



MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH PROGRAM

Funding Organization SOAR Armenia

Location_ Armenia Lori region Vanadzor

Implementation 15.05_ 15.07.2025

Number of beneficiaries 10 pregnant women

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROGRAM ANI GABRIELIAN

Program Objective and Activities Undertaken

The goal of the project was to raise reproductive health awareness and promote health care among 10 pregnant women through training

Project Goal:

The primary objective of this project was to enhance reproductive health awareness and facilitate access to healthcare services among pregnant women through specialized training sessions.

Participant Selection:

Following recommendations from the SOAR Charity Foundation, we collected data on pregnant women, specifically focusing on those from Artsakh experiencing their first pregnancy. Out of 17 candidates, 10 were selected based on being in the early stages of their first pregnancy.



Needs Assessment and Information Provision:

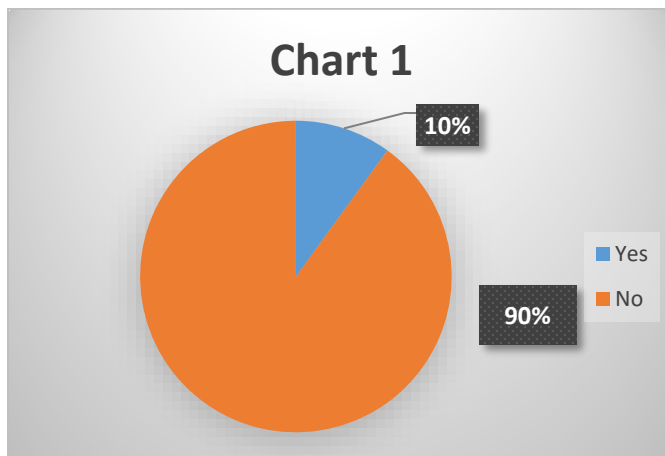


A primary knowledge assessment was conducted with women at different stages of pregnancy. As a result, the following key issues were identified:

- A significant portion of pregnant women (approximately 90%, according to the survey) lacked adequate knowledge about essential health care practices, proper nutrition, and maintaining mental well-being during pregnancy.
- None of the pregnant women had received psychological counseling or attended educational meetings.
- The sources of information were mostly non-professional: relatives, internet and social media.
- There was a notable lack of trust in community and public institutions and services.

Examples from questionnaires

- Before getting pregnant, have you ever consulted a doctor to find out if your health condition is suitable for pregnancy?



According to the preliminary evaluation data, only 1 of the women interviewed had ever consulted a doctor before becoming pregnant to find out about her health status before becoming pregnant. This indicates a lack of preventive knowledge and practices due to both lack of awareness and limited available counseling services.



IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITY

Within the framework of the project, eight thematic meetings were organized for pregnant women. 10 (ten) beneficiaries from various communities participated in these sessions. The meetings were facilitated by a team of professionals; including a psychologist, gynecologist, social worker, therapist, dentist, nutritionist, and a representative from the Unified Social Service.

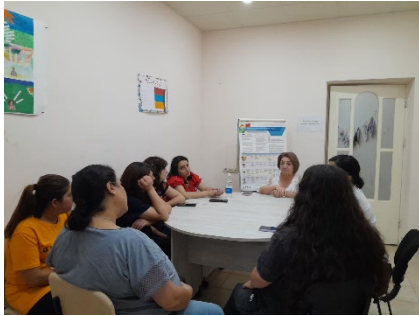
The primary aim of the meetings was to identify the biological, psychological, and social challenges faced by pregnant women and to enhance their knowledge and skills in addressing these issues.



The main thematic areas of the meetings were:

- The impact of the mother's psychological state on intrauterine development
- Postpartum stress and mechanisms of coping with them
- Family harmony and responsible parenting
- Self-care and self-knowledge
- The role of vitamins and supplements during pregnancy
- Stress and anxiety - ways to overcome them
- Healthy nutrition for pregnant women
- Child oral care and dental problems during pregnancy
- Pregnancy rights, benefits and access to state services

- Signs and types of childbirth



All meetings were accompanied by discussions, interactive exercises and answers to the participants' questions. During individual meetings, art therapy sessions were conducted aimed at self-assessment, motherhood perception and stress management. The trainers provided practical tasks; afterwards they discussed those tasks in a group format.

During the last meeting, we concluded the program; participants were awarded certificates of participation and small gifts, with the support of the "SOAR" charitable foundation.

Views expressed by pregnant women during the final evaluation of the program, which we present in a summarized form:

"These meetings gave us something we didn't have before: time and a chance to be heard. Specialists answered every question calmly and kindly, while when we apply to a medical institution, sometimes they don't even have a minute to listen to us. Here we voiced our questions without charge or feeling judged."

Pregnant, 23 years old

I'm about to have my tenth child, but after attending these courses, I realized how much I should have known during my very first pregnancy. It may be late, but I'm grateful I had the opportunity to participate now and embrace motherhood from a new perspective.

Pregnant, 35 years old

"Beyond gaining knowledge, this was a space where I could simply be a woman, a mother, a human being. So often, we face our questions alone — but these meetings became a source of

trust, mutual support, and emotional strength."

Pregnant, 40 years old



The series of courses was further enriched with elements of cultural and community participation, taking the psychological support component out of the closed space and moving it to a public and social environment. These meetings contributed to the social inclusion and overall improvement of the well-being of pregnant women.

The cultural events implemented included:

Film watching in a group format, followed by a discussion with a psychologist and reflecting both the content of the film and the participants' personal experiences.

A visit to an art- gallery – for several pregnant women, this was their first experience entering the public space of art. This visit, incorporated an open discussion of emotional responses facilitated by a psychologist, as an art therapeutic approach.

These events created a supportive environment where pregnant women were able to share their concerns, feelings, and expectations for the future.



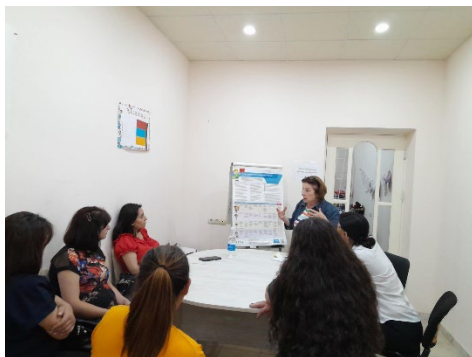
IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

The meetings had a significant impact on pregnant women, contributing to the improvement of their physical, psychological and social well-being. Participants gained important knowledge about the course of pregnancy, childbirth, childcare, as well as maintaining their own mental health.

Cultural events such as film watchings and gallery visit complemented the program's impact by fostering peer interaction, offering a break from daily concerns, and helping participants feel a sense of belonging within the community.

The legal meetings played a vital role in raising awareness of women's social rights. Many participants learned for the first time about maternity benefits, lump-sum birth payments, and caregiving entitlements.

The program not only enhanced knowledge and skills but also fostered a sense of empowerment, helping women regain confidence and evolve into more active, informed, and self-sufficient mothers within their communities.



THE CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAM

The experience and insights gained from similar programs implemented in previous years enabled effective anticipation of potential challenges and the prevention of both organizational and content-related issues at this stage.

Drawing on previously collected feedback, an assessment of participants' needs, and consultations with experts, the program was more precisely structured in terms of themes, methodology, and timing. As a result, no significant difficulties were encountered during implementation.

Participant engagement remained high, the courses proceeded without interruption, and the overall level of organization was rated by participants as appropriate and well-adapted to their needs. This outcome reaffirms that lessons learned from earlier phases were fully integrated into the current program.



CONCLUSION

The program was successfully implemented and fully achieved its objectives: to educate, provide psychological support, and promote the social inclusion of pregnant women. Throughout the training sessions, a safe, respectful, and trusting environment was established, allowing participants to openly discuss their concerns, acquire new knowledge, and reassess their roles as future mothers.



Beyond the transfer of valuable information, the program played a key role in boosting women's self-confidence, enhancing their mental well-being, and increasing awareness of their rights and opportunities. The integration of cultural components further enriched the experience, transforming it into a platform for psychological support and social connection.

This program stands as an exemplary model for delivering comprehensive support to expectant mothers and merits both continuation and expansion.