

# First Experience of Using WINGS (Women Initiating New Goals of Safety) Intervention to Prevent Gender Based Violence against Female Sex Workers and Women who Use Drugs in Ukraine



Iryna Pykalo, MPH<sup>1</sup>, Alina Sarnatska, BS<sup>4</sup>, Lynn M. Madden, PhD, MPA<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ukrainian Institute on Public Health Policy, Ukraine; <sup>2,3</sup>Yale School of Medicine, APT Foundation, USA; <sup>4</sup>NGO “Club “Eney”, Ukraine



## Background

Female sex workers (FSWs) are the highest risk group for gender-based violence (GBV) [1; 2]. According to research in Ukraine, 76% of FSW who use drugs experienced violence. FSW who were subjected to sexual abuse also faced verbal abuse (69.5%), threats (50.1%) and forced labor (49.5%); a third were beaten (38.3%); a quarter (24.3%) were raped [3]. GBV disproportionately affects FSW and women who use drugs (WUD).

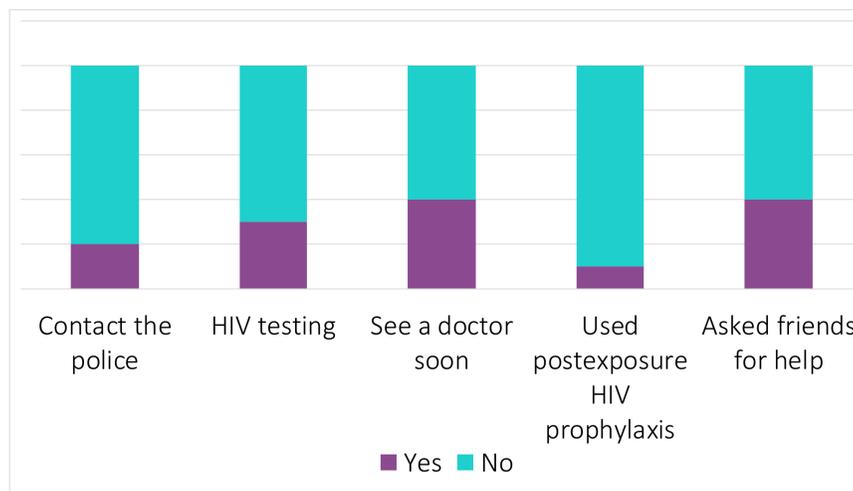
During the COVID-19 pandemic, problems of violence were exacerbated and required additional intervention. WINGS is an intervention and a therapeutic tool to identify GBV among WUD, which enables them to develop security planning strategies, to strengthen social support network, to identify and access various services to reduce the risk of GBV.



## Methods

During 2019 were conducted 48 WINGS groups at 6 regions of Ukraine. 287 women from two at risk groups – WUD and FSWs pass the WINGS sessions. During the session, the women received a questionnaire, which is one of the tools of the intervention. The questionnaire collected information about the goals that the participant had set up and her needs for redirection for assistance and services. These data were used to compare with the data of a previous poll. Participants were asked whether their selected goals and needs were fulfilled. The choices included 15 goals and 12 needs, but women chose those that were most applicable for them. Follow-up interviews were conducted 1 month after the intervention.

Distribution of client requests for help in situations of violence

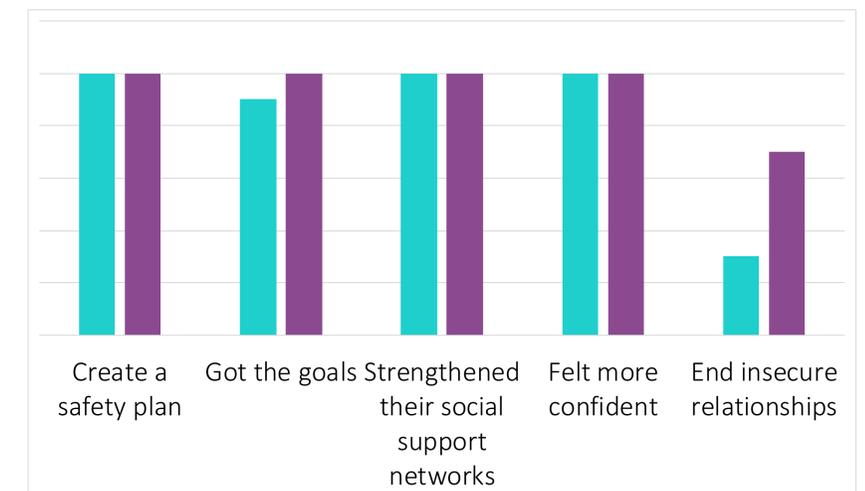


## Results

100% of the participants reported having benefited from WINGS. Participants' feedback was received on how taking part in the intervention affected future violence. The majority of participants reported that the most important service for solving their urgent needs was received.

- 35 women became WINGS facilitators
- intervention rallied the community (March of Drug-Addicted Women Against Violence)

Post-session changes



## Acknowledgements

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## Conclusions

The project developed a gender-sensitive organizational capacity by adapting the WINGS methodology to improve access to HIV services and counter GBV among WUD and FSWs in Kyiv, Ukraine.

## References

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