

Evidence Accelerator Brief Series

Awareness about support services for victims of gender-based violence among women in Armenia

Lusine Aslanyan

Lead Researcher/Consultant, The Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women

JHU Faculty Mentor: Michele R Decker, ScD, MPH

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Why This Matters

- **Prevalence of Gender-Based Violence (GBV):** In Armenia, nearly 25% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from intimate partners, emphasizing the widespread nature of the issue.¹
- **Need for Accessible Support Services:** Despite existing support services, awareness is limited among women, which hinders their ability to seek help and access resources.^{2,3}
- **Gendered Dynamics:** Women face unique barriers due to socio-demographic factors, including education, disability status, and geographic location, which affect their awareness of and access to support services.⁴
- **Significance of the Study:** Addressing awareness gaps can improve service accessibility, empowering more women to seek assistance and support in situations of violence.
- **Urgency of the Issue:** Given the high prevalence of GBV and the ongoing efforts to promote gender equity, there is an immediate need to ensure that women are informed about available resources and can access them without barriers.

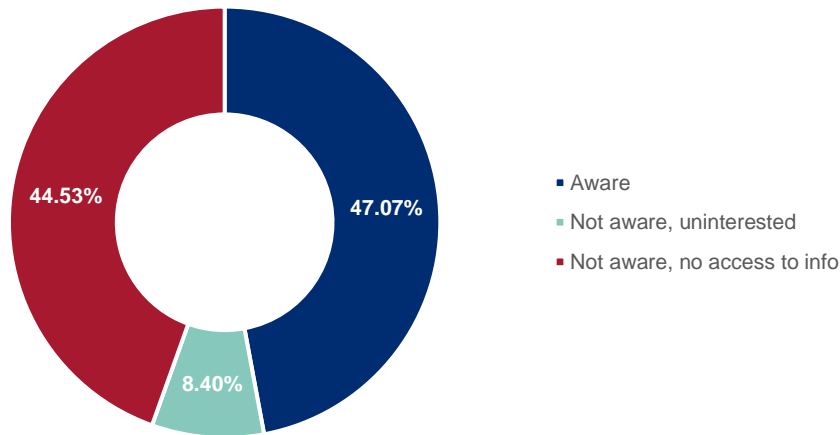
Key Findings

Support Services for Victims of Gender-Based Violence

Low Awareness Levels: A substantial portion of women surveyed were either unaware of the available support services for victims of gender-based violence or uninterested due to lack of information.

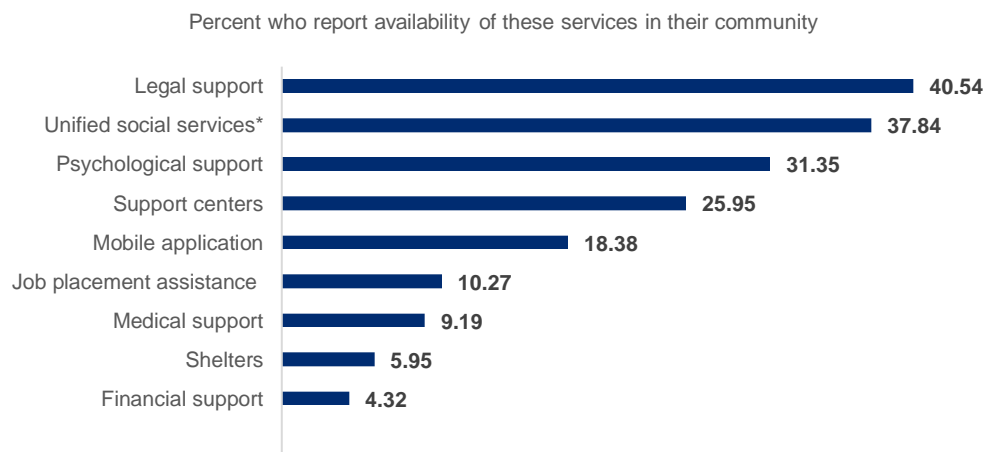
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Figure 1: Awareness of violence against women and girls support services (n=393)



Support Gaps: A notable gap exists in the perceived availability of violence against women and girls support services, with essential services like psychological support (31.3%), financial assistance (4.3%), and shelters (5.9%) being reported as largely inaccessible. While legal support was the most commonly cited available service (40.5%), highlighting its relative accessibility, other critical resources remain out of reach. It is also important to note that services like mobile applications and job placement assistance may not be specific to violence against women and could encompass general community support.

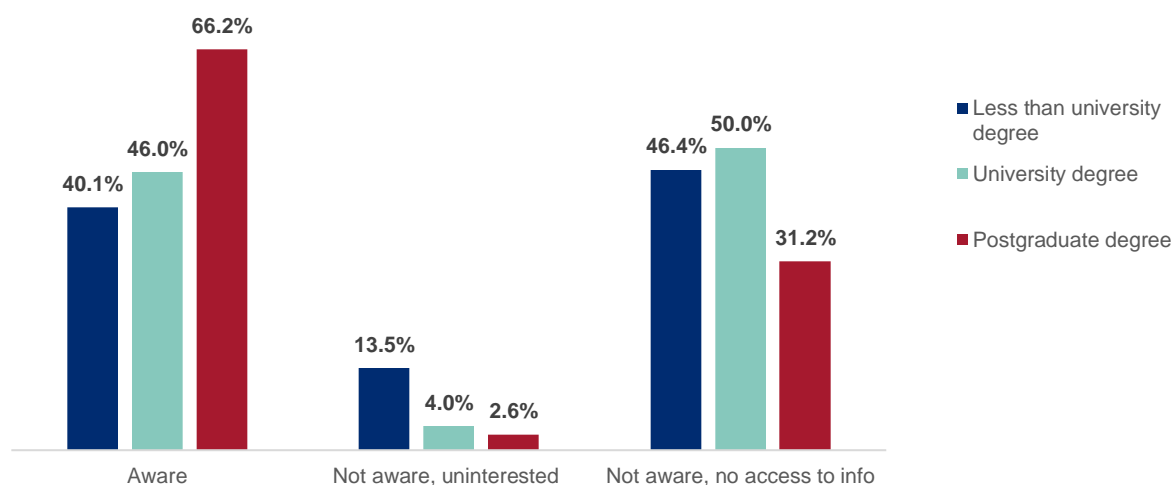
Figure 2: Individual-level perceptions on the availability of violence against women and girls support services (n=393)



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Educational Disparities: Women with lower levels of education showed considerably lower awareness of support services compared to those with higher educational backgrounds.

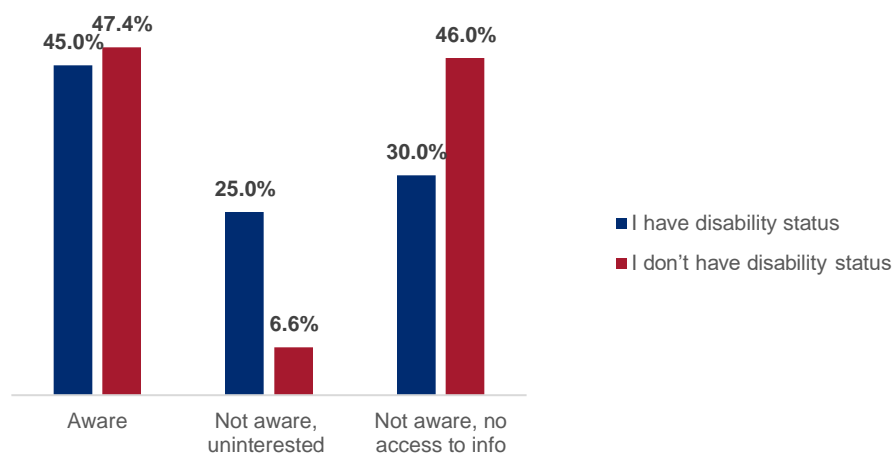
Figure 3: Awareness of the violence against women and girls support services by education (n=393)



Disability and Awareness: Women with disabilities were less aware of and less interested in available support services, highlighting a need for more accessible outreach efforts. This lack of interest may suggest that these women face other pressing priorities, such as addressing immediate physical needs, caregiving responsibilities, or financial constraints, which could make accessing support services less feasible or less urgent for them. Additionally, focus group discussions revealed that women with disabilities primarily learn about support services through NGOs, as governmental agencies provide little accessible information. Physical barriers, including the absence of sign language interpreters and braille materials, further limit access. Societal stigma and familial control also discourage help-seeking, as families often restrict their autonomy in seeking support. These structural and socio-cultural barriers contribute to lower awareness and the perception that services are not a viable option, underscoring the need for targeted outreach and inclusive service design. Further research is needed to better understand and address these underlying factors.

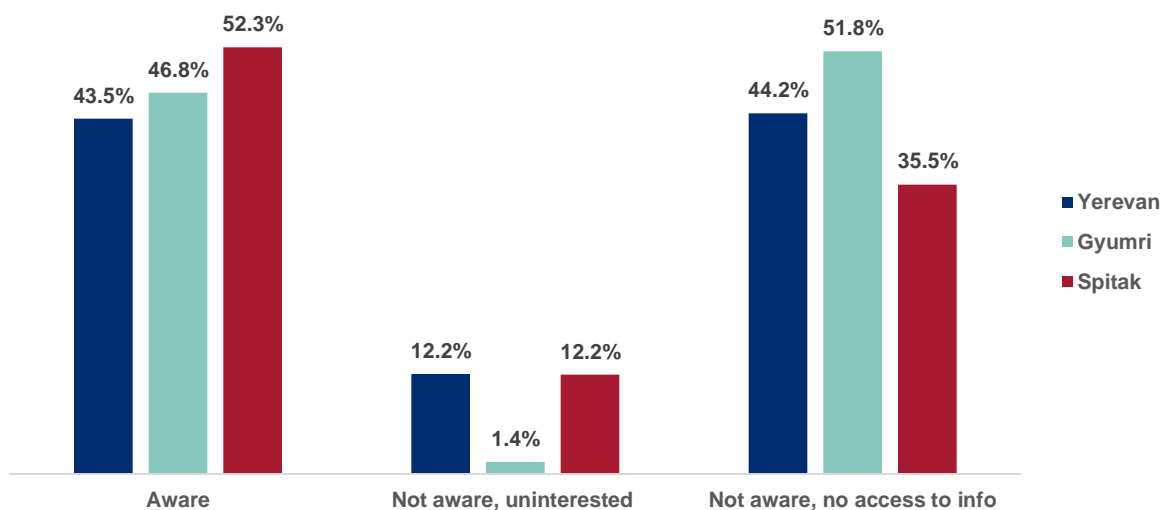
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Figure 4: Awareness of the violence against women and girls support services by disability status (n=390)



Geographic Variations: Awareness levels varied by city, with areas like Gyumri showing lower awareness, suggesting the need for targeted, city-specific interventions.

Figure 5: Awareness of violence against women and girls support services by city of residence (n=393)



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Action Steps

- **Simplify Communication:** Develop clear, accessible messaging about available support services, tailored for women with varying literacy levels to improve understanding and engagement.
- **Enhance Accessibility:** Ensure that information on support services is available in multiple formats, including braille, sign language, and easy-to-read versions, to reach women with disabilities.
- **Conduct Targeted Outreach in Low-Awareness Areas:** Focus outreach and awareness campaigns in cities like Gyumri, where knowledge about services is lower, to increase visibility and accessibility of resources.
- **Partner with Local Organizations:** Collaborate with community-based groups, disability advocacy organizations, and women's rights groups to expand the reach and inclusivity of awareness campaigns.
- **Organize Educational Workshops:** Hold workshops in primary healthcare facilities and community centers to educate women about their rights and available support services, with a focus on practical steps for seeking help.
- **Incorporate Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish systems to regularly gather feedback from women on the accessibility and effectiveness of services to ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness to community needs.

Methods

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to assess awareness of support services for GBV among women in Armenia. Data collection was conducted through interviewer-administered surveys from June to July 2024. The sample included 393 adult women aged 18–63 years, recruited from primary healthcare facilities in three urban cities. The study was conducted under the supervision of Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women organization, in collaboration with other civil society organizations located in Yerevan, Gyumri and Spitak.

Participants were sampled using a convenience selection approach to capture a diverse range of socio-demographic backgrounds relevant to GBV awareness. Eligibility criteria included Armenian citizenship, residence within the three selected urban centers, and capacity to provide informed consent. The survey collected data on various socio-demographic exposures and outcomes related to GBV support services. Exposures included factors such as age, district, education level, employment status, income, marital status, disability status, and citizenship. Outcomes focused on awareness of GBV support services, categorized into three groups: aware, not aware but uninterested, and not aware with no access to information.

Descriptive analyses were conducted to explore demographic characteristics. The mean age of participants was 42 years. Nearly half (48.5%) had less than a university education, and 68.9% were employed. Over half (51.7%) reported a monthly income of less than 360 USD. The majority of participants were Armenian citizens without a disability (89.7%), and most resided in Yerevan (37.4%). Two-thirds (66.7%) of the participants were married. Additional descriptive analyses were conducted to assess levels of awareness across socio-demographic characteristics. Chi-squared

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tests assessed the significance of differences in awareness by factors such as education level, disability status, and city of residence, with findings informing targeted programmatic recommendations.

Suggested citation:

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