

SAVERA UK



# Empowering BME women and girls at risk of domestic abuse and harmful practices to take control of their lives

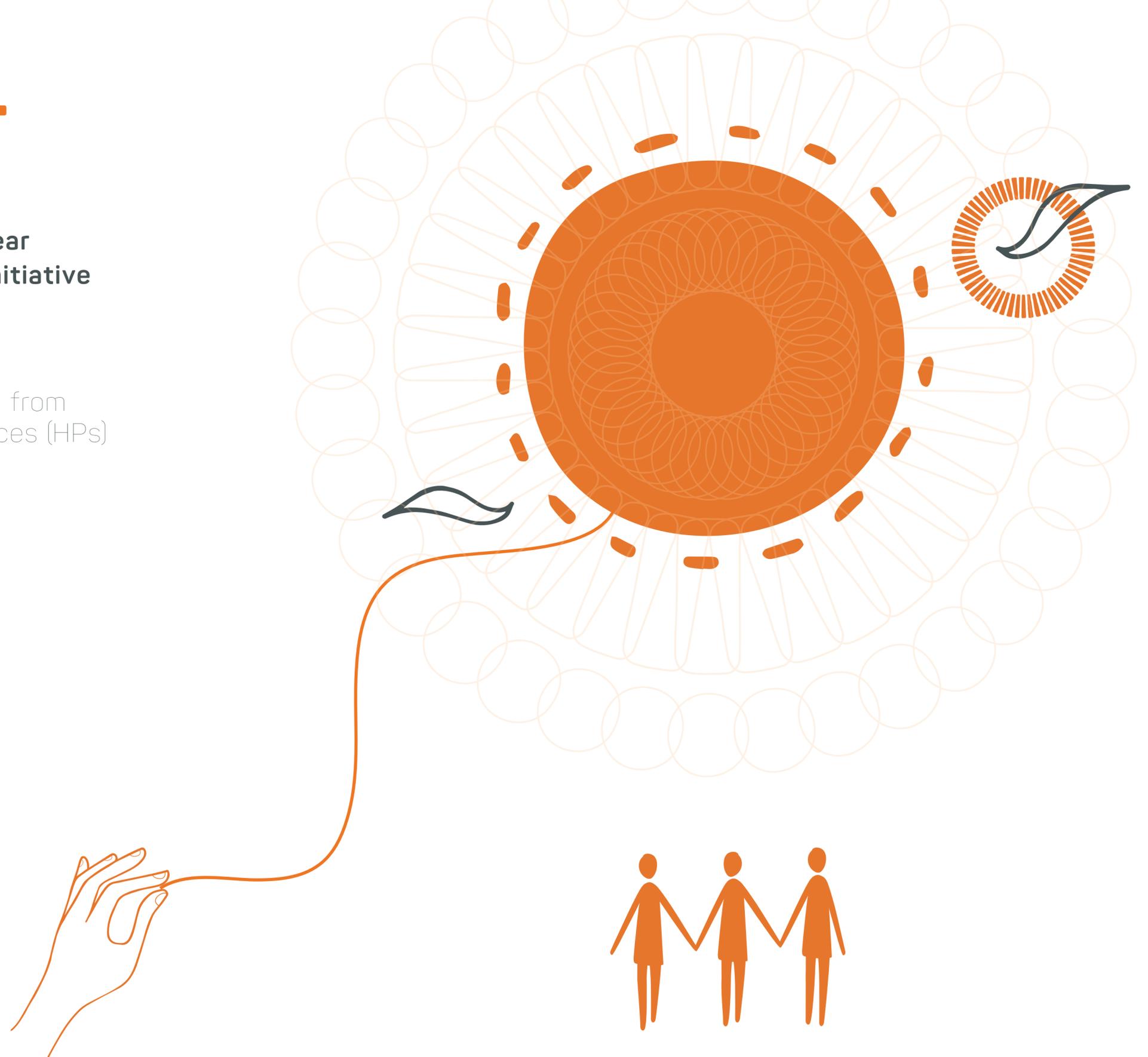
The evaluation of Savera UK's Domestic Abuse and Harmful Practices Engagement and Support Project

Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund Women and Girls Initiative.

# SAVERA UK'S PROJECT

In December 2016, Savera UK embarked on a three year National Lottery Community Fund Women and Girls Initiative project, with the following aims:

- To expand the one-to-one support service for women from BME communities who are at risk from harmful practices (HPs) and domestic abuse.
- To engage with young people in schools to educate about domestic abuse and harmful practices.
- To raise community awareness and reduce incidents of domestic abuse and harmful practices



# SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

- Support service
- Schools-based awareness raising programme
- Community engagement

**Outcome 1:** Savera UK has increased the provision of holistic approaches for BME women and girls at risk of domestic abuse and HPs.

**Outcome 2:** Savera UK has sought and responded to the views of BME women and girls by enabling feedback from service users to influence service delivery.

**Outcome 3:** BME women and girls have awareness of what constitutes domestic abuse and harmful practices, and where they can go for advice and support.

**Outcome 4:** BME women and girls have awareness of their rights and how to assert their rights in relation to domestic abuse and harmful practices.

**Outcome 5:** BME women and girls feel safe to assert their rights in relation to domestic abuse and harmful practices.



# NATIONAL LOTTERY W&GI LEARNING HUB QUESTIONS:



What is a holistic approach? How is it different from mainstream interventions?

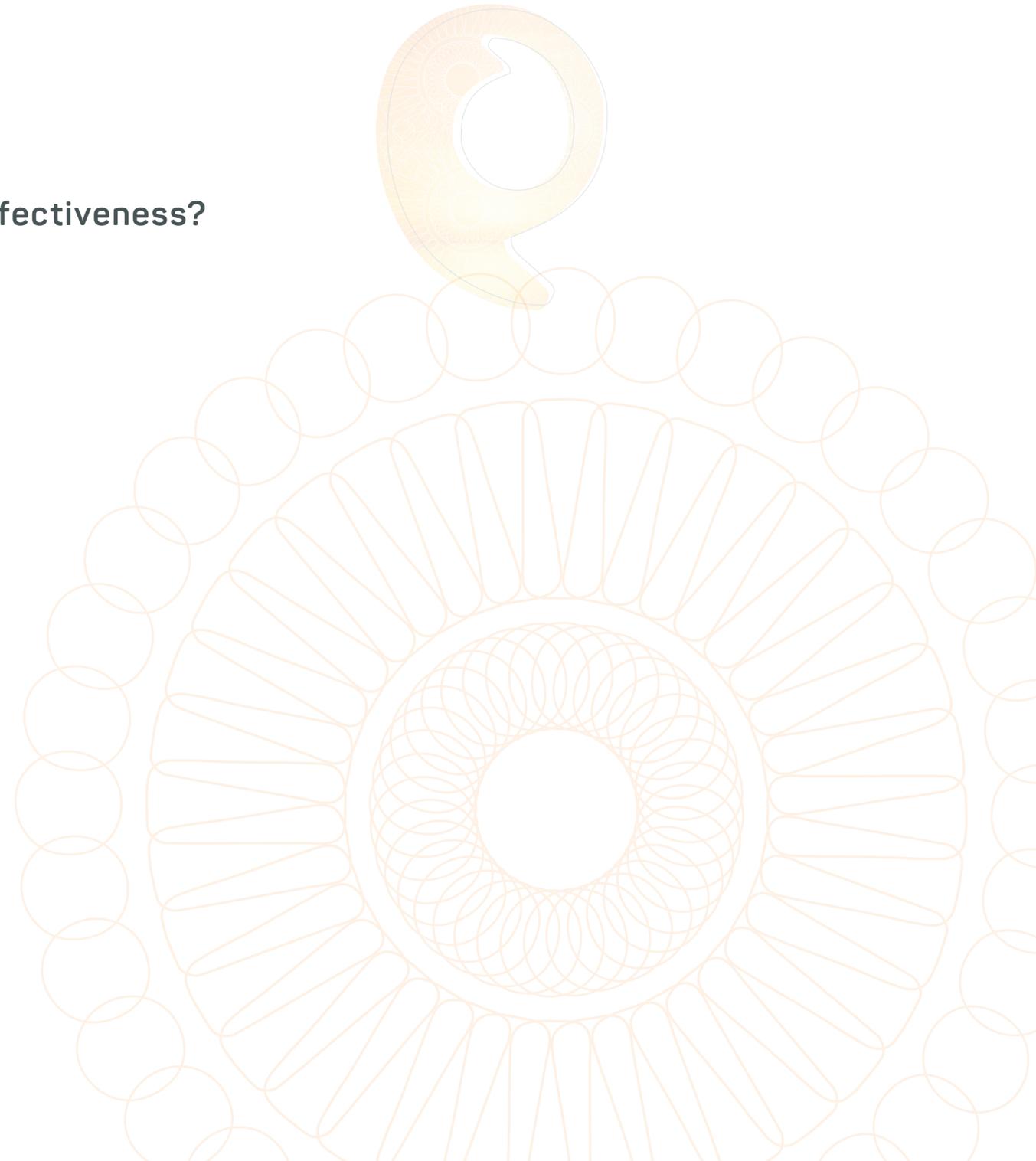
Does it matter whether projects are informed by gender analysis? Does it impact on effectiveness?

Does a service being women only matter to users and staff?

What can be learned from looking across generic and BME specific services?

What does an empowerment approach mean?

How are survivors involved in shaping services & wider social change work?



# GENDER MATTERS



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93% of Savera's clients were female



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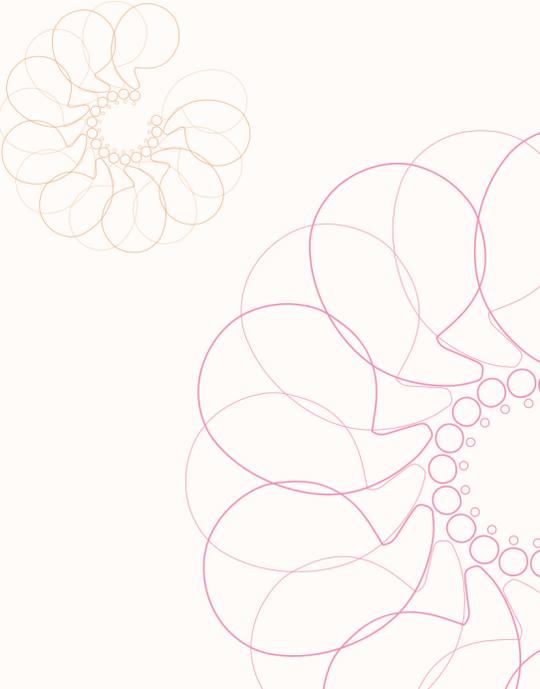
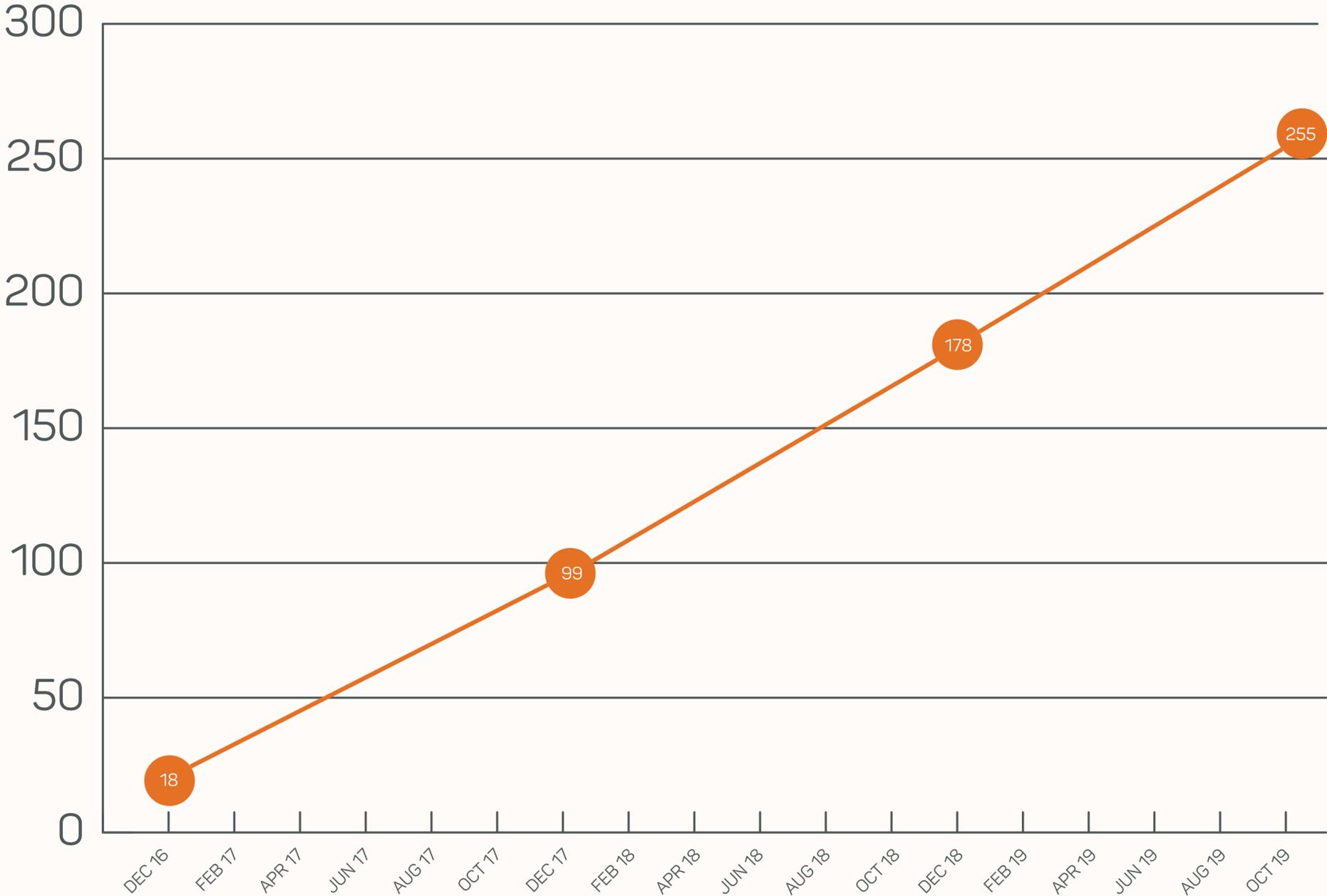
A gendered analysis is important in understanding the gendered contexts and experiences of HBA and FM.



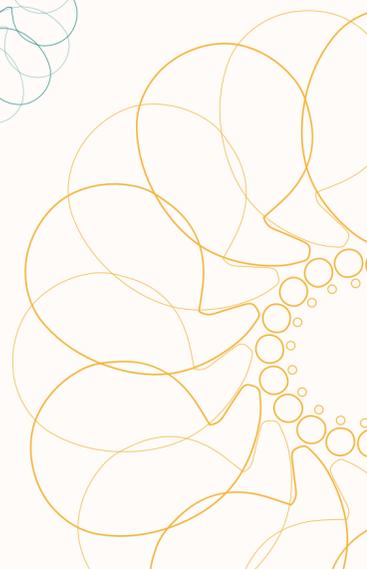
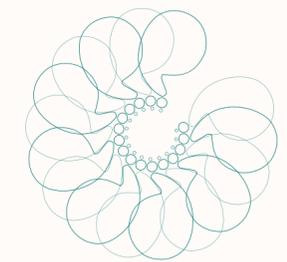
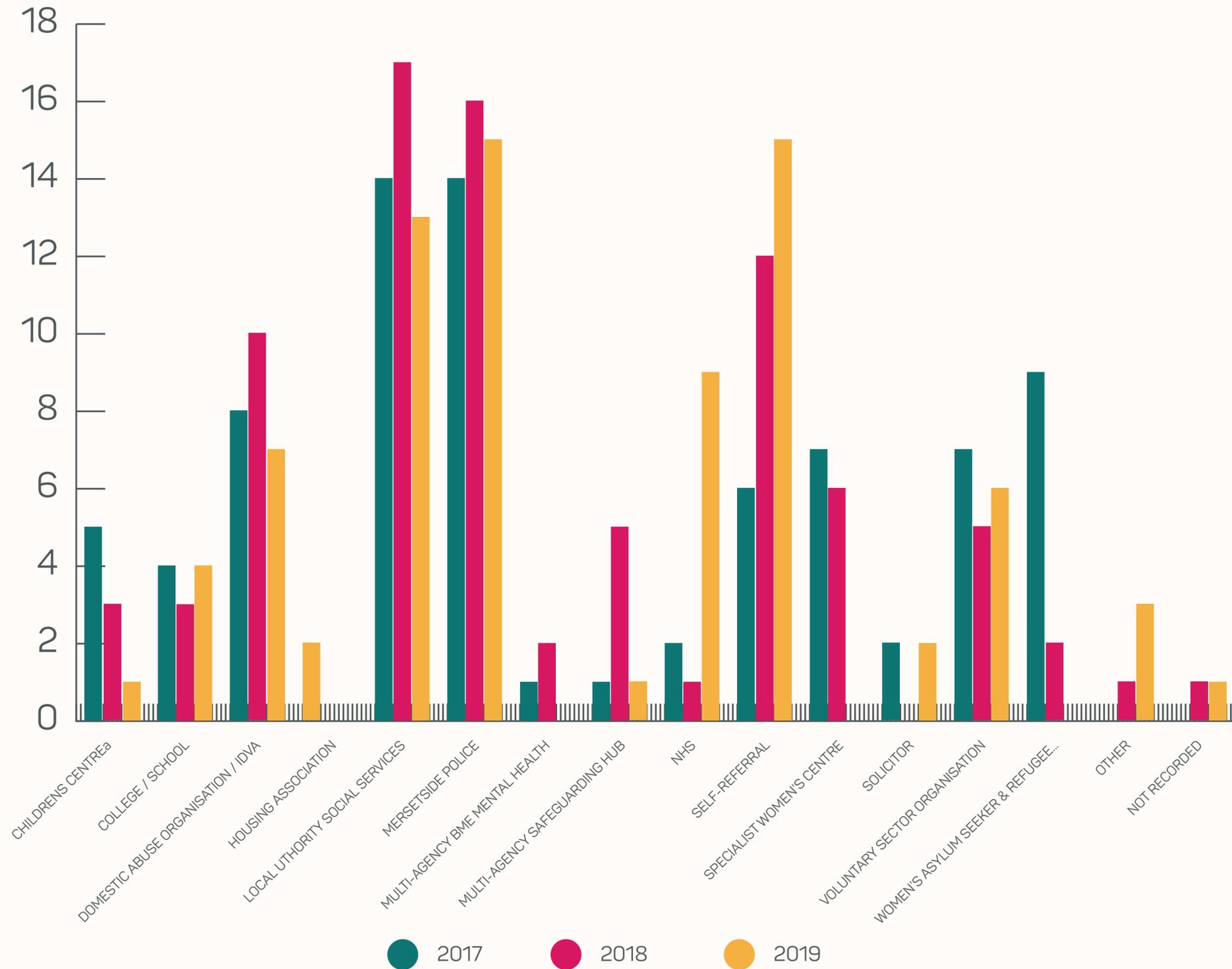
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E.g. Not only do women and girls more frequently experience FM, the impact is usually more severe for them than for men: domestic violence, sexual violence, rape, forced pregnancy, domestic servitude, movements policed, forced to withdraw from education and employment.

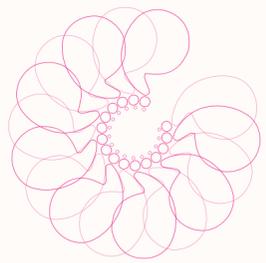
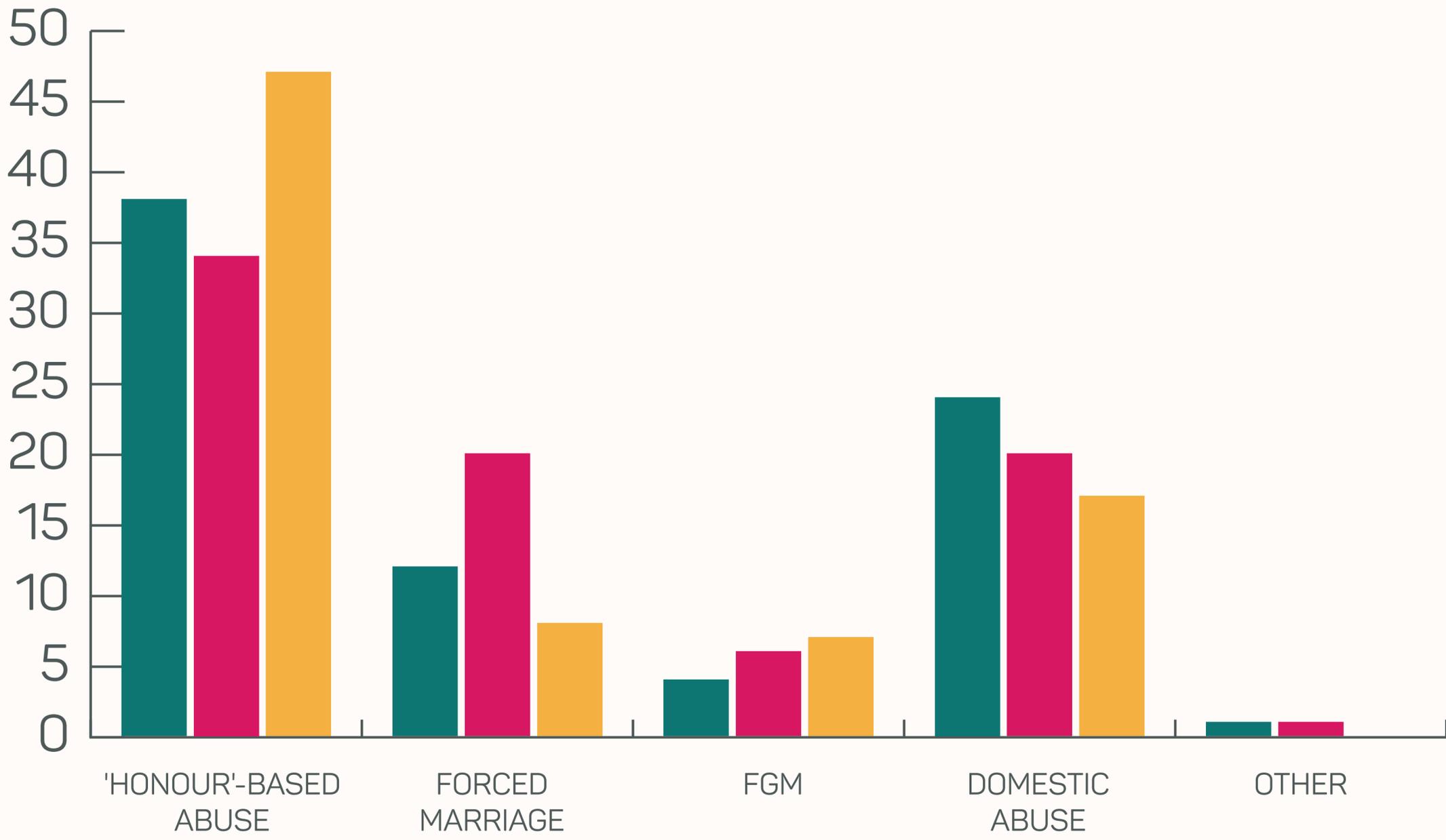
# SAVERA UK'S SUPPORT SERVICE:



# SOURCE OF REFERRALS



# ALL PRESENTING TYPES OF ABUSE OVER THE PROJECT



# HOLISTIC APPROACH



Statistics show the progress of Savera's project, the numbers of women and girls supported, the issues for which they sought help.



When women and girls first arrive at Savera they are usually extremely frightened and traumatised. It is often a pattern or a severe incident of domestic or 'honour'-based abuse, a threat of forced marriage, with sometimes fear of being murdered by family members or a wider network of perpetrators that has driven a woman to seek help.



Each number represents a real human story.



Savera has developed an effective model of holistic, tailored, proactive and intensive provision.

# SAFETY

*"In my country, even if a husband hit her, they say she need to go back... And one day it was too much, and I take the step. And I was scared, scared, scared ... I feel safe here. They said to me that if I need help at night time or day time we will help you."*



- Risk assessment
- Safeguarding
- Safety plan

# EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

*"I come first, she Support Worker (SW) say, "nice to meet you, welcome to Savera". And she listen to me very, very carefully. She listen from her heart. I was crying, she held my hand, she said, "don't worry, now you are not alone, we are with you, we believe you". So, she give me hope."*



Being able to talk about their experiences, being listened to, understood and believed, finding someone they could trust, and being given hope.

# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE



# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Journeys towards 'recovery' and empowerment take time and are rarely straightforward.

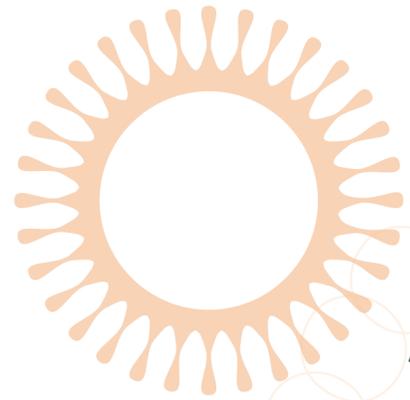
Continuing support is required to build relationships and trust when addressing the long-term impacts of abuse and trauma.

Essential components of trauma-informed support were evident when women were discussing the support they had received from Savera.

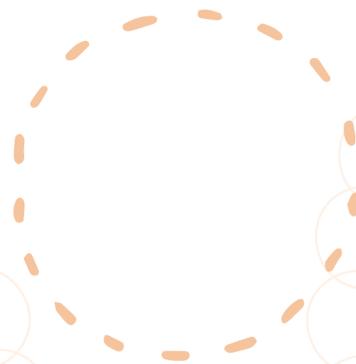
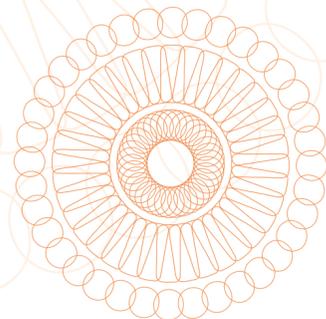
Key are:



# WOMEN-ONLY PROVISION



*"I'm glad it's women-only. There are barriers, certain things that I wouldn't tell a man. I don't think I would feel comfortable talking to a man."*



*"I think I feel safe knowing that it's all women. ... I feel at ease knowing it's all women staff, I don't have to think about what I can say."*



# PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Practical matters

Support

Safety provision



# PRACTICAL SUPPORT

*"[SW] help me about my papers with the Home Office, and she find for me solicitors. ... It's big thing. Because for three years in this country, there is no one who listen to me. The most important is she work with me about my papers. When I get my papers, I'm going to work and work so that I can get my children to live with me."*



Relocation and housing



Financial resources



Healthcare



Legal advice and representation



Links to immigration support



English classes



Liason with schools



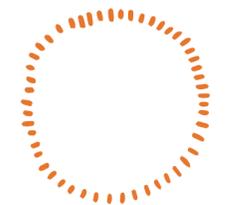
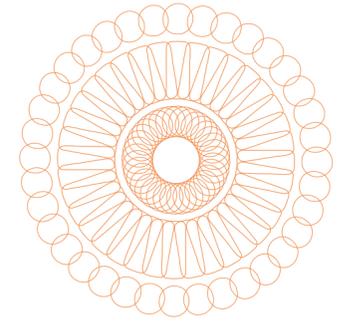
Foodbanks



Clothing and household needs



Education and work



# PRACTICAL SUPPORT

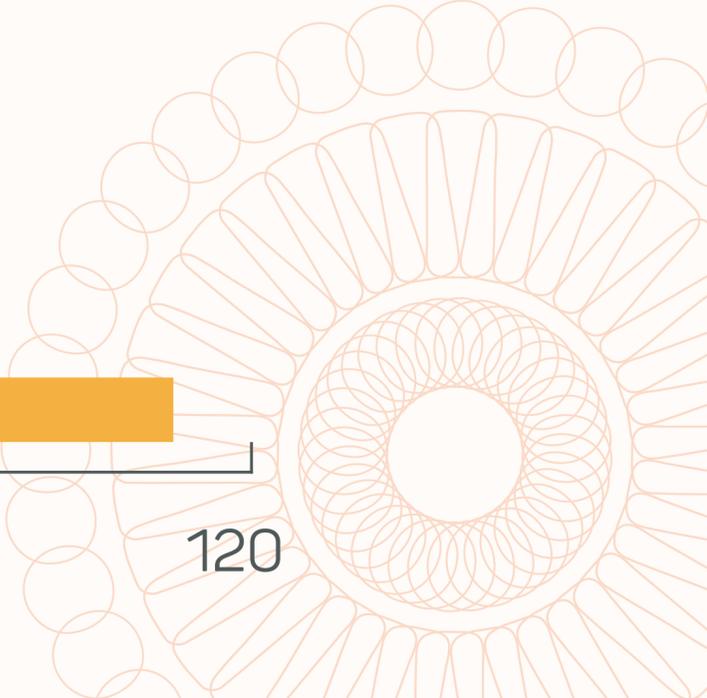
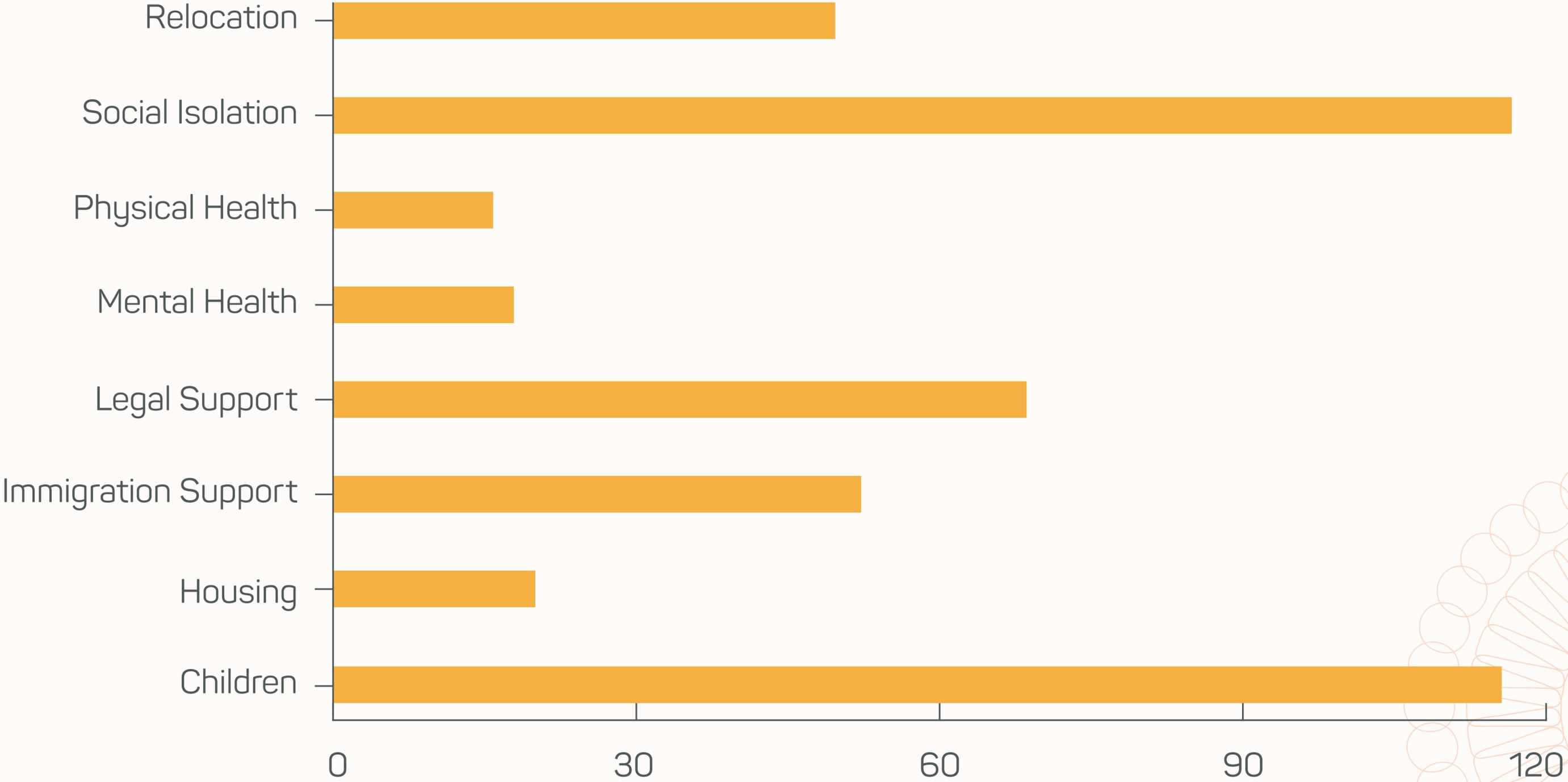
*Overwhelming sense of relief that they had found an organisation that could help them with their full range of support needs*

Again of particular importance knowing support was not time limited

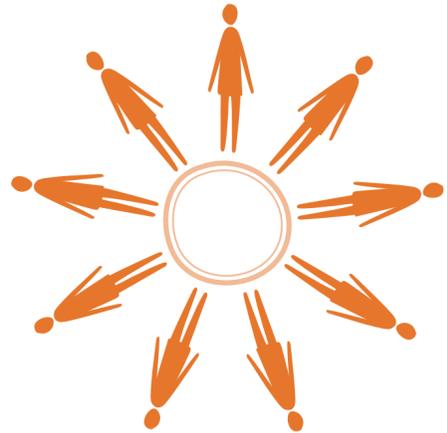
Call on Savera for ongoing help and advice

A key example of holistic support

# ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED OVER THE PROJECT

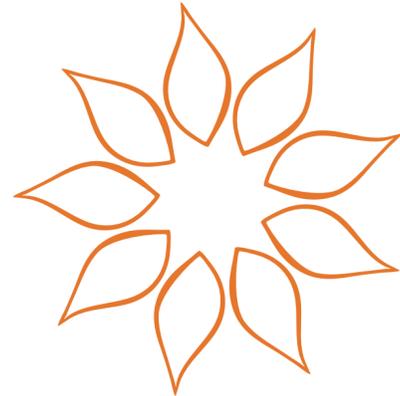


# CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERTISE



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Need for BME services



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Savera staff trained  
in cultural awareness  
and competence



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Understanding of  
complex needs



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Women feel safe,  
understood and  
not judged

*"It's hard explaining  
these things to people  
from a different culture,  
but when I come here,  
I don't have to explain.  
They know."*

# PARTNERSHIPS



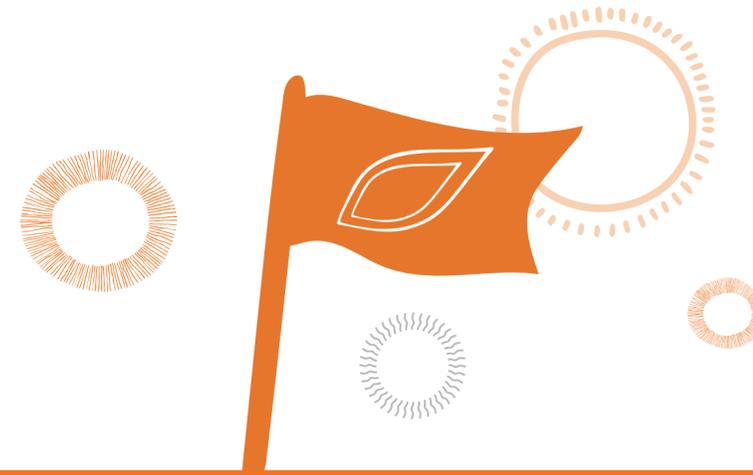
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Savera's expertise in working with BME women at risk of harmful practices makes it an invaluable partner and resource for a range of local agencies.



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While Savera has been proactive and competent in delivering training to a range of local agencies, there are gaps in local statutory and voluntary sector knowledge about harmful practices.



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Both Merseyside Police Public Protection Unit and Liverpool Safeguarding Unit reported that Savera is their 'go to' agency when they refer victims of harmful practices for ongoing support.



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Savera's expertise as a specialist service enables them to identify indicators of harmful practices, and to intervene when these have been overlooked. This has ensured the safety of victims and reinforced vital messages about risk and necessary safeguarding responses.

# STRENGTHENING LOCAL RESPONSES



# STRENGTHENING LOCAL RESPONSES



# LEARNING ABOUT RIGHTS



# LEARNING ABOUT RIGHTS

*"The majority of our women come from communities and cultures where this is all they know. This is what they've seen their mothers and their grandmothers do. You put your head down, and you nod, you don't have a voice, you don't speak back. So, when you take on the case ... you start to pick at those things. It's like peeling an onion, and you say, why do you think that is? And do you know that that's wrong? And this is how it can be; these are your rights. With a lot of our women, it's the fear. It's the fear of being judged, excluded, ostracised, shamed."*

Self-blame

Fear

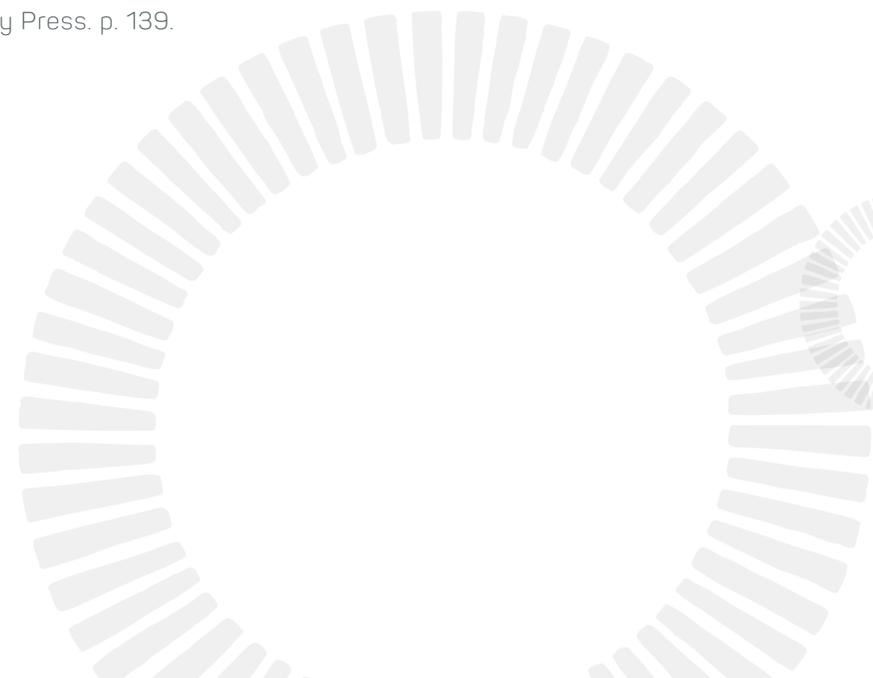
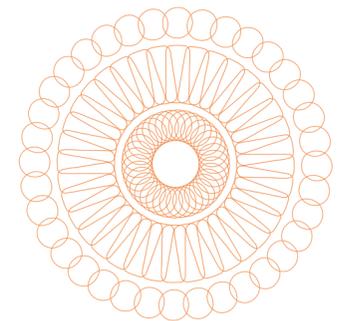
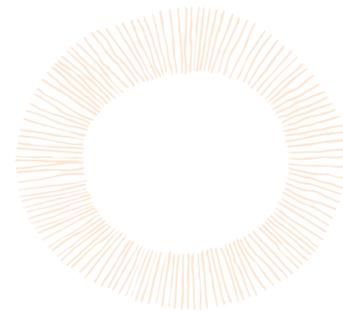
Loss

# UNDERSTANDING ABUSE

Naming involves making visible what was invisible, defining as unacceptable what was acceptable, and insisting that what was naturalized is problematic.

Kelly, L. (1988) *Surviving Sexual Violence*. Polity Press. p. 139.

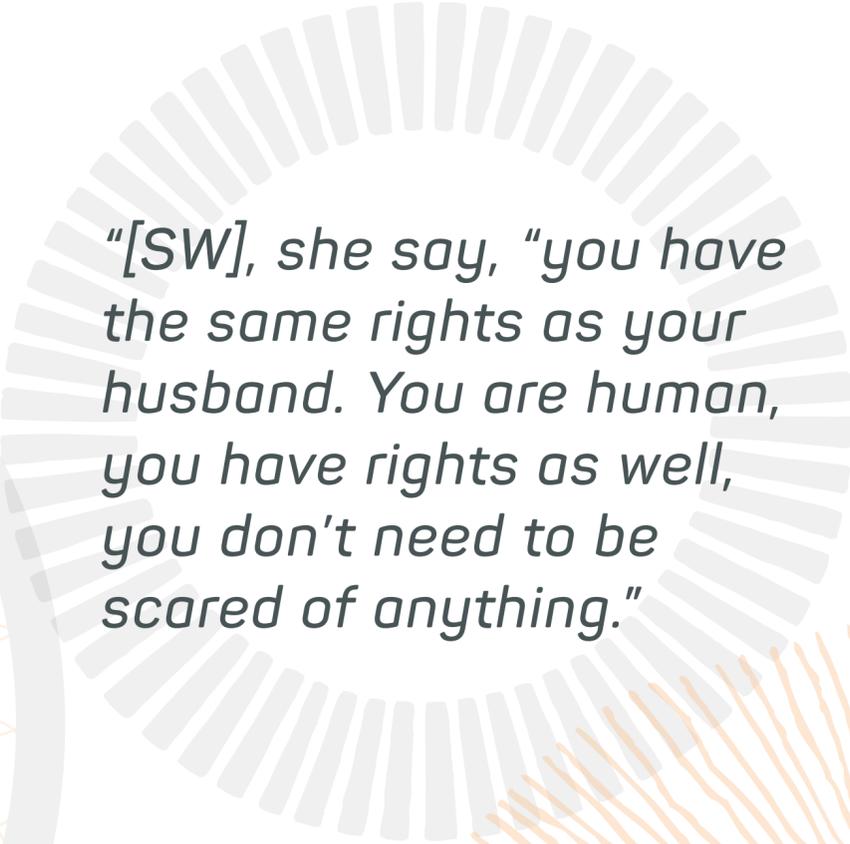
*"He used to keep me isolated and I thought it was part of the culture ... and after talking to [Savera SW] about my situation, I got to know that these things were about honour, and that I didn't do anything wrong."*



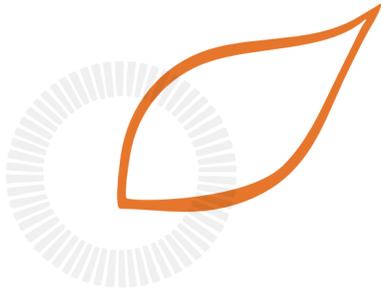
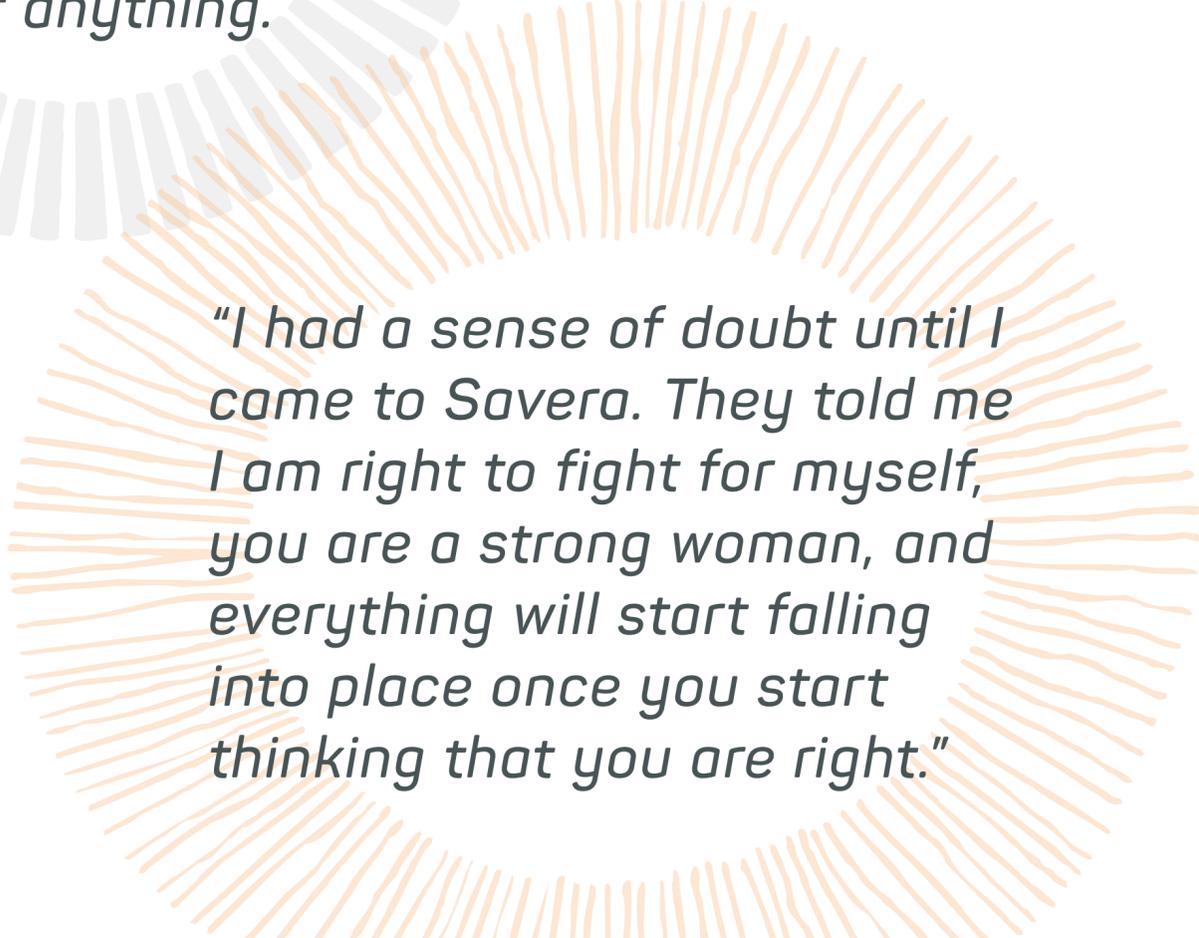
# OVERCOMING AND BELIEVING



*"I didn't believe in myself, I didn't think I could. Whatever my family conditioned me to believe I would believe, but [SW] told me that my happiness matters and that whatever I want for my life is what I deserve, and I believe her. Which is really hard for me to do because I've been led to believe that women don't matter."*



*"[SW], she say, "you have the same rights as your husband. You are human, you have rights as well, you don't need to be scared of anything."*

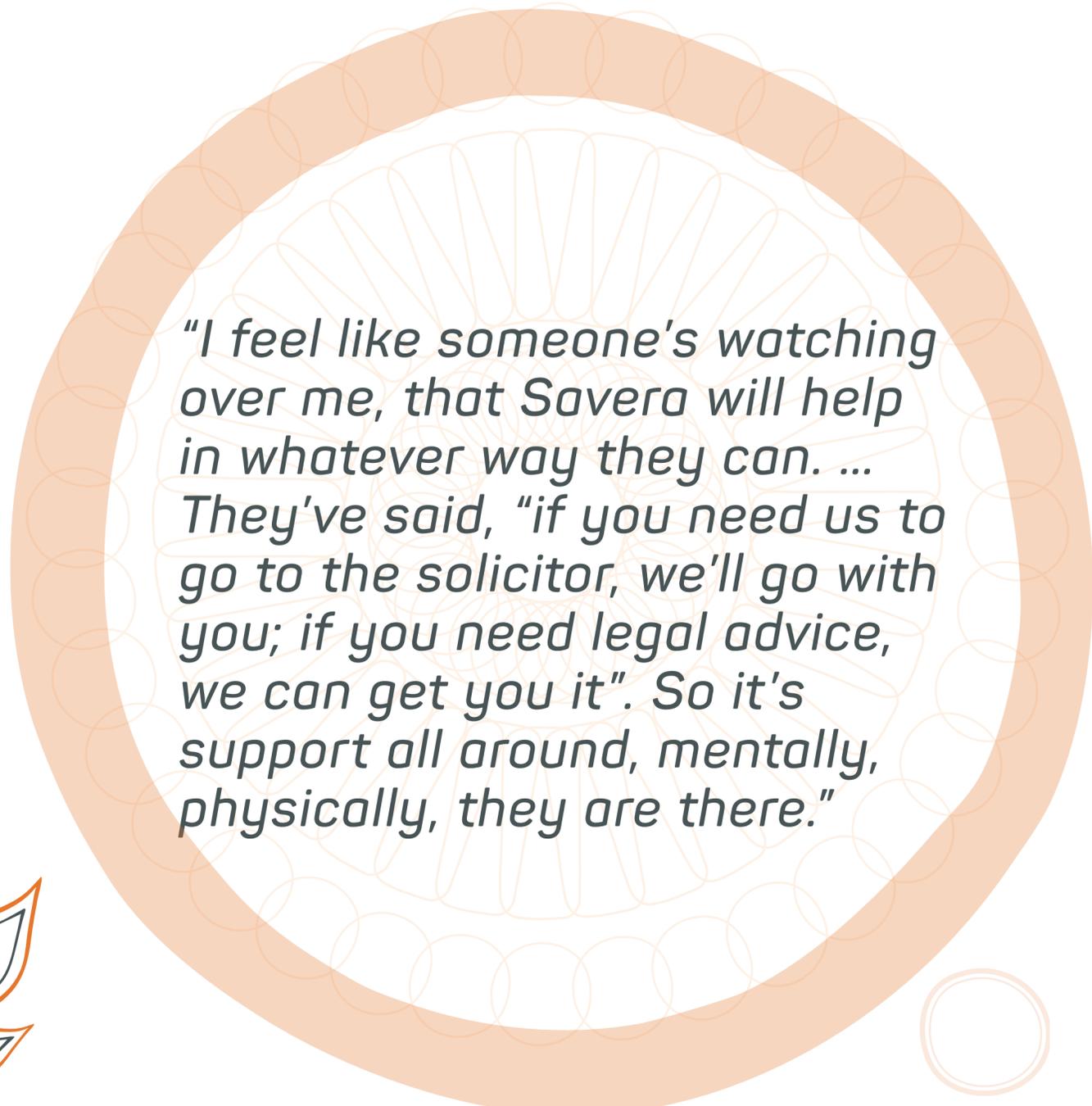


*"I had a sense of doubt until I came to Savera. They told me I am right to fight for myself, you are a strong woman, and everything will start falling into place once you start thinking that you are right."*

# EXERCISING RIGHTS



*"[SW] help me about my papers with the Home Office, and she find for me solicitors. ... It's big thing. Because for three years in this country, there is no one who listen to me."*



*"I feel like someone's watching over me, that Savera will help in whatever way they can. ... They've said, "if you need us to go to the solicitor, we'll go with you; if you need legal advice, we can get you it". So it's support all around, mentally, physically, they are there."*



# ENABLING

*"I said to her "call the solicitor; your English is great, it's improving every day and the more you use it, the better it will get. If you think the solicitor hasn't understood, then you can always call me, but I know you can do it yourself". So she did, and there were no issues about it. ... There has been such a significant change; yes, we had an input, but she's played a big part herself."*



# INCREASED ROLE AND VOICE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CO-PRODUCING SERVICES

*"It made me feel part of a team and part of a family sharing our experiences and understanding each other more."*



# EMPOWERING BME WOMEN AND GIRLS AT RISK OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR LIVES

An important aspect of female empowerment lies in women & girls knowing that they have legal and human rights with regard to gender-based violence, particularly when such violence is seen as a normal, everyday occurrence.

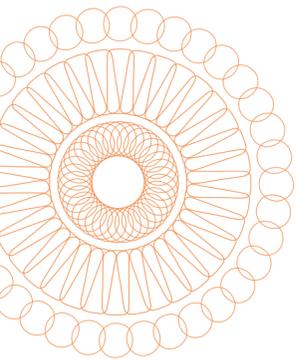
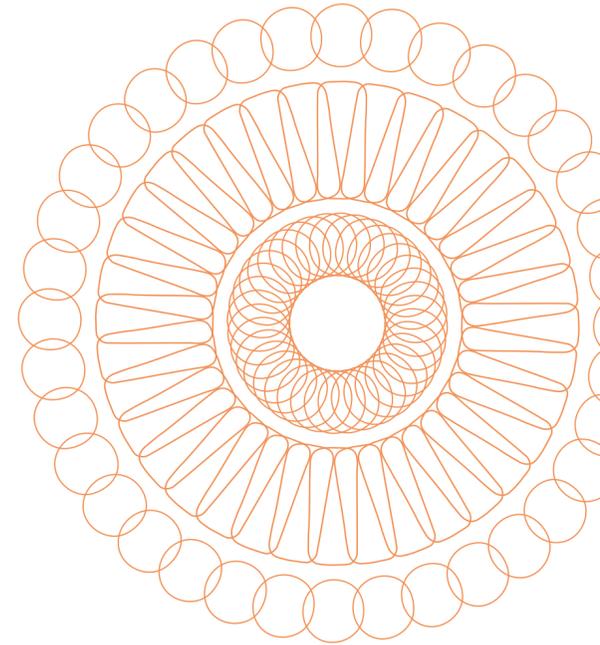
**Savera builds and facilitates:**



Strengths,  
skills and  
capabilities



Awareness,  
choices & self-  
determination



# EMPOWERMENT



live free

Self  
determination

Pass on...

# EMPOWERMENT

*"If I am not standing for myself, I will not be able to stand for my future. My future could be my child. And if that child is a girl, she will have to live the same life as I am living if I don't stand for myself. ... Because that doesn't happen out of destiny, we have to fight for it."*

*"I've made sure any events they [Savera] do, I'll bring my daughter along because I want her to see it isn't just me and her in this situation. ... And if my daughter can achieve what she wants to do, then going through what I've gone through and showing her you don't have to put up with it, I'll feel as her mum I've accomplished everything."*

SAVERA UK



EVALUATION COMPLIED AND PRESENTATION  
NARRATED BY **JACKIE PATINIOTIS**

Thank you