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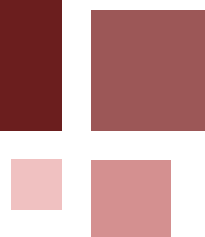
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Photo: Ion Buga/UNDP

# **Local Action** to End Gender-based Violence in Moldova

## **SUMMARY BRIEF**







# Key Messages

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- 1.** Gender-based violence (GBV) is widespread in the Republic of Moldova and has been severely underfunded at the local level. Urgent action is required through participatory local governance and inclusive partnerships that can more effectively respond to and eliminate GBV.
  - 2.** The pilot in Chirsova will demonstrate how to localize a national GBV plan and develop and implement coordination mechanisms and adapt innovative intervention models to achieve impacts on health, social welfare, justice, education, and economic development.
  - 3.** More efforts will be needed to ensure the sustainability of this stepped-up intersectoral local action, by bringing more stakeholders and payers to the table and demonstrating the societal and multi-sectoral value of investing in interventions to address GBV.
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# Why is it important to address gender-based violence at the local level in Moldova?

Over 1 in 3 women aged 15 years and older in the Republic of Moldova have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime, according to an OSCE survey conducted in 2014<sup>1</sup>. In the year preceding the survey, 9.4% of women had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV).

GBV is a widespread problem with significant health consequences, including physical injuries, mental health problems, lack of control over sexual and reproductive choices and increased vulnerability to HIV, as well as increased adoption of risky health behaviours, such as smoking, drug and alcohol misuse, self-harm and risky sexual behaviours. GBV also results in serious social consequences for the affected women and their children, who experience behavioural and emotional disturbances associated with poor educational outcomes and the perpetration or experience of violence later in life<sup>2</sup>. Without targeted action, Moldova will not achieve SDG target 5.2 to 'eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres', and GBV will continue to undermine its health and wellbeing goal.

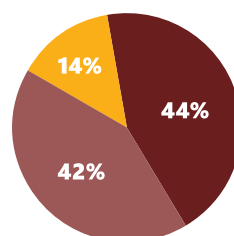
The unacceptable human suffering caused by GBV is further compounded by substantial direct and indirect economic costs for survivors, their families and communities, as well as the government and the economy. A 2014 study commissioned by UN Women<sup>3</sup> estimated an annual cost to Moldova's government of 36 million lei (nearly 2.6 million USD)<sup>b</sup>. Social assistance is a severely underfunded sector in Moldova, and over 60% of social service costs resulting from cases of violence were covered by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The study did not capture additional economic costs related to other sectors, such as decreased educational outcomes among survivors' children (education sector), or reduced productivity due to absenteeism (labour sector).



**Government spent 36 million lei in response to GBV (2014)**



**A GBV survivor spends on average<sup>c</sup>...**



■ Social assistance  
■ Legal costs  
■ Health care expenses



**3,000 lei**

on medical treatment



**9,000 lei**

on attorney services



**3,200 lei**

on temporary accommodation costs

**4 x more**

on attorney services than the government

**1.5 x more**

overall than the government

Despite a comprehensive legislative framework and National GBV Strategy (Box 1), there are significant gaps in funding their full implementation<sup>3</sup>. Survivors are not receiving the required social assistance, economic empowerment and social housing; mental health and psychosocial long-term support; and access to state-funded legal counseling and representation<sup>3</sup>. Over 30% of essential services by international standards are either inefficient or non-existent in Moldova, with over 175 shelter places still missing<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Based on the 2014 annual rate of 14.04 Moldovan Lei per 1 USD reported by the National Bank of Moldova: [http://www.bnm.md/en/content/official-exchange-rates#calculator\\_full](http://www.bnm.md/en/content/official-exchange-rates#calculator_full)

<sup>c</sup> Estimates based on a survey of 20 survivors randomly selected from service beneficiaries from September 2015 to January 2016.

## Republic of Moldova's Law and related National Strategies to address GBV

- Enacted in 2008, *Law No. 45-XVI on Preventing and Combating Family Violence*<sup>4</sup> aims to protect and support the family unit by ensuring the human rights of women and men to a life without violence. It provides the institutional framework to address GBV through an Inter-ministerial Coordinating Council to ensure coordination and cooperation across ministries and other central administrative authorities. It establishes victim protection (a court can issue a protection order within 24 hours by applying a restraining order), encourages the establishment of centers/services for the rehabilitation of survivors and perpetrators, and allows third parties to file complaints on behalf of survivors.
- The *National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2018 – 2023* (National GBV Strategy)<sup>5</sup> is aligned with the Istanbul Convention, and sets the standards for preventing GBV, protecting victims of violence, prosecuting perpetrators, and developing integrated policies through multi-agency cooperation and data collection.
- The *National Strategy on Ensuring Equality between Women and Men (2017-2021)* involves investments in social, psychological, legal, educational and economic services for women and girls.

## Localizing the National GBV Strategy in Chirsova

Recognising the need for multi-sectoral action, Moldova has established an Inter-ministerial Coordinating Council for preventing and combating domestic violence at the national level to ensure coordination and cooperation across ministries and other central administrative authorities<sup>5</sup>. Although *Law no. 45-XVI* mandates the establishment of Multidisciplinary Teams as a matching structure to address GBV at the local level, the mechanisms created to date in Moldova vary in their efforts to address GBV issues. In regional ATU Gagauzia, pressing regional independence and administrative issues have been prioritised in the past decade and therefore, no matching local mechanism was established prior to 2018, resulting in very limited to no government investment in GBV prevention and response activities and very few survivors receiving support, particularly in rural communities<sup>3</sup>.

Communities provide a critical platform for effective local action in addressing GBV, supporting both national priorities and progress towards achieving the SDGs<sup>5,6</sup>. Since GBV drivers and patterns are best understood at the local level, it is necessary to consider the local context (including cultural differences, gaps in prevention/service provision and training needs of service providers) and ensure active community engagement.

The global project *Ending GBV to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (2017-2020)*, led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the Republic of South Korea, combines local participatory planning methods with the latest thinking in cost sharing in several locations across the world with high GBV prevalence. It supports the development of Local Action Plans





Photo: Ion Buga/UNDP

to address GBV, through both prevention activities and enhanced services for survivors, by bringing together a range of sectors and partners, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal on governance (SDG16).<sup>7</sup>

Expected outcomes include the reduction of GBV and improved support for survivors in selected locations by testing, costing and evaluating different types of intervention models and providing decision-makers, practitioners and community partners with policy recommendations and new knowledge, skills and tools to address GBV at the local level.

Chirsova village, in the autonomous region of Gagauzia, joined the global project in July 2018<sup>8</sup>. In this pilot project, regional and local authorities have embarked on a process to localise the National GBV Strategy with the support of UNDP by establishing local coordinating and financing mechanisms to develop, implement and sustain a participatory Local Action Plan.



Photo: Ion Buga/UNDP

## Gender-based Violence in Chirsova village

A local situational analysis conducted in 2018 as part of the UNDP pilot found that:

- Intimate partner violence is estimated to be high (although underreported) with several severe injuries registered by the police.
- Domestic violence often happens as result of - and is perpetuated by - a combination of harmful norms, attitudes and behaviours; alcohol abuse; mental health problems and household poverty.
- There are serious gaps in GBV response services for survivors:
  - ✓ service providers require specialized training in addressing GBV cases in the community, including local referral mechanisms for the protection of survivors.
  - ✓ survivors do not have access to a safe confidential space, counselling or mental health support services
  - ✓ there is no alternative accommodation (shelter) available for survivors in the locality.
- Recommended areas for action included raising public awareness to prevent GBV; providing protection to survivors; training service providers in preventing and responding to GBV; and prosecuting GBV offenders.

# Ingredients for success

The local government and community in Chirsova are combining several approaches and strategies to optimize the impact of the local action plan for the eradication of GBV.

## Participatory and inclusive governance

The participatory planning approach has led to the institutionalization of a local multidisciplinary coordination and collaboration mechanism referred to as the Multi-disciplinary team (MDT). The MDT was formally appointed by the Mayor of Chirsova in October 2018 to fulfill the local obligations under Moldova's normative and legislative acts to address GBV prevention and response (including protection and prosecution needs) and enable shared responsibility and accountability, creating a more conducive environment to eradicate GBV.

The MDT, which includes Chirsova's Mayor and service providers as members, has been meeting quarterly to receive capacity building training to identify, manage and prevent GBV cases in the community, and develop an annual GBV Local Action Plan based on the recommendations from the situational analysis. While the law does not require civil society to be part of the MDT, the draft plan has been discussed with the community in several participatory discussions and public hearings. This participatory model has also enabled stakeholders in Chirsova to identify additional groups and organizations likely to benefit from the implementation of future plans, including different government levels (local, regional, national); sectors (health, social services, education, employment, justice), CSOs, and the private sector.<sup>6</sup> It has also enabled an awareness-raising campaign targeting several demographic groups at the local and national levels, thereby highlighting that addressing GBV is everyone's responsibility and requires the transformation of harmful norms, beliefs and behaviours around GBV.

Based on the local drivers of GBV (limited employment opportunities leading to economic stress and alcohol abuse) and the unmet needs analysis identified by the situational analysis, the local government is supporting the establishment of a Safe Space, which is expected to provide GBV prevention and response services in Chirsova, including counselling services by adapting the Common Elements Treatment Approach (CETA) to the Moldova context as well as economic empowerment activities.

## Committed leadership that walks the talk

Local and regional authorities have, and are, investing in the implementation of a GBV Local Action Plan through:

- Substantial in-kind contribution of government staff time to develop and implement the first Local Action Plan
- Donation of the building for an innovative Safe Space (valued at 2,500,000 lei, or 141,000 USD)
- Contribution of 1,580,000 lei (84 000 USD) by Regional authorities toward the Safe Space renovations
- Commitment to cover the Safe Space running costs (estimated between 615,000-870,000 lei, equivalent to 35,000-50,000 USD per year, including the staff salaries for 2 social workers, a psychologist and a lawyer) from 2021 onwards, when it becomes a Public Institution<sup>d</sup>.

## Embedded monitoring, evaluation and learning

To ensure that the experience and learning from the Chirsova model can inform further efforts in the region of Gagauzia, in the rest of Moldova and globally, the project includes a comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and learning component. The implementation research and analysis will guide the refinement of the activities in the Local Action Plan in real-time and identify the enablers to leverage these when replicating the model, as well as barriers to overcome them.

## Costing and value for money

A costing exercise will inform the resources required to support implementation of the Local Action Plan, and budgeting requirements to replicate those efforts in other communities at a larger scale. These costs and the observed benefits of the Local Action Plan will be analysed to assess the value for money of the investment across multiple sectors and stakeholders. Building on this evidence, local stakeholders could advocate for co-financing of the planned GBV activities across a range of sources (both public and private sectors, or across government-levels and sector departments).

<sup>d</sup> UNDP has committed to financing the running costs of the Safe Space for the first year estimated at 352,000 lei (20,000 USD) while the services are being established.

# Testing innovative local action to address Gender-based Violence

## Multidisciplinary Team (MDT): multi-sectoral coordination and participatory planning



**Intervention:** Establishing a local coordination mechanism to design, implement, monitor and evaluate a comprehensive Local GBV Action Plan including GBV prevention and response through a participatory planning and paying approach.



**Evidence:** Programmes that effectively reduce GBV are multi-sectoral, participatory and support greater communication and shared decision-making with community members and women's groups<sup>10</sup>.



### Achievements to date:

- MDT established in October 2018, including the Mayor of Chirsova and local service providers (nurses, police officer, teachers, social workers and others).
- MDT trained in the proactive identification of GBV cases, their management and referral.
- MDT developed a Local Action Plan for 2019 aligned with the National GBV Plan, based on the situational analysis as well as the latest evidence on effective GBV prevention approaches, and incorporating inputs from local authorities, Public Council members and the community during several participatory discussions and public hearings.

## The Safe Space: Providing direct assistance and protection for survivors as well as prevention of future violence



**Intervention:** Establish the Centre for Assistance of Victims of Intimate Partner Violence as a regional Safe Space integrating support services and a shelter for women and their children and GBV prevention approaches - the first of its kind in Moldova.

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_11700](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_11700)

