



Help-Seeking Behaviours of Women Who Experience Violence in Albania



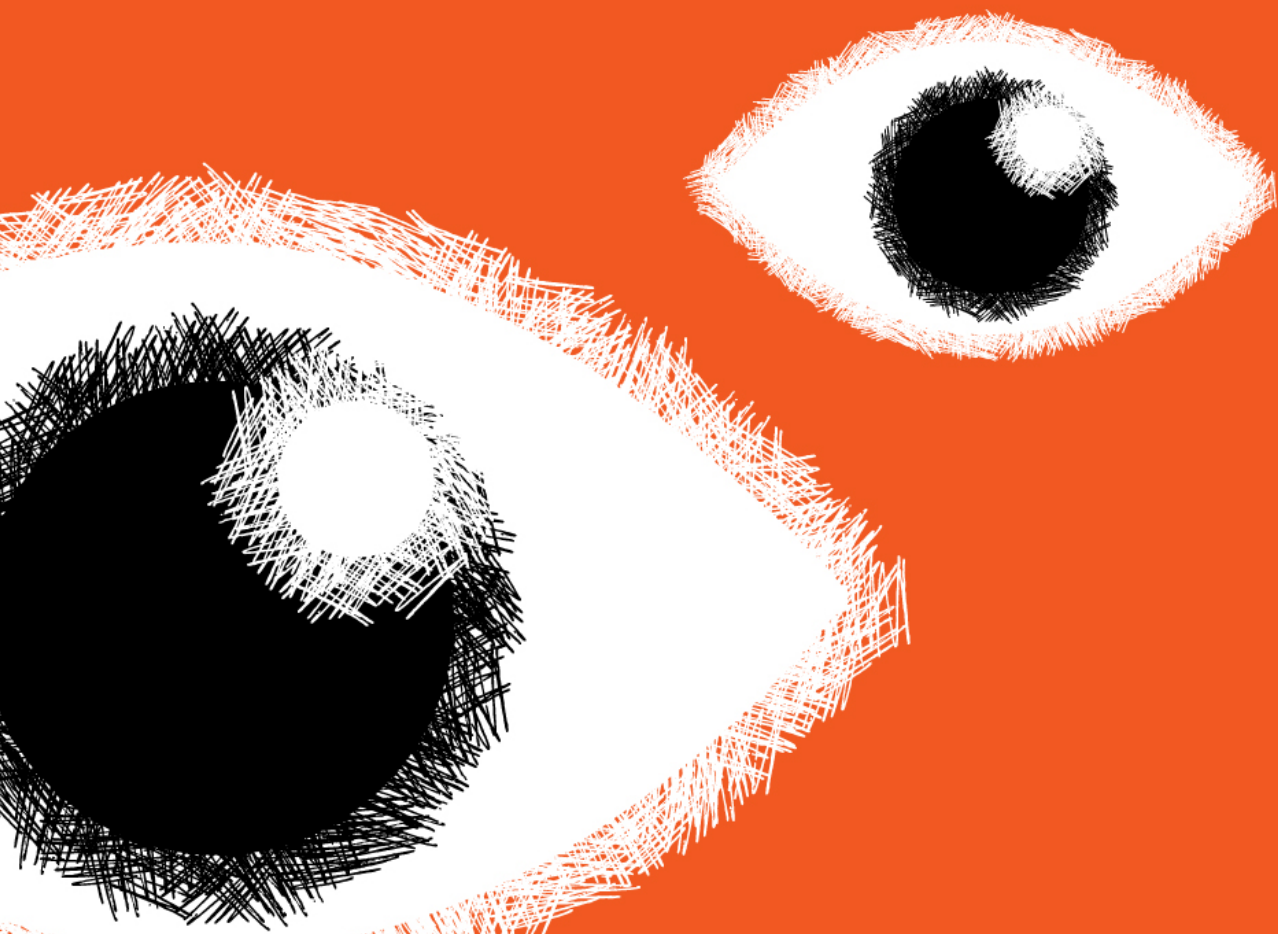
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RESEARCH BRIEF

Help-Seeking Behaviours of Women Who Experience Violence in Albania

June 2019

1. *This survey was conducted by INSTAT with technical expertise provided by and report writing led by Dr. Robin Haarr, international consultant, supported by UNDP and UN Women and financial contribution through the Government of Australia in the framework of the regional gender statistics and SDGs project "Women Count" and the Government of Sweden in the framework of the UN Joint Programme on Ending Violence Against Women in Albania. Opinions and views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of UNDP, UN Women and/or their donors.*



INTRODUCTION

There is a dearth of research on help-seeking behaviours of women who experience violence in Albania.

Violence against women (VAW) is a pervasive violation of human rights and a global public health problem of epidemic proportions. VAW is recognized as both a cause and consequence of gender inequality, and is a major obstacle to women and girls' enjoyment of human rights and their full participation in society and the economy. There is no single factor that causes VAW; rather, there are a combination of elements operating at different levels of the 'social ecology' that perpetuate and reinforce gender discriminatory and biased attitudes, norms, and practices that contribute to the pervasive imbalance of power that exists between men and women within societies and contributes to VAW.

VAW manifests in various forms of physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence that occur in public and private spaces. VAW undermines the mental and physical health and well-being of women and girls and can have a negative impact on their long-term sense of safety, stability, and peace. VAW also has serious implications for the development and advancement of women, and their contribution to the economy.

VAW is not a new phenomenon in Albania, but has deep roots in the patriarchal traditions and customs that have long-shaped Albania, including strict gender identities and roles, patriarchal authority, adherence to an honour-and-shame system, customs of hierarchal ordering within the family, and intergenerational family control.

In 2007, with technical assistance and support from UNDP and UNICEF, INSTAT conducted the first National Domestic Violence Survey (NDVS). In 2013, with technical assistance from UNDP and financial support from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), INSTAT conducted the 2nd NDVS. The 2018 National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS) used a similar methodology and data collection tools as the 2013 NDVS to collect reliable data on the nature and prevalence of intimate partner violence, and was extended to collect data on dating violence, non-partner violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and social norms related to VAW.

The 2018 NVAWS collected data on help-seeking behaviours of women who experienced intimate partner domestic violence and non-partner violence. Specifically, the study assessed the extent to which women sought help for intimate partner domestic violence and non-partner violence, and investigated from whom women sought and the reasons why women sought help or do not seek help for intimate partner domestic violence and non-partner violence. This information is important because it can help victim advocates, service providers, municipal police, justice officials and decision-makers identify barriers that exist and assist in breaking down those barriers and develop interventions that facilitate help-seeking behaviours of women who experience intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and other forms of gender-based violence.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The 2018 NVAWS in Albania was developed to measure the nature and extent of five different types of VAW – intimate partner domestic violence, dating violence, non-partner violence, sexual harassment, and, stalking – and help-seeking behaviours of among women who experience intimate partner domestic violence and non-partner violence. The study consisted of a national population-based household survey conducted across each of the 12 prefectures in Albania. A stratified sample design was used for selecting women for sampling. The goal was to generate a sample of women age 18-74 that would allow for the production of statistically reliable national estimates of the prevalence of VAW.

Sample of Women

The final sample of women included 3,443 households and women age 18-74. The sample was not equally distributed across prefectures, as more women were sampled

in Tirana (27.1%), the capital city which has a much larger population, and in Fier (11.5%) and Elbasan (10.6%), compared to Kukës (3.0%) and Gjirokastër (2.6%) where far fewer women were sampled. There was a fairly equal distribution of women sampled across each of the age groups. Women ranged in age from 18 to 74 years with an average age of 43.6 years. In terms of education, 42.4% of women had a lower secondary education (8-9 years), 27.8% had an upper secondary education, and 19.7% had a university education; only 7.7% of women had only a primary education or less.

The majority of women sampled were currently married and/or living with a male partner (73.3%); 20.3% were not currently married or living with a male partner. Only 4.1% were widowed, 1.2% divorced, and .2% separated or broken up with their current male husband/boyfriend. The majority of women first married or lived together with a man at 18-24 years of age (63.2%).



73.3%

of women sampled were currently married and/or living with a male partner

63.2%

of women first married or lived together with a man at 18-24 years of age

WOMEN'S HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOURS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The 2018 NVAWS found that 47.0% of women (those who were or had been married and/or lived with a partner) experienced intimate partner domestic violence one or more times in their lifetime ('ever'), and 1 out of 3 or 33.7% of women experienced intimate partner domestic violence in 12 months prior to the survey ('current'). The types of intimate partner domestic violence women experienced included controlling behaviours, economic violence, psychological violence, physical violence and/or sexual violence at the hands of their current/former husband/partner. It is notable that 21.0% of women 'ever' experienced physical and/or sexual violence, or both, and 8.2% of women experienced physical and/or sexual violence, or both, in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Battered women are often reluctant to seek help for domestic violence. Only 16.9% of women who 'currently' experienced domestic violence told someone about the violence and only 8.4% of women sought help for domestic violence. Women who 'currently' experienced physical and/or sexual violence, or both, were nearly two times more likely to tell someone about the violence (30.8%) and two times more likely to seek help (18.5%). This data demonstrates the severity of intimate partner domestic violence affects the likelihood of help-seeking.

Among women who were 'currently' experiencing physical violence and experienced domestic violence injuries, 23.1% had to spend one or more nights in a hospital, yet only 13.4% told a health worker that domestic violence was the cause of their injuries. Women often do not tell doctors or nurses that domestic violence was the cause of their injuries; they will often lie about the cause of their injuries to protect their husband/partner and out of fear,

Battered women in Albania continue to suffer in silence

Only 16.9% of women who 'currently' experienced domestic violence told someone about the violence, and only 8.4% sought help for domestic violence

Women who 'currently' experienced physical and/or sexual violence, or both, were nearly two times more likely to tell someone about the violence (30.8%) and two times more likely to seek help (18.5%)

8.4%

SOUGHT HELP FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

shame or embarrassment. At the same time, doctors and nurses often do not screen for domestic violence or ask women about the cause of their injuries, particularly if screening for domestic violence in health settings is not mandatory.

These findings demonstrate that the majority of battered women in Albania suffer in silence despite ongoing efforts to raise awareness to the problem of domestic violence, domestic violence laws, and social services for domestic violence victims. Thus, battered women are not receiving the essential services, protection access to justice that is their legal and human rights.

WHO DO BATTERED WOMEN SEEK HELP FROM?

When battered women sought help for domestic violence, the majority sought help from their own family (98.9%) and a significant proportion sought help from their husband/partner's family (40.4%). Although few in number, some women sought help from informal networks, such as neighbours (11.9%), friends (6.7%) and religious leaders (1.7%). Far fewer women sought help from formal networks, such as police (4.4%), lawyers (3.4%), doctors/health workers (3.1%), judges (2.8%), social service agency/organizations (1.6%) and/or a shelter for women and girls (0.4%). No women sought help from the helpline and/or a local domestic violence coordinator; this finding can lead one to conclude that either women are not aware of the helpline and/or the local domestic violence coordinators, or that domestic violence survivors do not have confidence in these formal networks of support services.

From whom do battered women seek help?

Family	
Own family	98.0%
Husband/partner's family	40.4%
Current/former husband/boyfriend	4.2%
Informal networks	
Neighbour	11.9%
Friend	6.7%
Religious leader	1.7%
Formal networks	
Police	4.4%
Lawyer	3.4%
Doctor/health workers	3.1%
Judge	2.8%
Social service agency/organization	1.6%
Shelter for women and girls	0.4%
Helpline	0.0%
Local Domestic Violence Coordinator	0.0%
Other	0.0%

HOW MANY INCIDENTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ARE REGISTERED TO THE STATE POLICE?

In recent years, there has been increased interest by the Government of Albania and development partners to strengthen administrative data and to monitor and report on domestic violence and sexual assault/rape. In keeping, administrative data collection has been institutionalized through the establishment of the "Recording Violence in Albania" (REVALB) system, a nationwide online tracking system that is utilized by local Domestic Violence Coordinators in each municipality, and managed centrally by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP, formerly managed by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth). Challenges, however, remain when it comes to systematic use of the REVALB system and in ensuring coordination between referral mechanism members in tracking and case management.

Administrative data and prevalence data on VAWG data come from different sources, have different purposes, and respond to different questions. Together, administrative and prevalence data allow for better understanding VAWG. The difference between actual prevalence and incidents of violence, disclosed violence, and reported violence varies, but need to be understood to be able to estimate the costs of preventing, responding to and eliminating VAWG, and to plan and develop policies and programming.

In general, VAWG prevalence studies gather data from a representative sample of the population (national or subnational) so results can represent the actual prevalence and more detailed information on the context in which VAWG occurs and how VAWG affects women and girls in the general population. VAWG prevalence studies help to create a baseline against which other VAWG prevalence studies can be compared to monitor changes in the prevalence of VAWG and the factors

Links between VAWG prevalence data and VAWG administrative data

VAWG administrative data cannot be used as a substitute for VAWG prevalence data because administrative data does not provide an accurate measure of the prevalence of VAWG in a population.

Administrative data are not representative because a large number of VAWG survivors do not report the violence they experience to official agencies or service providers.

VAWG prevalence data can reveal the proportion of women and girls who have experienced violence while administrative data show how many VAWG survivors seek help, which service providers help them, and the number of services needed.

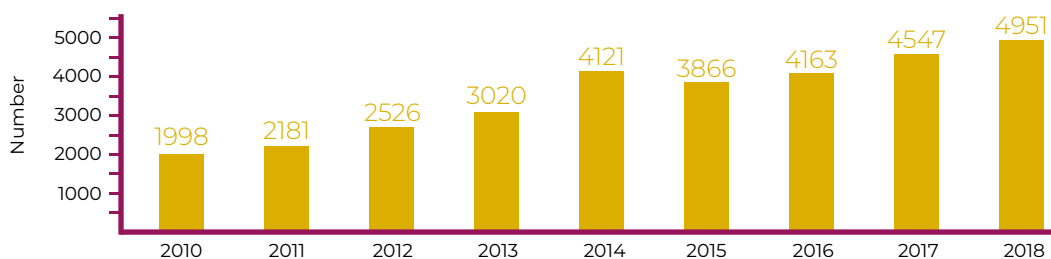
that contribute to VAWG over time, and the negative impacts of VAWG. VAWG prevalence data is collected periodically (every few years) at one point in time.

Although VAWG administrative data does not capture the prevalence of VAWG, the uses of administrative data are numerous; most notable is that administrative data can help service providers, justice agencies, and decision-makers know how many domestic violence incidents are reported and responded to, the number of battered women who access services, which services they access, access to justice, and referrals made by service providers. Administrative data can also reveal patterns and trends over time in VAWG survivors' help-seeking behaviours. At a practical level, administrative data can be used to inform general programme planning and resource allocation to address domestic violence.

It is important when discussing administrative data on domestic violence to understand that most incidents of domestic violence are not reported to authorities. Most women are reluctant to report their experiences with violence of gender-based violence to formal authorities for a multitude of reasons, including: the belief that the violence experienced was not serious; fear of retaliation (many women and girls are threatened with more violence and even death if they speak out or tell authorities about the people or person who perpetrated the violence); fear of being shamed and criticised for speaking out because they do not want to bring shame to their family; and, lack of trust in the police and justice system. Women's economic dependence on their abusers/batterers also prevents women from reporting and escaping intimate partner violence and domestic violence situations. In addition, perpetrators may hold positions of power within the community and not want their identities revealed or their reputations harmed, so they make credible threats to silence the women they abuse.

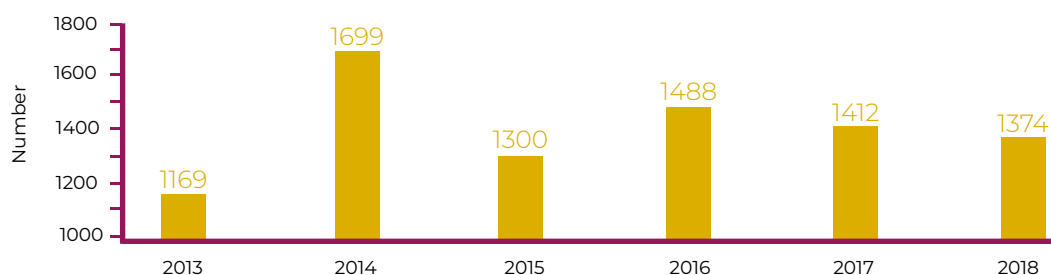
When women do not report their experiences of domestic violence to formal services or authorities, their experiences are not reflected in administrative data. Similarly, when police officials do not register or record incidents of domestic violence, incidents of domestic violence are not reflected in administrative data. Globally, research has found that some police even discourage women from making official reports by blaming battered women or encouraging them to return to and reconcile with their husband and family. In Albania, there are still a few cases when some police officers may discourage women from making reports of domestic violence. Thus, it is important that efforts are underway in Albania to improve the responses of health workers, service providers, police and justice officials to VAW; meanwhile, ensuring that reported incidents of domestic violence are properly registered remains a challenge.

Chart 1. Domestic violence offenses registered by the State Police (2010-2018)



Source: Albania State Police, January 2019

Chart 2. Domestic violence offenses registered under Criminal Code Article 130/a by State Police (2013-2018)



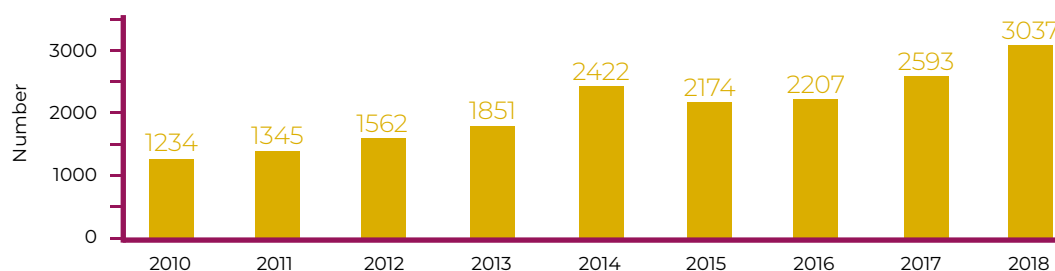
Source: INSTAT, January 2019

Chart 1 shows the number of domestic violence cases registered by the police each year from 2010 to 2018 (1 January – 31 December). Bear in mind, most incidents of domestic violence go unreported and incidents that are reported are often more serious cases of domestic violence. The data reveals a steady increase in the number of registered domestic violence cases from 1,998 in 2010 to 4,951 in 2018 (148% increase). This data demonstrates that domestic violence victims are more willing to report incidents of domestic violence to the police, and the police are registering more domestic violence cases. These changes may be related to reforms that have been made over the past decade to the 2006 Law on “Measures against Violence in Family Relations” and changing social norms and increased awareness among women as to the legal protections and social services available to domestic violence victims.

Chart 2 reveals the number of domestic violence offences reported and registered under Criminal Code Article 130/a, which includes acts such as battery or other violent criminal offences, serious threats or injury against a person who is the spouse, former-spouse, partner or former partner, child or family member, resulting in infringement of the physical, psycho-social, and economic integrity of the person. Data shows an increase in the number of incidents of domestic violence recorded by the police under Article 130/a from 1,169 in 2013 to 1,699 in 2014 (45.3% increase), followed by a 23.5% decline to 1,300 in 2015, then a 14.5% increase to 1,488 in 2016 and a slight decline to 1,412 in 2017.

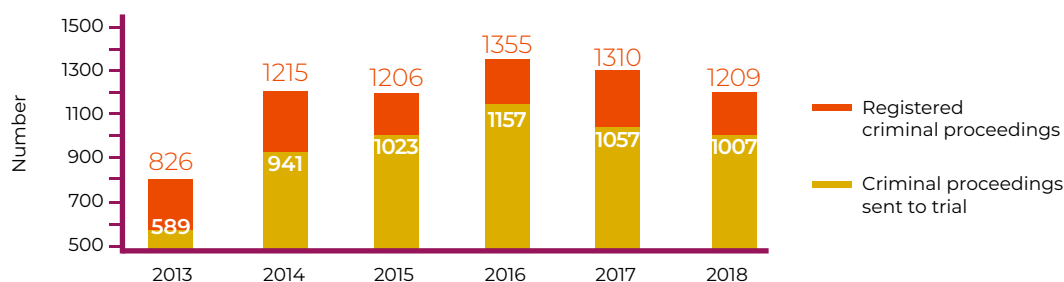
Chart 3 shows the number of petitions for immediate protection orders/protection orders made each year from 2010 to 2018 (1 January – 31 December). There was a steady increase in the number of petitions for immediate protection orders/protection orders

Chart 3. Petitions for immediate protection orders/protection orders (2010-2018)



Source: Albania State Police, January 2019

Chart 4. Prosecution of domestic violence cases under Criminal Code Article 130/a (2013-2018)



Source: INSTAT, January 2019

from 1,234 in 2010 to 3,307 in 2018 (146% increase). Each year from 2010 to 2018 there has been a steady increase in the number of petitions for immediate protection orders/protection orders, except in 2015. Petitions for immediate protection orders/protection orders were made in more than 50% of registered cases of domestic violence each year (see Chart 1); in fact, in 2018, immediate protection orders/protection orders were issued in 61.3% of registered cases of domestic violence (up from 53.0% in 2016). This data reveals that domestic violence victims are more willing to utilize provisions for protections provided in the 2006 Law on “Measures against Violence in Family Relations.”

Chart 4 reveals the number of domestic violence cases charged and prosecuted under Criminal Code Article 130/a. Data shows there was an increase in the number of domestic violence cases registered for criminal proceedings by the prosecutor’s office from 826 in 2013 to 1,215

in 2014 (47.1% increase), followed by an increase from 1,206 in 2015 to 1,355 in 2016 (12.4% increase), then a decrease to 1,310 in 2017 and 1,209 in 2018 (10.8% decrease). Even fewer domestic violence cases were sent to trial by the courts. There was, however, a steady increase in the number of domestic violence cases sent to trial by the courts from 589 in 2013 to 1,157 in 2016 (96.4% increase), followed by a steady decline to 1,007 in 2018 (13.0% decrease). It is unclear what has driven the significant decline in the number of domestic violence cases charged and prosecuted under Criminal Code Article 130/a during the two-year period of 2016 to 2018.

It is notable that the criminal justice system does detain some domestic violence perpetrators awaiting trial and conviction in correctional institutions. In 2016, 196 domestic violence perpetrators were detained in correctional institutions, followed by 241 in 2017 and 2018 (23% increase).

WHY DO BATTERED WOMEN SEEK HELP FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Battered women who sought help for domestic violence were asked why they sought help. The most common reasons battered women gave for seeking help were that friends or family encouraged them to seek help (63.5%), they knew that violence is unacceptable in relationships (62.6%), they could not endure more violence (58.8%), and they were badly injured (43.6%). Although fewer in number, 22.3% of women sought help because they saw their children suffering. In addition, 9.8% of women were afraid their husband/partner would kill them, 4.9% reported their husband/partner threatened to kill them, 4.7% said their husband/partner threw them out of the home, 4.3% said he threatened or hit the children, and 2.2% were afraid they would kill their husband/partner.

DO WOMEN LEAVE HOME BECAUSE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Few women who experienced domestic violence (10.0% current, 8.8% ever) and more specifically physical and/or sexual violence (18.3% current, 12.1% ever) ever left home because of domestic violence, even if for one night. The number of days battered women left home ranged from 1 to 20 days depending upon the woman, for an average of 2.1 days per women.

The reasons that battered women left home varied greatly, including: they could not endure the violence (34.8%); they were encouraged by friends or family to leave (22.9%); they were injured badly (13.8%); their husband/partner threatened or tried to kill them (12.4%) and hit the children (12.2%); they were afraid their husband/partner would kill them (10.4%); they saw their children suffering (9.3%); and, their husband/partner threw them out of the house (4.7%).

Why do domestic violence victims seek help?

My friends or family encouraged me to seek help	63.5%
I know violence is unacceptable in relationships	62.6%
I could not endure more violence	58.8%
I was badly injured	43.6%
I saw the children were suffering	22.3%
I was afraid he would kill me	9.8%
He threatened or tried to kill me	5.9%
He threw me out of our home	4.7%
He threatened or hit the children	4.3%
I was afraid I would kill him	2.2%

Why do domestic violence victims leave home?

Reasons domestic violence victims left home the last time	
Could not endure the violence	34.8%
No particular incident	24.1%
Encouraged by friends/family	22.9%
Badly injured	13.8%
He threatened or tried to kill me	12.4%
He threatened to hit the children	12.2%
Afraid he would kill me	10.4%
Saw the children suffering	9.3%
Thrown out of the home	4.7%
Afraid I would kill him	0.6%
Encouraged by organization	0.0%

WHY WOMEN DO NOT SEEK HELP FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

The 2018 NVAWS found the majority of women who experienced domestic violence did not seek help. The reasons that battered women do not seek help for domestic violence vary significantly. The most common reasons women gave for *not* seeking help was that they felt the situation was not serious enough to complain (47.8%). Although fewer in number, 12.0% of battered women said they did not want to bring shame to the family, 10.9% were embarrassed, ashamed or afraid they would not be believed, and 9.7% thought they would be blamed.

A small proportion of women thought there was no reason to complain because violence is normal (6.8%), they were afraid of divorce or the relationship ending (6.5%), they were afraid of being threatened and the consequences or more violence (6.1%), they were afraid of losing

12.0% of battered women said they did not want to bring shame to the family

their children (6.0%), they did not know where to ask for help (4.9%), and they believed it would not help (4.2%).

Even when women do not seek help for domestic violence, the scars of domestic violence are still very real and often run deep in battered women, which is why battered women have a difficult time seeking help, seeing their options, and organizing the resources they need to leave a violent marriage/relationship.

Why women *do not* seek help for domestic violence?

The situation was not serious enough to complain	47.8%
I don't want to bring shame to my family	12.0%
I am/was embarrassed, ashamed or afraid I would not be believed	10.9%
I think/thought they will blame me	9.7%
I think there is no reason to complain/violence is normal	6.8%
I am/was afraid of divorce or the relationship ending	6.5%
I am/was afraid of being threatened and the consequences or more violence	6.1%
I am/was afraid of losing my children	6.0%
I don't/didn't know where to ask for help	4.9%
I believe it would not help/I know other women were not helped	4.2%

WOMEN'S HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOURS FOR NON-PARTNER VIOLENCE

Among women age 18-74, 18.2% 'ever' and 2.4% 'currently' experienced physical and/or sexual non-partner violence since age 15 (by someone other than their husband/ boyfriend). Women were more likely to experience non-partner physical violence (17.3%) than non-partner sexual violence (1.3%).

Among women who 'ever' experienced non-partner physical violence since the age of 15, the majority reported the perpetrator was a mother/step-mother (76.1%) and/or father/step-father (58.0%). In addition, 35.7% of women identified the perpetrator as a teacher and 28.0% identified a sibling (sister/brother). Women identified a variety of other perpetrators, but to less extent. Women who experienced non-partner sexual violence since age 15 identified the perpetrators as: classmates/schoolmates (15.1%); teachers (7.1%); friends/acquaintances (5.4%); fathers/step-fathers (5.2%); mothers/step-mothers (4.4%); and, strangers (3.3%).

Among women who ever experienced physical and/or sexual non-partner violence, only 6.6% ever told anyone about the violence they experienced and 4.6% sought help for non-partner violence.

WHO DO WOMEN SEEK HELP FOR NON-PARTNER VIOLENCE?

The majority of women who sought help for non-partner violence sought help from family, including their own family (85.3%), their husband/boyfriend's family (15.5%) and/or their current/former husband/boyfriend (2.6%). Quite a few women also sought help from informal networks, such as neighbours (16.6%) and friends (12.1%); only 1.1% of women sought help from religious leaders. Very few women sought help from formal networks, however, those who did sought help from the police (8.3%), courts/judge (4.7%), doctors/medical personnel (2.6%), lawyers (2.2%) and a social service agency/organization (2.2%).

From whom do women seek help for non-partner violence?

Family	
Own family	85.3%
Husband/boyfriend's family	15.5%
Current/former husband/boyfriend	2.6%
Informal networks	
Neighbour	16.6%
Friend	12.1%
Religious leader	1.1%
Formal networks	
Police	8.3%
Courts/Judge	4.7%
Doctor/medical personnel	2.6%
Lawyer	2.2%
Social service agency/organization	2.2%
Shelter for women and girls	0.0%
Helpline	0.0%
Local Domestic Violence Coordinator	0.0%

WHY DO WOMEN SEEK HELP FOR NON-PARTNER VIOLENCE?

Among women who sought help, the majority of women sought help for non-partner violence because their friends and/or family encouraged them to seek help (70.8%). A significant proportion of women also reported seeking help because they could not endure more violence (45.9%) and they were badly injured (43.9%). Some women also sought help because they believed what happened to them was not acceptable and was a crime (17.4%), because the man who committed the violence threatened their family (3.5%) and/or threatened or tried to kill them (2.2%).

Why do women seek help for non-partner violence?

My friends or family encouraged me to seek help	70.8%
I could not endure more violence	45.9%
I was badly injured	43.9%
What happened to me was not acceptable, it was a crime	17.4%
The man who did this to me threatened my family	3.5%
The man who did this to me threatened or tried to kill me	2.2%
I was afraid the man who did this to me would kill me	0.0%
Other	22.4%

WHY WOMEN DO NOT SEEK HELP FOR NON-PARTNER VIOLENCE?

The 2018 NVAWS found the majority of women who experienced non-partner violence did not seek help. The most common reasons for not seeking help was because they thought the situation was not serious enough to complain (38.1%). Some respondents also reported they did not seek help because they did not want to bring shame to the family (10.9%), they thought they would be blamed (9.6%) and they were embarrassed, ashamed or afraid they would not be believed (9.0%). Some women even reported there is no reason to complain because violence is normal (7.0%), they didn't know where to ask for help (4.9%), and they believed it would not help the situation (2.7%).

Why women do not seek help for non-partner violence?

The situation was not serious enough to complain	38.1%
I don't want to bring shame to my family	10.9%
I think/thought they will blame me	9.6%
I am/was embarrassed, ashamed, or afraid I would not be believed	9.0%
I think there is no reason to complain/ violence is normal	7.0%
I don't/didn't know where to ask for help	4.9%
I am/was afraid of being threatened, the consequences of more violence	3.0%
I believed it would not help/I know other women were not helped	2.7%
I am/was afraid of the relationship ending	1.5%

WAYS FORWARD

This study was the third study of VAW in Albania conducted by INSTAT, which can serve to inform policy response and action on the ground. The 2018 NVAWS survey findings show that few women seek help for intimate partner domestic violence or non-partner violence. The severity of violence, attitudes toward domestic violence, and indicators of empowerment all affect the likelihood of women's help-seeking behaviours.

While providing formal services is important, policies designed to help women who are victim of intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and other forms of gender-based violence must recognize and address barriers that may inhibit help-seeking behaviors. Because the majority of women who experienced intimate partner domestic violence and non-partner violence sought help from family and friends, it is important that individuals in these extended networks receive information about violence against women and girls, legislation that addresses violence against women and girls, and community-based victim support services so they can extend help and respond appropriately to female family and friends who experience violence.

General considerations as to the ways forward for developing interventions that facilitate help-seeking behaviours of women who experience intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and other forms of gender-based violence include:

- Strengthen policies, action plans and strategies for promoting gender equality, including legislation that protects women and girls from all forms of VAW, including new or newly recognized forms of VAW, such as sexual harassment and stalking, including through new technologies, and forms of VAW that are under-reported by women to police and justice agencies, and victim support organizations.
- In keeping with the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence, a partnership by UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP and UNODC, providing greater access to a coordinated set of essential and quality multi-sectoral services for all women and girls who experience gender-based violence is crucial and can be accomplished by:
 - Develop a comprehensive legal framework that provides the legal and judicial basis for VAW survivors seeking health, social services, police and justice services.
 - Establish governance, oversight and accountability to ensure that the government's duty to provide quality essential services to VAW survivors is met, and the resources and financing required to build and sustain each sector, along with an integrated, coordinated system that has the capacities and capabilities to provide quality essential services and that can effectively and efficiently respond to VAW and VAW survivors needs.
 - Invest in training and workforce development to ensure that sector agencies and coordination mechanisms have the capacities and capabilities to deliver quality services, and that service providers have the competencies to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.
 - Establish practices for regularly monitoring and evaluating delivery of essential services to VAW

- survivors; this requires strengthening administrative data collection and analysis and publication of such data so that it can be used to monitor access to essential services and promote quality service provision.
- Develop policies in each sector and for coordination mechanisms that advance rights-based and victim-centred approaches, are culturally and age appropriate and sensitive and promote gender equality and women's empowerment, safety as paramount, and perpetrator accountability.
 - Service delivery across all essential services and actions have the following key characteristics: availability and accessibility; appropriateness; prioritizes safety; informed consent and confidentiality; effective communication and participation by stakeholders in design, implementation and assessment of services; have data collection and information management systems; and, link with other sectors and agencies through coordination.
 - Develop behaviour change and awareness raising campaigns about VAW, in all forms, and correct misinformation and stereotypes related to intimate partner violence, domestic violence, rape/sexual assault, sexual harassment and stalking. Such campaigns should encourage VAW survivors to know their rights and to seek help for VAW, and share true stories of VAW survivors who sought help and benefited from it. Special efforts need to be taken to develop behaviour change and awareness-raising campaigns about VAW that target and speak in a meaningful way to the most marginalized groups of women and girls in Albania, such as Roma and Egyptians, women with disabilities, women from remote areas, elderly women, and lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered persons.
 - For the development of policy responses and actions on the ground civil society actors working with VAW survivors and VAW survivors should be involved in such work to help ensure that practical results for VAW survivors are effective and sustainable. Engaging the whole-of-government across different sectors and whole-of-society to change social norms related to VAW and improve access essential services and police and justice system responses.
 - All relevant public law enforcement and judiciary authorities need to develop administrative and criminal data categories for all forms of VAW and ensure that they are harmonized across the sectors. These types of administrative data need to be regularly collected, compiled, analysed and reported on to inform responsible authorities who formulate policies, action plans, and programming to end VAW and build the trust of VAW survivors to report incidents of VAW and seek help from relevant public authorities and service providers.
 - The GoA should ensure that funding mechanisms exist to support VAW prevention and intervention programmes and initiatives which contribute to protection of women and girls from all forms of violence. In particular, funding is needed for the delivery of quality essential services for VAW survivors, and awareness raising as to the range of available victim support services and the rights of women and girls to protection from violence.

**Ending
Violence**
Against
Women

