

# Together We Empower

Programme 2025 - 2026





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# Foreword

## Hon. Rebecca Buttigieg

The Together We Empower programme reflects a shared commitment between the Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and the Commission on Gender-Based Violence to strengthen the role of civil society in addressing gender-based and domestic violence. Through this collaboration, we aim to support the essential work being carried out by NGOs across Malta, whose efforts are central to prevention, advocacy and survivor support.

Gender-based violence is not only a deeply personal violation of human rights, it is a societal issue that demands collective and sustained action. NGOs are often at the forefront of this work: engaging communities, raising awareness, challenging harmful norms, and providing direct support to those affected.

This programme was designed to provide the necessary resource and space for these organisations to grow, innovate and reach those who need them most. The first edition funded projects show the power of grassroots leadership from educational initiatives and artistic engagement, to trauma informed workshops, research and advocacy.

We also recognize that NGOs often carry out this vital work while facing limited resources, administrative burdens and capacity constraints. As a government, we have made it a priority to not only fund but also actively support civil society, creating spaces for collaboration, offering technical assistance when needed and reducing barriers that may hinder their impact. Strengthening this partnership is essential for long term sustainable progress in preventing and responding to gender-based violence.

As a government, we remain committed to working hand in hand with civil society to implement comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of violence and promote a culture of equality and respect. This includes our commitment to the Unite. Elevate. Engage strategy and the ongoing implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

We are also fully committed to the launch of the second edition of the Together We Empower - A Future Without Violence programme and are eager to see even more NGOs form part of this important initiative. By expanding our reach and deepening our partnerships, we can continue building a stronger, more inclusive society.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all the NGOs who took part in this programme, and to the Commission for its dedication in coordinating this important work. I encourage all NGOs and citizens to engage with the work presented here and to continue contributing to a country where respect, dignity and safety are a reality for all no matter your differences.

Let this be a stepping stone toward further collaboration, and a continued journey toward eliminating violence in all its forms.



# Foreword

## Commissioner Samantha Pace Gasan

This year marked the first cycle of the Together We Empower Programme- a funding scheme designed to support voluntary organisations in their work to address gender-based violence and domestic violence.

In this first edition, a total of nine projects were funded, each tackling different aspects and intersectionality of gender-based and domestic violence. The diversity of approaches and target groups demonstrates the strength and creativity of civil society in confronting domestic violence.



Through the projects funded various social groups were reached. Training was provided for voluntary leaders working with young girls, police, educators, senior leaders in education and other professionals. Survivors, students, young people, women, migrant women, the elderly and the general public were engaged in the different projects undertaken, highlighting the importance of intersectionality in addressing gender-based violence and domestic violence. The channels used to disseminate information and challenge gender stereotypes and norms included social media through reels, podcasts and infographics, an artistic exhibition, in person training and information sessions and workshops. Other project outcomes included research conducted with the elderly and studying the demand for prostitution as well as the development of a toolkit for educators. The impact of each project was closely monitored to ensure that resources were effectively translated into action, learning and long-term community benefit.

This fund forms part of Malta's National Strategy on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (2023 – 2028) *Unite. Elevate and Engage.*, specifically addressing action 1.4(d) which emphasizes the commitment to involve NGOs at different stages of policy-making, awareness raising and training provision. The funded projects are a direct reflection of this commitment translating policy into action through grassroots engagement, creativity and specialised knowledge.

Through this initiative, NGOs had the opportunity not only to implement impactful projects but also to collaborate, exchange knowledge and strengthen collective efforts to address gender-based and domestic violence. This further strengthened the relationship between the Commission and civil society whereby as Commissioner I could observe more closely the important work being carried out by these organisations.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the NGOs who participated in this first round of funding. Their commitment, innovation and hard work brought this programme to life and made a tangible difference in our communities.

We are now excited to launch the second round of the funding programme, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside more NGOs in the year to come.

The work of civil society is essential and we remain committed to supporting it.



# 1. Introduction

The Together We Empower Programme is a funding scheme designed to support voluntary organisations to address gender-based violence and domestic violence, in line with the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

This Programme was developed as part of the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence's commitment to implement Malta's Third National Strategy on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (2023 – 2028), entitled *Unite. Engage. Elevate*.

The Programme is administered and managed by the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (CGBVDV) and supported by the Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality (OPM-ES).

The Together We Empower (TWE) Programme has an allocated budget of €100,000.

This call is restricted to projects to be submitted by Voluntary Organisations registered and compliant in line with requirements of the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

## 1.1 Objectives

The general objectives establishing the TWE are the following:

- a. To support the work of voluntary organisations in the field of gender-based violence and domestic violence;
- b. To enhance capacity and knowledge related to gender-based violence and domestic violence;
- c. To stimulate cooperation and networking between voluntary organisations; and
- d. To provide a platform from which to develop co-operation between voluntary organisations, private entities, local councils and the governmental entities.

## 1.2 Priority Areas

The general priorities of the TWE are based on areas relating to addressing gender-based violence and domestic violence, including through addressing harmful practices, gender stereotypes and norms in Malta and Gozo:

### 1.2.1 Gender stereotypes:

This priority aims at preventing gender-based violence by tackling prejudices and gender stereotypes. Activities proposed under this priority should focus on addressing misogyny and patriarchy in general, by targeting gendered attitudes, behaviours and social norms that either encourage or minimize the impact of violence. A relevant action under this priority is the Engagement of Men and Boys.

### 1.2.2 Gender-based violence:

This priority aims to enable applicants to plan programmes or outreach activities to address issues related to different forms of gender-based violence, including forced marriages, forced sterilization, forced abortion, female genital mutilation; sexual, physical, psychological and economic violence; stalking, harassment, and cyberviolence; and other harmful practices. Gender-based violence can take place in various spheres of life including education, employment, social activities, public and political participation and online.

### 1.2.3 Domestic Violence:

This priority aims to address the aggravating circumstances that different forms of gender-based violence have within the family or domestic unit. Initiatives under this priority should address at least one form of gender-based violence within the “family or domestic unit” as defined in Cap. 581, Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act, of the Laws of Malta:

- a. current or former spouses, civil union partners or cohabitants in accordance with the Cohabitation Act, and their children;
- b. persons having or who had a child in common;
- c. persons related to each other either by consanguinity or affinity, civil union or cohabitation up to the third degree inclusively;
- d. persons who are or have been in a sentimental and/or intimate relationship; and
- e. spouses whose marriage has been dissolved or declared null.

Relevant actions under this priority include child witness intervention perpetrator rehabilitation and accountability and the support for adult victims of domestic violence.



## 1.3 Activities

Activities funded under the TWE include:

### 1.3.1 Artistic Community-Based Initiatives:

Initiatives proposed under this programme may include specific artistic or innovative activities through community outreach practices. These may include but are not limited to: exhibitions, artistic competitions, dance, drama, and music. Collaborations with VOs based in the community should be supported by the necessary documentation.

### 1.3.2 Targeted Capacity Building Workshops:

Initiatives proposed under this programme may include information sessions, workshops, conferences or other events, targeting specific social groups or professionals including businesses and employers. With reference to intersectionality, this programme supports initiatives that focus on those at greater risk of violence and abuse, these include: children, women, persons with disability, elderly, migrants and persons within the LGBTIQ+ community.

Furthermore, specific initiatives may aim to address specific needs and/or involve victims, survivors, perpetrators, child witnesses, bystanders, and/or professionals working in the field. Collaborations with VOs or entities should be supported by the necessary documentation.

### 1.3.3 Production and Dissemination of Information Material:

Initiatives proposed under this programme may include written information material, to be disseminated in various formats including but not limited to leaflets, brochures, magazines, and booklets. The development of storytelling material, such as books, documentaries and podcasts are also considered under this programme.

### 1.3.4 Development of tools for informal education:

Initiatives proposed under this scheme may include the development of educational tools that may be used for informal educational purposes with various or specific social groups. Examples of these tools include interactive sticker books, flash cards, board games, card games, or adaptations of other resources used in different spheres, educational or for leisure.



Malta Womens Lobby



TAMA



St Jeanne Antide



Fondazzjoni Saghtar

## 1.4 Horizontal Priorities

Projects proposed under the TWE shall incorporate several principles and horizontal priorities. Projects which address the following horizontal priorities will be prioritised when it comes to the selection criteria. The Horizontal priorities are highlighted below:

### 1.4.1 Inclusion and Equality

Projects proposed under this programme should abide by the principles of inclusion and equality. All content, events, and publications should be accessible for all.

### 1.4.2 Civic Empowerment and Engagement

Projects proposed under this programme should seek to empower and engage participants throughout all the phases of the project. Tools, material and events should aim to call out and stand up to violence through empowerment and civic engagement.

### 1.4.3 Sustainability

Projects proposed under this scheme should abide by principles of environmental sustainability. Additionally, the sustainability and continuation of the actions developed within the scope of the proposed project should be factored in.

### 1.4.4 Social Innovation

Projects proposed under this programme should be original and innovative in the field of gender-based violence and domestic violence. Actions previously undertaken under other funding schemes will not be considered.

### 1.4.5 Collaboration

VOs are encouraged to collaborate and partner with other VOs, public entities or private organisations for multiplier effects. Joint efforts between VOs for implementation, expertise and/or community outreach will be prioritized.





## 2. Eligibility

### 2.1 Eligibility Criteria

- 2.1.1 All projects and initiatives proposed and implemented under the TWE shall be implemented in Malta and Gozo;
- 2.1.2 Projects should comply with all the terms and conditions of this call for applications;
- 2.1.3 Applicants are in conformity to legal or policy requirements through the VO registration number and the VO Compliance Certificate published by the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. A copy of this certificate needs to be submitted together with the application form;
- 2.1.4 Applicants shall have the financial capacity to implement the project proposed by providing financial statements for the past 2 years. A copy of the VO's financial statements needs to be submitted with the application form;
- 2.1.5 Applicants shall have the operational capacity and expertise to implement the project proposed. Applicants are to provide a brief description of the Voluntary Organisation and the team implementing the project. Any expertise on the project would need to be highlighted in the application form.
- 2.1.5 One application per VO will be accepted under this programme, including in cases where the VO is participating as a partner; each VO may be involved in only one project whether as lead application or partner organisation.

### 2.2 Exclusion Criteria

- 2.2.1 The project proposal is or has been supported under another EU/national fund.
- 2.2.2 The project is purely a fundraising event and/or for-profit-making purposes.
- 2.2.3 Does not observe any of the eligibility criteria.

## 3. Budget

The total budget allocated for the TWE is of €100,000. The amount requested for each project shall not exceed €10,000. All projects falling under the scope of the TWE shall have a 20% co-financing rate supported by the beneficiary.

The CGBVDV reserves the right not to allocate all the funds available should projects fall under the established quality benchmark of 65% mark.

### 3.1 Eligible Costs

- 3.1.1 Costs tied to the main activities mentioned in Section 1.3 include but are not limited to media slots, content creation, exhibitions, artistic competitions, any costs related to the arts industry, information sessions, workshops, conferences, leaflets, brochures, magazines and booklets.

The below costs should be according to the percentage of the cost of the total of the main activity.

- 3.1.1.1 Staff costs for project management are covered up to 50% of the total of the main activity. These costs may be incurred either for employed personnel responsible for project implementation or, in the case of sub-contracted personnel, for managing the project. In the latter case, Voluntary Organisations are expected to adhere to the spirit of public procurement regulations. Following project approval, VOs will be required to submit a copy of the relevant employment contract or payslip for verification, which may be requested for in-person review.
- 3.1.1.2 Hospitality (catering) costs which are not part of the main activities of the project are covered up to 20%. This should be calculated over the cost of the main activity.
- 3.1.1.3 Marketing Costs which are not part of the main activities of the project are covered up to 20%. This should be calculated over the cost of the main activity.
- 3.1.1.4 Indirect administrative costs, such as running costs for offices, documents, etc are covered up to 5% of the total project cost. This should be calculated over the cost of the main activity.
- 3.1.1.5 A contingency of 5% should be accounted for when preparing the budget section.



### 3.2 Ineligible Costs

- 3.2.1 Purchase of equipment is not eligible under this programme.
- 3.2.2 Infrastructural costs are not eligible under this programme.



## 4. Timeframes and Duration

Projects proposed in this call shall commence implementation between April 2026 and October 2026. Projects should be implemented over a maximum period of seven (7) consecutive months.

The Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence reserves the right to propose alternative timeframes, based on and in line with Malta's National Strategy on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence. Should this clause be applicable, the CGBVDV shall discuss the possibility with the beneficiary and factor in allocation of resources.

### 4.1 Timetable and Deadlines

#### 4.1 Timetable and Deadlines

*(Deadlines are indicative and may be updated)*

Call opening	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2025
Submission of applications	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2026 at noon
Evaluation	1 <sup>st</sup> March – 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Publication of Results	April 2026
Grant Agreement Signature	April 2026
Project Implementation	April 2026 - October 2026



## 5. Application Process

The application is to be submitted via email on [funding@stopviolence.gov.mt](mailto:funding@stopviolence.gov.mt). A step-by-step guide is provided below on how to get hold of the application and the guidelines together with steps on how to submit your application.

### 5.1 Access Website

- 5.1.1 Access the [link](#) or visit [www.stopviolence.gov.mt](http://www.stopviolence.gov.mt)

### 5.2 Access Guidelines

- 5.2.1 Click on the calls and media button (top right)
- 5.2.2 Click on the Together We Empower - A Future Without Violence tab.
- 5.2.3 You will find the application and guidelines to download.
- 5.2.4 Download the documents in PDF format

## 5.3 Submission

- 5.3.1. Once the application is completed, send the completed application together with all the required documents to [funding@stopviolence.gov.mt](mailto:funding@stopviolence.gov.mt)
- 5.3.2 You will receive an automatic reply stating “Thank you for applying under the Together We Empower- A Future Without Violence Programme”.

## 5.4 Confirmation of application

- 5.4.1 After submitting your application kindly wait for confirmation issued by the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence
- 5.4.2 Once your application is approved the email address that you would have submitted will be used for all sort of correspondence related to the various funding schemes.

## 5.5 Supporting documents

When applying for a project, the lead beneficiary would need to upload a list of supporting documents which will aid in the selection criteria of the project. This list includes but is not exhaustive:

- a. VO number both beneficiary and partners
- b. VO Compliance Certificate both beneficiary and partners
- c. VO's Financial Certificate for the past two years
- d. Declarations for partners such as private or public entities
- e. List of partner and leading projects.
- f. Budget breakdown
- g. Gantt Chart



# 6. Evaluation Process

## 6.1 The Together We Empower Selection Committee

6.1.1 The TWE Selection Committee is chaired by the Commissioner on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence. The selection committee is composed of:

- a. A representative from the Commission on Gender- Based Violence and Domestic Violence;
- b. a representative from the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the OPM-ES;
- c. an expert in the field of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

6.1.2 The TWE Selection Committee is tasked with:

- a. Evaluating project proposals;
- b. Carrying out a transparent and equitable selection process for project applications to be funded through the TWE;
- c. Provide and/or monitor effective and efficient administrative processes in the evaluation process and in the implementation of the TWE; and
- d. Decide on the final list of projects to be awarded a grant.

6.1.3 The Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence is tasked with:

- a. Promoting and providing information on the TWE;
- b. Administer and manage the application process;
- c. Provide support to project applicants and beneficiaries throughout the project life cycle;
- d. Monitor the implementation of the TWE and approved projects;
- e. Evaluate TWE project reports and relevant deliverables;
- f. Support the Selection Committee by assigning a secretary for minute taking;
- g. Disseminate project outcomes and results, in collaboration with beneficiaries, at a national level;
- h. Issuing payment for approved projects.



## 6.2 Evaluation procedure

The selection of project applications is as follows:

- 6.2.1 All project applications are checked by CGBVDV against the eligibility criteria, the exclusion criteria and supporting documents submitted by the lead beneficiary to substantiate the application form.
- 6.2.2 Those project applications which have successfully passed these checks are individually evaluated by the TWE Selection Committee members.
- 6.2.3 The mark of each proposal is computed and ranked accordingly.
- 6.2.4 Projects receiving more than 65 marks will be selected based on their ranking order until the funds are fully exploited. Should there be additional funds, components from projects receiving less than 65 marks may be considered until funds are fully exploited.

## 6.3 Decision and Notification of Award

Once the evaluation process is completed, a ranking list of the final mark of each project according to the final marks issued by the TWE Selection Committee is prepared and communicated via a notification email. Results will be uploaded on the CGBVDV website. The decision for granting funds will be based on the selection criteria, ranking order, and the budget available.

Applicants will be notified with the results. All successful applicants will be informed in writing. On termination of the project application procedure the documents including the project application form and the scoring documents will not be returned to the applicant.



## 7. Reporting and Payment Arrangements

The projects supported under the TWE will be subject to a payment procedure consisting of one pre-financing payment, one interim payment and a final payment/recovery of the balance due, as described below:

### 7.1 Reporting

#### 7.1.1 Interim or progress reports

Beneficiaries are to submit a periodic or interim report accompanying the request for an interim payment.

The interim and the progress reports must be submitted by the deadline stipulated in the agreement made between the contracting agency and the lead beneficiary.

CGBVDV will be providing templates for the interim to the lead beneficiary 30 days prior to the deadline of the reporting.

#### 7.1.2 Final report

Upon the completion of the project, the lead beneficiary shall submit a final report one month after the project would have concluded. This final report should indicate all the project deliverables and activities which have been done throughout the duration of the project. In this report a breakdown of how the budget was spent needs to be given. The final report should also be accompanied by photographic evidence of the completed deliverables as agreed upon in the grant agreement.

CGBVDV will be providing a template for the final report to the lead beneficiary 60 days prior to the deadline of the reporting.

## 7.2 Pre-financing payment

A pre-financing payment of 40% will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date when the last of the two parties sign the agreement. Pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiary with the necessary financial resources to start putting in place the approved actions in the agreement.

## 7.3 Interim payment

An interim payment of 30% will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date which the interim report is submitted. The interim payment is intended to provide the beneficiary with the necessary financial resources to continue achieving the deliverables and activities as outlined in the application.

## 7.4 Payment or recovery of the balance

The amount of the final payment 30% is to be made to the beneficiary will be established based on the complete final report which is to be submitted within one month following the end date of the project. The final payment will not be processed if CGBVDV is not satisfied that all agreed upon deliverables have been satisfactorily implemented. Should all deliverables be implemented to the CGBVDV's satisfaction, a final payment will be disbursed within two months from the submission of the final report.



## 8. Non-compliance and breach of contract

The grant agreement shall provide for measures that the CGBVDV may take in case of breach of contract and other non-compliance issues.

## 9. Support

The CGBVDV will be providing necessary support throughout the project lifecycle – proposal to final stage. For information related to the call for proposals or for technical support in the project application process, please contact the CGBVDV on [funding@stopviolence.gov.mt](mailto:funding@stopviolence.gov.mt) or +356 2276 8303.







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