

# **ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN ARMENIA**

# Attitudes Toward Women's Organizations In Armenia

**Authors:**

Gohar Shahnazaryan & Siran  
Hovhannisyan

**Research Team:**

Syuzanna Boshyan, Jenya Asatryan,  
Inessa Khanagyan, Anna Baghramyán,  
& Lilit Zargaryan

This report was prepared by Women's  
Resource Center. The sociological  
survey was conducted by the research  
team of Yerevan State University Center  
for Gender and Leadership Studies.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

INTRODUCTION

5

SOME  
CONSIDERATIONS ON  
METHODOLOGY

6

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

7

SHORT  
INTRODUCTION OF  
RESPONDENTS

**ANALYSIS  
OF THE  
MAIN  
RESULTS**

9

INFORMATION  
ON WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS AND  
THEIR ACTIVITIES

**13** ATTITUDES ON  
WOMEN'S ROLES

**31** FINANCIAL SOURCES  
OF WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS

**19** ATTITUDES  
ABOUT WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS

**32** MISTAKES  
OF WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS

**22** WHAT PEOPLE KNOW  
ABOUT WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS

**23** WHO ARE MAIN  
BENEFICIARIES?

DO WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATION  
ASSIST OR HINDER  
THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF ARMENIAN  
SOCIETY?

**33**

**25** WHEN IS IT  
APPROPRIATE TO  
APPLY TO A WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATION?

HOW WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS CAN  
AFFECT OUR LIVES?

**34**

**27** STRATEGIES  
AND PRIORITIES  
OF WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATIONS



## INTRODUCTION

There are only a few numbers of studies that take into consideration the importance of studying the attitudes towards women's organizations. There may be various reasons for this, some of which are the following: there is not much importance that is given to the work of women's organizations, they do not make the headlines in media, and trendy talking points political issues are not happening around them. Recently however, we have all witnessed (and experienced for ourselves) that members of women's organizations, and people working in the field of women's and gender issues, are challenged in many areas: specifically, in their personal lives, work, and communication. Along with understanding the attitudes of people towards women's roles, and revealing the image of value systems among different groups of men and women in Armenia, we have tried to have a different approach.

In this small-scale quantitative study, a group of researchers attempted to understand what people think of women's organizations in Armenia, and what the roles and missions are of these organizations in politics and everyday life. The study itself is a unique one in all its aspects. This approach is a sufficient, necessary, and profound mechanism to understand the challenges and the hatred these organizations and their members face. Especially in the current climate of anti-gender and anti-feminist realities. From a strategic standpoint, the results of this research enable women's organizations to keep their activities going and provide better services for their target audiences, and especially when that target audience are fellow women. We also understand this to be used as a potential communication tool when in the hands of women's organizations with respect to their respective relations with wider audiences and donors. This is from both local and international standpoint. In addition, we hope that women's organizations will adopt more sensitive approaches and transform their strategies into more responsive ones without compromising their values and mission.

## SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON METHODOLOGY

This is not a large-scale survey. We understand the consequences in both our methodology and sampling, which mainly came from the limitation imposed by funding. For this research, we asked 300 women and men (sampling set by the project) about their understanding and knowledge on women's organizations in general, women's roles and functions in the society, and their attitudes toward their environment about women's organizations, to what extent they trust these organizations, and what they do in general in Armenia.

In total, 300 participants from Yerevan, Lori, and Vayots Dzor regions (marzes) took part in this survey. The regions have been chosen based on the levels of activities of women and other civil society organizations in these places. In comparison with Yerevan, Lori is active in that sense, whereas Vayots Dzor is not active in terms of women's organizations in the region at all. The selection of Vayots Dzor was also based on the results of the women's march by the team of the Women's Resource Center NGO, that takes place every two years. In 2018, a women's march was organized in Vayots Dzor. In each region, we have chosen three cities: Vanadzor, Tashir, Stepanavan in Lori, and Vayk, Yeghegnadzor, Jermuk in Vayots Dzor. Our approach with respect to the respondents has been on the basis of gender, age group, and other characteristics. Many of the interviews were rejected by the potential respondents after they heard that the topic was about "women's organizations".



	Total	By cities	Women	Men
Yerevan	150	150	80	70
Lori marz	75			
Vanadzor		25	13	12
Tashir		25	13	12
Stepanavan		25	13	12
Vayots Dzor marz	75			
Vayk		25	13	12
Yeghegnadzor		25	13	12
Jermuk		25	13	12



## FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Field observations by our interviewers provided us with some background information which we find significant enough so as to share with the reader. According to these observations, for instance, men in Vayots Dzor region were too hesitant to participate in interviews at the beginning. However, afterwards they were eager to answer the questions. Women, according to interviewers, were more open and impartial to talk about women-related issues. Moreover, women went deeper in their answers. Unfortunately, the research methodology did not give us an opportunity to do a more in-depth analysis. Also, according to our background analysis, based on these and other field observations, women were more “thankful for being heard”.

In Lori, for instance, women over 40 had heard some advertisements but barely could remember anything because of their “forgetfulness” (as they pointed out and reminded us of gaslighting). There was an interesting correlation between the workplace (mostly the state and public sector) and the level of knowledge on women’s organizations and their activities. Thus, in city of Tashir, those who worked in the state and public sector were very informed about these organizations. Moreover, they applied and were very satisfied with the service provided by the various women’s organizations.

In Yerevan, and in other cities, men were more aggressive in their answers than women. In comparison with other cities, there were no extraordinary differences or observations in Yerevan.

## SHORT INTRODUCTION OF RESPONDENTS

We have attempted to be as consistent in our sampling as possible. So, we have asked respondents, women and men, of different age groups. Overall, 52% of our respondents were women, and 48% were men. 26% of these women and men were between the ages of 18 to 25, and 22% were between the ages of 36-45. We have almost the same number of respondents of age groups 26 to 35 (22%) and 46-55 (21%). The other group of respondents were 56 years of age or older and more consisted of 9% the overall sampling.

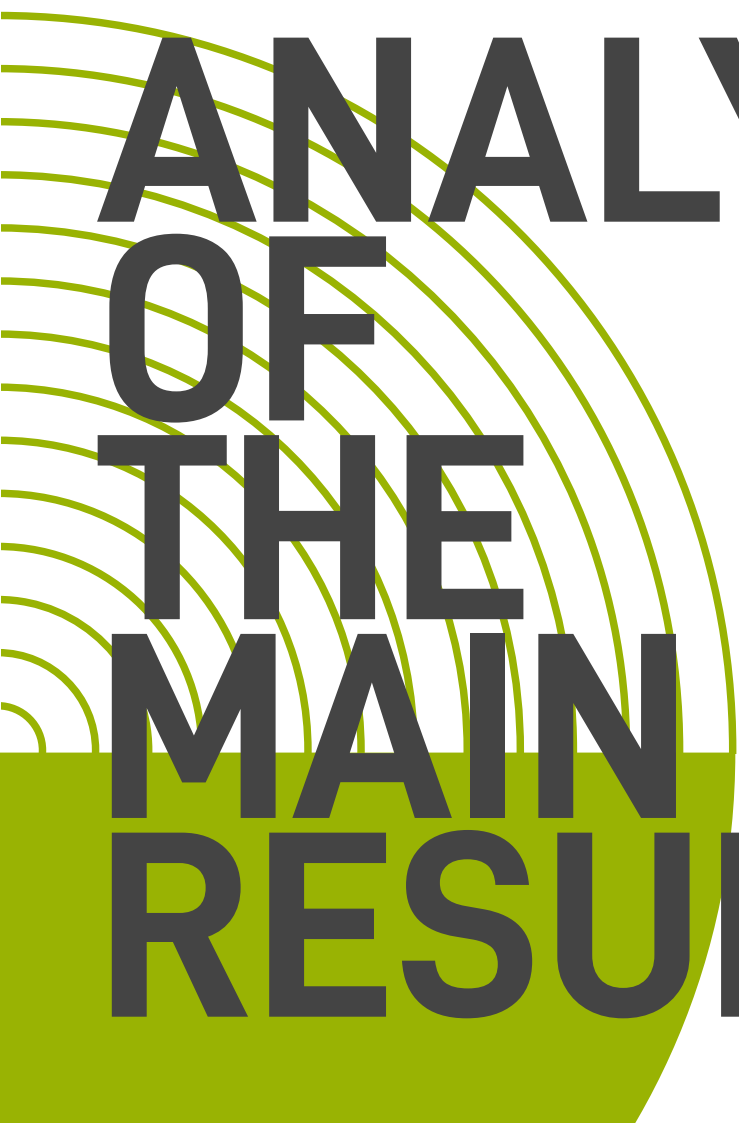
Most of our respondents (43%) have higher education. More than 37% have secondary education, and 17% were still in a university or did not graduate. Only a little number of respondents (3%) have doctoral and post-doctoral education. 37% of respondents were not married, 44% were married, and 8% of them were in a church-based union (commonly related to “married” option). Also, most of the respondents were working in full-time jobs (38%). Another significant group of respondents (24%) were unemployed. 13% were working in part-time jobs, 11% were seasonal workers, and 7% of respondents were contract workers.

Again, most of the respondents were employed in private sector (68%), and 29% of respondents were employed in the state and public sector. Most of our respondents have had average salaries ranging from 100 001 to 300 000 AMD (36%) and 50 001 to 100 000 (35%).





# ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN RESULTS



## INFORMATION ON WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES

To our big surprise, 70% of respondents mentioned that they have not heard of any women's organization in Armenia. 14% have heard of a few women's organization but couldn't remember any of the names. Some of the respondents were got angry when asked to provide the name of any women's organization. The remaining 15% have given different answers that we have tried to show in a list below. Those who have ever heard about women's organizations in general were in the age ranging from 26 to 35. Moreover, these respondents were mostly from Yerevan.

1. Coalition to stop violence against women
2. Gender and Leadership Studies Center
3. Intra Health Center
4. Society Without Violence
5. Soldier's Mother
6. Women against war
7. Women with University education
8. Women's Fund Armenia
9. Women's regional association in Yeghegnadzor
10. Women's Regional Resource center
11. Women's Resource Center
12. Women's Rights Center
13. Women's Support Center
14. Young women's association

The list presented above is of the names of organizations that have been mentioned in a more or less proper way. There were also mentions of World Vision Armenia and Helsinki Association as women's organizations, and also names of TV shows, such as "Semi-Opened Windows" ("Կիսաբաց լուսամուկներ"). One person also mentioned a female MP who was against the "Red Apple" as a women's organization name.

Unsurprisingly, women more than men have heard of women's organizations, and this means that in the list presented above women contributed more. Moreover, women came up with more precise answers than men, and this means that women



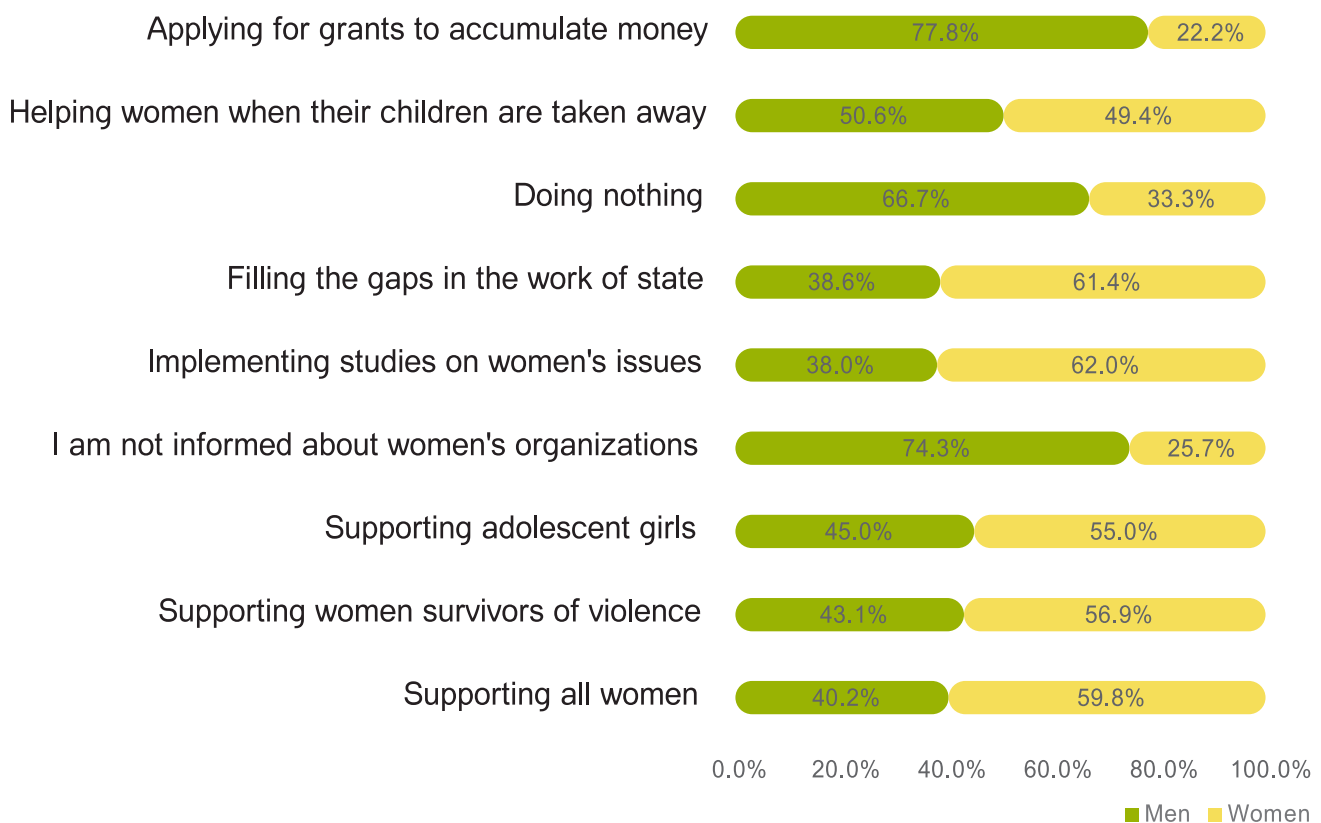
were more aware about the exact names of the organizations than men.

We have also tried to understand what the perceptions of respondents about the goals of women's organizations in Armenia were. According to 27% of respondents, women's organizations **support women survivors of violence**. This option has been chosen mostly by respondents with higher education. More women (57%) than men (43%) have chosen this option. 21% of respondents think that women's organizations organize and implement **researches and studies on women's issues** (62% women and 38% men). This option was popular also among respondents from the private sector (36%). Moderately fewer people, 13% respectively, think that women's

organizations in Armenia **support adolescent girls** and **support all women** in the country. Some moderately significant percentage of respondents (12%) think that women's organizations **help women when their children are taken away from them**. Both men and women have chosen this answer almost equally (51% men and 49% women).

Only 6% of all respondents think that women's organizations **fill the gaps in the work of the state**. Fortunately, only six people out of 300 think that women's organizations do not do anything. Interestingly, again, more men than women think that **women's organizations apply for different grants to accumulate more money (78% and 22 % respectively)**.

### What do you think are the goals of women's organizations?



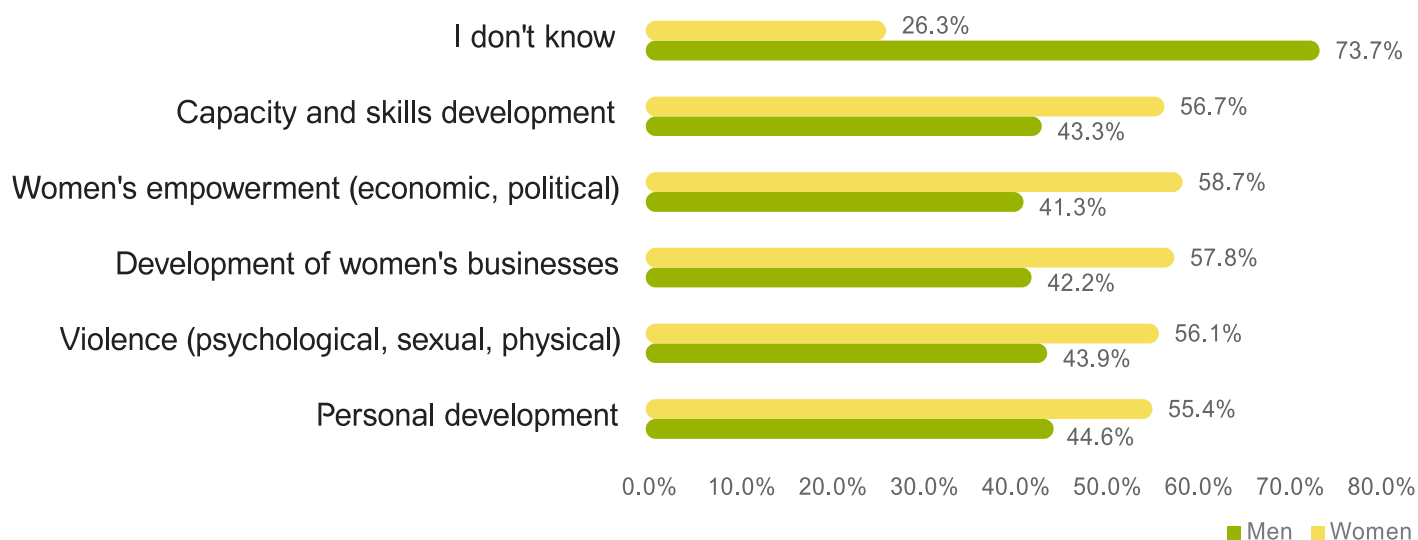
Most of the respondents from Yerevan think that women's **organizations support women who were survivors of domestic violence** (38%) and organize and implement **researches on women's issues** (32%). In Vayots Dzor, similarly, 20% of respondents mentioned the option on violence and support, 13% had chosen the research option, and

11% think that women's organizations support adolescent girls. We were expecting to have more informed respondents in Lori than Vayots Dzor, mainly because of the previous evidence showing that Vayots Dzor is more deprived in terms of services for women and related projects, in comparison with Lori.

With these interviews, we attempted to understand the perceptions on thematic areas, and topics women's organizations cover according to respondents. 32% of all respondents think that women's organizations work on the topic of **violence**. 20% of them answered that women's organizations in Armenia implement **capacity building**. Among all the respondents, 18% think that the work of women's organizations are directed towards **women's empowerment**. **Personal development** was a popular answer among 16% of respondents. 9 % of the respondents think that women's organizations help women in their **businesses or to establish one**. This option was more popular among the respondents from Vayots

Dzor than Lori (7% and 4%, respectively). And only 5% did not know what are the topics covered by women's organizations in Armenia. This last point, and the significant amount of answers for the options mentioned above, may provide grounds to think that the respondents of this study may not know the names of the organizations per se but overall, they are considerably informed about the areas of works of women's organizations in Armenia. Again, to our surprise, more respondents from Lori (8%) did not know about the topics and areas covered by women's organizations (in comparison with Yerevan, 2%, and Vayots Dzor, 3%).

### What do you think are the thematic areas and topics covered by women's organizations?



With our next question we have tried to reveal what our respondents thought of the services provided by women's organizations in Armenia. The answers vary here as well. 31% of our respondents, both men and women, think that women's organizations provide social and psychological counselling services. 19% and 18% respectively, are those who think that women's organizations provide their clients with direct financial support and trainings. Some of the respondents also think that women's organizations give legal counselling services (13%). 11% of respondents pointed out the services of shelters. Only 3% did not know anything about the services of women's organizations whatsoever. Although only 15% have chosen the option on shelters for

women for this question, respondents from Lori and Yerevan were more informed about this (7% and 8%, respectively).

Only 4% (11 people out of 300 respondents) were familiar with any women's organization **in their community/living area**. More respondents from the private sector were unaware of any women's organization in their communities. Unsurprisingly, **more women than man familiar with these organizations (82%)**. It is interesting to mention that both informed and uninformed respondents were from Yerevan: 2% from informed and 48% from uninformed were from Yerevan. To our surprise, **none of the respondents from Lori**

## ever heard about any women's organization in their initial community.

From these 11 people, we also have answers about the specific organizations; namely, we asked them to name a few organizations that they knew in those communities. We should mention that the respondents who have contributed to these answers have had higher education degrees and above and were previously or currently involved in the higher education system. The answers are provided below in a short list: Women's support center

- Women's resource center in Yeghegnadzor
- Shushan, women's regional/local association
- Women's union
- Women's resource center (Yerevan)
- Trust NGO (for social work and sociological researches)
- Women's Fund Armenia
- Women's rights center
- Women with university education NGO
- Mother's Fund

Among these 4% (11) most of the respondents mentioned that the organizations they knew about worked for **violence prevention**, while others also mentioned **social and psychological counseling, trainings for women, development of leadership skills** among women, **promotion of women in business**, and **direct financial support**.

As for the staff of women's organizations, the answers vary as well. Those who think that the staff of a women's organization consists of **9 to 15 members** are the majority (33%) but there is no strict critical mass for any answer for this question. Thus, 26% think that a women's organization has **more than 16 members**, 21% answered that there are **4 to 8 people** only. Some 6% of respondents mentioned that there can also be **only 3 or less people** involved in a women's organization's works. For 14% of remaining respondents it was difficult to give an answer to this question.

We have also had an unusual question for this type of a survey; namely, we asked the respondents to **describe how a women's organization's office would look like**. We received **283 different answers** to this question. Respondents from the private and state sectors contributed to this question the most. The remaining 17 respondents did not want to answer the question and we did not

push them to do so. In order to make the answers as attractive and fun as possible, we have tried to show them with the following illustrations based on the nature of the answers that we have tried to put **into three groups**. There are two, obviously, conflicting ideas about the physical space of a women's organization, both based on stereotypes and hate, and aggression. Overall, three main descriptions have been revealed.

**First**, based on the ideas of connection of any women's organization with **George Soros, "genderism", "lesbianism" and concepts like "perversion"**, etc. For instance, "Cigarettes in their mouths, with short dresses, short hair girls are walking around; the flags of those perverts are on the walls", "Soros' portrait hanging on the wall".

**Second**, the group of ideas that are based on the typical expectations from women: **cleanliness, flowers, mirrors, colors, colorful walls, paintings, and else**. "Feminine furniture of the European look", "Bright rooms, for sure, flowers, cactus I mean, beautiful paintings on the walls, mirror, fish in the aquarium and candies", "Mirrors, everywhere, so they can look at themselves all the time".

As for the **third** group of ideas, fortunately, there are also considerations about the clients. For instance, we have received descriptions about having "a usual office", "with computers and stuff", and "with separate rooms for women who would visit for counselling". These answers were given **by women only**. We could assume at this point that these were women who visited or knew people who visited women's organizations during their lifetimes. In contrast, mostly men answered in an aggressive manner, with some anger and relating their answers to "Soros and perversions". Those who contributed to these answers were mostly women and men with higher and secondary education. Also, a majority of these contributors were from the age groups 18-25 and 26-35

## ATTITUDES ON WOMEN'S ROLES

In this survey/study we have also tried to understand a couple of important attitudes of the respondents on women's roles and functions in the society. The goal of this section was to reveal the attitudes of the respondents on important aspects of women's lives, women's physical appearance, their economic stability and well-being, their education, political activity, and violence against women. For the first question of this section regarding **the most important aspects of a woman's life**, we have had eight different options for answers. Those were the following: Education

- Family
- Childcare
- Material/financial well-being
- Leisure
- Politics
- Work
- Religion

Unsurprisingly, the **"Family"** option was the first among the answers from our respondents (69%). Unsurprisingly, also because we have significant evidence based on other researches and studies implemented and previously presented. Interestingly those who were involved in private sector were more eager to choose this option (36%). Also, those respondents with higher (26%) and secondary (29%) education were active choosers of the "Family" option. **"Education"**, interestingly, was the second option; but only 18% of the respondents found it important for women. 8% of all the respondents think that taking care of the children is the most important thing that women should do (third option amongst the others presented in the chart/diagram).

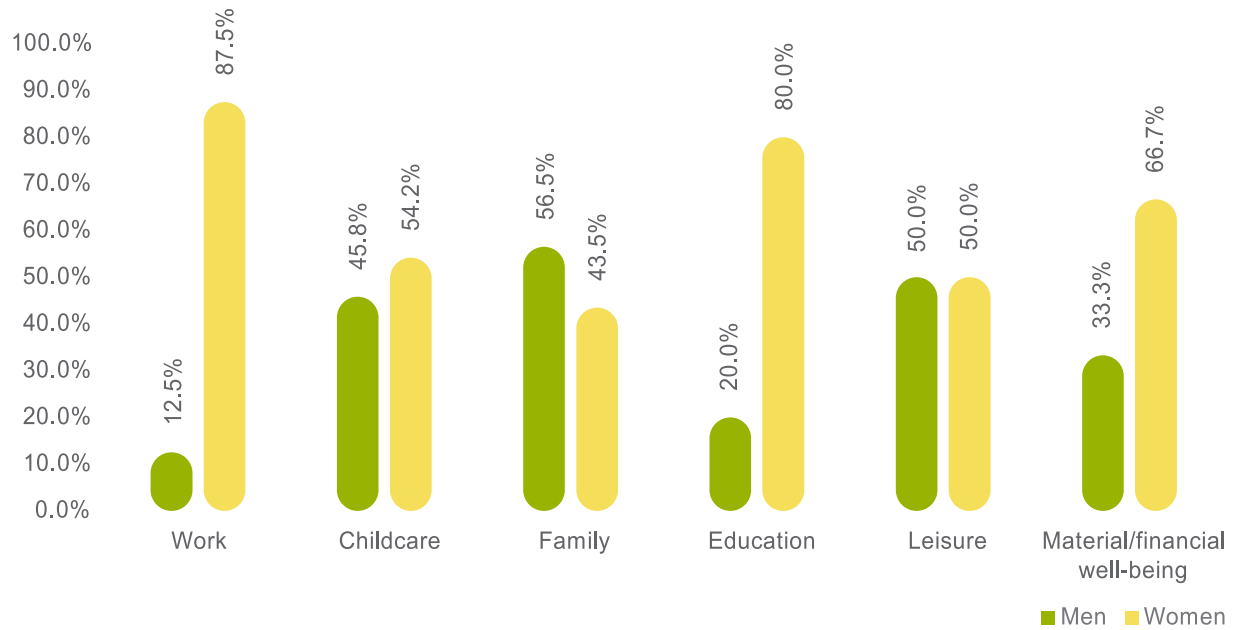
Interestingly, though, more women think that the work (87%), education (80%), and material/financial well-being (67%) are important for women. Even though the gap is not that big but **more men (56%) than women (44%)** give more importance to the family. **Childcare** was a more popular answer among women than men (54% and 46% respectively). The respondents that valued woman's education the least, were from Lori (only 2%), especially in contrast with the option on "Family" to which 20% of answers came from Lori.

# ATTITUDES ON WOMEN'S ROLES





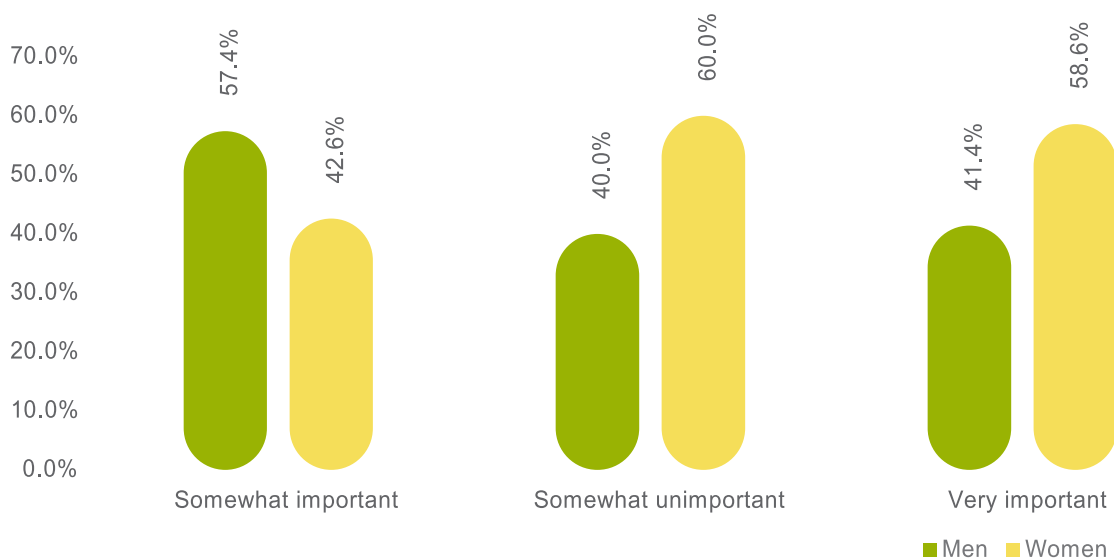
### What do you think is the most important for a woman?



Basically, there was no obvious disagreement around **the physical appearance of the Armenian women**. 58% think that it is very important, 39% think that it is important for an Armenian woman to take care about her appearance. Interestingly, **more men than women (57% and 43% respectively)** were more convinced that it was **somewhat important** for women to take care of

their appearance. But more women answered that it is very important for a woman to take care of her appearance (59%). Another interesting point here is that women, again, were more eager to choose the answer “somewhat unimportant” (60%). Interestingly, there were basically no respondents that have chosen “absolutely unimportant”.

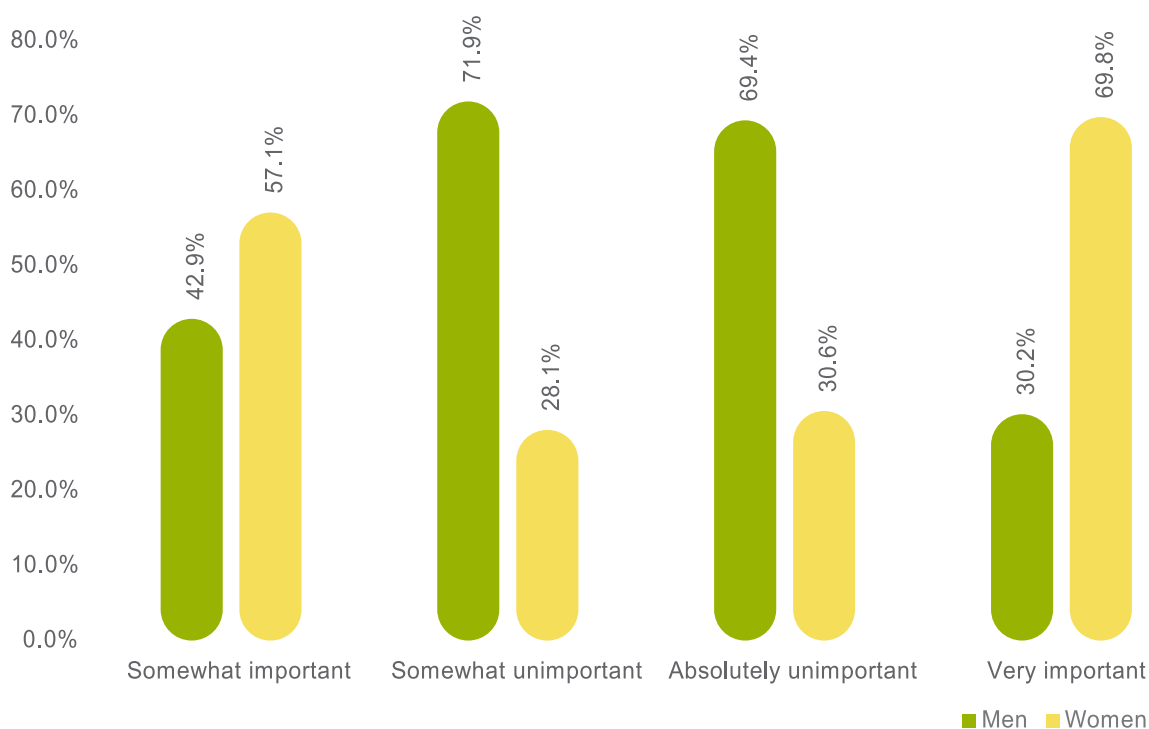
### To what extent do you think it is important for an Armenian woman to take care of her appearance ?



Only 12 % of the respondents think that it is unimportant **for an Armenian woman to be rich, have high income and financially provide for the family**. 19% mentioned that it was somewhat unimportant. 29% of the respondents mentioned that it is very important for a woman to be rich and have high income, and according to 40% it is somewhat important. However, **when it comes**

**to gender differences in the answers**, there are some interesting points. For instance, more men than women answered that it was not at all important (70%) and somewhat unimportant (72%) for women to be rich, to have high income and financially provide for the family, in case, when more women thought that it was very important to be rich and do so (70%).

To what extent do you think it is important for an Armenian woman to be rich and have high income?



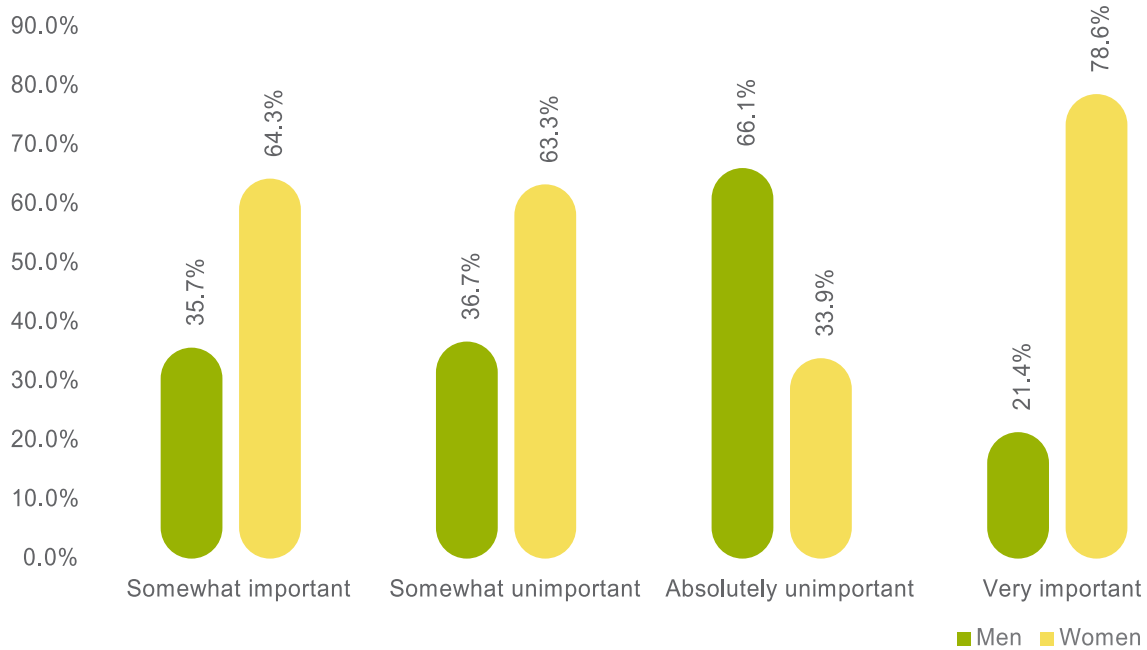
In the first question of this section, education was important for only 18% of the respondents. **When asked separately, education matters even more:** from all the respondents 61% mentioned that it was very important, and 29% mentioned that it was somewhat important for a woman to have a good education. Some 8% of respondents think that education is somewhat unimportant. There were also people (2%) **for whom the woman's education does not matter at all, and surprisingly more women think so (57%)**. More men think that it is somewhat important (66%) and somewhat unimportant (56%) for women to have good education. Again, more women have chosen the answer "very important" (62%) for the question on good education for women.

As a matter of important political circumstances and to our big interest, we have tried to reveal

what respondents think of **women's political participation and activity**. Apparently, the respondents think that it is **unimportant (38%) and somewhat unimportant (33%)** for women to be active in politics. 23% of the respondents answered that it is somewhat important for women to be active in politics. And **5% agreed that women's political activeness is very important**. We would like to remind the reader at this point that the field work, and data collection were implemented in the end of fall of 2018. Obviously, **more women than men think women's political participation and activeness is important: 78% of women answered that it is very important for women to be active in politics, in comparison with 66% of men that think that it is not important at all. Mostly respondents from Vayots Dzor and Lori mentioned that it is absolutely unimportant for a woman to be active in politics.**



## To what extent do you think it is important for an Armenian woman to be active in politics?



Furthermore, we have had some questions on the overall **image of female politicians**. We asked the respondents whether according to them female politicians were accepted the way male politicians do, and **most of the respondents disagreed with the statement (91%)**. According only to 8% of respondents, female politicians were accepted the way male politicians do, and mostly women agreed with this statement (81%).

When trying to understand the reasons of unequal acceptance of male and female politicians in society, we found out the following:

- Female politicians have **low ratings (38%)**
- Women cannot be politicians because they are **emotional (33%)**
- Women cannot be politicians because they **do not have necessary skills (14%)**
- Politics is immoral, and **women have nothing to do there (13%)**

In this case as well, **more women agreed that the ratings of female politicians are low (58%)**. Among the mentioned 33% **more men** think that women are more emotional, so they cannot be in politics (58%). Also, **men are those** who think that women do not have necessary or enough skills to be involved in politics (60%). And, **again, 58% of men** think that politics is immoral, and women have nothing to do there<sup>2</sup>.

In order to somehow provide solutions to this situation, we also asked the respondents **what kind of an image should female politicians possess?** Less than half of the respondents (45%) think that female politicians must be **active, have initiatives and initiate legal changes/reforms**. Almost 1/3 of the respondents have conflicting ideas: 16 % thinks that they should not get involved in the serious or important political questions. 15% thinks that female politicians must be persistent and promote/protect the interests of their allies. 15% mentioned that female politicians must always act in the interests of the society. Only 5% of respondents mentioned that in order to have a good or acceptable image, female politicians should be feminine and take care of their appearance.

**When it comes to gender differences**, there are some more interesting results. More women think that women in politics should be feminine and take care of their appearance (60%), and also be persistent, promote the interests of their allies (63%). Again, women outnumber men in thinking that female politicians must be active, have initiatives and initiate legal reforms (63%). Unfortunately, we must say, that in this case as well men showed their conventional attitudes about women's voice in politics: 77% of men pointed out that women should not get involved in serious political questions.

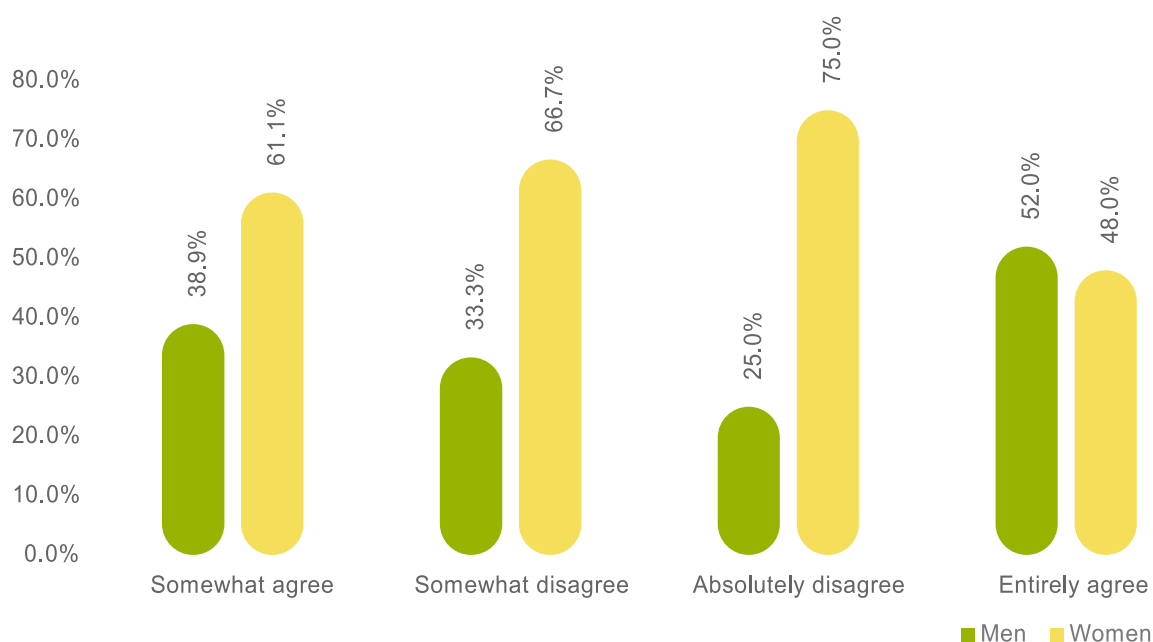
We have also had a few **stereotypical statements** that we have tried to bring to the discussion. Thus,

1. Interestingly, we also had one female respondent who added from her side that "women in politics and women in prostitution are the same for her". This is not of statistical significance but also speaks of some attitudes in the culture.

we asked the respondents what they thought of the **virginity** of a girl before getting married. Interestingly, there were **no significant results** in terms of the respondents' education and their attitudes about these questions. Most of the respondents agreed with the statement saying that **the girl must be a virgin before the marriage**: 68% of the respondents absolutely agreed and 18% of the respondents somewhat agreed with this statement. **On the one hand, interestingly**, and to some extent, sarcastically, women and

men among our respondents have **conflicting point of views**: 75% of women answered that they absolutely disagree with the statement on virginity, and 52% of men entirely agree with the latter statement. **On the other hand**, from all respondents that have chosen "somewhat agree" option, 61% were women. Only 4% of the respondents absolutely disagreed with the statement. Another 4% somewhat disagreed with it, and for 6% of the respondents it was difficult to answer to this question.

To what extent do you agree that a girl should be a virgin before marriage?



Another stereotypical attitude that we have presented to the respondents was **the physical violence** (namely, beating) as the best means in the hands of the husband for upbringing his wife. Fortunately, most of the respondents disagreed with this statement: 81% absolutely disagree and 12% somewhat disagree with this idea. More women absolutely disagreed with the statement (57%). The majority of those who somewhat disagreed with the statement on physical violence were also men (71%).

Interestingly, there are different attitudes towards **women's equal rights and their equal treatment in the society**. It is true that most of the respondents generally agree with the equality between men and women in terms of their rights and equal treatment (32% and 33% of the respondents entirely agree and somewhat agree, respectively). However, some

**14% of the respondents absolutely disagree** that women must have equal rights and expect equal treatment with men. And **17% somewhat disagree** with this statement. And **again**, there is **an obvious contrast** and, we could say a conflict, between the attitudes of men and women in this case as well: if 85% men absolutely disagree that women should have equal rights and equal treatment, 77% women think right the opposite and entirely agree with the statement.

In the scope of this study, we have also tried to understand what the respondents thought **of women who apply to the police in case of domestic violence**. According to the data, less than half of the respondents (40%) think that violence is a crime and it is a right decision to go to the police. **Women are more willing to choose this option (53%).**

29% of all the respondents are fine with applying to the police because they themselves do not tolerate any violence. Again, women significantly outnumber men in this answer to (72%). Interestingly, 16% mentioned that their attitude towards a woman going to the police depends a lot on **what has she done before** the actual act of violence. As sort of a tendency already in this analysis, men were eager to choose this option more than women (69%). Some respondents (3%) still think that **these women are destroying families with their appeals** (55% men and 44% women). And 7% of the respondents do not have any specific attitude for/about these women. Of which 91% of men answered that beating the wife in family is a usual thing and there is no need to go to police.

## ATTITUDES ABOUT WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS<sup>2</sup>

More than half of the respondents (58%) mentioned that women's organizations are important and those should promote development of the society. In this case, women were more eager to agree (66%) with this statement than men. 35% of respondents have no specific attitude towards these organizations, they are more neutral or have no specific attitude. In this climate of overall positivity, we must say that there are still answers that are worrying in that sense and show the intolerance as well. For instance, 8% of all respondents think that women's organizations are ran by so-called "grant-eaters", and, again, men outnumber women in this answer as well (54%). 6% think these organizations destroy Armenian traditions, demolish families and spoil children. Men are willing to agree with this idea more than women (64%).

In order to understand the overall atmosphere around women's organizations, we have also tried to ask about the attitudes of the initial environment of our respondents. Thus, 33% of the respondents answered that in their environments the attitudes towards women's organizations are neutral. 25% think that the attitude is positive. And 17% thinks that the attitude is somewhat positive. Around 10% of the answers are related to the negative (7%) and somewhat negative (3%) attitude. Based on gender disaggregation of answers to this question women mentioned more that in their environment people have more positive attitudes (68%), and men mentioned about somewhat negative attitudes (78%) towards women's organizations.

When asked about the coherence of their own attitude and that of their environment about women's organizations in Armenia, 26% answered that the attitudes totally correspond to their own attitude and 54% answered that it somewhat corresponds to their own attitude.

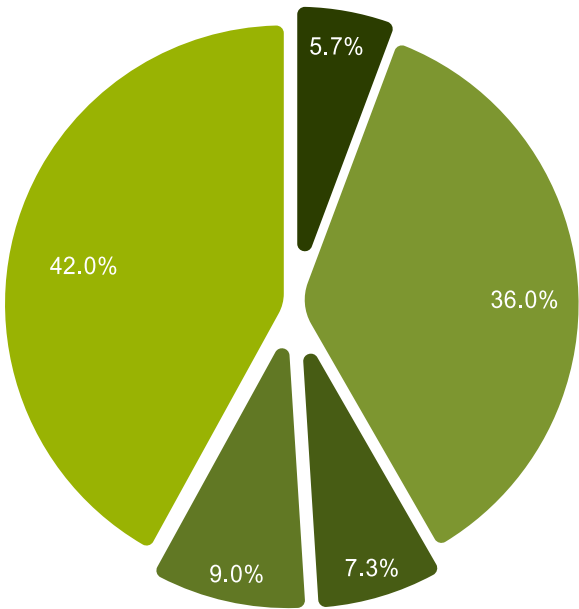
We also asked people to recall any advertisement or a slogan by a women's organization. Some of the respondents remember smoothly some slogans: "No to violence", and else. But most of them confused the topics of those advertisements with the actual slogans and ad texts; for instance, "Women in Business" or "Fight against Trafficking". Around 12% of respondents did not hear and could not remember any advertisement or a slogan. Women contributed to these answers more than men.



2. No strict difference between the level of education and the attitudes of women and men in this part has been revealed. There is no specific tendency, but rather tendency of diversity in answers based on the respondents' age and education level. We find this extremely important to mention because especially for women's and related CSOs even unique cases of any maltreatment of women are important to be noticed, raised and resolved.

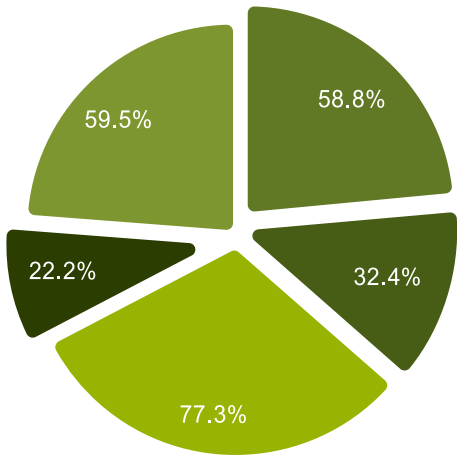
We also had an objective to understand to what extent do the respondents **trust women's organizations**. Thus, we asked them about their trust level towards these organizations. Most of the respondents in our sampling **did not have any specific trust issue** with women's organizations; 42% answered that they were neutral about these organizations. Surprisingly, 36% answered that

they somewhat trusted women's organizations, and 9 % totally trusted them. There is again an interesting conflict between the answers of men and women separately: if men are reluctant to trust women's organizations (77%), women tend to be more open and they trust these organizations more (78%).



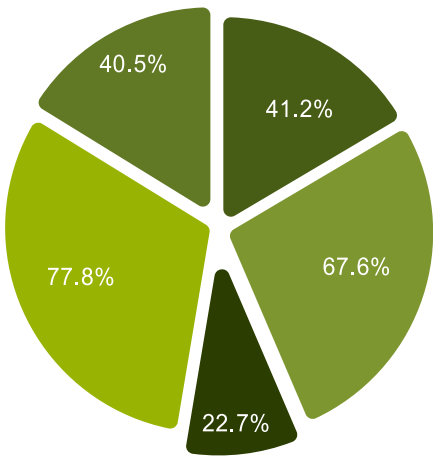
To what extent do you trust women's organizations? (Grand Total)

- Neutral
- Somewhat trust them
- Totally trust them
- Do not trust them at all
- Rather do not trust them



To what extent do you trust women's organizations? (Men)

- Do not trust them at all
- Neutral
- Rather do not trust them
- Somewhat trust them
- Totally trust them



To what extent do you trust women's organizations? (Women)

- Totally trust them
- Somewhat trust them
- Rather do not trust them
- Neutral
- Do not trust them at all

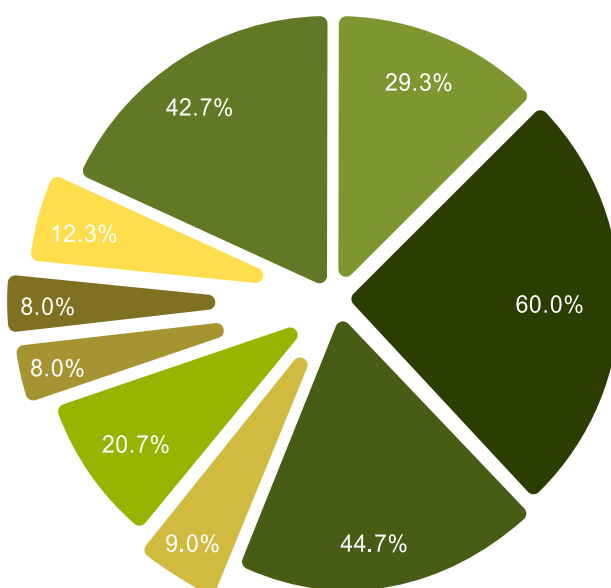
We also have had a goal to reveal what do our respondents think about **the impact of women's organizations on politics**. 30% of the respondents answered that these organizations help women to become **more independent political subjects**. Unsurprisingly, this answer was more common among women than men (67% and 33% respectively). 29% of the respondents think that women's organizations **do not have any impact** on politics whatsoever. Some 11% mentioned that these organizations develop women's **leadership skills**. Importantly, some of the respondents think that these organizations create opportunities for women to bring changes in their communities (9%) and promote women in elections (6%). **More women than men think that women's organizations promote women in politics, elections (72%) and decision-making in their communities (53%)**. Interestingly, men are more willing to think that women's organizations have some impact or influence on politics and policy developments (63%). Also, men were eager to

answer that these organizations have no impact on politics (64%).

The final question of this section was about the differences between women's organizations and other CSOs/NGOs. Each respondent could choose up to three options for this question. Thus, we have separated the most significant answers in the following table: 60% of all respondents think that women's organizations in Armenia **assist women who are subjects of systematic violence**, and that is the main difference of these organizations. 45% think that these organizations in comparison with others **support women and girls only**. A significant number of respondents (43%) mentioned that women's organizations **help women to find their place in life** (from which more than the half of the respondents (56%) **are women**). It is also important to mention that around 29% of the respondents also think that women's organizations are specific because of targeting **young women and girls** especially.

### How do you think women's organizations differ from other NGOs?

- No difference
- I don't know
- They are more visible and organize more events
- Teaching women how to take care of their children
- Helping women to start their own businesses
- Targeting young women and girls especially
- Helping women to find their place in the life
- Supporting women and girls only
- Assisting women who are subjects of systematic violence





## WHAT PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Only 4% of women ever used services of women's organizations and **all of them were satisfied with the received service**. At the same time, 13% knows people who uses services of women's organizations. The majority of those who applied for services and/or know someone who applied are **from Yerevan and with higher education**. The most common services of women's organizations that women use are **trainings and social-psychological support**.

We also asked respondents about the main cause they would apply to women's organization if it is needed. A majority said that they would apply for the services that will address their needs and if the organization **will be in close physically**. 23% of respondents mentioned that they will apply to women's organizations if the organizations **present their goals in a clearer and more understandable manner**. It is very interesting that relatively **more people from Yerevan** than from marzes said that they will apply to the women's organization only **if they know who is the leader of the organization**, and 6 times more respondents from Yerevan than from Vayots Dzor and Lori said they will apply to the organization **if the organization has more clear messages**. At the same time the majority of those who said they **will never apply** to any women's organization are from Vayots Dzor (12%) compared to those from Yerevan (7%) and Lori (2%).



## WHO ARE MAIN BENEFICIARIES?

According to the respondents, the main beneficiaries of women's organizations are **women-survivors of violence, women who need psychological help, and women who need financial assistance.**

There are big **geographical differences** in the perceptions of main beneficiaries of women's organizations. Most of those respondents who mentioned that main beneficiaries of women's organizations are women who are willing to start business are from Yerevan (45%) compare to those from Vayots Dzor (21%) and Lori (16%). People from Yerevan also think that main beneficiaries of women's organizations are **women who seek psychological support**, while the majority of those who believe that beneficiaries of women's organizations are those who are looking for the development of their professional skills, are from the regions.

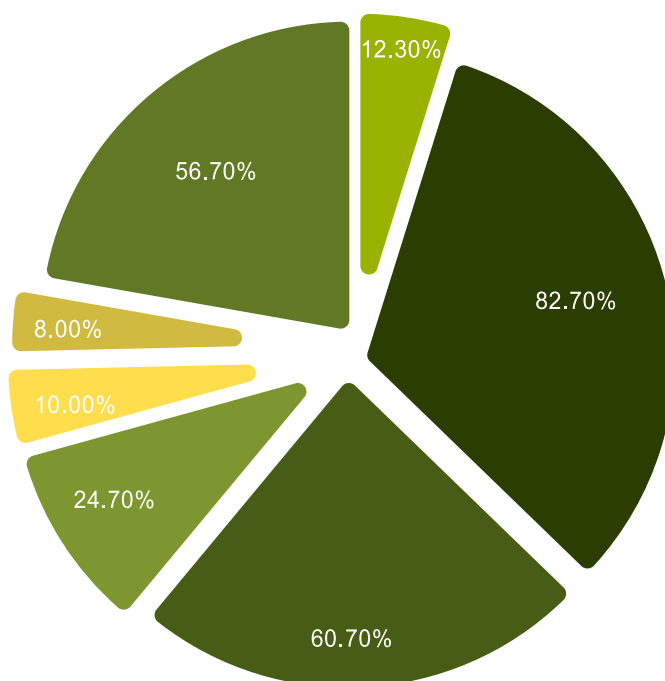
We found very interesting **gender differences** in the perceptions of beneficiaries of women's organizations. For example, more than half of women respondents said that main beneficiaries of women's organizations are women who want to develop their professional skills, seek for psychological support and are survivors of violence, while more men mentioned that beneficiaries of women's organizations are those women who want to become **politically active**. Also, **almost twice more men than women** said that they do not know who the beneficiaries of women's organizations are.



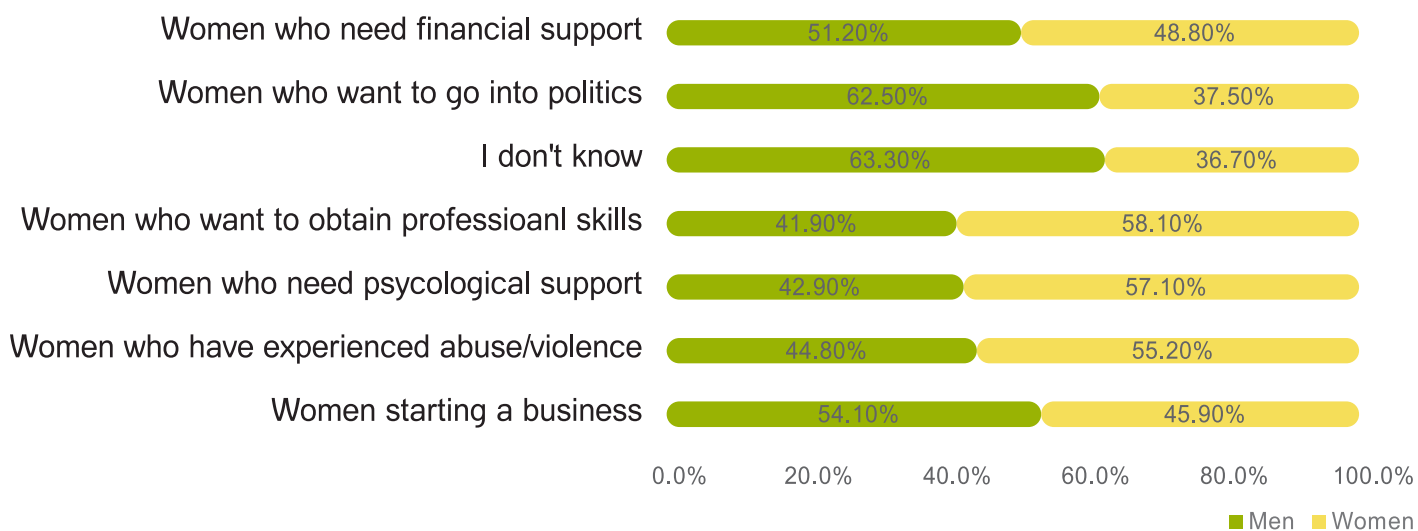


### Which or what kind of women are applying to women's organizations? Grand Total

- Women who want to go into politics
- I don't know
- Women starting a business
- Women who want to obtain professional skills
- Women who need financial support
- Women who need psychological support
- Women who have experienced abuse/violence



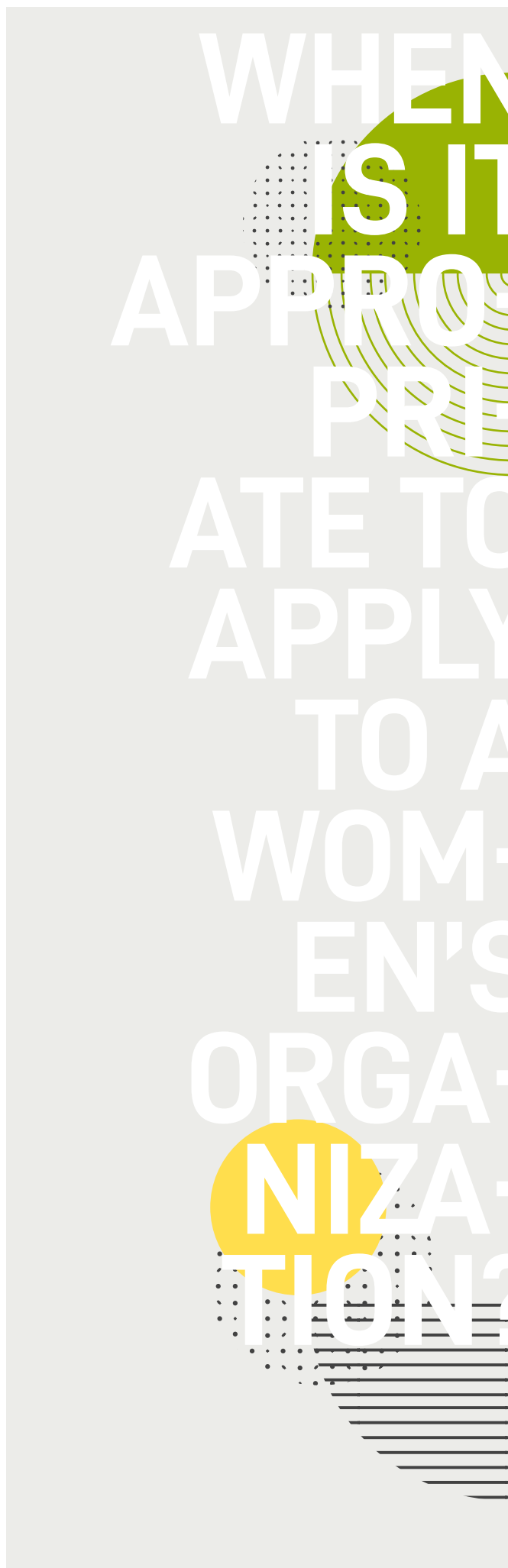
### Which or what kind of women are applying to women's organizations?



## WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO APPLY TO A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION?

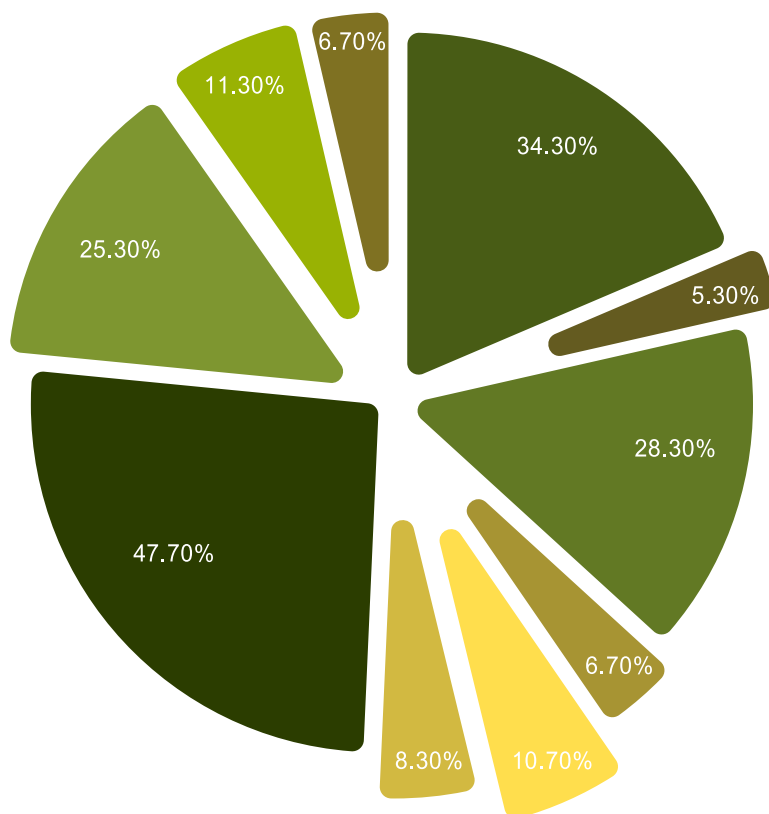
We also tried to understand when, according to the respondents, a woman should apply to a women's organization. Among main reasons were the following options:

1. when a woman is forced to do an abortion, because she is having a girl;
2. when husband beats her, and in a lesser degree;
3. when husband or parents are limiting a woman/girl's rights to mobility, and
4. when a woman wants to leave an abusive partner/husband.



## When (in which cases) do you think women should apply to women's organizations, Grand Total

- When she needs money
- I don't know
- When her parent bits her
- When her income is taken away from her
- When her parents refuse to help her
- A real Armenian woman/girl should never apply to women's organizations even in the worst situations
- When she wants to leave the abusive husband
- When her parent or husband limits her mobility
- When her parents refuse to help her
- When she is forced to do an abortion because of expecting a girl

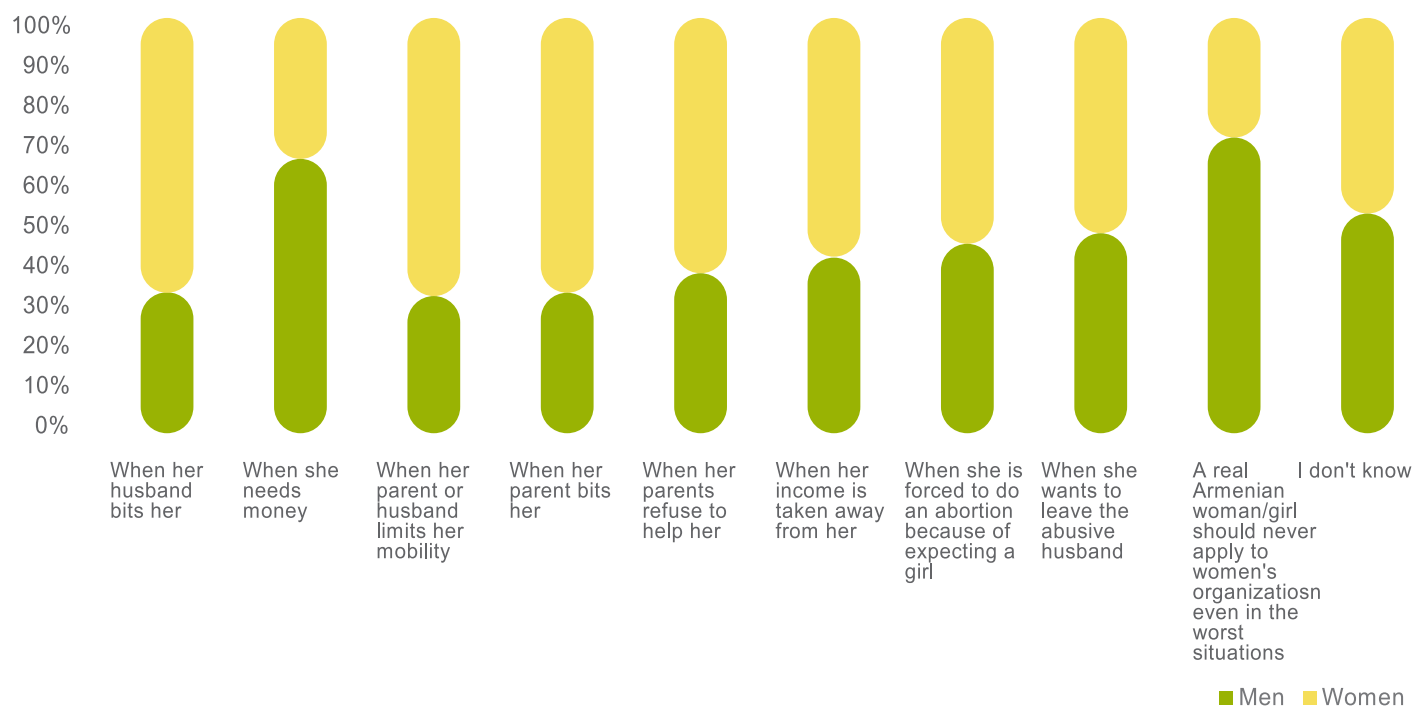


It is very interesting that much **more people in the capital agree** that a woman should apply to women's organizations when a husband beats her (26%), 7% thinks that way in Lori and only 1% in Vayots Dzor. **The same is true for the issues of son preference.** 34% of respondents from Yerevan said that they think a woman should seek help from women's **organizations if she**

**is pressured to do an abortion** because she is having a girl. Almost 3 times less respondents from Lori agreed with that statement (12%) and only 2% from Vayots Dzor.

There are also obvious **gender differences** in regard to this question that are presented in the chart below.

## When (in which cases) do you think women should apply to women's organizations?



Twice the number of women than men agreed that a woman should apply to women's organizations when a husband beats her, a husband or parents limit women's freedom of movement, when parents do not want to apply to her. At the same time, **almost twice more men than women** said that a woman should apply to women's organization when she needs financial support.

## STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

When asked about **priorities of women's organizations**, more than half of the respondents mentioned that they would like women's organizations to support women-survivors of violence (67%), to assist strengthening Armenian families (57%), to help single mothers (56%), and to help women to find their place in life (52%).

But as for many other sensitive topics, here as well, we registered **significant gender differences**. Twice more women than men believe that women's organizations should support women's economic and political empowerment (31% men vs 70% women), while 85% of men compare to only 15% of women agreed with the statement "women's organizations shouldn't interfere in family matters"

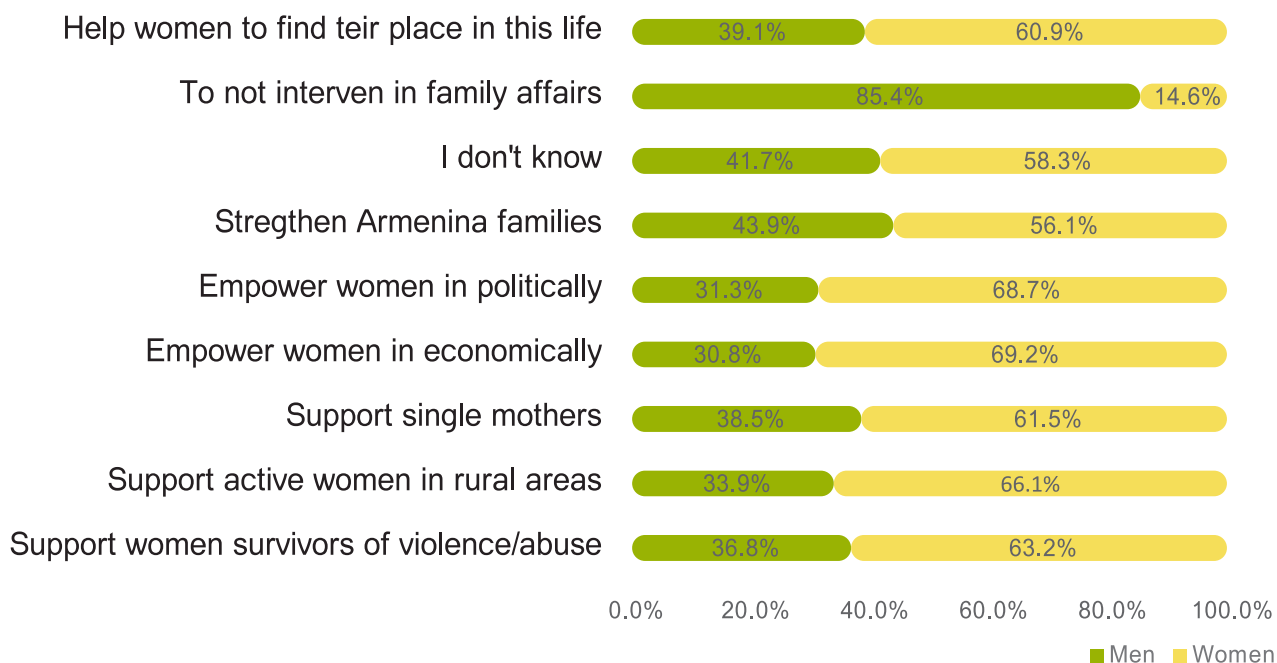
When it comes to **the strategies and activities** of women's organizations, the following were suggested:

1. To raise awareness about women's issues and ways to resolve them (60%)
2. To organize more events and meetings in their communities (57%)
3. To apply for more grants (30%)
4. To have more financial resources (28%)

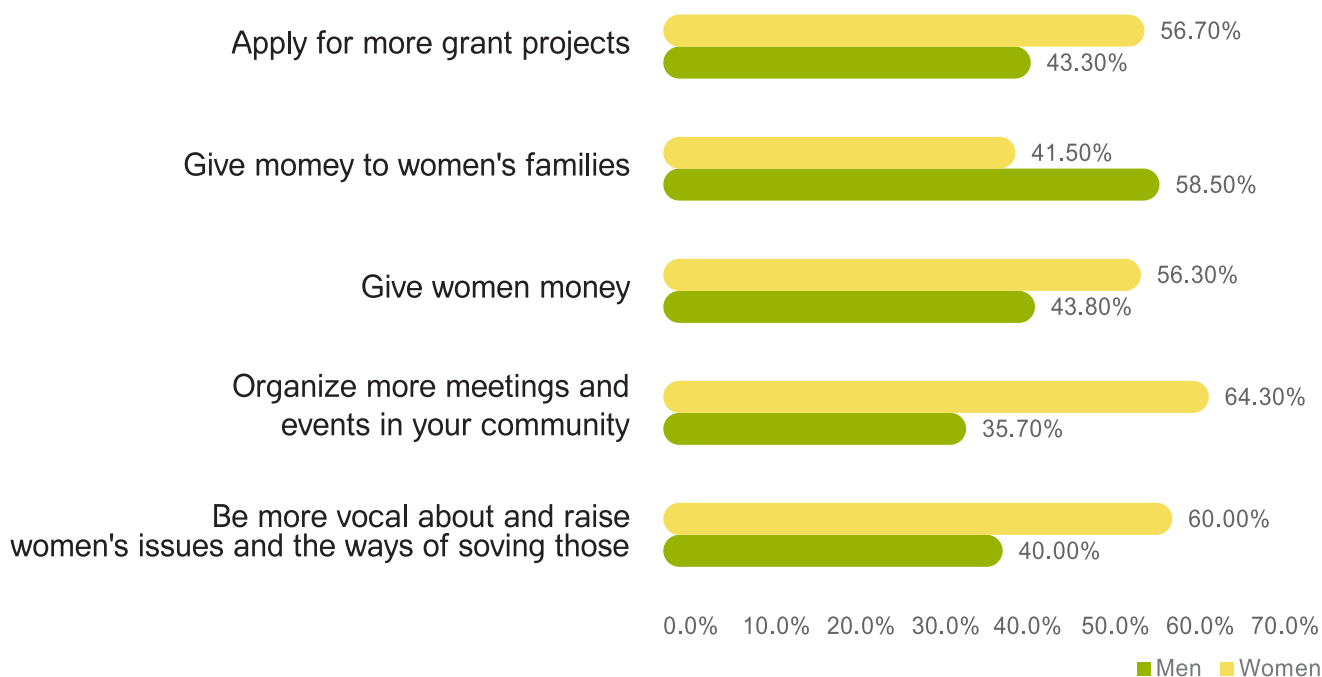
It is very interesting that more men than women mentioned that women's organization should give financial support to women's families (58% men vs 41% women).



### What do you think women's organizations should do in Armenia?



### How do you think women's organizations can achieve the goal you have mentioned?

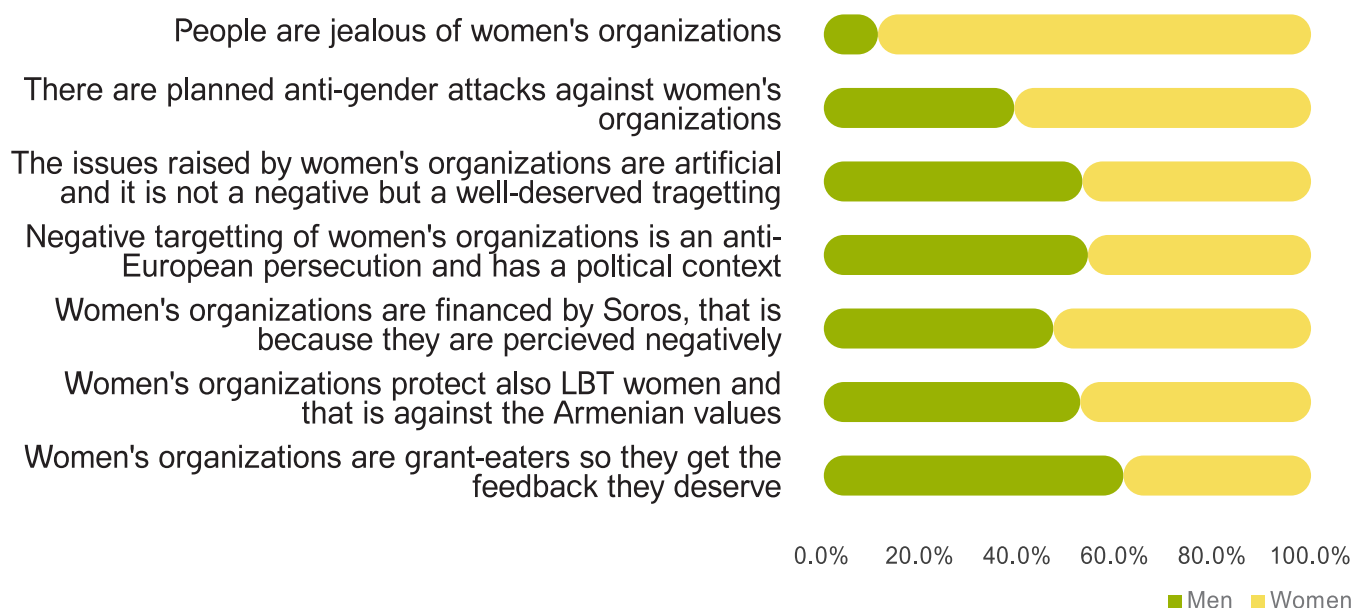


We also registered some **geographical differences** when it comes to the priorities of women's organizations. For example, respondents from Yerevan agreed that women's organizations should raise awareness about problems and challenges that women have, and apply for more grants, while respondents from Vayots Dzor more than respondents from Yerevan and Lori think that one of the main goals of women's organizations should be **financial support to women's families**. Twice the number of respondents at the age of 18-

25 agrees that **negative targeting** of women's organizations **has political context**.

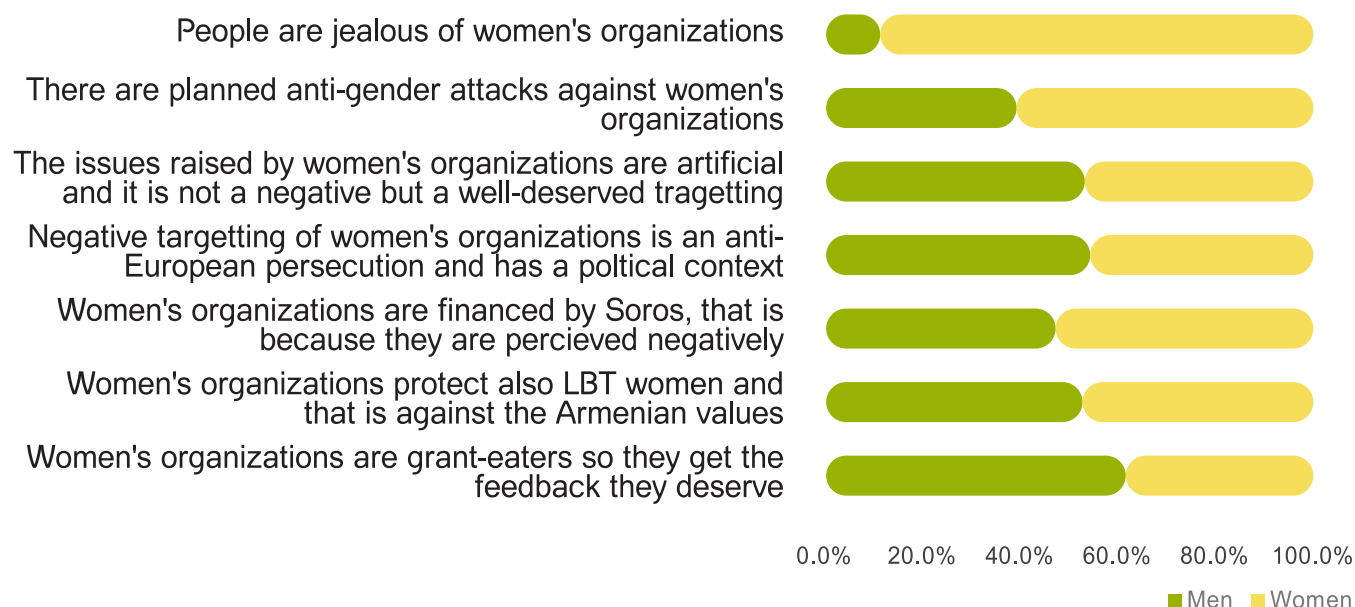
40% of respondents believe that women's organizations **are targeted and presented in a negative way**, while 60% thinks there is no negative PR of women's organizations. And the majority of those who think there is no negative PR of women's organizations are from Yerevan. Interestingly, **more men than women justify the attacks** on women's organizations.

If yes, what do you think is the reason of this type of targeting?



Besides, **more men than women agreed with the following statements:**

If yes, what do you think is the reason of this type of targeting?



**61% of women compare to 39% of men believes that attacks and negative targeting of women's organization are the results of planned activities by anti-gender movement.**

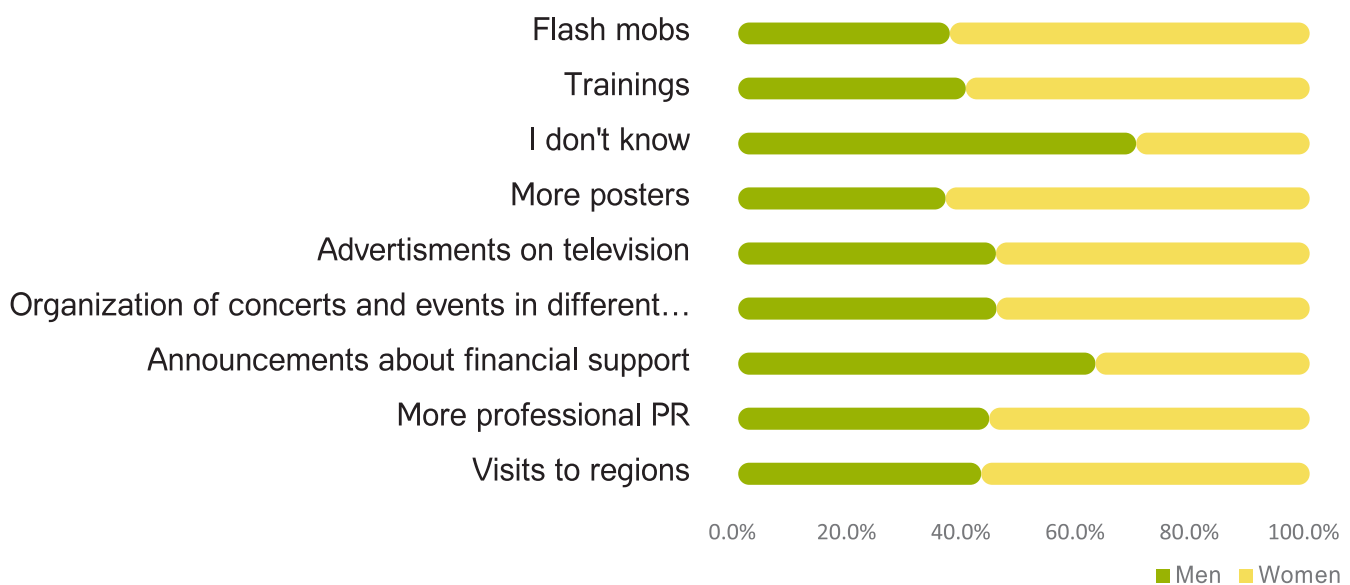
We also asked participants of the survey **what women's organizations should do in order to become more understandable and accepted by the society.** 72% said that it will be great to be more present on TV/radio and social media. Half of the respondents replied that having more volunteers will help (51%), also having **daily interactions and conversations** with people (47%) and **going to the regions** of Armenia (51%). 54% of the respondents agrees that in order to be more accepted women's organization need more **professional PR and advertainment** (65%). It is interesting that compared to respondents from other cities and regions, more respondents from Vayots Dzor think that in order to be accepted women's organizations should **help women from villages**, organize meetings in the communities, and **do not interfere in "family matters"**. **On the contrary**, twice more respondents from

Yerevan than from the regional cities mentioned that women's organization should help women-survivors of violence.

In addition, if respondents from Yerevan believe that women's organizations can achieve their goals better if they organize **professional PR campaigns and advertisements of their work**, relatively more people in Vayots Dzor than in Yerevan and Lori think that women's organization can become more accepted if they **organize concerts and various entertainment activities in the communities and provide financial support to women and their families.**

Moreover, again, almost 1.5 times more men than women mentioned **financial aspect**. 62% of men compare to 37% of women mentioned that women's organizations can reach their goals in a more efficient way if they give more money to women. While women think that women's organizations can reach their goals through more trainings, visits to the regions and flesh mobs.

What do you think should be the tools and methods for women's organizations to inform the public about their goals?





## FINANCIAL SOURCES OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Since there are a lot of myths about financial sources of human rights organizations working in Armenia, and, especially, about women's rights organizations, we also tried to understand what people think about **financial sources of women's organizations**. More than a half of respondents (60%) believe that the main source is **international donors**, and half of the respondents (50%) are sure that it is **Armenian Diaspora**. According to 14% women's organizations are getting support from **state budget**, and it is very interesting that the majority of those who think this way, is from private sector. More 11% thinks that women's organizations **do not have any financial support and they volunteer**.

More men than women (**62% of men vs. 37% of women**) believe that women's organizations are **getting funding from "Soros"**, while more women (69% of women vs. 30% of men) think that women's organizations are getting state funding. A few men also mentioned "gomikneri kazmakerputunneris" ("from faggots' organizations"), Europe, perverts' organizations.

We also wanted to understand what Armenian population thinks about salaries that women's organizations' leaders and staff is getting. The vast majority of the respondents said its somewhere between **300 000 – 500 000 AMD for the managers** of the organization, and it is up to **300 000 AMD for staff**.

**Twice more men than women think that leaders of women's organizations are getting salaries between 500 000- 1 000 000 AMD.**





# MISTAKES OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

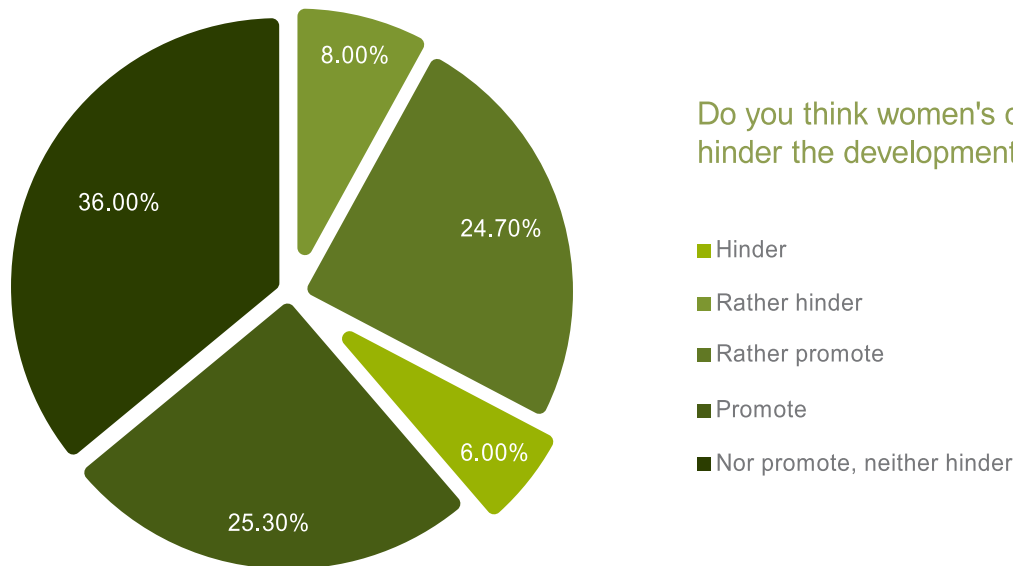
## MISTAKES OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

**55% of the participants** of our survey said that one of the main mistakes that women's organizations make in regards of public relations is **not having good advertisement**, and **48% thinks** that protecting rights of **LBT women and raising such sensitive issues as sexuality is also in a way a negative PR for women's organizations**. According to 34% women's organizations are **spreading foreign/European values in Armenia** and it is also a mistake that women's organizations make. It is very interesting that 40% of respondents agrees that women's organizations are targeted, and their work **purposefully presented in a negative way**. Respondents from the regions twice more than respondents in Yerevan agree with the statements that "one of the biggest mistake women's organizations do is that they are very vocal around the issues that have nothing to do with women's rights", "talk about taboo and sensitive for Armenian society issues, such as sexuality" and "promote European values in Armenia" (17% thinks that way in Vayotz Dzor, 9% in Lori, and only 8% in Yerevan).

At the same time, four times more respondents from Yerevan think that the main mistake of women's organizations is **not advertising their work**. And among those who think that way are more women than men (**40% men vs. 50% women**). We also registered an **interesting trend**: there are no differences in the answers of respondents from three regions when it comes **to the question of LBT women**. 17% of respondents in all three cities agreed that talking about LBT women's rights has **negative consequences for the reputation of women's organizations**. And among them are more men than women (**65% men vs 35% women**). At the same time, more women than men think that one of the biggest mistakes of women's organizations is having **little finances** (37% men vs 63% women).

## DO WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION ASSIST OR HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARMENIAN SOCIETY?

We received the following answers on the question whether women's organizations assist or hinder the development of Armenian society:



As we can see, quite a big number of respondents **(36%) couldn't answer whether women's organization assist or hinder the development of Armenian society**. Those who are very positive about women's organizations' contribution to the development of society are mostly from Yerevan. Respondents from Yerevan also appreciate women's organizations role in **women's emancipation and independence** more than respondents who live in Vayots Dzor and Lori. More young people at the age of 18-25 think that women's organizations assist to the development of society.

There are obvious **gender differences in the answers to this question**. 77% of men vs 23% of women answered that women's organizations hinder the development of society, and 88% vs 12% of women that women's organizations are rather hinder the development of society, while almost 70% of women and 30% of men believe that women's organizations assist to the development of society.

7% of the respondents thinks that the **registration process** for women's organizations should be limited, because women's organizations are destroying families. At the same time, 66% believes that **the government should control the activities** of similar organizations, because

"the government should know what these organizations do", and more 12% said that **the government should monitor financial resources and sources of women's organizations**. It is very interesting that even though 39% of respondents from Yerevan does not think that there shouldn't be any restriction for the registration of women's organizations, almost the same percentage of respondents from Yerevan (37%) believes that the government should monitor and control activities of women's and similar organizations. And among those who think there shouldn't be any restrictions on women's organizations are much more women. 81% of women vs 20% of men agreed with the statement "as a civil society women's organization should be completely independent". 78% of women vs 22% of men agreed with the statement "no government, neither any state agency has a right to interfere in the work of women's organizations".

We were also interested to see whether participants of our survey can identify marches/protests/initiatives implemented by women's organizations. As for the future participation in any street action or activity, **39% refuses to participate in any activity undertaken by women's organization**, **34% would like to participate in the public lecture**, and more **24% in trainings and workshops**.



## HOW WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS CAN AFFECT OUR LIVES?

Finally, we also wanted to identify how, according to the respondents, women's organizations can affect their lives. 30% does not think women's organizations can't help them in any way (the majority of the respondents who agreed with this are from Vayots Dzor). The rest is expecting from women's organizations **financial support and positive changes in their respective communities**. For example, 22% thinks that women's organization can help them directly if they can bring positive changes in the communities, they (respondents) live. 14% of women are expecting women's organizations to help them **to become more self-confident, and more than 6% wants to become advocates for women's rights** with support of women's organizations.

