have knowledge and skills on establishing and running a small business of their own including through the small grants mechanism	Number of women who have been covered by the economic empowerment trainings	Interviews with project partners, interviews with shelter's staff, review and analysis of the available project documents including economic empowerment training records	0	100	November 2015	103	November 2017
	Number of women who have been awarded small grants for the business of their own	Review and analysis of related project documents, in-depth interviews with the women who have established the business of their own, interviews with project partners	0	30	November 2015	30	November 2017
Outcome 2. Local CSOs, FBOs and key community members/leaders agree that women and girls have a right to live a life free from violence/DV and take action to change attitudes and behaviors in the community	Number of civil society organizations and faith based groups actively engaged as agents of change in the project's awareness raising and sensitization activities	Review and analysis of project documents, review and analysis of the related subcontracts issued to CSOs and FBOs in the framework of the project, interviews with partners	0	18	November 2015	18	November 2017
	Number of community members sensitive towards the issues related to DV and aware of the services provided by the shelter	Registration lists of the project's information sessions, review and analysis of pre and post session evaluation questionnaires, focus groups, review and analysis of shelter's registry	0	2000	November 2015	2600	November 2017

	Number of the men and boys who report high support for gender equality norms according to GEM scale	Registration lists of the project's information sessions held with the men and boys in the target communities, review and analysis of pre and post session evaluation questionnaires, focus groups, review and analysis of shelter's registry	0	1000	November 2015	1400	November 2017
Output 2.1. The local CSOs and FBOs have better knowledge and capacities to work as agents of change for achieving behavioral and attitudinal changes regarding DV in the target communities	Number of CSOs and FBOs sensitized through the project's awareness raising sessions	Review and analysis of project documents, review and analysis of the related subcontracts issued to CSOs and FBOs in the framework of the project, interviews with partners	0	18	November 2015	18	November 2017
Output 2.2. The community members covered by the project's awareness raising information sessions have better understanding	Number of community members sensitized through the project's awareness raising sessions	Registration lists of the project's information sessions, review and analysis of pre and post session evaluation questionnaires, focus groups, review and analysis of shelter's registry	0	2000	November 2015	2600	November 2017

of the DV, its negative consequences for the communities, and the available protection mechanisms including the services offered by the shelter	Number of men and boys sensitized through the project's awareness raising sessions	Registration lists of the project's information sessions, review and analysis of pre and post session evaluation questionnaires, focus groups, review and analysis of shelter's registry	0	1000	November 2015	1400	November 2017
Outcome 3. Institutional commitment for continuation of the shelter and its services is sustained beyond the life of the project through successful demonstration of the model for replication	Number of monitoring visits held with the Government	Minutes of the monitoring visits and observations	0	6	November 2015	3	November 2017
	Number of draft guidelines/roadmaps to guide the replicability strategies to follow	Review of the project documents and the draft roadmap	0	1	November 2015	1	November 2017
	Number of partnerships events/meetings held with the Government to ensure sustainability of the project	Event registration lists, related project documents/financial records	0	6	November 2015	5	November 2017
Output 3.1. The partnership and joint monitoring of results with the Government is held through grass-roots and high level advocacy events/meetings	Number of joint monitoring visits held	Minutes of the monitoring visits and observations	0	6	November 2015	5	November 2017
	Number of joint events/conferences held	Minutes of the events	0	6	November 2015	5	November 2017

Output 3.2. Analytical framework (draft roadmap) on the organization of the shelter's services is developed to support the following replicability strategies	Number of guideline documents developed	Draft roadmap document	0	1	November 2015	0 ** in progress	November 2017
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ANNEX 7: Beneficiary Data Sheet

Beneficiary group		The number of beneficiaries reached	
		At the project goal level	At the outcome level
Women/ girls survivors of violence		448	448
Primary beneficiary total		448	448
CSOs	Number of institutions reached	N/A	18
	Number of individuals reached	N/A	18
Community based groups/members	Number of groups reached	N/A	N/A
	Number of individuals reached	N/A	2600
FBOs	Number of institutions reached	N/A	1
	Number of individuals reached	N/A	1
Men and boys		N/A	1400
Secondary beneficiaries total		N/A	4019

ANNEX 8: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data source and data collection methods
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Effectiveness	<p>1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?</p> <p>2. Was the project effective in delivering desired/planned results?</p> <p>3. To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?</p> <p>4. How effective has the project been in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results were achieved?</p> <p>5. To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.</p> <p>6. What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How?</p> <p>7. To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why.</p> <p>8. To what extent did the Project's M&E mechanism contribute in meeting project results?</p> <p>9. How effective were the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?</p> <p>10. What are the future intervention strategies and issues?</p> <p>11. <i>To what extent did the outcomes and activities contribute to the achievement of the project outcomes?</i></p>	<p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the staff of the shelter is in a position to offer effective protection and support services to the victims of DV the degree to which the beneficiary women are satisfied with the services provided at the centre the economically empowered women are confident that the resources they have mitigate the risk of DV DV the community members demonstrate more sensitivity towards the issues of DV the community members are ready to act and refer the victims for the protection and support services the extent to which the Government partners support the project the extent to which the NGOs have been engaged in the project's advocacy action for DV prevention and response have there been any major policy changes as a result of project intervention the type and effect of internal and external factors contributing to/impeding the project implementation measures to address the obstacles faced and leverage enabling factors for the successful project implementation how effectively are project's M&E plan and exit strategy utilised <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one shelter providing protection and support services to the victims of DV is functioning the number of the women satisfied by the centre's services the number of the survivor women with increased knowledge and skills on establishing and running a small business the number of the women benefitting from the small grants programme the number of community members sensitised in the DV and aware of the services provided at the centre the number of the NGOs supporting the project's advocacy actions availability of the project's M&E plan and exit strategy 	<p>Desk review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project application Project reports and records Available evidence/research and data <p>Interviews/FGDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with project staff Interview with donor representative Interviews with partners Interviews with beneficiaries Focus groups with beneficiaries On-site observations
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Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data source and data collection methods
Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was the project relevant to the identified needs of the beneficiaries? 2. To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs of women and girls? 3. To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls? 4. What and how much progress has been made towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project (including contributing factors and constraints); 5. Were the inputs and strategies identified, and were they realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the results? 6. <i>To what extent was the project's conceptual framework responsive to the changes in the national development context?</i> 	<p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which the project activities and intervention strategies have been designed to contribute to the intended outputs and outcomes • the extent to which the project's goal, objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities are aligned with the related national priorities and SDGs • the extent to which the strategic interventions undertaken are informed by the actual needs and expectations of the beneficiaries • the extent to which the strategies used were appropriate and realistic to achieve the intended results • the perception of the project partners and other beneficiaries as regards the project relevance • the extent to which the duty bearers and rights holders have been able to participate in the project design • the type and effect of internal and external factors contributing to/impeding the successful implementation of the project <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of partnerships established with the Government agencies • the number of partnerships established with the civil society sector • the number of partners taking part in the project design • the number of vulnerable group members taking part in the project design 	<p>Desk review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project application • Project reports and records • Available evidence/research and data <p>Interviews/FGDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff • Interview with donor representative • Interviews with partners • Interviews with beneficiaries • Focus groups with beneficiaries • On-site observations

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data source and data collection methods
Efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the Project Document? 2. Was the process of achieving results efficient? Specifically did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred? Were the resources effectively utilized? 3. Did project activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors? Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs? 4. Could a different approach have produced better results? 5. How was the project's collaboration with its partners, other CSOs and government? 6. How efficient were the management and accountability structures of the project? 7. How did the project financial management processes and procedures affect project implementation? 8. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project's implementation process? 	<p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which the actual activities have been delivered in line with the predefines work plans and timeline • the extent to which the resources allocated have been adequate for the achievement of the project results • adequacy of the organisation's structures, accountability measures and human resources for the implementation of the project • adequacy of the available expertise and capacities for successful project implementation • the extent to which necessary resources have been allocated for the project monitoring • evidence of the measures undertaken to overcome the challenges as regards the resource allocation, if any • cost effectiveness of the results achieved to date • evidence of the coordination and cooperation with other partners to leverage the resources and fill in the gaps • type and effect of the measures that contributed to the project efficiency • type and effect of measures that impeded project efficiency <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resources allocated for the project • ratio of managerial/operational costs • number of partnerships established with the NGOs and other partners for leveraging the resources • amount of the resources leveraged through partnerships with other agencies 	<p>Desk review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project application • Project reports and records, particularly financial • Audit findings • Available evidence/research and data <p>Interviews/FGDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff • Interview with donor representative • Interviews with partners • Interviews with beneficiaries • Focus groups with beneficiaries • On-site observations

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data source and data collection methods
Sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project? 2. How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends? 3. Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach? 4. How were capacities strengthened at the individual and organizational level (including contributing factors and constraints)? - Describe the main lessons that have emerged? 5. What are the recommendations for similar support in future? (Nb. The recommendations should provide comprehensive proposals for future interventions based on the current evaluation findings). 6. <i>To what extent is the Government as well as other stakeholders willing to replicate the approach utilised by the project?</i> 	<p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perceptions of the project staff as regards the project sustainability • perceptions of partners as regards the project ownership and sustainability • type and effect of the measures that contributed to the sustainability of the project • type and effect of the measures that impeded the sustainability of the project • policy level sustainability of the action • financial sustainability of the action • technical sustainability of the action • level of engagement of the Government and other partners • donors' perceived perception to support the action beyond the project life <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of Government agencies willing to replicate the action • number of NGOs willing to replicate the approaches • number of donor agencies willing to support the project • availability of the handover/exit strategy 	<p>Desk review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project application • Project reports and records • Available evidence/research and data <p>Interviews/FGDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff • Interview with donor representative • Interviews with partners • Interviews with beneficiaries • Focus groups with beneficiaries • On-site observations

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data source and data collection methods
Impact	1. What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?	<p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> the level of likelihood that benefits from the project will continue beyond the project life <input type="checkbox"/> the evidence of the agencies referring to or including the lessons learned and best practices in the course of their projects/programmes <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> number of consultations, partnerships and joint collaborations with partners during the project implementation 	<p>Desk review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project application • Project reports and records • Available evidence/research and data <p>Interviews/FGDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff • Interview with donor representative • Interviews with partners • Interviews with beneficiaries • Focus groups with beneficiaries • On-site observations

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data source and data collection methods
Knowledge generation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls? 2. Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries that have similar interventions? 	<p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which the project implementation has generated the lessons for the strategic interventions in the future • the extent to which the project products could be regarded as best practices to be replicated by other partners <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of the partners using the lessons and best practices from the project 	<p>Desk review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project application • Project reports and records • Available evidence/research and data <p>Interviews/FGDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff • Interview with donor representative • Interviews with partners • Interviews with beneficiaries • Focus groups with beneficiaries • On-site observations