



## **NGO 'Aktiv'**

### **Report on the Prevalence of Domestic Violence in north Kosovo**

By

NGO 'Aktiv'

Mitrovica 2013



### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank, first and foremost, NGO Aktiv's partner organizations Žensko Pravo, Kolo Srpskih Sestara and Maras for their invaluable help and input during the implementation of the project. Aktiv would like to thank Ms. Ružica Simić for her professionalism and her work with focus groups and workshops which provided valuable insight and data for this report. Aktiv would also like to thank Ms. Marina Bogojević and Ms. Radmila Kapetanović for their assistance in the carrying out of the survey and their work with local communities. Finally, we would also like to extend a special thanks to Ms. Bojana Vukadinović for her work on the development of the survey, without her support and professional advice this would not have been possible.



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## Section I

### Background

In April of 2013 NGO 'Aktiv' launched the project 'Don't Turn Your Head Away – Violence Against Women' with the financial support of the Embassy of Finland in Pristina and in partnership with a number of local non-governmental organizations in north Kosovo. The core goal of the project is to raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence among local communities and to conduct research into the issue in order to make concrete policy recommendations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project and to contribute to the alleviation of the problem of violence against women in the immediate region. The first phase of the project is largely centered on conducting research into the issue. This has proved to be a challenge due to a distinct lack of statistics and information on domestic violence. Furthermore, the absence of a strong legal structure and a relatively weak police presence means that institutional support available to victims is limited even when compared with other countries in the region. These factors have colluded to create a situation in which it is exceedingly difficult to obtain information which could lead to a deeper understanding of extent of the problem in north Kosovo. Taking this into consideration, Aktiv began to contact relevant institutions and organizations to hold interviews in order to establish a number of parameters around which it would conduct research and to determine preliminary findings. It was established that although there are a number of local (municipal) institutions which handle domestic-violence cases their capacity to effectively tackle the issue, even on a case-by-case basis is limited. On top of this, there is no public body in the north which maintains a statistical database of incidences of domestic abuse making it difficult to ascertain how widespread it is. An essential part of any organization's work related to domestic violence in north Kosovo must by default involve contributing to and, in certain cases, creating a more detailed picture of the problem in order to



produce fruitful results. It is with this reasoning in mind that Aktiv, in June and July of 2013 carried out a survey of women in four municipalities in north Kosovo; Mitrovica, Zvečan, Zubin Potok and Leposavić. The survey was the first of its kind in the North and the questionnaire was developed meticulously, with a clear methodological plan and keeping in mind social norms which exist in north Kosovo society. The results, which will be presented in greater detail throughout this report, not only indicate how commonly domestic abuse occurs in north Kosovo but also it' correlation with the attitude of victims and witnesses towards public institutions and the police. These results will allow Aktiv as well as other similar organizations and institutions to paint a clearer picture of the problem thus contributing to more effective and concrete policies to help victims of abuse as well as to raise greater awareness and understanding among local communities.

## Section II

### Methodology

#### *Research Concept*

We used the following definition within the framework of our research:

*"Violence against women is a criminal act during which a woman or female child experiences an imminent threat to their life. Every situation of violence against women carries with it the a fear of imminent death."* (Center for the Promotion of Healthier Women, 2011.) Therefore violence takes on the following dimensions, related to the forms of violence and indicators:

- ✦ Physical: Slapping, hitting, pushing, shooting, pinching, grabbing, hair-pulling, breaking body parts, cutting, extinguishing cigarettes on the body, drowning, scratching, biting, tripping, throwing objects and others.
- ✦ Material: withholding of money for necessities, not allowing you to have access to family earnings, taking your earnings and limiting your spending, asking that



you justify all your spending, demanding that you leave your job or not allowing you to get a job, manipulative actions which prevent you from developing professionally or from educating yourself (before an exam or work obligations he makes excessive plans, inviting guests, creating travel expenses etc), all property is in his name and other similar situations.

- ✦ Sexual violence: rape and attempted rape, touching intimate parts of the body, sexual inappropriate sexual remarks, advances, demands, sexual blackmail, jokes, facial expressions and body movements which bring on feelings of shame or humiliation, forced viewing of pornographic films or publications, forced participation in pornographic photography and other similar situations.
- ✦ Psychological: insults, mocks, criticisms, accusations, threats, calling you derogatory names, humiliation, belittling you, your relatives, or your friends (eg. "you're dumb", "just look at your mother", "your friends are a bad influence on you" etc), jealousy, eavesdropping on conversations, going through personal possessions, he limits or prevents communication with relatives or friends, making you think you're 'crazy', and other similar situations.
- ✦ Disturbing the peace: yelling, creating a racket, eviction from place of residence, hiding or throwing away personal possessions, documents etc, scattering or destroying personal possessions, inflicting damage to place of residence and other similar situations.

### **Research Methodology**

Research into domestic violence constitutes a so called "sensitive research topic", which means that we had to take great care with the kinds of questions we wanted to ask in what manner we would ask them to women who were potential victims or witnesses of domestic violence. Along these lines, in order for potential victims not to feel discriminated against or singled out by the interviewers, it was necessary to not lead them into a sense of victimization. The questionnaire which we



used in the course of our research was created based on a pre-existing one although certain questions were changed and altered according to our research goals. We changed the framework of 'direct' questions in the sense that we gave respondents the opportunity to choose whether or not they wish to declare themselves as victims or as witnesses to domestic violence. Among the questions that were formulated in this manner we posited them in a manner which gave us insight into whether or not the respondent is a victim of domestic violence. Within that particular question, as with all questions, there is a 'neutral' option or answer: "There is no violence in my family." Along the same lines, with the questions "how do you rate your role as an equal member of your family?" and "what are your reasons for giving that answer?" we attempted to ascertain whether or not the respondent was an actual victim of domestic violence

The survey was anonymous so that also answered basic questions related to age, level of education, employment status, number of family members and their role within the family. Within the framework of the survey we also asked participants if they view their family as being 'patriarchal' or 'modern.' With answers to these questions we were able to compare the existence of violence within families with the perception of family type. We also posited questions relating to the reporting of domestic violence, the work of relevant institutions and their level of satisfaction with their reaction. We also felt that it was important to ask women if they know the number of the police station so we added a question relating to this.

It is also important to mention that we had two surveys. One was designed for men and the other for women. The survey geared towards men was designed specifically for situations when the interviewers found themselves to be in the presence of both husband and wife at the same time. In this manner, the interviewer was able to give the husband a survey to complete while the wife filled out her survey in order for his attention to be drawn away from her.



### *Sample Test*

The framework of this research covers north Kosovo: the municipalities of Kosovska Mitrovica – 30 respondents (10 from the ages of 18-34, 10 from the ages of 35-54 and ten from the ages of 55-75), Zvečan - 30 respondents (10 from the ages of 18-34, 10 from the ages of 35-54 and ten from the ages of 55-75), Zubin Potok – 40 respondents (10 from the ages of 18-34, 10 from the ages of 35-54 and ten from the ages of 55-75), Lešak i Leposavić - 30 respondents (10 from the ages of 18-34, 10 from the ages of 35-54 and ten from the ages of 55-75). There were a total of 130 respondents.

### *Method of data-collection*

In order to avoid the secondary victimization of respondents, it was decided that the primary methodology of data-collection would be a self-administered questionnaire. Women were guaranteed complete anonymity. We came to the conclusion that this method of data-collection proved to be very suitable because women had the freedom to choose whether or not they wanted to complete the questionnaire, and should they choose to fill out the survey they could do so in peace, undisturbed by other participants and without the intervention or interruption of the interviewers. Still, women had the option, as long as they were alone, to question the interviewer should they see the need. If women requested that the interviewers pose the questions directly/verbally due to sight or other problems, the interviewer was required to alert the respondent to that fact that the questionnaire contains sensitive and intimate questions and if they, with that knowledge, still wanted to answer the questions orally, interviewers had permission to interview them orally under the condition that no other members of the household be present. Beyond these guidelines, we gave interviewers further instructions regarding how they should behave during interviews.



## Section III

### Overview of Primary Results

#### Introduction

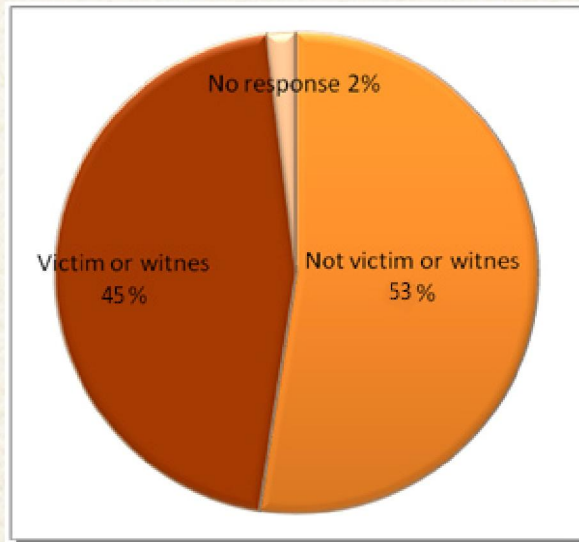
The survey produced a number of interesting and notable results. In line with other major surveys undertaken both in the region and internationally, it was revealed that *34% (approximately one-third) of women in North Kosovo are victims of some form of domestic violence.*<sup>1</sup> On top of this, *45% percent of women in North Kosovo reported either being a witness or a victim of domestic violence.* This large number is indicative of how widespread the phenomenon is in the region and how it has affected the lives, in some way or another, of a very large percentage of the female population. What's more, the survey also revealed a *deep mistrust and dissatisfaction* in local institutions and their handling of domestic abuse – an overwhelming *96% of respondents stated that they were 'dissatisfied'* with how institutions handle violence against women. What's more, a majority of all respondents – 62% - stated that they do not know they number of the local police station. The results reveal both the scale of the problem as well as the lack of ability of relevant institutions to provide sufficient assistant to victims. Despite the existence of laws, both in Kosovo and in the Republic of Serbia which stimulate wide-ranging protection for victims of domestic violence<sup>2</sup>, the weakness of the institutional structure in north Kosovo coupled with the general lack of trained officers within the police force able to handle domestic violence cases effectively means that women have, at best, scant access to social services which are able to provide them with adequate care and assistance.

<sup>1</sup>[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW2010%20Report\\_by%20chapter%28pdf%29/violence%20against%20women.pdf](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW2010%20Report_by%20chapter%28pdf%29/violence%20against%20women.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence (Kosovo), Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence (Republic of Serbia.)



1. 45% of respondents are either victims or witnesses of some form of domestic violence:



*Figure 1*

2. Out of those respondents who stated they were witnesses or victims of domestic violence, 62% can be considered to be direct victims of domestic violence and 38% to be witnesses.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, in total, 34% of women surveyed are victims of domestic violence.

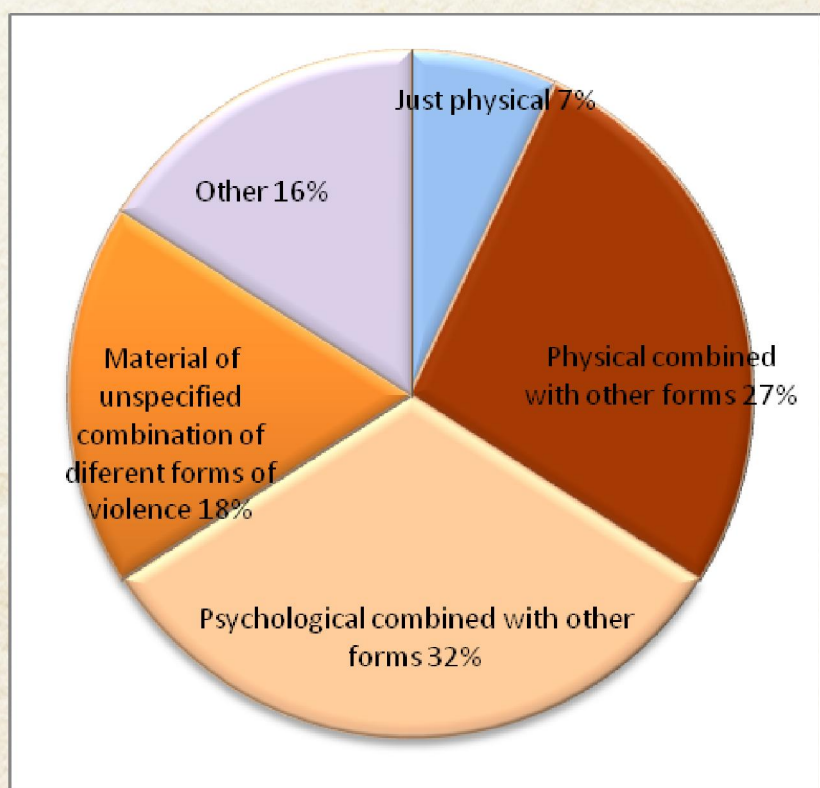


*Figure 2*

<sup>3</sup> This information was extracted by isolating responses to the question 'who do you consider to be the main perpetrator of violence in your family'. Those who answered 'there is no violence in my family' were identified as witnesses whereas others who identified a perpetrator of violence in their families were considered to be victims.



3. Most victims have experienced a combination of different forms of violence in the home (i.e. physical, psychological, material) Overall, 34% of women reported being a victim of physical abuse (either alone or in conjunction with other forms of violence) while a further 32% reported being victims of psychological violence (combined with other forms excluding physical) and 18% reported being victims of unspecified combination of forms of domestic violence:



**Figure 3**

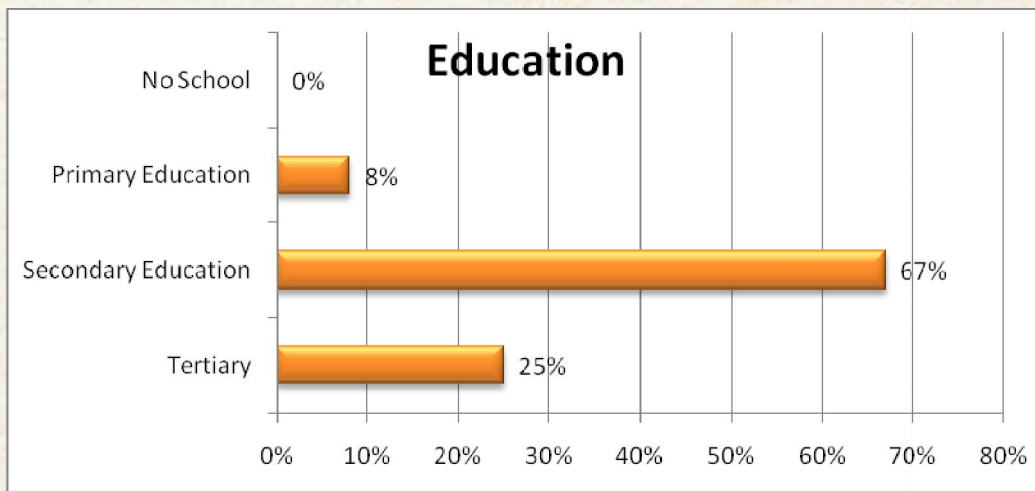


## Detailed Overview of results

**Total: 130**

### 1. Level of education

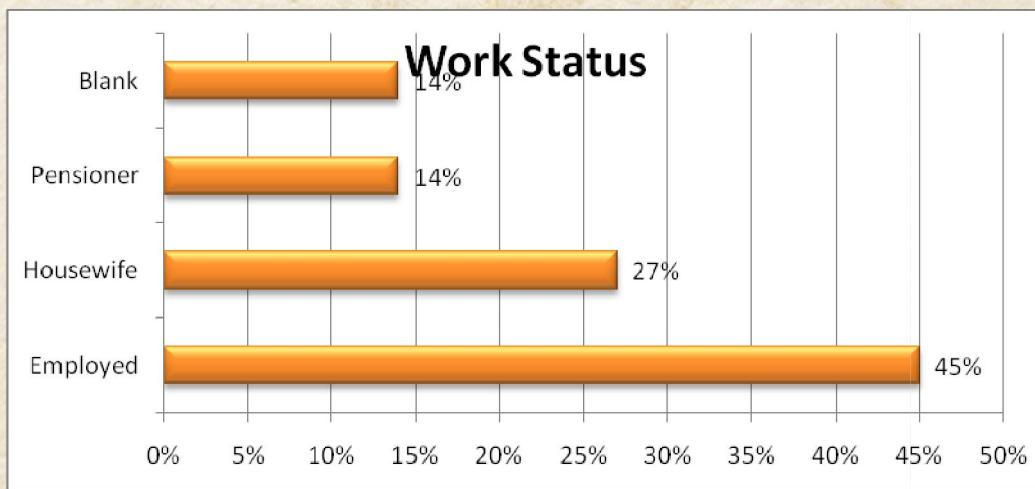
- a. No school: 0 – 0%
- b. Primary education: 11 – 8%
- c. Secondary education: 87 – 67%
- d. Tertiary education: 32- 25%



**Figure 4**

### 2. Work status

- a. Employed: 59 – 45%
- b. Housewife: 35 – 27%
- c. Pensioner: 19 – 14%
- d. Blanks: 19 – 14%

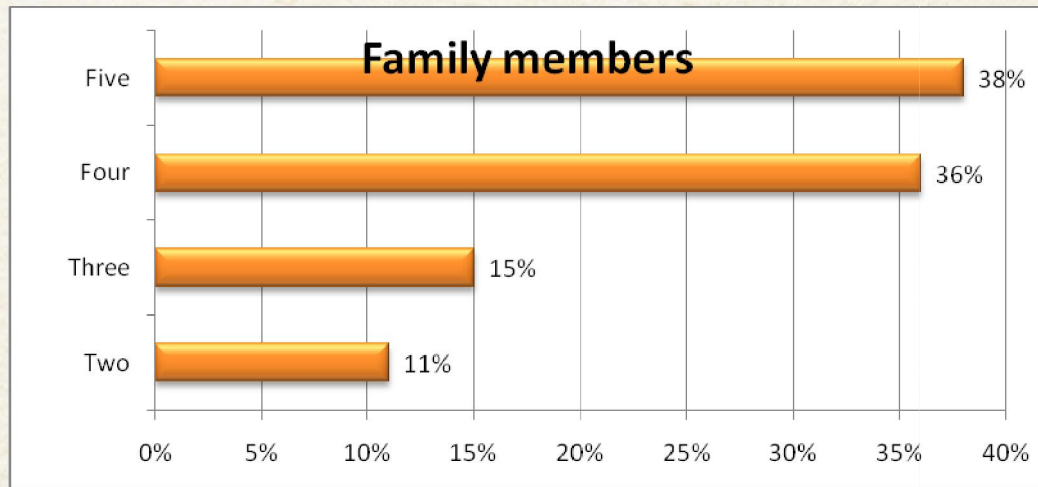


**Figure 5**



**3. How many family members**

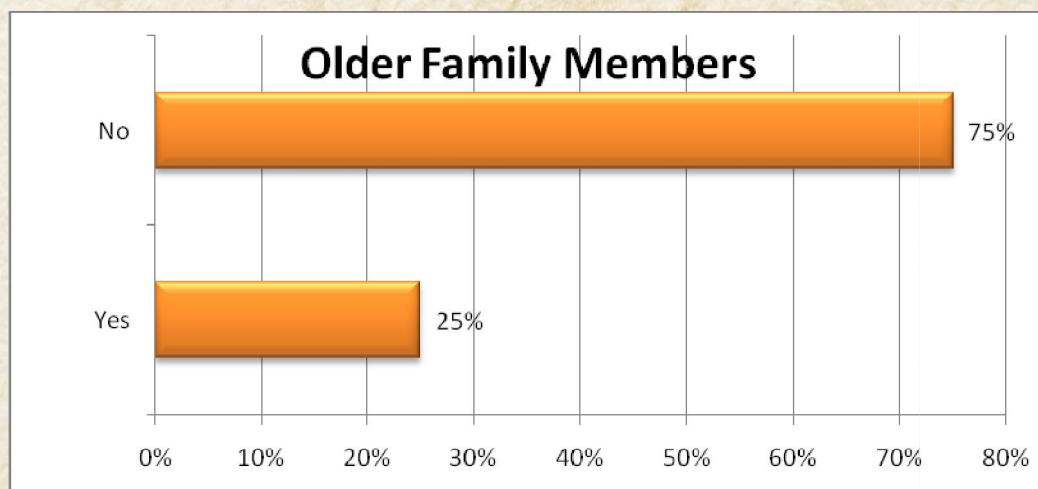
- a. Two: 15 – 11%
- b. Three: 19 – 15%
- c. Four: 47 – 36%
- d. Five: 49 – 38%



**Figure 6**

**4. Do you have older family members living with you?**

- a. Yes: 32 – 25%
- b. No: 98 – 75%

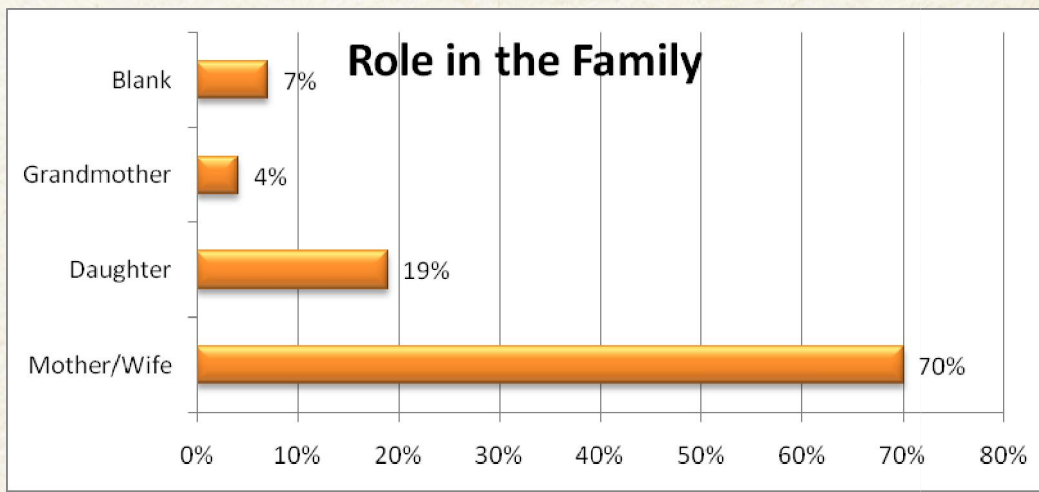


**Figure 7**



**5. What is your role in the family?**

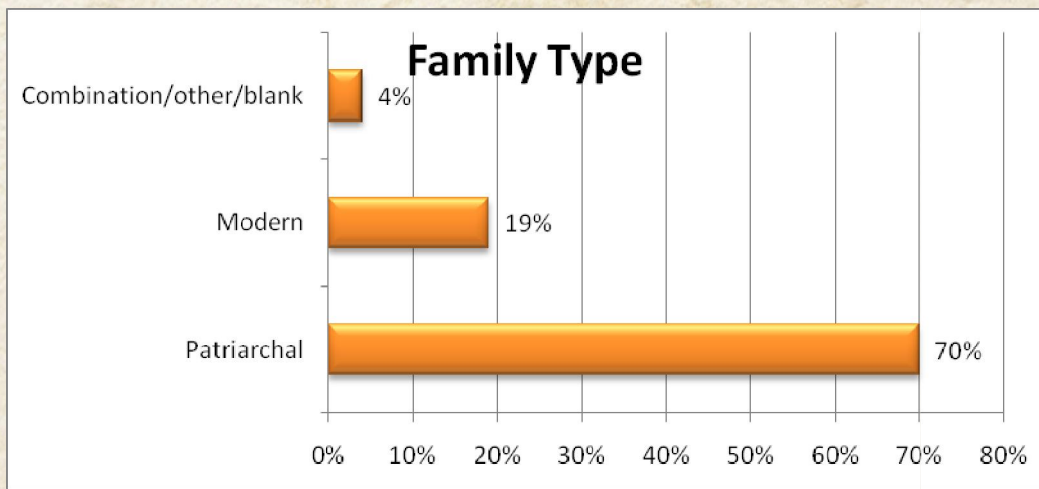
- a. Mother/wife: 92 – 70%
- b. Daughter: 25 – 19%
- c. Grandmother: 5 – 4%
- d. Other/blank:



**Figure 8**

**6. Do you consider your family patriarchal or modern?**

- a. Patriarchal: 75 – 58%
- b. Modern: 53 – 41%
- c. Combination/other/blank: 2 – 1%

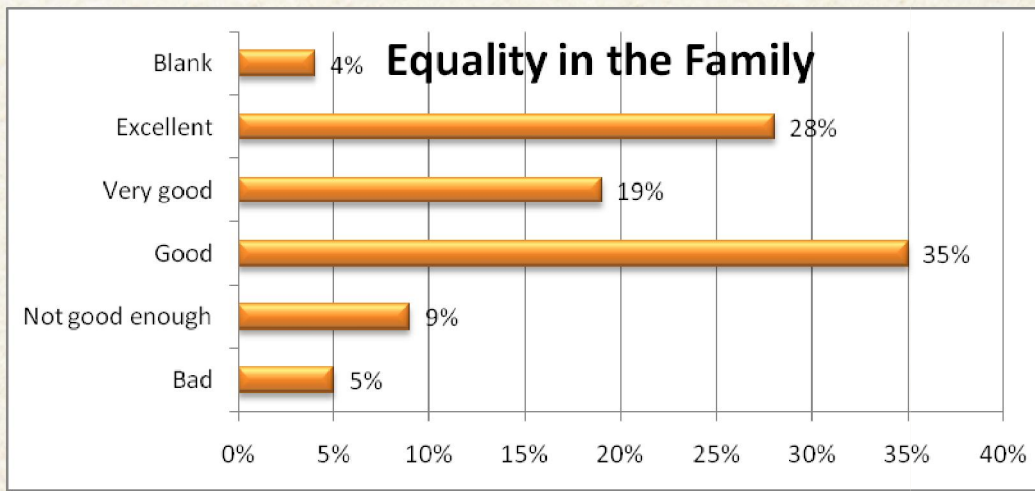


**Figure 9**



**7. How do you rate your role as an equal member of the family?**

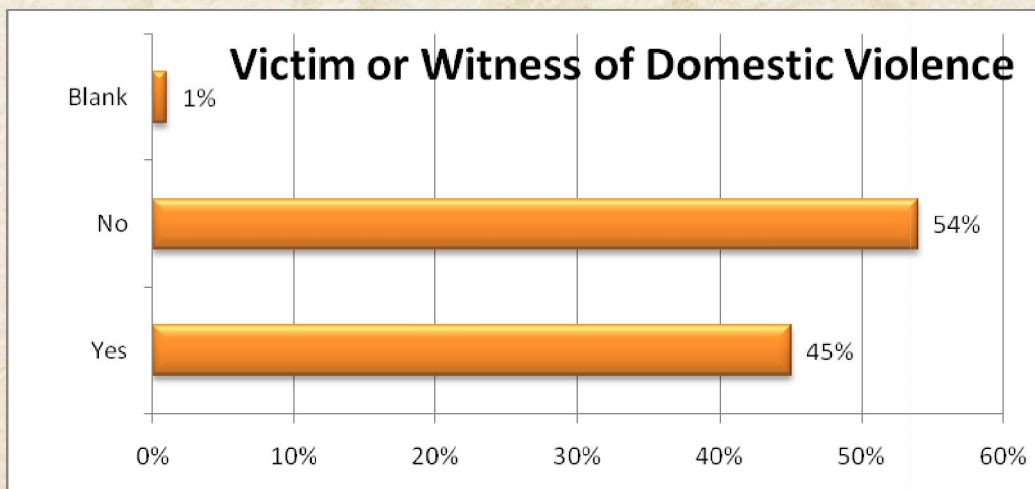
- a. Bad: 6 – 5%
- b. Not good enough: 11 – 9%
- c. Good: 46 – 35%
- d. Very good: 25 – 19%
- e. Excellent: 37 – 28%
- f. Blank: 5 – 4%



**Figure 10**

**8. Have you ever been a witness or victim of domestic violence?**

- a. Yes: 58 – 45%
- b. No: 70 – 54%
- c. Blank: 2 – 1%

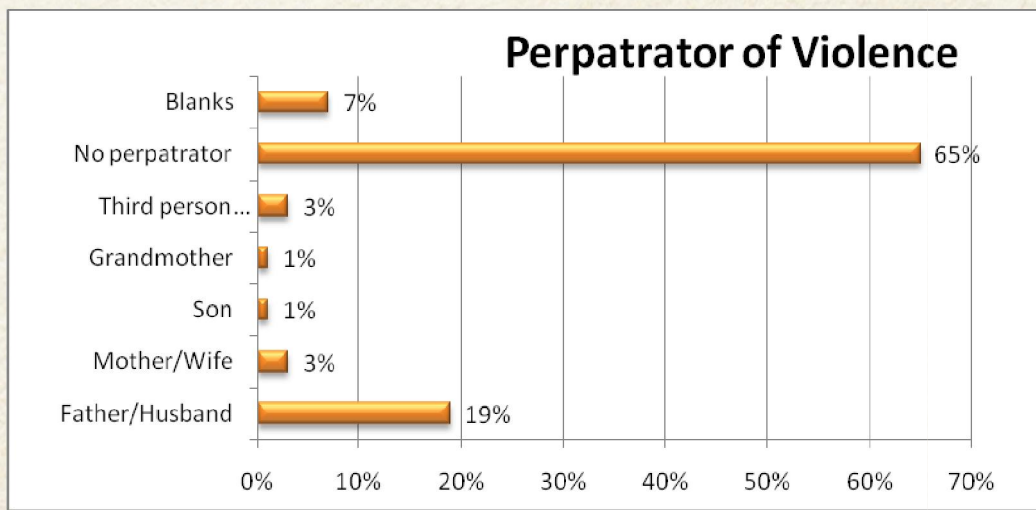


**Figure 11**



**9. Who do you consider to be the perpetrator of violence of your family?**

- a. Father/husband: 25 - 19%
- b. Mother/wife: 4 - 3%
- c. Son: 2 - 1%
- d. Daughter: 0 - 0%
- e. Grandfather: 0 - 0%
- f. Grandmother: 1 - 1%
- g. Third person (uncle, aunt etc): 4 - 3%
- h. There is no domestic violence in my family: 85 - 65%
- i. Blanks: 9 - 7%



**Figure 12**

**Out victims of domestic violence:**

Out of 130 respondents, 44 (forty-four) or 34% are direct victims of domestic violence. The results below were isolated from the sample of women who, according to their survey answers, were determined to be victims of domestic violence. These women were identified by isolating the sample indicating that they were victims or witnesses of domestic then by further eliminating women who were witnesses but not victims of violence.

Of those:



### Employment:

- 13 said they were employed (29%)
- 20 said they were 'housewives' (45%)
- Others were left blank

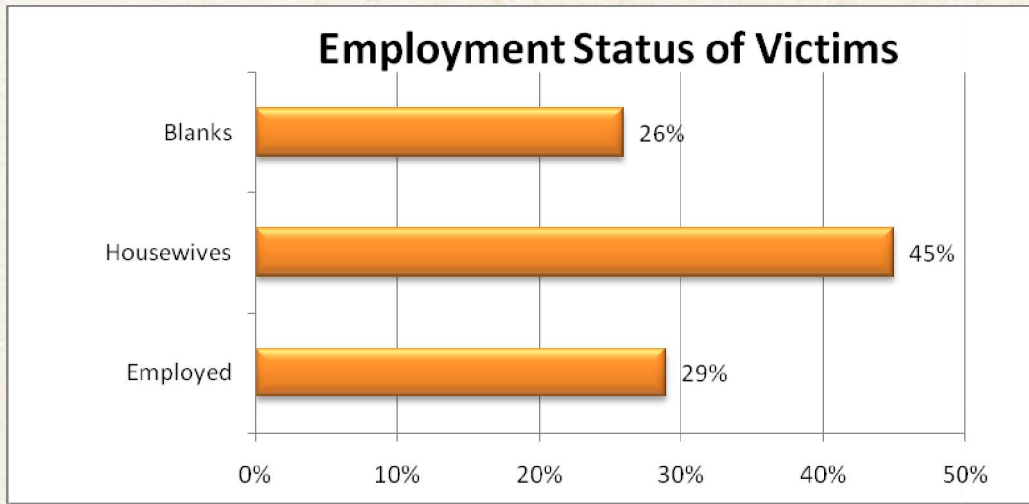


Figure 13

### Education

- 4 only completed primary education (3%)
- 32 completed secondary education (72%)
- 9 completed higher education (25%)

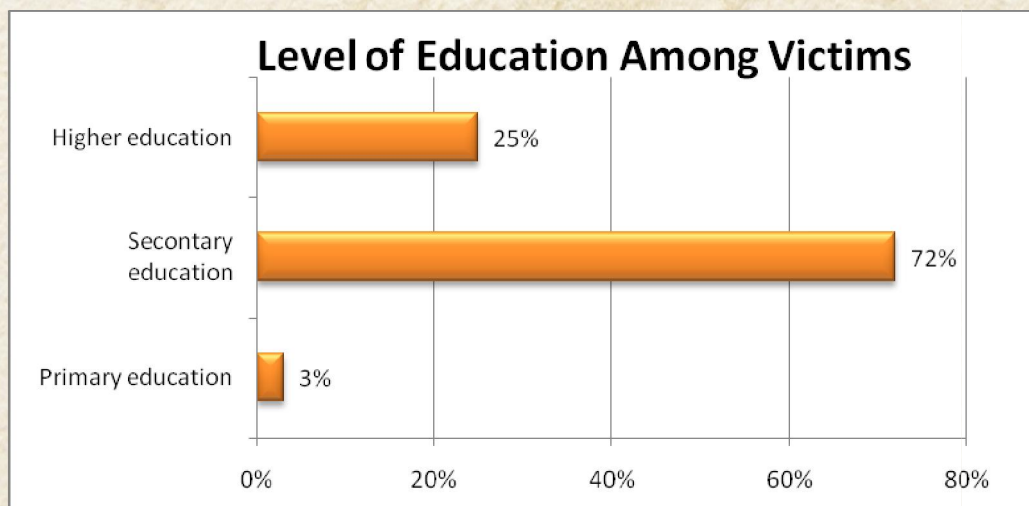
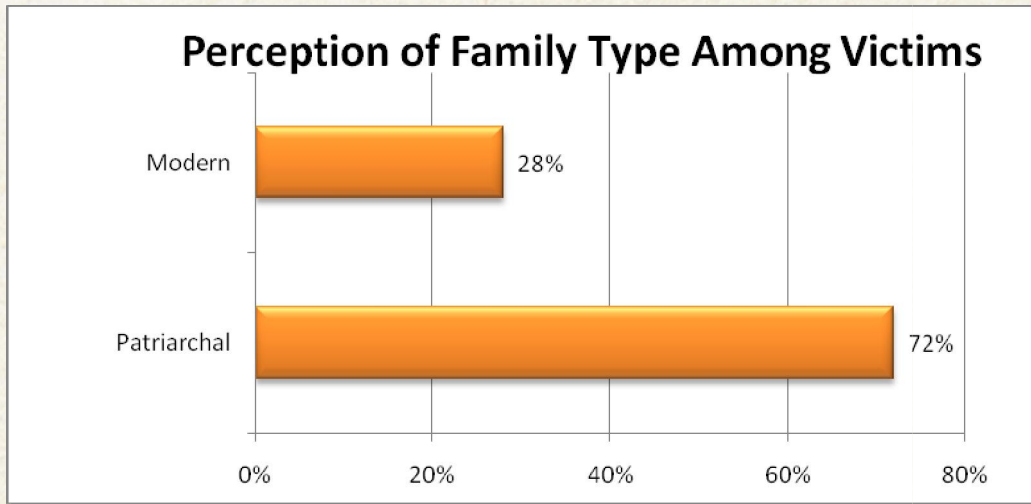


Figure 14



## Family

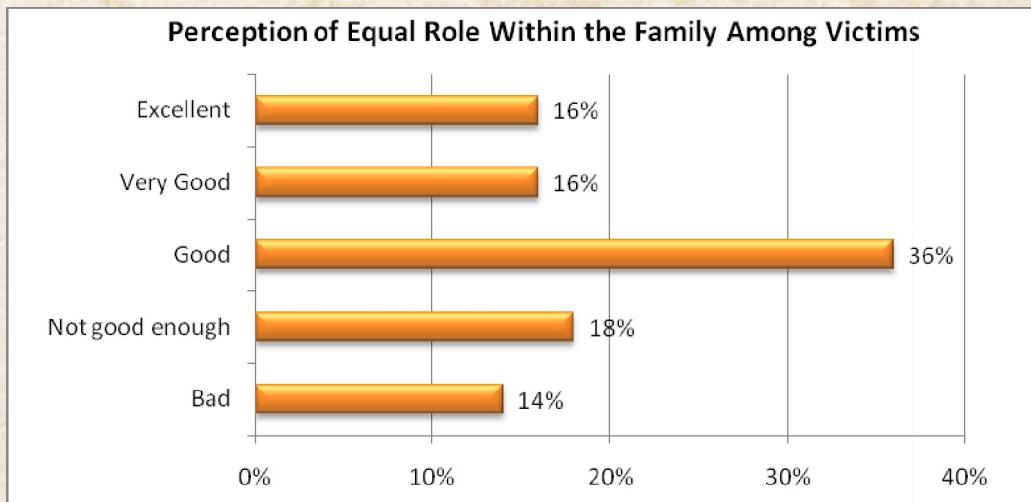
- 32 consider their families to be 'patriarchal' (72%)
- 12 consider their families to be 'modern' (28%)



**Figure 15**

## Equal member of their families

- 6 rate it badly (14%)
- 8 not good enough (18%)
- 16 good (36%)
- 7 very good (16%)
- 7 excellent (16%)



**Figure 16**



### Type of violence

According to the results of the survey, a majority of victims (57%) reported suffering from a combination of different types of violence. Many respondents circled a number of options, which included physical (hitting, shoving, beating), material (or economic) and psychological or verbal abuse. Most of the representative sample *did not* limit their responses to just once form of violence but circled between two and three different options (i.e. physical, psychological and material.):

- ✦ 15 women (34% of victims of domestic violence) indicated that they were in some way a victim of physical abuse
- ✦ 14 women (32% of victims of domestic violence) indicated that they were in some way a victim of psychological abuse
- ✦ 25 women in total (57% of victims) indicated that they were a victim of a combinations of different forms of violence
- ✦ 16 women (36%) of victims did not give a clear indication as to what form of violence they faced

### Police station number

In what is perhaps one of the most telling results produced by the survey was the fact that a large majority of women (either victim or non-victim) did not know the number of the Kosovo Police. This is perhaps reflective

- Only 15 (34%) of victims of domestic violence know the number for the police
- 25 (57%) stated that they do not know the number for the police
- 5 left the question blank

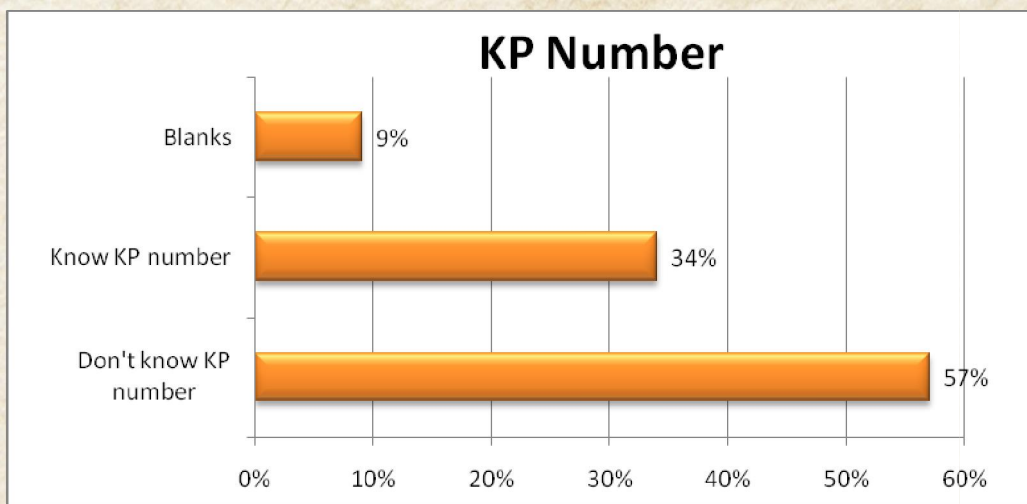


Figure 17



## Section IV

**Analysis of written responses to questions:****Question #7****“Do you consider your family to be modern or patriarchal?”**

Out of all respondents (see fig. 9):

- 57% of said that their families were ‘patriarchal’
- 40% of said that their families were ‘modern’
- 3% of said that their families were either a combination of the two or did not respond

**Respondents were then asked to elaborate on their answer in the following manner:**

- a. Please characterize a modern family**
- b. Please characterize a patriarchal family**

**When reviewing the responses to this question a number of trends and patterns were isolated from the answers given:**

1. For patriarchal families there were both positive and negative (subjective) descriptions of the characteristics of a patriarchal family. These descriptions can be grouped into two main categories:
  - a. The first set of answers was grouped into a category of negative descriptions of patriarchal families. A patriarchal family is one in which the *husband/male is at the head of the family*. There is a *lack of equality* and *respect* for female family members and all decisions are made by the



patriarch. Other key words and phrases identified were: *lack of freedom of choice, no freedom of movement, no equality in the decision making process*. Responses in this vein are considered to be *negative* characterizations of patriarchal families.

- b. The second set of answers was grouped into a category of positive descriptions of patriarchal families. A patriarchal family is one in which *respect of elders, religious beliefs and traditions, family unity and closeness* is paramount. Responses in this vein are considered to be *positive* characterizations of patriarchal families.

2. For modern families there were also both positive and negative (subjective) descriptions of the characteristics of a “modern” family. These descriptions can be grouped into two main categories:

- a. The first set of answers was grouped into a category of negative descriptions of modern families. A modern family is one in which there is *too much freedom, a lack of respect* towards elders and parents and a *lack of unity/interest/closeness* among family members. Responses in this vein are considered to be *negative* characterizations of modern families.
- b. The second set of answers was grouped into a category of positive descriptions of modern families. A modern family is one in which there is *freedom of choice, respect* for all members of the family, *democratic* decision making (i.e. all views are taken into account) and where there is *gender equality*. Responses in this vein are considered to be *positive* characterizations of modern families.



### Analysis of results:

Out of a total of 130 surveys 82 (eighty-two) responded to question 7 parts a and b. Of those 82 (eighty-two) who responded to the question 50 (fifty) or 56% positively characterized 'patriarchal' families and 40 (forty) or 44% negatively characterized them. The same respondents were more resounding in giving 'modern' families positive descriptions with 62 (sixty-two) or 77% giving 'modern' family positive descriptions and only 18 (eighteen) or 23% assigning the term 'modern' family negative characteristics.

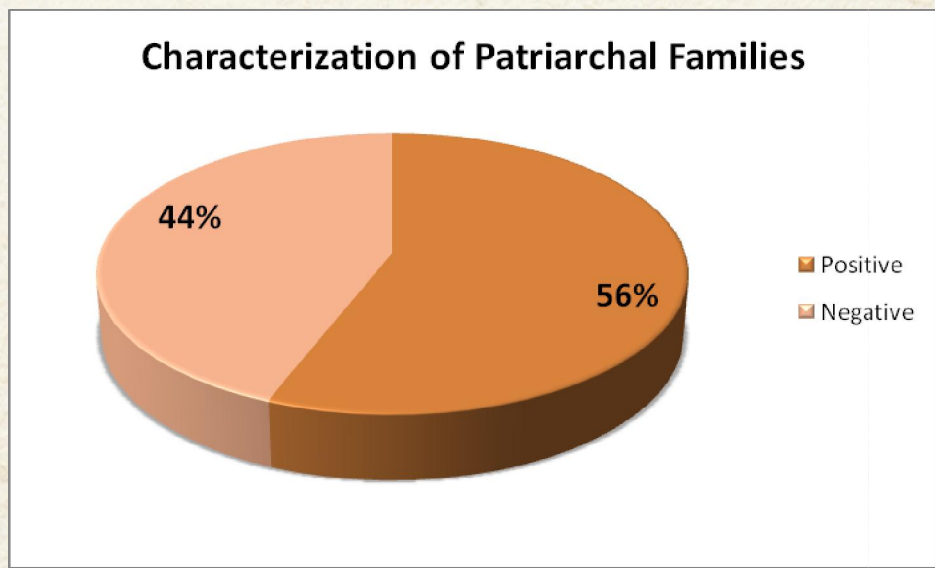


Figure 18

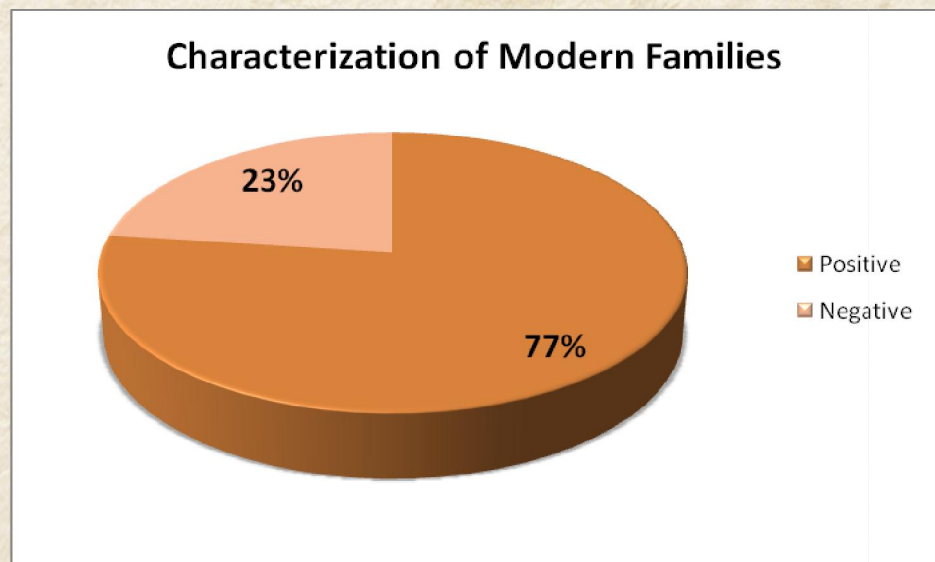


Figure 19



### **Question #8-9**

#### **How do you rate your role as an equal member of your family?**

Women were asked to rate their role as an equal member of their family and were given the options bad, not good enough, good, very good and excellent. Out of a total of 130 surveys 129 responded to this question. Overall, women rated their role as an equal member of their family positively (see fig. 10):

- 5% rated their role as an equal member as 'bad'
- 9% rated their role as an equal member as 'not good enough'
- 38% rated their role as an equal member as 'good'
- 19% rated their role as an equal member as 'very good'
- 29% rated their role as an equal member as 'excellent'

**When reviewing the responses to this question a number of trends and patterns were isolated from the answers given:**

1. Written responses in which women described their role in the family in a positive manner or felt that there was equality between genders in their families. Key words and phrases isolated from the responses included, equality or a feeling of equality, decisions made together, understanding between spouses, as well as mutual respect and a feeling of being taken seriously and having their opinions matter to other family members.
2. Written responses in which women described their role in the family in a negative manner or did not feel that gender roles within the family are equal. Key words and phrases isolated from these responses included feeling disrespected by their husbands or children, not feeling appreciated and not feeling included in the decision-making process.



## Results:

Out of a total of 130 surveys 68 (sixty-eight) responded to questions 8 and 9. Out of those who responded, 51 (fifty-one) or 75% described their role in a positive manner and 17 (seventeen) or 25% described their role in a negative manner. More specifically, 5% rated their role as an equal member of their family as being 'bad', another 9% said it 'wasn't good enough', 38% said it was 'good', 19% as very good and finally 28% as 'excellent.'

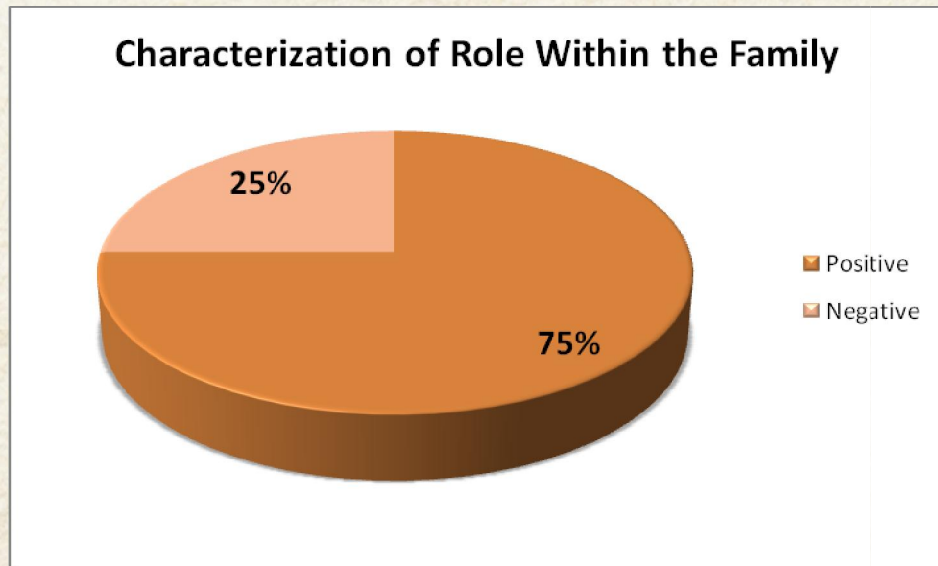


Figure 20

## Question 15.

### Why didn't you report the violence?

This question, aimed at witnesses and victims of domestic violence, asks why they did not report the violence to the relevant authorities. Survey participants were asked to describe (in writing) the reasons why they did not contact the police or other authorities. Out of a total of 130 surveys received, 65 or 50% responded to this



question. This reflects the number of women who stated that they were either a witness or a victim of domestic violence.

Written answers were grouped into 5 (five) broad categories based on a number of patterns/key words and phrases which were identified:

1. They did not report the violence due to personal reasons or a desire to NOT get involved. These answers mostly were from women who were aware that violence was occurring in another household but did not feel it was their place to get involved (18%.)
2. They did not report the violence out of fear or shame. These answers reflected a fear of reprisals from the perpetrator of the violence or feelings of shame that would come along with reporting domestic abuse (25%.)
3. They did not report the violence because they were not witnesses to actual acts of violence. As opposed to category 1, these answers came from women who are/were aware of violence taking place but felt that they could not report it because they did not actually see the violence occur (34%.)
4. Respondents who did not report the violence due to lack of trust in relevant institutions/police (11%.)
5. This category of answers can be broadly grouped as answers which indicated feelings that there was either no need to report violence, that they problem would solve itself on its own or that it won't happen again (12%.)

### **Results:**

Out of 65 (sixty-five) responses 22 (twenty-two) or 34% indicated that they did not report domestic violence because they did not actually witness the violence occurring (category 2), a further 16 (sixteen) or 25% did not report out of fear or shame, 12 (twelve) or 18% because they didn't want to get involved, 8 (eight) or 12% because they



believe the problem will sort itself out or that it won't happen again and finally 7 (seven) or 11% did not report due to a lack of trust in public institutions.

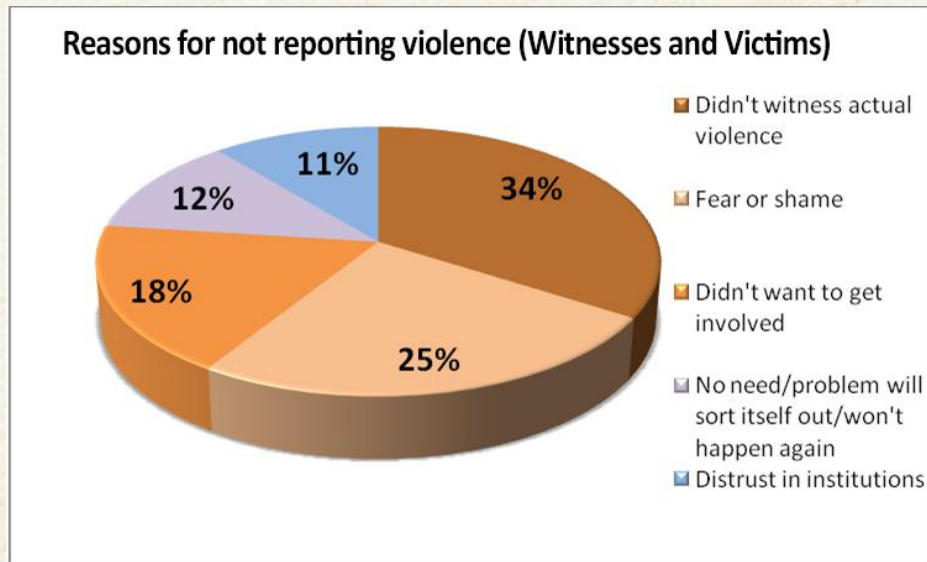


Figure 21

### Question 17

**Are you satisfied with the reaction of institutions (to domestic violence)?**

**If you aren't satisfied with the reaction of institutions, explain why**

This question dealt with how women in north Kosovo feel about the reaction of institutions (i.e. the Kosovo Police) to domestic violence.

Out of 92 (nine-two) responses only 4 (four) stated that they were satisfied while an overwhelming 88 were not satisfied:

- Not satisfied: 96% (out of 92)
- Satisfied: 4%



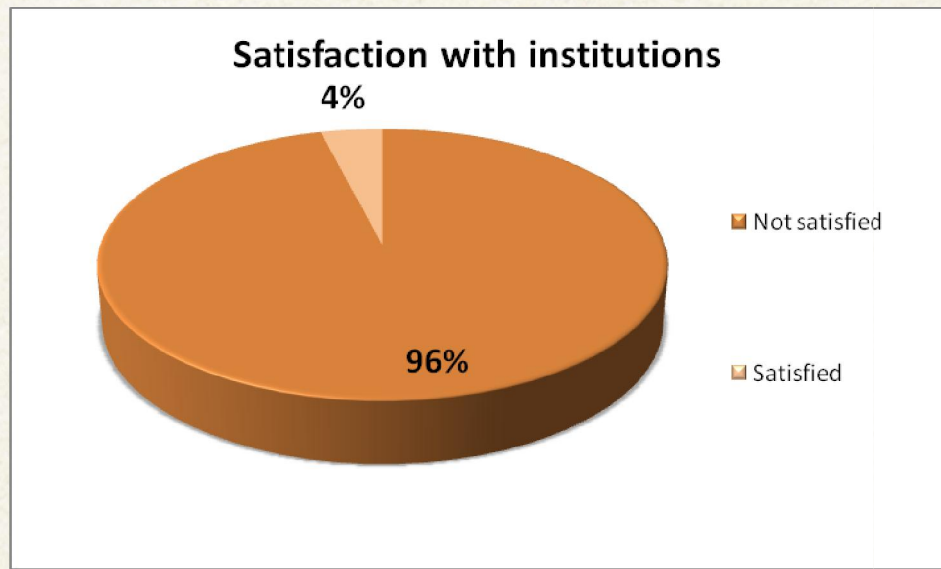


Figure 22

Survey participants were then asked to elaborate (in writing) why they were not satisfied with the reaction of relevant institutions and to detail their personal experience if they reported domestic violence. In other words, they were asked to explaining why they chose not to report domestic violence despite either being victims or witnesses. Those responses were placed into three categories of responses which were as follows:

- 1) In this category, respondents indicated there general lack of trust in the ability of public institutions to fulfill their duties, they also said that institutions in general have a bad reputation, there is widespread mistrust and misconduct is an issue (63%.)
- 2) In this category, women indicated that they did not contact relevant institutions out of fear of retribution (15%.)
- 3) Respondents who called the police but the police did not arrive on time or at all (22%.)



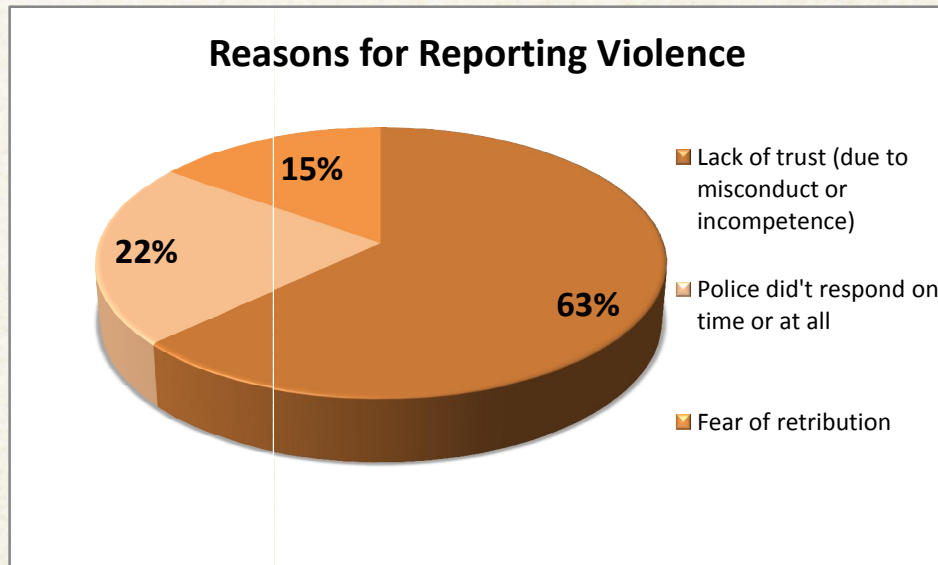


Figure 23

## Section V

### Analysis of Results and Findings – Main Conclusions

The results of the survey show that, perhaps surprisingly, there is no concrete link between economic (employment) status, education and incidence of domestic violence. Out of victims of domestic violence, 72% stated that they had completed high school and 25% reported that they had completed tertiary (higher) education. This is largely similar to the overall results which show that 67% and 25% of women questioned had completed secondary and tertiary education respectively. Interestingly, while 8% of all respondents reported that they had not completed any form of school only 3% of victims of domestic violence stated likewise. What is perhaps more revealing is that a large majority (72%) of women claiming to be victims of some form of violence also defined their families as having a 'patriarchal' character as opposed to 58% of all respondents who said the same. In what is perhaps a more puzzling result, a minority of



victims of domestic violence (32%) rated their role as an equal member of their family negatively as opposed to 68% who rated it positively (ranging from 'good' to 'excellent.')

This points to a strong cultural dimension to domestic violence in north Kosovo – as a phenomenon it is very much intertwined with socially-defined gender roles and familial structures.

### **Domestic violence spans social strata**

In the context of north Kosovo it can be concluded, based on the results of the survey, that domestic violence is a phenomenon which is not limited to a particular social or educational sub-group within society. Although household income was not included in the questionnaire, women were asked about their employment status and a plurality (45%) stated that they were engaged in full-time employment with the rest either saying that they were housewives (27%) or pensioners (14 %.) Among victims, the percentage of women saying that they are 'housewives' (45%) is much higher than among all respondents and the percentage engaged in full-time employment is much lower (29%.) While it would be difficult to draw concrete conclusions on the economic status of a respondent based solely on responses to questions regarding education and employment, we can make the assumption that a woman who is employed and has completed higher-education is potentially economically better positioned than a woman who has not. Should this assumption be true, it can be ascertained that there DOES exist a potential correlation between economic status and the presence of domestic violence consideration that only 29% of victims of domestic violence claimed to be employed. A relationship here can also be identified between traditional patriarchal family-structures and violence in the home when taking into consideration the fact that a large majority of victims (72%) characterized their families as being 'patriarchal.' This would indicate that the correlation between economic well-being and the occurrence of domestic violence is weak – a position which has been supported by recent research



conducted in European countries faced with rapidly expanding unemployment rates.<sup>4</sup> The data on both employment and on education would support the thesis that economic status and educational background alone are not sufficient indicators for domestic violence and that an employment, educated women is not necessarily more likely to be a victim than a woman who is comparatively economically disadvantaged. As mentioned previously, this survey did not contain questions relating to overall household income or the employment status of male-partners or household members but the data extracted from the information provided by the survey results do not support the idea that domestic violence in north Kosovo occurs at significantly higher rates in lower economic strata.

### *Violence and Gender Roles*

As mentioned previously, 72% of women who identified as victims also considered their families to be 'patriarchal', as opposed to 58% of all respondents who answered in a similar vein. This result alone indicates that there is a stronger statistical relationship between the occurrence of domestic violence and perception of gender roles within the family. For example, in their written answers, women who were victims of domestic violence tended to state that within the home the decision-making process was largely or exclusively a male domain. Women (both victims and non-victims) who defined their families as 'patriarchal', in their written answers, often pointed to what they saw as the importance of maintaining traditional power structures within the family. For the most part, this means that the male is the head of the household and the primary decision maker and is essentially the 'head' of the family unit. Interestingly, a majority of women who purported to be victims of domestic violence did not necessarily rate their gender-role (role as an equal member of their families) negatively, with only 32% saying that it was either 'bad' or 'not good enough.' Although this was higher than the 14% of all respondents who gave negative responses, it is

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/08/when-male-unemployment-rises-domestic-violence-rates-fall/278423/>



surprisingly low considering that the sample in question consists of women who stated that they had faced some form of violence in the home. That having been said, the fact that the overwhelming majority of victims considered their families to be 'patriarchal' does raise questions about a certain level of congruence and convergence between traditional perceptions of gender roles within the household and the occurrence of domestic violence.