



The MOVE training slides are intended for frontline professionals who are working within the migration context.

We suggest that the MOVE Training Package for frontline professionals interacting with potential male perpetrators of GBV with migrant backgrounds be conducted only by experienced trainers with sufficient knowledge and professional experience in the field of domestic violence and abuse in general, as well as specifically in working with perpetrators of violence from migrant backgrounds.

The training lasts for 4 hours and can be conducted both online and in person. The main objective of the training is to provide training in a culturally sensitive and anti-racist approach to frontline professionals for addressing GBV for approaching men who are (potential) perpetrators of gender-based violence

The Consortium MOVE is not responsible for how the trainers will use the materials



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EUROPEAN NETWORK
OF MIGRANT WOMEN



Training package for frontline professionals interacting with potential male perpetrators of GBV with migrant backgrounds



Training content

- Pre training Questionnaire
- Overview of MOVE project
- MOVE values
- Learning objectives of training
- Module 1: Identifying violent, controlling behaviour in men with migrant backgrounds
- Module 2: Communicating with men with migrant backgrounds about their violent, controlling behaviour
- Module 3: Referral practices to specialised, perpetrator programmes
- Case study
- Post training Questionnaire

MOVE Pre training questionnaire

- Complete the questionnaire via [link](#) or handout
- Short 5 min. of questions on your knowledge and skills in interacting with men with migrant backgrounds in the work setting

Overview of MOVE project

- EU wide project to tackle men's violence against women and girls through a culturally sensitive approach
- Based on a multi agency model for frontline professionals and perpetrator programmes who work with male clients directly or indirectly through the victims
- Partners: Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, and Spain
- Goal: provide training in a culturally sensitive and anti-racist approach to frontline professionals for addressing GBV for approaching men who are (potential) perpetrators of gender-based violence

MOVE website



- [MOVE | WWP European Network \(work-with-perpetrators.eu\)](https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/projects/move)



MOVE values

- Work *inclusively* with, not for, persons with a migrant background
- Work *collaboratively* with others to have a collective impact on improving services to victims and perpetrators of gender-based violence
- Work *respectfully* with all those we interact with, including people we disagree with, based on professionalism and understanding
- Work *transformatively* to improve the experiences of men with migrant backgrounds seeking help

Learning objectives

- To improve skills of frontline professionals to recognise signs of potential abuse and control of men with migrant backgrounds towards their partners
- To improve skills of frontline professionals to communicate about violent behaviour with men with migrant backgrounds
- To improve referral practices of frontline professionals to for men with migrant backgrounds to perpetrator programmes
- To be proactive in promoting men's role to prevent gender-based violence

Contact with violent or abusive men

This training is designed for **frontline professionals** who may come into contact with violent or abusive men. There are three ways this may happen:

- 1. Men as service users:** some men may disclose their abusive behaviour and ask for help, others will present themselves as victims of their (female) partner's violence, but most will not refer to the abuse
- 2. Men as partners of service users:** some men insist on accompanying their partners to appointments and/or talk for their partners (they may appear to be caring and protective of their partners and very plausible)
- 3. Men as fathers of young service users:** in your role you may know children affected by domestic violence, and consequently the perpetrator, with whom you may be in contact in your agency, in his home or at child protection case conferences

Awareness of the stressors men with migrant background face in your settings

- What are the challenges faced by men with migrant backgrounds in your settings?
- Are there differences between first and second generation migrants?
- Are these challenges unique to these particular men due to their background or similar to all men you interact with in the work setting?

Stressors for men with migrant backgrounds

For first generation migrants:

- Forced separation from loved ones, no job or low job opportunities in host country, absence of a social support network, absence of a sense of control and learned helplessness

For second generation migrants:

- Having to balance cultural ways and norms with those of country of migration

→ None of these stressors justify in any way violence against women of any kind, nor does this require a “softer approach”

Relationship between male norms and trauma/adversity in men with migrant backgrounds



- Feelings of humiliation and shame due to loss of power and control
- Masculine norms make it difficult for some men with migrant backgrounds to process emotions and vulnerabilities.
- Avoidance and denial of unwanted feelings and thoughts in response to traumatic experiences to maintain a "strong man" image

Myths of male perpetrators of violence with migrant backgrounds

- Men from migrant backgrounds believe it is their right to treat women how they want, so we as frontline professionals cannot change their attitude
- Men with migrant background who are violent will never change
- Men with migrant backgrounds are only violent because of the trauma they suffer as refugees in a new country, eventually they will stop being violent

Fears about addressing violent behaviour with men with migrant background



Fear of the man's reaction in form of anger

1. increasing the risk for the victims (violent reaction with her / the children)
2. risk for oneself (violent reaction with the professional)
3. impact on the working relationship (fear of losing man as service user)

Responding to these understandable fears

1. measures to keep the victims safe (see following slides)
2. safety measures at the workplace + most men won't act violently with professionals
3. most men don't mind being asked if done respectfully / in non-judgemental way

Risk of *not* addressing violent behaviour with men

- Violence will go on ...

What we know about men who use violent behaviour regardless of cultural backgrounds...

- No single profile of 'violent man'
- No single causal explanation: biological, psychological, relational, cultural, social
- Violent behavior is due to a complex interplay of factors
- Traditional models of intervention (psychiatric, psychotherapeutic and psychosocial) are **not** sufficient to change or stop violent behaviour
- Men need to be made accountable for their behaviour through a coordinated response that is *culturally* appropriate

Frontline professionals work with people from diverse, multiple, unpredictable cultural backgrounds

- What are the intercultural challenges you have faced when interacting with men with migrant backgrounds in your settings?
- Are these challenges unique to these men or similar to all men you interact with?

Role of a frontline professional when interacting with male perpetrators of migrant backgrounds



- **Not** responsible for providing specialist services to help men stop their violence/abuse
- Central role working in collaboration with other relevant services in an integrated approach to hold the man accountable for his behavior
- Frontline professionals should have the knowledge, skills and confidence to:
 - Identify and address violent and controlling behaviour in a culturally sensitive way, and refer male perpetrators to a perpetrator programme or other specialist services

Module 1: Identify warning signs of violent, controlling behaviour by men with migrant backgrounds towards their partners

Power and control mechanisms men use over their female partner...

- Blackmail
- Threats, to harm either her or themselves to get her to do (or not do) something
- Coercion
- Isolation from family, friends, support networks
- Degrading her, e.g. 'you are stupid,' 'you are worthless,' 'you are a bad mother'
- Manipulate her decisions and choices
- Intimidate her until she does what he wants
- Blame her for something that she didn't do so that she has to make it up to him
- Make female partner suffer dramatically and publicly until she agrees to do what the man wants to make him happy

Signs you observe in the female victim

- Blaming oneself: being convinced that it is one's own fault
- Not willing to press charges due to fear for her safety or her children's safety
- Confusing statements and/or accounts
- An account of the events that is always identical, i.e. 'she tells only his version of the story'
- Contradictory non-verbal behaviour: crying while saying that everything is fine, or smiling when explaining the violent behaviour or controls she experienced
- Minimizing what happened
- Using his "culture" as an excuse for his violent or controlling behaviour

Signs you observe in the male perpetrator

- He always wants to be present when you speak to his partner
- He gives confusing statements and/or accounts of what happened
- He does not let her speak, he does all the talking
- Contradictory non-verbal behaviour: saying that everything is fine, but showing signs of nervousness or anxiety
- Minimizing what happened, blaming her/it is her fault he 'lost it'
- Using his "culture" as an excuse for his violent or controlling behaviour

→ Be aware that perpetrators might present as victims, some because they genuinely see themselves as victims, and some because by presenting as victims they hope to maintain power and control over their partner.

A perpetrator who is worried about his behaviour might say...

- “I’m not handling stress at work”
- “My partner says I need to see you”
- “My partner and I are fighting a lot”
- “My partner and I need counselling”
- “My partner is not coping and taking it out on me”
- “The kids are out of control and my partner’s not firm enough”
- “I’m depressed/anxious/stressed/not sleeping//not myself”
- “I feel suicidal (or have threatened or attempted suicide)”

Module 2: **Communicating** with men with migrant backgrounds about their violent, controlling behaviour in a culturally sensitive way

Know yourself to know others

- Identify and keep in mind the response you want from the communication
- Be aware of your stereotypes and communication styles - and the way in which you may come across to other people
- Avoid referring to the Western culture as an ideal so you minimise participants' resistance and reduce fear of stigmatisation and marginalization

Trap of cultural relativism

- Cultural relativism: excusing patriarchal, homophobic or exclusive patterns when they appear also in ethnically stigmatized groups
- “Culture” cannot be tolerated in multicultural societies when it violates women’s human rights
 - Frontline professionals have to identify, comprehend and tackle taboos and stereotypes of specific cultural target groups

Reflect and deal with stereotypes

- Are you aware of your own stereotypes related to interacting with (potential) male perpetrators of migrant background?
 - What words come to mind when you think of a man who may or may not be a perpetrator of violence
 - What words come to mind when thinking of the same man, but with a migrant background?
- Does your organization have stereotypes towards this group of men?



How to avoid the trap of cultural relativism

Apply intercultural sensitivity in every contact with men with migrant backgrounds:

- Show understanding and respect
- Work towards a relationship without dominance
- Show empathy
- Show interest, curiosity

→ Ask for clarification when a message given may be perceived as being harmful

→ Create *safe and brave* spaces for men with migrant backgrounds:

- In safe spaces, the participants can discuss and explore topics without feeling discriminated, forced or marginalized
- In brave spaces, the participants are seeking knowledge in topics that might not be in their usual comfort zone

Activity: Intercultural Communication Skills Checklist

Read each of the following strategies and techniques for communicating effectively across cultures in the **handout**. On the right-hand side, write down some specific behaviour that describes how you can put each strategy or technique into practice. The first two have some examples already inserted.

Asking men about violent behaviour and control

- Create an environment of privacy and safety that facilitates disclosure and be clear about the conditions of confidentiality that apply
- Many men remember being asked about the violence as an important factor to opening up and sharing information about they had never talked about before
- Do not address the issue of violence and abuse in the presence of the partner, this can place her in danger
- Ask open questions, do not say ‘Why did you...’
- Respect silences, for a man to reflect and consider what he wants to share next
- Ask questions about what he was feeling in that moment of deliberate choice to use violent/controlling behaviour
- Explore the violence with progressive questions from generic to more specific and focused

General funnel questions to ask a man:

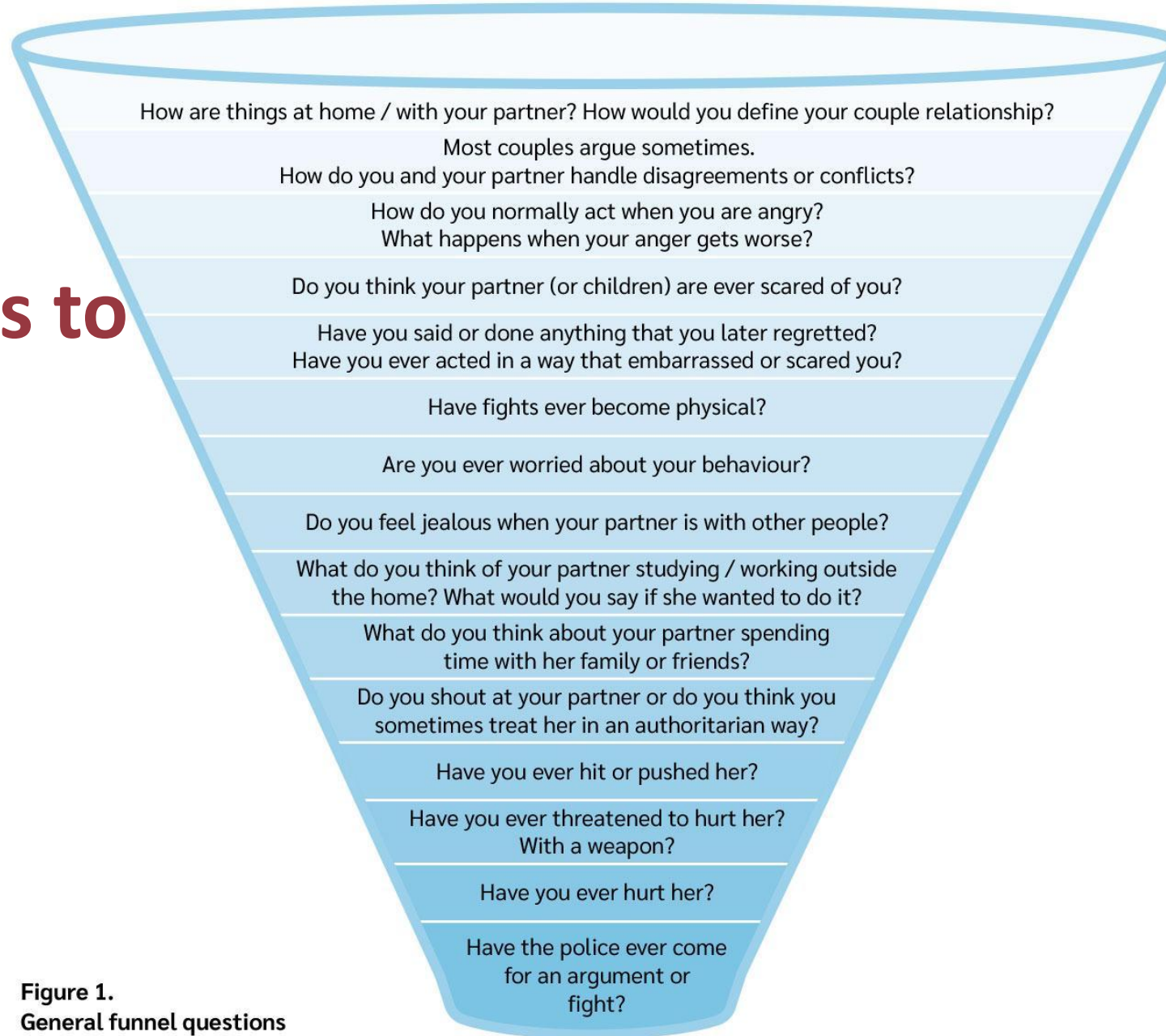


Figure 1.
General funnel questions

Specific funnel questions to ask a man:

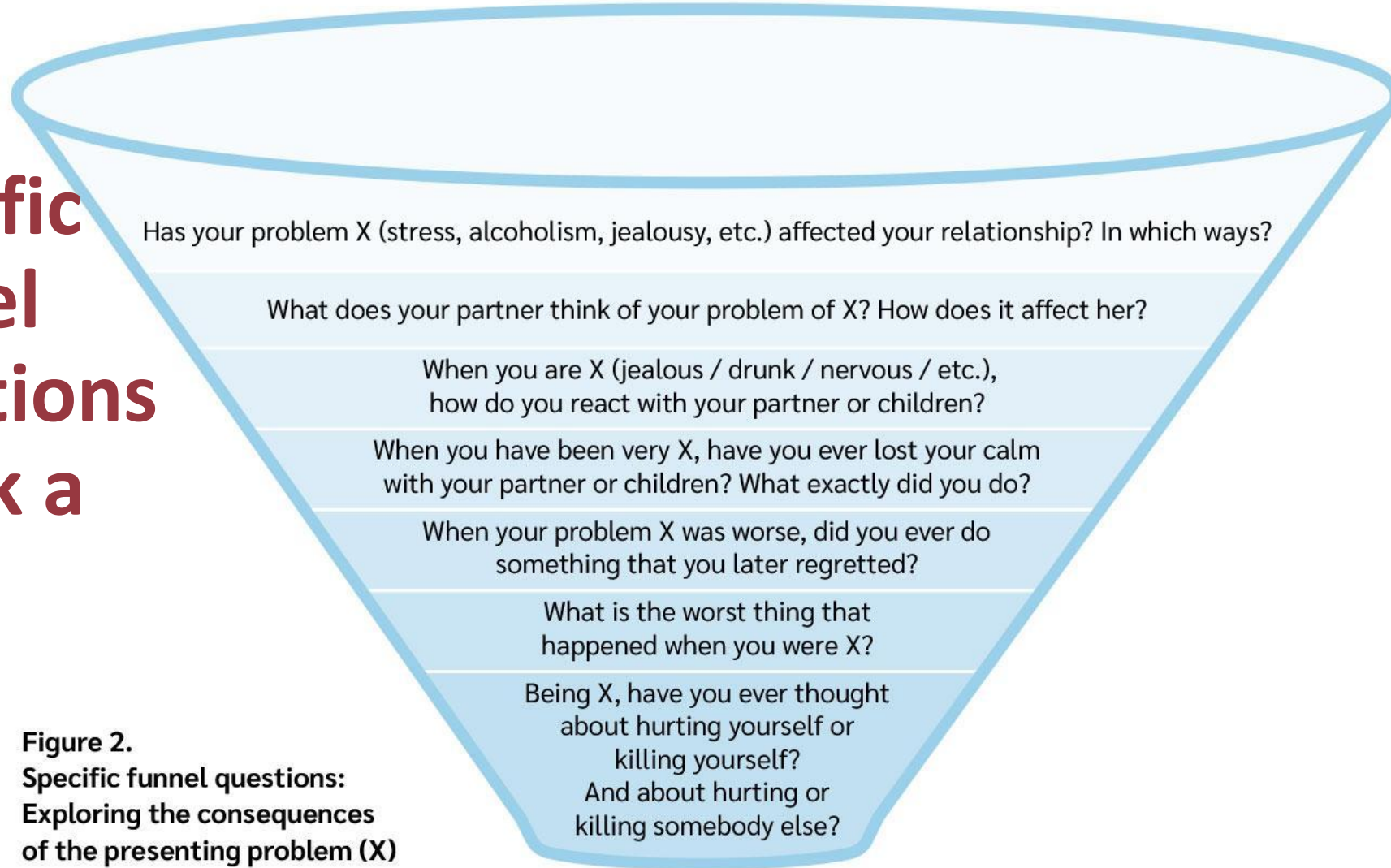


Figure 2.
Specific funnel questions:
Exploring the consequences
of the presenting problem (X)


Different positions and the therapeutic relationships they produce		
Collusion	 Balanced	Confrontation
Alliance forms	Alliance forms with the part of him that wants to change	No Alliance, rather opposition
Session is experienced with feelings of closeness	Sessions are difficult because the man experiences internal conflicts and feelings of vulnerability	Sessions are difficult because of the conflict with the man, who mainly feels angry
There is little challenge or conflict	You make gentle but persistent invitations to the man to challenge himself	There is a high level of challenge and conflict
You sit alongside him to review others' behaviours	You assist him to review his abusive behaviours.	You confront him with his wrongdoings.
You empathise when he talks about himself as a victim of others	You empathise when he feels bad about his abuse	You don't empathise at all
Much of the interview is spent reviewing other people's behaviours and the impact on the man.	Much of the interview is used to review the man's abusive behaviour and its impact on others	Much of the time is spent on confronting the man with how badly he acted and the man defending himself
The session is non-judgemental	You invite the man to make judgments about his own behaviour and empathise with how hard that is.	You let the man know your judgments – both professional and personal – about his behaviour.
The man might feel much more understood by you than by his partner	The man may come to value and respect your help	The man dislikes you and may let you down

Table adapted from Iwi & Newman (2015, p. 26)

Checklist for imminent or severe risk of harm

The following are specific indicators of heightened risk to consider when deciding on what to do next:

- Recent or imminent separation
- Recent escalation in frequency or severity of assaults
- Sexual violence or abuse
- Partner pregnant or recently given birth
- Past use of weapons
- Threats to kill
- Active substance misuse by the perpetrator

If one or more of these indicators are present, liaise with the victim support services as well as other agencies, such as the police or social care. Where there is an indicator of imminent or severe risk of harm, you need to act on it.

In communicating with a man who you have identified as using violent or controlling behaviour with his partner...

- Help the man to acknowledge that he is responsible for his actions
- State that he does not have the right to use violent/controlling behaviour
- Reinforce it is a violation of human rights
- Reinforce he can adapt and learn healthy, nonviolent coping mechanisms, with support from specialised perpetrator programmes

Module 3: Referral of men with migrant backgrounds to specialised perpetrator programmes

Referring men with migrant background to a perpetrator programme

- If you have detected and addressed domestic violence in a service user and have been able to co-create sufficient acknowledgement and motivation for referral, you should **refer the man** to a perpetrator programme
- A structured perpetrator programme usually entails an **individual intake** and assessment phase, **group (or individual) intervention** and, ideally a **follow-up** phase to see whether objectives are achieved and maintained
- Perpetrator programmes should fulfill different **quality standards**, including to pro-actively **contact the (ex-) partners** of the men they work with to make sure they receive the information and support they need for them and their children to be safe

Good practices for referrals

- Where no structured perpetrator programmes are available, **individual counselling clearly aimed at stopping the use of violence** might be an alternative if this includes risk assessment and management within a victim/survivor safety focused approach
- It is important to prepare the referral well and to **inform the man** about why he is being referred, what the benefits are for him and others, what his rights and responsibilities are in relation to the referral and what to expect from it
- Agree about the **mechanism of feedback** and coordination with the specialised service you refer the man to while you keep working with him and about how you can support his participation in the programme
- **Do not refer** a man who uses domestic violence and abuse to anger management courses or programmes, couples counselling or therapy, mediation and family therapy, this will not be useful as the professionals do not have the specialised skills needed to help

Support the person and challenge the behaviour

- Challenge minimisation, excuses, and partner-blaming
- Reinforce his behaviour is against the law, cite prevention of violence is a global human right and part of social justice
- Communicate in a non-judgemental way that violent behaviour is a choice
- Consider if there are immediate risks to his partner, the family
- Explain support options that are available to him
- Ask him if he agrees to a referral to specialised, perpetrator programme

Case study: Sara and Ali

Sara presents to the frontline professional as a 24-year-old woman with a migrant background. She explains to you that she has lived here in this new country for three years with her parents and sisters. Sara married Ali two years ago. Ali is the son of a family friend of Sara's parents. Quite soon after Sara and Ali were married, Ali started to control her everyday behaviour. Ali does not let Sara see her friends or go anywhere without him. A mandatory language course is the only place where Sara can go alone. He says the host country is dangerous for her and men will harass her if she goes out alone or with female friends, so he is trying to protect her.

Ali takes away Sara's debit card and when Sara is angry about this, he turns violent and threatens her to send her back to her home country. Sara discloses the situation to her parents, asking for help. The parents say they do not get involved in the matter between husband and wife and Ali is under a lot of stress as he has a low paying job with long hours. They tell Sara to be patient and be a good wife, to please him.

Sara's mother tells Sara it is her duty to stay with her husband and her sisters ask her not to bother their mother with the issue any more. Sara feels that she is responsible for the violence and her family's reputation, and accepts that leaving her husband is not an option. Over time, the violence gets more serious and more frequent. Sara feels isolated, helpless and depressed. Sara feels anxious since she cannot talk to anyone – even to her family – about her feelings. She shares this with the social worker on the one occasion where her husband could not be with her for the appointment.

Case study: Sara and Ali

How do you want to help?

What do you suggest doing first...

Case study: Magaly and Luis

Luis is a 44-year-old man who comes to the Service because he has financial difficulties. He has a 5 year old daughter who suffers from wetting the bed at night.

He has been living with his partner Magaly for 5 years and about 3 years ago they moved to Italy from Peru. Luis lost his mother at the age of 20 and suffered an episode of depression. Luis has a corpulent constitution, very smiling, polite and kind in his manner.

He works as an occasional bricklayer for a company and does not have a residence permit to stay in Italy, has no contract, and lives in a house shared with his family and other people. He arrives at the Service very worried about the economic aspect and all his documentation which does not seem to arrive.

During the interview, he complains that he is the only one working, since his wife Magaly thinks only of the child. He criticizes his wife and is angry with her because in her opinion she behaves inadequately, he seems strange, absent, that she is not interested in him and that she suspects an affair. She doesn't want to have intimate relations with him anymore and this makes him very angry.

They had a fight one night, on that occasion she fell and the little girl got scared and started crying, they live in the same room, he points out how much she makes drama and that she often uses the little girl to turn it against him. He feels lonely and he often drinks and then falls asleep, Magaly gets angry and he doesn't understand why.

She sometimes told him that she wants to leave home, and he says that without him she couldn't go anywhere because "she is so weak and not very intelligent" "since we've been here, she hasn't even been able to learn Italian". Despite this, Luis says he loves Magaly and her little girl very much and he would do anything for them; without them he just wouldn't be able to live.

Case study: Magaly and Luis

How do you want to help?

What do you suggest doing first...

MOVE Training Take Home Messages

Take Home Message: Be proactive

- Learn and practice to be effective in your intercultural communication and interactions with men of migrant backgrounds
- Investigate your own biased thinking and actions, learn and practice how to correct and interrupt it
- Avoid generalising immigrant and refugee men's experiences
- Your role as a frontline professional is to identify violent/controlling behaviour, communicate and refer to perpetrator programmes, not to provide counseling yourself
- Consider nonviolent men with migrant backgrounds as **agents of change** for other men: a) practising non-violence; b) intervening in violence as positive 'bystanders'; and c) addressing the social and cultural causes of violence by being an advocate for change

Take Home Message: Communication

- ✓ Be empathic and understanding but don't collude with the man: be aware of the mechanisms of minimization, denial and victim-blaming and don't give in to possible manipulations
- ✓ Be aware of the barriers to him acknowledging his abuse and seeking help (such as shame, fear of child protection) and recognise any accountability shown by him
- ✓ Be positive about the possibility of change and explore the man's own motivations for it, including the costs of continued violence to himself and the effects on children
- ✓ Establish a referral pathway to a perpetrator programme or similar specialised service in your area and refer the man
- ✓ If you are in contact with both partners, try not to see them together and discuss their relationship only in separate sessions

Reflection on the training

- Can this training be useful in your work setting when interacting with men with migrant backgrounds?
- Has it helped you be aware of your feelings about the man's behaviour and not let them interfere with your provision of a supportive service?
- Has it helped you to distinguish the behaviour from the person and to not be judgemental?

Suggestions for how to improve this training?

MOVE Post training questionnaire and evaluation of the training

- Complete the 2 questionnaires via [link](#) or handout
- Short 5 min. questionnaire on your knowledge and skills in intercultural communication in the work setting AFTER taking part in the MOVE training and evaluation of the training itself

Thank you for participating!

- Questions or comments on this training, pls contact: xxxemail address of facilitator