


WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2002b): More than a roof over your head. A survey of Quality Standards in European Women’s Refuges, Vienna

WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna


World Health Organisation (2004): The economic dimensions of interpersonal violence, Geneva
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- Support and protection of children;
- Withholding of custody and visiting rights for violent fathers;
- Migrant women and protection from violence - counselling and therapy in mother tongue; residence permit independent from respective husband, work permit and social benefits. residence permit on humanitarian grounds if no legal residence status;
- Women with disabilities - wheelchair compatibility in women's refuges. Measures to assist in special needs of women with sight or hearing impairments, and specially trained support personnel for women with mental disabilities;
- The unsuitability of inter-personal and family therapy as well as mediation in violent relationships;
- Work with perpetrators;
- Legal assistance and protection against violence;
- Intervention programs;
- The prosecution of domestic violence - the state, not the victim is responsible for bringing charges against the perpetrator;
- Guidelines for the work of the state prosecutor's office and the courts' special departments;
- Victims' assistance and support - providing support during court cases for women and children who have been subjected to domestic violence;
- Financial support and housing;
- Qualifications and work for women;
- Public relations and prevention;
- Prevention / Awareness-raising programs in schools and youth centres;
- Integral part of training and further training for professionals;
- Equality measures;
- National action plan - guaranteed implementation with participation of women's NGOs.
EXERCISE "MY OWN EXPERIENCE"

The facilitator asks the participants and recalls a situation in which you have experienced violence or witnessed violence. Be attentive to your own needs and check if you want to reveal the experience to others, e.g. if you want to communicate your memory only to your partner and not within a big group or not at all in this setting. If you choose to do so, relate the incident that came to your mind to the partner and vice versa. Thus one is telling the story and one is listening and supporting the self reflection by asking open, non-judgemental questions.

Questions for reflection on the incident

- What was the situation that came to your mind?
- What happened? What happened to you?
- How did you feel? What did you do in this situation?
- What strategy did you use to help yourself?
- Was there anybody around? Did you get support?
- Was it helpful or not? What was helpful? What was not helpful?
- What else would you have needed in this situation?
- Did you get support after the incident?
- How were people reacting? What was helpful?
- What was not helpful or even irritating or upsetting? Why?
- What else would you have needed?
- Whom did you tell about the incident? Whom did you decide not to tell and why?
- If you were injured or threatened during the incident - did you report to the police?
- If yes, how did you experience the police? What was helpful, what wasn’t?
- If you did not report to the police, what hindered you from doing so?
- Were there any other agencies involved (hospital, ambulance, social services, etc.)?
- If yes, what was your experience with them?
- How did the experience affect you? What impacts and consequences did it have on you?
- How did you process and integrate it?

The listening partner should support the telling partner to end the reflection by

- Thanking her/him that she/he shared the story.
- Supporting to decide if he/she wanted to share the story with the whole group or not and - if yes - which parts he/she would like to tell.
- Encouraging her/him to get further support if the incident is still upsetting and by - asking what she/he would need before continuing - a glass of water, a short walk around the block, etc.

Such methods are important in order to “get out” of the story again, to re-gain some distance and to look at it as something that is over.
**Method:** Exercise in pairs, reflection in the whole group.

**Time:**
- exercise in pairs (30 minutes)
- reflection in the whole group, plus and summary and in-put by trainer (60 minutes)
- total: 90 minutes
EXERCISE: "VIOLENCE IN MY FAMILY - WHAT TO DO?"

Reflect upon the following story

You are living in a small town somewhere in Europe. Your sister and her family live nearby. Unfortunately, your sister's marriage is not going well and her husband abuses her. She is ashamed to talk about it, but everyone in the family knows. Her husband, your brother-in-law, is a member of the fire brigade in your municipality and everybody knows him. On one occasion, there is an especially grave incident, in which your brother-in-law abuses your sister so badly that their 13-year-old son calls the police. The police evict your brother-in-law from the dwelling, the incident is reported and legal proceedings are started against him. Your sister is frightened about the consequences and wants to stop legal proceedings.

Discuss this situation regarding to the following questions

- How would you react to this situation? How would you feel?
- What would you do to support your sister?
- What do you think would be helpful for your sister in this situation (from the side of the family)?
- What would be unhelpful and make the situation more difficult for her?
- What support would be helpful from outside?
- What would not be helpful?
- What kind of support would your nephew need?
- What should be done by whom and why?

After the group work, share your experiences and name the actions and efforts that would be helpful in such a situation, not only for the sister but also for other family members. The results should be visualised on a flip-chart.
ROLE PLAY NEGOTIATIONS FOR FUNDING

Short introduction

The goal of this exercise is to develop and try different strategies in form of a role play in order to get funding for a women's refuge.

Situation

Three members of the initiative "A women's refuge for our town" have an appointment with the mayor to present their project in the mayor's office. An assistant to the mayor (the advisor for equality issues, somebody from the social department - here the actors playing the mayor and her/his assistant can decide what function the assistant holds).

Roles: - 3 members of the initiative
   - the mayor, the assistant
   - observers

Notes for trainers

After the role play reflect on the situation played by asking the following questions:

- To the actors playing the members of the initiative:
  - What was your goal for the meeting?
  - What strategy did you follow?
  - How did it go? Are you satisfied with your negotiations?
  - Are you satisfied with the results? What did you achieve?
  - What did you not achieve?
  - What went wrong?
  - What would you do differently the next time?

To the actors playing the mayor and the assistant

- What was your goal for the meeting?
- What strategy did you follow?
- How did it go? Are you satisfied with the negotiations?
- What did you achieve, are you satisfied with the results?
- Which arguments/strategies of the member of the initiative were convincing and why? Which were not convincing and why?
- What advice would you give to the initiative to be more successful and convincing?
EXERCISE: "MY AGENCY SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF MYSELF AS A SERVICE USER"\textsuperscript{1}

One person should start reflecting and the role of the other is to support this person by asking the following (or other questions) and by writing down the results on a flip-chart as a map of positive and negative points in service provision. Then you should take turns.

Questions to be answered

- How would it be to use your service?
- Is it easy to find the telephone number and the address?
- How does the first contact look like?
- Is it easy to get an appointment?
- How do you find the address? Is it accessible to survivors with disabilities?
  Would you like the place?
- Who would open the door for you and how would the first encounter look?
- Is the place safe? Do you feel welcome?
- Do you have to wait, and if so, where?
- Can you bring the children; are there any childcare facilities?
- Is there information material, posters, leaflets indicating the agency is aware of the problem?
- Who talks to you first and in which setting?
- Is there a translator or native-speaking counsellor?
- Is there time and space for you, without disturbance?
- Can you talk to someone confidentially and without others listening?
- Does the person talking to you listen and try to understand without pressure and prejudices?
- What kind of help is offered to you? How concrete is the help?
- Would you be able to develop trust in the agency? Why? Why not?
- Are you referred to other agencies? Is that satisfactory?
- Are you helped to make contact? Is the contact made for you?
- Would you be satisfied with the service in general? Why? Why not?

Share then some of the group's experiences during discussion.

Try to take the results of this exercise back to your agency and to discuss it there or do the exercise together with your colleagues. This can be used as a regular instrument to improve service provision.

PREREQUISITES FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS - GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE ORGANIZATION

Different organizations may have different needs and existing basics. This will vary if the organization has already been in existence for a while or is newly set up. To consider "corporate identity" and to see that all refuge employees agree on pre-conditions for PR is crucial. Answer the following questions which will help in developing and/or reviewing a corporate identity:

1. Name: Does an agreement on name and acronym of the organization exist?

2. Self image: What is the refuge about, which services can it offer? What is the understanding of the refuge employees and that of the responsible women of a women's refuge? Positive self-image ("We, the refuge employees, are proud of our work") and a solution-based (vs. problem-based) approach are prerequisites for successful PR. The following questions will help in developing such a self image:
   - What makes your program and/or organization unique?
   - How are your efforts making a difference in the community?
   - What is the refuge about, which services can it offer, when can the refuge be contacted?
   - What is the understanding of the refuge employees and that of the responsible women of a women's refuge? What is a/our refuge, and what is it NOT?
   - What are some of your most impressive accomplishments?
   - What are some obstacles or challenges that your organization has overcome?
   - Are there any comments from survivors, community members, allied agencies, or government people on your services?

3. Guiding principles are strongly connected to the self image. Review whether participants can agree on the key messages of the organization? Can all team members identify with those messages? E.g. the Austrian Women's Shelter Network has one guideline which is: "There is never a justification for violence". This sentence is included in letters, emails, fact sheets, press releases, etc. Tell participants not to worry if they do not find a solution and agreement during the exercise, but there should be time in follow-up team meetings for further reflection.

4. Logo, letterhead: does a logo already exist? If not, draft your ideas. Again participants should not worry if they do not find a solution and agreement during the exercise, but there should be time in team meetings for further reflection. Also, a simple solution is desirable; logos can be reviewed over time and changed as well. A logo, letterhead is important to be more visible in public.

5. When can the organization be contacted?

6. Who are/could be the contact person(s) responsible for PR within the organization? Maybe participants will have more concrete ideas after the end of this part of the training.
7. Brochures, folders, websites:
- What kind of information already exists and is "public"?
- Does a brochure already exist?
- Does a website already exist?
- Do they reveal the key messages and the self image you want to convey?
- Which activities need to be done regularly (such as an annual report)?

8. Security and safety: What are implications when providing information about our refuge in terms of safety and confidentiality (address of shelter, names of shelter staff in reports, etc.)?

Present the results of your discussion to the group and try to agree on steps to be followed up in the organization (during staff meetings etc.).
PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK - KEY MESSAGES AND KEY INSTRUMENTS

Draft a PR plan for a women’s refuge, to identify aims and target groups (aims should be tailored to target groups), methods, means and activities to reach the aims as well as (simple) instruments for evaluation. Aims should be realistic and defined in a clear way so that it is possible to check if they have been reached or not, and why. The plan should then be written on a flip-chart and presented to the others.

Questions for discussion

- Which target groups can be reached? (Prioritize which target group should be reached first?)
- What should be the key message for the target groups? What is the goal?
- By which means/instruments can this goal be reached? (See checklist below). Prioritize the means/PR instruments to be used. What methods have the highest multiplication factor in relation to our means? What (else) do you need to use these PR instruments? What would be realistic instruments to address certain target group and to your capacities? Coalition for PR work? Is there a women’s network in your country that could help with PR activities?
- Draft a timeframe and outline the short term, mid term, and long term goals.
- Who could be responsible in your organization for carrying out such activities? What competences should this person have/acquire?
- What kind of activities need to be done regularly?
- What are the implications of providing information about our refuge in terms of safety and confidentiality?

Checklist on Public Relations key instruments¹

- Website;
- Regular newsletter;
- Press releases and newspaper articles;
- Press conferences;
- Information material, leaflets, flyers, folders;
- Press map (containing information on VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN and your organization);
- Data, fact sheets;
- Annual report;
- Radio, television and newspaper interviews;
- Sensitizing the media to the subject;
- Campaigns (e.g. 16 days against violence campaign, CoE Camapign 2006);
- Organization of events such as fund-raising parties, public exhibitions, marches;
- Stickers for buses, taxis, public transport;
- TV “advertisements”;

¹ List adapted from Manual Away from Violence (2004) page. 80
- Posters for schools, youth hostels, hospitals, doctors, lawyers, social services, counselling centres, churches;
- Collaboration with politicians and other decision-makers;
- Participation in panels, expert meetings, conferences or political lectures;
- Acceptance of invitations by political parties, local associations, social organizations etc.;
- Public speak-out (letting victims and relatives of victims talk publicly);
- Policy papers;
- Comments on legislation;
- Information of other women’s NGOs, networking;
- Lobbying;
- Others.
DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Two situations should be played (each about 10 Minutes):
1. Contacting the journalist, getting his/her interest; communicating the subject of DV
2. Interview with a survivor

Role description

Journalist: You are quite open to human rights issues, but you don’t have too much knowledge on the issue of VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. Deadlines are tight and the best thing that could happen to you is a good story. According to your opinion, legal questions should always be connected to a story in order to make it more interesting for people to read, but things have to be clear, fast and straight, facts, data and statistics are also useful for you.

Shelter staff: You want to announce something about your shelter (or another subject happening) or that human rights issues are also issues of violence against women. You don’t want a tragedy to have to happen in order to get journalists interested. Actually, you are interested in regular contact with the media, but how? You decide to contact a journalist who has already written about human rights issues.

Survivor: You’ve already been staying in the shelter quite a while and are on the path to regaining some strength. You are eager to share your story with others in order to prevent violence and to express to others that there is a way out.

Observers: Take notes on what is happening, your own thoughts, ideas, impressions, give feedback.

Questions for first part of the role play

Journalist: What kind of information do you need? In which form should this information be presented. When did the shelter staff catch your interest, when not? What was helpful for you, what wasn’t? How did you feel during the role play? What was the impression you got from the shelter staff?

Shelter Staff: How did you feel during the role play? What was your impression of the journalist? Were your ideas accepted? Which situation was difficult, which easy, what has, or could have helped?

Survivor/Observer: How did the communication look through the eyes of a survivor, or through the eyes of the observer?
Questions for second role play

Survivor: How did you feel during the role play? Was it as you would have wished, or different? Did you feel prepared for what happened? How did you feel after the role play? What was helpful and what wasn’t?

Journalist: How did you feel during the role play? Was it as you would have wished, or different? Did you feel prepared for what happened? How did you feel after the role play? What was helpful and what wasn’t?

General questions concerning communication, security and safety

What kind of information should be given to a journalist and which not? What kind of information is useful for shelter employees and journalists - how should it be presented?
What risks can occur when a survivor gives an interview (concerning anonymity, impact, perpetrator recognizes her, etc.)
Information

Documentation of person-related data, internal statistics which is important for reports but also might involve sensitive and confidential data. It is very important for a refuge to keep internal statistics in which all person-related data are made anonymous. Which details are collected and analysed and how detailed the data should be is basically up to the individual refuge - this should be gauged according to the refuge’s specific needs.

Further, the manual "Away from Violence" highlighted the following areas of documentation\(^1\) as a guideline

- How many residents (women and children separately) are in the house (on a daily / weekly / monthly basis)?
- How long do women stay?
- If it is their first (second, third, etc.) stay?
- How old are they?
- How many children do they have?
- How old are the children?
- Their marital status?
- Their relationship with the perpetrator?
- How long had the abuse been going on before they sought shelter in the refuge?
- The type of violence the women were subjected to?
- The type of violence the children were subjected to?
- How long had the children been abused?
- The circumstances of leaving the refuge (back to the perpetrator, new apartment, etc.)?

Statistics may also include data relating to

- The women’s nationality;
- Their domicile;
- Their legal status;

However, the examples above are likely to be sensitive data. A lot of thought should be given to which data are made public and which data are kept solely for internal purposes.

\(^1\) From Manual Away from Violence p. 93
Instruction for exercise: analysis of confidentiality and privacy protection

An analysis of confidentiality and privacy protection should help in decisions on whether to share private information that has been entrusted in confidence. Either first draft questions for documentation (e.g. the list above and other information needed for funding) or use the documentation form from your own shelter and look it through according to the following questions:

1. Why do I need this information?
2. Is my request for this information to the benefit of the client being asked to provide this information?
3. Who will have access to the information if it is requested and obtained?
4. What pieces of information will they have access to?
5. Why will those individuals be allowed to access this information?
6. What information was the client given about her rights to control the information that she chooses to give?
7. What kind of information has the client been given on her rights to control the dissemination of the information once she has given over her personal history?
8. Is the sharing of private information implicitly or explicitly a condition for service?
9. Is this information just as useful for the intended purpose without identifying the individual?

Discuss in group and plenary with other professional groups with which you are in contact, how much information about the woman is provided, in which form and whether the woman has knowledge of it?

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FACTS AND FIGURES ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN¹

Prevalence studies on violence against women carried out in European countries vary by methodology, sampling and definition of violence, and therefore are not directly comparable. Still one can get an estimation on the prevalence of violence against women: the results suggest a lifetime prevalence of physical violence against women in one fifth to one quarter of women and about one tenth of women who have suffered sexual violence involving force. The majority of violent acts are carried out by men. Figures for the prevalence of all forms of violence, including stalking, are as high as 45 per cent (Hagemann-White 2006).

The most recent study was carried out in Italy by ISTAT in 2006. "6 million 743 thousand women, between 16 and 70 years of age, are estimated as victims of physical or sexual violence during their lifetime (31,9 per cent of women in the considered age group). 5 million women were victims of sexual violence (23,7 per cent), 3 million 961 thousand women were victims of physically violent acts (18,8 per cent). About 1 million women were victims of rapes or attempted rapes (4,8 per cent). 14,3 per cent of women in a current relationship or in a previous one, were victims of at least one episode of physical or sexual violence by their partner. Considering only women with an ex-partner, percentage rises to 17,3 per cent. 24,7 per cent of women were victims of violent acts by another man. While physical violence is more frequently perpetrated by partners (12 per cent, as opposed to 9,8 per cent), the opposite applies to sexual violence (6,1 per cent, as opposed to 20,4 per cent), and this is mainly due to sexual harassment. The difference is almost negligible as far as rapes and attempted rapes are concerned".

A study carried out in Germany in 2004 by Müller and Schröttle showed that 40 per cent of women older than 15 had experienced physical and/or sexual violence. 37 per cent of the women had experienced physical violence, 13 per cent sexual violence independently of the relationship between victim and perpetrator. 25 per cent of physical and/or sexual violence, 23 per cent of physical violence and 7 per cent of sexual violence happens in intimate or partner relationships. Müller and Schröttle also gave information on the data of European prevalence studies (see table at the end of the handout):

A large-scale French prevalence study (2003) showed that 17 per cent of the women interviewed had been subjected to physical violence and 5 per cent of women to sexual violence over the last 12 months (in Schröttle, Müller 2004). Young women in the age group 20 to 24 were twice as vulnerable to partner abuse as women over 45.

In Lithuania, in a study by Reingardiene (2002, 2003), 23 per cent of women responded to having experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their current relationship, 46,3 per cent of women in their previous relationship. (Schröttle, Martinez 2006a).

According to the Finnish study (1998) by Heiskanen, Piispa, 40 per cent of adult women have been victims of male physical or sexual violence or threats after their 15th birthday, 14 per cent in the course of the last 12 months. The lifetime prevalence (after the 15th birthday) of having experienced male physical

¹ Adapted from: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna, see pages 14-16.
violence was 30 per cent and the corresponding one-year figure was 7 per cent. 20 per cent of the women interviewed were living with their husbands or partners and had suffered physical or sexual abuse or the threat of death by their partner, 45 per cent by their previous partner. Moreover, 6 per cent had actually suffered violence at the hands of their partners during the preceding twelve months, 19 per cent by their previous partner (in Schröttle, Müller 2004).

According a study carried out in Sweden by Lundgren, Heimer, Westerstrand, Kalliokoski (2001), almost every second woman, i.e. 46 per cent, has been subjected to violence by a man since her fifteenth birthday. 56 per cent of all women have been sexually harassed. Nearly one woman in four between 18 and 24 years of age has been subjected to violence in the last year (last 12 months period).

The following studies are also described in the Manual "Away from Violence": In Britain, it is estimated that 48 per cent of all female murders are the result of women being killed by their partners, compared with 6 per cent of male victims of homicide (WAFE, February 1998,1). On average, two women per week are killed in England and Wales by their partners/ex-partners (Mirlees-Black, 1995).

A 1997 Portuguese study revealed that 43 per cent of acts of violence were committed within the family. A Belgian study in 1998 indicated that 68 per cent of women had been the victims of physical or sexual violence (European Women’s Lobby, 2000). Data from the first Greek national study involving 1,200 women aged 18 years or older show that 36 per cent of them have suffered physical abuse from their husband or partner (KETHI, 2003), and data from the first Spanish national survey on domestic violence conducted in 1999 and involving more than 2,000 women aged 18 years or older show that 14.2 per cent of them have been victims of domestic violence at least once, and that 4.2 per cent are repeatedly abused (The Lancet, 2000).

In the Dutch study (1997), 65 per cent of the female respondents who spoke about their experiences of abuse by their current partner said that they had been subjected to mild forms of violence, 26 per cent to moderate violence and 7 per cent to severe violence. Two per cent said they had been subjected to very severe violence. However, these figures changed significantly in relation to previous relationships. Here, 33 per cent had suffered severe abuse, 21 per cent moderate abuse and 23 per cent mild abuse.

A Swiss study carried out in 2003 by Daniela Gloor and Hanna Meier corroborated the high percentage levels above. In the survey of just under 1,800 patients in a gynaecology clinic in Zurich, one respondent in ten said that she had suffered violence in the previous twelve-month period. The highest proportion of perpetrators was accounted for by the partners (7.9 per cent). More than three quarters of the respondents (76.8 per cent) said that they had at least once been subjected to physical abuse and infringement of their personal freedom by a person in their immediate social environment since the age of fifteen (Gloor/Meier 2004).

Knowing the prevalence of interpersonal violence is one important step towards intervention and prevention as well as to set up prevention and intervention programs especially for policy makers. Germany, Finland, and Sweden show the highest prevalence rate of 40-46 per cent, which might also be due to country differences in taboo and reporting of violence (Martinez, M./ Schröttle, M. et al. (2006b).

Thus results of prevalence studies; despite their difference in methodology, sampling and definition of violence; show violence against women as a severe and pervasive human rights violation across Europe and throughout the world (Bräutigam 2006). Domestic violence also costs society as a whole, not only the women who are abused. A study carried out by Sylvia Walby shows that domestic violence costs the U.K.
£23 billion a year, including over £3 billion for state services, such as the criminal justice system, emergency housing and health care; £3 billion in lost economic output; and £17 billion in human costs (Walby 2004).

References to all studies mentioned can be found in the reference list as well as in the information/research section of the WAVE database for download.
Domestic violence against women and children does not consist of individual acts of violence. It is a pattern of physical, psychological, sexual and social/financial violence. The children of women victims of violence are always affected by the violence, either directly or indirectly or both; thus violence against the mother is also violence against the children.

**Physical violence**

Physical violence ranges from "just a slap in the face" to manslaughter, attempted murder and murder. It includes any form of abuse, such as pushing, kicking, beating, pulling the victim's hair, burning her, pushing her out of the window, abusing her with objects, wounding her with weapons, etc. This may cause injuries such as bruises, contusions, lacerations, teeth knocked out, fractures or cuts, which may be life-endangering and lead to permanent impairment. Women are abused by violent partners also during pregnancy, which may result in complications or miscarriage. Injuries due to abuse are often found on the head, neck, throat, breast and lower abdominal regions.

**Psychological violence**

This includes:
- Isolation;
- Threats, bullying and intimidation;
- Harassment, persecution, terror;
- Coercion, use of force;
- Insults, humiliation, defamation;
- Economic violence, abuse of dependence situations;
- Damage to property, cruelty to the victim’s pets, etc.

**Examples**

**Threats, bullying and intimidation** are frequent forms of psychological violence. Typically, threats and bullying include statements such as: I'll kill you if you leave me; I'll kill the whole family if you call the police; you'll pay dearly if you tell anybody; I'll take the children away; the welfare officer will take the children away from you; nobody will believe you anyway; if you call the police you will be deported; etc. Abusers may also threaten to injure third persons (children, relatives) or to torment pets in order to get what they want. Threats and intimidation even make physical violence unnecessary, so to speak, because the fear of it is frightening enough. As a result, the victims live in constant fear.

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1 Adapteed from: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna, see pages 14-16
Control, harassment and psychological terror, such as repeated phone calls, phone calls during the night, threatening letters, spying on the victim and persecution of her at work and at home: Such forms of violence are also referred to as stalking. They are used both within relationships to maintain control over the victim and to intimidate her, and also during the separation stage or after separation. Victims are often persecuted, harassed and threatened for months or even years after the end of the relationship.

Insults, humiliation and defamation aim to destroy the victim’s self-confidence and mental health. In the course of time, the woman concerned will cease to have faith in herself, her worth and her identity and will no longer believe that she has any rights and may take decisions herself. This kind of violence includes exposing the victim to ridicule and making insulting comments about her appearance or her character. Typical humiliating statements are that the woman is mad or mentally ill, that she is making things up or that she is in danger of committing suicide. Abusers often say this to distract others from their deeds and to present the woman herself as a problem.

Economic violence refers to inequality in the access to and control of the family’s resources. This may mean that the husband’s maintenance payments are insufficient and/or that he makes a secret of his income, his property and his expenses.

Isolation is a central strategy that violent partners use in order to maintain control over their victims, to weaken them and to prevent them from seeking help. Typical methods of isolation include denying a woman any contact with her relatives or friends, shutting her in at home, forbidding her to leave the house alone, forbidding her to use the phone, taking away her mobile phone, cancelling phone contracts, taking away the car, etc.

Sexual violence includes any sexual act or sexual behaviour which a woman is forced to engage in or which is imposed upon her. Sexual violence is an act of violence and not a result of a sexual drive that cannot be controlled. Examples of sexual violence include: rape (forced vaginal, oral or anal penetration), penetration with objects, forcing a woman to perform sexual acts that she regards as degrading or humiliating, forcing her to watch pornography, etc.

Summary

It is difficult to talk about violence one has had to suffer, in particular sexual violence. Agencies that provide help must be aware of this and cannot take it for granted that victims will readily talk about their abuse or even go into great detail. It is essential to be sensitive towards victims, to acknowledge the fact that they did decide to take steps for themselves, and to encourage them to talk about violence. This requires a relationship of trust. The women concerned must be sure that the information they provide will not be misused or even used against them.

Patterns of violence - power and control

Violent partners usually exert several forms of violence: Physical and sexual violence are also expressions of psychological violence. Physical violence leaves traces in the form of injuries which may betray the abuser. Therefore, violence is often deliberately used in a way that avoids visible injuries. For instance, women are beaten with wet cloths or hit on body parts that are covered by clothing. A frequent
strategy is to use violence in situations where no witnesses are present. The abuser then denies having been violent and says, for instance, that the victim has inflicted any injuries herself.

In some violent relationships, the partner does not use physical violence. In such cases, it may be particularly hard for the victim to prove the abuse. Some of the women affected say that their partners stopped using physical violence after they had been reported to the police or after they had taken part in a programme for abusers, but that they continued to use psychological violence.

In most cases, violence against women and children is not an isolated act, but an ongoing strategy that aims to secure a hold on the victim. Thus, a relationship of violence exists, the goal of which is to have power and to exercise control so that the victim will be subservient to the abuser and cannot escape his influence.

Thus, the problem of domestic violence against women and children is characterised by relationships of power and violence, with varying degrees of intensity. It is of central importance to look into each individual case and find out which forms and strategies of violence are used, how much power the violent partner exercises, and which opportunities, if any, the victim has to take steps against this or to escape the violent relationship.
REASONS: WHY DOESN’T A VICTIM LEAVE HER VIOLENT PARTNER?

Unfortunately, the problem of violence against women is still marked by myths and prejudices in our societies. The tendency to blame the victim for what has happened is not only a typical strategy of abusers to justify the abuse, but is an attitude that is also common among the general public and also among representatives of relevant institutions. A question frequently asked in this context is, "Why didn’t the abused woman leave the perpetrator and why did she go back to him after a separation?" Such questions are not always aimed at understanding the situation of the abused, but often include an implicit reproach or prejudice, i.e., that the victim is actually seeking violence and wants it. Therefore, it is important to understand that a survivor never stays in a relationship because of the violence she experiences, but in spite of it. Each situation is unique, and it is essential to take the individual situation of each survivor of violence into account and to respond in a sensitive, empathetic way in order to understand the situation and to empower the victim. The paragraphs below list a number of typical reasons why women who suffer violence do not leave their partners. A central reason, i.e., the bond established with the violent partner (the Stockholm Syndrome), has already been described.

Separation is a difficult process that takes time

Leaving a partner is a difficult process for anybody, and it takes time. Marriage and family are concepts of high social value, and the decision to end a relationship is not taken easily. You ponder the pros and cons; you do not carry through the separation, but try again to continue the marriage or relationship. The more bonds there are that tie a couple to each other, e.g., children or joint property, the more difficult it is to end the relationship. Women, through cultural and social rules, are educated to endure a great deal. In families where traditional, patriarchal values play an important role, women have very little freedom to leave their partners and to lead independent lives. Thus, the way in which a woman affected by violence will take a decision (i.e., by attempting separation, then returning to the partner) is by no means unusual, but rather is a normal process. Often, the woman concerned is under great pressure by her own or her partner’s family, or both families, and is urged to give her spouse another chance and to make it up. In many cases, a definitive separation only takes place after several attempts have failed and if the woman can no longer hope for a change for the better.

The wish to put an end to the violence, not to end the relationship

Many abused women do want their partners to stop using violence but do not want to leave them. This is a legitimate wish that has to be respected. Every woman has the right to decide for herself whether or not she wants to end a relationship. It is a personal decision that has to be acknowledged by her environment, and also by the agencies involved. If a woman who has suffered violence decides to continue the relationship (for the time being), this does not mean that she has to put up with violence as well. The point is to ensure the cooperation of all the agencies that are concerned with the problem in order to provide the best possible support and empowerment of the woman in question and to prevent her partner from continuing to use violence. The goal of services and multi-agency initiatives should not be to demand of the survivor that she end the relationship, but to engage in putting an end to violence.
Lack of resources and lack of options

A lack of resources and housing problems are important reasons why many victims do not end a relationship. A separation may mean that the woman will lose her job, or that the children have to change kindergartens or schools. In many countries, it is very difficult or impossible for single mothers with low incomes to find a place to live. Many countries do not have shelters or the shelters do not have enough room to accommodate all the women who need help. Often, women do not get financial support or assistance to help them re-enter the labour market; thus the situation is precarious for them and their children. Many fathers do not pay alimony voluntarily and have to be sued for maintenance in lengthy proceedings. Mothers frequently do not get any maintenance payments for themselves or their children.

Fear of further violence: Separation is a high-risk situation

Fear of further violence plays an important role in women’s decisions to stay in a violent relationship. As described above, it is at times of separation or divorce that the most egregious acts of violence are committed. Thus, separation often does not mean the end of violence, but ushered in a further aggravation of it. The workers in intervening agencies have to be aware of this risk and must not advise a woman without careful consideration to "simply leave her partner". There is no simple way out of a violent relationship. During the separation phase, women need special encouragement and active support and protection to ensure their safety.

Feeling responsible for the family

Many victims of violence, in spite of their difficult situation, are surprisingly strong in managing their lives, although they play subordinate roles in their relationships. Women feel responsible for the family, for the children and also for the husband. Therefore, they attempt to improve the current situation and to motivate their husbands to change their behaviour. Thus, they also play the role of social workers for violent men, so to speak. They are not only victims, but their role is also to ensure the bonds between and the well-being of all the members of the family. As a result, these women are in a situation that is paradoxical in several ways: As victims, they should fight against the violence and report it to the police; as wives, they should be loyal to their husbands and evade negative consequences. They should protect their children from violence, but also make it possible for the children to have contact with their fathers. In fact, they are confronted by their families and by society with contradictory requirements which they cannot fulfill, and this places them in a hopeless dilemma.

The scars of violence

As has already been indicated, violence profoundly affects the physical and mental health of victims. In her book, Trauma and Recovery (1992), Judith Lewis Herman, a psychiatrist and psychotherapist, points out that the survivors of violence need intensive help and support in order to recover and to heal. People who have experienced violence can start to heal only if they are in safety and are no longer exposed to violence. Therefore, the first and most important goal of anyone who helps victims of violence must be to create a situation of protection and safety.
Lack of help or inadequate help

Absence of, or inadequate, help is a frequent reason why victims stay in or return to abusive relationships. They do not know where they might find help or they are frustrated in their attempts to obtain support. Still, they do seek help, often desperately, as is shown in a study carried out in the USA: 85% of all women who were killed had called the police at least once in the past (Sherman and Berk 1984).

There are more reasons than those described above that make women decide to stay in abusive relationships. These reasons are different in each individual case, and it is important to understand and respect them. Of course, victims of violence should at the same time be encouraged not to go on enduring violence any longer. It is essential to see that a separation always requires a great deal of courage and readiness to take risks, and that the women concerned are likely to face additional social problems. Effective, intensive support by third parties is very important for women and their children so that they can disentangle themselves from abusive relationships.

Reporting domestic violence is a taboo

A special feature of violence within families is that the abuser and the abused have a very close relationship and that they might tend to cover up what is happening. The fact that the victim acts as an "accomplice" of the abuser is normal in the context of domestic violence. This is a special situation which the police and the courts must not fail to take into account. Here, the picture may be different in many respects from that presented by violent acts committed by strangers. While the victim of violence by a perpetrator from outside the family tends to report the offence to the police and give evidence as a witness, the victim of domestic violence, because of her close relationship with the perpetrator, cannot be expected to cooperate readily with the prosecuting authorities. All of us know such protective attitudes from our own families; they are by no means unusual.

There is a taboo against reporting a member of the family to the police. Let's imagine that we have been beaten and injured by our own brother or sister. Would we go to the police and report them? Most likely, we would try to solve the problem ourselves and only if the violence continued would we turn to a friend or relative. A study in the British Crime Service revealed that more than 50% of victims did not tell anybody about the violence and only 9% reported the violence to the police (Mirrlees-Black 1999:54).

As a result of a strong feeling of loyalty and fear of further violence, victims are often hardly able to pay heed to their own safety. They have to do what is in the interest of the abuser and/or the family and it is impossible for them to consider their own needs to any great extent. Again: Planning for safety and encouraging victims to take their own safety into account are important strategies when providing help to victims of violence.

High probability of re-victimisation and manipulation of the victim

It is important to bear in mind that abusers in a family are very likely to repeat their violent acts. The probability of repeat offences rises if the negative consequences or sanctions of former violence have been small. Perpetrators will not stop committing acts of violence of their own accord: In most cases, interventions and sanctions by third parties are necessary to prevent further violence. It is also a feature of domestic violence that the abuser has easy access to his victim: She frequently lives with him.
Thus, the risk of re-victimisation is especially high. Victims of violence by strangers will usually try to stay away from their abusers, while it is much more difficult for victims of domestic violence to protect themselves and to evade the perpetrator. For instance, children have to see their father because of visitation rights, and women are often forced to keep contact with the abuser even after a divorce or separation.

A perpetrator in the family has many possibilities to influence the victim. He may prevent her from making a statement, or persuade her to refuse to give evidence or even to make a false statement that harms her case. In criminal proceedings, the victim is often the only witness of the violence, and she will frequently be powerfully influenced by the abuser and also by his family.

Because of the abuser’s close ties to the abused, it is difficult for the victim to take steps against the perpetrator such as calling the police. This, in turn, strengthens the abuser’s position, and the risk of sanctions is small. Perpetrators use the control they have over their victims, and often prevent them from seeking help. They exert pressure and convince or coerce the victims not to make statements or to withdraw reports to the police. It is difficult for victims to refuse to give in.

Perpetrators within a family often use their victims as buffers in order to avoid sanctions. They place their victims between themselves and the prosecuting authorities, so to speak. Victims may be induced to act to the advantage of the abuser (see the section on the Stockholm Syndrome). This may be harmful for the victims themselves, as they eventually come to be regarded as untrustworthy, and they even risk being prosecuted themselves for making false statements. Such behaviour by victims is often regarded as paradoxical or even masochistic, because the underlying strategies of the abuser are not recognised. It is rather assumed that the victims voluntarily act in such a senseless way. However, their behaviour does make sense if the interests of the abusers are taken into account.

Committing violent acts that remain in the private sphere makes it easy for the abuser to prevent interventions, to make light of the violence or to insist that he is not a danger to the public. Therefore, it is essential for each country to have effective laws that ensure protection from violence and that permit the police and the courts to intervene and protect the victims in their own homes. The new protection against violent acts adopted in Austria and Germany are good examples in this regard, as they make it possible for the police to order violent spouses or fathers out of the home (see Appendix, models and examples). It is also extremely important that the police and the prosecutor’s office meticulously collect evidence, since the victim might not be willing to testify in court or her testimony might not provide enough evidence.

Prejudice prevents effective steps against violence

In cases of domestic violence, social prejudice - especially prejudice against the victims - is still strong and takes many different forms. Typical views in this context are that the victim behaved in a way that provoked the violence, that the victim is to blame for the violence, that the victim has made up a story of violence in order to harm her husband in a divorce suit, etc. The victims are also criticised for enduring violence over many years and for not reporting the abuser to the police - or they are criticised for the opposite: calling the police too soon. Domestic violence often continues to be regarded as less serious than violence in public - also by the prosecuting authorities. The share of domestic-violence-related proceedings that are dismissed is high. A relevant study indicates that, in Austria, only one out of seven reports leads to a conviction (Haller 2002).
Survivors of domestic violence are often accused of inventing acts of abuse in order to improve their position in divorce suits, and they are often regarded with extreme suspicion, in particular by the prosecuting authorities, which makes it difficult or impossible for them to trust the police and the courts. This, in turn, helps the perpetrator. Therefore, it is important to orient ourselves toward facts and not prejudice. There is no empirical evidence corroborating the assumption that false reports are frequent in cases of domestic violence, or more frequent than in other cases. On the contrary, as a representative study carried out by Monika Schröttele in Germany indicates, it is highly probable that violent acts will not be reported to the police and that the victims will not tell anybody what they have suffered, or that they will not tell everything (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth BMFSF (2004). A consequence of prejudice is that workers in relevant institutions fail to grasp what has actually happened, that they overlook or neglect important facts, in particular with regard to risk factors that are indicative of the dangerousness of the abuser, or that their interventions are unprofessional. Thus, it is of great significance for workers in agencies to understand and reflect upon their own prejudice.

Zero tolerance: a clear position towards abusers tolerance

A clear position towards abusers: People who commit acts of violence within their families are not easily identified as violent by other people. The majority of abusers will use violence "only" in the domestic sphere. Outside their families, they may appear to be inconspicuous and often even very nice and friendly. When we refer to abusers often a picture of brutal men and "typical" criminals comes to mind. Perpetrators who resemble this picture are more often prosecuted by the police and the courts than people who seem to fit in, who are eloquent and appear to be calm and composed. However, individuals who commit acts of domestic violence are found in all social classes. Some of them have criminal records, but many of them have never been convicted or reported to the police and have regular jobs.

Men who use violence against women and children in the domestic sphere often espouse the traditional role model of the man as the master of the house who has the final say and may treat his wife and his children as he pleases. Many abusers do not recognise that what they are doing is wrong. On the contrary, they feel that they are right, and blame the victims, society or the laws for the offences they have committed.

Domestic violence has long been regarded as a private matter, and the privacy of the family has protected the abuser from criminal prosecution. Therefore, the intervention of the State is crucial in the context of violence in the family, as it sends a signal to the abuser that violence is not tolerated and will have negative consequences. Effective laws that are actually enforced, as well as intensive support of the victims, are necessary to eliminate violence.

Central principles against violence include the following:

- An act of violence is a criminal offence and must not be tolerated.
- An act of violence is never justified; there is no excuse for violence.
- The abuser is the one who is responsible for acts of violence and he must face consequences.
BUILDING AN INTERVENTION CHAIN TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND PROTECT VICTIMS

States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence, whether those acts are perpetrated by the state or private persons, and provide protection to victims (Council of Europe 2002). In order to be able to fulfil this obligation, states need to have evidence based, comprehensive and co-ordinated policies in place, including adequate resources for effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The main goal of a comprehensive and co-ordinated policy is to establish a well functioning "Intervention system" or "Intervention chain" focused on the needs of the victims. According to the Council of Europe, "all relevant state institutions as well as non-governmental organizations should be associated with the elaboration and the implementation of necessary measures." (Council of Europe 2002, Para I.3).

Elements for a comprehensive policy and necessary links in the intervention chain

1

1. Inform victims/survivors/the public by means of ongoing campaigns,
   24-hour toll-free helpline for women victims of violence;
2. Identify the problem - guidelines and training for health and social services staff and educators in schools and kindergartens;
3. A network of women’s shelters, one shelter place per 7,500 inhabitants;
4. A network of women’s crisis centres and outreach services;
   Special services for migrant and minority women;
5. Effective protection and support by the police;
6. Proactive services/intervention centres;
7. Effective support for all children victims of DV;
8. Measures of protection in civil law;
9. Legal and psycho-social support in criminal proceedings;
10. Measures to protect victims in criminal law;
11. Protection for immigrant women, independent residence permit;
12. Intensive support and effective protection for high-risk victims;
13. Effective interventions for perpetrators to stop the violence;
14. Housing programs and financial support for victims;
15. Regional multi-agency initiatives as linkage of services at the structural level.

1 From: Rosa Logar (2007): Tried and tested: protecting and supporting victims, Power Point presentation at the Conference of National Focal Points and Joint Meeting of National Focal Points and Contact Parliamentarians 4-5 June 2007, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, Palais de l'Europe
MEASURES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations have taken numerous substantive measures and declarations for the promotion of women’s right. Those measures are tightly tied to historic developments, especially to actions taken by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and also to actions by active NGOs and the Civil Society. In the following handout the milestones towards women’s human rights and tackling violence against women will be highlighted in chronological order:

1. Commission on the Status of Women - founded in 1946;
2. First Women World Conference in 1975;
3. CEDAW 1979;
4. Second Women’s World Conference in Copenhagen in 1980;
5. Third Women’s World Conference in Nairobi in 1985;
7. Vienna Declaration against Violence at the UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1993;
8. UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women as a result of the Vienna Declaration in 1993;
9. Declaration for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Dec. 1993);
10. Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995;
11. CEDAW - Optional Protocol (1999);
12. Beijing + 5 (2000);
13. Beijing + 10 (2005);

1. Founding of the Commission on the Status of Women (1946):

Violence against women was not a priority issue on the agenda in 1945, when the UN charter was signed in San Francisco, but women’s rights were inscribed in the founding document as “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women”\(^1\). The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) started as a Sub-Commission under the Commission on Human Rights in 1946 already in the same year became formally a full-fledged Commission with the goal to ensure women’s equality and to promoting women’s rights. In 1947 the Commission’s declared in its first session its guiding principles to “raise the status of women, irrespective of nationality, race, language or religion and to eliminate all discrimination against women in the provisions of statutory law, in legal maxims or rules, or in interpretation of customary law”\(^2\). In order to get a country-by-country picture of the legal and political status of women, the Commission focused till 1962 mainly on fact finding, and therefore launched several studies.

Many developments were initiated by the CSW such as the organization of the four Women’s World Conferences and their preparation and follow ups, the drafting of CEDAW, of the Declaration for the Elimination of Violence and of the Beijing Platform for Action. The CSW had substantive support by their secretariat, the Division for the Advancement of Women, which also supported in the liaison with NGOs, conducted studies and raised awareness for the issue of violence against women.

Since 1996 the principal annual output of the Commission on the Status of Women are "agreed conclusions" on priority topics adopted by representatives of Member States at United Nations

\(^1\) http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf
\(^2\) ibid.
Headquarters in New York. Agreed conclusions contain an analysis of the priority theme and set out concrete recommendations that should be implemented at international, national and regional level by the respective Governments, intergovernmental bodies and other relevant stakeholders. Civil society actors, NGO representatives annually hold a parallel event during the CSW and also have the possibility to assist certain sessions and to push for topics. All agreed conclusions are available at the following link: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/agreedconclusions.html

2. First Women World Conference in Mexico in 1975:
The Commission on the Status of Women proposed 1975 as the International Women's Year to mark its 25th anniversary. During this year the Commission also organized the First World Conference in Mexico City. 133 Government representatives participated in this conference and over 6,000 NGO representatives held a parallel forum.

Results of the conference were:


b. Calling for a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women with effective implementation procedures; the drafting of CEDAW, had been mandated by this Plan of Action.

c. Following a recommendation from this World Conference, the UN declared 1976-1985 the United Nations Decade for Women, Equality, Development and Peace.

3. CEDAW:
The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was ratified in 1979. It is one of the most important legally binding instruments for ending all forms of discrimination against women. The Handout 25 gives more details on this important convention.

4. Second World Conference during the United Nations Decade for Women in 1980:
In 1980 the Second World Conference was held in Copenhagen. The importance of the CEDAW was reaffirmed and progress since the first conference reviewed. The main focus of the conference was on the topics employment, health and education.

5. World Conference in Nairobi in 1985:
The main topic at the World Conference in Nairobi in 1985 was to review the achievements of the UN Decade for Women and to establish concrete measures to overcome the obstacles to achieving the Decade’s goals. At all Women's World Conferences, NGO representatives participated at the sessions.

6. CEDAW - General Recommendation 12 (1989) and 19 (1992) on Violence against Women:
The CEDAW convention does not explicitly mention violence against women, but the CEDAW committee has the capability to highlight certain issues of priority, to make recommendations which are, when adopted, also legally binding. General Recommendation 12 and 19 specifically focus on violence against women. More information is given in Handout 25.

1 ibid.
7. Vienna Declaration and Programme to Action at the UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1993:

At the UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna, violence against women was recognised as not a "private" but a "national" problem. Women’s organizations from all over the world had prepared the ground at the campaign "women’s rights are human’s rights" and drawn up a petition signed by half a million people (Bunch/Reilly 1994). The conference’s final document, the Vienna Declaration (1993a), states that acts of violence against women constitute human rights violations, even when they are carried out in the so-called private sphere: "The human rights of women and the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights [.....]. Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation, including those resulting from cultural prejudice and international trafficking, are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person, and must be eliminated.” (United Nations 1993a) http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/A.CONF.157.23.En

Women Rights are Human Rights

The Global Campaign "Women Rights are Human Rights" was initiated by the Center for Women’s Global Leadership is in itself neither an international/UN agency nor an UN document. It was a campaign that called upon grassroots women’s movements to take action at the international level and to influence the global human rights policy at the UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna. The campaign had two goals: First to integrate women consistently (and the effects of measures on women) into the human rights agenda. The second goal was that gender based violence is recognized as an international human rights abuse against women. As this campaign shows, NGOs and Civil Society can have an influence on the international agenda - most of the demands of the campaign were acknowledged in the Vienna Declaration.¹

The issue of violence against women was brought onto the international agenda, violence against women was no longer considered a private matter, but as a public and human right issue. This development was encouraged by the CSW, CEDAW and an active NGO movement.

9. UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (1994):

The Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and its consequences was appointed in 1994 as proposed within the Vienna Declaration. The Special Rapporteur collects and analyzes data on violence against women in order to recommend measures to be taken at the international, regional and national level. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur has three elements:

1. Collection of information on violence against women and its causes and consequences from a variety of sources, including government and intergovernmental organizations, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
2. Recommendation of measures at the international, regional and national levels to eliminate violence against women;
3. Cooperation with other special rapporteurs, working groups and experts from the Commission on Human Rights.

¹ http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/Diana/fulltext/bunc.htm
Report cases to the special Rapporteur: Yakin Ertürk, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, encouraged colleagues to report cases to her office. Compared to her colleagues who are rapporteurs on other fields, Yakin Ertürk receives relatively few reports on violations of women’s human rights violations. She and her staff will follow up on the reported cases and take suitable steps. To contact and issue complaints to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women:

http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/rapporteur/complaints.htm

The Commission on the Status of Women undertook the drafting of the Declaration for the Elimination of Violence against Women in the early 1990s. The Declaration for the Elimination of Violence against Women was adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993. The Declaration is the first international human rights instrument that exclusively addresses violence against women. It defines acts of violence against women, constitutes them as human rights violations and places responsibility on the state for ending violence and safeguarding the effective protection of its female inhabitants even when they are carried out in the so-called private sphere: the term “violence against women” as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (United Nations 1993b).

The declaration further highlights the responsibility of the state: “States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women and, to this end, should: […] c. Exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons.”

The declaration can be found under: http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm

11. The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and Platform for Action in 1995:
The Commission on the Status of Women has planned and held the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. This conference advanced the global agenda for women’s human rights and gender equality significantly. In the preparatory process the Commission on the Status of Women comprehensively managed five regional preparatory meetings in 1994, held several NGO meetings, collected over 170 country reports in order to comprehensively draft recommendations formulated in the Platform for Action, the final document of the conference.

The elimination of violence against women was also a major focus of the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing. The “Platform for Action” formulated 12 strategic objectives and actions. The issue of violence against women is highlighted as one objective needing improvement and special measures. The Member States pledged to implement those actions including the implementation of international human rights instruments, adoption and regular review of legislation on VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, access to justice and effective remedies; policies and programs to protect and support women: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingdeclaration.html

The adoption of the Optional Protocol by the General Assembly in 1999 is explained in detail in Handout 25. It is also a milestone towards equality and women’s human rights since it gives (if the State has ratified the Optional Protocol) individuals and groups the possibility to formulate complaints/communications to the CEDAW committee.

13. **Beijing +5 (2000):**
The five-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development, and Peace for the Twenty-first Century", took place in New York at UN Headquarters in 2000. Member States affirmed that violence against women and girls, whether in public or private life, is a human rights violation and highlighted again the State responsibility in addressing such violence. Governments were asked to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and violence against women by any person, organization or enterprise and to treat all forms of violence against women and girls as criminal offences. The Commission's work focused on the implementation of both the Platform for Action.

14. **Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/45 on the Elimination of Violence against Women:**
The United Nations Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed and extended the mandate of a Special Rapporteur on violence against women at its 59th session in the resolution 2003/45 on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Further it stresses the duty of the State to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls and to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of all forms of violence against women and girls. The resolution can be downloaded under:

15. **Beijing + 10 (2005):**
A ten-year review of the Beijing Platform was organized by the Commission on the Status of Women within the framework of the 49th session in NY in 2005. The Declaration adopted by the Commission at its 49th session reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as the outcome of the five year review of the Beijing Platform. The challenge for the Commission on the Status of Women and concerning the Beijing Platform for action is to further develop means in order to ensure accountability for implementation of the existing policy framework at the national level.

16. **UN Study on all Forms of Violence Against Women (2006):**
The Secretary General in-depth study on all forms of violence against women was launched by and presented to the General Assembly in 2006. It has been carried out by the Women's Right Section of the Division for the Advancement of Women. The study gives a historical overview of the development of actions taken against violence on women, sets violence against women in a broad context and synthesises different forms violence against women can take. Among other points, the study highlights the following recommendations:
- States must close the gaps between international standards and national laws, policies and practices.
- States should allocate adequate resources and funding to programs to address violence against women.
- The knowledge base on all forms of violence against women should be strengthened to inform policy and strategy development.
- The United Nations should take a stronger, better coordinated and more visible leadership role to address violence against women and allocate sufficient resources.

THE UN-CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW, is a treaty codified in 1979. Unlike declarations and resolutions, this convention is binding upon all states that have signed and ratified it and must be implemented. The CEDAW convention defines discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Currently, 185 countries - over ninety percent of the members of the United Nations - are party to the Convention. The CEDAW convention is a dynamic and effective document concerning women's human rights and includes the following elements:

Content of the CEDAW Convention (1979)

The preamble of the Convention states the general premise of eliminating discrimination. Article 1 defines discrimination against women as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field".

Articles 2-6 cover the general obligations to be undertaken by State Parties such as, for example, to implement the principle of the equality of men and women in legislation as well as to prohibit by law or other means all discrimination against women; further to establish legal protection of the rights of women, national tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination.

The Articles 7-16 specify the different areas that particularly affect women and the state obligations in that regard. This list of areas and measures is not an exhaustive coverage of all areas of gender discrimination; for instance it does not explicitly address violence against women.

Articles 17-30 describe working procedures, reporting mechanisms and dynamic aspects of the Convention, which include important points such as the following:

Establishment of a "Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women" which shall be elected by the Member States (Article 17)

Among the tasks of the committee are to watch over the progress for women made in the CEDAW Member States by monitoring national measures on the basis of state (and NGO shadow) reports and by publishing concluding comments to the State parties. Further, the Committee can also make recommendations on any issue affecting women to which it believes the States parties should devote more attention. By 2008, 25 recommendations had been adopted, among them the general recommendation 12 and 19 on violence against women.

1 http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/states.htm
2 http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm
3 http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/committee.htm
General Recommendation 12 and 19 are core documents for women’s human rights which mention the responsibility of the State for violence against women in the family sphere and private sphere, defining gender based violence as a human rights violation and calls the States to act with due diligence to prevent violence. In the following, both recommendations are mentioned in detail:

General Recommendation No. 12 (1989) on Violence against Women:
The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, states "that articles 2, 5, 11, 12 and 16 of the Convention require the States parties to act to protect women against violence of any kind occurring within the family, at the work place or in any other area of social life", further the Committee recommends to the States parties that they should include in their periodic State reports following points:
1. The legislation in force to protect women against the incidence of all kinds of violence in everyday life (including sexual violence, abuses in the family, sexual harassment at the work place etc.);
2. Other measures adopted to eradicate this violence;
3. The existence of support services for women who are the victims of aggression or abuses;
4. Statistical data on the incidence of violence of all kinds against women and on women who are the victims of violence.

General Recommendations No.19 (1992):
In Rec. 19 gender-based violence is defined as "violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty." Gender based Violence impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international law or under human rights conventions.
Among the responsibilities of the state according to Rec. 19 is to take "appropriate and effective measures to overcome all forms of gender-based violence, whether private or public acts [.....]" further: "States may also be responsible for private acts if they fail to act with due diligence to prevent violations of rights or to investigate and punish acts of violence, and for providing compensation".

State reports, NGO shadow reports and concluding comments:
As soon as a State has ratified the Convention it has to report in the first year and thereafter every four years to the CEDAW Committee or whenever the CEDAW Committee requests it. The State report shall focus on the legislative, judicial, and administrative or other measures which have been adopted to implement the provisions of the present Convention including the General Recommendations and on the progress made, State Reports should also indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under CEDAW. These procedures are regulated under Article 18 of the Convention.

NGO participation: The CEDAW Committee also supports the submission of country-specific information from NGOs in the form of alternative or shadow reports to the State Reports. NGOs can submit their reports to the Committee prior to or at the session concerned; the shadow report will be considered for the Concluding Comments and recommendations to the State party. More information on submitting NGO shadow reports: [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/NGO Information note CEDAW.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/NGO Information note CEDAW.pdf)

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Concluding comments, also known as Concluding Observations are recommendations issued by the Committee following the review of those States (and shadow) reports. The CEDAW Committee comments on the progress made by the State Party in implementing its obligations under the treaty and make recommendations for improvement.

Optional Protocol:

On 6 October 1999 the General Assembly adopted a 21-article Optional Protocol to the CEDAW Convention and called on all CEDAW States parties to ratify the new instrument. 90 State parties have ratified the Optional Protocol¹ and recognize the competence of the CEDAW Committee to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups²:

The Protocol contains two procedures:

1. **An individual complaint/communications procedure**, which provides individuals and groups the right to lodge complaints with the CEDAW Committee, a guideline to this procedure can be found on the CEDAW website;
2. **An inquiry procedure**, which enables the CEDAW Committee to conduct inquiries into serious and systematic abuses of women’s rights. These mechanisms are only applicable in countries that are states parties to the Optional Protocol.

Information and original documents to CEDAW can be found:

http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

Three decisions of the CEDAW Committee under the Optional Protocol concerning violence against women

Two CEDAW decisions: Ms. F.Y (deceased) and Ms. S.G. (deceased) versus Austria:

In 2004 the Vienna Intervention Centre against Domestic Violence and the Association for Women’s Access to Justice issued two communications (individual complaints) on behalf of descendants of the deceased F.Y. and of the deceased S.G. Involved State party in both cases was Austria. On 6 August 2007, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women adopted in both cases the Committee’s views under article 7, paragraph 3 of the Optional Protocol, which states that even though Austria has a well developed protection law, Austria has failed to apply it and did not protect Ms. F.Y. nor Ms. S.G. sufficiently against the threatened violence.

The Committee states that Austria must apply its law in every single case and recommends, among other points, additional training for police and the judicial system, especially for prosecutors.

Download CEDAW decision No 06 F.Y. (deceased) vs. Austria:


Download CEDAW decision No. 05 S. G. (deceased) vs. Austria:


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¹ http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/sigop.htm
² http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/
CEDAW decision: Ms. A.T. versus Hungary:
At the end of January 2005 the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concluded its consideration of communication, submitted to the Committee by Ms. A.T (Hungary) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Committee states that Hungary as the State party has failed to fulfil its obligations and has thereby violated the rights of Ms. A.T. under article 2 (a), (b) and (e) and article 5 (a) in conjunction with article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination.

The Committee recommends, among other points, that the State party take immediate and effective measures to guarantee the physical and mental integrity of A.T. and her family; and to ensure that A.T. is given a safe home in which to live with her children, receives appropriate child support and legal assistance and that she receives reparation proportionate to the physical and mental harm undergone and according to the gravity of the violations of her rights.

Download CEDAW decision No. 04 A.T. vs. Hungary:
UNIFEM / TRUST FUND

UNIFEM was established in December 1976, originally as the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women in the International Women's Year. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. Since 1976 it has supported women's empowerment and gender equality through its programme offices and links with women's organizations in the major regions of the world. Its work on gender responsive budgets began in 1996 in Southern Africa and has expanded to include East Africa, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central America and the Andean region. It has worked to increase awareness throughout the UN system of gender responsive budgets as a tool to strengthen economic governance in all countries.

www.unifem.org

The UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women was established by General Assembly resolution 50/166 in 1996 and is managed by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). In establishing the UN Trust Fund, the General Assembly highlighted eliminating violence against women as critical to accelerating the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The UN Trust Fund is the only multilateral grant-making mechanism that supports local, national and regional efforts to combat violence. Since it began operations in 1997, the UN Trust Fund has distributed more than US$19 million to 263 initiatives to address violence against women in 115 countries. Raising awareness of women's human rights, these efforts have:

- linked activists and advocates from all parts of the world;
- shown how small, innovative projects impact laws, policies and attitudes and
- helped break the wall of silence, moving the issue onto public agendas everywhere.

With grants currently ranging from US$100,000 to US$300,000, UN Trust Fund projects conduct public education and awareness campaigns, build coalitions, involve law-enforcement, judicial and government agencies, train educators, healthcare personnel and police officials to respond to and prevent violence. Many projects strive to alter community attitudes and involve men as allies.
MEASURES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

What is the Council of Europe?

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 and is now a comprehensive European and international organization. The Council of Europe is not institutionally connected to the European Union, and should not be confused with the European Parliament or the Council of the European Union (Council of Ministers). It is located in Strasbourg. Currently the Council of Europe has 47 Member States. The Council of Europe dedicates itself to the safeguarding and preservation of democracy, especially regarding human rights and the protection of basic democratic principles, such as due process of law. It is a forum for the discussion of common European issues as well as for the support of scientific and social advancement.

Main organs of the Council of Europe:

- The Committee of Ministers: the Council of Europe’s highest decision-making body, consisting of the foreign ministers of all member countries;
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE): comprised of representatives elected by the national parliaments of the Member States from among their membership, having the power to investigate, recommend, and advice;
- The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities are the voices of Europe’s regions and municipalities and have a consultative status;
- The Secretariat of the Council of Europe currently headed by Secretary General Terry Davis, a British Parliamentarian. The Secretary General gets elected by the Parliamentary Assembly;
  One of the Secretariats, for Human Rights and Equality, has also a special focus on violence against women1;
  Since 1993 the Council of Europe has made the combat against violence one of its priorities, several recommendations and actions have been taken (e.g. Recommendation 2002(5) about which you can find more information on Handout 28) and various studies on the effects of legislation and implementation of measures to tackle violence against women have been carried out2. On 27 November 2006, the Council of Europe launched a “Campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence” (further details on this campaign can be found on Handout 44).
- In addition to these organs, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) was created to systematize the hearing of human rights complaints against States Parties to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1950. Further information is given below in this handout.

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1 http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/05_Violence_against_women/
2 e.g. Council of Europe Stocktaking Study on the measures and actions taken in CoE Member States to combat violence against women: http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/PDF_CDEG(2006)3_E.pdf
NGO involvement at the Council of Europe

Since its founding, the Council of Europe encourage NGO participation, already in 1952 the Council of Europe opened the possibility for NGOs to apply for a "consultative status", which currently has been obtained by about 400 NGOs.

Information on the European Convention on Human Rights incl. European Court for Human Rights

The European Human Rights Convention is an international treaty (Council of Europe 1950) which member states of the Council of Europe may sign. It guarantees all people the right to life, health and freedom and prohibits torture or any other form of inhuman or degrading treatment. This key Convention thus obliges the signatory States to take action to combat violence against women and children and to protect them from violence. The Convention also establishes also the European Court of Human Rights and lays down how it is to function. [http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/005.htm](http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/005.htm)

The European Court of Human Rights applies the European Convention on Human Rights. Its task is to ensure that States respect the rights and guarantees set out in the Convention. It does this by examining complaints (known as "applications") lodged by individuals or, sometimes, by States.

Information and original documents to ECHR and guidelines for making complaints can be found under: [http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/Applicants/Information+for+applicants/Frequently+asked+questions/](http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/Applicants/Information+for+applicants/Frequently+asked+questions/)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE RECOMMENDATION REC(2002)5 ON THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE

The Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the protection of women against violence is an important policy instrument and a core strategy among the many activities the Council of Europe (CoE) has carried out in the last years to combat all forms of violence against women. Though not legally binding, the Recommendations represent the political will of the 47 Council of Europe Member States to implement effective measures to prevent violence against women and protect the victims. The Council of Europe carried out the Campaign Stop Domestic Violence against Women in 2007 and 2008 and established a Task Force compiled of eight European experts to write a blue print for the campaign (Council of Europe 2006) and to assist the Council of Europe and the Member States in their efforts to improve the prevention of violence against women. The Task Force published a position paper on the Council of Europe considerations for a legally binding convention, strongly advocating a comprehensive human rights instrument that does not only cover domestic violence but all forms of violence against women (Council of Europe 2008).

The following text contains the nine core recommendations of the CoE document (Rec 2002-5) as well as parts dealing with the protection and support for women victims of violence. It is recommendable to policy makers as well as representatives of agencies dealing with the problem, to become familiar with the entire document and to contribute to the improvement of its implementation. The document is available on the Council of Europe website in the following languages: English, French, Armenian, Azeri, Bosnian, Dutch, Georgian, Hungarian, Italian, Macedonian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian. You can also find other important and useful information on the issue of violence against women on this website as well as on the Website of the Campaign Stop Domestic Violence against Women: www.coe.int/stopviolence.

The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers

 Recommends that the governments of Member States

I. Review their legislation and policies with a view to:

1. Guaranteeing women the recognition, enjoyment, exercise and protection of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;
2. Taking necessary measures, where appropriate, to ensure that women are able to exercise, freely and effectively, their economic and social rights;

1 http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/05_violence_against_women/003_Rec(2002)05.asp#TopOfPage
3. Ensuring that all measures are co-ordinated nation-wide and focused on the needs of the victims and that relevant state institutions as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) be associated with the elaboration and the implementation of the necessary measures, in particular those mentioned in this recommendation;

4. Encouraging at all levels the work of NGOs involved in combating violence against women and establishing active cooperation with these NGOs, including appropriate logistic and financial support;

II. Recognise that states have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence, whether those acts are perpetrated by the state or private persons, and provide protection to victims;

III. Recognise that male violence against women is a major structural and societal problem, based on the unequal power relations between women and men and therefore encourage the active participation of men in actions aiming at combating violence against women;

IV. Encourage all relevant institutions dealing with violence against women (police, medical and social professions) to draw up medium- and long-term co-ordinated action plans, which provide activities for the prevention of violence and the protection of victims;

V. Promote research, data collection and networking at national and international levels;

VI. Promote the establishment of higher education programs and research centres, including at the university level, dealing with equality issues, in particular with violence against women;

VII. Improve interactions between the scientific community, the NGOs in the field, political decision-makers and legislative, health, educational, social and police bodies in order to design co-ordinated actions against violence;

VIII. Adopt and implement the measures described in the appendix to this recommendation in the manner they consider the most appropriate in the light of national circumstances and preferences, and, for this purpose, consider establishing a national plan of action for combating violence against women;

IX. Inform the Council of Europe on the follow-up given at national level to the provisions of this recommendation.

Section from the Appendix to Recommendation Rec(2002)5:

Definition

1. For the purposes of this recommendation, the term "violence against women" is to be understood as any act of gender-based violence, which results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
a. Violence occurring in the family or domestic unit, including, inter alia, physical and mental aggression, emotional and psychological abuse, rape and sexual abuse, incest, rape between spouses, regular or occasional partners and cohabitants, crimes committed in the name of honour, female genital and sexual mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, such as forced marriages;

b. Violence occurring within the general community, including, inter alia, rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in institutions or elsewhere trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation and economic exploitation and sex tourism;

c. Violence perpetrated or condoned by the state or its officials;

d. Violation of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict, in particular the taking of hostages, forced displacement, systematic rape, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and economic exploitation.

**General measures concerning violence against women**

2. It is the responsibility and in the interest of states as well as a priority of national policies to safeguard the right of women not to be subjected to violence of any kind or by any person. To this end, states may not invoke custom, religion or tradition as a means of evading this obligation.

3. Member States should introduce, develop and/or improve where necessary, national policies against violence based on:
   a. Maximum safety and protection of victims;
   b. Empowerment of victimized women by optimal support and assistance structures which avoid secondary victimization;
   c. Adjustment of the criminal and civil law including the judicial procedure;
   d. Raising of public awareness and education of children and young persons;
   e. Ensuring special training for professionals confronted with violence against women;
   f. Prevention in all respective fields.

4. In this framework, it will be necessary to set up, wherever possible, at the national level, and in cooperation with, where necessary, regional and/or local authorities, a governmental co-ordination institution or body in charge of the implementation of measures to combat violence against women, as well as of regular monitoring and evaluation of any legal reform or new form of intervention in the field of action against violence, in consultation with NGOs and academic and other institutions.

5. Research, data collection and networking at the national and international level should be developed, in particular in the following fields:
   a. The preparation of statistics sorted by gender, integrated statistics and common indicators in order to better evaluate the scale of violence against women;
   b. The medium- and long-term consequences of assaults on victims;
   c. The consequence of violence on those who are witness to it, inter alia, within the family;
   d. The health, social and economic costs of violence against women;
   e. The assessment of the efficiency of the judiciary and legal systems in combating VAW;
   f. The causes of violence against women, i.e. the reasons which cause men to be violent and the reasons why society condones such violence;
   g. The elaboration of criteria for benchmarking in the field of violence.
Information, public awareness, education and training

Member States should:
6. Compile and make available to the general public appropriate information concerning the different types of violence and their consequences for victims, including integrated statistical data, using all the available media (press, radio and television, etc.);
7. Mobilize public opinion by organizing or supporting conferences and information campaigns so that society is aware of the problem and its devastating effects on victims and society in general and can therefore discuss the subject of violence towards women openly, without prejudice or preconceived ideas;
8. Include in the basic training programs of members of the police force, judicial personnel and the medical and social fields, elements concerning the treatment of domestic violence, as well as all other forms of violence affecting women;
9. Include in the vocational training programs of these personnel, information and training so as to give them the means to detect and manage crisis situations and improve the manner in which victims are received, listened to and counseled;
10. Encourage the participation of these personnel in specialized training programs, by integrating the latter in a merit-awarding scheme;
11. Encourage the inclusion of questions concerning violence against women in the training of judges;
12. Encourage self-regulating professions, such as therapists, to develop strategies against sexual abuse which could be committed by persons in positions of authority;
13. Organize awareness-raising campaigns on male violence towards women, stressing that men should be responsible for their acts and encouraging them to analyze and dismantle mechanisms of violence and to adopt different behavior;
14. Introduce or reinforce a gender perspective in human rights education programs, and reinforce sex education programs that give special importance to gender equality and mutual respect;
15. Ensure that both boys and girls receive a basic education that avoids social and cultural patterns, prejudices and stereotyped roles for the sexes and includes training in assertiveness skills, with special attention to young people in difficulty at school; train all members of the teaching profession to integrate the concept of gender equality in their teaching;
16. Include specific information in school curricula on the rights of children, help-lines, institutions where they can seek help and individuals they can turn to in confidence.

Assistance for and protection of victims (reception, treatment and counseling)

Member States should:
23. Ensure that victims, without any discrimination, receive immediate and comprehensive assistance provided by a co-ordinated, multidisciplinary and professional effort, whether or not they lodge a complaint, including medical and forensic medical examination and treatment, together with post-traumatic psychological and social support as well as legal assistance; this should be provided on a confidential basis, free of charge and be available around the clock;
24. In particular, ensure that all services and legal remedies available for victims of domestic violence are provided to immigrant women upon their request;
25. Take all the necessary measures in order to ensure that collection of forensic evidence and information is carried out according to standardized protocol and forms;
26. Provide documentation particularly geared to victims, informing them in a clear and comprehensible manner of their rights, the service they have received and the actions they could envisage or take, regardless of whether they are lodging a complaint or not, as well as of their possibilities to continue to receive psychological, medical and social support and legal assistance;

27. Promote cooperation between the police, health and social services and the judiciary system in order to ensure such co-ordinated actions, and encourage and support the establishment of a collaborative network of non-governmental organizations;

28. Encourage the establishment of emergency services such as anonymous, free of charge telephone help-lines for victims of violence and/or persons confronted or threatened by situations of violence; regularly monitor calls and evaluate the data obtained from the assistance provided with due respect for data protection standards;

29. Ensure that the police and other law-enforcement bodies receive, treat and counsel victims in an appropriate manner, based on respect for human beings and dignity, and handle complaints confidentially; victims should be heard without delay by specially-trained staff in premises that are designed to establish a relationship of confidence between the victim and the police officer and ensure, as far as possible, that the victims of violence have the possibility to be heard by a female officer should they so wish;

30. To this end, take steps to increase the number of female police officers at all levels of responsibility;

31. Ensure that children are suitably cared for in a comprehensive manner by specialized staff at all the relevant stages (initial reception, police, public prosecutor’s department and courts) and that the assistance provided is adapted to the needs of the child;

32. Take steps to ensure the necessary psychological and moral support for children who are victims of violence by setting up appropriate facilities and providing trained staff to treat the child from initial contact to recovery; these services should be provided free of charge;

33. Take all necessary measures to ensure that none of the victims suffer secondary (re)victimization or any gender-insensitive treatment by the police, health and social personnel responsible for assistance, as well as by judiciary personnel.

Criminal law, civil law and judicial proceedings

Member States should:

34. Ensure that criminal law provides that any act of violence against a person, in particular physical or sexual violence, constitutes a violation of that person’s physical, psychological and/or sexual freedom and integrity, and not solely a violation of morality, honour or decency;

35. Provide for appropriate measures and sanctions in national legislation, making it possible to take swift and effective action against perpetrators of violence and redress the wrong done to women who are victims of violence. In particular, national law should:
   - Penalize sexual violence and rape between spouses, regular or occasional partners and cohabitants;
   - Penalize any sexual act committed against non-consenting persons, even if they do not show signs of resistance;
   - Penalize sexual penetration of any nature whatsoever or by any means whatsoever of a non-consenting person;
   - Penalize any abuse of the vulnerability of a pregnant, defenseless, ill, physically or mentally handicapped or dependent victim;
   - Penalize any abuse of the position of a perpetrator, and in particular of an adult vis-à-vis a child.
Civil law

Member States should:
36. Ensure that, in cases where the facts of violence have been established, victims receive appropriate compensation for any pecuniary, physical, psychological, moral and social damage suffered, corresponding to the degree of gravity, including legal costs incurred;
37. Envisage the establishment of financing systems in order to compensate victims.

Judicial proceedings

Member States should:
38. Ensure that all victims of violence are able to institute proceedings as well as, where appropriate, public or private organizations with legal personality acting in their defense, either together with the victims or on their behalf;
39. Make provisions to ensure that criminal proceedings can be initiated by the public prosecutor;
40. Encourage prosecutors to regard violence against women and children as an aggravating or decisive factor in deciding whether or not to prosecute in the public interest;
41. Take all necessary steps to ensure that at all stages in the proceedings, the victims’ physical and psychological state is taken into account and that they may receive medical and psychological care;
42. Envisage the institution of special conditions for hearing victims or witnesses of violence in order to avoid the repetition of testimony and to lessen the traumatizing effects of proceedings;
43. Ensure that rules of procedure prevent unwarranted and/or humiliating questioning for the victims or witnesses of violence, taking into due consideration the trauma that they have suffered in order to avoid further trauma;
44. Where necessary, ensure that measures are taken to protect victims effectively against threats and possible acts of revenge;
45. Take specific measures to ensure that children’s rights are protected during proceedings;
46. Ensure that children are accompanied, at all hearings, by their legal representative or an adult of their choice, as appropriate, unless the court gives a reasoned decision to the contrary in respect of that person;
47. Ensure that children are able to institute proceedings through the intermediary of their legal representative, a public or private organization or any adult of their choice approved by the legal authorities and, if necessary, to have access to legal aid free of charge;
48. Provide that, for sexual offences and crimes, any limitation period does not commence until the day on which the victim reaches the age of majority;
49. Provide for the requirement of professional confidentiality to be waived on an exceptional basis in the case of persons who may learn of cases of children subject to sexual violence in the course of their work, as a result of examinations carried out or of information given in confidence.
Intervention programs for the perpetrators of violence

Member States should:
50. Organize intervention programs designed to encourage perpetrators of violence to adopt a violence-free pattern of behavior by helping them to become aware of their acts and recognize their responsibility;
51. Provide the perpetrator with the possibility to follow intervention programs, not as an alternative to sentence, but as an additional measure aiming at preventing violence; participation in such programs should be offered on a voluntary basis;
52. Consider establishing specialized state-approved intervention centers for violent men and support centers initiated by NGOs and associations within the resources available;
53. Ensure cooperation and co-ordination between intervention programs directed towards men and those dealing with the protection of women.

Additional measures with regard to violence within the family

Member States should:
55. Classify all forms of violence within the family as criminal offence;
56. Revise and/or increase the penalties, where necessary, for deliberate assault and battery committed within the family, whichever member of the family is concerned;
57. Preclude adultery as an excuse for violence within the family;
58. Envisage the possibility of taking measures in order to:
   a. Enable police forces to enter the residence of an endangered person, arrest the perpetrator and ensure that he or she appears before the judge;
   b. Enable the judiciary to adopt, as interim measures aimed at protecting the victims, the banning of a perpetrator from contacting, communicating with or approaching the victim, residing in or entering certain defined areas;
   c. Establish a compulsory protocol for operation so that the police and medical and social services follow the same procedure;
   d. Promote pro-active victim protection services which take the initiative to contact the victim as soon as a report is made to the police;
   e. Ensure smooth operation of all relevant institutions, such as police authorities, courts and victim protection services, in order to enable the victim to take all relevant legal and practical measures for receiving assistance and taking actions against the perpetrator within due time limits and without unwanted contact with the perpetrator;
   f. Penalize all breaches of measures imposed on the perpetrators by the authorities.
59. Consider, where needed, granting immigrant women who have been/are victims of domestic violence an independent right to residence in order to enable them to leave their violent husbands without having to leave the host country.
EUROPEAN UNION MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Measures and initiatives to combat violence against women exist within the European Union, but no legally binding document explicitly addressing violence against women. Violence against women is only mentioned in two binding documents: The “Treaty of Amsterdam” mentions measures against sexual harassment and according the "Council framework decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings" also victims of domestic violence are entitled to free court accompaniment. Other measures explicitly addressing violence against women, such as the Resolutions and Recommendations of the European Parliament or the Daphne-Programme, don’t have a legally binding character, but they indicate that the issue of violence against women is of growing importance within the European Union.

The Treaty of Amsterdam

In the Treaty of Amsterdam equality between women and men was established as a crosscutting goal of all EU policy. Recent developments point to a trend towards extending the EU mandate in the field of gender equality policy (Walby 2003). Measures against violence and sexual harassment in the workplace are already part of the EU mandate and are regulated in the relevant legal documents. Similarly, legal regulations to combat trafficking of women already exist. In the field of domestic violence, no legally binding measures have yet been adopted, but the activities of the EU to combat violence against women and children are expanding. The Treaty of Amsterdam was signed in 1997 and went into force in 1999. It can be downloaded under: http://www.eurotreaties.com/amsterdamtreaty.pdf

Council framework decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (2001)

The "Council" or "European Council" is the highest body of the European Union consisting of heads of states and governments of the EU Member States and is currently chaired by the member state holding the EU presidency. This Council Framework decision addresses after input of the European Commission and consultation of the European Parliament the implementation of minimum standards on the protection of victims of crimes.

It is an important and legally binding instrument of the EU concerning women and children victims of violence, as is the Council framework decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (2001), establishing minimum rights of victims (European Union 2001), for instance free court accompaniment for every victim of violence. The Council framework decision can be downloaded under: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:082:0001:0004:EN:PDF

1 Adapted from: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (Ed.) (2006) : Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna p. 101
European Parliament Resolution on combating violence against women (2006)

In February 2006, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the current situation in combating violence against women and any future action. The resolution: “recommends, as regards men’s violence against women, the commission and the Member States:

a) to regard it to be a violation of human rights, reflecting unequal gender power relations and to adopt an all encompassing policy approach to combat it, including effective methods of prevention and punishment;

b) to adopt a framework for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with a view to developing policies and practices to combat domestic violence;

c) to formulate a zero-tolerance policy as regards all forms of violence against women;

d) to adopt a framework for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with a view to developing policies and practices to combat domestic violence” (European Parliament 2006).

The resolution calls on the Member States to take appropriate measures to ensure better protection and support of victims and those who are at risk of becoming victims of violence against women by, among other measures:

- Recognizing the importance of providing support to victims, whether women or children, to help them become financially and psychologically independent from the perpetrator;
- Adopting a proactive, preventive and penal strategy towards the perpetrators of violence against women in order to reduce recidivism, and providing advisory services for access by the perpetrators, either on their own initiative or under a court order; always carrying out adequate risk assessments in order to ensure the safety of women and any children in the process;
- Providing all necessary assistance, including transitional housing, to women and their children in cases of separation or divorce;
- Treating women who are victims of gender-based violence as a category entitled to priority access to community-housing projects;
- Providing safe shelters including sufficient financial resources;
- Conducting specific employment action programs for the victims of gender-based violence, so as to enable them to enter the labor market and achieve financial independence;
- Planning services and centers for the care and support of children of women who are victims of violence;
- Providing social and psychological support to children who have witnessed domestic violence;
- Providing proper protection for immigrants, especially single mothers and their children, who often have inadequate means of defense or knowledge of available resources to counter domestic violence in Member States (European Parliament 2006).

European Parliament Resolution on violence against women 1986

As early as 1986 the European Parliament issued a resolution concerning violence against women. Among other points, the Resolution recommends in article 26 EU Member States to provide sufficient places in women’s shelters - the rate of one family place per 10,000 inhabitants:

"With regard to the availability of refuges, calls on housing authorities to recognize: the necessity of providing adequate refuge provision, at the rate of one family place per 10 000 inhabitants, that refuges constitute temporary emergency accommodation and should not be classified as "permanent accommodation" the right of all battered women to permanent re-housing, in good standard accommodation, when they feel ready to leave the protection of a refuge, the right of women to return to their own home without the presence of a violent spouse, the necessity for the implementation of measures, in particular civil law, to ensure that any material disadvantage are borne by the author of the violence, the need to provide care and assistance for all battered women, regardless of their marital status or whether or not they have children, the right of the children of these mothers to be accommodated within the education system and given the care necessary to overcome their emotional problems, the necessity of providing information to women on their housing rights and the provision of refuges in their area."

Women’s Right and Gender Equality Committee at the European Parliament (FEMM)

Currently, 22 standing committees which are made up of the Members of the European Parliament exist within the European Parliament. One of these Committees is on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality. Reports are written by a rapporteur appointed by the chair-person of the committee. Reports help in initiating legislation, giving opinions to legislative proposals by the European Commission. Some reports will get discussed for adoption in the plenary sessions of the European Parliament. Also the above mentioned resolutions have been discussed and prepared by the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality. It is valuable to seek the responsible contact person in your country and/or of the party supporting your ideas.

The Daphne Program

Daphne is a preventively oriented program of action of the European Commission for Combating Violence against Children, Youngsters and Women. It was founded in 1997 and under the framework of Daphne I (1997 - 2003) and Daphne II projects (2004- 2008) has meanwhile supported over 350 projects in all of Europe. On 20 June 2007, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Daphne III framework for the period 2007-2013. Daphne supports the activity of non-governmental and other organizations that involve themselves in the fight against violence toward children, youngsters and women. Projects are supported that fight against every form of violence against children, young people and women (e.g. violence in the family, violence in the school and other establishments, violence in the workplace, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, trafficking of women, working with offenders, etc.). The goal is to learn from each other through nets of trans-national cooperation away from country borders and to develop and implement strategies. For example, the build-up and extension of multi-disciplinary nets are supported for the cooperation between non-governmental- and other organizations for the exchange of information and proven practices, as well as measures for sensitizing the public.

Additional information can be found under the following internet addresses:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/2004_2007/daphne/funding_daphne_en.htm and
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/daphne3/funding_daphne3_en.htm

1 http://www.legislationline.org/legislation.php?id=99&lid=5730&less=false
2 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/members.do?language=EN
3 Daphne Toolkit: Resources for combating violence against children, young people and women, DVD (2004), unfortunately the website links are not valid any more.
Many offers and services from WAVE were initiated and developed by Daphne Projects of the European Commission, such as the WAVE-Database, the European Information Centre, training program and -concepts, Bridging Gaps, etc. The last concluded Daphne Project is called "IMPROVE - quality services for women affected by violence". The training concept you are reading now is a result of this Daphne project.
MEASURES OF THE OSCE

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is an intergovernmental organization focusing on security, human rights, conflict prevention and early warning, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. 56 States from Europe, Central Asia, Caucasus and North America participate in the OSCE.

The OSCE covers the following three aspects in its work: the politico-militarian, the economic and environmental and thirdly, the humanitarian aspect. The commission within the OSCE focusing on humanitarian aspects also has a gender equality unit, which also works on issues of Violence Against Women.

In 2004 the OSCE adopted an "Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality". In the Action Plan Trainings for Gender mainstreaming for OSCE officials are planned, including specific modules on combating domestic violence and trafficking of human beings.

The Action Plans also highlight the individual and collective responsibility of States to bear primary responsibility and are accountable for implementing their commitments (IV. 41). Under point 42 Member States are recommended: "To ensure a safe environment for their citizens ... notably by eliminating all forms of violence against women; ...to ensure that existing national legislation on violence against women is enforced,...". Measures in the areas of prevention of violence are mentioned as priorities and areas of special interest for Member States.

The Action plan can be downloaded under following link: http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/2004/12/3917_en.pdf

The implementation and progress on Gender Issues according to the Action Plan is evaluated annually. Evaluation reports can be downloaded under: http://tandis.odihr.pl/index.php?p=qu-ac

In 2005 the OSCE adopted the Decision No. 15/05 on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women. This decision notes "with regret that female victims of violence are too often left without protection and assistance and urges participating states among others1:

- to ensure that all female victims of violence will be provided with full, equal and timely access to justice, medical and social assistance, including emergency assistance, confidential counselling and shelter;
- to adopt and implement legislation that criminalizes gender based violence and establishes adequate legal protection, as well as to provide in a timely manner physical and psychological protection for victims, including appropriate witness protection measures;
- to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators while addressing their need for appropriate treatment

The Decision No. 15/05 on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women can be downloaded under following link: http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/2005/12/17433_en.pdf

1 http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/2005/12/17433_en.pdf Article 4 (i) - (vi)
THE PRINCIPLES OF A WOMEN`S REFUGE

The goals of refuge work, protection and safety, empowerment and social change are embedded in fundamental principles which determine all aspects of refuge work. These principles are:

**Feminist analyses**

Male violence against women is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women and a reflection of existing gender relationships in society and in politics. It must therefore be regarded primarily as a social and political problem. Women’s refuges need to fulfil a political function in that they create awareness of the social, historical, cultural and political framework that fosters male violence. Activists seek to give women and children a voice to speak out against violence. Society has to make perpetrators responsible for their actions. The feminist principles as implemented in the refuge should demonstrate ways for women and children to free themselves from violence.

**Women helping women**

Abused women suffer greatly from being dominated and abused by their male partners. It is therefore important for them to receive support and help from a female counsellor specialised in the field. Women victims of violence also suffer from being in a weak position and from having lost faith in their own abilities and strength. Thus, the refuge serves as a model for women to experience their own ability to lead an active and self-determined life. This is also reflected in the structure of the refuge, where women not only work at the grassroots level but also handle the household responsibilities. It helps the women to rethink and overcome stereotyped gender roles. This principle also applies to other women’s support services.

**Advocacy for women**

Acting against violence means adopting a clear stance and condemning violence against women in all its forms (“There is no excuse for violence”). Trying to stay neutral on what has happened entails the pitfall of tolerating violence. Women who come to the refuge do not have to offer proof of the violence they have undergone. It is important to believe what they say and to treat them without preconceptions. Victims need advocates who stand beside them and support them at every step that needs to be taken. Advocacy and solidarity are essential. It is always the perpetrator who is responsible for the violence. Adopting a clear stance against any form of violent behaviour demonstrates condemnation of violent acts but not condemnation of the perpetrator as a person.

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1 Adapted from Manual Away from Violence “Goals and Principles of a women`s refuge"
Team work (and flat hierarchies)

Women’s refuges trace their origins back to the women’s (rights) movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which called for equality and non-discrimination in every area of life. The organization of the refuge should also reflect these goals by promoting democratic principles, sharing power and avoiding excessively hierarchical or bureaucratic structures. In many refuges the staff work as a team, and management duties and responsibilities are shared. Even if the refuge has a director, it is still important to work on a team basis and to involve the refuge workers in all the decisions and enable them to participate in the development of the service. These structures ensure that interaction and relationships are not based on exerting power from top to bottom but that people can live and work together in an atmosphere of solidarity and equality.

Participation and democratic structures

Democratic structures and the opportunity to be involved in the various aspects of refuge life are very important principles. In all refuges there are regular meetings which are the basis of participation for the women. It is important to be careful that women’s refuges are not turned into institutions in which the women’s lives are dominated and controlled, but that the women are included in all the operational processes. The power of the husband should not be replaced by the power of the institution. The staff are called upon to handle power carefully and to enforce the regulations in the house in such a way that they provide orientation without putting too many limits on the individual freedom of the women.

Right to self-determination

It is important to respect women’s rights to decide about their lives. Very often relatives, friends and professionals in caring organizations try to tell the woman what to do. Some think she should separate from the perpetrator, others tell her to give him another chance. Unfortunately, it happens quite often that these people are disappointed or even annoyed if she does not follow their advice. Such advice can create even more pressure for the woman and is experienced as not helpful at all. It is important to convey to the woman that only she is in a position to decide and that her decision will be respected. The aim of an intervention is to end the violence, not to end the relationship. The right to self-determination is an important principle. How long a woman wants to stay in the refuge and if she wants to separate or not is solely up to the woman.

Confidentiality / anonymity

To protect a woman’s rights and her integrity, it is necessary that she is able to decide which information is passed on. Therefore no information should be passed on by the refuge or by the counselling centre without the woman’s consent. Exceptions should and have to be made if the life and health of women or children are at stake (i.e. suicide attempts, acute danger through the violent partner, or women abusing their children). Women should also have the right to receive counselling and support without having to reveal their identity.
24 hour service and no time limit for stay

A woman who has to flee from her husband needs immediate support and protection. She should be able to reach a women's refuge 24 hours a day every day. In women's refuges at least one staff member should be on call so that she can admit the woman. If there is more than one refuge in a town, at least one should be able to take a woman and her children in at any time. In principle, women and their children should be able to stay until they feel safe and empowered to lead a life without violence.

Diversity

The diversity of women should not only be respected but be seen as something valuable that is encouraged. An asset of many women’s refuges is refuge workers who reflect the diversity of society. They can offer additional language skills and a better understanding of the specific background of migrant women.

Accountability

A refuge has a responsibility and is answerable to the women and children, to the organization and its members and to society in general. The activities and the conduct of the refuge have to be transparent and comprehensible.

Principles regarding the quality of service

Professionalism is a prerequisite for the full implementation of principles. The staff has to be adequately trained and paid. Provisions must be made for further training and supervision. The number of staff must be gauged to the number of women and children in order to provide all the necessary support and services and meet the requirements. Some refuges are dependent on support by volunteers. Volunteers have to be well trained. Resources should be managed economically and efficiently. Quality standards should be checked through regular quality control.

Principles regarding structure and funding

Refuges should be run by non-governmental, non-profit and non-party women’s associations. Women’s refuges need adequate funding by the state, as they fulfil necessary functions for society; they give shelter and support to battered and abused women and their children.

Services free of charge

Support services for women and children victims of violence should be free of charge, certainly for women with little or no income. This is to ensure that women and their children in need can find shelter independently of their financial status.
STANDARDS OF GOOD PRACTICE IN SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Advocacy for women victims of violence

Countering violence means adopting a clear stance and condemning violence against women in all its forms. ("There is no excuse for violence. It is always the perpetrator who is responsible"). In attempting to remain neutral about violence, one runs the risk of tolerating it. Advocacy has different meanings; it can mean to support and empower women to secure their rights or to represent the interests of women in legal settings or both. In any case, the emphasis is on (human) rights and entitlements, reflecting the approach that all forms of violence against women are human rights violations. Survivors of violence need services that provide advocacy in the crisis situation and on a long-term basis, accompanying them through all processes and coordinating interventions. Women's services usually provide this necessary kind of support and it should be standard procedure that every survivor of violence is supported by a women's advocate. Survivors seeking help should never be asked to offer proof of the violence they have suffered. It is important to listen carefully, to believe and to respond with the utmost respect and without prejudice.

Protection and safety

Safety must be assigned the highest priority in all agencies providing services to women and children victims of domestic violence. Risk assessment and practical safety planning should be standard in supporting women victims of violence guaranteeing that immediate safety needs of women and their children are met.

Building a relationship of trust

Building a consistent relationship is important to enable women victims of violence to develop a feeling of trust, to open up and to talk about their experiences, which is far from being easy. It takes time to build a relationship of trust and short term interventions are not adequate support. Advocates need to understand very well the dynamics of violence against women in the family and the complex fears and dependencies it creates. Emotional support is needed, as well as practical support.

Empowerment

A victim of domestic violence means passing through the traumatic experience of being powerless and at the mercy of the violent partner. The aim of any kind of support should be to overcome powerlessness and to empower women so that they can lead a self-determined life. Survivors of violence should not be

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2 the term “advocate” in this context describes the activities, not the profession and does not mean the person working as an advocate has to have a legal profession, it can be a social worker or another professional
labelled "ill" or "distressed", which would further weaken their position. Being weak is often the consequence of being exposed to violence. Violence leaves marks not only on the body but also on the mind and self-esteem. Some approaches for working with abused women go wrong in that they see this weakness as characteristic of women who, consequently, are viewed as pathological cases. It is vital to regard women as agents for change and experts in their own situation. Women victims of violence need support to help them reflect on their situation and to understand how it was possible for their partner to exert power over them, which enables them to develop better strategies to overcome violence.

**Right to self-determination**

It is important to respect women's rights to decide about their lives (see also "Empowerment"). Very often relatives, friends or even professionals in social services try to tell the woman what to do. Some think she should separate from the abuser; others tell her to give him another chance. Unfortunately, it happens quite often that people are disappointed or even annoyed if she does not follow their advice. But such advice can create even more pressure on the woman and is experienced as not being helpful at all. It is important to convey to the woman that she is the only one in a position to decide and that her decision will be respected. The aim of an intervention is to end violence, not to end a relationship. The right to self-determination is an important principle. How long a woman wants to stay in a shelter and whether she wants to separate from her partner permanently or not is solely up to her.

**Matching services**

Some migrant and minority women might prefer to be supported by someone from their own background when seeking help, others might not. In any case, services for women victims of violence should employ advocates with diverse cultural backgrounds and language skills in order to be able to meet the different needs of clients.

**Special knowledge**

Advocates supporting migrant and minority women have to be especially trained and able to assess the situation of the women concerned, such as the loss women experience when leaving or fleeing their country of origin. They also have to be sensitive to different cultural beliefs and norms that might affect women seeking help. Furthermore, advocates have to have special and detailed knowledge about immigration laws and how the law affects migrant women in order to be able to assess the immigration status of clients and to avoid any step jeopardizing their status.

**Comprehensive tailored information and support**

Not all women seeking support have the same needs. Therefore, it is important to listen carefully to each individual woman in order to find out what she wants. Some women, especially those who have just moved to the country recently, need support in every-day life skills, such as: how to find one’s way through the city, how to use public transport, how to call the police, how social agencies work, how to get the children to school, how to find a kindergarten, a language course etc.
Fighting racism

Services providing support to migrant and minority women have to be aware of racist tendencies and racist violence in society and in institutions and how they might affect their clients. They also have to be able to support clients in this regard and to respond to and fight racist violence. Racism can also be part of institutional practices in social work by discriminating against migrant and minority women seeking help and has to be addressed.

Awareness raising

Raising awareness is an important element of preventing violence against women. It is necessary to address different communities and to communicate with appropriate means that violence against women are criminal acts and unacceptable. Furthermore, it is important to spread knowledge about rights of and services for women victims of violence widely in the communities, so that many members of the community are able to support and assist women in crisis situations.

Services free of charge

Support services for women and children victims of violence should be free of charge, especially for women with little or no income. This is to ensure that women and their children in need can get support independently of their financial status.

Support for children

Children are always affected by violence against their mothers, either directly or indirectly. Thus, violence against women is also violence against children. Unfortunately, they are often the forgotten victims because few agencies and services are aware of their needs. In women’s refuges, support for children has become an integral part of service but not all services meet this standard yet. Support for children has to be organized in a family-friendly way, making it possible to accept the help offered. Counselling and support for children should preferably be offered parallel to help for the mother, as a package serving the needs of both. This makes it possible also to strengthen the mother-child relationship and the non-violent family system, which is often the only source of support for the children.

Confidentiality and anonymity

To protect a woman’s rights and her integrity, it is necessary that she be able to decide which information about her will be passed on to others. Therefore, no information should be passed on from an agency to others without the woman’s consent. Exceptions should and must be made if the life and health of women or children are at stake (i.e., suicide attempts, acute danger from the violent partner, or women abusing their children). Women should also have the right to receive counselling and support without having to reveal their identity.
Accountability and quality of services

Services are accountable to the service users, to the organization and its members and to society in general. The activities and the conduct of the services must be transparent and comprehensible. It is important for services to be democratically structured and for service users to have the right to be involved in the provision and evaluation of services (Hague/Mullender/Aris 2003). In modern quality management concepts, the involvement of the customers, clients or patients is a core principle. They are not seen as mere objects of interventions but as important stakeholders whose opinions regarding the quality of service are crucial to the organization. The participation and involvement of women and children is especially important in shelters and other services where women and children reside for some time. Women's shelters should not be institutions in which women's lives are dominated and controlled, but women and children should be included in processes of decision-making. The power of the abusive husband and father should not be replaced by the power of the institution. Power has to be handled carefully; regulations are necessary, but they should mainly aim at providing orientation without putting too many limits on the individual freedom of clients.
ANNUAL BUDGET PLAN FOR RUNNING COSTS OF THE REFUGE

The annual financial plan for a women’s refuge requires careful planning. In all cases local prices should be taken as the basis. This is also true of personnel costs; staff salaries of people working in the refuge. Salary levels for work in a refuge should not be lower than those for other employment at the same qualification level. The sums vary from year to year, the variables including salary changes / increases, higher staffing levels, varying special expenditure and investments, changes in energy costs etc.

The following costs usually occur

<table>
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<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
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<td>Staff costs (see chapter 7)</td>
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<td>Counsellors for women and children</td>
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<td>Counsellors for non-residents</td>
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<td>Translation in mother tongue of the client</td>
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<td>Staff for night shifts</td>
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<td>Overheads</td>
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<td>Energy costs (electricity, heating, water, etc.)</td>
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<td>Maintenance (repairs, renovation, etc.)</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<td>Investments in immovable (furniture, office equipment)</td>
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<td>Car/van (insurance, repair, running costs)</td>
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<td>PR and awareness raising</td>
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<td>Travel costs</td>
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<td>Specialised literature</td>
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<td>Office and training supplies</td>
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<td>Household supplies</td>
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<td>Expenses for children</td>
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<td>Costs of children</td>
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<td>Cost of food</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 Adapted from Manual Away from Violence (2004) p. 64, 65
Drawing up cost estimates is just one aspect of this field of responsibility. Financial planning and estimates of subsidies to be applied for also have to be dealt with in good time. In the case of some funding sources and some expenditure categories (e.g. campaigns), it is necessary to plan several years ahead.

There follows a broad outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>AMOUNT PER YEAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public funding (national, regional and/or local bodies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subscription</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variable income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsoring</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent paid by women / public authorities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
BUDGET PLAN FOR SETTING UP THE REFUGE

It is not possible to give exact figures on what the actual setting up of a refuge will cost. Apart from variations in local prices, different costs occur depending on whether you buy a house, buy land, have a house built, are given a building which needs to be adapted etc. However, certain fixed costs are bound to occur.

Particularly when setting up a refuge from scratch, it is advisable to seek the advice and assistance of experts. Of course it is helpful if you can fall back on personal contacts here. But public authorities and other women’s support organizations can also offer advice. In any event, it is important to consult experts in construction and technical security systems and to discuss the planning and cost estimates with them.

The table below serves only as a broad outline; the specific sums may vary widely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COST OF FACILITY</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of property (alternatively renting a facility) or</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase of land +</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Building costs (calculate by square metres, use local estimates) incl.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Electrician, plumber, floor layer, painter, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security installations (as above)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Costs of equipment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture for rooms for women (beds, wardrobes, tables, chairs)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dining room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen (incl. cooking pots, dishes, cutlery)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office rooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Counselling rooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s rooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toys, games, teaching equipment and material</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrance area</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Storage facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden (plants, garden tools, garden furniture, playground)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machine(s), clothes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office equipment (phones, PCs, photocopier, fax, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 Adapted from Manual Away from Violence (2004) p. 63
RISK FACTORS

The danger of repeat offences is very high in the case of domestic violence, and isolated occurrences of abuse are rare. In times of separation or divorce, the risk of violence tends to rise: The majority of murders, attempted murders and acts of serious violence are committed when the victims attempt to leave their abusers. Ironically, it is safer, so to speak, to stay in a violent relationship than to end it. Domestic violence must be taken very seriously: The factors listed below have been identified in international studies as risk factors for a high degree of dangerousness (Gondolf 2001; Robinson 2004; Humphreys et al 2005). The more factors apply in a specific case, the higher the risk is that acts of violence will be repeated or that the violence may increase or even escalate.

Previous acts of violence against the partner and the children or other members of the family

The perpetrator’s history of abuse and the forms and patterns of violence he has used are important indicators of his future behaviour. Thus, it is important to find out whether he has previously committed acts of abuse. Former convictions or reports to the police alleging violence are indications of a strong violence potential.

Separation and divorce are times of high risk

As mentioned above, domestic violence often escalates when a victim wants to leave the abuser. Therefore, this phase must be considered as an additional risk factor for escalation.

Severity and frequency of violent acts

The severity and frequency of violent acts also play a relevant role in assessing the dangerousness of an abuser. Acts of severe violence include armed violence, use of objects to injure a victim or strangling. Perpetrators who have committed frequent, severe acts of violence are particularly dangerous.

Violence against former partners or family members

Acts of violence committed against former partners or family members also indicate a risk factor for danger.

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1 Adapted from: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna
Acts of violence by other family members

Violence committed by family members of the perpetrator is another risk factor. It is especially difficult for the victim to escape the violent relationship, because in such cases the woman concerned is often controlled by the whole family, which, for instance, may make it impossible for her to flee.

Acts of violence outside the family

A great majority of domestic violence offenders commit violent acts only within the family circle. However, if they show violence also outside the domestic sphere, this indicates a general tendency to use violence. Such perpetrators may also assault the staff of support centres or authorities. Thus, safety planning for shelters and agencies is of particular importance.

Possession of weapons, use of weapons

If a perpetrator possesses (legal or illicit) weapons, this increases the risk of acts of armed violence. The risk is especially high if he has already used arms in the context of former acts of violence, or if he threatened to use a weapon in the past. Therefore, the abuser’s licence to carry firearms should be revoked. Violent perpetrators may also use techniques of combatant sports or aggressive animals (fighting dogs) as weapons.

Abuse of alcohol or drugs

While violence is not caused by alcohol and drugs, in persons who are inclined to use violence, they may lower the threshold of violence and thus contribute to an escalation of violence.

Threats

Threats should always be taken seriously. The perpetrator’s threats express his intention and his plans, and often indicate further acts of violence that are to be expected. It is wrong to assume that individuals who “only” use threats are not dangerous, but are just the proverbial barking dogs that seldom bite. Practical experience has shown that severe violence is often preceded by threats. Therefore, threats are important indicators of the dangerousness of a perpetrator.

Threats of murder/serious coercion

Threats of murder are dire threats that must always be taken seriously. In many cases of domestic murder, the victims had repeatedly been threatened with murder before they were killed.
Threats of suicide, depression

Threats of suicide should also always be taken seriously. There are many examples of perpetrators who kill themselves as well as their partner, other family members or a new partner. If an abuser threatens to commit suicide, a physician should always be consulted to assess the risk of the perpetrator's harming himself or others. Although many abusers use threats of suicide as a means of emotional blackmail, one can never be sure whether they will carry out the threat. Depression may also be a risk factor for the dangerousness of a perpetrator. Depressive phases are characterised by tunnel vision: One does not see any alternative; nothing seems to make any difference. At this stage, violent acts may escalate.

Extreme jealousy and possessiveness

Abusers who kill or severely injure their partners are often possessed by the desire to own their partners. They are extremely jealous and some regard every man around their partner as a rival. They control and monitor the partner and constantly accuse her of infidelity. This may lead to delusional jealousy, which is especially dangerous because the abuser is losing his grip on reality.

Extremely patriarchal concepts and attitudes

Extremely patriarchal concepts and attitudes may also be risk factors with regard to dangerousness. A typical view in this context is that a girl or young woman must not lead a self-determined life, but has to obey her father, as he is the head of the family. Such attitudes may also mean that a girl or a young woman is strongly persuaded or forced to marry, or that she is prevented from getting a divorce. What is particularly dangerous is a situation in which very rigid concepts of honour and sexuality prevail and women become victims of violence or are even killed if they do not obey these rules or if they are accused of having dishonoured the family.

Persecution, psychological terror (stalking)

Many perpetrators are not ready to accept a separation from their partner and try to prevent it by all means, also by using violence. There are abusers who continue to commit violent acts also after a separation and threaten their former partners for many years.

Danger for children

During separation or divorce, children are particularly vulnerable. They are also regarded as the abuser's possession. They cannot leave a violent father and, during visits, children may become victims of violence. The abuser's aggressions against the partner may also extend to the children, and he may take revenge by abusing or even killing them. Therefore, safety planning must always integrate the children, and fathers who use violence should not be granted visitation rights before they can prove that they have effectively tackled their violence problems.
Non-compliance with restraining orders by courts or police

If a perpetrator does not meet obligations such as compliance with restraining orders, protective orders requiring him stay away from the victim, or other orders by the courts or youth welfare authorities, this also indicates a high-risk situation, because it shows that the perpetrator is not willing to observe the restrictions that have been defined and to change his behaviour.

Possible triggers

One has to bear in mind that certain situations may lead to a sudden escalation of violence. Often, violence is triggered by a change in the relationship (e.g., when a woman takes a job against the will of her partner, when she looks for help or files for divorce, or when a divorce summons is served upon her husband). Therefore, it is very important to consider which situations or events may trigger violence and to take adequate safety measures in order to forestall it.

Risk assessment by the partner

Gondorf (2002), in his study on the risk of repeat offences in the context of domestic violence, determined that the assessment by the victims is an important indicator of the danger of renewed violence, and that there is a strong correlation between the risk assessment on the part of the victim and the actual use of violence by the perpetrator. Therefore, it is of crucial importance that the staff of authorities and support services ask the woman affected by violence about her assessment of the situation, and her opinion must be taken very seriously. The victim's fear of violence should never be minimised, played down or dismissed as hysterical.

A systematic assessment of the risk situation should be a standard procedure in all cases of domestic violence, followed by development of a safety plan, which should be drawn up with the victim in each individual case - not only once, but repeatedly.
RISK ASSESSMENT

Over the last decades, several instruments to assess the dangerousness of a perpetrator of domestic violence have been developed through research and practice. However, the instruments developed are not designed to measure or predict risk precisely. They rather serve to gather information systematically and to compare it with previous experience and knowledge in order to determine whether a victim is at risk of serious harm. In multi-agency cooperation, it is important to share information and engage in coordinated risk assessment. Danger assessment should be carried out with the victims of violence and only if there is a relationship of trust and support. It should always be accompanied by safety planning.

Danger assessment tool by Jacquelyn C. Campbell

Jacquelyn C. Campbell has developed a similar danger assessment instrument that can be downloaded from her website. She also offers online training in danger assessment:
http://www.dangerassessment.com/WebApplication1/pages/da/

Initial risk assessment form

ASSIST, Glasgow, Scotland, has developed a risk assessment form for advocates that can be found on the website of CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse):
http://www.crarg.org.uk/library_resources.html#2

London metropolitan police risk assessment model for DV cases

The London Metropolitan Police have developed a risk assessment tool (SPECSS) for their police force that can be downloaded from their website.
www.met.police.uk/csu/pdfs/AppendixIII.pdf

An evaluation of the application of the risk assessment instrument has been carried out by the University of Warwick and can be downloaded:
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/shss/swell/research/

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1 From: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to Good Cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna
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SAFETY PLANNING

The following points should be considered in supporting women victims of violence and their children

- Whom can she talk to about her situation, and whom can she trust - (friends, relatives, employer, teachers in school, etc.)?
- She should pack a bag with her most important belongings and those of her children, especially with all her important documents, and leave it with someone she can trust. Remind her always to have the keys for the house/apartment and the car with her so that she won’t leave them behind;
- If there are weapons in the house, explore ways to have them removed;
- In an emergency, what works best to keep her safe?
- Whom can she call in an emergency?
- Encourage her to call the police if violence reoccurs. How can she call the police? Does she have a mobile phone? (The police emergency number can also be dialled if the phone is blocked or if there is no credit balance left; 112 is the number of the European emergency line operating in every EU country.);
- Can she devise a signal with the children or her neighbours to have them call the police or get help if she cannot do it herself?
- If she needs to escape immediately, where can she go? Help her think through several places where she can go in an emergency. Write down the addresses and phone numbers and tell her to keep them someplace where the perpetrator won’t be able to find them;
- If she has to escape, what are the escape routes?
- Remind her that, in the middle of a violent assault, it is best to try to run away, or sometimes to placate the assailant, anything that works to protect her and the children.

If the woman is planning to leave the violent partner

- How and when can she leave most safely?
- Does she have transport, money, and a place to go?
- Does she know how to get to the nearest women’s refuge? Does she know the telephone number? Advise her to write it down and keep it where her partner won’t find it;
- What can she and others do to prevent her partner from finding her?
- Whom in her support network does she trust to protect and support her?
- How will she travel safely to and from work or school/kindergarten to pick up the children?
- What community/legal resources will help her feel safer?
- What custody and visitation provisions would keep her and the children safe?
- Can she get a restraining order to prohibit the perpetrator from coming near her or contacting her?

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If the woman has separated from the violent partner, discuss the following with her

- Increasing safety measures such as changing or installing safety locks on doors and windows;
- If possible, installing a better security system (window bars, locks, better lighting, a fire extinguisher, etc.);
- Instructing the children or family/friends to call the police in a situation of danger;
- Talking to school teachers and child care providers about who has permission to pick up the children, and developing other special precautions to protect the children;
- Building up a social network to support her, e.g., finding women’s support services, asking family, friends, colleagues for support, etc.;
- Obtaining a barring/restraining order by the police/the court, if possible.

Safety bag

Advise the client to have the following available in a safety bag, in case she and the children need to escape:
- Passports, birth certificates;
- Marriage certificate;
- Health and social security cards;
- Immigration documents;
- Driving licence, car papers;
- Divorce papers, other legal documents and important contracts;
- Phone numbers and addresses of family, friends and community services;
- Clothing and comfort items for herself and her children;
- Keys (house, car, etc.);
- Children’s favourite toys, school books, etc.
TECHNICAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS FOR THE SHELTER

Technical security precautions are extremely important in a women’s refuge. The necessary standards require the following precautionary measures:

- Safe entrances which cannot be forced open;
- Entrances should always be kept locked, and access to the building should be monitored. Ideally there should be a technical monitoring system (cameras, automatic opening and locking devices for doors);
- If the building has several entrances, this is a safety hazard, so a refuge should have only one main entrance. Any other doors to the outside should be kept locked and barred so that they cannot be forced open;
- A yard or garden is an asset for the women and children but poses a security risk. The yard or garden should likewise be secured against forced entry, and it should not be possible for anyone to look inside, throw objects or shoot. This means a high wall, a barrier, a protective fence or an alarm system;
- The yard or garden gate should also be secure, and the refuge workers should make a habit of locking it, especially at night;
- Ground-floor windows are a security risk, and ground-floor rooms facing onto the street should not be used as living or working areas.
- Windows - at least those that are located on the ground floor or can be reached from the outside - should have gratings;
- Every woman’s refuge should be equipped with an alarm system by which the police can be called in the event of an emergency. One example is a direct emergency line to the nearest police station.

Summary of the most important security features

- Strong, secure doors;
- Doors permanently locked, monitored access area;
- Gratings on windows;
- Direct emergency line to the police.

Example: The new women’s refuge in Vienna, opened in 2002, is a newly constructed building which has a two-door security lock in the entrance area - the second door doesn’t open until the first has closed. Several cameras have been mounted to monitor the street in front of the building. The garden is surrounded by a high wall and is secured by an alarm system.

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SAFETY PLAN FOR INSTITUTIONS

Services and institutions can only support and protect victims successfully if they also take care of their own safety. Protecting the employees and the clients against all sorts of violence as well as supporting them should be part of the policy of every organization involved in domestic violence prevention. A safety plan for institutions has been developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Center Vienna along the following guidelines:

Steps of safety planning

1. Policy of the institution

Clear policy of the agency concerning the occurrence of violence, harassment or discrimination - planning of safety measures; this includes:
- Development of a written safety plan for the support of employees and clients in cases of violence (Who is responsible for support, what kind of support - e.g. a lawyer, some time off, etc.);
- Comprehensive and written safety plan, about what has to be done in dangerous situations; informing all about the safety plan;
- Planning of implementation of the safety plan on all levels:
  - Association / agency of the institution
  - Management
  - Employees
  - Clients

2. Prevention of violence and implementation of the safety plan

- Technical safety precautions (safety door, video, direct line to the police…);
- Monitor daily security measures (e.g. Who is allowed to enter the institution? When are the doors open, when closed? Who has to take what safety precautions?);
- Regularly informing new employees about safety measures;
- Regular ‘safety practice’ (checking safety precautions, discussing measures with everyone);
- Early warning system: with imminent danger (e.g. an aggressive client), take measures in time, discuss the situation in the team meetings, don’t let it ‘wait’.

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3. Follow-up after occurrences of violence

- Plan what has to be done immediately after the violence - Who has to do what and when (e.g. calling the police / make a report, 'institution ban' for clients, emergency session...);
- Supporting directly affected people (find out their needs, organise and realise supporting measures - which kind of support, competency...);
- Find out the needs of other employees, organise and realise supporting measures (e.g. supervision);
- Assessing the processes concerning safety planning (What worked, what did not?);
- If necessary: improving / up-grading the safety plan.

Considerations for the development of a safety plan

- What unwanted incidents occur / could occur in our institution?
- By whom? Against whom? At what times especially? At which places especially?
- What sorts of violence / danger could occur?
- By whom? Against whom? At what times especially? At which places especially?
- What do we need / What do we have to do to avoid dangerous situations?
  - concerning clarity;
  - concerning agreements / rules;
  - concerning technical instruments / conditions:

- Safety plan for everyday life - Who has to do what and when?
- Safety plan in case of emergency;
- Follow-up after violence - What kind of support is available for the employees? (e.g. Lawyer, supervision, time off...) What for affected clients? What for other employees?
- Who is responsible for what concerning safety? Who is responsible for the ongoing realisation of safety plans? How is that ensured?
CHECKLIST FOR REFUGE GUIDELINES

Adapted from manual "Away from Violence", Chapter 8 - Community life in the refuge

The refuge guidelines should contain information about

- The structures and principles of the refuge;
- The services offered to the women and children;
- The staff;
- Security in the refuge;
- Visiting regulations;
- Responsibility for children;
- The residents’ rights;
- The scope for participation (house assembly, refuge council…);
- Rules and responsibilities;
- Guidelines for moving out;
- Contact person(s) in the event of conflicts;
- Complaint procedures;
FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

Women living in a refuge should be involved in its organization and administration. This approach, by promoting the principle of help for self-help, requires women to participate and is a factor in empowering them and supporting them in the process of regaining their self-confidence. Many women and children who seek shelter in a refuge have been exposed to a great deal of violence and abuse. Some of them have spent years in isolation imposed by their partners or husbands. Some have had their self-esteem systematically eroded. Life in the refuge, founded as it is upon non-violence, solidarity, involvement and democratic structures, constitutes an alternative way of life to the violent relationship they have left.

Possible models of participation:
- Refuge assembly;
- Children's assemblies;
- Participation in organizational meetings;
- Refuge Council;
- Conflict resolution team;

Further points for discussion regarding participation:
- Obstacles to participation;
- Preventing violence in the refuge;
- Balance of power;
- Respecting and valuing diversity;
- Solidarity;
- Dealing with complaints;
- Participation in external evaluations;
- Involvement in social changes;

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1 Adapted from the Manual "Away from Violence"
Fair procedures

One of the most difficult decisions that have to be taken in a refuge is whether or not a woman who has broken the rules and agreements should be prematurely dismissed from the refuge. Many women have nowhere else to live, which makes it very difficult for the refuge staff to expel her - and what about her children, who will also have to suffer the consequences? But if no decision is taken, other women and children might suffer. One fundamental consideration should be which behaviour or which offences are so serious that they warrant dismissal. Because the consequences can be extremely far-reaching, this form of sanction should be used very sparingly, and there should be other consequences for breaking rules. We have also to bear in mind that rules are guidelines for communal living, and it would be unrealistic to demand that they should never be broken.

Often refuge guidelines define norms but do not prescribe procedures and sanctions in the event of non-compliance. It is therefore important to establish formal procedures to deal with infringements in a constructive manner. Any such procedures must include and respect rights of the women concerned.

Model procedure

As said, expelling a woman from a refuge is one of the most far-reaching decisions. The team from a refuge for homeless women in Vienna, Austria, has, with the help of a supervisor, tried to develop a fair procedure and form of hearing to deal with this problem.

The procedure should be organised along the lines of the following questions:

1. What was the infringement to be sanctioned by expulsion?
2. Who is acting as the "prosecutor"? (i.e; who is responsible for monitoring compliance with the rules and reporting infringements?);
3. Is this a "first offence" or have there been prior infringements? If so, how were they dealt with before?
4. Before which body will the hearing take places? Who is responsible?
5. Who has a seat on this body?
6. When will the infringement be dealt with?
7. Who will present the arguments representing the refuge rules?
8. How is the woman concerned represented, does she have the right to be present at the hearing?
9. Who will "defend" the woman concerned - her counsellor or another staff member? (It is very important that somebody takes her side and is accepted as defending her without being seen as "betraying" the refuge rules.);
10. Should representatives of the residents be present?
11. How should the hearing be conducted?
12. How can the best decision be reached? What are the alternatives?
13. Who takes the final decision?
14. When, how and by whom will it be enforced?
15. How will this decision be explained to the woman concerned and the other residents, and by whom?

A fair hearing which the residents can understand helps to build up and maintain trust in the refuge. Intelligible procedures avoid decisions taken by the staff appearing arbitrary. This is one way of offsetting the imbalance of power between refuge staff and residents.

1 Adapted from Manual "Away from Violence", Chapter 8 - Community Life in the Refuge.
CAMPAIGN 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign for women’s rights as human rights. It was started through the initiative of the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) in 1991. The campaign lasts from November 25, the International Day Against Violence Against Women till December 10th the International Human Rights Day, in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. During this 16-day period are also other significant dates including November 29th, the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day and December 1st, World AIDS Day.

Each year women’s human rights organizations from all over the world participate in the activities. Information on organizations participating can also be found on the website of CWGL. Each year a special topic is emphasized by CWGL which may be taken up by other groups as well. The 16 Days Campaign is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and groups around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by:

- Raising awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights violation at the local, national, regional and international levels;
- Strengthening local work around violence against women;
- Establishing a clear link between the local and international levels in order to end violence against women;
- Providing a network in which organizers can develop and share new and effective strategies;
- Demonstrating the solidarity of women around the world;
- Creating tools to pressure governments to implement promises to tackle violence against women.

Since 1991 over 2,000 organizations in approximately 154 countries have participated in the 16 Days Campaign!

More information: http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/about.html
COUNCIL OF EUROPE CAMPAIGN: STOP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Council of Europe Campaign 2006 - 7: “Stop domestic violence against women”
http://www.coe.int/t/dc/campaign/stopviolence/default_en.asp

In November 2006 the Council of Europe (CoE) launched a Campaign to Stop Domestic Violence Against Women, which ended in June 2008 with an official Closing Conference. The campaign was carried out at a parliamentary level (PACE), at a national (governmental) level and a regional level.

Information about instruments and activities of the Council of Europe in the area of violence against women - tools and studies developed during the campaign

All studies can be downloaded at the WAVE homepage: www.wave-network.org under the section documents - CoE.

Written publications

  - The blueprint gives an overview of the aims of the Campaign, the objectives, its messages, target groups and the supposed time frame of activities.

- Combating violence against women. Stocktaking study on the measures and actions taken in Council of Europe Member States. 2006, Strasbourg prepared by Prof. Dr. Carol Hagemann-White with the assistance of Judith Katenbrink and Heike Rabe. Directorate General of Human Rights. 2006, Strasbourg.
  - This comprehensive study gives an overview and statistics on the extent of the problem incl. cost of violence, implemented measures to protect victims (legal instruments, services and support, perpetrator re-socialisation), measures to deter and punish violence against women (penalisation and prosecution), linking different legal frameworks, holistic approaches like National Action Plans and monitoring the progress in the Member States.
  
  - This study is a follow up to the stocktaking study, assessing the implementation of the main areas emphasised in the Blueprint across Europe. It takes account of the diversity of conditions in the Member States.

- **Handbook for Parliamentarians “Parliaments united in combating domestic violence against women”** Secretariat of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.
  
  - Parliamentarians can play a vital role by adopting legislation to establish domestic violence as a serious and unacceptable assault on human dignity. This handbook is a practical tool for parliamentarians. It sets out practical ideas for elected representatives who want to back the campaign and help fight the scourge of domestic violence against women. It comprises an overview of the problem, questions and answers, good practices for parliaments and a selected bibliography of Council of Europe work regarding this matter.

- **Setting the Standard: A study on and proposals for minimum standards for violence against women support services.** Liz Kelly and Lorna Dubois March 2008, Strasbourg:
  
  - This study gives an overview of and recommendations for minimum standards for shelters, counselling services, legal advice, hotlines, self-help groups, rape crisis centers, training and education, perpetrator programs and intervention projects.

- **Council of Europe Campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence: Activity Reports of National Focal Points.**
  
  - In this report, 35 countries give reports and outlooks on planned activities within the CoE campaign. Make sure they really realize what they promise here.

- **Council of Europe Task Force statement for European Convention on violence against women 2008**
  
  - As one of the many results of the Council of Europe Campaign "Stop domestic violence against women", the Task Force urges for a legally binding convention to prevent violence, protect the victims and punish the perpetrators. The Task Force considers that the Council of Europe has a unique opportunity to lead the process for the preparation of the first European human rights treaty to prevent and combat violence against women. The Task Force highlighted the absence of a universal treaty and a European treaty in this field. Indeed, at present only the Organization of American States and the African Union have treaties in this field.

**Other campaign material**

- Domestic Violence Poster;
- Flyer;
- Bookmark.
The Association Austrian Women's Shelter Network (AOEF) was founded by members of staff of different Autonomous Women’s Shelters in Austria in 1988. The aim of this feminist non-profit network has been to enhance the cooperation of the different shelters and women's help services as well as to ensure the exchange of information. At the moment 26 of 29 shelters in Austria are members of the association. AOEF deals with gender-based violence and being the only institution of this kind in Austria, acts as a pioneer in the field of research, training and documentation. Within the last few years it has performed an increasing number of tasks such as training-courses for the police, seminars for different professions, expertise for law improvement, created an archive on violence, intervention projects, and international projects. AOEF now comprises four departments: the Austrian Information center against violence, the 24hr women's helpline against violence and an archive of literature against violence and WAVE.

In 1991 the Austrian Information Center against Violence was established as a "service center" within the association which is responsible for networking and coordination of the women's shelters. They have also organized conferences twice a year. The association AOEF serves the staff of the women's shelters as a source of information and also does lobbying for the women's shelters.

The aims of the Information Center against Violence are

- Information and sensitization of the public about the problem area of violence against women and children;
- Providing information about help organizations;
- Encouragement and support of the establishment and extension of women's shelters, counselling centers and other establishments those are active in the area of violence prevention;
- Networking of women’s shelters and other establishments those are active in the area of violence prevention;
- Training of various professional groups;
- Development and realization of new measures against violence against women and children;
- Implementation of activities for the prevention of violence against women and children and violence in civil society in general;
- Study of personal and structural violence against women and children;
- Improvement of women's social and economic situation;
- These aims are reached by: Public Relations work (work with the media, press releases, conferences,…), conferences, publications, collection of data, press monitoring, lobbying activities, networking of the women's shelters, networking and cooperation with other establishments and organizations, presentations, specialist meetings and preventive education activities, campaigning, etc.

The 24hr nationwide helpline against male violence (0800 222 555) is a service helpline which came under the umbrella of AOEF in 1999. A team of social workers and psychologists can be reached for telephone counselling for women and children affected by violence. The helpline works nationwide, 24hrs/7 days a week and for free of charge.
In the documentation and archive against violence, books, videos and other documents against violence are collected. Books can be copied and read in the library.

WAVE (Women Against Violence Europe) is a Europe wide network which has over 80 focal points in 48 European Countries and networks over 4000 women’s right NGOs and women’s help services. More information about WAVE can be found in "Handout 50".
DESCRIPTION OF WAVE
(WOMAN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE)

Women Against Violence in Europe (WAVE) is part of the Austrian Women’s shelter network (AÖF), which comprises also the Austrian Information Center against Violence, the 24hr women’s helpline against violence and the archive of literature against violence. WAVE is the European network of women’s non-governmental organizations and works in the field of ending violence against women and children. Organizations within the WAVE network include women’s shelters, crisis hotlines, and organizations focusing on prevention and training. The WAVE office - the coordination of the network - is located in Vienna.

WAVE’s vision: WAVE strives for a world respecting women’s rights as human rights and for a world free of violence against women. To realize this vision, violence against women has to be identified as a priority area to be tackled internationally as well as nationally. States must be held accountable and take active steps in ending violence against women, adapt and implement legislative measures and ensure specific quality services run by NGOs to be provided for women and children affected by violence. WAVE’s mission is to promote women’s human rights and ending violence against women by setting up a network of women’s NGOs, lobbying activities for legislative changes, promoting specific quality services, providing training, campaigning, capacity building and conferences.

The WAVE network was founded in 1994 and initially launched its activities at the World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Having started off with six organizations, the network currently connects approximately 4000 women’s organizations combating violence against women and children in Europe. At the regional and national levels about 91 Focal Points in 46 European countries form the basis of the network.

WAVE focal points are member organizations embedded in an informal structure. There are no membership fees, but also no formal decision making structures - those organizations participating are also deciding. This enables prompt reaction to upcoming issues concerning DV. All focal points at the WAVE network have in common that they are NGOs based or support feminist principles, work towards the same vision to end DV and VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. They share the desire to be internationally engaged as well as to have access to European and international decision-making processes. The WAVE focal points are the force of the WAVE network to - jointly - influence external policies (UN, CoE, EU level) as well as seeking support to influencing and implementing national policies. Focal points are embedded in a local network where they can reach other organizations. In doing so NGOs function as multipliers. Sometimes there is more than one focal point in one country, since the aim is to reach many different networks and NGOs working in the field of DV. Focal points have specific tasks such as to disseminate WAVE information regularly to groups within their network, to monitor the implementation of women’s human rights in their country and pass information from their network to the WAVE office in Vienna as well as to other Focal Points. Furthermore Focal points are often project partners and should strive to participate at the annual WAVE conference in order to network, exchange good practice examples, and discuss upcoming issues and strategies for the next year and to get updated information on new developments regarding DV.
Aims and main activities of the WAVE-network

Advocacy, collecting and providing information in relation to domestic violence: For women affected by violence and people looking for support services, WAVE maintains a directory containing over 4000 women's help organizations in 46 European countries. Further, WAVE gathers country specific information in relation to male violence against women, research, applicable laws, international documents, good practices and prevention strategies, which is also published at the WAVE directory and is a source of information for women's NGOs, policy maker and researchers.

Lobbying, campaigning and awareness raising: WAVE lobbies the EU-, CoE- (Council of Europe) and UN-policies to take actions against VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN and monitors - with the help of the WAVE Focal Points - the implementation of those commitments on national level of the WAVE member countries. WAVE supports focal points to hold states accountable for their commitment. WAVE participates in campaigns raising awareness of VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, of ways to tackle violence, and of the importance of specific quality services. WAVE highlights occurring legal/structural forms of violence of which women are affected and ponders for the obligation of the state to ensure a life free of violence for every single woman.

Networking, projects and training seminars: WAVE promotes dialogue and cooperation among women's NGOs Europe-wide through information exchange, Europe-wide projects, conferences, training seminars and consultations, as well as active participation in social movement events at national, European and international levels.

WAVE’s networking aims are four-folded:
1. We work internally with our focal points to make the WAVE network even stronger (annual WAVE conference, WAVE-network list, projects, policy paper),
2. We use the strength and resources of being a network to influence external policies (UN, CoE, EU level), for this aim we also cooperate with other organizations and allies,
3. We use the strength and resources of being a network to influence national policies in our focal point countries in order to promote women’s human rights and their implementation, for sufficient and adequate women's services, etc,
4. We support cooperation structures between different professional groups who work in the field of violence against women since effective cooperation structures can save the life of women affected by violence.

Regular services of WAVE

The WAVE database is a comprehensive database on the subject of violence against women and children in Europe. It comprises addresses of over 4000 women's organizations working in the field as well information on legislation, research on violence against women as well as a resource section with international documents. Easy access is guaranteed by publishing the database on the Internet, on WAVE's website www.wave-network.org. Having started with information on domestic violence / male violence in intimate relationships, it now covers many other forms of violence against women, such as trafficking in women, FGM, violence against migrant women, etc.
Apart from the WAVE-database, the **WAVE-website** contains regular information on current international developments regarding the issue of violence against women on UN, Council of Europe and EU level, as well as specific information on the situation in 46 European Countries. Further, the WAVE website contains position papers, update on projects and publications.

**Training for professionals:** Training and further education is one of the crucial ways to pass on experience and knowledge. Experts who have been actively involved in violence prevention activities for many years provide their expertise during special training seminars. The seminars are based on a comprehensive training programme on combating violence against women which were developed by the WAVE office as part of a DAPHNE projects.

**Information supply and training materials**

- More than a roof over your head - A Survey of Quality Standards in European Women’s Refuges (2002);
- Prevention of Domestic Violence against Women - European Survey, Good Practice Models, WAVE Training Programme (2000);
- Away from violence - guidelines for setting up and running a women’s refuge (2004).
- Bridging Gaps - From good intentions to good cooperation. Manual for effective multi-agency cooperation in tackling domestic violence (2006);
- Annual WAVE report on activities, WAVE additionally strives to publish annually a country report on the situation of women’s services and the legislative situation of VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN within the WAVE member countries;
- WAVE newsletter - The newsletter monthly gets published and contains information on VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN issues on international and national level (of the 47 member countries) as well as updated information about projects, activities and campaigns;
- FEMPOWER is a journal published once or twice per year by WAVE. Each journal has a special “focus topic”, e.g. on the Council of Europe Campaign to Stop Violence against Women (2006-2008), on CEDAW, on the Situation of Migrant Women.

All materials mentioned above, information about trainings, projects and activities, the WAVE database as well as country specific information regarding VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN can be found on the WAVE website: [www.wave-network.org](http://www.wave-network.org).

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THE PROCESS OF COOPERATION - STEPS TO BE TAKEN

Multi-agency cooperation can take many forms, from information networking to institutionalised cooperation between agencies. The goal of multi-agency cooperation is to go beyond informal networking and to achieve more binding forms of cooperation that have the potential to introduce change and improve the response to survivors of violence. Multi-agency forums or round tables have been established in many countries at the local and regional levels. This handout provides information on how to start a multi-agency initiative and on possible structures and working methods.

1. Getting starting

Many multi-agency initiatives are initiated by women’s NGOs providing services to survivors. This is not surprising, since the need and pressure to improve the response to violence against women and children is most urgent for agencies which in their daily work are confronted with the problems and concerns of survivors. Most women’s NGOs lack resources even for providing basic services; multi-agency work is hardly funded, which makes any commitment in this field a "luxury". Still, many women’s NGOs and other agencies do engage in various forms of cooperation, knowing that they have to work together in order to provide effective services to survivors. It is advisable for a multi-agency initiative to "start small" and to grow slowly, aiming at broadening its tasks as well as its resources.

Ideas for getting started:

Preparations
- Collect and provide statistics on the prevalence of violence against women and children in your region, the number of survivors seeking help in your agency or other agencies, as well as information, research and reports about the status quo of service provision and responses to the problem;
- Identify policy papers, national or international documents, national action plans, etc. that oblige provincial, national and regional governments to provide effective services and protection to survivors of violence and use these documents as a policy base;
- Mapping;
- Sit down and think about agencies you are working with successfully already;
- Meeting;
- Call a series of two or three meetings with the aim of setting up a multi-agency initiative in your town/region and invite the agencies you have identified as potential allies;
- Form a small working group or steering group to coordinate the activities;
- Establish an ongoing forum that meets regularly;
- Actors involved - see chapter 10 in the Manual Bridging Gap (WAVE-Network 2006);
- Possible initial activities;

1 Adapted from: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna, Chapter 10.
- Start with the aim of getting to know each other and sharing your experiences;
- Organise a multi-agency training event to deepen your knowledge about each other’s work and experiences;
- Take time to find out what the participating agencies expect from multi-agency cooperation and what they are willing to contribute;
- Identify concrete themes for the first meetings;
- Identify gaps in services;
- Develop common visions and goals about the ideal response to violence against women and children;

2. Leadership

In order to form a successful and productive multi-agency initiative, it is necessary to assign the role of leadership and of coordination of the processes to specific agencies or persons. Some multi-agency initiatives decide for a rotating leadership; others designate one agency to assume this task or hire a person to take on the job. No matter how this task is organised, it is important that those agencies most involved in the field (women’s refuges and women’s services for survivors) take a leading role and that their expertise is acknowledged and valued.

Many multi-agency initiatives have good experience with having experts from women’s agencies, who are usually most engaged and have a comprehensive knowledge of the problem, taking the lead in coordinating and preparing the meetings. By having at least two persons participating in the meetings of the multi-agency initiative, the coordinating women’s organizations solve the problem of having to fulfil two roles (chairing and contributing). This can put an additional burden on small women’s agencies, but it has proven to be a successful model, according, for instance, to the local round-table initiatives in Gladbeck, Germany (see appendix--models and examples).

3. Development of working structures

Minimum working structures

A local multi-agency initiative such as a round table should have the following minimum working structures:

- A coordinating agency to prepare and chair the meetings;
- A mailing list;
- Invitations to meetings;
- Regular meetings (in the beginning, it might be necessary to meet more often, e.g., once a month; later on, when goals are developed and tasks shared out, it may suffice to meet every second month or quarterly. Frequency always depends on the projects that are to be carried out and the resources available);
- Commitment to regular participation for a given length of time;
- Development of concrete goals and steps to implement them;
- Keeping of minutes of all meetings and activities; distribution of the minutes;
- Evaluation procedures to monitor developments and progress.
Continuous reflection on the activities of the multi-agency initiative is important in order to prevent the initiative from becoming a "talking-shop" which only pretends to be active rather than achieving actual change.

**Sub-groups**

If the multi-agency initiative has a large number of participants, it may be difficult for them to work together in a fruitful way. The building of sub-groups can be a good method to stay productive and to avoid frustrations. Sub-groups can deal with specific issues (e.g., legal protection measures, the situation of immigrant women and violence, effects on children, perpetrator programs) or they can serve to carry out specific tasks like organising a conference or a training course.

**Steering group**

As the multi-agency initiative grows and develops different "branches", it might be necessary to form a steering group to coordinate actions. A steering group can serve as the managing body of a multi-agency initiative. Its tasks can be to coordinate policies and actions, to provide resources through fund-raising activities or to network with other initiatives, e.g., general crime-prevention initiatives. A steering group should not have too many participants, but it should also make sure agencies engaged in supporting special groups such as immigrants or ethnic-minority women are represented.

### 4. Principles and methods of working together

**Common ground, respect and dialogue**

- It is important to identify the common ground, the base that all agree upon, and to broaden this base over time;
- It is also important to identify points on which participants do not agree and to try to understand why; it is advisable to engage in a dialogue and to try to understand and discover the rationale for a certain position instead of just arguing;
- It is important to respect and value the opinions of agencies with long-term and expert experience in the field;
- Respectful, non-sexist and non-discriminatory attitudes and action should form the basis for working together;
- Based on a non-discriminatory policy, each agency’s position should be respected, even if it is not shared by all.

**Decision-making**

In order to move on from more informal networking and to be able to take action together, it is important to decide on a method of decision-making. Some points to consider are:

- Common decisions serve to build the identity of the multi-agency initiative;
- It is necessary to work out a practicable method of decision-making;
- Disparities in power between agencies (e.g., small vs. big, "poor" vs. "rich" agencies) should not be magnified by reflecting the power in the decision-making processes;
- The perspectives, interests and needs of survivors should always be the central concern in decision-making.
- It may be wise to strive for decisions by consensus if possible, in order to make sure all participants feel respected and integrated;

- However, multi-agency initiatives should also aim at reaching decisions that guarantee progress and improvement of the status quo rather than settling for the lowest common denominator; participants should not use their power to block progress and improvements;

- In order to build trust, it can be important to agree not to talk in public about the multi-agency initiative without the consent of all the participants.

5. Goals, policies and action plans

In order to move beyond the stage of identifying what should be done to improve the situation, it is necessary for a multi-agency initiative to identify concrete goals and to work towards putting them into practice.

Action plans and written agreements, signed by all the participants, form a binding structure for a multi-agency initiative and represent an important base for sustainable work. An action plan should comprise long-term as well as short-term goals. Long-term goals are broader and describe the general development that should be achieved, like “Improving services for victims”. These more general goals should then be broken down into concrete goals and formulated in a manageable way (example: improving services for victims by supporting the setting up of one more women’s shelter in the region; the support comes from the activities that follow within the next three months).

In order to be able to monitor and evaluate whether goals have actually been attained, it is important to formulate them very clearly and also to define indicators suitable for measuring goals or determining whether they have been achieved. Indicators can be of a quantitative or a qualitative nature. For example, if the goal is to develop guidelines for cooperation between two agencies, the indicator for achievement of the goal will be that the guidelines exist in written form and are being implemented in the working procedures of both agencies by a certain date.

Of course it is important that goals always correspond to resources and that the necessary means (finance, infrastructure, personnel) are available to implement the goals. Careful and realistic planning is necessary to avoid failures and frustration, which in the worst case can lead to the collapse of a multi-agency initiative.

Agreed goals should be formulated in a written action plan or policy paper, coordinated with the heads of all the agencies involved and signed by all the participants. The action plan or policy paper should contain:

- A common definition of the problem;
- A mission statement and visions;
- An analysis of the status quo and the need for change;
- Overall goals and operational goals;
- Strategies and methods for achieving the goals and implementing policies;
- A timetable;
- Responsible agencies and persons;
- Resources allocated to carry out the tasks (personnel, money, materials, etc.)
- Evaluation procedures.
6. Making the work visible

It is also important to make the work of the multi-agency initiative visible, i.e., by means of:
- Information sheets;
- Annual reports;
- Research and evaluation reports;
- Websites and other means.

7. Evaluation

Goals and action plans need to be evaluated continuously. A multi-agency initiative should take the time at least once a year to evaluate the work that has been done. It is advisable to turn to an external expert for this task. The cycle of quality control can serve as a model for integrated evaluation:

Cycle of goal-oriented actions
- Define overall goals;
- Analyse the situation and the status quo in the field in which you want to achieve changes; collect data and information;
- Define concrete, realistic goal(s);
- Develop an action plan to achieve the goals (strategies, methods, means);
- Define indicators to measure and determine whether the goals have been achieved;
- Analyse and evaluate the results (what worked and why, what did not work and why, what needs to be changed);
- Take action to make improvements and redefine goals.

8. Resources

Every agency should allocate the necessary resources for participating actively in multi-agency cooperation and at least provide staff time and if possible also money for carrying out projects and tasks. Local and regional authorities should fund multi-agency initiatives on a regular basis, covering at least coordination work and specific projects. Small agencies like women’s refuges and other women’s services should get additional funding by the local or regional government to avoid siphoning off resources for multi-agency work from service provision. Multi-agency initiatives should not have to compete for funding with women’s services, as this would be counter-productive to the provision of adequate services to survivors and also to the spirit of cooperativeness. Funding should thus come from other sources.
ROUND TABLE: “VIOLENCE-FREE CITY”\(^1\)

This exercise can serve as a preparation for multi-agency cooperation. It can be used by a group, i.e., a women’s refuge planning a round table in their town, to empathise with the different groups they are planning to involve. It can also be used in a multi-agency training event where the participants get a chance to “slip into the shoes of the other” in order to better understand each other as a prerequisite for finding common goals and solutions.

**Situation**

In your city, the round table "Violence free city" on protection and support of women victims of violence is meeting for the first time. The women’s shelter has initiated and prepared the gathering and is chairing it together with the head of the city’s equality department. The goal of the first meeting is to get to know each other and to discuss common goals for future cooperation. The women’s shelter has invited two women from a self-help group of survivors to the meeting. One woman has brought along her teenage daughter to translate for her.

**Roles:**

2 staff members of the women’s shelter (NGO), 1 coach/observer;  
2 women from the self-help group and one teenage daughter, 1 coach/observer;  
1 head of the city’s equality department;  
1 member of the police force;  
1 member of the youth/child welfare office;  
1 family court judge/clerk;  
1 prosecutor;  
1 social welfare office staff member;  
1 person from the mayor’s office;  
1 general coach/observer;  
Total=15 people.

**Preparation**

The representatives of the women’s shelter and the staff member of the equality department prepare the role-play with support by the coach. During the role-play, the coaches function as observers. The two women from the self-help group and the daughter prepare their role-play together, with support by the coach/observer. The other representatives prepare their roles first by themselves and then together. Participants should invent their own characters (name, age, profession, rank, history, needs, experiences, goals for the meeting, hidden agendas, etc.)

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\(^1\) Adapted from: WAVE-Network (Women against Violence Europe) (2006): Bridging Gaps - From Good intention to good cooperation, Manual, DAPHNE project Bridging Gaps, Vienna.
QUALITY STANDARDS IN DELIVERING HUMAN SERVICES

- Treating each client/survivor with the dignity he or she deserves;
- Respecting confidentiality;
- Providing on-time services;
- Providing resolution to legitimate complaints;
- Providing services in a safe and secure setting;
- Providing services in a facility that is accessible, clean and functional;
- Delivering services provided by competent, trained personnel;
- Assuring that services provided meet high standards and respond to the clients’ needs;
- Obtaining informed consent from clients before services are provided;
- Seeking constant feedback from clients to improve the delivery of services;
- Taking advantage of advances in technology to improve communication between the organization and the clients.

1. Understanding domestic and sexual violence and its impact

Services demonstrate an approach that recognizes and understands the dynamic and effects of domestic violence.

1.1. Services work to and promote a definition of domestic violence and sexual violence that acknowledges that domestic and sexual violence, by a known person, is a pattern of coercive and controlling behavior. Services recognize that the cause of domestic and sexual violence is rooted in the issues of power and control the perpetrators sense of entitlement; that were domestic and sexual violence is perpetrated by men against women this is a consequence of, and reflects an reinforces, the historical unequal power relations between men and women in society;

1.2. Services recognize that women survivors, because of their gender, are likely to be affected by a range of forms of violence against women - FGM; forced marriage and so-called honor-based violence; rape and sexual assault; sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, trafficking and exploitation through prostitution and the pornography industry;

1.3. Services recognize and promote information about the links between domestic and sexual violence, violence against women and the abuse and neglect of children; that witnessing domestic violence and sexual violence also constitutes harm to a child of young person and acknowledge the impact of the above for help seeking, service provision, child and adult protection;

1.4. Services acknowledge and promote that domestic and sexual violence is unacceptable and an abuse of human rights. Services challenge the social tolerance of domestic and sexual violence and address myths of false beliefs about domestic and sexual violence in their own and in other agencies, and the wider community;

1.5. Services understand the effect that domestic and sexual violence has on survivors and operate from a position where survivors are believed, listened to with empathy, and provide a non-judgmental response;

1.6. Services recognize that the social and cultural identities, needs and experiences will have an effect on individuals' experience of domestic and sexual violence and that particular groups may face disadvantages as a result.

2. Safety

Services demonstrate that all intervention prioritizes the safety of survivors and staff.

2.1. Services acknowledge that safety is paramount and that all survivors, their children and staff working with them have a right to be protected from violence and abuse, and will take action in accordance with procedures to ensure this;

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2.2. Services recognize the need for gender sensitive service provision to ensure the safety of survivors and to enable effective recovery from abuse;

2.3. Services utilize effective risk assessment to identify and immediate risk of harm to survivors at the point of referral and, where services are ongoing, follow up with a comprehensive assessments of risk to survivors and their children, which is quarterly reviewed and updated;

2.4. Services respond to identified risk by providing appropriate information, conducting safety planning and intervening with agreed support and advocacy services to help reduce and manage risk;

2.5. Services seek information from other agencies to enable effective assessment of risk, and contribute to risk assessment conducted by other agencies by providing specialist advice and information;

2.6. Services recognize that confidentiality and privacy are key to enabling disclosure and effective support and ensure that all work with survivors is conducted in the safest environment possible.

3. Diversity and equal access to services

Services respect the diversity of survivors and positively engage in anti-discriminatory practice, and survivors should be supported assisted to access services on an equitable basis.

3.1. Services ensure that survivors, when attempting to access or when receiving services, will not experience unfair discrimination on the basis of their: additional support needs; age, caring responsibilities; class; cultural beliefs; disability; economic status; gender reassignment; HIV status; language barrier; marital status; nationality; race; religion; sexuality, unless this is a justified requisite for specialized service;

3.2. Services take steps to ensure they are accessible and welcoming to all survivors who are experiencing or have experiences domestic or sexual violence;

3.3. Services promote and engage in anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of their work, and are understanding, sensitive and responsive to the individual needs of survivors and their children from diverse backgrounds with a range of support needs;

3.4. Services are responsive to, and challenge, unfair prejudice and discrimination when it arises, within service delivery and when advocating on behalf of survivors;

3.5. Access to services is prioritized on an individual basis taking account of availability, risk, need and level or nature of support required;

3.6. Services maintain good links with specialist agencies that work with people from diverse backgrounds, and use multi-agency networks to promote access to services, and referral and signposting for survivors who may fall outside their eligibility guidelines or benefit from specialist services;

3.7. Services recognize the need of, provide support for, and seek assistance for, survivors with insecure immigration status or EU status who have no recourse to public funds or without work visa.
4. Advocacy
Services provide both institutional and individual advocacy to support and promote the needs and rights of survivors.

4.1. Specialist domestic and sexual violence services provide services and support that are independent of criminal justice or local authority jurisdiction or of other statutory agencies;
4.2. Services fully utilize the statutory framework for responding to domestic and sexual violence, survivors’ rights and entitlements within existing systems, and offer effective individual and institutional advocacy;
4.3. Services understand and ensure the principle of good practice in effective advocacy work with individuals (early and periodical assessment of the survivors needs; realistic, regularly reviewed support plans, continuity of support and advocacy, based on agreements with the survivor);
4.4. Advocacy work undertaken is outcome focused and these outcomes are representative of the particular needs of domestic and sexual violence survivors;
4.5. Services liaise regularly with other agencies to develop positive working relationships and to negotiate or resolve problems in law, policy and practice, in order to maintain and develop effective response to meet the needs and interests, safety and well being of survivors.

5. Empowerment and a survivor centered approach
Services encourage survivors to identify and express their needs and make decisions in a supportive and non-judgmental environment; survivors are treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity; and promote service-user involvement in the development and delivery of the service.

5.1. Services provide clear information about the services they provide, how to access the service, and about the rights and responsibilities of survivors upon accessing services;
5.2. Services provide timely, pro-active support which is non-judgmental and flexible enough to meet survivors’ individual needs;
5.3. Services promote self help, empowerment and inclusion, to enable survivors to take control of their lives, maintain their independence and acknowledge their life experience & strengths; services promote survivors’ rights to respect, dignity, independence, choice and control, where this does not conflict with safety;
5.4. Services use a range of methods to consult survivors to inform the management of services, service delivery and policy development - (documented individual and group consultation with survivors).

6. Confidentiality
Services respect and observe survivors’ right to confidentiality and survivors are informed of situations where that confidentiality may be limited.

6.1. Services ensure that access to information about services, whether verbal or written, is restricted to those with a need to have access and limited to the information they need;
6.2. Services understand and respond to the additional needs domestic and sexual violence survivors, and staff providing services to them, may have in relation to confidentiality and take steps to minimize identified risks that could arise from inappropriate information sharing;
6.3. Services have mechanisms in place to share information appropriately and safely, including information sharing protocols within a multi-agency framework.
7. A coordinated community response
Services operate within a context of inter-agency cooperation, collaboration and co-ordinated service delivery, to ensure a culture of intolerance about domestic and sexual violence is developed in communities and by individuals.

7.1. Services recognize the need for safe, consistent multi-agency response to domestic and sexual violence; services participate in a coordinated community approach in order to protect survivors, provide appropriate services and to reduce and prevent domestic and sexual violence, and hold perpetrators accountable and manage their risk;
7.2. Services take steps to ensure that the needs of survivors are effectively represented by a specialist provider within local multi-agency partnership working arrangements;
7.3. Services promote awareness amongst other statutory and voluntary agencies of domestic and sexual violence and, where appropriate, develop coordinated best practice response.

8. Responsibility for the violence and holding perpetrators accountable
Services operate within a culture based on the belief that perpetrators have sole responsibility for their violence.

8.1. Services believe that perpetrators have sole responsibility for their violence, and that the safety of survivors is paramount; this informs service provision, risk assessment and safety planning.
8.2. Services have systems in place to identify the primary perpetrator of domestic and sexual violence and operate from an understanding of the different context in which men’s violence and women’s violence occurs. That is:
   - Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive and controlling behavior;
   - The causes of domestic and sexual violence are rooted in the issues of power and control and the perpetrators’ sense of entitlement within relationships;
   - Men’s violence against women is learned and intentional behavior, a direct consequence of the power differentials and inequality between men and women, and men are encouraged to believe that they are entitled to privilege and dominance over women in general and to power and control over their partners in particular;
   - Women’s violence to men is neither the same as - nor symmetrically opposite to - men’s violence to women, and reasons why women use violence within intimate relationships include (i) self-defense, protection of self or children, and/or escape from violent partner (protective); (ii) a response to a limit to their autonomy due to a history of adult/childhood victimization (both protective and reactive); and (iii) power and control over intimate partner (primary perpetrators);
   - Same-sex domestic violence occurs within the context of societal homophobia and heterosexism. Although there is an absence of gender difference, gender role stereotypes still needs to be addressed in service provision (i.e. gay and bisexual men were socialized as boys, lesbians and bi-sexual women were socialized as girls);
8.3. Services work with, promote or refer to voluntary sector perpetrator programs that meet respect minimum standards and principles, and services ensure that survivors have realistic expectations about the opportunities and potential risks of such programs;
8.4. Work with survivors recognizes and promotes the fact that responsibilities of the violence rests with perpetrators, and encourages a focus on their own and their children’s needs, and not that of the perpetrator.
9. **Accountability**

Services provide effective management of services so that survivors receive a quality service from appropriately skilled staff.

9.1. Services provide effective management and delivery of services that are sensitive and appropriate for survivors’ needs;

9.2. Services meet their stated mission and values, and have transparent systems in place to ensure accountability to stakeholders, funders and service users;

9.3. Services ensure the staff providing services are recruited, employed and developed to ensure that they are competent to meet the requirements of specialist domestic and sexual violence service provision.
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
ENSURING QUALITY STANDARDS

Principle 1: Information

The purpose and objectives of the services of the women’s refuge should be clearly defined and its mode of operations transparent to the staff, the service users, and the general community.

Written basic information (handbook, brochure, leaflet)
- Women’s service / refuge has an up-to-date handbook, information leaflet or brochure describing its purpose, objectives, target groups, principles, approach to service delivery, types of services provided, admission and leaving procedure;
- The description is available to all potential service users, staff and members of the community;
- The description is in a user-friendly language and it is also available in several languages (according to the languages in the population); it should also exist in visual or audio format;
- The description is explained to individual service users when they access the service.

Written description of policies and procedures
- The women’s refuge/service has documented policies and procedures describing how it will approach service delivery issues;
- Core standards as well as implementation steps are described:
  - Understanding domestic and sexual violence and its impact;
  - Safety;
  - Diversity and equal access to services;
  - Advocacy;
  - Empowerment and a survivor centered approach;
  - Confidentiality;
  - A co-ordinated community response;
  - Responsibility for the violence and holding perpetrators accountable;
  - Accountability (see Women’s Aid England 2007);
- The women’s refuge/service has a mechanism to review and update its policies and procedures.

Records of service operations and activities
- The women’s refuge/service maintains precise and current records of service operations and activities, in compliance with the principle of confidentiality;
- Precise and current records of service operations and activities of the women’s refuge/service are maintained, in compliance with the principle of confidentiality;
- Statistical reports are produced, in compliance with the principle of confidentiality;
- Periodical statistics and reports on the women’s refuge/service performance are accessible to the public; again they have to be in compliance with the principle of confidentiality.
Principle 2: service to users

The service should identify and respond to specific service users’ needs.

Policies and procedures in relation to accessing and leaving the service
- Women's refuge/service has policies and procedures in relation to accessing and leaving the service and they are accessible to service users, staff and other interested parties;
- The entry policy is non-discriminatory and clearly identifies the target groups for service delivery and - if there is a shortage of services - the criteria for determining priority for entry;
- If a women seeking help cannot be served, the women's’ refuge/service provides her with reasons for the decision and, if possible, refers the client to an alternative service.

Procedures to assess and meet survivors’ needs
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures in relation to assessing and meeting service users' needs and feedback to the service; the procedures are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties;
- Survivors are consulted regularly and their views are incorporated in the assessment and planning process. Relevant staff is consulted as well;
- The women’s refuge/service records assessment of service users’ needs and feedback updates them regularly and plans as to how they will meet their needs, including goals, action identified and timeframes for achieving or reviewing plans.

Principle 3: respect for service users’ rights

The women’s refuge/service respects the rights of the service users in all aspects of service operations and delivery.

Policy and procedures to ensure the service users’ right to make informed choices of the service they receive:
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures for providing service users with opportunities, if appropriate, to make informed choices and decisions about the services they receive, and such policy and procedures are accessible to them.

Policy and procedures to respect the service users’ rights for privacy and confidentiality:
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures for ensuring that the privacy and dignity of individual service users are being respected, and the policy and procedures are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties;
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures for ensuring that service users' rights on confidentiality are being respected, and the policy and procedures are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties.

Policy and procedures for ensuring that service users’ rights in relation to private property:
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures for ensuring that service users' rights in relation to private property are being respected, and the policy and procedures are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties.
Policy and procedures in relation to ensure service user rights to freely raise and have addressed, without fear of retribution, any complaints he or she may have regarding the service:

- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures in relation to handling complaints and they are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties;
- The procedures identify necessary staff actions and specify who will be responsible for dealing with the complaints, include timeframes and indicate how/when feedback will be provided to the service users;
- Service users are informed of their rights to, and procedures involved in, raising complaints;
- The women’s refuge/service encourages and provides opportunities for service users to discuss service delivery issues and to freely raise any concerns they may have;
- Any complaints raised and actions taken are documented.

Policy and procedures to ensure that service users are free from abuse:

- The women’s refuge/service unit has policy and procedures for ensuring that service users’ rights to freedom from verbal, physical and sexual abuse are being respected, and the policy and procedures are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties;
- Staff of the women’s refuge/service are aware of these policy and procedures;
- Service users and staff are encouraged to raise any concerns about verbal, physical or sexual abuse and are given appropriate opportunities to do so.

Service standards regarding safety:
See Handout 56 "Quality Standards in Management" and Handout 43 "Safety Planning for Institutions"
QUALITY STANDARDS IN MANAGEMENT

The women’s refuge/service should manage its resources effectively and in a manner that enables the organization to be innovative and to continuously improve the quality of service delivery.

The roles and responsibilities of all staff, managers, the Association, the Management Committee, the Board, and other decision-making bodies (i.e. a Refuge Council) should be clearly defined

- Job description and duty statements which define roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in respect of all positions within the women’s refuge service are available;
- This information is accessible to all staff, service users and other relevant parties;
- The roles, responsibilities and membership of the Association, the Management Committee and/or the Board or other decision making bodies are clearly defined and documented;
- The women’s refuge/service has an organigram picturing the overall structure and accountability relationships.

Policy and procedures on staff

The women’s refuge/service implements effective staff recruitment, contracting, development, training, assessment, deployment and accountability practices:

- The women’s refuge/service has policies and procedures on staff (including part-time staff) recruitment, deployment and promotion, employment contracting and accountability practices; the policies and procedures are accessible to staff and to all relevant bodies in the Association;
- The women’s refuge/service has induction policy and procedures for new staff;
- The women’s refuge/service provides on-going supervision for staff and conducts regular (annual) performance reviews for identifying areas for performance improvement and needs for ongoing training and development;
- The women’s refuge/service has a training policy and a plan for staff training and development.

Performance planning

The women’s refuge/service regularly plans, reviews and evaluates its own performance, and has an effective mechanism by which service users, staff and other relevant parties can provide feedback on its performance:

- The women’s refuge/service develops and documents appropriate plans to guide its operations and provide a basis for evaluating its performance (i.e. Annual Assessment Report);
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures for obtaining feedback from service users, staff and other relevant parties on its performance and for responding to such feedback, and such policy and procedures are accessible to these groups;
- Action is taken in response to performance / quality issues identified during review and evaluation processes.
Policies and procedures to ensure effective financial management

- The women’s refuge/service has procedures for developing and endorsing budgets;
- The women’s refuge/service has policy and procedures to manage financial resources efficiently and to monitor financial performance.

Procedures to meet all relevant legal obligations

The women's refuge/service unit complies with all relevant legal obligations:
- The women’s refuge/service is aware of all legislation which governs its operations and service delivery (including health and safety legislation, etc.);
- The women’s refuge/service has procedures to monitor its performance ensuring that it complies with relevant legislation and seeks legal advice if and when required.

Procedures to ensure provision of a safe physical environment for service users and staff

- Fire, and other necessary safety equipment is available and effectively maintained;
- The women’s refuge/service has a Safety Plan and Staff and service users are made aware of procedures for responding to an emergency are conducted on a regular basis, at least annually;
- The refuge regularly reviews its immediate and broader environment to identify safety issues and ensures that appropriate strategies for managing them are developed and implemented;
- A record is kept of any accidents or injuries involving staff and/or service users at the service unit and the manner of responding to such incidents.
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