



ENHANCING STABILITY, WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE OF WOMEN AND GIRLS +15 AND CONFLICT- AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN IRAQ

**Report of initiative that addressed women and girls problems of violence and
suicide – Mosul, 2025**

Report Objective: To highlight key findings from the Mosul women's survey and guide the design of future initiatives to enhance women's safety, resilience, and empowerment.

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Executive Summary

This analytical report presents the findings of a field survey conducted by Better World Organization for Community Development (BWOCD) as part of a women's empowerment initiative in Mosul. The survey aimed to identify the main challenges faced by women and girls in areas related to safety, freedom of decision-making, economic participation, and overall psychosocial well-being, particularly focusing on factors that may lead to suicidal thoughts or decisions such as divorce.

Data collection was carried out from September to October 2025 through Kobo Toolbox using both closed and open-ended questions. The process was directly supervised and followed by the Project Manager, ensuring accuracy and ethical data handling. Responses were gathered through interactive sessions and direct interviews with women participants.

The findings of this research aim to develop an evidence-based initiative designed to enhance women's safety and independence, ensure equitable and secure access to psychosocial support services, and increase their awareness of their legal and social rights, thereby promoting greater female participation and contributing to a more stable and equitable community.

2. Methodology

The total number of participants in this survey is 130. The survey targeted a diverse group of women representing different social and professional backgrounds survivors, employees, students, and housewives.

The selection process followed a random sampling approach, ensuring representation from various categories including employed women, survivors of gender-based violence, and women with limited opportunities. The survey results therefore reflect a broad cross-section of women residing in Mosul.

Data collection was conducted using the Kobo Toolbox platform, using a structured questionnaire that included both closed and open-ended questions. Enumerators and project staff carried out direct interviews with women in different parts of the city to ensure inclusivity and contextual accuracy. The study scope was limited to participants from Mosul city, and therefore the findings should be interpreted as representing this specific urban context rather than the entire Nineveh governorate

3. Results & Analysis

3.1 Decision-Making Freedom

Decision-making freedom is a key indicator of women's and girls' empowerment, as it reflects their ability to control and make choices about their daily lives without family or social restrictions. The survey results, based on responses of women and girls in Ninawa Governorate, show clear differences

in levels of decision-making freedom across various life domains. These differences indicate the presence of ongoing structural and social barriers that continue to limit women’s full participation in society.

Education

The findings show that the highest levels of decision-making freedom were reported in the areas of education and employment. A higher proportion of respondents stated that they are able to make decisions related to continuing their education or accepting work opportunities. This can be partly attributed to increased awareness of the importance of girls’ education and the economic contribution of women to household income, as well as a relatively higher social acceptance of women’s employment compared to previous years. However, in many cases, this freedom remains conditional on the approval of a male family member, indicating that full independence has not yet been achieved.

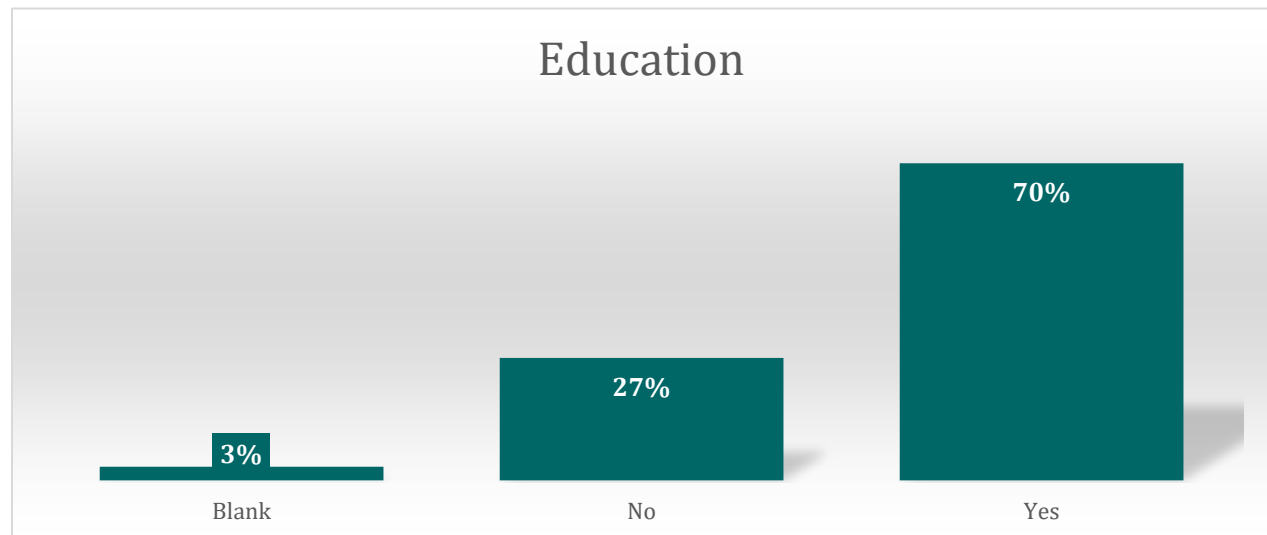


Chart 1: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on Decision-Making in Education

This chart presents women’s and girls’ decision-making power related to education. The results indicate that 91 respondents reported having the ability to make decisions about their education, while 35 respondents stated that they do not have this freedom. Only 4 responses were left blank.

Although education shows the highest level of decision-making freedom among the surveyed domains, the findings still reveal that a considerable number of women and girls face restrictions in continuing or choosing their educational pathways. These limitations are often linked to early marriage, economic pressures, and traditional gender roles.

Ensuring full access to education remains critical, as education is a foundational driver of women’s empowerment, improved livelihoods, and broader social development.

Mobility and Participation in public space

In contrast, the results reveal a significant lack of decision-making freedom in relation to mobility and participation in public spaces. A large number of women and girls reported that they do not have

sufficient freedom to use transportation independently or to participate in public and community activities. These restrictions represent one of the most critical challenges affecting women’s daily lives, as they limit access to essential services such as education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and community initiatives.

These limitations are strongly influenced by social norms, security concerns, and family pressures, which continue to restrict women’s and girls’ movement, particularly in urban areas affected by past conflict, such as Mosul. As a result, many women experience increased social isolation and reduced opportunities to build support networks or engage in community-level decision-making processes.

Overall, the findings highlight a clear need for targeted support and interventions that address the root causes of restricted mobility and limited public participation, and that promote women’s autonomy, safety, and meaningful engagement in community life.

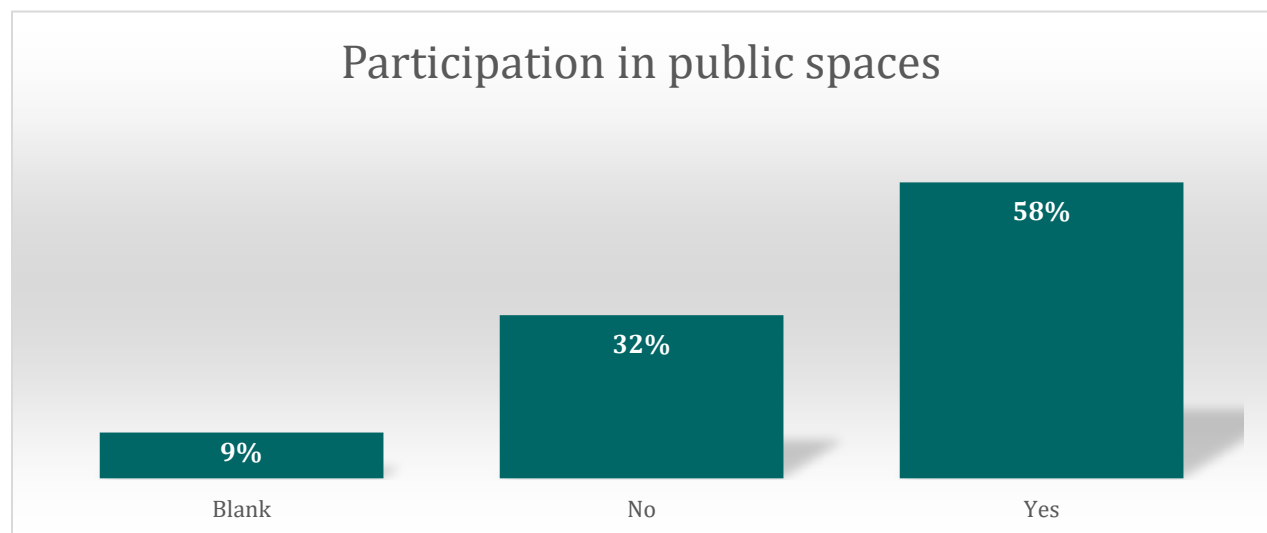


Chart 2: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on Participation in Public Spaces

This chart illustrates the level of participation of women and girls in public spaces. Out of 130 respondents, 76 women and girls reported that they are able to participate in public spaces, while 42 respondents indicated that they do not have this opportunity. In addition, 12 responses were left blank.

Although more than half of the respondents reported some level of participation, the findings show that a considerable proportion of women and girls remain excluded from public life. This reflects the continued presence of social, cultural, and security-related barriers that limit women’s ability to engage in community activities and public events outside the household.

Limited participation in public spaces negatively affects women’s and girls’ access to services, involvement in community initiatives, and ability to influence local decision-making, contributing to increased social isolation and reduced empowerment.

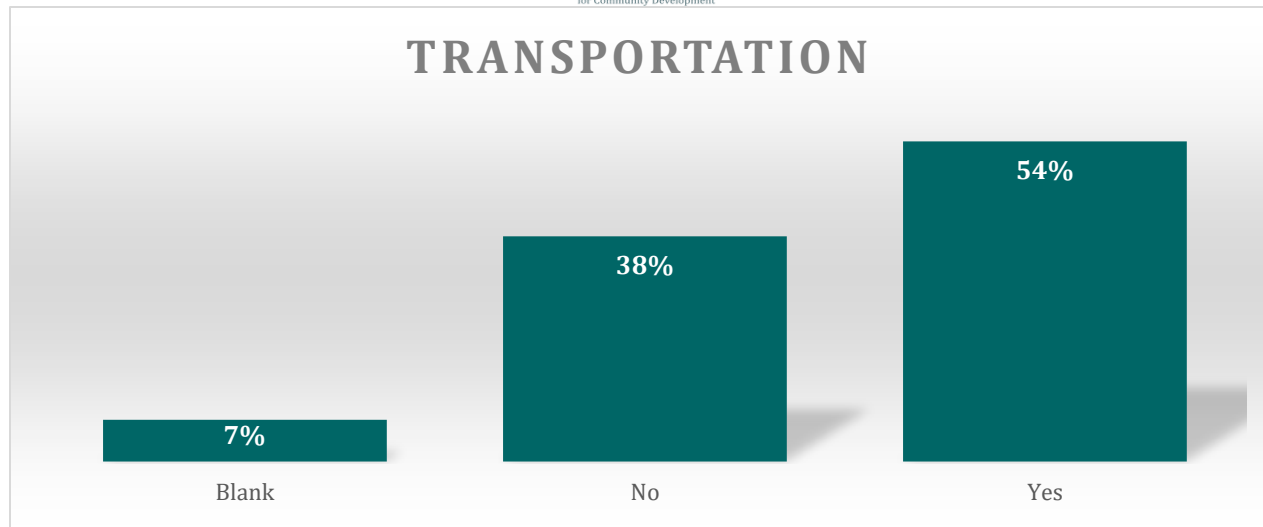


Chart 3: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on Decision-Making in Transportation

This chart presents women’s and girls’ ability to make decisions regarding transportation and mobility. The results show that 71 respondents reported having decision-making power over their mobility, while 50 respondents indicated that they do not have this freedom. Additionally, 9 responses were left blank.

These findings highlight a clear gap in freedom of movement, with a significant number of women and girls unable to use transportation independently. Restricted mobility limits access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and participation in community activities.

Such restrictions are closely linked to social norms, security concerns, and dependence on family approval, all of which reduce women’s autonomy and their active participation in public life.

The results from both charts demonstrate that participation in public spaces and freedom of mobility remain major challenges for many women and girls. These findings underscore the need for targeted, gender-sensitive interventions that promote safe mobility, challenge restrictive social norms, and enable women’s meaningful participation in community life.

Work

While the majority of respondents reported having some level of choice regarding work, the data shows that a significant proportion of women and girls remain unable to independently decide whether to work. This reflects persistent family and social constraints that limit women’s economic participation and financial independence.

Restricted decision-making in employment negatively affects women’s livelihoods, long-term economic security, and ability to contribute meaningfully to household and community resilience.

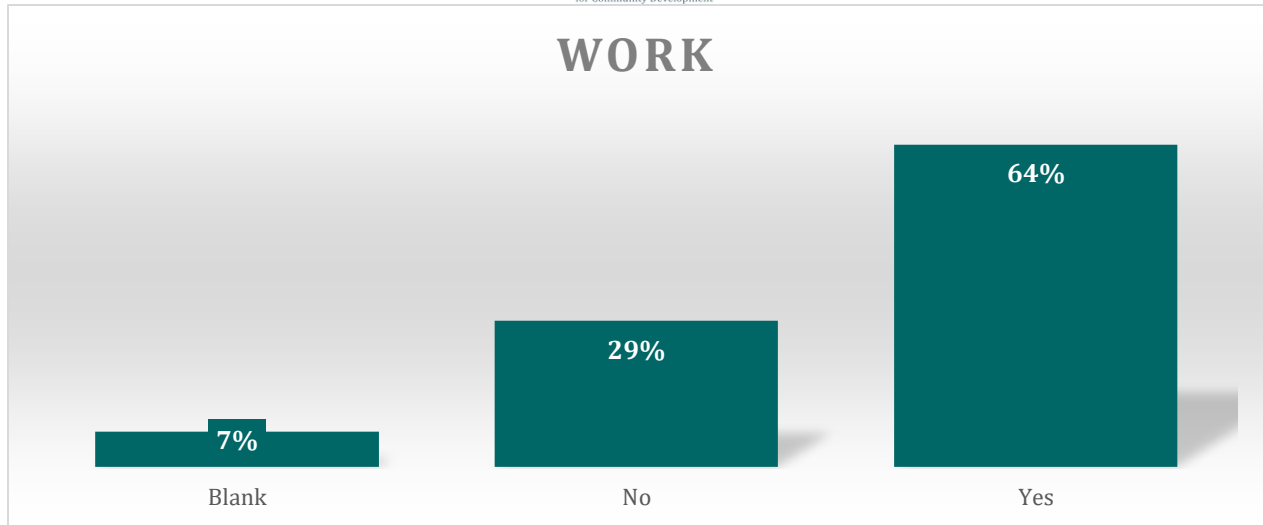


Chart 4: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on Decision-Making Regarding Work

This chart illustrates women’s and girls’ ability to make decisions about whether to work or not. Out of 130 respondents, 83 women and girls reported that they have the freedom to decide on employment, while 37 respondents indicated that they do not have this decision-making power. In addition, 10 responses were left blank.

Marriage

Despite the relatively high number of affirmative responses, the data indicates that a substantial proportion of women and girls lack full autonomy in decisions related to marriage. This raises concerns related to early or forced marriage and limited agency in choosing a life partner.

Limited decision-making power in marriage has long-term consequences for women’s health, education, economic participation, and overall well-being.

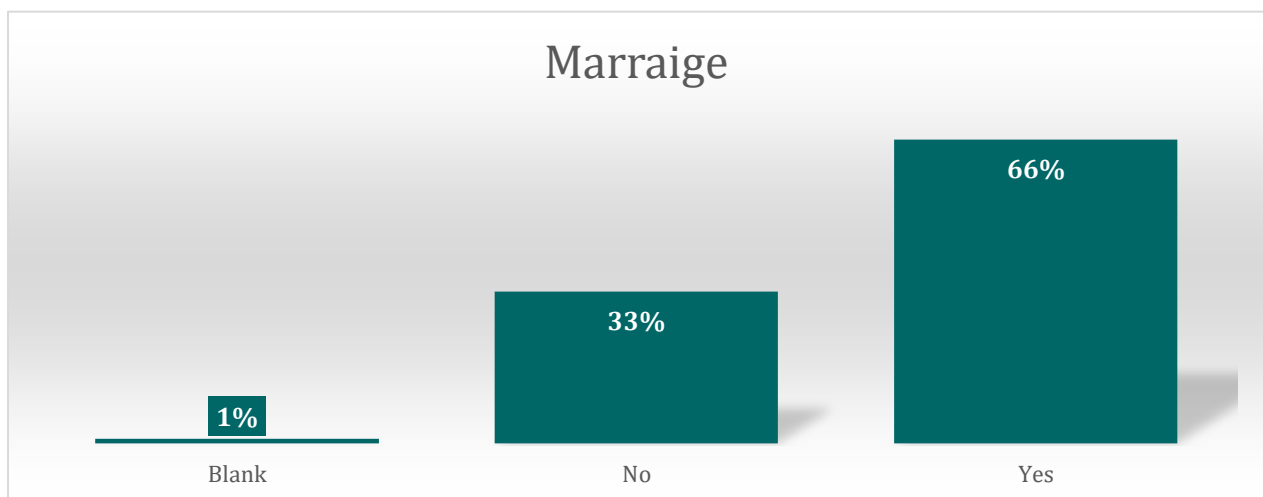


Chart 5: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on Decision-Making in Marriage.

This chart highlights women’s and girls’ ability to make decisions regarding marriage. The findings show that 86 respondents reported having a say in marriage-related decisions, while 43 respondents indicated that they do not have this decision-making power. Only one response was left blank.

Across work, education, and marriage, the findings demonstrate uneven levels of decision-making freedom among women and girls. While progress is evident in some areas, significant gaps remain, particularly for women who continue to face social, economic, and family-imposed constraints. These results underscore the need for integrated interventions that strengthen women’s autonomy, promote rights awareness, and address the structural barriers limiting full empowerment.

3.2 Family and Community Support

The majority of women and girls reported receiving support either always or often, the findings reveal that a significant number of respondents experience inconsistent or insufficient support. This suggests that access to family and community support mechanisms is not guaranteed for all women and girls, particularly in situations involving risk, violence, or social pressure.

Limited or unreliable support increases women’s vulnerability and may prevent them from seeking help, reporting abuse, or accessing essential protection and social services.

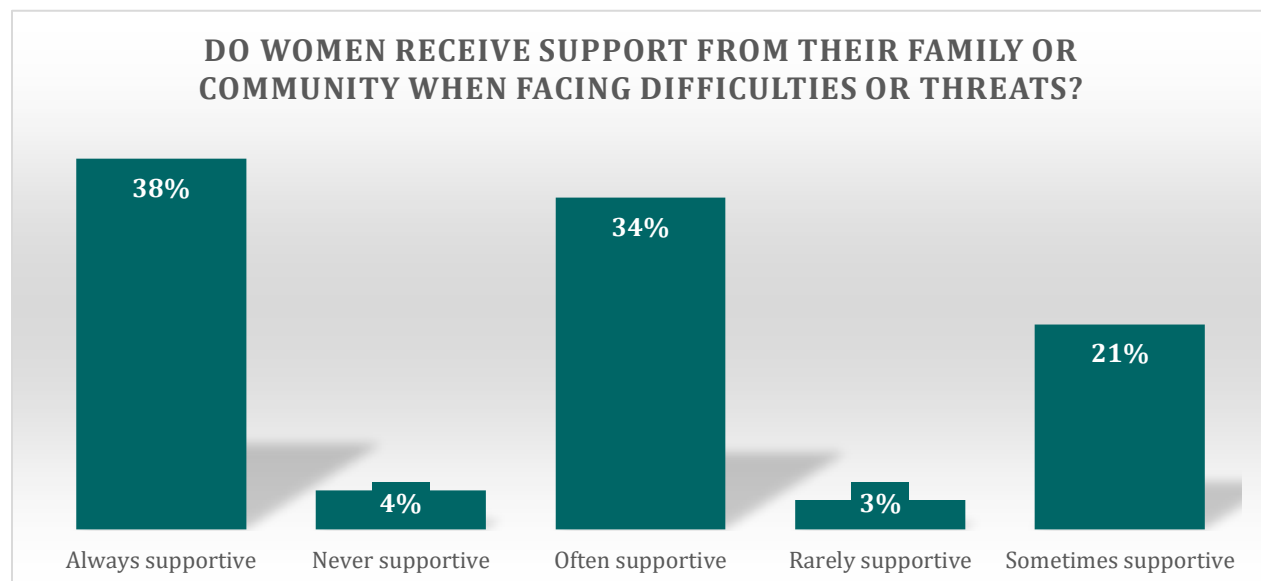


Chart 6: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on Receiving Support from Family or Community

This chart illustrates the extent to which women and girls receive support from their family or community when facing difficulties or threats. The results show that 49 respondents reported that they *always* receive support, while 44 respondents indicated that they *often* receive support. In contrast, 28 respondents stated that they *sometimes* receive support. A smaller number of respondents reported limited or no support, with 4 respondents indicating they *rarely* receive support and 5 respondents stating that they *never* receive support.

The results highlight the need to strengthen community-based protection and support systems for women and girls. Targeted interventions are required to improve awareness, trust, and accessibility of support networks, ensuring that women and girls facing threats or difficulties can rely on safe, timely, and effective assistance.

3.3 Main Sources of Pressure and Hopelessness

Economic hardship/unemployment is the dominant driver of hopelessness, followed by family restrictions and lack of educational opportunities.

The chart below highlights the main pressures contributing to feelings of hopelessness among women and girls. The findings show that economic hardship and unemployment are the most significant drivers, representing the highest percentage of responses. This reflects the strong impact of economic instability on mental well-being and perceptions of future security.

Family pressure and restrictions emerge as the second most influential factor, indicating the significant role of social norms and family expectations in limiting women’s and girls’ choices and reducing their sense of control over their lives.

Additionally, lack of educational opportunities is identified as a major contributor to hopelessness, as limited access to education reduces employment prospects and self-reliance. Other contributing factors include lack of community or government support, exposure to abuse, and social stigma. Although these factors were reported at lower levels, they still have a cumulative negative impact on women’s and girls’ overall well-being.

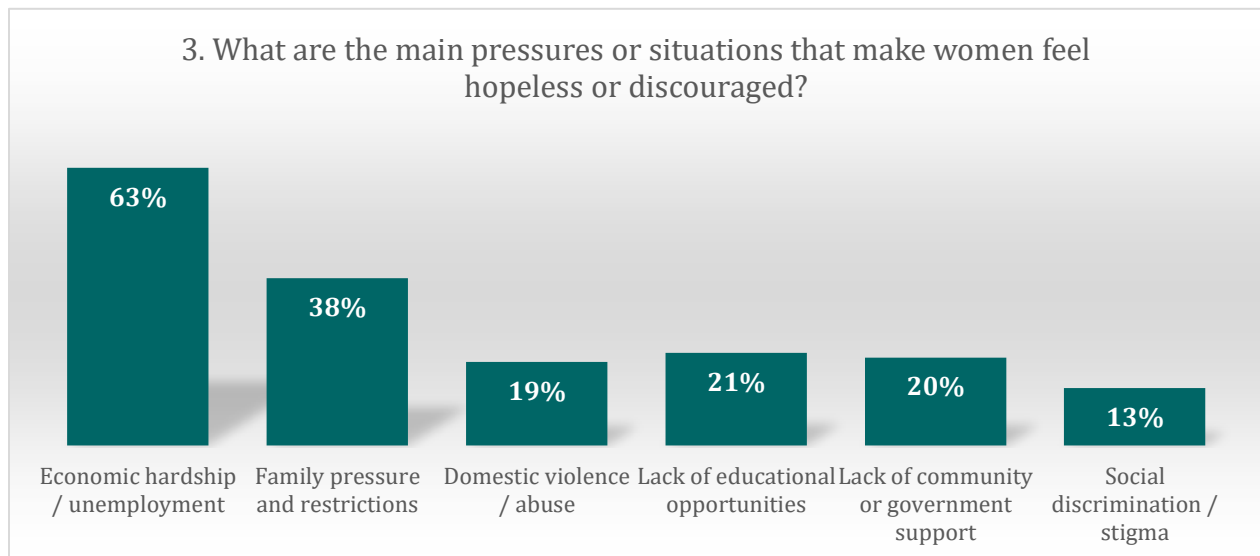


Chart 7: Main Pressures Leading to Hopelessness (% of Sample)

The results demonstrate that hopelessness among women and girls is closely linked to interconnected economic and social challenges. This underscores the need for **comprehensive interventions** focused on economic empowerment, expanded access to education, reduction of family-related pressures, and strengthening community and institutional support systems to improve women’s resilience and future prospects.

3.4 Impact of Social Media

Social media has a moderate-to-high impact on self-image and expectations. Some women report negative comparisons, while others find empowerment and information benefits.

Chart below illustrates how social media platforms affect women’s and girls’ perceptions of themselves and their lives. The findings show that the majority of respondents reported a positive influence, with a large proportion indicating that social media affects them somewhat positively, followed by those who reported being affected very positively. This suggests that social media can play a constructive role in providing access to information, connection, motivation, and exposure to new ideas and opportunities.

At the same time, a notable number of respondents reported negative effects, with some indicating that social media affects them somewhat negatively. A very small proportion reported being affected very negatively, while others stated that social media has no effect on them.

These mixed responses highlight that while social media can serve as a tool for empowerment, awareness, and connection, it can also contribute to negative self-comparison, emotional stress, or unrealistic expectations, particularly in contexts where women and girls already face social and economic pressures.

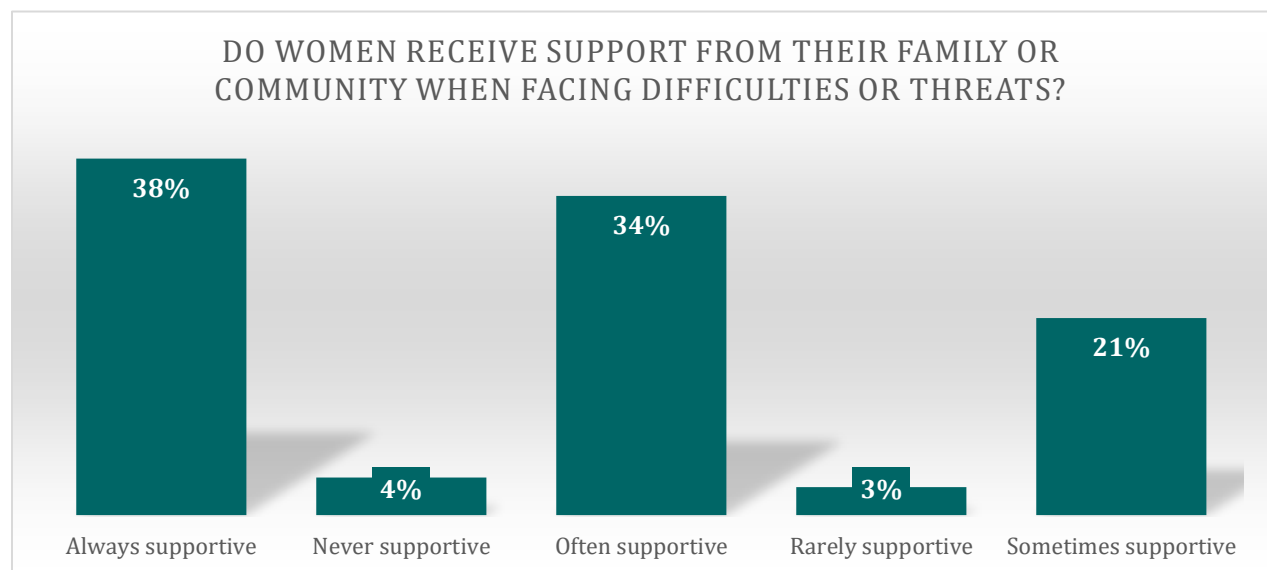


Chart 8: Women’s and Girls’ Responses on the Impact of Social Media on Their Self-Perception and Lives

The findings indicate a need for balanced and protective approaches when addressing social media use among women and girls. Interventions that promote digital literacy, positive online engagement, and psychosocial support can help maximize the benefits of social media while reducing potential negative impacts on self-esteem and well-being.

3.5 Family Conflicts and Weak Bonds

Financial stress and social pressures are the most common triggers of household conflict, often tied to gendered control over women’s choices.

Chart below presents the main reasons contributing to family conflicts affecting women and girls. The findings show that financial stress is the most commonly reported cause, representing the highest percentage of responses. This highlights the strong link between economic hardship and increased tension within households.

Social pressures from the community and relatives are identified as the second leading cause of family conflict, followed closely by control over women’s choices, which reflects persistent gender norms and power imbalances within families. These factors significantly limit women’s autonomy and contribute to ongoing household tensions.

Additionally, abuse is reported as a serious contributing factor, while lack of communication and cultural or generational differences also play notable roles in creating conflict within families. Although these factors are reported at slightly lower levels, they collectively contribute to an unstable and stressful family environment for women and girls.

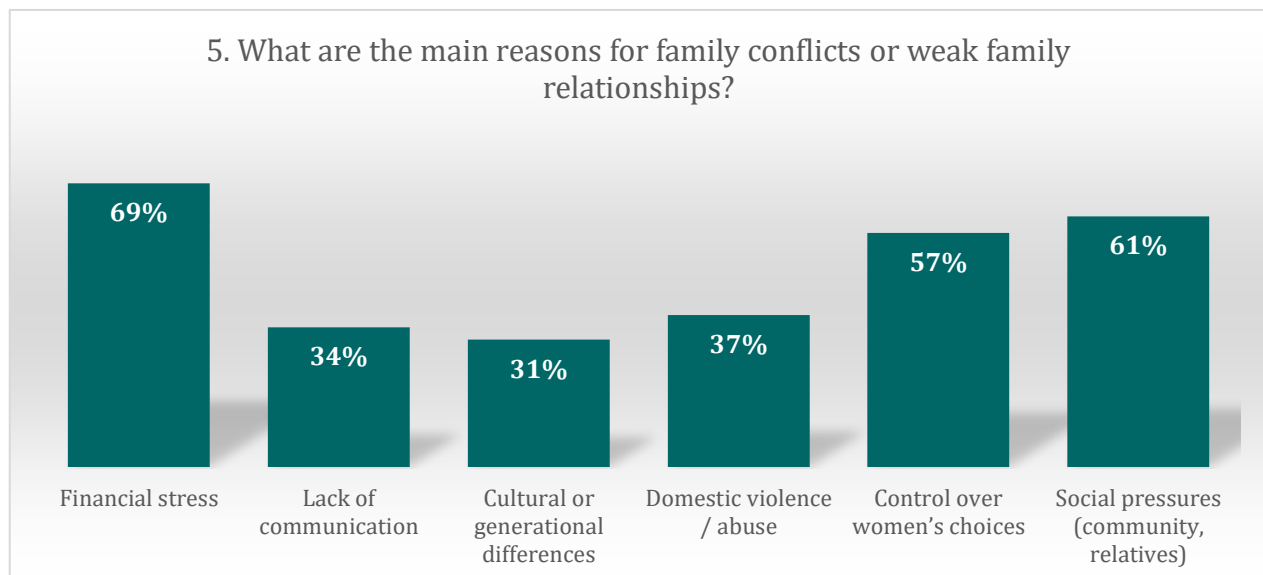


Chart 9: Main Reasons for Family Conflicts (% of Sample)

The results demonstrate that family conflicts are driven by interconnected economic, social, and gender-related factors. Addressing these challenges requires integrated interventions that combine

economic support, awareness-raising on women’s rights, family dialogue and communication initiatives, and protection services. Strengthening family and community resilience is essential to reducing conflict and improving the safety and well-being of women and girls.

3.6 Economic Conditions and Family Stability

Most respondents perceive a strong link between economic conditions and family stability, emphasizing the need for economic empowerment strategies.

Chart below illustrates women’s and girls’ perceptions of whether economic conditions, such as lack of job opportunities or low income, affect family stability. The results show that 79 respondents strongly agree and 38 respondents agree that economic conditions have a direct impact on family stability. In contrast, only 7 respondents expressed a neutral view, while 4 respondents disagreed.

The overwhelming level of agreement indicates a strong consensus among women and girls that economic hardship is a major factor contributing to family instability. Financial stress can increase tension within households, exacerbate conflicts, and negatively affect relationships, particularly in vulnerable communities.

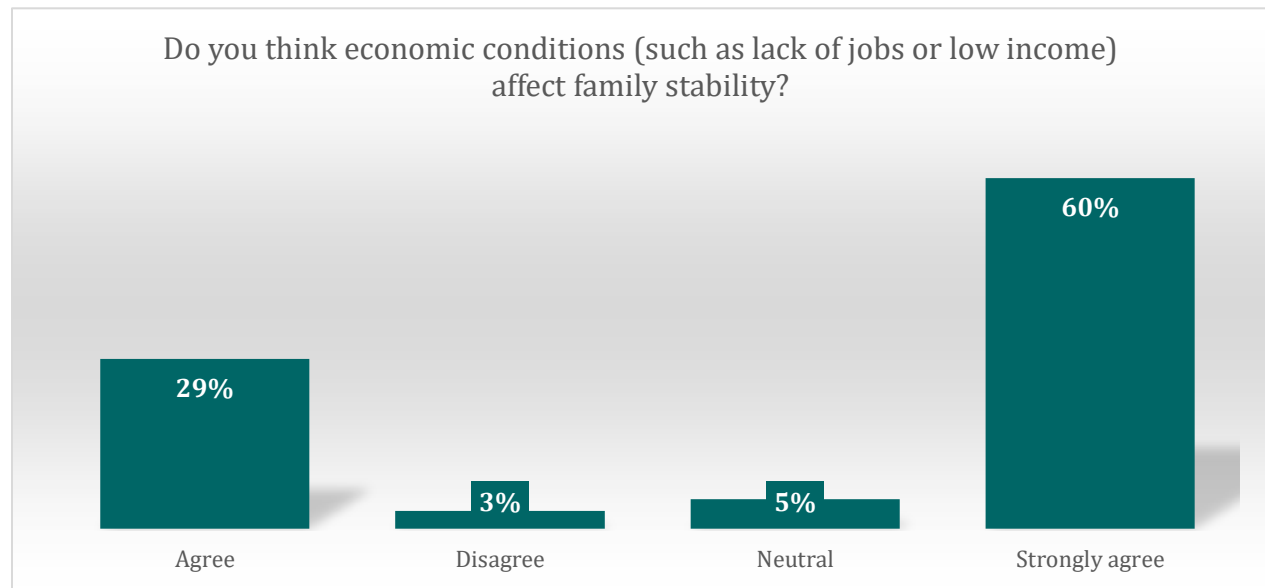


Chart 10: Women and Girls answers on the economic conditions

These findings clearly demonstrate that improving economic opportunities and income stability is critical to strengthening family cohesion and reducing household stress. Donor-supported interventions focused on livelihoods, employment, and economic empowerment can play a key role in enhancing family stability and improving the overall well-being of women and girls.

3.7 Safety in Public Spaces

Perceptions of safety are mixed, with many women describing spaces as partially safe and citing harassment, poor lighting, and limited women-only spaces.

Chart below presents women’s and girls’ perceptions of how safe and supportive public spaces are for them. The results show that 57 respondents described public spaces as *safe and somewhat supportive*, while 40 respondents reported that these spaces are *very safe and supportive*. In contrast, 30 respondents expressed *neutral or mixed* views, and 3 respondents indicated that public spaces are *unsafe and not supportive*.

While the majority of respondents perceive public spaces as generally safe, the findings reveal that a considerable number of women and girls do not fully experience public spaces as consistently safe or supportive. Neutral or mixed perceptions suggest variability in safety depending on location, time, or type of public space, particularly in transportation and workplaces.

Even a small number of reports of unsafe and unsupportive environments is significant, as concerns around safety can strongly affect women’s mobility, participation in education and employment, and overall sense of security.

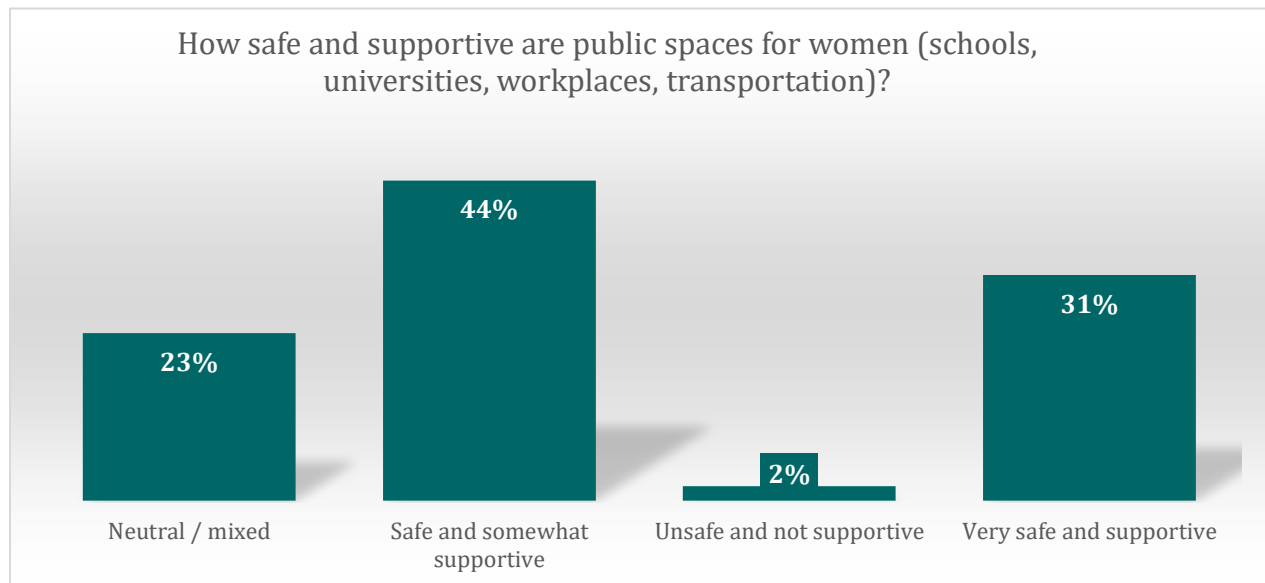


Chart 11: Women and Girls answers on the safety in public spaces

The results demonstrate that family conflicts are driven by interconnected economic, social, and gender-related factors. Addressing these challenges requires integrated interventions that combine economic support, awareness-raising on women’s rights, family dialogue and communication initiatives, and protection services. Strengthening family and community resilience is essential to reducing conflict and improving the safety and well-being of women and girls.

3.8 Challenges in Accessing Support Services

Stigma, cost, and information gaps are the leading barriers to reaching legal, health, and psychosocial services. Below chart highlights the main barriers preventing women and girls from accessing available support services. The findings show that fear of stigma or judgment and high cost of services are the most commonly reported barriers, each representing the highest proportion of responses. This indicates that both social attitudes and financial constraints play a critical role in limiting access to essential services.

Other significant barriers include lack of information about available services, family restrictions, and lack of trust in service providers. These factors suggest gaps in awareness, social acceptance, and confidence in existing support mechanisms. Additionally, lack of transportation was identified as a barrier, further limiting access particularly for women with restricted mobility or those living farther from service locations.

Together, these barriers create a complex set of challenges that prevent women and girls from seeking timely and appropriate support, even when services are available.

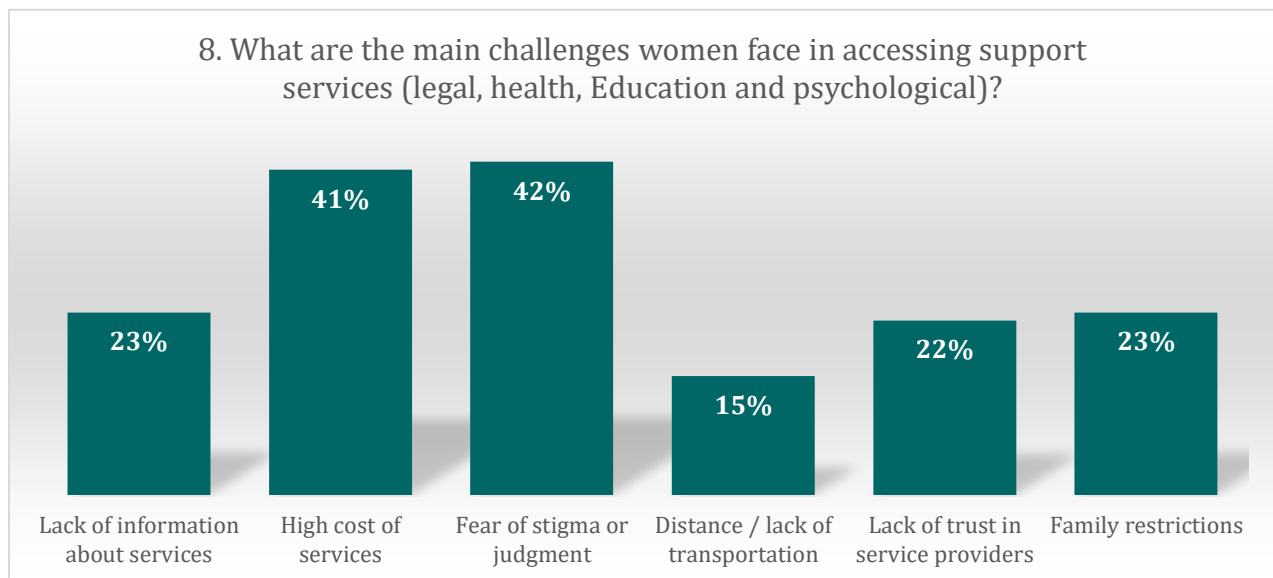


Chart 12: Barriers to Accessing Support Services (% of Sample)

The results underscore the need for holistic, gender-responsive interventions to improve access to support services. Donor support is essential to address affordability, reduce stigma, increase awareness of available services, strengthen trust in service providers, and improve safe transportation options. Removing these barriers is critical to ensuring that women and girls can access protection, psychosocial, and livelihood support when needed.

3.9 Influence of Traditions and Social Norms

Traditional norms strongly influence daily choices in marriage, mobility, and public participation, though younger respondents note gradual change. Below chart illustrates how traditions and social

norms influence women’s daily life choices. The findings show that the largest proportion of respondents (68 women and girls) reported that traditions and social norms affect their lives somewhat negatively in a restrictive manner. This indicates that, for many women, social norms limit personal freedom without being openly extreme, creating ongoing and normalized constraints.

In contrast, 26 respondents reported that traditions and social norms influence their lives somewhat positively, suggesting that some women experience support or protection through cultural practices. However, this positive influence remains limited compared to the restrictive impact.

A smaller group of respondents (8 women and girls) indicated that social norms affect them very negatively, describing these norms as highly restrictive and controlling. Only 7 respondents reported a very positive influence, where traditions encourage freedom and support. Meanwhile, 20 respondents stated that traditions have no major influence on their daily choices.

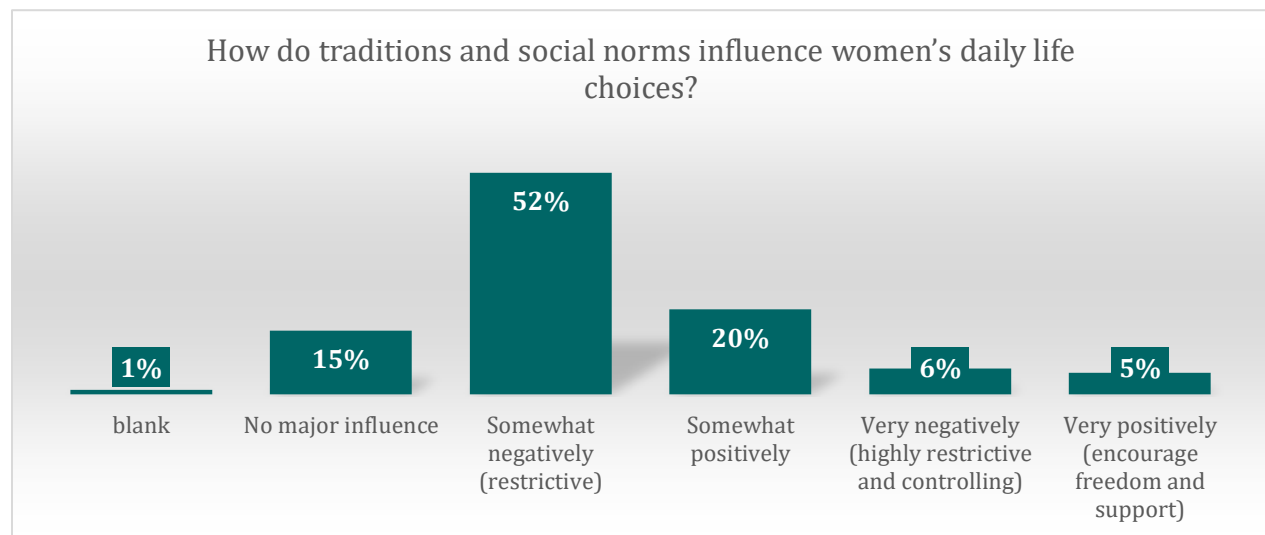


Chart 12: Women and Girls answers on the traditions and social norms influencing their life

Overall, the results demonstrate that restrictive social norms continue to shape and limit women’s autonomy, even when they are not perceived as overtly oppressive.

The findings highlight that traditions and social norms play a significant role in constraining women’s daily choices, often in subtle but impactful ways. This underscores the need for community-based and culturally sensitive interventions that promote positive social norms, encourage dialogue, and support women’s autonomy while respecting local contexts. Addressing these social barriers is essential for achieving sustainable gender equality and meaningful empowerment.

3.10 Priority Support Needs

Family support ranks highest, followed by economic support and support from organizations. Demand for psychosocial services remains substantial. Below chart highlights the priority support needs identified by women and girls. The findings show that family support is the most frequently reported need, representing the highest percentage of responses. This reflects the central role that

family plays in women’s lives and the importance of supportive family environments in coping with social, economic, and personal challenges.

The second most significant need identified is economic support, including job opportunities and financial assistance. This underscores the strong link between economic stability and women’s overall well-being, independence, and ability to cope with stress and household pressures.

Additionally, respondents identified support from organizations and psychological and social support as important needs, indicating demand for structured services that address both practical and emotional challenges. Government services, such as social protection and legal aid, were also highlighted, though to a lesser extent, suggesting gaps in accessibility or trust in formal systems. Finally, community support was reported as a lower but still relevant priority, pointing to the need for stronger community-based support networks.

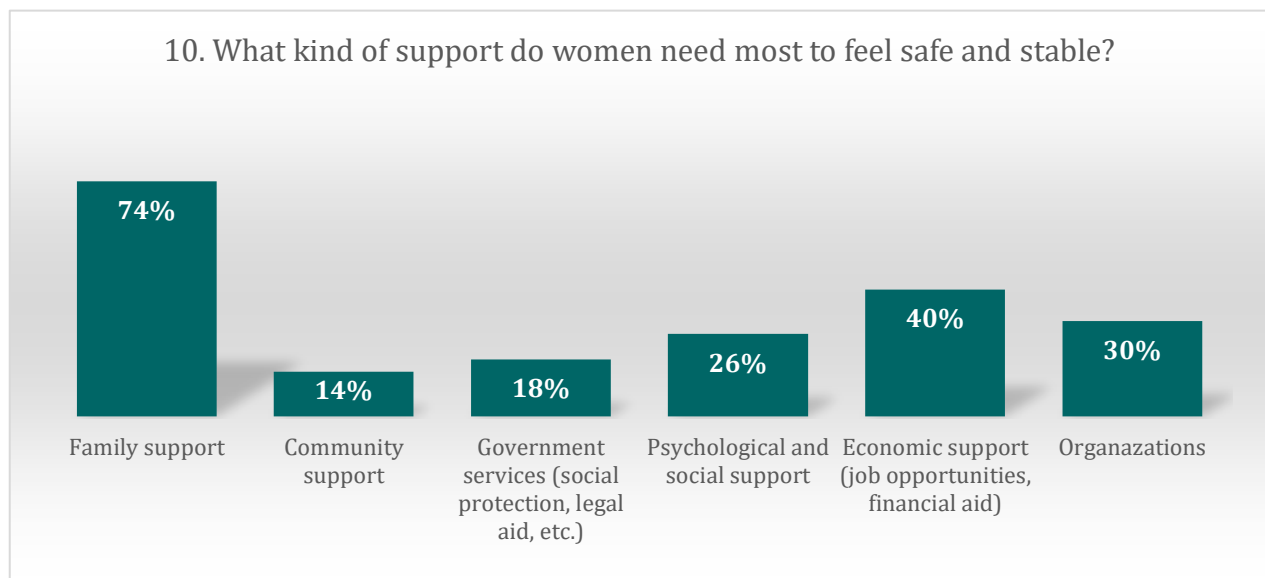


Chart 14: Priority Support Needs Identified by Women and Girls (% of Sample)

The results demonstrate that women and girls prioritize family-based support and economic empowerment, alongside access to organizational, psychosocial, and protection services. These findings highlight the importance of integrated, multi-sectoral interventions that strengthen family support systems, expand livelihood opportunities, and improve access to responsive services. Donor support is essential to address these interconnected needs and promote sustainable empowerment for women and girls.

3.11 Overall Summary

A consolidated view of the most salient indicators across domains, emphasizing economic hardship, family restrictions, financial stress, stigma, and the centrality of family support. This chart provides



an overall summary of the most critical indicators identified through the survey. The findings show that the need for family support is the most prominent issue, reported by approximately three-quarters of respondents, highlighting the central role of family dynamics in women's well-being and decision-making.

Financial stress is the second most significant indicator, affecting around 70% of the sample, which reinforces earlier findings that economic hardship is a major driver of instability, stress, and reduced opportunities for women and girls.

Additionally, stigma as a barrier to accessing support services was reported by over 40% of respondents, indicating that fear of judgment and negative social perceptions continue to prevent women from seeking help. Family restrictions, reported by nearly 40% of the sample, further emphasize the persistent influence of social norms and household control over women's choices and mobility.

Together, these indicators reflect a pattern of interconnected economic, social, and family-related challenges that shape women's daily lives and limit their access to support, safety, and opportunities.

The overall findings demonstrate that women's needs are not isolated but deeply interconnected. Addressing economic stress, family dynamics, stigma, and restrictive social norms requires integrated, multi-sectoral interventions that combine economic empowerment, family and community engagement, and accessible support services. Donor support is essential to tackle these root causes and enable sustainable improvements in the lives of women and girls.

4. Interpretation

4.1 Factors Explaining High and Low Percentages

The survey findings reflect the lived realities of women and girls in Mosul, where economic conditions, social expectations, and family dynamics are closely interconnected and continue to shape daily life choices and opportunities.

Higher percentages related to decision-making in education and work indicate that many women, particularly younger women and those who are already employed, show a strong desire for self-development and economic independence. Education, in particular, appears to be more socially accepted, with families increasingly recognizing its importance for women's future. Similarly, participation in work is gradually becoming more acceptable, especially when it contributes to household income. However, these decisions are often still influenced or approved by family members, suggesting that progress exists but remains conditional rather than fully autonomous.

In contrast, the lower percentages related to mobility and participation in public spaces highlight persistent challenges. Many women continue to face restrictions on movement and public engagement due to social norms, family expectations, and concerns about safety. These limitations are more pronounced among married women and those living in conservative neighborhoods, where public presence is still closely monitored. As a result, women's access to services, employment opportunities, and community activities remains uneven.



The data also shows a strong link between economic pressure and family conflict. Financial stress, unemployment, and low income were repeatedly identified as major sources of tension within households. These pressures not only affect family stability but also contribute to emotional stress, reduced well-being, and feelings of hopelessness among women and girls. Economic insecurity often intensifies existing power imbalances and limits women's ability to negotiate decisions within the family.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that stigma and barriers to accessing support services play a critical role in reinforcing silence and vulnerability. Fear of judgment, high service costs, lack of information, and limited trust in service providers prevent many women from seeking legal, psychosocial, or protection support, even when they face threats or abuse. This lack of accessible and trusted support systems increases isolation and leaves women without effective coping mechanisms.

Overall, the combination of economic hardship, restrictive social norms, family control, and limited access to support services explains the variation in responses across the indicators. While positive changes are visible in certain areas, the results clearly show that women and girls in Mosul continue to face structural and social barriers that require coordinated, long-term, and gender-sensitive interventions.

4.2 Connection to the Mosul Context

The findings of this assessment closely reflect the current social and economic realities facing women and girls in Mosul. Although the city has entered a post-conflict recovery phase, the effects of the conflict continue to shape daily life, family dynamics, and access to opportunities, particularly for women.

Economic challenges remain a central concern. High levels of unemployment and low household income help explain why many respondents linked family stability, emotional well-being, and hope for the future to financial security. The survey results show a clear relationship between economic pressure and family conflict, stress, and feelings of hopelessness. In Mosul, where livelihood opportunities remain limited and many families rely on unstable income sources, financial strain continues to place significant pressure on households and disproportionately affects women.

Cultural expectations and traditional gender roles continue to influence what is considered acceptable behavior for women. While there has been some progress in attitudes toward women's education and employment, this acceptance is often conditional and varies by neighborhood. Social norms continue to restrict women's mobility, limit their participation in public spaces, and influence their ability to express opinions or seek support independently, particularly for married women and women living in more conservative areas.

These findings are consistent with trends observed through case management activities, which indicate an increase in reported cases of gender-based violence, domestic violence, deprivation, and harassment. In addition, service providers have noted a concerning rise in cases of suicide and killings



for unknown or unclear reasons, pointing to severe psychological distress and unresolved protection risks among women and girls. These cases reflect the cumulative impact of economic hardship, social pressure, family control, and limited access to effective support systems.

Perceptions of safety in public spaces further highlight these challenges. While some women reported feeling safe in certain settings, many described inconsistent or limited safety, especially in transportation, workplaces, and poorly serviced areas. Harassment, weak protection mechanisms, and damaged or inadequate infrastructure continue to reduce women's sense of security and freedom of movement.

The variation in experiences among different groups students, employed women, housewives, and survivors demonstrates that empowerment and vulnerability exist side by side in Mosul. Employed women generally reported greater independence and decision-making power, while housewives and survivors described stronger social restrictions, higher emotional fatigue, and fewer options for seeking help.

Overall, the findings confirm that the challenges facing women and girls in Mosul are not isolated or temporary. They are structural and deeply rooted in the city's economic, social, and post-conflict context. Addressing these issues requires coordinated, long-term, and gender-sensitive interventions that focus on economic empowerment, protection, psychosocial support, and community-level engagement to support women's safety, dignity, and resilience.

4.3 Overall Interpretation

The survey findings present a picture of gradual change taking place within long-standing structural constraints. Women and girls in Mosul are increasingly aware of their rights and aspirations, particularly in areas such as education and work. However, this awareness is not universal, and for many women it does not yet translate into full autonomy or equal opportunities. Their daily choices remain shaped by economic hardship, social norms, family control, and limited access to trusted services.

While the data shows signs of progress, especially among younger and employed women, it also highlights persistent gaps in mobility, public participation, safety, and access to support. These gaps demonstrate that individual motivation alone is not sufficient; women continue to face systemic barriers that limit their ability to act on their choices and protect their well-being.

The findings clearly point to the need for integrated and coordinated interventions. Economic support alone cannot address these challenges unless it is combined with family and community engagement, awareness-raising on women's rights, and accessible psychosocial and protection services. Strengthening women's decision-making capacity, reducing stigma, and ensuring safe and reliable access to services are critical steps toward improving stability at the household level and resilience within the wider community.



Overall, the results underline that meaningful change in Mosul requires approaches that address both practical needs and underlying social dynamics, supporting women not only to survive current pressures, but to participate safely and confidently in shaping their own futures.

5. Findings:

Based on the survey results, direct discussions with women participants, case management activities, and continuous field monitoring, several key findings emerged clearly and consistently.

1- Economic pressure is the strongest driver of distress and family tension.

Women repeatedly linked feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion to unemployment and ongoing financial insecurity. Economic hardship was described not only as a lack of income, but as a daily burden that affects mental well-being, increases household stress, and contributes to marital instability and family conflict. For many women, financial pressure limits choices and weakens their sense of control over their lives.

2- Family and social traditions remain major constraints on women's autonomy.

More than half of the participants indicated that customs and social expectations continue to restrict their ability to make independent decisions, particularly regarding mobility, marriage, and participation in public life. While some women noted gradual changes in attitudes, especially toward education and work, these changes remain uneven and often conditional, depending on family approval and community norms.

3- Women's sense of safety in public spaces remains fragile.

Although a number of women reported partial improvements in safety, many still experience harassment, discomfort, or fear in public spaces, including transportation, workplaces, and crowded areas. The absence of safe, women-friendly environments and effective protection mechanisms continues to limit women's movement and participation outside the home.

4- Access to psychosocial and legal services is constrained by stigma and lack of awareness.

Even when services are available, many women hesitate to seek support due to fear of judgment, social stigma, or concerns about confidentiality. Limited information about available services further compounds this challenge. These barriers highlight the urgent need for community-based awareness initiatives and trusted, confidential service delivery mechanisms.

5- Family support remains the most critical protective factor.

Across all themes, women emphasized the importance of family understanding and



encouragement. Women who reported supportive family environments demonstrated higher levels of confidence, resilience, and willingness to pursue education, employment, and leadership roles. In contrast, lack of family support often deepened vulnerability, isolation, and emotional fatigue.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that women's challenges in Mosul are interconnected, rooted in economic hardship, social norms, and limited access to protection and support. At the same time, they highlight the powerful role that family support and inclusive, gender-sensitive interventions can play in strengthening women's resilience and well-being.

6. Recommendations:

Based on the voices, experiences, and data collected from women and girls in Mosul through the survey, case management activities, and continuous field engagement, below are practical and actionable recommendations that respond directly to women's needs and reinforce the positive outcomes already observed through this project.

1. Integrate Economic Support with Psychosocial Assistance.

Economic stress was consistently identified as one of the main drivers of family conflict, emotional distress, and feelings of hopelessness. While livelihood and income-generating activities are essential, the findings show that financial support alone is not sufficient.

It is strongly recommended to **integrate psychosocial guidance within economic empowerment programs**, ensuring that women receive emotional support, stress management tools, and counseling alongside livelihood assistance. This combined approach has already shown positive results in helping women regain confidence, reduce family tension, and make more informed decisions.

2. Strengthen Protection from Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Given the increase in reported cases of GBV, domestic violence, harassment, and deprivation observed through case management activities, continued and expanded protection services are critical.

Key actions include:

- Strengthening referral pathways between community focal points, health facilities, legal aid providers, and specialized GBV services to ensure timely and safe access to support.
- Increasing awareness among families, caregivers, and community leaders to reduce stigma and promote supportive, non-harmful responses to women at risk.
- Developing community-based prevention initiatives that focus on early identification of risks and prevention of violence before situations escalate.
- Deploying trained female social workers and psychologists to provide ongoing, accessible, and culturally sensitive counseling and emotional support within communities.



These measures are essential to ensuring women's safety and preventing further harm.

3. Expand Psychosocial Support and Emotional Resilience Activities

Many women reported not knowing practical ways to cope with stress, trauma, or emotional pressure. This gap highlights the need for continued investment in psychosocial support.

It is recommended to:

- Conduct regular awareness and support sessions on self-help techniques, stress management, and coping strategies.
- Ensure that psychosocial services are confidential, consistent, and community-based, which has proven to increase trust and service uptake.
- Maintain strict adherence to the Do No Harm principle in all outreach, data collection, and service delivery activities, particularly when working with survivors and vulnerable groups.

4. Strengthen Awareness and Rights Education

A recurring finding across the assessment is that many women and girls are unable to access their rights simply because they do not know them or lack clear information about available services.

To address this gap, it is recommended to:

- Implement sustained and accessible awareness campaigns through community centers, social media platforms, schools, and local networks, focusing on women's legal rights, health services, and psychosocial support.
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning sessions, where women who have benefited from project services share their experiences and success stories. These sessions have proven effective in encouraging other women to seek help and reducing fear and stigma.

5. Ensure Continuity of Services During This Critical Phase

The project has already demonstrated tangible and real-life success stories, where women's access to economic, psychosocial, and protection services has led to improved well-being, stronger coping skills, and increased confidence. Interrupting these services at this stage risks reversing progress, particularly given the ongoing economic hardship and social pressures in Mosul.

Continued donor support is therefore essential to:

- Sustain existing services that women have come to trust.
- Build on successful interventions rather than restarting fragmented responses.
- Ensure that women and girls are not left without support during a period of heightened vulnerability.



The evidence from this project clearly shows that integrated, long-term, and community-based interventions work. Continued investment will not only protect women and girls from harm but will also strengthen family stability, community resilience, and women’s ability to actively contribute to Mosul’s recovery.

7. Conclusion

This report highlights the complex and interconnected challenges facing women and girls in Mosul, where economic hardship, social norms, family pressures, and limited access to support services continue to affect safety, well-being, and decision-making. While gradual progress is visible in certain areas, the findings confirm that many women remain vulnerable to emotional distress, violence, and social isolation.

At the same time, the assessment demonstrates that community-based, gender-sensitive, and integrated interventions are effective. When women have access to psychosocial support, economic opportunities, protection services, and family engagement, their resilience and ability to cope improve significantly. The project has already generated tangible positive outcomes and real-life success stories that should be sustained and expanded.

In this context, continued donor support is essential to ensure that women and girls in Mosul are not left without protection or support during a critical phase of recovery. Sustaining these efforts will contribute not only to individual well-being, but also to stronger families, safer communities, and a more stable and inclusive recovery process.