

Sharing Our Strengths in a Growing Network

—

Creating a Base for Collaboration

Report on the Work with Perpetrators European Network (WWP-EN) Annual Workshop 2015

Held in:

Berlin, Germany

From: 30th September

To: 2nd October



Wednesday 30th September

The WWP European Network is growing. From small beginnings we now have 37 members from 22 countries. To this end, our latest annual workshop was about getting to know each other, knowing how we could benefit from the network and also from each other. "Sharing our strengths" was the key focus for this year's meeting, held over 3 days from 30th September to 2nd October 2015 in Woltersdorf, Berlin, Germany. We had 64 participants from 20 countries attend.

Introductions

After arrival and lunch, the group gathered to be welcomed and the 3 day workshop outlined to them.

Sharing our strengths: Detecting differences and building reflecting teams

Christian Raschke, the process facilitator for the 3 days, organised a novel way of introducing us all to each other. He had created a timeline in red cord laid diagonally across the room. Important dates were mapped out from the first seeds of ideas to form a network culminating in this year's workshop, taking in all that we have achieved so far. People were asked to stand in the place where they first became part of the network, and to contribute their knowledge of events to tell the story of WWP-EU's timeline.

The next mission was to build 6 reflection teams to look at the development of the network. The 6 teams were for those who carried out: no practical work (those not doing frontline work); work with perpetrators and survivors; work with survivors; work with perpetrators only – groups; work with perpetrators – individual work and work with perpetrators – groups and individuals. After some shuffling round, the groups were set and we were on with our first task.

Before the workshop began, all organisations had been given the opportunity to create a poster about themselves, which had been printed off by the WWP-EU office. These were laid out in the dining room and the groups collected the relevant ones so that each group member could use it to introduce themselves to the others in their reflecting team.

The further task for each group, in another meeting later on in the day, was used to look at: identifying strengths and challenges; ideas for co-operation and our wishes for the future of the network and then present these to all the participants.

Workshops 1st Slot: Experiences, reflections, methods and best practice

The first selection of workshops took place late afternoon. Participants were faced with an embarrassment of riches with a choice of sessions as follows:



1. Working with offenders: a multi-perspective approach by Kris Decramer. The theory and practice of bridging the gap between the offender's values, intentions and actions versus those of others individually, including the victim, and society generally, with a view to challenging to move towards non-violence.
2. Jussi-work® an option for men to mend and end the violent behaviour – good practice from Finland by Veli-Matti Toikka. An intervention practiced in 12 cities in Finland developed in collaboration with victim's shelters.
3. Duluth programs for perpetrators of domestic violence in Poland, Michal Trojnar. A brief glance at group work and process in the Duluth programme approach adapted in Poland.
4. Introducing perpetrator counselling in Western Balkan countries by Roland Reisewitz. The experience of training up professionals in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania to conduct psychosocial perpetrator treatment. In particular a focus on and learning from encouraging and training these professionals to look at their own experiences and socialisation of gender, masculinity and violence.
5. Treatment of female perpetrators of domestic violence, Dean Ajdukovic. A workshop on the experiences of and issues around delivering a programme in Zagreb for women using violence in intimate relationships.

Thursday 1st October

Keynote Speech: Project Mirabal Results, Neil Blacklock.

The name of the project comes from the Mirabal sisters, who opposed the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. 3 of the 4 were killed on 25th November 1960, and, in 1999, this was decreed as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Neil gave an overview of the reasons why Respect had felt compelled to conduct their own research, and outlined that the outcomes are from Respect Accredited Programmes in the U.K. and do not apply to Criminal Justice Interventions.

The project asked men on a programme, their (ex)partners, practitioners and funders what they thought "success" would look like for a programme. From this, 6 measures were settled on, the most important for women being improved relationships.

The findings were that the more criminal the behaviour, the more it was impacted on positively by programmes: physical and sexual violence showed large decreases; space for action increased; harassment and surveillance also decreased; respectful communication increased to some extent. The more inconclusive areas of "success" were fathering and safer and healthier childhoods, although it could be argued that these could be influenced by issues other than a programme. The successes in terms of the interventions were: "time-out"



technique; addressing negative self-talk and increased empathy/more understanding the damage the men have done. The researchers noted that the men talked differently about their behaviour after the interventions, with more substance and more accurate descriptions of their behaviour. They see this as part of a process towards change, with some very complex issues at play.

Final report and other papers here - <https://www.dur.ac.uk/criva/projectmirabal/>

Sharing our Strengths: Presentations on Challenges and Strengths

These were held at a couple of times during the day. All 6 groups fed back on their issues. Emerging common themes appeared to be:

- valuing the time to find out about each other and the projects and organisations;
- the importance of victim-focussed groups and victims' rights in our processes;
- discussions on ideology and reality;
- supporting new members and programmes;
- practical ideas on how we might best learn from each other;
- resources/marketing/fundraising issues;
- social, structural and legislative differences between countries;
- the importance of safe spaces for discussion on difficult subjects;
- the roles of gender inequality and issues of masculinities in our work;
- sharing the burden of the problems and
- identifying common solutions to these.

Workshops 2nd Slot: Experiences, reflections, methods and best practice

6. A presentation of the treatment work of ATV - basic characteristics and latest developments, Marius Rakil. The characteristics of the Alternative to Violence model and programme of work with perpetrators in Norway, including reference to services for ethnic minority families, attachment based parenting module, treating trauma and outcome research of the model.
7. Principles of victim-safety and victims' rights in work with perpetrators, Rosa Logar and Nikola Furtenbach. How principles and provisions of the Istanbul Convention can be implemented in work with perpetrators.
8. Developing integrated responses – Co-locating DVPPs alongside statutory child protection workers, Ben Jamal. Presenting a model of co-location of DVPP workers alongside statutory children's/social workers to address long running tensions between the 2 sectors.
9. WWP-EN Guidelines for Standards of Work With Perpetrators Part I, Alessandra Pauncz and Dean Ajdukovic. Feedback given as part of the General Assembly.



Workshops 3rd Slot: New developments and questions

10. How to identify and deal with high risk situations in work with perpetrators, Rosa Logar and Nikola Furtenbach. Presentation and discussion on risk factors, highlight lethal risk. Methods and challenges of multi-agency work to protect victims in high risk situations.
11. Violence prevention and gender equality, Jens van Tricht.
12. Concept of Family Justice and the role of work with perpetrators in this context, Pascale Franck. On the network of European partners in this approach, their goals, the European picture and work with perpetrators in this context. Video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEKspqXsr-Y>
13. WWP-EN Guidelines for Standards of Work With Perpetrators Part II, Alessandra Pauncz and Dean Ajdukovic. Fed back in General Assembly.
14. WWP-EN Training: What do we need to provide? Nina George and Paula Heinrich. Workshop asking for feedback on WWP-EN initial ideas for training/learning between members and asking for ideas to inform a survey to go out to members.

General Assembly

This was held in the later afternoon through to the early evening. The following 2 presentations were delivered as part of the assembly and after the conclusion of the formal business. Amongst others, several issues discussed were: the presentation of budget; progress on the strategy and the regional meetings.

The board thanked the staff, Ralf and Paula, for sticking with the network through financial difficulties due to the late awarding of funding.

Dean Adjukovic was asked and accepted to join the board as a co-opted member.

Presentation: MenEngage, Jens Von Tricht

Jens gave a presentation and an overview of MenEngage, which is a global alliance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who have signed up to get men and boys on board with changing the way they think about gender and masculinity. Through networks at country and regional levels, the alliance promotes gender justice and equality through various interventions and campaigns.

The day to day work that individual organisations do differs, but there is a code of practice and principles that the membership is expected to follow. The coalition believes that men, along with women, should be involved in advancing the rights and well-being of women and



are committed to working as allies alongside women and women's organisations. Much of the work is done on a voluntary basis.

Those present were positive about WWP-EN having stronger links with MenEngage. The possibility of some kind of joint action or work streams between the 2 agencies was discussed. A follow-up workshop was suggested for the next morning to explore this further.

Website: <http://menengage.org/>

Presentation: WWP – Developing New Standards, Alessandra Pauncz and Dean Adjukovic

Alessandra and Dean presented the interim results of a recent survey (completed by 12-13 countries to date) and 2 workshops at this annual workshop with WWP-EN members on their knowledge and use of the Network's Guidelines for Standards of Work with Perpetrators from 2008. Some programmes have made use of these, others are not aware of them. Since the Istanbul Convention and further developments in the field, it has been suggested that this should lead to the revision or updating of them.

Members have also been asked to identify any issues they considered to be critical in that they limit development of our work and/or be discussed in a revision of the guidelines. Some of them are outlined here:

- Terms, there are various ones we use – perpetrator, people, men, those using violence;
- Prioritising victim safety and stopping men's violence;
- The issue and mechanisms of partner support;
- Programmes within a larger community/social intervention;
- Funding, especially the issue of not being in competition with victim support services;
- The role of women's support services on boards, the issue of delegation of responsibility for victims;
- Models of work – taking in theoretical understanding, different approaches, ecological models and the most major issue being therapeutic (clinical) versus social (cultural) which tend to polarise views and debate across the sector;
- Country-based issues, for e.g. issues around privacy, child protection or legislation may differ from country to country;
- Risk assessment – the legal and ethical responsibilities of programmes;
- Do we have enough on "what works" research;
- Screening out of programmes;
- Couple therapy and mediation;
- Staff qualifications;
- Specific knowledge on domestic violence;



- Partner contact issues.

The challenges for us are:

- Some of the critical issues are huge issues;
- Sensitivity around certain words or use of words;
- Pinpointing guiding attitudes;
- Whether there should be a revision of guidelines or the creation of standards;
- How we continue thinking about and ways of discussing this;
- Secure space to look at controversial issues;
- Making them practical enough to use them whilst being general enough to accommodate differences;
- Are there priorities?

There is general agreement that this process requires much in the way of thinking and coming to consensus on the issues. The feeling is that this cannot be rushed and the need for fuller participation will be long term.

Next steps: There is an open space for reflection until December where contributions to the discussion are welcomed. An initial paper will be produced in December 2015. The Research and Development Manager will pick up the work from 2016.

Link to original guidelines: <http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=29>

Friday 2nd October

Workshops: Offered by participants on morning or follow up sessions

15. Funding, Katharina Samara-Wickrama. Advice given as a professional from the Oak Foundation. Key advice was not to be shy and to ask.
16. Work with Young People's Use of Violence, Cyrill Dully and Neil Blacklock. Experiences of and learning from programmes designed to tackle this, and ways that this might inform our work with adults.
17. Couple Counselling Methods and Perpetrator Work, Giacomo Grifoni. Explored the processes of how communication tools may translate to our work (for e.g. reconciliation processes), for example how a man might talk in a structured/protected way to his wife and children about his use of violence.
18. MenEngage Follow up Meeting, Jens Von Tricht. Explored ideas for WWP EN and MenEngage to collaborate on a campaign, with the potential to work with further partners.



19. Regional Meeting, South Eastern/Eastern Region. Feedback from this group on the results of several meetings this week exploring the hopes and concerns around a regional network in this geographical area. Next steps were outlined by participants.

Evaluations

So, what did those attending like about the event? Spoken feedback given at the time was positive, in that:

- the event was extremely useful;
- people appreciated being made welcome and said that it was easy to participate;
- they felt it was a good atmosphere (despite the heavy subject);
- they were enjoying getting to know the network and
- the meeting had been inspiring and positive.

What could have been done better was:

- really getting to know what was happening in other organisations;
- more time for workshops.

Written feedback was similar. There was also plenty of support for a thriving, vibrant network and for increasing our interactions and discussions and great ideas for specific future projects. There will be a full evaluation report with the information taken from the feedback sheets.

As one person fed back at the end of the event, we are moving from an informal to a formal set up. We need to find those tricky points of balance between moving on but not going too quickly and fulfilling expectations but bringing in new projects. What is clear is that, as an organisation, we are hungry for more: more dialogue with each other; more in depth conversations; more time to get to know each other; more time on emerging topics and on complicated and contentious issues. And this is a great thing.

Next Annual Workshop

There was a proposal from Michal Trojnar from the Institute of Violence Prevention, Foundation Dialogue without Violence to host the next Annual Workshop in Poland. This generous offer was accepted by the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you next year!

