



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2027

### Introduction

The Astra Foundation was created in 2022 by a group of women who have been fighting violence against women and children for over 20 years. Our goal is to end violence against women and children by improving practices and prevention programmes, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. We have a team of people who are dedicated to this mission, including sociologists, psychologists, researchers, and practitioners. This strategy document outlines our goals and initiatives for the next five years (2023–2027) to achieve our mission.

### Vision

The Astra Foundation envisions a society in which women and children are protected from all forms of violence and have access to comprehensive psychological, medical, legal and social support.

### Mission

The Astra Foundation is dedicated to promoting a scientific approach to the prevention and response to violence against women and children, as well as to improving their health and well-being. We accomplish this by performing rigorous research, fostering collaborations, providing practise-oriented training courses, and implementing evidence-based prevention programmes.

# Our Goals and Strategies

## Goal 1: Strengthening the Evidence Base

- Bringing resources to the Caucasus and Central Asia to fund research on violence against women and children
- Conducting cutting-edge research to gain a better understanding of the nature, prevalence, and consequences of violence
- Disseminating research findings so that we can contribute to a better understanding of effective preventive and response strategies
- Translating research findings into practical recommendations to prevent and respond to violence against women and children

## Goal 2: Capacity Building

- Increasing policymakers' and practitioners' capacity for research uptake in order to ensure that research findings are converted into effective policies and programmes
- Creating and sharing methodology resources to promote methodologically sound, inclusive, trauma-informed, and gender-sensitive research
- Increasing decision-makers' knowledge of the importance of research in policymaking and programme development

## Goal 3: Enhancing partnerships

- Creating new partnerships between organisations and specialists to develop the field and enable information and learning sharing as well as increase the impact of preventive measures and response
- Promoting exchange among researchers, policymakers, practitioners and funders through conferences, seminars and meetings in order to develop collaboration and ensure that all stakeholders are involved in efforts to combat violence against women and children

## Goal 4: Creating Safe Spaces for Children

- Promoting awareness and understanding among managers, staff members, parents and teachers of the importance of preventing and responding to abuse and other unacceptable behavior in children's organizations
- Assisting organisations in development and implementation of 'Child Safeguarding Policies', i.e. sets of practical procedures to prevent, identify and respond to abuse and other unacceptable behavior in a children's organization.

## Expected Outcomes

### Goal 1: Strengthening the Evidence Base

- Increased number of rigorous and innovative research studies on violence prevention and response, using strong research designs
- Greater availability of funding for research on violence against women and children
- Increased awareness and understanding of evidence-based approaches to violence prevention and response among practitioners and policymakers

### Goal 2: Capacity Building

- Greater capacity among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to design, implement, and evaluate violence prevention and response interventions using rigorous research methods
- Increased collaboration and sharing of knowledge and resources among stakeholders

### Goal 3: Enhancing partnerships

- Increased collaboration and knowledge-sharing among organizations and initiatives focused on violence prevention and response
- Greater alignment and coordination of efforts towards shared goals
- Development of innovative partnerships between diverse stakeholders

### Goal 4: Creating Safe Spaces for Children

- Increased number of children's organizations with Child Safeguarding Policies in place, leading to safer environments for children and teenagers
- Greater awareness and understanding among managers, staff members, parents, teachers, and tutors of the importance of preventing and responding to abuse and other unacceptable behavior in children's organizations
- Improved ability of managers and staff members to identify and respond to abuse and other unacceptable behavior, through the implementation of practical procedures and training programs

## Guiding principles

1. Evidence-based approach: We use rigorous research and evaluation to understand and address violence against women and children and promote mental health.
2. Comprehensive health: We work to promote the health and wellbeing of women and children, recognizing access to comprehensive health services is a basic human right.
3. Prevention-oriented: Our efforts are focused on developing and implementing evidence-based prevention programs that reduce the risk of violence.
4. Partnership-based: We work with a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, academic institutions, and others, to achieve our goals.
5. Gender-sensitive: We recognize the unique experiences and needs of women and girls and promote gender equality and empowerment.
6. Trauma-informed: We incorporate trauma-informed approaches into our prevention and response efforts, recognizing many survivors may also have experienced trauma.
7. Culturally responsive: We develop programs and services that are responsive to local contexts and cultural norms, recognizing the diversity of the communities in which we work.
8. Rights-based: We promote and protect the human rights of women and children, recognizing their inherent dignity and worth.
9. Capacity-building: We build the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities to prevent violence against women and children and promote mental health, providing training and technical assistance for evidence-based prevention programs and services.