

BASELINE REPORT

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS

PUKA



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This Project is implemented by:



Gender Alliance for Development Centre



Counseling Line for
Women and Girls

This report was prepared by the Gender Alliance for Development Center, under the project “**Women empowerment: Building capacities to improve access economic opportunities with a special focus to victims of domestic Violence**”, based on the contract between GADC and EC, no. 2011/278-135.



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Authors:

Mirela Arqimandriti

Iris Luarasi

Irena Shtraza

Blerina Nika

Further contribution:

Besmira Selmani, Besmira Aliaj, Arta Ahmeti, Mira Gega, Naxhije Djaloshi, Halit Dini etc.

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Str. “Abdyl Frashëri”, P.10/1, shk.1,ap.3

Tirana, Albania

Tel.Fax:00 355 4 22 555 14/5

E-Mail: gadc@gadc.org.al

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction

1.1 *Purpose of the Study*

1.2 *Context of the Study*

2. Methodology

2.1 *Sampling*

2.2 *Instruments*

2.3 *Limitations*

3. Current Situation

3.1 *Summary of key findings*

3.2 *Key findings in relation to the participation of women in decision-making*

3.3 *Key findings in relation to domestic violence*

3.4 *Key findings in relation to economic development*

3.5 *Key findings in relation to social services*

4. Recommendations

4.1 *Women's participation in decision-making*

4.2 *Domestic violence*

4.3 *Economic Development*

4.4 *Social Services*

Annex 1

Evaluation of community on local governance through "Score Card Methodology"

List of acronyms

MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
NEA	National Employment Agency
GADC	Gender Alliance for Development Centre
CLWG	Counseling Line for Girls and Women
EC	European Commission
UN women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
DA	Different Ability
LG	Local Government
NEA	National Employment Agency
NPO	Non Profit Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was prepared by Gender Alliance for Development Center and Counseling Line for Girls and Women on the frame of the project “*Women empowerment: Building capacities to improve access economic opportunities with a special focus to victims of domestic Violence*”, financed by the European Commission.

The proposed action aims at promoting equal participation of women and men in the social and economic life, by enhancing the empowerment of women, gender equality and respect of their human rights. The specific objectives of the proposed project relate to two main areas:

- Improving women’s position in the labour market and
- Specifically targeting more vulnerable groups of women, especially those at risk of poverty and or victims of domestic violence; with counselling, training and awareness activities not only on labour market access, but also on issues of domestic violence and access to available social services as well.

Activities towards these two specific objectives will be complemented by awareness and advocacy activities, aiming at:

- Increasing general awareness within target groups – including but not limited to women, but also public sector and potential employers – on social benefits of active women participation in social life; employability of women; but also antidiscrimination policy. Awareness activities will be both national and local scale, through TV and radio events as well as other communication instruments; and
- Improving social attitude towards the role of women in society through information and communication actions; counselling and non-conventional means - Networking with grassroots NPOs; business associations; women and change agents in the community will also be used; including development of school curricula to target young people at an early age.

The following are some of the outputs of the proposed action:

- An analytical report, containing an updated analysis of the current situation of women in Albania, focusing on their integration in the labour market as a crucial mean for woman empowerment; as well as identify the current situation with of vulnerable women, in particular victims of domestic violence and the extent of

spreading of the phenomenon. The report will also identify possible partners and explore networking opportunities in order to achieve results.

- Identification of a local network/working group of organizations involved in gender, woman empowerment and domestic violence issues, with the participation of experts, public institutions and business organizations.

Indicators related to economic development:

- Percentage of men and women who run businesses
- Percentage of women and men employed and paying social insurance
- The number of new businesses started by migration of men and women
- Payment of insurance as a farmer (women and men)
- Number of women and men who participated in vocational training and their employment after the course
- The level of recognition of rights in the labor market by women
- Number of initiatives by local structures for women's employment

Indicators relating to domestic violence:

- Quality and appropriateness of services provided to victims of domestic violence
- The number of battered women who have received services from local offices as per law
- Training on the law against domestic violence
- Addressing gender issues in local media
- The number of cases of domestic violence reported to the police and reported to the court

Indicators related to social services

- The number of women in need
- Socio-economic situation of Roma women and Egyptian
- Quality of social services in the area

Indicators related to women's participation in decision-making

- Respect for gender quotas by political parties
- Percentage of women and men participating in meetings to draft municipal budget

2. Methodology

2.1 Sampling

Regarding Puka Municipality, as part of this research (baseline), representatives of the various state and local organizations were interviewed. The interviewees were selected based on the information they possess and the role they play in relation to the four indicators (participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

A focus group with 9 people from the Puka community (7 female and 2 male) was also conducted. The participants discussed and made their evaluation on local governance (in terms of indicators: participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and services social).

2.2 Instruments

During this research semi-structured interviews and community Score Cards were to evaluate local governance (related to indicators: participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

2.3 Limitations

In terms of sampling, the data of this study are not very representative in quantitative terms. This is particularly valid for the section on Local Governance Evaluation (related indicators: participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

However, the statistical and qualitative data gathered during semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders play a very important role in relation to the four indicators. (participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

3. Actual situation

3.1 Summary of the main findings

Based on the situational analysis of women's rights in Puka, several problems were identified in regard to the four components analyzed, being women's participation in decision making, economic development, domestic violence and social services.

Some of the main findings worth mentioning are¹:

- The Office for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence in Puka Municipality is functional; however its budget is not sufficient to manage the reported cases. The support is provided mostly by the local NGOs, such as Gender Alliance for Development Center.
- The Referral System is functional but more concrete steps must be undertaken to support the management of the reported cases of domestic violence.
- There are many difficulties in the reintegration of the victims of domestic violence after the Protection Order is issued by the court.
- There exists a lack of trust in the protection that the Protection Order offers to the victims of domestic violence.
- The inclusion of female names in the lists of the local political candidates is fictitious.

3.2 Main findings regarding women's participation in decision making

According to the community members' perceptions, women are underrepresented at decision making levels. The majority of the participants in the focus groups, men in particular, think that it is the women who must be more active and break the taboos and change the prevailing patriarchal mentality, according to which women must stay at home and look after the children.

According to the participants, the women's political forums in Puka are active only during the political campaigns and sometimes they also organize parties during specific holidays. They have no impact on empowering the women's participation in decision making. Moreover, the participants in the focus groups state that the political parties' gender quota didn't have any considerable impact on the participation of women in politics. Most of the women's names in the lists were merely used to fill the lists with the required number of the political candidates.

Important facts regarding women's participation in decision making:

- The inclusion of female names in the lists of local political candidates is fictitious.
- Female members of the women's political forums in Puka are active only during the political campaigns and on specific holidays and are not working on undertaking serious steps to empower women and increase their participation in decision making.
- The low rate of women's participation in decision making can be observed in the Municipality Council, where only 3 out of 15 members are females.
- Only one out of 5 Municipality sectors is leaded by a female.

¹Below you will find a more detailed description of the findings, based on each respective indicator.

- According to the participants, the economic situation and the skills to generate family income are the main factors of women's low participation rate in decision making.
- According to the interviewees, women in Puka have an active role in the social life and the old patriarchal mentality has changed. This is more prevalent in the city as in the countryside women are less active and do not participate in decision making.

3.3 Main findings regarding domestic violence

According to the interviewees, community members in Puka are informed in regard to the Law against Domestic Violence. Several informative meetings and trainings have been organized with community members, targeting mostly marginalized women. They state that the most salient problems are the lack of structures working on domestic violence and gender equality and the prevailing patriarchal mentality and social prejudices toward women.

All the interviewees and representatives of local government institutions mention similar causes of domestic violence:

- Economic difficulties, particularly high unemployment rate among men who are considered as bread winners of the family
- Men's abuse with alcohol
- Men's abuse with gambling
- Patriarchal mentality favoring men "having power" over women

Based on the data from local Office of Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence, the number of cases reported to this office during 2012 is 16 and all the victims are females. Many of them find it difficult to report the domestic violence to the Police Office.

Some of the main reasons why women do not report the domestic violence, in particular to the Police Office, are:

- Economic difficulties
- Fear of social prejudices and discrimination
- Lack of trust in respecting confidentiality on behalf of the police officers and also medical expertise personnel who verifies the violence exerted as a proof for proceedings.

Important facts regarding domestic violence:

- People are acknowledged on the Law against Domestic Violence.

- There have been successful interventions aiming at awareness raising among community members in regard to domestic violence.
- The local Office for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence has coordinated multidisciplinary interventions and periodic meetings in regard to domestic violence issues.
- It is important that the local Referral System becomes wider, including other relevant actors (Police, Labor Office, Municipality Council etc.) in order to provide with more efficient multidisciplinary solutions and have an impact on the accountability of the local government institutions.
- Lack of budget for the local Office of Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence is an obstacle for the efficient and successful management of the reported domestic violence cases.
- Other than the free Police numbers (126/129), there is no free call line to report or ask for assistance in case of domestic violence.
- Lack of trust in respecting of confidentiality on behalf of the police officers and also medical expertise personnel who verifies the violence exerted as a proof for proceedings is an obstacle to reporting and proceeding of domestic violence.

3.4 Main findings regarding economic development

According to the data, in Puka district there are no local services assisting the professional formation and/or development of women. There is no formal professional training center. There are several private initiatives of language (mostly English) and computer courses but nothing has been done on behalf of the state local structures or private sector for the professional formation of women to assist them in entering the labor market.

The local government structures' representatives and community members have no information regarding policies on fiscal facilities for women entrepreneurship.

Important facts regarding the economic development of women in Puka:

- There is a considerable number of women employed in the local public administration, mainly in positions of average status. Only some of them occupy leading positions, mostly in educational and cultural sectors. Private initiatives and businesses undertaken by women exist but in low numbers, and there are no fiscal facilities supporting such entrepreneurships.
- There is a high number of registered unemployed women and a significant number of them do not have a profession. Consequently, they lack the necessary skills and capacities to generate family income.
- Labor Office representative says that the high rate of unemployment shows that opportunities for women to enter the labor market are limited.

According to the local Tax Office, from January 2012 to October, only 17.5% of the registered businesses are headed by females. If we compare this to 2011 figures, there is a slight increase during 2012 by 0.5% (Fig. 1).

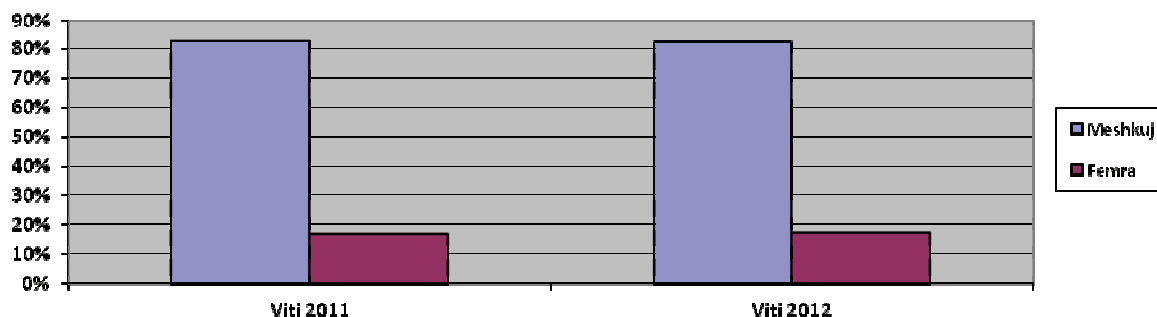


Figure 1. *Percentage of businesses headed by men and women during 2011 and 2012*

According to the data from the Labor Office in Puka, the total number of the registered unemployed persons in Puka district is 4237, out of which 1874 are females, composing approximately 44% of the registered unemployed persons. It is important to underline the fact that only 0.1% of the registered unemployed women are university graduates, 60% are high school graduates, 39% have completed basic education and 0.9% have completed primary education.

The total number of the registered employed persons in Puka district is 2417, out of which 460 are females employed in state institutions and 44 in private sector. Females compose 21% whereas males 79% of the total number of the registered employed persons in Puka district (Fig. 2).

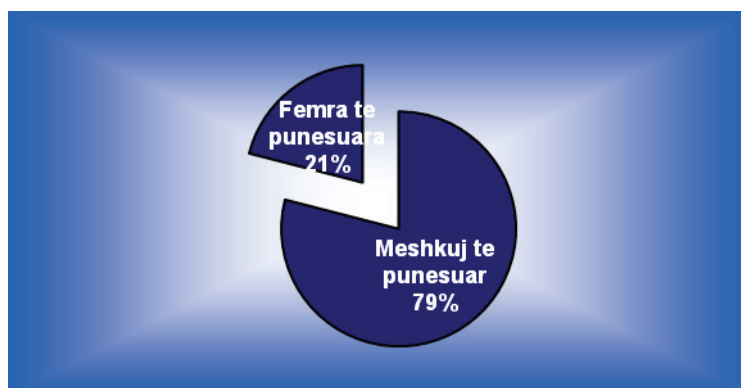


Figure 2. *Percentage of employed males and females in Puka district*

Data from the Social Security Agency show that social security contributions of females during 2012 are slightly higher than the social security contributions of men. When compared to data from 2011, both male and female contributions are lower. However, 2012 data reflect only January – September period (Fig.3).

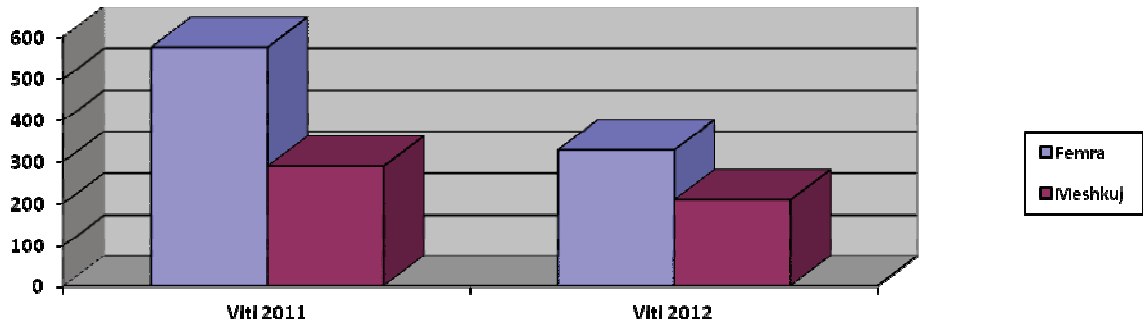


Figure 3. Social security contributions of male and female farmers during 2011 and 2012 (January – September 2012)

3.5 Main findings regarding social services

➤ **Social Centers at local level**

- *Economic assistance*

Data from the Economy Office of Puka Municipality show that there is a total of 516 families receiving economic assistance, in 16% of which the head of the family is a female (widow, divorced etc.). According to the law on economic assistance, the later can be received only by the head of the family.

Neighborhood	Tot. number of beneficiaries	Female beneficiaries	% of female beneficiaries
Puka Municipality	250	39	15.6%

- *Persons with disabilities*

According to the statistics of Puka Municipality, there are 111 persons with mental and physical disabilities, 13.5% of which are females and 70% males. The remaining part is children. The number of blind persons is 15, 3 of which are females (20%) and 12 males (80%). The remaining part is children. In the tetra-paraplegic category, the total number of beneficiaries is 13, 4 of which are female, 7 are male and the rest are children.

Kind of disability	No. of persons	No. of females	No. of males
Mental and physical	111	15	78
Blind	15	3	12
Tetra-paraplegic	13	4	7

At present there are no daily or residential centers offering services to persons with disabilities from any of the categories listed above.

➤ **Infrastructure of crèches, kindergartens and schools**

At present, Puka Municipality supervises one crèche, one basic education school and one general high school. The conditions in schools are relatively good in terms of infrastructure. However, teaching and learning process needs further improvement as there is a lack of opportunities to generate an interactive learning environment, including lack of laboratories where different subjects can be taught by practical, easy-to-understand techniques.

➤ **Road and Electricity Infrastructure**

The road infrastructure has been significantly improved, especially the city roads and the ones connecting Puka to other cities. However, not all the roads are fully covered by road lights.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Women's participation in decision making

Based on the situational analysis' findings on the actual situation of women's rights and their participation and representativeness in decision making levels, we can conclude that it is necessary that women in Puka play a more active role in the social and political life, especially in decision making levels and in regard to decisions that directly affect the situation of women.

Some concrete steps that can be undertaken to empower the role of women in decision making are:

- Empowerment of the local Office against Domestic Violence through exchange visits (or mentoring) among existing local structures which have positive records in protection and promotion of gender equality and management of cases of domestic violence. These exchange visits can contribute to the awareness raising of the stakeholders in decision making levels as well as in drafting participatory budgeting, sensitive to achievement of gender equality.
- Awareness raising through Media in community in regards to the role of women in decision making.
- Meetings with community women aiming at encouraging them to participate in the decision making process and in the meetings of the Municipality Council. These meetings can be organized in collaboration with the Municipality Council female members, and male members can participate too.
- Workshops with community, including both men and women, can be organized to discuss the importance of women participation in decision making and the benefits of respecting and fulfilling gender equality.
- Common forums, including both men and women, can be organized to discuss on cases of success of women in decision making from the community, region and country, and its positive effects on the family and community.

4.2 Domestic violence

Recommendations on possible interventions to eliminate domestic violence:

- Awareness raising in community by working with small groups (families for example) on family values, reciprocal respect and roles and responsibilities of the family members.

- Community working groups can be trained to train community members on topics of domestic violence and gender equality, related laws and the protection that legislation offers to victims of domestic violence. This measure would also help to prevent domestic violence and also to promote the family values and improve couple relationships.
- Continuous training of police officers who assist, coordinate and follow the reintegration of the victims of domestic violence on the importance of confidentiality, case management and interviewing techniques with victims of domestic violence.
- Establishing an emergency center from 24 to 72 hours for temporary sheltering of victims of domestic violence in cases when the victim is removed from the house and is waiting for a long term shelter arrangement.
- Empowerment of the Referral System by building the capacities of the local stakeholders to efficiently and successfully manage cases of domestic violence.
- Establishing a free call line to facilitate the reporting of domestic violence cases and once it is established, to promote it to the community.
- Workshops with local actors (representatives of Labor Office, Police, Court, NGOs, Municipality, psychologists, lawyers etc.) to improve their knowledge and skills in identifying, reporting and managing cases of gender equality and domestic violence.
- Capacity building of local actors on issues regarding domestic violence, in particular reporting cases of domestic violence to the Local Referral Mechanism or Multidisciplinary Group established by Puka Municipality.
- Meetings with Puka Municipality Council as advocacy and lobbying activities to achieve gender sensitive budgeting.
- Advocacy and lobbying activities with Puka Municipality Council to support the sustainability of the local Office for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence through allocation of regular budget for the working staff and professional assistance for cases of domestic violence.
- Collaboration with the local Media, as a key factor in increasing public awareness in regard to gender equality and fight against domestic violence. Collaboration with Media can also help to launch positive messages regarding gender equality in general, and against domestic violence in particular.
- Meetings with children in schools (primary to high school) to inform them on the importance of respect and protection of gender equality and fight against domestic violence.
- Meetings with health personnel on the importance of reporting the cases of domestic violence and preserving the confidentiality of the cases.

- Implementation of serious legal measures (such as imprisonment sentences) on behalf of by the responsible structures toward the perpetrators in cases of violation of the Protection Order.
- Regional forums at district level, where each district (municipality/commune) can bring on its success stories, positive experiences, and challenges faced in regard to management of domestic violence cases. Actors from the multidisciplinary groups, as well as representatives of Police Office, Court, NGOs, Gender Equality and Domestic Violence Local Structure, Social Services, Head of Commune/Mayor etc. can participate in these forums.
- Development of programs aiming at women empowerment, targeting the economic and social reintegration of women.
- Inclusion of gender mainstreaming issues to the long and short term policies and strategies at Municipality and also District levels.

4.3 Economic development

Recommendations regarding the economic development area:

- Advocacy and lobbying with Ministry of Labor, Social Issues and Equal Chances and the Ministry of Economy to create fiscal facilities for entrepreneur women in order to support women's business initiatives.
- Capacity building of local structures' representatives (Municipality, Labor Office etc.) to facilitate participation of women in labor market by evaluating the market demands and women's potential.
- Developing potential programs and projects on behalf of local government and civil society aiming at economic empowerment of women based on market demands, as well as evaluating the needs of the marginalized women.
- Establishment of a Professional Formation Center in Puka district to build capacities of women and men in specific professions, identified from the market demands' evaluation, in collaboration with the local Labor Office.
- Developing programs aiming at economic and social empowerment of women in order for them to be able to successfully reintegrate in the public life.

4.4 Social services

There are several aspects where immediate intervention in the social services' area is necessary. *Some suggestions and recommendations to improve the social services are as follows:*

- Increase of the monthly amount of economic assistance is essential in order for the beneficiaries to be able to fulfill the family's basic needs (food, clothing, education etc.).
- The law on economic assistance states that the later can be received only by the head of the family. An amendment to this item is necessary in order for women to have the same right as men to receive the economic assistance provided for their families.
- An Emergency Center for victims of domestic violence must be established, available to shelter victims of domestic violence from 24 to 72 hours, as a transitory shelter in cases when the victim is removed from the house and is waiting for a long term shelter arrangement.
- Establishment of a Daily Center for children with mental and physical disabilities.
- Establishment of a Daily Center for elderly.
- Investing more on improving the quality of teaching and learning process by at least establishing the necessary laboratories in schools.

Annex 1

Evaluation of community on local governance through "Score Card Methodology"

Scores: 1 – 5

1 – Very bad 2 – Bad 3 – Neither good nor bad 4 – Good 5 – Very good

AREA	INDICATOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
Women's participation in local decision making	Implementation of gender quota by the political parties in the local elections	2	<i>Women's participation in local elections is very low due to the patriarchal mentality, disappointment of the candidate women and lack of information.</i>
	Role of Women's Political Forums in increasing the representation of women in important public decision making	2	<i>Women's Political Forums are active, especially during the electoral campaigns and several festivities. However, there are no actions or initiatives aiming at increasing the representativeness of women in decision making.</i>
	Community participation in general and women's participation in particular in local decision making	1	<i>Community members in general and women in particular do not participate in local decision making, mostly due to the prevailing patriarchal mentality. This is more common in villages, whereas in the city women are more emancipated.</i>
	Women representation in important public decision making	1	<i>Community members in general and women in particular do not participate in local decision making, mostly due to the prevailing patriarchal mentality. This is more common in villages, whereas in the city women are more emancipated.</i>
Addressing violence against women	Informing the community in general and women in particular on the law against domestic violence	3	<i>Community members are well informed on the Law against Domestic Violence. According to focus group participants, women are well informed on the law too. They state that women know the steps to follow in case of domestic violence but they are reluctant due to the economic dependence on their husbands and the prevailing social prejudices.</i>
	Addressing of violence by the local structures	3	<i>The establishment of the Office on Gender Equality and against</i>

AREA	INDICATOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
			<i>Domestic Violence has assisted several cases of domestic violence. A lot of work must be done in regard to reporting the domestic violence cases as most of them are not reported to the Police Office and proceeded by the court. There is a good collaboration among this structure and the Police Office.</i>
	Awareness raising campaigns organized by local structures to address issues regarding domestic violence	3	<i>Continuous informative meetings with women have been organized by the Domestic Violence officer on the topic of domestic violence.</i>
	Specific policies in place which guarantee reintegration of female victims of domestic violence	1	<i>Community members are not informed on reintegration policies.</i>
Economic situation	Initiatives undertaken by local structures which support and promote employment of women	1	<i>Community members are not informed on such initiatives, other than the nonprofessional courses (computer, English language etc.).</i>
	Local services which help and improve professional formation of women	1	<i>There are no such local services in Puka.</i>
	Local policies in regard to fiscal facilities which support and promote women's businesses	1	<i>There are no such local policies in Puka.</i>
Social services and local infrastructure	Social centers at local level	1	<i>There are no social centers in Puka.</i>
	Economic assistance	1	<i>This amount is insignificant; it is insufficient to fulfill the needs of a family.</i>
	Infrastructure of crèches and kindergartens	3	<i>The infrastructure of crèches and kindergartens is satisfactory.</i>
	Infrastructure of schools	3	<i>The infrastructure of schools is satisfactory.</i>
	Infrastructure of roads	2.5	<i>The infrastructure of roads is good.</i>



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