

An Update on Implementing the Impact Toolkit Working Paper 3, December 2017

1. Introduction

There is a tremendous debate on Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPPs) and their ability to “make a difference”, i.e. how they know if they “work”. Practitioners in the sector do this work as they believe that abusive behaviour is learnt, and therefore, can be unlearned. The WWP EN “Guidelines to develop standards”, in the section on “Approaches and attitudes in direct work with perpetrators”, states that “Perpetrator programmes are based on the belief in the ability of people to change.” However, this is not always straightforward process and there are differing views on what contributes towards this process of change.

Numbers alone should and can not show the true picture of the “success” of a DVPP, behaviour change has to be put into practice, not just understanding demonstrated in a programme setting. Further, it can be difficult to engage men onto programmes if they are not in the criminal justice system or where sanctions are applied for non-attendance, and programmes can find that abusive men can be difficult to retain. Thus, numbers on programmes can be low as compared to the possible actual numbers of abusive men in any given society.

For many DVPPs, it is very difficult to analyse the impact they may be having in terms of success rates. This could be for several reasons, some of which are very important in terms of WWP EN being able to provide a toolkit to help address these issues.

- Many programmes run on very little resources and therefore staff time is a huge issue, often resources (if there are any) are geared towards programme delivery and programme evaluation can be left to one side.

- It can be hard to know how and what to evaluate in a programme. There are many different evaluation tools with many from more generalist interventions, these are often not transferable to DVPPs as they are very specialist in both nature and the outcomes that are looked for.
- A further layer of complication is that DVPPs are working to see outcomes, not only for the men on the programme, but, more importantly, for those he has harmed. I.e. if the goal is women and children's safety, it is not enough to only ask the client about the changes he has made, but the DVPP has to ask the same questions of his partner or ex-partner.

WWP EN, is a membership organisation of programmes working on tackling domestic violence these may be programmes aimed at perpetrators, victims/survivors or both. Our mission is as follows:

“to prevent violence in close relationships as a gender-based phenomenon and to foster gender equality. More specifically, the mission of WWP EN is to improve the safety of women and their children and others at risk from violence in close relationships, through the promotion of effective work with those who perpetrate this violence, mainly men.”

Therefore, programmes working to WWP EN standards are putting the safety of victims (i.e. women and children) first in that the goal of the work is to increase their safety and this should be prioritised at every stage. However, it is important to understand whether DVPPs are meeting this goal (Hester et al., 2014), and, if so, what they are doing that is successful. However, up until the Impact Project, DVPP evaluations used different methodological designs and tools to measure outcomes (Akoensi et al., 2013; Hester et al., 2014), which, in turn, has limited the conclusions that could be drawn about how programmes contribute to this. In this way, the IMPACT project was conceived of in order to put into practice these ideas and, eventually, to improve the quality of European DVPPs.

2. Background to WWP EN Impact Toolkit

The WWP EN Impact Toolkit comes from the project IMPACT which was supported by the European Commission's Daphne III programme. The project was titled, "Evaluation of European Perpetrator Programmes", starting in January 2013 and finishing at the end of 2014. The service coordinating of the project, Dissens - Institut für Bildung und Forschung e.V. from Germany, worked together with six other organisations, from Austria, Denmark, Spain and the U.K. and two associated partners from Germany and Norway. The partnership contained a mix of perpetrator programmes, researchers and programmes with a more general level of activities.

To start the project, staff elicited specialists' views about the potential for conducting monitoring or evaluation studies of DVPPs in different countries (Scambor, Wojnika, and Scambor, 2014). These specialists noted difficulties associated with the differences in systems (e.g. DVPPs, victim support services, institutional practices) both within and across countries. They considered that finding agreement on one evaluation model that would overcome these issues would be difficult, particularly as regards the different methods and instruments previously used. To overcome this, Lilly-Walker, Hester, and Turner (2016) suggested a methodology that consisted of collecting specific information on outcomes (negative and positive) throughout the course of the DVPP. The design of the WWP EN Impact Toolkit is consistent with Lilly-Walker et al.'s proposed methodology.

As the Daphne funded IMPACT project was a time limited one, WWP EN has now taken over the maintenance and development of the tools and continues to work on this.

3. WWP EN Impact Toolkit

The WWP EN Toolkit has 3 purposes:

1. to aim to standardise the methods and areas of enquiry used in evaluations;
2. help programmes to monitor and evaluate the impact of their work;
3. to create a European wide dataset.

The Toolkit was designed to assess possible changes in perpetrator behaviour and the impact of that behaviour, and possible changes in the safety of victims (drawing on the COHSAR approach – Hester et al. 2010). Specifically, the Toolkit facilitates assessing changes over time by designating four points at which to collect information and with a designated questionnaire for each point in time. The time points are: T0, T1, T2 and T3:-

1. Time 0 (T0) is the first contact with the client and the partner/ex-partner (at intake).
2. Time 1 (T1) occurs when the client starts the DVPP.
3. Time 2 (T2) and this occurs half way through the programme, and
4. Time 3 (T3).

At each of these time points, there is a questionnaire for the man on the perpetrator programme and a corresponding questionnaire for the partner/ex-partner.

4. Available tools

➤ Hard copies of questionnaires

Perpetrator programmes can access a set of questionnaires and tools that they can use to analyse their impact on their perpetrator clients and the partners/ex-partners (and any children) of these perpetrators.

Programmes can ask clients and their (ex)partners to fill out paper copies of the questionnaires at the 4 stages. There are 2 options:

- 1) The programme signs up to the WWP EN Impact Toolkit Process Agreement (Appendix A), and WWP EN and the University of Bristol provide reports at an agreed timescale.
- 2) The service collects its own data then fills out the “Content and context of DVPP”, which helps them to be clear on what kind of set up they have and approach to the work that they use. These two tools give them information that they can use in the “Report Pro-Forma” to give a robust picture on how the programme is making changes (i.e. outcomes), how it is structured and fits into the localised picture.

➤ Online database

DVPPs and other interventions can apply to use the ready-made set of online questionnaires used at the same intervals as the paper/hard copies. The information is submitted to an online database which is held by WWP EN. The Network staff, together with academic researchers from the University of Bristol in the U.K., then analyse the data and produce programme reports on the outcomes and outputs.

Eventually, this should give WWP-EN enough information to analyse similarities and differences within DVPPs from the same countries and, in time, examine issues and trends over Europe. The eventual aim is to be able to use the data collected online in order to examine “what works” in terms of tackling intimate partner violence and to suggest improvements in DVPPs.

In 2017, much work has been done to move the Toolkit to WWP EN’s website. In 2018, data will be saved from the survey’s existing web location, which will eventually be closed down, and participants will move their data collection to the new site.

5. The WWP EN Impact Toolkit in Practice

To date, the WWP EN Impact Toolkit continues to directly serve 7 projects including 1 Italian perpetrator project and 6 in the U.K.. 3 programmes or initiatives in the original cohort are no longer running so no longer using the

Toolkit. Several other programmes are on a waiting list or building up data sets for analysis, 1 project is piloting the questionnaires on an access database.

The Toolkit has also been used to inform other evaluations, such as an evaluation of a project in the North-East of England.

The U.K. membership organisation for domestic violence perpetrator programmes (Respect), has included a recommendation for their member programmes to use the WWP EN Impact Toolkit to measure outcomes as part of their “Outcomes Framework 2017”.

Further, the toolkits or parts of the toolkits are being used on the evaluations of other U.K. National Pilot Projects with domestic violence perpetrators.

6. New Templates

In 2017, with the added amount of data that was collected, WWP EN took suggestions from services already using the toolkit and the researchers from the University of Bristol on how to further develop the templates. The University of Bristol has now developed 2 further draft templates for use with services’ data, these are:

- 1) one that compares the experiences reported by a couple and compares then directly
- 2) one that looks at a cohort of men who complete a programme.

7. Presentations and Training Sessions

➤ Workshop at International Conference

Members from the Impact project team and WWP EN were asked to present findings from the Daphne funded Impact project and on the issues around putting it into practice at IPVI2017 - Interpersonal Violence Interventions – Social and Cultural Perspectives Conference at the University of Jvaskylä, Finland, 14-16th June 2017.

Members from the WWP EN Impact Toolkit Working Group presented on “Evaluating European perpetrator programmes: The IMPACT project”, which was held on 15th June, as a 1 ½ hour session. 3 presentations were held for a total of 21 participants (professionals and academics):

- “Outcome monitoring in European perpetrator programmes: a survey.” Presented by Heinrich Geldschläger.
- “Evaluation of European Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes: Toward a Model for Designing and Reporting Evaluations Related to Perpetrator Treatment Interventions”, presented by Marianne Hester
- “The Impact Toolkit: Development and Challenges during Implementation” - Nina George.

➤ Webinar

“Behind the WWP EN Impact Toolkit” was an hour long webinar presented by Cassandra Jones who is a Senior Research Associate at the University of Bristol and a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Exeter.

The webinar covered the following:

Recent reviews of evaluations of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) perpetrator programmes in Europe highlighted variations in the methodological designs used to evaluate programmes, as well as a myriad of quantitative tools to measure outcomes (Akoensi et al., 2013; Hester et al., 2014). The inconsistencies across design and measures limited the conclusions that could be drawn about the effectiveness of programmes. The IMPACT Project - Evaluation of European Perpetrator Programmes developed The Toolkit, in an effort to harmonise the methods and tools used. The starting point for developing The Toolkit was the survey Comparing Heterosexual and Same-sex Abuse in Relationships (COHSAR; Hester & Donovan 2009; Hester, Donovan & Fahmy, 2010; McCarry, Hester and Donovan, 2008). The authors of COHSAR developed a survey that was sensitive to gender and power dynamics, captured a range of DVA behaviours and took into account the context and consequences of DVA. COHSAR provided not only the type of information commonly reported by the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS – 2; Straus et al., 1996) but also information necessary to address the substantial critiques of the CTS – 2 (e.g. Dobash et al., 1992). In the webinar, the development and content of COHSAR was reviewed, followed by a discussion of how COHSAR was adapted for The Toolkit.

➤ In-house sessions

WWP EN staff continue to offer and develop tailor-made in-house training sessions to those interested in using the Toolkit and to problem solve data collection issues.

8. Challenges Encountered During Implementation

Quality of data continues to be an issue, in that programmes are not always able to fully complete questionnaires, that some stages are missed out or that (ex)partners are not asked to complete questionnaire for a variety of reasons. The template on tracking clients and training sessions have helped this to some extent, but still needs constant attention.

With the collection of more data and more programmes interested in using the toolkit, WWP EN staff held a meeting of those staff involved in collecting the data with a view to helping update the templates and issues behind the research. This was really useful in terms of sorting some of the issues and ideas for triangulation of data in the future, as well as suggestions to link the Toolkit into commissioning processes.

9. Suggestions for Future Development

The WWP EN Impact Toolkit is becoming a recognised tool in programme evaluation and research on domestic violence perpetrators.

Participants at the meeting for services using the Toolkit pinpointed that it is important to know if the behaviour changes made by perpetrators last after programme end. They suggested that WWP EN add follow-up questionnaires (based on the existing programme-end questionnaire) at a set 6-month period after the programmes finish, the period should be set or we will not be able to compare results across programmes.

In 2018, the Network will review the feasibility model for delivering support to organisations taking up Impact tool kit to ensure we have the right sustainable approach for future roll-out. This will inform the best way to provide this and how to most appropriately resource it and whether to focus activity in countries with members who are national networks or with WWP EN regional initiatives.

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Appendix A

WWP EN Impact Toolkit Process Agreement

What we need from you:-

- Data protection agreement signed
- Reporting timescales agreed
- Training session date agreed
- This document signed
- Questionnaires filled out comprehensively for both clients and (ex)partners at all possible time points
- Questionnaire data online or on excel spreadsheet
- Client/partner tracking list

What you will get in return:-

- Support to access and use toolkit, then on an ongoing basis
- Training session for all staff
- Regular reports produced by data experts from the University of Bristol
- Programme outcomes: analysis over time from men and (ex)partners on any changes in safety of (ex)partners, any changes in DVA behaviours, and the impact of these
- Please be aware that the above reports can only be supplied if adequate data is supplied

Reporting dates for Year 1 (and 2 if possible):

	Date Data to be Sent by Project*	Date Report Required	Basic (B) or Detailed (D)
Report 1			
Report 2			
Report 3			
Report 4			

* Please note that we need 1 month notice for basic reports and 2 months for detailed ones, depending on staff availability.

Data Protection Agreement Signed:

Date	
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Training Session Agreed:

Date	
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I agree to the above and also to follow the flow chart procedure. I understand that, if I do not do this, then this will affect the quality of the report and the timescales.

Signed:	
Name:	
Role:	
Project:	
Date:	

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