



PROJECT CHRONICLES

Issue # 11, March - April 2010

COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS PROJECT/ARMENIA

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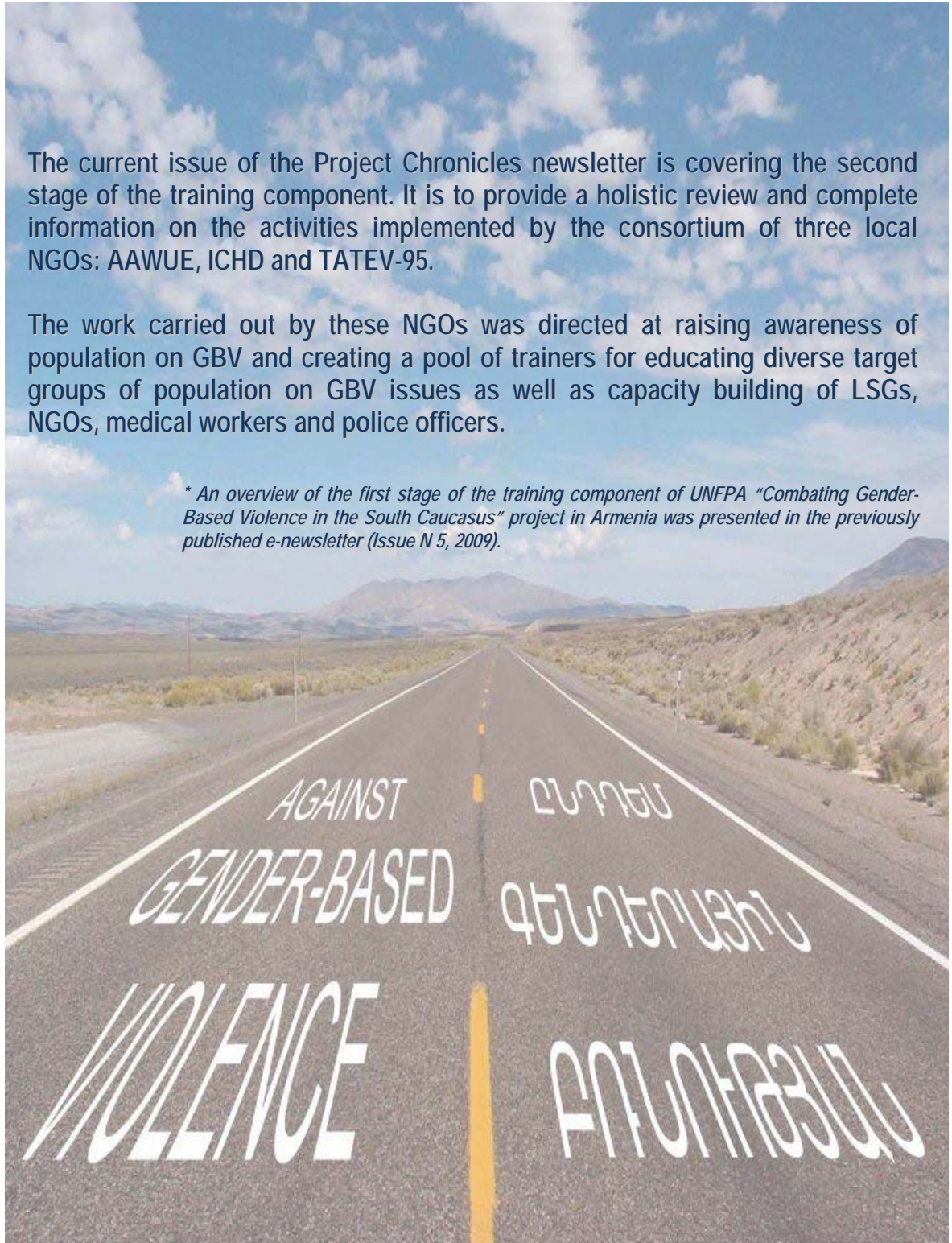
AND THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)

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The current issue of the Project Chronicles newsletter is covering the second stage of the training component. It is to provide a holistic review and complete information on the activities implemented by the consortium of three local NGOs: AAWUE, ICHD and TATEV-95.

The work carried out by these NGOs was directed at raising awareness of population on GBV and creating a pool of trainers for educating diverse target groups of population on GBV issues as well as capacity building of LSGs, NGOs, medical workers and police officers.

** An overview of the first stage of the training component of UNFPA "Combating Gender-Based Violence in the South Caucasus" project in Armenia was presented in the previously published e-newsletter (Issue N 5, 2009).*

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRAINING COMPONENT: PHASE TWO

Following successful completion of the first stage of UNFPA “Combating Gender-Based Violence in the South Caucasus” (CGBV) project’s training component, and based on the positive experience of cooperation with local NGOs, the second stage of the training component was launched with the consortium of International Centre for Human Development (ICHHD), Association of Armenian Women with University Education (AAWUE) (these two NGOs were among the implementers of the first stage of the training component), and Tatev-95, NGO that works in the field of psychological consultancy and assistance to the population.

International Center for Human Development (ICHHD) is an independent think tank which has been implementing activities aimed at development of democracy, dissemination of liberal values, initiation of reforms in the governance system of Armenia and implementation of research and analysis to study possibilities of regional integration. Association of Women with University Education (AAWUE) is an NGO that has been active in supporting initiatives of human rights protection, ensuring equal rights and equitable treatment of men and women, increasing the role of women in society, enhancing more active participation of women in political and civic activities, addressing gender discrimination and gender stereotypes, promoting civic initiatives and the culture of peace. Tatev-95 is a charitable public organization that works towards improving the mental health of people of Armenia. Tatev-95 helps individuals that have emotional and mental health problems to overcome difficulties and to develop ways of coping with and solving problems. Tatev-95 is committed to the well being of the person resulting in enhanced self-esteem.

The goal of the second phase of “Combating Gender-based Violence in Armenia” project was to support the development of an environment conducive for the elimination of gender-based violence (GBV) in Armenia and to enhance capacities of the key players to implement the country’s international commitments in this field.

The objectives of the second stage of the project were as following:

- a) *To extend a pool of trainers on gender and GBV;*
- b) *To increase awareness and improve knowledge among public (women, men and youth) on gender issues;*
- c) *To strengthen capacity at both national and local levels for protecting and enforcing the rights of women and building reporting mechanisms.*

The outcomes of the second stage of the project included:

- **1654** young people, men and women, including high school and university students, journalists and educators, and other target groups gained knowledge on gender and GBV issues, national and international instruments on gender equality and combating GBV;
- **340** representatives of Local Self-governance bodies (LSGs), law enforcement bodies, healthcare institutions and NGOs gained knowledge on gender and GBV issues, national and international instruments on gender equality and combating GBV;
- **245** women and adolescents - potential and real victims of violence, gained knowledge on violence and its impact on the mental health, developed skills for dealing with violence problems, as well as at least **57** victims of violence were able to improve their mental health conditions as a result of psychological counseling;
- **36** journalists and educators participated in ToT trainings on gender and GBV in Armenia.

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60 INFORMATION MEETINGS HELD IN MARZES:

Awareness raising on GBV issues among population

Within the framework of the second phase of awareness raising activities, Armenian Association of Women with University Education (AAWUE) conducted 60 one-day information meetings in Yerevan and 10 Armenian marzes (regions) with a purpose to raise awareness of population on GBV issues. As many as **1357 participants out of 1654** took part in one-day meetings, among them: **386** school students, **166** university students, **695** women and **111** men.

Based on the previous experience of conducted information meetings, which proved fairly low levels of awareness on gender equality and GBV issues among school children from remote and rural areas of the country, and considering the importance of gender socialization of the youth, information meetings were planned and conducted for the following target groups of population:

- **School children - overall 17 information meetings** were conducted in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, and Kapan cities; 10 information meetings conducted in Etchmiadzin, Artashat, Vedi, Abovyan, Hrazdan, Nor Hachn, Sevan, Dilijan, Vayk and Stepanavan towns, as well as 2 information meetings conducted in Akhuryan and Yeghvard villages;
- **Students - 7 information meetings** were conducted in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Kapan cities and Etchmiadzin town;
- **Women - overall 29 information meetings** were conducted in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, and Kapan cities as well as in Dilijan, Hrazdan, Etchmiadzin, Ashtarak, Nor Hachn, Ararat, Sevan, Tashir, Artik, Artashat, Abovyan, Vedi, Charentsavan, Talin, Vayk, Alaverdi towns and Yeghvard, Akhuryan, and Maralik villages.

AAWUE paid a particular attention to organizing information meetings for the target groups of women due to the dual role that women play in GBV; on the one hand, women are the main targets of GBV, while on the other, they are the main agents of gender socialization, i.e.: women traditionally play a key role in the process of upbringing of children both in family and in kindergartens, schools and higher education institutions where a large number of women work as teachers and lecturers.

- **Men –3 information meetings** were conducted in Gyumri, Vanadzor and Sevan cities.

It was decided to conduct information meetings for men-only target groups to reveal their perceptions and the extent to which they understand GBV problem.

- **Journalists - 2 information meetings** were conducted in Gyumri and Vanadzor. *This target group was selected due to the role mass media play in shaping and influencing public opinions.*

- **Members of professional unions - 2 information meetings** were conducted in Yerevan for young activists of the Confederation of Professional Unions as well as for the group of physicians representing professional unions of the healthcare system.

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AAWUE selected this target group based on the positive role it can play in disseminating information among medical workers.

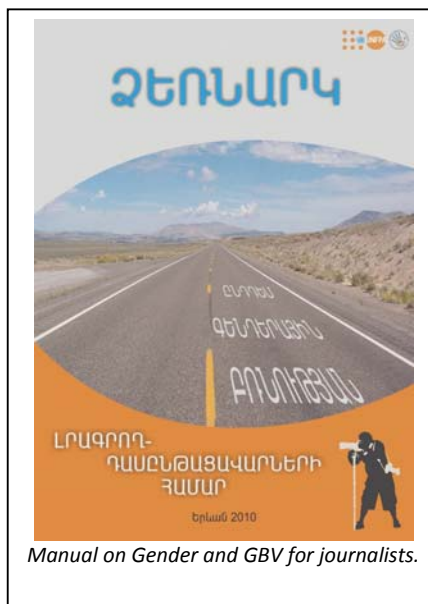
Information meetings revealed a low level of awareness on gender-based discrimination and GBV among population in Armenian marzes. At the same time, almost all of the participants displayed a great interest in the discussed topics, including trafficking, and acknowledged the importance of combating GBV to lay the grounds for gender equality, which is a necessary precondition for sustainable, harmonious development of Armenian society and establishment of democracy.

During information meetings the majority of participants shared a common opinion regarding the importance and need of consistently conducting information meetings on the topics of gender equality and GBV for diverse groups of population.

MANUAL FOR JOURNALISTS AND 3-DAY TOT IN TSAGHKADZOR:

*Preparing journalist to conduct information meetings
for mass media representatives*

In order to create a solid knowledge base on gender and gender-based violence (GBV) related issues as well as to ensure effectiveness of planning, teaching and learning processes, the consortium partners, under the overall guidance of the UNFPA CGBV project, have developed four detailed training modules and handouts for the target groups of journalists, health professionals, police officers and psychologists.



Manual on Gender and GBV for journalists.

Each of the modules was fine-tuned to correspond to the specific needs of each of the mentioned target groups.

The module for journalists aims at enhancing skills of journalist to conduct information meetings for mass media representatives on gender equality and GBV issues with a purpose to ensure effective and non-biased reporting on the mentioned topics by TV, radio, print and E-media.

The module includes a broad range of topics related to GBV and mass media, including:

- Mass media and coverage of gender issues;
- Gender-based violence,
- Gender equality and GBV issues reflected in the international and national instruments.

The module was test-piloted during a 3-day ToT, which took place in January 2010, in Tsaghkadzor town and was conducted by AAWUE trainers for the group of 18 journalists.

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The auditorium of the participants included journalists of TV, print and radio media from Yerevan (3 journalists) and 7 Armenian marzes (15 journalists), including **Shirak** (Gyumri city), **Lori** (Vanadzor city, Alaverdi and Stepanavan towns), **Ararat** (Artashat and Ararat towns), **Aragatsotn**, **Tavush**, **Armavir** (Armavir and Etchmiadzin towns), **Gegharkunik** and **Kotayk** (Abovyan and Hrazdan towns) **marzes**.

The journalists represented editorial offices of Yerevan-based and marz newspapers, such as: “Megapolis”, “Delovoy Express”, “Kanch”, “Komsomolskaya Pravda”, “Loru Marz”, “Ararat”, “Aragats”, “Geghama Ashkharh”, as well as TV and radio companies, including: “H1”, “Shant”, “Tsayg”, “Lori”, “Radio Hay”, “Ankyun+”, “Artashat”, and “Hrazdan”.

The goal of the training was dual:

- to prepare a pool of skillful trainers for conducting information meetings and seminars aimed at awareness raising on gender and GBV issues among journalists, and
- to facilitate effective coverage of these topics in mass media, thus contributing to promotion of gender equality principles and elimination of gender stereotypes, gender-based discrimination, and GBV in Armenian society.

During the trainings a particular focus was placed on the role of mass media as active agents of socialization and the most influential institute in the field of formation of public perceptions regarding gender issues in Armenia and gender stereotypes. The participants of the training also learned how to conduct assessment of print and TV media through gender indicators.

Trainers presented different forms of GBV and ways how it is manifested, as well as shared information on the current situation with GBV in Armenia. HIV/AIDS and trafficking topics were also covered during the training.

The feedback provided by the participants demonstrated on the one hand, a low level of awareness on many topics included in the training program, and on the other, appreciation of the received knowledge and skills by the participants. The feedback has also revealed the effectiveness of the training and high level of satisfaction of the participants with all aspects of the training.

3-DAY TOT FOR THE GROUP OF EDUCATORS:

Preparing a pool of educators to conduct awareness raising meetings for school teachers and universities lecturers

The goal of this ToT was to prepare trainers for conducting information meetings aimed at raising awareness on gender and GBV issues among target groups of teachers/lecturers, school and university students.

The group of 18 educators representing Yerevan and 8 Armenian marzes was selected for participation in the ToT.

The following topics were presented and discussed during the ToT:

- The process of gender socialization and its stages;
- Institutes, agents, and mechanisms of gender socialization;
- Gender stereotypes and how they are manifested in the field of education;

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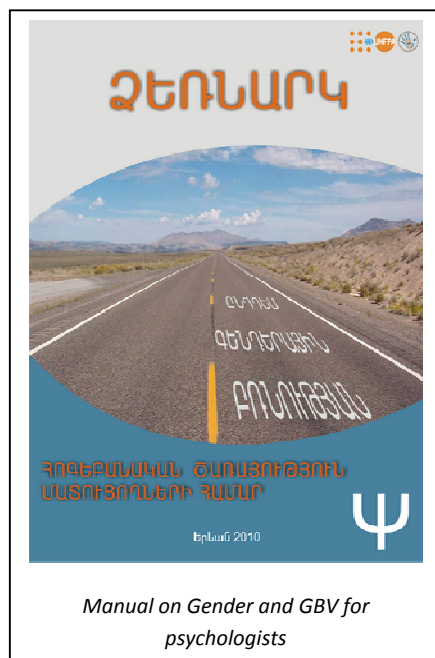
- Gender-based discrimination and how it is manifested in political and economic spheres of life;
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) as a form of gender-based discrimination;
- Types of GBV, causes and consequences;
- Domestic Violence as a form of GBV;
- Major national and international instruments pertaining to gender equality and GBV and the role of educational institutions in promotion of gender equality and combating GBV.

During the training film screenings were organized to demonstrate series of documentaries on the topics of violence and trafficking, followed by facilitated discussions. This allowed participants to get a better insight into the scope of the mentioned problems and the current situation in Armenia. Trainees also received information regarding regional and international initiatives in the field of combating GBV and shared a lot of positive feedbacks regarding the involvement of famous sportsmen in the campaigns against GBV in Armenia.

Analysis of the results of the ToT proved a proper selection of the group of participants, who displayed a great interest towards presented topics and a strong intention to continue conducting information meetings for the target groups of teachers/lectures and students on the topics of gender equality and GBV.

15 EDUCATION/INFORMATION MEETINGS HELD FOR POTENTIAL AND ACTUAL VICTIMS OF GBV:

Help to socially vulnerable groups and actual victims of GBV



ICHD and Tatev-95 have organized 15 education/information meetings for at least 245 potential and actual victims of GBV representing socially vulnerable groups, such as: orphans, attendees of care centers, poor families residing in hostels, as well as for patients of surgical, neurosurgical, traumatological, gynecological health departments and etc. The total duration of the trainings/awareness raising meetings totaled 60 hours.

Tatev-95 paid a particular attention to the confidence building activities in the groups. A special section of the meetings has been devoted to individual protection topic to ensure physical security of the victims of the GBV. The training covered also the long-term strategies and actions for GBV victims.

The participants have been informed about the use and availability of the psychological counselling for the victims of GBV. At the end of each meeting Tatev-95 offered free-of-charge individual counselling to the participants and made arrangements with those who sought such assistance.

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While initially it was planned to conduct one meeting per each target group, Tatev-95 and the partners have decided to extend the meetings for more days to address the needs of a larger number of victims who requested further individual assistance and counselling.

Individual counseling sessions were conducted for **57** victims of the GBV (all women). Tatev-95 offered comprehensive assistance to the GBV victims including financial, medical, legal, and vocational, child care and other forms of assistance. The counselling included individual needs assessment by the psychologist and the social worker, psychological assistance that guaranteed unanimity, as well as addressing the basic needs revealed in the earlier stages and providing practical assistance to the victims of GBV.

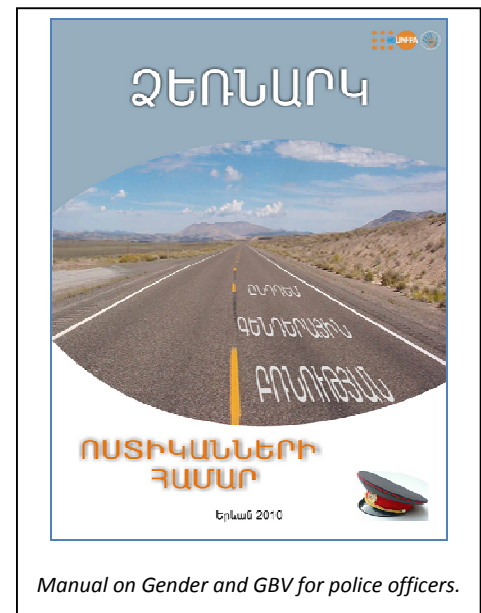
As a follow up to the conducted counselling sessions and information meetings for potential and actual victims of violence, a manual on provision of psychological assistance to the victims of violence was developed by the psychologist experts of Tatev-95. The Manual will be published within the framework of UNFPA CGBV project and disseminated among psychologists through professional networks and educational institutions.

TRAININGS TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY OF SERVICE PROVIDERS:

Trainings for the groups of PH workers, Police officers, Migration services staff, LSG and NGO representatives

One of the goals of the second stage of “Combating Gender-Based Violence in Armenia” project was to strengthen capacity of service providers who play a key role in the field of primary assistance to the victims of violence and at the same time serve as initial focal points for collecting and providing information regarding GBV cases.

In order to raise awareness on GBV and to enhance skills of the service providers, ICHD in cooperation with consortium partners conducted a series of trainings for **320** professionals (20 groups) from the following sectors: public health (health professionals), law enforcement (police officers), migration service officers, local governance bodies (LSG elected representatives and municipal staff), and NGOs (NGO members and staff).



Manual on Gender and GBV for police officers.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS

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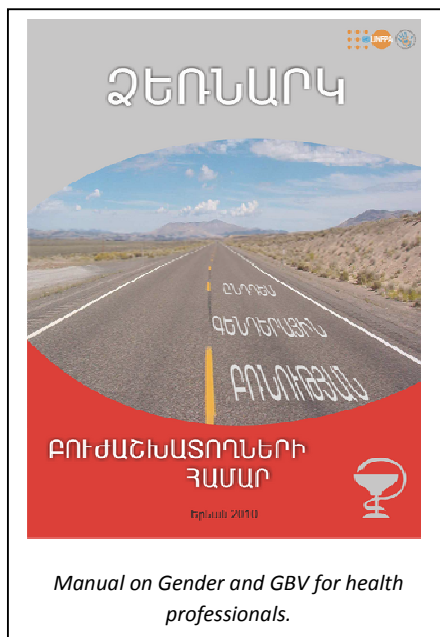
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Step 1: Creating Manual/Guidelines: A Manual that focused particularly on the legal aspects of GBV, stressing it as being a form of crime that needs to be acknowledged and punished, as well as presented effective ways of police intervention when directly dealing with GBV and in the aftermath of each GBV case, was developed to serve as major guidelines in their work with GBV victims and perpetrators.

Step 2: ToT pilot-testing of the Manual/Guidelines for police officers: The Manual for Police Officers was test-piloted during ToT for the group of GBV trainers, who had a chance both to participate in the training, and to provide their comments and feedbacks regarding the elaborated Manual, based on their own learning/teaching experiences.

Step 3: Chapters from the Report on Legal Assessment of the RoA legislation from GBV perspective added in the Manual for Police Officers: Upon completion of the legal assessment of the RoA legislation from GBV perspective, conducted within the framework of UNFPA CGBV project, the Manual for the Police Officers has been supplemented with an overview of the national legislation pertaining to gender and GBV related issues. A particular attention was given to the criminal aspects of GBV based on the national legal acts as well as on the importance of bringing GBV criminal cases into the spotlight of the national judiciary system and the role of the Police in properly reporting GBV cases. The RoA General Prosecutor's Office took active part in the process of revising the Manual, particularly parts related to the national legislation. Experts provided by the Prosecutor's Office made comments and suggestions regarding improvements in the Manual and effectively contributed to the final revision of the Manual prior to its publishing.

Step 4: Trainings for the RoA Police Officers: As a final roundup of the capacity development of the RoA police officers, series of trainings were conducted by the trainers that took part in the ToT. As many as **76 police officers** (among them: district police officers, officers for work with juveniles, police inspectors, etc.) from Yerevan and Armenian marzes participated in the trainings.



Manual on Gender and GBV for health professionals.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Step 1: Creating Manual/Guidelines: A special Manual for public health (PH) professionals was elaborated by the experts of ICHD to serve as primary guidelines for health professionals who work with victims and/or potential victims of GBV. The manual provided a detailed overview of GBV types, including DV and physical/mental consequences of GBV. It stressed the role of the national healthcare system in assisting GBV victims while focusing also on the legal regulations in the field of healthcare system concerning GBV. The outline of the manual was elaborated in a way that would ensure a gradual build up of the knowledge of the participants while logically linking all presented topics, thus

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providing a holistic view of GBV problem observed from different angles of the health care system.

Step 2: ToT pilot-testing of the Manual/Guidelines for health professionals: The elaborated manual was test-piloted during a ToT training for GBV trainers. **5 participants** of the ToT were identified from the group of professionals that were trained earlier during the first stage of “Combating Gender-Based Violence in Armenia” project. The ToT allowed fine-tuning the manual to the needs of the trainees based on their personal teaching/learning experiences and feedbacks.

Step 3: Trainings for the health professionals: Capacity building of the health professionals, included series of trainings conducted by the trainers prepared within the framework of the ToT, for 66 medical workers from Yerevan and Armenian marzes.

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