

BASELINE REPORT

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS

MILOT



This project is funded by the European Union

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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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 Milot 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 community (8 female and 1 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 situation in Milot, 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:

- There is no separate Office for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence in the Milot Commune. Child Protection Unit was established one year ago, in 2012, in collaboration with World Vision Albania, but it is not functional anymore.
- There is no Referral System against Domestic Violence.
- More coordination is necessary among the stakeholders responsible for management of cases of domestic violence.
- Due to the prevailing patriarchal mentality, reporting the cases of domestic violence in Commune is a “taboo”, as stated by the Commune representatives.
- There is no gender sensitive budgeting.
- Women’s representativeness in decision making structures, such as in Commune Council, is very low.
- Community members have no trust in the state structures and this is one of the main causes why they do not report the domestic violence. Milot community is very small and keeping the confidentiality is very difficult. As one of the participants in the focus group said “If we tell our problem to anyone, the whole Milot will hear about it”.
- There are no initiatives or interventions to connect the labor market with the available professional capacities of women and men.

3.2 Main findings regarding women’s participation in decision making

According to the community members’ perceptions, women are underrepresented at decision making levels. However, they believe that the role of women in public life is as important as the role of men. The majority of the participants in the focus groups, men in particular, think that it is the women themselves who must be more active and break the taboos to change the prevailing patriarchal mentality, according to which women must stay at home and look after the children. Women’s emancipation in Milot is perceived as more opportunities for them to attain higher educational level (including high school and university).

According to the participants, there are no women’s political forums in Milot as community members are not interested in political participation. Moreover, the participants in the focus groups state that the impact of the political parties’ gender quota on the participation of women in politics is inconsiderable. Most of the women’s names in the lists were merely used to fill the lists with the required number of the political candidates.

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

Important facts regarding women’s participation in decision making:

- Women are not organized in political forums or in similar political initiatives that focus on issues related to women.
- In Milot Commune Council, only 18% of the councilors are female.
- Representation of women at leadership level in Milot Commune is relatively equal to men’s. Two out of 5 sectors are headed by females. The drafting of the budget is proposed by the head of each sector. The participation of women at this level, although not equal to men’s, can be considered at least satisfactory.
- It is difficult to identify whether there is gender sensitive budgeting or gender mainstreaming in issues regarding women’s rights and gender equality. Milot Commune representatives state that the budget is designed by a work group within the Commune, composed mainly of the heads of the communes’ sectors.

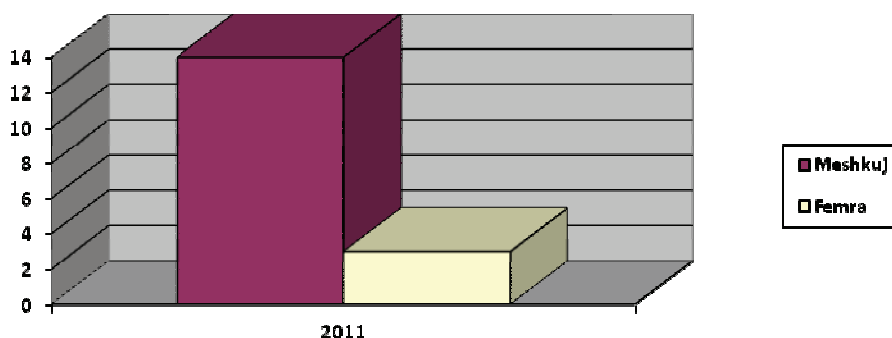


Figure 1. *Women’s representation in the Milot Commune Council after the last local governance elections (2011)*

As can be seen in the figure, women’s representation in the Commune Council is not high; however it is significant as an opportunity that women have to raise their voice about the role of women in decision making, political participation, gender sensitive budgeting and other issues related to women’s rights.

3.3 Main findings regarding domestic violence

According to the participants in the focus groups, the only legitimate institution to manage cases of domestic violence is the State Police. Other than the State Police, the participants do not know any other structures where they can report such cases. Community members state that Media is the main information source on domestic violence, change in legislation or cases of domestic violence. No organizations or other institutions have worked on this topic in Milot.

All the interviewees and representatives of local government institutions mentioned the same causes of domestic violence:

- Poverty
- The patriarchal culture which reinforces economic power of men and legitimates the violence of men on women (“Women must be kicked sometimes” – says a man during the focus group discussion)
- Men’s abuse with alcohol and other narcotic substances
- Patriarchal mentality favoring men “having power” over women
- Low educational level

During 2012, 2 cases of domestic violence have been reported. In both cases, it is the husband who violates his wife and children. The cases could be reported to Laci Police Office but the lack of trust in state structures, especially in police officers, prevents the reporting and proceeding of the case. Community members also lack the trust in the protection that the Protection Order offers to the victims of domestic violence. A very low percentage of community members however are acknowledged about the Law against Domestic Violence. This is another reason why people do not report cases of domestic violence.

Some of the main reasons why Milot community members do not report domestic violence to the local structures are:

- Fear of social prejudices and discrimination
- Considering the family as a “value” which must be preserved even by “standing” the violence exerted by one’s partner
- Economic dependence on men
- Lack of support by extended family members
- Wishful thinking that domestic violence can be eliminated without the intervention of the Police Forces
- Lack of an appointed person in the Commune, responsible for cases of domestic violence. The Commune staff often performs a variety of tasks and as a consequence it is difficult for them to follow the cases of domestic violence.
- The Protection Order has not been efficient in all the cases, leaving the victims unprotected from the perpetrator; One out of the two cases is being proceeded and the perpetrator has violated the Protection Order more than once and nothing has been done by the police officers to protect the victim.

Important facts regarding domestic violence:

- There is a lack of knowledge regarding Law on Domestic Violence.
- There is a lack of information regarding the actual protection that the Law against Domestic Violence offers to the victims.

- There is no Local Referral System. There is a lack of knowledge and interest on behalf of local state administration representatives regarding issues of gender equality and domestic violence
- There exists lack of trust in regard to the actual protection from the Protection Order and punishment of the perpetrator in case s/he violates the Order.
- 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.

3.4 Main findings regarding economic development

According to the community members, there are several employed women in the local public administration. Women in Milot do not generally hold high level positions, and especially no leading positions. Nevertheless, there have been several self-employment initiatives in the private sector, such as Sunday Market.

Despite the positive examples of private enterprises, there are no local services assisting the professional formation and/or development of women. There is no professional formation center and no organization has shown interest in working with marginalized women in Milot. The community members have no information regarding policies on fiscal facilities for women entrepreneurship. The local government structures' representatives also say that such policies might exist "on paper" but none of them has been implemented so far.

Important facts regarding the economic development of women in Milot:

- There is a considerable number of women employed in the local public administration, mainly in positions of average status. There are several entrepreneurial initiatives undertaken by women but there are no fiscal facilities supporting the establishment and development of such entrepreneurships.
- There is no professional formation service for women. Women entrepreneurship is based solely on self-initiative and economic opportunities of women.
- Although a considerable number of females are employed in a shoe production fabric close by, women's employment in Milot commune remains a challenge.

3.5 Main findings regarding social services

- **Social Centers at local level**
 - *Economic assistance*

According to the data obtained by the Economic Assistance Office, there is a total of 679 families living on economic assistance, in 10% of which the head of the family is female (widow, divorced etc.). According to the law on economic assistance, the later can be received only by the head of the family. The high number of families under economic assistance is an indicator of the poverty prevailing in Milot.

Milot Commune	Tot. number of beneficiaries	Female beneficiaries	% of female beneficiaries
Milot	679	67	10%

- **Persons with disabilities**

According to the data obtained from Milot Commune, there is a total of 211 persons with disabilities, 37 % of whom are females.

Kind of disability	No. of persons	No. of females	No. of males
Mental and physical	148	42	106
Blind	43	24	19
Tetra-paraplegic	20	12	8

At present, there is no daily center for persons with disabilities or other social centers.

- **Third Age**

At present, there is no daily center for elderly.

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

At present, in Milot Commune there are 1 public crèche and 3 basic education schools. The conditions in schools have significantly improved during the recent years due to considerable investments in the infrastructure on behalf of organizations working on child protection. 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 main roads. There is still need for lightening in many roads as only the main city roads are fully covered by road lights while the neighborhood streets are not completely lighted.

3.6 Community's Evaluation of Governance by Scorecards

In general, community members appreciate the local institutions' efforts. However, the evaluation of the work conducted in regard to the four components is low.

The main results of community's evaluation of governance by scorecards are:

- The evaluation of the community members' of the first component (participation of women in local decision making) is very low – 1.25 / 5 points.
- The evaluation of the community members' of the second component (addressing domestic violence towards women) is very low, which points to the lack of interventions on behalf of local structures – 1.4 / 5 points.
- The evaluation of the community members' of the third component (economic situation of women) is the lowest. Community members have no information regarding fiscal facilities that support and promote women entrepreneurship.
- The evaluation of the community members' of the fourth component (social services) is again low but higher than the evaluation of the previous components – 2.6 / 5 points. Points are higher due to investments in infrastructure; however social services remain an issue.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Women's participation in decision making

Based on the findings from this situational analysis focusing on the actual situation of women in decision making, we can conclude that it is necessary that women in Milot 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:

- Advocacy and lobby campaigns aiming at empowerment of the women's role in decision making and gender equality, especially before the electoral campaigns, in order to successfully implement the gender quota foreseen for political candidates, rather than fictitiously including female names to fulfill the electoral list.

- Establishment of local structures on gender equality and against domestic violence in the Milot Commune to better protect women and contribute to achievement of gender equality.
- Awareness raising among local structures representatives and community members on issues regarding gender equality and domestic violence.
- Advocacy at local level with Milot Commune Council's female members to promote women's role and participation in public life.
- Forums and meetings with community members to discuss stories of successful as positive and reinforcing examples of the active role of women and their contribution in decision making.

4.2 Domestic violence

Recommendations on possible interventions to eliminate domestic violence:

- Awareness raising among community members and local structures' employees on issues related to domestic violence and gender equality, including their addressing procedures
- Awareness raising among local stakeholders on the importance of the reporting of domestic violence cases and their referral by the respective structures.
- Establishment of the local Office against Domestic Violence, responsible for managing the cases of domestic violence and gender equality.
- A free call line to facilitate the reporting of domestic violence cases must be established and promoted to the community.
- A 24 – 72 hours Emergency Center must be established, where victims of domestic violence can be temporarily sheltered in cases when the victim is displaced from the house and is waiting for long term sheltering arrangement.
- Establishment of the local Protection Net (Multidisciplinary/Technical Group) to coordinate all the local structures through a collaboration agreement where the steps to be undertaken by each group member for management of a domestic violence case are described in details.
- Capacity building of local actors on management of issues regarding domestic violence, especially on how to address them as prescribed by the Referral System.

4.3 Economic development

Recommendations regarding the economic development:

- Awareness raising and lobbying with local government representatives to implement the fiscal facilities which support and promote women entrepreneurship.
- Capacity building of women in professions highly demanded by the labor market.

- Capacity building of local structures' representatives to facilitate the participation of women in labor market by evaluating the market demands and women's potential.

4.4 Social services

Other than the economic assistance, there are no other social services offered for marginalized groups in the commune of Milot.

Some suggestions and recommendations to improve the situation of 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 latter is received 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.
- A daily center for elderly and another one for children with disabilities must be established to assist the needs of these marginalized groups.
- Establishment of the local Office against Domestic Violence, responsible for managing the cases of domestic violence and gender equality.
- A free call line to facilitate the reporting of domestic violence cases must be established and promoted to the community.
- A 24 – 72 hours Emergency Center must be established, where victims of domestic violence can be temporarily sheltered in cases when the victim is displaced from the house and is waiting for long term sheltering arrangement.
- More investments must focus on heating the school premises during winter and 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>The majority of the participants believe that women must be more represented in the local decision making structures. According to them, women's actual participation is fictitious and their names on the local candidates' lists are put to complete the required number of candidates.</i>
	Role of Women's Political Forums in increasing the representation of women in important public decision making	1	<i>A significant number of focus group participants believe that the Women's Political Forums are inexistent structures. Even if they existed, the community members know nothing about them.</i>
	Community participation in general and women's participation in particular in local decision making	1	<i>According to the participants, the community members do not play an active role and the same is true for women.</i>
	Women representation in important public decision making	1	<i>According to the participants, women in their community do not play an active role.</i>
Addressing violence against women	Informing the community in general and women in particular on the law against domestic violence	1.5	<i>Only a small number of participants have heard about the law. Most of the participants do not know anything about it, including its function.</i>
	Addressing of violence by the local structures	1.5	<i>The participants have no information on any local structure responsible to address issues of domestic violence other than the Police Office.</i>
	Awareness raising campaigns organized by	1.5	<i>Awareness raising campaigns are usually organized by organizations</i>

AREA	INDICATOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
	local structures to address issues regarding domestic violence		<i>and youth rather than by the local structures. However, there have been no specific campaigns targeting domestic violence. Most of the campaigns organized have targeted the protection of children.</i>
	Specific policies in place which guarantee reintegration of female victims of domestic violence	1	<i>There are no specific policies in place which guarantee the reintegration of female victims of domestic violence.</i>
Economic situation	Initiatives undertaken by local structures which support and promote employment of women	1	<i>There are no initiatives undertaken by local structures which support and promote employment of women.</i>
	Local policies which help/improve the professional formation of women	1	<i>There are no local policies which help/improve the professional formation of women.</i>
	Local policies in regard to fiscal facilities which support and promote women's businesses	1	<i>There are no local policies in regard to fiscal facilities which support and promote women's businesses.</i>
Social services and local infrastructure	Social centers at local level	1	<i>Participants say that there are no social centers at local level.</i>
	Economic assistance	2	<i>In Milot Commune, the number of persons receiving economic assistance is very high. For them, the economic assistance is the only economic income. According to the law on economic assistance, the later can be received only by the head of the family, who is in most cases the man. This amount is insufficient to fulfil the needs of a family.</i>
	Infrastructure of crèches and kindergartens	3	<i>The conditions of crèches and kindergartens are good. During the last years, there have been many investments, in particular in schools, in collaboration with child protection organizations.</i>

AREA	INDICATOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
	Infrastructure of schools	3.5	<i>The conditions of schools in Milot Commune are satisfactory as they have been lately reconstructed. However, there are no laboratories where students can practice their knowledge. In addition, there is no heating, which is a serious problem during winter.</i>
	Infrastructure of roads	3.5	<i>Infrastructure of roads is good. During the last years it has been significantly improved.</i>



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