



WWP || EUROPEAN NETWORK

WHO SHOULD PROVIDE VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES?

A REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS AND WORKING
PAPERS ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN
PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES AND WOMEN'S
SUPPORT



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1. The starting point

The need for a reflection on how the collaboration between Perpetrator programmes and Women's support services should work has been ongoing and core to the set up and work of WWP EN. It has always been clear, ever since the founding meeting, that issues and concerns arising from the women's sector needed to be addressed to develop a solid collaboration. Also, the issue of trust has many times come up and the most responsible and accountable way of dealing with the construction of trust is the commitment to develop perpetrator programmes that are accountable and that pose the safety of women and children at their centre as is clearly the case for WWP since this is stated in all leading documents. One of the ways that WWP EN has devised to be able to promote this is through the guidelines to standards. Standards provide a framework for safe practice. Given the multicultural and other differences within the network, WWP strives to highlight best practices and standards in an effort to encourage all members to adopt them. Within this, there is also the need to be attentive to the different political, social and cultural backgrounds that compose the European network and be open to different approaches and ideas. In line with the ongoing reflections and the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention in 2016 WWP started a revision of the Guidelines to Standards through working groups, consultation of experts, consultation with members through the Annual Meeting and finalization at the end of 2017.

At the board meeting in Barcelona in February 2018, WAVE raised some concerns about the wording of the revised guidelines in the part related to "Partner contact and services". Although the wording of this section is quite general in relating to services for victims and requirements if the man is in a program, there was an issue raised that pertained to the legitimacy of Perpetrator programmes offering conjunct victims support services.

To provide a platform to this discussion this paper revises all positions of all documents that WWP EN has produced since 2014 on the topic of collaboration between Perpetrator programmes and Women's support systems as well as leading background documents. The documents that were consulted (extracts consulted are included in the appendix of this document) are as follows:

- a) WWP – Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – Daphne II Project 2006-2008 Guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with male perpetrators of domestic violence, Version 1.1.
- b) Article 12 and 16 of the Istanbul Convention
- c) Council of Europe publications "Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services" suggested standards at 8.18 pp. 57-58 , 2008
- d) Hester and Lilley, "Domestic and Sexual Violence Perpetrator Programmes: article 16 of the Istanbul Convention", 2014
- e) Discussion document in the view of the future revision of the WWP EN Guidelines, Alessandra Pauncz and Dean Ajduković

- f) Expert Essay, Rosa Logan, Partnership with Victim's Services in Work with Perpetrators
- g) Atila Uligaj and Natalia Batenkova, WWP EN report: member's organization's Good Practice, 2017
- h) WWP EN Guidelines to Develop Standards Updated, 2017
- i) Expert Essay, Viji Rajagopalan, Phil Price, Jo Langston and Fran Potter, Working towards safety: supporting women alongside DVIP's perpetrator programme, Expert Essay, 2015
- j) Position/discussion Paper, Olga Person, "Accountability in Perpetrator work, 2018

2. Are perpetrator programmes important? Should we support them?

Given the mission and aim of the European network of work with perpetrators, the importance of working with perpetrators is taken for granted. Since there are concerns that are raised by survivors' advocates and some women's' specialized services for victims of violence on the possible iatrogenic effects of perpetrator programmes, it is necessary to take a step back and actually discuss this first very basic point. In order to collaborate there must be agreement that the work with perpetrators has an important role to play in the general effort to end violence against women. It seems that if this point is not dissipated first, objections will always stem from the basic belief that perpetrators work may be in the best case useless, but potentially harmful.

Agreeing that perpetrator work is a relevant response to a coordinated community intervention against domestic violence is not subscribing to any kind of intervention. It is of great importance that guidelines and standards help identify and separate responsible, accountable, victim centred perpetrator intervention from potentially harmful practices. However, there must be a basic understanding that at certain conditions and having responded to specific concerns the work with perpetrators should be supported.

a. Concerns of Women's Support Services

The starting point is to address the concerns that are raised by Women's support services and weigh "pro and cons" of working with perpetrators in order to arrive at a starting point in which there is agreement that the collaboration is not only necessary, but also in the victim's best interest.

Can perpetrator programmes increase risk for victims?

It is possible that enrolling a perpetrator in a programme may increase the risk for victims. Although most literature on evaluation shows slight to modest improvement in perpetrators use of violence at the end of programme, in at least one evaluation study we do have evidence of increased risk¹. We still don't have

¹ Arias et al. (2013), Batterer Intervention programmes: A meta-analytic review of effectiveness, Psychosocial Intervention, n. 22, pp. 153-160. The study concludes that: "On the whole, the treatment of batterers has a



conclusive evidence as to what the elements of effective treatment are, although the length of programme seems to be a relevant variable as is the individualized treatment of certain perpetrators (psychological-psychiatric programme for batterers with psychopathology). We could imagine an increased risk due to the resentment the man has in being “obligated” to attend and being angry with his partner for what he feels is “her fault”. Another way in which the women might be at increased risk is as Iwi and Todd state in the DVID manual: “The very fact of a man's attendance on a Perpetrator Programme or in counselling is likely to influence significantly his partner's decision about whether or not to stay in the relationship. Many women then choose to stay, to give their partner another chance because he is trying to get help, when they otherwise would have left. This means that his attendance may actually put her at risk.” In this case, what is stated is that a woman that has suffered violence from her partner, by remaining with him, is at risk of suffering another violent incident. Here the issue at hand is not that of recidivism caused by a specific risk factor linked to attending the program, but just by the fact that she is not leaving the relationship. However, we know woman is at risk of further violence also by leaving, so both cases might present the risk of further violence. While the factor of leaving has been identified as a clear risk factor, attending a programme is no way comparable in terms of increased risk. What is underlined here is that the woman’s decision to stay may be influenced by her hopes that the man will change given that he is enrolled in a perpetrator program. We will discuss the point on the women’s expectation and hopes in the “Can perpetrators foster a false of security?” paragraph.

Can perpetrators programmes be 100% safe?

Any intervention in the field of domestic violence is not risk free. As frameworks for risk assessment and management improve and are implemented more widely, this should not obscure the fact that there is no risk-free intervention. Whenever violence sets into people’s life there are always going to be risks that are not always controllable for the people engaging violence, for the people suffering violence and for the once removed workers that are called to help stop the violence. Even a woman that escapes to the other part of the world to get away from a violent perpetrator can fall short if she is court mandated to come back for visitation rights and is killed on such visits. Sometimes femicides can be predicted because they follow a long string of preceding violence, other times no previous warning sign was issued that make prediction close to impossible. There is also the suicidal component to many of the most extreme acts of violence. Short from arrest, or forced hospitalization nothing much can deter somebody that is willing to take their own life. It is usually the case that suicidal behaviours are also exhibited with a series of other risk factors that can be evaluated in a correct risk assessment. Of course, perpetrator programmes must provide services than can assess the suicidal risk of men and this would improve the evaluation of any kind of risk assessment. For sure, the link between depression, suicide and femicide requires further investigation.

Can perpetrator programmes foster a false sense of security?

Women often choose to give the “men” one last chance and they may foster “hope” that their partner will change, thus deciding to stay in the relationship. It is often difficult for

positive but non statistically significant effect. As for some specific treatments, it may also have had considerably negative effects [...] Nonetheless, the results remain inconsistent and further studies are required to assess the efficacy of batterer treatment programmes, i.e., to examine moderators that may explain why some batterers respond to treatment yet others fail to do so under similar treatment programmes. This calls for authors, reviewers, and editors to provide explicit details regarding the treatment contents, techniques, and methods.”

women to leave the abusive relationship for many reasons, one of them being the hope that their partner will change. This may be increased by the attendance of a perpetrator to a program, but it is not “caused” by the program itself. This is a strong reason for collaboration with women’s support services so that support is provided to the woman in managing her expectations and to help avoid manipulation.

Do perpetrator programmes “convince” women to stay?

The role of perpetrator programmes is not one of giving marital advice. The objective is that of increasing women’s safety through the work with perpetrators. There is therefore no situation in which a perpetrator programme should discuss and argue in favour of a woman staying in the relationship. On the contrary there may be times, if the perpetrator programme perceives there is a risk that they may suggest to leave the situations.

Are perpetrator programmes a form of mediation or couple counselling?

Perpetrator programmes are not a form of mediation or couple counselling although in some cases they may use restorative practices aimed at helping the men become more accountable and take responsibility for their violence. In all cases perpetrators aim is to interrupt the men’s violence working individually or in groups. Any contact and support offered to the woman should never be geared at “mediating” the conflict, since perpetrator programmes recognize the gendered component of domestic violence and the issues of coercive control, entitlement and power that would be rendered invisible with the practice of mediation.

Perpetrators will manipulate the system using perpetrator programmes

Perpetrators will try to manipulate the system through perpetrator programmes, but perpetrator programmes may be in the position to evaluate behaviour, attendance, compliance and interaction not only with the counsellors but also with other men in the group. Perpetrator programme policies must be built so that they can be accountable for any consequence or effect of the attendance of the perpetrator programme on other services involved.

b. Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
If a man is dangerous, he will be assessed and extra safety measures could be suggested. Decision of woman can be informed not only by man’s participation, but also by competent counselling on what to expect and information on the programme content	Increased risk
No intervention in the field of DV is 100% safe. Perpetrator programmes can contribute to increasing the safety of women by holding men and the system accountable for stopping the violence.	Perpetrator programmes may not be safe
For perpetrator programmes to be able to address this issue there must be a form of pro-active contact with partner or ex-partner to provide empowerment and correct information, on the other hand the woman might effectively	Perpetrator programmes foster a false sense of security

be safer with the man in the programme and being accountable to somebody.	
Maybe in the short run, but in the long run if the perpetrator programme relies on a woman's support service she will have the opportunity to access resources to make her own choices and evaluate the man's progress with the support of the women's support services. If woman decides to leave it will be safer if her partner has support and assessment. In addition, she <i>may</i> be safer.	If man goes to program, woman will be less likely to leave
Perpetrators are good at manipulating the system, but they are not almighty. The structure of the Perpetrator programme can be built as to avoid the most common pitfalls and the training of the service providers must enable them to respond adequately to manipulation.	Perpetrators will manipulate the system through perpetrator programmes
By working with perpetrators, we are also preventing future women from being abused	
By working with perpetrators, we are helping interrupt intergenerational violence by helping raise children in a safer non-violent environment	
By working with men that are self-referred we are preventing future violence	
By working with perpetrators, we are decreasing post separation violence	
Women that are not ready to leave an abusive relationships can benefit from support and services	
By working with perpetrators, we are promoting safer parenting skills	
By focusing on the man's violence, we are promoting intervention that places the responsibility of the violence on men	
By promoting proactive partner contact we are contacting women that in many cases have never had access to women's support services	
If men drop out of the programme or/and are not motivated pp can inform service providers of non-accountability helping to make informed decisions on parental rights	
If men are in programmes we can support post separation violence related parenting issues	
Pp are complying with the Istanbul Convention in art. 16; and art. 12 points 1 and 4	

c. Istanbul Convention: Art. 12 points 1 and 4, and art. 16

In conclusion, there may be some concerns and risks for victims posed by having their partner in a program. However, it is not evident that in many cases victims might have a very similar level of risk if the man were NOT in a program. It is also the case that many of the partners of the men involved in programmes have never had access to women's support systems, so pro-active

measures that reach out to women might gain them access to victim services. As will be analysed in the following part of the paper there are a series of countermeasures that can be taken so that the critical issues can be addressed through a coordinated intervention with the women's support system.

It seems that overall there are more aspects in favour of promoting perpetrators than ones against it. To reinforce the point, it should be mentioned that there are at least two articles in the Istanbul Convention that refer to aspects linked to Perpetrator Programmes. The first one is art. 16 that specifically refers to "parties taking legislative and other measures to set up and support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships" and also that "these programmes ensure safety of and support for the human rights of victims [...] and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims". Art. 16 is the most quoted and most obvious referral to perpetrator programmes, but there two other points that are relevant to this reflection and they are points 1 and 4 taken from art. 12. Specifically these state: "Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men" and "Parties shall take the necessary measures to encourage all members of society, especially men and boys, to contribute actively to preventing all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention". Both these points of art. 12 refer to specific aspects of prevention that should be promoted with a focus also on changing men's beliefs and practices and addressing specific social change that should also be part of the core curriculum of perpetrator programmes. Especially in those countries where men are self-referred, perpetrator programmes become an important (if not the most important) reference point for men that have historically inherited a patriarchal, potentially abusive power over attitude in relationships and realize that they need to change it.

Therefore, the conclusions are that not only perpetrator programmes are an important part of the coordinated community response for contrasting violence against women, but they are also central for the implementation of the Convention of Istanbul and for promoting social change of men to create a more equal society that is part of the long term strategy to eradicate violence against women and gender inequality.

At the same time, the concerns that were raised need to be addressed by a set of standards that counteracts the risk factors that have been highlighted. The next part of the paper focused on this.

3. What has to happen perpetrator programmes to be as safe as possible?

Some very important risk factors are of concern when a perpetrator enters a program. Increased risk, false sense of security, deciding to stay with partner to offer "one last chance" and the manipulation of the system are the main ones. Is there something that can be done to counter

these risks? One premise to the questions needs addressing. All of these risk factors could and sometimes are present even if the man does NOT enter the program. If a man is not assessed and has not been referred to a programme there is no guarantee (actually there is a higher possibility that) his violence might be high risk, the situation would just be invisible to outside help unless the victims takes action. The burden of action would still lay on the victim and not on the system. By enrolling in a perpetrator program, it is more likely that the system will be alerted to potential increase in risk. All victims support workers know how often women are willing to give “one more chance” and fall into the cycle of violence even if the man has not taken any kind of action (like actively enrolling in a perpetrator program) and how difficult it is for women to leave. There is a saying among support services that women will leave only when they feel they have “tried everything”. It is therefore important that services be provided to support women’s choices and that can enable them to evaluate their level of safety.

In this framework, perpetrator programmes may also be one of the many stepping-stones for victims to make a decision to leave the violent relationship, but it is a stepping-stone that should provide correct information on how to evaluate change, support in evaluating risk and in accessing services that can help empower the women.

Having said this: what should be in place for perpetrator programmes to be as safe as possible?

a. Accountability in working with men

Perpetrator programmes should always focus on making visible men’s responsibility (in their work with perpetrators and with community) for the violence. It is therefore necessary that there be a gendered understanding of men’s violence and a willingness and core curricula focused on helping men become accountable for the violence they have committed. Therefore, there needs to be a special attention in training facilitators in understanding their own attitudes and beliefs towards women and their un-examined beliefs in gender hierarchies and equality. This attention must also extend to aspects related to psychological and sexual violence that calls for the capacity of programmes and facilitators to address the invisibility of male privilege.

b. Child protection policies

Women are not the only victims of male violence. When the couple has children, these are also affected by the violence. Creating systems of accountability and putting as primary goal of the work with perpetrators “the safety of victims” requires that the violence against children be made visible. It is often given for granted that children living in households where fathers are violent against mothers will lead to “assisted violence” and the literature has shown that this is as damaging for children than direct violence. However, it is all too easy to collude with the parents in rendering these children invisible. To be accountable to children means putting in place child protection policies that address the children’s well-being, finding ways of making the children seen and heard, so that they can participate in healing processes and be kept safe from violence. In doing so, it is important to acknowledge the difference in power and responsibility of the

perpetrator and the victim as to not risk revictimizing the mother. Perpetrator programmes have a special responsibility in working with men on parenting issues and explaining the importance of the children accessing specific treatment for eventual traumatization. Perpetrator programmes need to also work with the courts and social services in promoting safe parenting and helping shape policies of accountability that don't confuse conflict and violence.

c. Ensuring that certain services are offered to victims

If the perpetrator programme must focus its mission on increasing the safety of victims, it is essential that there is a solid risk assessment in place (see next paragraph) and that it is accountable about women having the possibility to access specialized support services. In addition, as we have seen, some risks may be enhanced by the participation of the perpetrator in a program. Thus, it is fundamental that there be high level, human rights oriented, and independent specialized support system for victims.

d. Risk assessment

For a perpetrator programme to be as safe as possible, it is necessary that there are procedures and policies of on-going risk assessment. It must not only be part of the intake process, but should also continue on an ongoing basis throughout the program. The risk assessment policies should also address what practical measure the programme will put in place in case they perceive a high level of danger (for example pressing charges and/or calling the woman) and how they will define this high level providing risk management strategies as well as risk assessment.

e. Ensuring that there is safety planning for the victim

As many of the women partners of the men entering the programme have never accessed a woman's support service and some of them may never go, it is important that the perpetrator programme be accountable for ensuring that the woman have a safety plan in place. This requires that she is alerted to possible risk factors that she may be minimizing or may not be completely aware of.

4. What needs to happen for the services to be effective (keep the victims safe)?

There are some specific issues that should be dealt with if the perpetrator is in a program. Following are the ones that were addressed in the various expert and discussion papers that WWP EN has produced over the years.

a. All contact must be voluntary

The woman should always choose the level of information and participation of any proceeding that concerns her. Her self-determination should always be respected and she should be able to always make informed choices of any process that involves her. The starting point should therefore always be her deliberate and full consent on any contact or service that concerns her.

b. Give clear, general information about the programme itself

It is important that the perpetrator's access to the programme does not provide a power imbalance on the perpetrator's access to information. Therefore, it is necessary that women be informed of general and eventually more detailed information about the program. It is important that she know aspects like the length, the day, what will be expected in terms of attendance, so that the perpetrators cannot manipulate the programme attendance to his advantage.

c. Provide more detailed information about the group work programme modules

If the woman requires it, there should be the possibility for her to have specific information on work programme modules and content of the psycho-educational materials that are provided in the individual or group work.

d. Run regular information sessions about perpetrator programmes

The flow of information between the woman and the perpetrator programme needs to be on going. Changes in the curricula or specific question that may come up as a consequence of the man's attendance can be raised and discussed so that the woman always has a clear understanding of the structure, content and politics of the perpetrator program.

e. Give information about the (ex) partner's attendance

The programme should keep the woman informed about her (ex) partner's attendance on the perpetrator program. She should be informed of any changes to her partner's client status – for example whether he drops out or is suspended from the perpetrator programme and the reason for this, if known. Any other relevant information for her safety should be given like informing her if her partner breaches his probation order.

f. Give clear information about the men's ability to change

The goal of this aspect of supporting the victim is to give her the possibility to evaluate, based on her needs and expectations what and how much her partner is willing/able to change. The perpetrator programme should provide information to curb unrealistic expectations but should at the same time promote a healthy capacity to evaluate the situation and find benchmarks that the woman can hold to assess if and how much change has realistically taken place.

g. Help her assess her hopes and fears

Part of gaining a workable framework to assess the ability of the men to change is helping the women recognize her hopes and supporting her in finding ways to evaluate the behaviours that will help recognize if the change has taken place. At the same time, it is important to be able to evaluate the level of fear and assess the risk based on the indicators that are present in the situation. Helping to define and evaluate risk factors can support the understanding and coping with fear.

h. Counter the possible manipulative use of the programme by perpetrator

Giving information for how the programme is set up and what is included in the programme module is an important starting point to help the victim access the information that could be used manipulatively by the perpetrator. Providing the partner with the possibility of talking to service providers that can competently explain the context of the socio-educational information provided in individual or group sessions can further help avoid any form of manipulation.

i. She has no responsibility in the man's participation in program

Partner contact or support by perpetrator programme should never suggest or imply that the woman is responsible for the man's participation in the program. Service providers working with partner should always consider the man fully responsible for his choices and behaviours, avoiding in all ways to ask the woman to facilitate the participation of the man in the program.

j. Women's needs must be respected and any concern for possible risk relating to contacting her addressed

The response to the needs of men's partners' that attend the programme must be flexible and every effort should be made to assure that the woman's safety and well-being is prioritized. This requires close collaboration between the women's support service and the perpetrator programme and there may be many different ways in which women's needs vary and possible appropriate responses can be given. A specific issue that needs to be addressed is if the woman perceives that being contacted by the programme may not be safe for her. In this case every effort

should be made to assess the level of risk and the possible protection measures that the programme itself can put in place.

k. Give her the possibility to access support and safety planning

Perpetrator programmes should always be connected directly or indirectly with women's support system. As the principal aim of perpetrator programmes is the safety of victims, it is central that in all cases that a perpetrator enters a programme there be the possibility for the victim to access support and safety planning.

l. Raise safety concerns

If there are issues that arise from the work with the perpetrator or episodes that the woman shares with the perpetrator programme that are of concern for the service providers, it is their responsibility to take any measure in the legal and ethical as well as their professional code of ethics realm to raise concerns for her safety. It is also important that the perpetrator programme provide reports about the man, where to do so would increase the safety of the woman and children.

m. Respond to information within the organization's confidentiality policy

Perpetrator programmes should respond to the women's request for information about her (ex) partner, within the constraints of the organization's confidentiality policy, about which she should have been informed from the start.

5. Who is accountable for ensuring that this is done?

Given that all of the issues concerning the safety and well-being of victims are linked with their partners being in a perpetrator programme there seems to be a clear link that make perpetrator programmes accountable to respond for the fact that these specialized victim support services be in place and that all the relevant issues be addressed. It is also quite clear that some of the information that is relevant to the women's safety may arise from the service providers working with the men and vice versa. Also implied by the previous information we have gathered is that to be able to contrast possible risks posed by the participation of perpetrators in programmes, service providers working to support the victim must have an in-depth knowledge of the functioning of the perpetrator programme and an understanding of the woman's specific needs. Only the perpetrator programme is in the position to provide this kind of information and training, so the link and collaboration between the service providers of the perpetrator programme and the women's support systems needs to be very close and trust and information sharing are essential to providing adequate service for victims.

6. Who should provide the services?

If perpetrator programmes need to be accountable in terms of the services that must be available to victims the logical consequence is that there are three ways in which this can happen. One is a tight partnership with independent women's support services, the second is women's support services directly connected and set up by perpetrator programmes themselves, the third are perpetrator programmes set up directly by independent women's support services that provide the services themselves. The process of negotiating the setting up or collaboration of and with independent specialized women's support services is a complicated territory. In principle, we know and the Istanbul Convention reinforces the necessity of collaboration between perpetrator programmes and women's support services, however the process of trust building and willingness to cooperate varies largely from country to country and within the same country often from region to region and even from programme to programme. There are many very sound reasons for which the best set up is that of close collaboration between independent women's support services for victims and perpetrator programmes that work independently and collaborate. However, we must be attentive to the fact that demanding perpetrator programs to be accountable implies that they respond directly that services are provided to victims and how actively they will be engaged in this will depend on the level of collaboration granted by the independent specialized women's support service.

a. How do we provide for independent and "victim" centred services?

One of issues that is at the centre of this discussion is the "right of survivors to specialist support services which work solely in the interest of the survivor and where advocates stand by their side uncompromised by any considerations concerning the work with perpetrators. Because of the violence and the imbalance of power it creates, it is incompatible with ethical standards if perpetrator programmes also work with victims." (Logan, 2015)

It seems like the focal point is how to ensure that:

- a) Service provided to victims is independent and can "defend" the best interest of victims without being "influenced" by needs or considerations regarding the perpetrator.
- b) The situation of imbalance of power created by violence requires that there be a clear distinction between who is working with victims and who is working with perpetrators.

While it seems like point a) is clearly within the realm of a professional intervention to support victims and requires clear boundaries to support professional in helping their "clients" in the best way, it is not entirely clear exactly what is intended in point b).

To assure that the imbalance of power that pertains to the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim does not transfer to the work that is done in supporting the change of violent behaviour of perpetrators and the victim empowerment and support, it is necessary for the



professionals working in the field to be skilled and highly aware and capable of recognizing not only the most overt forms of physical violence, but also the more subtle forms of power and control. These may be in the form of psychological, economical abuse and are often gender specific. This makes the dimension of self-reflection and examination of the facilitator's attitudes and beliefs very important. The professional must be able to understand their own forms of perpetration of violence and collusion with a patriarchal system and this needs to be integral part of the training and on-going supervision.

This is the area in which, maybe the focus of the discussion would be most helpful.

Given that perpetrator programmes are accountable for what happens as a consequence of the man enrolling in a programme and have a clear priority on the safety of victims, how do perpetrator programmes ensure an independent, right's based, victim centred and non-influenced by "perpetrator's point of view" service for victims?

Maybe by providing some guidelines and assessing these issues the concerns raised on the Standards could be overcome.

Appendix

WWP - Work with perpetrators of domestic violence in Europe – Daphne II project 2006-2008. Guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with male perpetrators of domestic violence *version 1.1, 2008*

A.2. Collaboration with victim's support services and intervention systems

Perpetrator programmes are only one part of a necessary wider system of intervention against domestic violence and should not be run in isolation nor be implemented where specific victim support services do not exist. Perpetrator programmes should be funded by additional sources and not at the expense of the victim support services. To effectively deal with domestic violence, perpetrator programmes should be an integrated part of an intervention system and actively participate in inter-agency alliances and networks against domestic violence. It is particularly important to cooperate closely with services for women victims and their children to ensure their safety as well as to achieve an integrated approach to domestic violence. These principles of co-operation should be implemented by including representatives from women's support services as experts in steering committees and advisory boards of perpetrator programmes. Collaboration and networking with all other services, agencies and professionals working with domestic violence (e.g., the justice system, social services, health services, and child protection services) are also important. Cooperation and participation in alliances and networks should be acknowledged and funded.

B Important principals for the work with male perpetrators

B.1. Partner contact and support

To increase the partner's safety perpetrator programmes have to assure that the men's partners are informed about the goals and the content of the programme, about its limitations (e.g. no guarantee for non-violence), about how her partner can use his programme attendance to manipulate or further control her and about the possibilities to receive support and safety planning themselves. Information provided by the partner should be included in risk assessment and evaluation of the perpetrator. Women should be warned if their partner drops out of the programme or if facilitators perceive a risk to the woman or children.

It has to be made sure that contact with the partners is absolutely voluntary for them and does not imply any responsibility for the men's participation or progress in the programme. The women's needs should be respected and efforts have to be made to minimize any possible risk related to contacting them. Contact with the partner can be provided by an associated victims' support service or by the perpetrator programme itself.

Istanbul Convention: Art. 16 and 12

Art. 16

Article 16 – Preventive intervention and treatment programmes

1 Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.

2 Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.

3 In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims

Art. 12

Article 12 – General obligations

1 Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men.

4 Parties shall take the necessary measures to **encourage** all members of society, **especially men and boys, to contribute actively to preventing** all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention

Council of Europe publication: suggested standards 8.18 pp. 57-58 in
 “combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services”,
 2008

<p>There should be an attached or associated women’s support service available for the victim.</p>	<p>The Women’s Support Services should be pro-active in contacting female partners or ex-partners and offer support (though women should not be coerced into participation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Due diligence to prevent, DEVAW Art 4 (c), Beijing Platform para 124 (b) & CoE Rec(2002)5</i> • <i>The Commitment of governments to provide a gender mainstreaming policy, Beijing Platform para 124</i>
<p>Programmes should continually conduct risk assessments.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to life, ECHR Art. 2, ICCPR Art. 6, UDHR Art.3, EU Charter Art.2 • Prohibition of inhuman treatment, ECHR Art. 3, ICCPR Art. 6 & UDHR Art.1 • Respect for physical and moral or mental integrity, ECHR Art. 8, EU Charter Art.3 • Right of the child to be protected, CRC Art. 19, Social Charter Art. 14, Revised Social Charter Art.17, EU Charter Art.24 • Due diligence to prevent, DEVAW Art 4 (c), Beijing Platform para 124 (b) & CoE Rec(2002)5
<p>Programmes should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear protocols on information sharing between a perpetrator programme and women’s support service; • A condition of joining the programme that perpetrators provide 	<p>Perpetrators should be asked to sign an agreement on the release of confidential information before being enrolled on a programme.</p>	<p>As above</p>



addresses of current and former partners, and this information will be passed on to the Women's Support Service.		
<p>Programmes should inform a female partner/ex-partner if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The perpetrator leaves the programme;• The perpetrator is suspended from the programme;• There are any other concerns for her or her children's safety.		As above



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Hester and Lilley, domestic and sexual violence perpetrator programmes: article 16 of the Istanbul Convention

Checklist for perpetrator programmes (pp. 31-34)

- Integrates or is directly linked to a women's support service to ensure the safety of the women (and their children) and to provide important information regarding the potential change in attitudes and abusive behavior of the perpetrator.

Free download available [here](#).

Pauncz, Alessandra and Dean Ajdukovic: Discussion document in view of the future revision of the wwp-en guidelines

4. ROLE OF SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AND ISSUES AROUND SAFETY

The Guidelines of WWP-EN state that: “the main goal of the work with male perpetrators is to increase the safety of the victims of violence. Perpetrator programmes must give priority to the safety of the women partners and their children at every level of the program.”

However, this statement could be seen as slightly at odds with other parts of the Guidelines in which there is a different formulation of the mission of WWP-EN stated, for example, as: “Work with male perpetrators of domestic violence **to stop the violence** and enhance the safety of victims” or the definition of working to understand “What works for which groups of men under which circumstances”.

The two issues “working with men to interrupt the violence” and the “safety of victims” are clearly related and very closely linked, but it may be necessary to further discuss more of the issues that could be controversial in a situation that has the potential to have a “conflict of interest”.

The fact that WWP-EN takes a strong position on the priority of victim safety, does not make the potential conflict disappear on the different levels (e.g. European, national, local, political and social) at which this conflict could be played out.

For example there may be a situation of a man on a P.p. that has ceased his violent behaviour but that is being very manipulative in the way he is using the information he is receiving in the program. He may in this way become more emotionally abusive. At this point how do we prioritize the survivors safety? It is crucial to understand if the termination from the programme might lead to an increase in violence, at the same time staying in the programme might be contributing to emotional abuse. Another example could be of a man that seems to be progressing positively in the program, but the partner says that although the physical violence has ceased he is still being abusive, but is not able to give examples of the behaviour and appears to be still very upset by passed behaviours. She may decline the help of support service and expect weekly reports on what the man says in the group, saying that she needs that in order to feel safe.

Another “conflict of interest” could arise between the P.p.’s need to have a high number of clients and thus decide to keep a high-risk man in the programme (on the other hand it might be safer to have the man in programme where he can be monitored and sanctioned if he commits violence again) and the protection that can and will be provided to the survivor. Another potential area of conflict is offering a programme that might provide legal advantages to the man that might be problematic for the victim and the children (for instance access to the children).

For this reason, it seems crucial that in revising the guideline there is an effort to understand some of the potential areas of “conflicting interests” and be able to provide some kind of examples of best practice and also how these best practices were developed in the light of the critical issues.

It is also important that there be a special attention of WWP-EN in understanding the dynamics of different European countries especially those that are currently developing P.p.

5. AIMS OF SUPPORT OF SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE, WHILE PARTNER IS IN A PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME.

Art. 16 of the Istanbul conventions states in point 3 “[...] parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.”

As we have stated the Guidelines must be framed in the terms outlined by the Istanbul Convention so we propose to break down the 3 main phrases and discuss them:

- 1) Safety and support of human rights of victims are of **primary** concern
- 2) Where appropriate**
- 3) Programmes are set up and implemented in **close co-ordination** with specialist support services

Point 1) is uncontroversial as we have seen how WWP-EN Guidelines take a clear position in stating that victim safety is of primary concern.

Point 2) is one of the issues that WWP-EN Guidelines should address because it is central to some of the controversy that is arising among Perpetrator programmes and specialist support services for survivors of violence but is closely linked to

Point 3) how are we supposed to understand/set up the different kind of collaboration/co-ordination between P.p. and specialist services for women survivors of violence?

6. COORDINATION OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES WITH PROTECTION SERVICES (CHILD AND WOMEN) AND POLICIES.

There are three levels at which the WWP-EN Guidelines address the issue of partner safety and, more important and potentially more difficult, relationships between Perpetrator programmes and Women’s specialist support services:

LEVEL 1) Collaboration with specialist services for women survivors of violence as part of a wider system of intervention

- a) P.p. Should NOT be implemented where specific Victim Support services do not exist
- b) Perpetrator programmes should be funded by additional sources and not at the expense of the specialist services for women survivors of violence.

Indication a) is quite explicit and clear, and points to the importance of having Victim Support services in place as a priority. It does however imply that no programme for men perpetrating violence should be started if there is not already a functioning specialist support service for survivors of violence.

Point b) is a clearly stated principle but is less clear in practice. Most funds are stanced for the whole field of Domestic violence including Women’s Centres, but also public services that provide specific services like E.R. programmes, police training, general training for public health providers, prevention programmes in schools and most community based interventions. It is not clear why

these resources should not also fund Perpetrator programmes, given that often they are the only funds available. It is true that in most countries domestic violence programmes are regularly underfunded and all programmes tend to run on a much lower budget and on voluntary basis. This is obviously a political issue of the difficulty of each country to prioritize the problem of domestic violence. The fact that it is a problem in almost all Countries is part of the fact that violence against women is a global issue linked to discrimination and gender blind politics.

When Perpetrator programmes are newly introduced into the social and cultural network, the idea that they are competing for scarce resources to help the “offenders” at the expenses, once again, of the survivors is a quite immediate concern.

On the other hand, the specific point in the standards that perpetrator work should not compete with women’s funds, puts a lot of pressure on the Perpetrator programmes as to which funds they should be bidding for. Regular funding is one of the basic requirements to be able to offer responsible and accountable programmes. If we endorse programmes that only run on a voluntary level, there is a very high risk of dangerous practice. Structure, training, correct risk assessment procedures, coordinated community intervention, partner support systems, evaluation of results all require a stable funding system. The issue of funding is of core importance to the survival of all programmes, and where survival is involved we have to be aware of the challenges to finding creative and new ways for collaboration and support.

LEVEL 2) Relationships and ways of working together of the Perpetrator programmes and the specialist Women’s Support system

Again quoting from the Guidelines:

- a) These principles of co-operation should be implemented by including representatives from Women’s Support services as experts in steering committees and advisory boards of Perpetrator programmes.
- b) It is particularly important to cooperate closely with services for women victims and their children to ensure their safety as well as to achieve an integrated approach to domestic violence.
- c) Contact with the partner can be provided by: 1) an associated Victim’s Support service or 2) by the Perpetrator programme itself.

In level 2, I have collected the Guidelines statements that are linked to formal ways in which the victim support should collaborate with the Perpetrator programmes. I will start with the last point, as it is quite central to the further development of the WWP-EN reflection on the Guidelines. The two options that are provided by the Guidelines for partner support are that these services can be provide by an associated Victim’s Support service **or** by the Perpetrator programme itself.

What these services should be aware of and how they can or should provide services is outlined in further parts of the Guidelines and will be explored in Level 3) for the moment it is important to focus on **who** is to provide the service, leaving the **how** to the next level.

A fundamental addition to these reflections is based on the Istanbul Convention. Specifically in two points the paper of the Council of Europe prepared by Marianne Hester and Sarah- Jane Lilley states: “these programme must ensure the safety and support of victims and **that specialist**

support services such as women’s shelters or rape crisis centres should be turned to for co-operation in this regard” and also “Programmes should offer women partners both group and individual support and assure that they are informed about the goals and the content of the program, its limitations, how her partner can use his attendance to manipulate or control her and the possibility of receiving support and safety planning themselves.”

It seems that for the Istanbul convention Perpetrator programmes are responsible for assuring partner support services (with certain characteristics), but also that they should be asking co-operation from Women’s Support services.

This raises many questions.

It is clear how a connected service for partner support should be run if it is the P.p. to be running it. What is more complicate is when there is a request for collaboration from existing Specialist services for survivors of violence in what terms the request can and should be framed. Again there are different possible scenarios:

- 1) The Women’s Services are interested and willing to collaborate in setting up a partner support system that deals with the issues related to level 3. Information is appropriately shared and there is an understanding of the aims and scopes of each program. While it is clear that Women’s programmes can work in isolation with what is happening with the perpetrator regarding his engagement in a programme the reverse is not true. This asymmetry in the treatment can sometimes create fractions between the Perpetrator and Specialized support services.
- 2) The Women’s services are not interested in collaborating. This is also a clear situation in which perpetrator services can and should (according to Istanbul convention and WWP-EN Guidelines) set up a partner support service. This might seem like a clear set necessity, but it is not without difficulties if the motivation for not collaboration is based on ideas that Perpetrator programmes should not be encouraged.
- 3) The Women’s services collaborate on their own terms. The Women’s service are willing and think they should be running services for victims, but are not willing to collaborate and share relevant information. They provide the service and have a very formal protocol, but are not willing to discuss relevant issues and methodology.

Given these premised let’s now discuss Level 3 on the content of the partner service programmes.

LEVEL 3) How a Partner service is modified by the Perpetrator programme and the necessity of integrating curricula for Women’s Support services.

There are various aspects that are included in the Guidelines that are specific to the kind of services that should be provided through the partner support. These aspects require that there is exchange of information and shared procedures for evaluation of risk. Different services and countries might have different requirements by law as to the possibility of information sharing and privacy issues. It is true that in these services it is very important that the women and the men seeking assistance should be involved in the process. A point of reflection in the development of the Guidelines might point in the direction of trying as much as possible to work on a basis of direct consent from “clients”.

The content of the services are addressed in the Guidelines, that state that partner support services should:



- a) Increase the partner's safety. Perpetrator programmes have to assure that the men's partner are informed about the goals, the content of the programme and about its limitations (e.g. no guarantee for non violence).
- b) Inform about how her partner can use the programme attendance to manipulate or further control her.
- c) Inform about the possibilities to receive support and safety planning themselves.
- d) Include information provided by partner in risk assessment and evaluation of level of violence of the perpetrator.
- e) Be warned if their partner drops out of the programme or if facilitators perceive a risk to the women or children.
- f) Make sure that contact with the partner is absolutely voluntary for her.
- g) Not imply (that victim has) any responsibility for the men's participation or progress in the program.
- h) Assure that women's needs be respected and efforts have to be made to minimize any possible risk related to contacting them.

To these specific aspects contained in the Guidelines the paper of the Council of Europe on article 16 adds that Perpetrator programmes: **“may influence a victim's decision to stay with or leave the abuser, or provide the victim with a false sense of security.** As a result, priority consideration must be given to the needs and safety of victims, including their human rights.”

On the whole there are specific issues that in the Guidelines and in the Istanbul convention result as critical issues for women whose men have enrolled in a Perpetrator program. These issues, to meet the criteria for safety and increasing security for women and children, must be dealt with. The underlying assumption is that:

- a) There can be an increase in risk.
- b) There can be false expectation that influence the women's decision to stay or leave.
- c) There can be a false sense of security by having the man enrolled in a Perpetrator program.
- d) The methodology and topics covered by the women's shelter should be revised or integrated.

It is important to stress once again that most of these issues are particularly critical in countries that are starting Perpetrator programmes and in which there is not a consolidated path to building trust and rapport between services.

In this context the fact itself that there is a concern for the **increased** risk of women, when the man enrolls in a program, can account for some of the hostility that women's programmes might reasonable hold against Perpetrator programmes. They could argue that any intervention that increases in the brief term the level of risk should not be encouraged.

I think WWP-EN could consider some kind of position paper on this subject trying to respond to these concerns.

Based on the assumption that there can be good arguments against this objection, there is another “hot topic” that needs to be addressed.

As is quite clearly outlined, the services provided for women survivors of the men enrolled in P.p. have different requirements from those of women whose partners are not. This means that it



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could be the case that the P.p. is aware of the critical issues and points them out to the Victim's services. This dynamic - in which the worker (often man) working with the perpetrator (prevalently man) tells the victim worker (woman) how she should be working with the victim (prevalently woman) in a field in which the latter usually has a lot more experience in the field of domestic violence that the first - is a very gendered issue with strong social and political connotations. WWP-EN needs to have a deep reflection on how it is going to avoid sustaining a patriarchal, patronizing practice in the name of "women's safety" to promote "men's change".

Is partner support the only way to guarantee victim protection and safety? If yes, are Perpetrator programmes entitled to request a "certain kind of victim support"? Should they be providing it if specialist support services for women survivors of violence are not willing to? What if their opposition is linked to the increased risk for women or insufficient funding?

Should we be looking at other ways of requiring accountability that does not lean on "partner contact" and support to the survivor? Is this possible or desirable? Is requiring partner contact even ethical when we look at the concerns of Specialist support services?

Rosa Logar: Partnership with victim's services in work with perpetrators

WWP EN Expert Essay, 2015

Empowering support of victims by independent and specialist women's support services as equals and partners

The Istanbul Convention requires that perpetrator programmes "shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims" (Council of Europe 2012:11). Such cooperation might not be appropriate for perpetrator programmes being run in prison when the safety of the victims concerned is not jeopardised. However, even in prison issues of safety need to be taken into account, especially those concerning contact arrangements and the release of perpetrators.

Violence against women is a human rights violation and a form of discrimination, as the Istanbul Convention states. Therefore, support to female victims of violence must be offered by independent, human rights based and gender sensitive organizations. The practice of perpetrator programmes to carry out "partner contact" or to even provide support for victims within the programme is problematic and needs to be revisited. Survivors should have the right to specialist support services which work solely in the interests of survivors and where advocates stand by their side uncompromised by any considerations concerning the work with perpetrators. Because of the violence and the imbalance of power it creates, it is incompatible with ethical standards if perpetrator programmes also work with victims.

Therefore the Istanbul Convention foresees that perpetrator programmes should work in close coordination with specialist women's support services, but not that they provide support to victims themselves.

The Convention requires that the countries that have ratified it "provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children. "(IB: 13). The new EU Victims Directive also calls for the establishment of specialist support to women victims of gender-based violence (European Union 2012). Organizations running perpetrator programmes need to be aware that this standard is not yet operational in many countries in Europe. As the WAVE report 2015 shows, only a few countries meet the minimum standards of providing one place in a women's shelter per 10,000 inhabitants and approximately 54,000 women's shelter places are missing in Europe, which amounts to 66% of the required places. Only 16 out of 46 European countries provide a 24/7 helpline free of charge for women survivors of violence (WAVE 2015:22f). This presents a serious problem because thousands of female victims of violence in Europe continue to have no support. This situation has to be taken into account when establishing perpetrator programmes and these should not be set up where specialist support for women survivors of violence and their children does not yet exist.

WWP EN: Guidelines to develop standards updated version, 2017

A.2. Collaboration with victim support services and intervention systems

There has to be the willingness and principles of work of putting safety of women and children as a priority for perpetrator programmes. To effectively deal with domestic violence, perpetrator programmes should be an integrated part of a holistic intervention system and actively participate in inter-agency alliances and networks against domestic violence. Cooperation and participation in alliances and networks should be acknowledged and funded. It is particularly important to cooperate closely with services for women victims and their children to ensure their safety as well as to achieve an integrated approach to domestic violence. These principles of co-operation should be implemented, for example, by including representatives from women's support services as experts in steering committees and advisory boards of perpetrator programmes. WWP EN supports non-competition for funds, however, given that the problem of gender-based violence is at epidemic proportions, the stakeholders working against this violence are many and that the funding awarded is not nearly adequate, this will set up dynamics that contribute to services being forced into competition for funding. WWP EN believes that there should be the provision of more funding. There should be more money with a focus on integrated approaches, not separating out the issues of a community approach, but in lobbying for more funding to certain standards, so that this community response can include perpetrator work. As such, we want to see work with perpetrators in partnership with local women's services. It is the responsibility of perpetrator programmes to reach out to the specialised women's support services to establish communication in an attempt to set up collaboration. However, it is also recognized that this may not always lead to an effective partnership. Nevertheless, perpetrator programmes should make constant and ongoing efforts to converse and cooperate with women's services. Collaboration and networking with all other services, agencies and professionals working with domestic violence (e.g., the justice system, social services, health services, and child protection services) is of vital importance, so that programmes contribute to the safety of women and children and hold violent men accountable.

B Important issues for perpetrator work B.1. Partner contact and services

Generally, there are specific issues that are critical for women whose men have enrolled in a perpetrator programme. These issues must be dealt with in order to meet the criteria for increasing safety for women and children.

Article 16.3 of the Istanbul Convention states that parties, when setting up perpetrator programmes, should have "the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims" as their primary concern. "Domestic and Sexual Violence Perpetrator Programmes: Article 16 of The Istanbul Convention" (Hester and Lilley, 2014), elaborates on this further to point out that attendance of her partner on a programme may have a bearing on a victim's decision process around staying or leaving her abuser, or give her false hopes about the change a programme can enable for abusive men. As such, partner contact and services should cover the following:

- a) Increase the partner's safety. Perpetrator programmes have to assure that the men's partner are informed about the goals, the content of the programme and about its limitations (e.g. no guarantee for non-violence).
- b) Inform about how her partner can use the programme attendance to manipulate or further control her.
- c) Inform about the possibilities to receive support and safety planning themselves.
- d) Include information provided by partner in risk assessment and evaluation of level of violence of the perpetrator.
- e) Be warned if their partner drops out of the programme or if facilitators perceive a risk to the women or children.
- f) Make sure that contact with the partner is voluntary for her.
- g) Not imply (that victim has) any responsibility for the men's participation or progress in the programme.
- h) Assure that women's needs be respected and efforts have to be made to minimize any possible risk related to contacting them.

All of these aspects require that there is exchange of information and shared procedures for evaluation of risk between the partner service and perpetrator programmes. Different services and countries might have different requirements in law as to the possibility of information sharing and privacy issues. It is true that, in these services, it is very important that the women and men seeking assistance should be involved in the process. Programmes for both parties should try as much as possible to work on a basis of direct consent from "clients". It is important to stress that most of these issues are particularly critical in countries that are starting perpetrator programmes and in which there is not a consolidated path to building trust and rapport between services tackling domestic violence.

Uligaj, Atila and Natalia Batenkova: WWP EN report on members' organisations' good practice, 2017

Importance of constant contact for risk evaluation

2.1. Approach to (ex-)partner support work

The description of the approach applied to (ex-)partner support work was given by *13 out of 15* respondents. The majority of the organizations gave a very detailed in depth summary of their approaches, and in order to present the findings in the more structured way and for the purpose of a better analysis the described approaches the respondents are divided into the four following categories:

(1) Organizations that combine PPs and VSS (54%)

(2) Established partnership between VSS and organizations providing PPs (7%)

(3) Organizations providing PPs and practicing referral of cases to VSS without actively working with (ex-)partner support (31%)

(4) Other (umbrella) organizations (8%)

(1) The majority of the respondents – *7 out of 13* – represent *the organizations that combine PPs and VSS*. [...]

(1) The *approach* of the *organisations that combine PPs and VSS* can be generally referred to as being *victim-centred* which means that safety of women and children suffered from men's violence, their concerns and needs are the first priority in all work plans, actions and measures of these organisations. [...]

(2) *Domestic Violence Intervention Center (Austria)* represents the *established partnership between VSS and organisations providing PPs*, and their approach to victim safety work is similar to the one described above. At the same time they underline that, "*safety of survivors means more than risk assessment and safety planning*". Primarily, it means providing support to survivors, empowering them and giving them "*tools*" to be able to live a life independent from their perpetrators. Similarly to SPAVO (Cyprus) the Domestic Violence Intervention Center/Anti-Violence Programme (Austria) works a lot with psychological support and empowerment of women and children subjected to men's violence, financial and legal support, employment, housing, residence status, etc.

(3) When it comes to the *organisations providing PPs and practicing referral of cases to VSS*, the main *starting point* in their victim safety work is *perpetrators' responsibility for violence*.

Rajagopalan et. al: Working towards safety: supporting women alongside DVIP's perpetrator programme

Expert Essay, 2015

We will focus on the aims and principles of the women's support service and elaborate on the crucial role it plays in supporting the partners of men who are attempting to change their abusive behaviour in intimate relationships, sometimes successfully but at other times not. The women's support service at DVIP is a little known vehicle for change and agency for women who:

- are not yet ready to leave an abusive relationship and are hopeful that the programme will repair their relationship,
- are involved with Children's Services due to having an ongoing relationship with the abusive fathers of their children,
- have been directed by the family courts not to obstruct contact between abusive ex partners (fathers) and children,
- may be separated temporarily from their partners on the condition that they engage with the programme and change their behaviour.

Therefore, the Women's Service linked to the Perpetrator Programme has special responsibilities and duties, above those of any other Women's Service, to:

- Give a woman whose partner or ex-partner is a client of the Perpetrator Programme clear, general information about the Programme itself
- Let her know she can have more detailed information if she requires it, including information about the group-work Programme modules.
- Run regular information sessions about the Perpetrator Programme, either as part of the structured group-work programme or separately. These should give women a chance to meet a worker from the Perpetrator Programme.
- Keep the woman informed about her (ex-)partner's attendance on the Perpetrator Programme. Inform her of any changes to her (ex-)partner's client status - for example, whether he drops out or is suspended from the Perpetrator Programme and the reason for this, if known. Inform her if her (ex-)partner breaches his probation order.
- Give information about what his attendance, completion or failure to complete the Perpetrator Programme might mean for her.

- Give clear messages about the Perpetrator Programme and men's ability to change.
- Talk through her hopes, fears and other feelings about his attendance, completion and so forth, and dispel false hopes and promote realistic expectations about his ability to change and the likely 'success' of the Perpetrator Programme.
- Raise with her as soon as possible, in some cases immediately, any safety concerns that arise from the Perpetrator Programme workers' contact with him.
- Provide reports from the Perpetrator Programme about the man, where to do so would increase the safety of the woman and children.
- Respond to her requests for information about her (ex-)partner, within the constraints of the organisation's confidentiality policy, about which she should have been informed from the start.

Olga Persson: Accountability in perpetrator work

Position Paper, 2018

Engaging men and boys for gender equality

On the MenEngage website, it is written that MenEngage “recognizes that its work was born out of a feminist tradition and that women-led organizations have carried out the foundational gender work. We strive to complement and expand the work promoted by women’s rights organization by engaging men and boys. In this context, accountability to the women’s movement and to other historically oppressed social groups is a necessary practice for building collaborative and equitable partnerships”. They also define being accountable as:

- *Being critically aware of one’s own power and privilege and open to constructive criticism;*
- *Taking action to address personal and institutional practices that go against our principles of gender equality and human rights, acknowledging any harm caused and making amends;*
- *Respecting and promoting women’s leadership in the gender equality movement;*
- *Creating structures of consultation and partnerships with women’s rights organizations.*

Accountability requires the development of a receptive capacity in men and others who have been placed in positions of power and privilege so that they can listen to the perspectives of the oppressed groups in order to become authentic allies. (<http://menengage.org/accountability/>)

Accountability in the work with perpetrators

Respect is the UK membership organization for work with perpetrators of domestic violence, male victims of domestic violence and young people’s violence in close relationships. The Respect Standard sets out an evidence-based, safety-focused framework, which identifies good practice and offers guidance for organizations to ensure that they are meeting the needs of service users safely and effectively. By evidencing that they meet the Respect Standard, organizations

demonstrate their competence in working with perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse with the safety of survivors and their children at the heart. Included in the Respect Standard is a set of *principles*, which should underpin all work with perpetrators:

1) *Do no harm.*

Organizations take all reasonable steps to ensure that their services do not create additional risks for survivors of domestic violence and abuse.

2) *Gender matters.*

Organizations work in a way that is gender informed, recognizing the gender asymmetry that exists in the degree, frequency and impact of domestic violence and abuse. They understand that men's violence against women and girls is an effect of the structural inequality between men and women and that its consequences are amplified by this. A gender analysis includes violence and abuse perpetrated by women against men and abuse in same-sex relationships, and these require a gender informed response.

3) *Safety first.*

The primary aim of work with perpetrators is to increase the safety and wellbeing of survivors and their children. The provision of an Integrated Support Service for survivors alongside the intervention for perpetrators is essential. When working with perpetrators it is important to recognize the need for behaviour change, but risk reduction should always be prioritized.

4) *Sustainable change.*

Organizations offer interventions that are an appropriate match to the perpetrator, considering the risks they pose, the needs they have and their willingness and ability to engage with the service offered. This will ensure that they are offered a realistic opportunity of achieving sustainable change

5) *Fulfilling lives.*

Organizations are committed to supporting all service users to have healthy, respectful relationships and to lead fulfilling lives.

6) *The system counts.*

Domestic violence and abuse cannot be addressed by one agency alone and work with perpetrators should never take place in isolation. Organizations are committed to working with partners to improve responses as part of their local multiagency arrangements.

7) *Services for all.*

Organizations recognize and respect the diversity of their local community and take steps to respond to everyone according to their needs.

8) *Respectful communities.*

Organizations recognize that the environment their service users live in has an impact on their lives. They will make the links between individual change and the development of respectful communities.

9) *Competent staff.*



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Organizations deliver a safe, effective service by developing the skills, well-being and knowledge of their staff through training, supervision and casework support.

10) Measurably effective services.

Organizations employ clear and proportionate measurement tools, which demonstrate both the individual benefits and the impact of interventions.

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