



WIN –
Women & Men Innovating &
Networking for Gender Equality

CONCEPT NOTE

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE DURING THE WAR AND IN POST-WAR SETTINGS

EXPERIENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF WOMEN'S NGOS

The conference on preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) during the war and in post-war settings will take place in Tbilisi, Georgia, and is organised by the WAVE Network and the OSCE Gender Issues Programme/WIN Project.

The conference will take place on November 8th, with the first half of the day streamed and accessible to all interested participants, while the second half of the day is only accessible to in-person participants.

The conference explores the topic of GBV during and after conflicts, with the purpose to launch a new toolkit aimed at supporting survivors and preventing violence in such context. Conflicts inflict suffering on everyone, but particularly on women, girls, and other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities.

Rape and sexual violence is used as a tactic of war and risks of human trafficking, domestic violence, exploitation, and sexual slavery increase. In post-conflict settings, GBV also increases significantly, as participation in conflicts and exposure to war trauma directly correlates with an increase in the intensity of domestic violence.

To better support women's organisations in dealing with such challenges so that they meaningfully support survivors of violence in these settings, a toolkit was developed by the WAVE Network in collaboration with four WAVE members: Sexual Assault Crisis Center (Yerevan, Armenia), Women Fund Sukhumi (Kutaisi and Tbilisi, Georgia), Foundation United Women Banja Luka (Banja Luka, Bosnia & Herzegovina), and Centre "Women's Perspectives" (Lviv, Ukraine). Based on the specific knowledge and experiences of women's CSOs throughout war settings, the toolkit not only presents the harm and challenges posed by conflicts but also documents promising first-hand practices with concrete examples and recommendations.

The authors of the toolkit present their strategies related to different conflict stages: (1) during the war and emergency response settings, shared by the Ukrainian and Armenian partners, (2) protracted conflict, described by the Georgian partner, and (3) post-war and long-term perspective, based on the experience of the partner from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The primary target group of the toolkit is women's specialist services (WSS) and CSOs involved in supporting women survivors of violence in conflict and post-conflict settings. However, the toolkit looks at supporting local authorities, professional entities, decision-makers, and peacebuilders to better understand the specific needs of survivors and women's organisations and implement adequate and gender-sensitive policies and responses.

The first half of the conference (morning) will be in a hybrid format. The day will start with opening remarks from Lara Scarpitta, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, and Stephanie Futter-Orel, Executive Manager of the WAVE Network.

Keynote speeches will be provided by representatives of international institutions and national stakeholders of the Government of Georgia.

The panel discussion will focus on the topic of GBV during and after conflict, and on how women, girls and vulnerable groups are particularly affected by violence. The role of women's NGOs in supporting survivors and preventing further violence will be discussed, as well as the need for collaboration with the other responsible actors, such as governmental bodies, national, regional, and local administrations.

Following the panel discussion, the toolkit developed by WAVE with the support of OSCE will be presented, and the participants will have the possibility to ask questions to the authors.

In the second half of the conference (afternoon), the participants will have the chance of joining smaller thematic groups for an in-depth discussion. This part will not be live-streamed. Each group will focus on one of the phases of war presented in the toolkit: during the war, protracted conflict, and post-war. In these groups, specific strategies presented in the toolkit will be discussed, to facilitate the exchange of promising practices and the creation of new synergies.

