



**Republika e Kosovës**  
**Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo**  
**Qeveria – Vlada - Government**

**Ministria e Drejtësisë - Ministarstvo Pravde - Ministry of Justice**

**CURRICULUM FOR THE TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS  
WORKING ON PROGRAMMES FOR PERPETRATORS OF  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO**

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## **List of abbreviations and acronyms**

<b>CBT</b>	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
<b>CLMB</b>	Counselling Line for Men and Boys
<b>CLWG</b>	Counselling Line for Women and Girls
<b>DV</b>	Domestic Violence
<b>DVPP</b>	Domestic Violence Prevention Programmes
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based Violence
<b>GREVIO</b>	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
<b>HMPPS</b>	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Services
<b>IPV</b>	Intimate Partner Violence
<b>ISS</b>	Integrated Safety Services
<b>PRIA-MA</b>	Programme of Intervention with Perpetrators in Alternative Measures
<b>PSTN</b>	Psychosocial Treatment of Perpetrators
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>WWP EN</b>	Work With Perpetrators European Network
<b>ZDB</b>	Centre for Men and Boys

## Introduction

The “Curriculum for the training of professionals working on programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in the Republic of Kosovo” (hereinafter the Curriculum) aims at setting the basis for the establishment and development of perpetrator programmes in Kosovo, in line with the standards of the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and other international standards. The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kosovo endorsed the Curriculum, so that the future development, implementation and delivery of perpetrator programmes in the Republic of Kosovo are aligned with this document.

This Curriculum is divided in three main sections:

1. The first section defines what are programmes for perpetrators or domestic violence (or perpetrator programmes), including key principles, main approaches, context and funding, and provides examples of several inspiring programmes across Europe.
2. The second section outlines how perpetrator programmes could be developed and deployed in Kosovo. It defines the objectives, principles and approaches, the specificities of the local context, structure, duration, service provision, and evaluation of the programmes.
3. The third section sets the modules and their content per each phase and session of the perpetrator programme. This version of the Curriculum draws inspiration especially from the British programme Respect (UK) and, at this stage, does not differentiate between mandatory and voluntary programmes.

The Curriculum fulfills the obligation derived from the National Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo for Protection from Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2022 – 2026, respectively Specific Objective I.4 Establishment and implementation of programs for the psycho-social treatment of perpetrators of violent crimes. The present Curriculum is conceived as a pilot, for which implementation has to be monitored and evaluated in order to better adapt it to the local context and needs.

1. The Working Group on the development of the curriculum of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in the Republic of Kosovo

The Working Group on the development of the curriculum of the programmes for perpetrators in Kosovo was established on 1 July 2022 with an official decision issued by the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Kosovo. The present curriculum is the result of several meetings, workshops and collegial discussions held between April and October 2022 and is intended as the basis for a pilot project aimed at implementing perpetrator programmes in Kosovo.

Based on the official decision, the members of the Working Group were:

- Dr. Nita Shala, Deputy-minister of Justice/ National Coordinator against Domestic Violence, chairperson
- Nazlie Bala, Ministry of Justice, member

- Edi Gusia, Agency for Gender Equality, member
- Ruzhdi Osmani, Ministry of Justice, member
- Florentina Beqiraj, Ministry of Justice, member
- Merita Sylja, Kosovo Correctional Service, member
- Merita Gashi, Kosovo Probation Service, member
- Milazim Gjocaj, Ministry of Health, member
- Representative of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, member
- Adile Shaqiri, Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfer, member
- Vebi Mujku, Center for Social Work Pristina, member
- Arsim Shala, Kosovo Police, member
- Shenaj Berisha, Prosecutor, member
- Ngadhujim Arrni, Kosovo Judicial Council, member
- Dardan Kadolli, Kosovo Judicial Council, member
- Shpend Haxhibeqiri, Institute of Psychiatric Forensics, member
- Erblina Dinarama, Safe House Gjakova, member
- Kadri Gashi, SIT, member
- Igballe Rogova, RRGK, member
- Representative of NGO EduTask, member

This document was developed by Cristina Oddone, international consultant, and Adelina Toplica Badivuku, local consultant. This document has been produced with the financial support of the project "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence - Phase III", implemented by the Council of Europe and co-funded by Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Norway, and the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of any of the parties.

## 2. The Council of Europe Istanbul Convention

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention, is the most far reaching international legal instrument on violence against women and it recognises violence against women as a form of discrimination against women and as a human rights violation. It is based on four key pillars: prevention, protection, prosecution and integrated policies. Chapter I of the Istanbul Convention defines the purposes, definitions, equality and non-discrimination and general obligations of State parties in applying this international treaty. These elements that are further discussed in Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention.

Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention sets specific obligations for states parties in relation to the setting up of preventive and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. Article 16, paragraph 1 requires parties to set up or support programmes that prevent perpetrators of domestic violence from re-offending and that promote change in violent behavioural patterns. In addition, Article 16, paragraph 3 states that *“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 up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims”*.

This section of the curriculum recalls a few elements that are relevant for the correct implementation of perpetrator programmes, in line with the principles of the Istanbul Convention.

### **Purpose of the Convention (Article 1)**

- The specific purpose of the Convention is **the protection of women against all forms of gender-based violence covered by its scope**, as well as the prevention, prosecution and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence, which need to be achieved by taking global and coordinated measures.
- The purpose of eradicating violence against women is closely linked to achieving gender equality in law and in fact: actions envisioned in the Convention are aimed at contributing to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and to the promotion of substantive equality between women and men.
- The Convention requires the adoption of a comprehensive framework, grounded on a human rights-based approach, in order to **ensure victims’ safety** and to **tackle the devastating consequences of gender-based violence against women**.
- Preventing and combating violence against women requires extensive multi-agency cooperation as part of an integrated approach.

### **Scope of the Convention (Article 2)**

- The Convention covers all forms of violence against women including domestic violence, and emphasises that **the majority of victims of domestic violence are women**, although men and children can also be subjected to such violence. **Gender-based violence against women** in its various manifestations, including domestic violence, must lie at the heart of all implemented measures.

### Definitions (Article 3)

- **Violence against Women** should be understood as a violation of human rights and as a form of discrimination against women. It includes all forms of **gender-based violence** resulting in **physical, sexual, psychological** or **economic** harm or **suffering** to women, including threats, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, in public or in private life.
- **Domestic violence** includes all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence occurring in the family or domestic unit, irrespective of biological or legal family ties. Domestic violence includes **intimate-partner violence** between current or former partners and **inter-generational violence** which typically occurs between parents and children. This gender-neutral definition encompasses victims and perpetrators of both sexes. **Intimate-partner violence is acknowledged as affecting women disproportionately**, therefore as **distinctly gendered**. In both cases, a joint residence of the victim and the perpetrator is not required.
- **Gender** refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men. Gender roles and stereotypes are considered to contribute to make violence socially acceptable. Within the Convention, the eradication of prejudices, customs, traditions and other practices based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped gender roles is considered as pivotal to prevent violence against women. All forms of violence mentioned in the Convention have to be addressed **in the context of prevailing inequality between women and men**, existing stereotypes, gender roles and discrimination against women.
- **Gender-based violence against women** refers to violence that is used against a woman because she is a woman or violence affecting women disproportionately. Gender-based violence refers to any violence that is perpetrated against women and that is both the cause and the result of unequal power relations, based on the perceived difference between women and men, leading to women's subordinated status in both private and public spheres. Such violence is deeply rooted in the social and cultural structures, norms and values governing society and is often perpetrated by a culture of denial and silence. This expression is aimed at protecting women from violence resulting from gender stereotypes and specifically encompasses women.
- **Victim** includes both victims of violence against women and victims of domestic violence. While only women and girls (under the age of 18) could be victims of violence against women, men and boys (under the age of 18) can be included among the victims of domestic violence.
- **Women** includes girls under the age of 18.

## **Part I: What are perpetrator programmes?**

### **1. Origins and international human rights law**

The work with perpetrators started around the 1970s as an experimental professional practice aimed at “rehabilitating” violent men. First in North America and in the UK, later in other European countries, such programmes have been conceived as a strategy that, by reducing re-offending, could contribute to the victims’ safety (Council of Europe 2014; Westmarland, Kelly 2012; 2016). When violence against women emerged as an issue of public concern, both research and practice have rightly focused on the victims’ experience and prioritised their need for protection and support. Shelter workers started to notice that women would refer to specialist services on several occasions, since the abuser’s behaviour would hardly reflect any changes. Following the example of the forerunners Duluth Model (Pence, Paymar 1993) and Emerge programme (Gondolf 1985; Gondolf, Russell 1986), in most cases these first interventions were intended as coordinated community responses to domestic violence, in collaboration with women’s support services. By holding domestic abusers accountable for their acts, perpetrator programmes were meant as a way to improve responses to both victims and perpetrators.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the adoption of specific criminal justice reforms also showed the limits of a solely punitive approach towards perpetrators (Hearn 1998), leading to a drive for rehabilitation initiatives. As of the years 2000s, several perpetrator programmes were implemented across Europe, although not consistently and without a standardised approach. They started to be developed, not only in non-custodial setting on the basis of self-referral, but also within the probation systems and in prison. From the UN Beijing Conference on the Status of women (1995) to the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention (2014), the work with perpetrators received growing attention. In 2008 the Council of Europe included a specific section on perpetrator programmes in its manual on minimum standards for support services for women victims of DV.

Included in Chapter III on “Prevention”, Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention requires state parties to set up perpetrator programmes targeting both perpetrators of domestic violence and sex offenders. Since 2018, the umbrella network organisation “European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence” (WWP EN) has developed the first guidelines for a correct implementation of perpetrator programmes in line with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention (WWP EN, n.d.).

### **2. Key principles**

Research and practice in this field have shown that these interventions, whether based on voluntary or on mandatory participation, can reduce the risks for further and more severe forms of abuse. In the context of a country-by-country evaluation procedure, the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) – the body in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention by state parties – has observed a wide range of practices concerning this provision.



**WARNING!**  
**PERPETRATORS PROGRAMMES ARE NOT...**

It is important to note that perpetrator programmes should not be reduced to alcohol and substance abuse, anger-management, or medication, and that they should never aim at reconciling partners or at offering mediation between spouses.

Therefore, perpetrator programmes are not just:

- Anger management sessions
- Therapy sessions
- Drug and alcohol abuse therapy
- Couple counselling or mediation
- Parenting support programmes

All these elements can be included in a curriculum, but the work with perpetrators **cannot be limited to these aspects.**

It should be remembered that individual and group work with perpetrators is not an opportunity for abusers:

- To share sexist views and support each other
- To justify their violent behaviour
- To find an easy way to satisfy the courts in order to regain contact or reunite with their partners

**Perpetrator programmes should always prioritise the protection of victims' human rights and safety**, by acknowledging domestic violence as a strategy for men to exert power and control over their intimate partners.

Perpetrator programmes can be run by civil society organisations or by statutory agencies such as probation services and prison administrations. Whether integrated with criminal justice or a co-ordinated community response, or run by independent organisation, perpetrators programmes can be based on several theoretical understandings of domestic violence.

Notwithstanding the different approaches observed by GREVIO during its first evaluation procedure, the **key principles for practice** are:<sup>1</sup>

- To prioritise the **victim's safety**;
- To consider that **violence is always a choice**, is always unacceptable and perpetrators should be held accountable for their acts;
- To design an individual-plan and a **co-ordinated community and inter-institutional response** to contain men's violence and reduce re-offending, in line with international standards and best practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Mid-term Horizontal Review of GREVIO baseline evaluation reports (2022). Available at: <https://edoc.coe.int/en/violence-against-women/11030-mid-term-horizontal-review-of-grevio-baseline-evaluation-reports.html>

Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence are, simultaneously, an intervention at the individual level and a response at the communitarian and structural level, since they indicate that domestic violence should never be tolerated. For practitioners (professionals delivering the programme), this translates into the obligation to work with the individual person (understanding its situation and needs) while understanding domestic violence as a structural phenomenon.

### 3. Main approaches

According to international standards, programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence should be based on a gender perspective and on a victim-centred approach. Although a multitude of perpetrator programmes do exist, those acknowledged as more effective combine different approaches:

**Psycho-educational approaches based on a gendered understanding of domestic violence (Pro-feminist approach):** men's violence against women is considered as the result of gender inequalities and patriarchal ideology; men's abuse consists in a range of tactics to exert power and control over women.

**Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)**, which considers domestic violence as the expression of mental and emotional inadequate attitudes of the perpetrator. According to this approach, violent behaviour is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned and replaced by new attitudes. Cognitive-behavioural programmes emphasise the repeated use of new skills or abilities, as perpetrators will be motivated to behave in a non-violent manner by seeing positive effects on those around them (positive reinforcement);

**WARNING !  
NOT ALL APPROACHES WORK...**

It is important to note that not all approaches can be included in the work with perpetrators. For instance, **couple counselling** has been criticised for increasing the risks for women victims and for making them share responsibility for the abuse committed by the perpetrator. On the other hand, **individualised approaches** have also been accused of focusing exclusively on the needs of the patient/client while neglecting both victims' needs and rights and the structural mechanisms underlying domestic violence.

Today most programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence across Europe and the UK combine different approaches and techniques, based on different kinds of treatments like CBT, Psychodynamic and Pro-feminist approaches. Many programmes are heavily influenced by the Duluth Model of power and control, delivered in a structured session format as part of a holistic coordinated response. All programmes used as an intervention maintain accreditation standards based on gender perspective and victim support (Respect 2018).

## THE DULUTH MODEL OF POWER AND CONTROL

[www.duluthmodel.org](http://www.duluthmodel.org)

Started by a group of professionals in Minnesota in the 1980s, the “Duluth model” is an ever-evolving way of thinking about how a community works together to end domestic violence and abuse. The Duluth model approach has:

- taken the blame off the victim and placed the accountability for abuse on the offender;
- shared policies and procedures for holding offenders accountable and keeping victims safe across all agencies in the criminal and civil justice systems from 911 to the courts;
- prioritises the voices and experiences of women who experience battering in the creation of those policies and procedures;
- believes that battering is a pattern of actions used to intentionally control or dominate an intimate partner and actively works to change societal conditions that support men’s use of tactics of power and control over women;
- offers change opportunities for offenders through court-ordered educational groups for batterers;
- has ongoing discussions between criminal and civil justice agencies, community members and victims to close gaps and improve the community’s response to battering.

Psycho-educational approaches based on the Duluth model use proven therapeutic techniques to condemn patterns of violent behaviour while operating positive reinforcement of non-violent attitudes; cognitive-behavioural programmes incorporate activities aimed at challenging patriarchal attitudes that legitimise violence against women. In all cases, practical experience and evaluation suggest that any intervention must take into account the perpetrator's motivation to change (BFEG 2016).

Agreements with women support services can also entail restrictions in perpetrators’ confidentiality rights. Before being enrolled in a programme, the perpetrator has to accept specific conditions such as providing address of current and former partners and signing an agreement on the release of confidential information, especially in the case of increased risks for the victims’ safety. Partners should always be informed if the perpetrator leaves the programme, if he is suspended for treatment, and if there are any concerns regarding women and children’s wellbeing (Council of Europe 2008).

Research findings from the project MIRABAL, completed in the UK in 2015, emphasise that the evaluation of the programmes has to be conducted from the victim’s perspective. The MIRABAL research team has identified six measures of success – presented as change from baseline to the final interview twelve months after a man started on a perpetrator programme. Such “movements towards change” include:

- (1) Respectful communication;
- (2) Expanded ‘Space for action’;
- (3) Safety and freedom from violence and abuse for women and children;
- (4) Shared parenting;
- (5) Awareness of self and others;
- (6) Safer, healthier childhoods.

These indicators are based on a wide understanding of the notion of ‘success’ and show the inadequacy of the simple evaluations “programme completed” or “no recidivism”. In the conclusions, the authors invite to consider the whole process of men’s change and underline the importance of focusing on its impact on women and children (Kelly, Westmarland 2015).

#### 4. Contexts and funding

Perpetrator programmes can be delivered in different contexts: in prison and in the context of probation services for sentenced perpetrators; in the community, for perpetrators participating on a voluntary basis. Depending on the context, several institutions and agencies can be involved, such as the Ministry of Justice (Prison and Probation services), the Ministry of Health (local health services and social services), the Ministry of Social and Family Policies, the Ministry of Education (in prevention activities in schools), community-based organisations, Universities and research institutes. According to the contexts, adequate financial resources should be allocated for such programmes. As emphasised in the guidelines elaborated by the WWP EN, inter-agency alliances must be acknowledged by policy makers and should be therefore properly funded, so to avoid inter-service competition. Taking a look at practices from other countries can be source of inspiration on how to integrate perpetrator programmes in each national context.

#### 5. Examples of inspiring programmes<sup>2</sup>

##### **The Counselling Line for Men and Boys (CLMB) (Albania)**

The Counselling Line for Men and Boys (CLMB)<sup>3</sup> is the first programme for perpetrators in Albania. It was established by the Counselling Line for Women and Girls (CLWG), the national hotline for victims of domestic violence active since 1994. In 2010 the CLWG developed a separate service aimed at the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence. Initially, professionals offered individual counselling sessions to male partners of women accommodated in their shelter. This pilot experimental practice showed the potential of working with those who perpetrate the abuse and consequently turned into a fully-fledged project started in 2010. Following a national need assessment, the CLWG identified the concrete requirements expressed by local services and institutions with regard to perpetrators' treatment. In 2011, several professionals underwent a two-year training focusing on the work with perpetrators, provided by Iamaneh Switzerland<sup>4</sup> and including study-visits to the Swiss centres of Basel and Zurich. In November 2012, the CLMB was officially inaugurated in Tirana.

In addition to offering counselling sessions to perpetrators on a voluntary basis, over the years the CLMB has worked with the courts and with the Ministry of Justice to ensure a referral system to mandatory perpetrator programmes on the basis of a judicial sentence. Today, perpetrators from several Albanian districts can be directed to a court-ordered programme run by the CLMB. In addition, *ad hoc* agreements have been signed with the Probation Office and with the General Directorate of Prison Centres to allow perpetrators' treatment inside the

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<sup>2</sup> More information on perpetrator programmes in the region is available in Jovanović and Vall (2022).

<sup>3</sup> For more information the official website is available at: <https://hotlinealbania.org/>. See also the section "Programmes and practices from the Balkan region" in the Council of Europe "Analysis of the Kosovo\* legal framework and good practices report" (2021): <https://rm.coe.int/research-on-perpetrator-treatment-programmes-kosovo-eng/1680a24362>.

<sup>4</sup> For more information, the official website is available at: <https://www.iamaneh.ch/en/about-us/>

penitentiary system. Perpetrators enrolling in a programme have to participate in a minimum of 16 weekly sessions and up to 30 sessions. Preventing dropouts and ensuring consistent participation both in custodial and non-custodial settings have been identified as serious challenges, as well as the need to follow-up when a perpetrator is released from jail, in order to avoid recidivism.

More recently, the CLMB has also identified the need to offer specific training modules on addictive behaviours – including alcohol and drug addiction, gambling, etc. – so that these issues can be addressed separately and perpetrators may be oriented towards specialised rehabilitation centres. Future training modules will also focus on the work with sexual offenders, which will be integrated in ongoing judicial reforms and new policies aimed at addressing sexual violence and rape in Albania.

Today the CLMB works in co-operation with the courts, probation service and other statutory agencies. It is dedicated to offering counselling to perpetrators, as well as fostering prevention and educational activities to help create a community in which violence is not tolerated. Since its foundation, the CLMB is part of the WWP EN and actively participates in annual meetings and study visits. Since 2012 it has trained many counsellors across the country and in 2014 founded the Centre for Men and Boys (ZDB) in Shkoder. Over the years it has also developed informal exchanges and joint partnerships with other programmes in neighbouring countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sharing good practices is considered of vital importance to discuss challenges and possible improvements in the work with perpetrators of domestic violence, to comply with the standards of the Istanbul Convention.

### **The PSTN programme and “You can do it differently” (Croatia)**

Since the end of the 2000s, Croatia has recognised the importance of the work with perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual offenders. Programmes can be either held in the community or in custody, depending on whether the case is classified as a misdemeanour or as a criminal offence.

The PSTN programme (Psychosocial Treatment of Perpetrators) was inaugurated in 2009 by Dom Duga Zagreb, the first organisation offering counselling and support to women and children victims of domestic violence<sup>5</sup>. The programme only applies to perpetrators charged with misdemeanour and is conducted in a non-custodial setting. The PSTN programme is not limited to men perpetrators of intimate partner abuse, since it also accepts female perpetrators and perpetrators of different forms of family violence, such as violence against elderly parents or against minors. In each of these cases service providers have to adjust the modules to the type of offender. It is important to note that the programme does not accept persons with severe mental health disorders, with problems of addiction, or with a low motivation to change. Ensuring the victim’s safety is one of the key pillars of the programme and for this purpose the victim is contacted at several stages. Today, Dom Duga Zagreb is a member organisation of the WWP EN.

Since 2018, the programme “You can do it differently” is implemented by the Probation Service with a specific focus on the treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence. The programme has been developed within the framework of EU support programmes for the

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<sup>5</sup> More information available at: [www.duga-zagreb.hr](http://www.duga-zagreb.hr)

development of probation services. In particular, peers from the “General Directorate of Open Regime and Alternative Sentences and Measures” at the Ministry of Interior in Spain have provided specific training on rehabilitation measures for perpetrators of gender-based violence. Most service providers have a background in psychology, social work and pedagogy. The programme is based on group-work (groups between 8 to 10 participants), but in case of a small number of perpetrators, individual counselling sessions can be offered instead.

The main goal of “You can do it differently” is to reduce GBV. Other objectives include limiting the risk factors, changing sexist attitudes and promoting new healthy concepts of masculinity. As the PSTN programme, it is structured in three phases: a motivational phase, an intervention phase, and a monitoring phase. Since the first group of offenders showed great satisfaction with the programme, institutions are planning on developing a specific research project to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

### **The PRIA-MA, Programme of Intervention with Perpetrators in Alternative Measures [to detention] (Spain)**

Today in Spain there are different types of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence: within the community (as voluntary participation to programmes run by civil society organisations) and within the judicial framework, under the Ministry of Interior, Penitentiary Institutions Office (in custodial settings for perpetrators with a prison sentence; in non-custodial settings as an alternative measure to detention).

As far as it concerns voluntary programmes, the Spanish national landscape is very heterogeneous, which is partially due to the lack of consistent funding. However, in 2006 a group of experts in the field of gender-based violence, mostly specialised in supporting women and minors exposed to domestic violence, developed a standard manual for the treatment of perpetrators of violence, containing intervention and legal guidelines (Geldschläger 2011). Voluntary participation programmes are often supported by funding from local institutions (such as municipal or regional government), on an occasional basis or through short-term contracts. It is the case of the Attention Service for Men (SAH) active since 2005 for the Barcelona City Council<sup>6</sup>, of Contexto in Valencia<sup>7</sup>, of the Psychological Attention Service for Men of the Aragonese Government, under the responsibility of the local Women's Institute (IAM)<sup>8</sup>, of the Re-education Programme for perpetrators of gender-based violence in Andalusia<sup>9</sup> and of Open the Circle, under the Regional Government of Galicia<sup>10</sup>.

In the last 20 years, the implementation of experimental practices, the adoption of a manual and the systematic outcome evaluations have allowed the elaboration of national standards that

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<sup>6</sup> More information on the *Servicio de Atención a Hombres* (SAH) is available on the website of the Barcelona City Hall: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dones/es/informacion-y-atencion/informacion-y-atencion-los-hombres/programa-de-atencion-hombres-sah>

<sup>7</sup> As regards the programme Contexto, see the official webpage: <https://www.programacontexto.org>

<sup>8</sup> *Servicio de atención psicológica para hombres*. More information is available here: <http://www.aragon.es/DepartamentosOrganismosPublicos/OOAA/InstitutoAragonMujer/AreasTematicas/ServiciosAsesorias/ci.Servicio-de-atención-psicológica-para-hombres.detalleDepartamento>

<sup>9</sup> More information is available on the official website of the Andalusia Region: [https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/igualdadybienestarsocial//export/Violencia\\_Genero/HTML/actuacion\\_esdqvg.html](https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/igualdadybienestarsocial//export/Violencia_Genero/HTML/actuacion_esdqvg.html)

<sup>10</sup> *Abramos o Círculo. Programa para homes con problemas de control de violencia*, on the official website of the Government of Galicia: <http://igualdade.xunta.gal/es/recursos/abramos-o-circulo-programa-para-homes-con-problemas-de-control-de-violencia>

are continually reviewed and updated in light of new considerations. The PRIA-MA programme, launched in 2017 under the Spanish Ministry of Interior, results from this fruitful “trial and error” process.

While an experimental project for convicted offenders was first activated in prison in 2001, the 2004 Organic Law on gender-based violence<sup>11</sup> set up a comprehensive framework for the treatment of DV perpetrators and established specific interventions within the judicial system through the General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions<sup>12</sup>. Following the evaluation of a pilot, a first programme named “Prison Treatment Programme for Family Violence Offenders” was applied between 2005 and 2010. The content and structure of the intervention was detailed in a first manual aimed at prison staff and other professionals active in the field (San Martín *et al.* 2005).

In a second phase, national institutions developed an intervention programme for perpetrators sentenced with alternative measures to detention, for the purpose of reducing recidivism for domestic violence offences (Pérez Ramírez *et al.* 2017): the PRIA programme (Intervention Programme for Perpetrators) was established in 2010 and represented a turning point in the treatment of aggressors in Spain (Ruiz Arias *et al.* 2010).

Following a thorough assessment, in 2017 the PRIA programme was revised and replaced by PRIA-MA (Programme of Intervention with Perpetrators in Alternative Measures [to detention])<sup>13</sup>, based on a few core objectives: (1) eliminating violent behaviours and reducing recidivism; (2) eliminating risk factors that are considered as relevant in perpetrating domestic violence; (3) increasing perpetrators’ personal motivation and interest with regard to treatment; and (4) improving perpetrators’ psychological response. A new revised manual has refined the intervention methodology, adopting a clear gender perspective and a critical view on behaviors culturally associated with normative masculinity (Suárez Martínez *et al.* 2015). Abusers have to participate in individual and group sessions for a period of approximately ten months, as a mandatory measure imposed by the judge as an alternative to prison.

The programme is organised in three main phases:

- (1) Motivation and assessment phase. A few individual meetings are aimed at creating a 'motivational plan' for each participant, eliminating attitudes of resistance and fostering interest in deep personal change;
- (2) Intervention phase. Several crucial aspects of the treatment are progressively addressed in this phase, such as developing emotional intelligence, self-control skills, anger management, support for self-esteem and empathy, changing sexist beliefs and misogynistic attitudes, becoming aware of the consequences of violence on/against minors, etc.;
- (3) Follow-up phase. During this phase, professionals conduct an assessment of individual occurred changes and design a personalised evaluation of the objectives achieved and possible follow-up paths.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ley Organica 1/2004*, Title IV, article 42.

<sup>12</sup> The official website of the Secretariat is available at this address:  
<http://www.institucionpenitenciaria.es>

<sup>13</sup> The official website is available here:  
<http://www.institucionpenitenciaria.es/web/portal/PenasyMedidasAlternativas/programas/priama.html>

The programme is applied nationwide and its periodic evaluation is entrusted to the General Undersecretariat of Penalties and Alternative Measures, in collaboration with the Institute of Forensic and Security Sciences of the Autonomous University of Madrid. In each Autonomous Community of the Spanish State, different types of organisations (NGOs, associations, universities, etc.) are in charge of managing the programmes according to the standards required by the Ministry of the Interior, in particular the Penitentiary Institutions Office, which is responsible for direct relations with offenders. Among the organisations in charge of implementing the programmes, it is worth mentioning the Aspacia Foundation in Madrid and the Contexto programme in Valencia, both renowned for their engagement in the work with perpetrators and in research.

### **Programmes accredited by Respect (United Kingdom)**

Respect is a UK-based organisation whose role it is to set standards for delivering perpetrator programmes, to illustrate best practices and to guide practitioners and abusers. Respect is a government-funded charity ensuring that everyone, including perpetrators, survivors, funders, commissioners, and practitioners can be assured that a service is of a high-quality standard, regularly monitored and supported to frequently reflect and improve on best working practices. Numerous effective perpetrator programmes currently active in the UK are regulated by Respect: they have a long duration (24 weeks or more), they are delivered on a combined individual and group session basis and use a mix of different approaches.

Make a Change is a community-wide, early response to people who are concerned that they are using abuse in their intimate and/or previously intimate relationships. The Make a Change model was developed by Respect, in partnership with Women's Aid Federation of England (WAFE) and is inspired by the "Change that Lasts" approach.

Make a Change is informed by the recognition that domestic abuse does not just affect individuals and their families, but entire communities. It works directly with people using abusive and controlling behaviours, while also empowering the people around them – local communities, friends, families, and professionals – to see themselves as part of the solution, and to work together to address the problem.

CLEAR is a complementary and integrated strand of "Change that Lasts", developed by Respect in partnership with Welsh Women's Aid. It is delivered as a free short awareness raising course for men who are concerned about their behaviour towards women, conceived as an early response. Survivors are given parallel and separate support via an Integrated Specialist Service. The aim is to intervene with men as early as possible by raising awareness, supporting behavioural change and increasing accountability. Men can self-refer to CLEAR or can be referred by a professional as long as consent has been obtained. Sessions can be run on a one-to-one or on a group basis and are tailored to meet each individual's needs.

The Drive Project is an innovative domestic abuse intervention that aims at reducing the number of child and adult victims by disrupting and changing the perpetrator's behaviour. The Project focuses on high-risk, high-harm and/or serial perpetrators, as this group carries the greatest risk of serious harm and engagement with available services is low. The Drive Project implements a whole-system approach using intensive case management alongside a coordinated multi-agency response, working closely with victim services, the police, probation, children's social services, housing, substance misuse and mental health teams. It focuses on



reducing risk and increasing victim safety by combining disruption, support and behaviour change interventions alongside the crucial protective work provided by victim services.

### **Building Better Relationships (United Kingdom)**

Building Better Relationships (BBR) is the only community-based probation programme in England and Wales for medium-to-high risk men convicted of a domestic abuse related offence against a female partner.

The BBR programme is suitable for heterosexual adult males who committed a domestic abuse offence including use of threatening words and behaviour, and criminal damage. This programme is designed to promote lifelong changes in behaviours and attitudes which, in the past, have resulted in male service users being convicted of intimate partner violence or abuse. The BBR programme helps service users gain a better understanding of the impact of their aggression on their partner and families. It promotes techniques of emotional self-control so they can be better prepared to deal with the conflicts that lead to aggressive behaviour and challenges the thinking which may justify the use of behaviour which may have caused harm to those closest to them.

### **Kaizen (United Kingdom)**

An accredited treatment programme, delivered in prisons and targeted at adult male convicted sex offenders, aimed at restructuring pro-offending attitudes. KAIZEN was developed by Intervention Services, within Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service for England and Wales.

Kaizen is a strength based, future focussed programme that addresses the criminogenic needs of each individual participant rather than focusing on the needs relevant to one specific offence type. As such, it is akin to individual treatment within a group setting and can accommodate those with convictions for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Sexual Offences (SO) and General Violence (GV).

Kaizen is generally delivered on a group basis, with additional supported learning sessions that can either be delivered on an individual or small group basis. Kaizen is based on the bio-psycho-social model of change, which proposes that criminogenic needs (risk factors) are expressions of underlying, interacting biological processes (genetic and neurobiological factors), psychological processes (developmental experiences and early learning including attachment, developed schema and personality) and social processes (cultural and social influences). It is proposed that these underlying processes help to explain why an individual offends. The programmes therefore aim to support participants to develop resources in each of these need areas, as per the six organising principles suggested by Mann & Carter (2012).

## **Part II: Curriculum on programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in the Republic of Kosovo**

This proposal for a Curriculum for professionals working with perpetrator programmes aims at offering an insight on perpetrator programmes' structure and modules, as it is used in interventions with perpetrators of domestic violence in the UK and in other European countries. In particular, the curriculum is built on the programme Respect.

Drawing inspiration from other programmes, the underlying idea of this document is to offer a curriculum that can be used in Kosovo, and that can easily be adapted to specific local needs when necessary. It is also important to note that this version of the Curriculum only focuses on men perpetrators of domestic violence in heterosexual relationships (it does not foresee the treatment of female offenders nor of male perpetrators in same-sex couples) as well as it does not differentiate, at this stage, among boys, adults and elderly men. A curriculum aimed at specific users should be modified accordingly, by adopting a female-oriented gender perspective and by considering age-related particularities.

The authors of this document believe that the curriculum should first be applied as a pilot project and that the whole experimental phase should be monitored by a dedicated researcher or team of researchers. The evaluation of the pilot and research results will allow for more precise adapting of the programme to the local context and needs. According to the specificities of the context of Kosovo, authorities and service providers may decide to modify this version of the curriculum and include specific modules for programmes in custodial settings or for mandatory programmes in non-custodial settings. They can also consider giving a qualification to perpetrators after completion or determining a standardised procedure in case of dropping out. Such decisions should not interfere with international standards nor jeopardise the victims' safety and well-being.

### **1. Objectives**

Respect programmes are structured to foster long-term change in participants' attitudes, beliefs, and ways of thinking in their ability to manage their behaviours and emotions, with the aim of long-term behavioural change (Respect, Step-by-Step, The Freedom). The main objectives of the programme are:

#### **(1) To help perpetrators achieve a better understanding of:**

- Why they use violence against their intimate partner and other family members;
- Which attitudes and beliefs underpin their behaviour;
- Which factors reinforce and maintain their use of violent behaviour in intimate and family relationships;
- Which abusive tactics they use to control their partner.

#### **(2) To encourage perpetrators to:**

- Identify, use, and build on existing strengths and skills to change their behaviour;
- Identify non abusive behaviour;
- Place their beliefs and behaviour in a social context;
- Acknowledge the effects of abuse upon others.

#### **(3) To enhance motivation** to engage participants and effect change, by providing a safe, respectful, stimulating, and challenging environment which is conducive to learning.

- (4) **To support perpetrators in developing practicable and sustainable strategies for maintaining change, once the programme has finished:** every week, specific drop-in sessions are open to all men having previously completed a perpetrator programme, over 2 hours and on ongoing bases.

## 2. Principles and approaches

Running a domestic violence perpetrator programme entails a considerable responsibility. Professionals delivering the programme must ensure that the work is safe and effective and, most importantly, that it does not, at any stage, further contribute to the harm experienced by victims or escalate the risk of further abuse. Evidence-based research has shown that interventions delivered in a professional and competent manner prove to be effective in creating change and reducing harm (Respect 2020).

The two most important principles that should inform the work with perpetrators of domestic violence are:

- **Safety first:** the aim should always be to increase the safety and wellbeing of survivors and their children. Staff should recognise the need for behaviour change on the perpetrator's side; however, priority should always be to reduce harm for the victim;
- **Do not harm:** take all reasonable steps to make sure that support to the perpetrator does not exacerbate or generate additional risks for survivors and their children.

Although not directly in contact with perpetrators, agencies involved in the provision of perpetrator programmes also carry a great responsibility for this work (WWP EN, n.d.). Such institutions have the duty to:

- Hold the perpetrator accountable for his acts, to take the responsibility of the impact of their behaviour on the victims (women and children);
- Treat perpetrators with respect;
- Create a safe environment facilitating change;
- Enable perpetrators to name their beliefs and verbalise their attitudes related to gender, whilst prioritising the safety of women and children.

In the UK and across many European countries, domestic violence perpetrator programmes are offered in community settings or under the Probation Service (for perpetrators found guilty of domestic abuse related offences). According to the Respect guidelines, all safe and effective perpetrator intervention programmes should be provided within a **coordinated community response**, rather than as a stand-alone solution to domestic abuse. This means that programmes focused on best practice standards must work alongside services such as Police, Social Services, Housing, Health Services, and victim/survivor support services.

## 3. The local context

Domestic violence and violence against women in Kosovo are an alarming phenomenon rooted in gender inequality and affected by negative social norms and patriarchal customs. The first quantitative study conducted by the Kosovo Women Network estimated that 46% of women had suffered domestic violence at least once in their life and that in 91% of all domestic violence cases the perpetrator was a man (Farnsworth and Qosaj-Mustafa 2008). In addition to high prevalence rates, a qualitative study based on in-depth interviews to women victims and professionals showed wide levels of acceptance of physical, sexual and economic violence in intimate relationships (Kosovo Women's Network 2008). More recently, in 2019, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) published the "Survey on well-being and safety of women in Kosovo", which found that 54% of women aged from 18 to 74 who have ever been in an intimate relationship have suffered from physical, psychological or sexual violence by an intimate partner since the age of 15. This percentage is likely to be underestimated considering the stigma around domestic violence that discourages reporting.

Historically, patriarchal customs and widespread beliefs around gender roles have limited women's rights (Pawlak, Krasniqi, Selaci 2016). Despite the rapid advances, even in contemporary Kosovo, among large sectors of the population specific roles are strictly meant for men and others for women (USAID 2018; OSCE/UNFPA 2018). Although this is less evident among families with a higher educational level, men are expected to be the breadwinners and family-heads, while women are mostly meant to take charge of unpaid domestic work and child-rearing.

The Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW) has been reflected in Article 22 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo adopted in May 2008. In 2015 the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo approved the "Human Rights Law Package", which comprehended new legislation on gender equality, on the prohibition of discrimination and a new Law on the Ombudsperson Institution (Council of Europe 2021). The Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence was adopted in 2010, which aims at preventing domestic violence. In January 2019, the Criminal Code included domestic violence and sexual harassment as criminal acts. In September 2020 the National Assembly of Kosovo unanimously decided to amend the Constitution to make the Istanbul Convention one of the directly applicable international legal instruments for the protection of human rights. The National Strategy on Protection against Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2022–2026, adopted in January 2022, is the main instrument in the field of domestic violence and violence against women, which also includes a specific objective on the establishment and implementation of programs for the psycho-social treatment of perpetrators of violent crimes.

Forming part of the Council of Europe co-operation project "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence - Phase III" (2021-2023), a report providing an assessment of the alignment of laws, policies and other measures in Kosovo with the standards of the Istanbul Convention was launched in November 2022 (Council of Europe, 2022). It sets out recommendations for further action and provides practical guidance to strengthen the local implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Applying the methodology of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the independent body monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, this report provides detailed findings and recommendations in relation to local compliance with Article 16 covering obligations related to the setting up of perpetrator programmes.

The above report notes that the Law on the Protection against Domestic Violence and administrative instructions regulate treatment for domestic violence perpetrators and

mandatory medical treatment for perpetrators with alcohol and drug addictions, but in practice, the availability of perpetrator programmes remains limited. According to the Administrative Instructions that regulate programmes for perpetrators, psycho-social treatments can be provided by health facilities, social institutions and licensed social services providers (including NGOs), while medical treatment for offenders with addiction problems must be run by medical institutions. Health facilities, especially mental health centres, are the main entities providing both types of programmes in practice. In custodial settings, the Kosovo Correctional Service implement a cognitive-behavioural group therapy programme on “Anger Management”.

The report pointed out that the above programmes lack uniform standards on the prioritisation of the safety of women victims and their human rights. Thus, it is unclear to what extent they conduct regular risk assessment and address negative gender stereotypes perpetuating violence against women. As a limitation, the report highlighted that the few treatment programmes delivered in public health institutions tend to focus on anger management, instead of encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions. The report added that “the fact that mental health services are the main public entities offering all existing programmes for perpetrators has caused concern over the narrow medical approach of interventions for perpetrators.”

In addition, the above report underlined that two NGOs, SIT Centre in Pristina and Women Safe House in Gjakova, have set up pilot psycho-cognitive treatment programmes which tend to better meet international standards. However, it stressed that such NGO-run programmes for perpetrators have received only limited financial support..

Founded in Gjakova in 1999, the “Shtëpia e Sigurt” Safe House is one of the oldest shelters in Kosovo and one of the first that have been licenced (OSCE 2019). The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has accredited its work in the area of social and family services and over the years it has gained recognition for its work with women victims of domestic violence. In 2019, during a period of nine months, six men attended a programme based on individual meetings and group-work. Most of them were perpetrators of domestic violence without any specific mental health issue or problem of addiction, whereas two men were referred to specialised health services following an individual evaluation. During the pilot programme, meetings with perpetrators were held in a separate building provided by the women NGO network “Qeliza” in Gjakova. A psychologist and psychosocial advisor conducted each session using a cognitive-behavioural approach and role-play games taken from the Duluth Model.

The SIT Centre is a non-governmental organisation based in Pristina and its core activities are counselling, social service and research. Current counselling sessions at the Sit Centre are mostly based on a cognitive-behavioural approach, which also includes psycho-educative work and role-play activities. Treatment is aimed at providing practical guidance and techniques for emotional self-management and improvement of interpersonal communication skills. It is the only organisation in Kosovo which is a member of the Work with Perpetrators European Network. Referrals to the SIT center have so far been made by institutions, interest groups and self-referred cases (Council of Europe 2021).

To improve the local setting up of perpetrator programmes, in line with the obligation contained under article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, the above report on the alignment of measures with the Istanbul Convention strongly recommended that the authorities:

1. **draft minimum quality standards for all programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence, which should place at their centre the safety of the victims and their human rights, and which should include the close co-operation between perpetrator programmes and specialist services that assist victims;**
2. **increase the number of available programmes, both mandatory and voluntary, to ensure their availability across the territory based on minimum quality standards;**
3. **ensure that the external evaluation of such programmes is conducted and in line with recognised best international practices and principles, including analysis of reliable information on reoffending, in order to assess whether the programmes serve the intended preventive aims;**
4. **ensure that the programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence form part of a multi-agency approach involving all relevant institutions, including NGOs; and**
5. **ensure adequate training for all facilitators of perpetrator programmes.”**

4. Structure and duration

Domestic violence perpetrator programmes are long term intervention programmes delivered over a period of 6 to 8 months. Each session can last between 60 minutes to 3 hours, depending on the model of intervention and on the context. It is very important that sessions are held on the same day each week, to provide consistency and to help participants include the meetings into their weekly routine.

The domestic violence perpetrator programme consists of three stages:

- (1) Intake/ Assessment (individual sessions)
- (2) Intervention (group sessions)
- (3) Completion and evaluation (combining individual and group sessions)

<b>STAGE 1</b>	
<b>Intake/ Assessment (individual sessions)</b>	<b>2 to 4 weeks</b>
<p>A period of time aimed at assessing participants suitability for the programme and their level of motivation to change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a set of questionnaires, open-ended questions, and motivational interviewing to run these sessions</li> <li>• Complete a risk assessment (assess and address any safety issues for the victim and their children, consider history of violence)</li> <li>• Explore participants willingness to reflect on past and current abusive behaviours with the aim to change (be mindful of denial, minimisation, shame)</li> <li>• Introduce the programme length, content, and methods</li> <li>• Inform them of requirements for completion and their obligations (measure willingness to change, motivation)</li> <li>• Address confidentiality</li> </ul> <p>Each meeting lasts 60 to 90 minutes and takes place in an office environment, as consideration should be given to the safety of the facilitator.</p> <p>Rules to respect in order to join the group intervention:</p>	

- Be ready and able to work in a group
- Arrive with a clear head and not under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol (participation in the session will not be allowed if they appear intoxicated during sessions)
- Commit to attend all sessions, arrive on time, and actively participate
- Show willingness to accept responsibility for the abuse and commitment to change their behaviour
- Stop violent or abusive behaviours towards anyone
- Treat facilitators with respect and respect the confidentiality of other participants
- Sign a consent form to allow the provider and other professionals involved to share information about their engagement and progress

(DAPP, CAFCASS on record, UK, 2020)

## STAGE 2

**Intervention (group sessions, once a week, 2 hours)**

**4 to 8 months**

The group format is the main intervention in perpetrator programmes. Group sessions consist of a maximum 10-12 participants and are delivered by 2 gender-balanced facilitators. Intervention starts by providing two or three orientation sessions, to create an opportunity for participants to meet with each other, set the group rules and allow more participants to join.

Sessions take place on a weekly basis, often delivered outside “working hours” (i.e, evenings, weekends) and last between 90 and 120 minutes. Facilitators follow a clear sequence of steps during each session, to help participants develop a routine, that may reduce their anxiety and encourage participation. At the beginning of each session, facilitators will remind every one of the group rules, pointing out the importance of confidentiality and respect. They will also share the session agenda with the group and provide session handouts. Some of the most difficult sessions can be extended by 15-30 minutes, to allow time for debriefing or relaxation techniques (mindfulness, breathing exercises, etc.).

The perpetrator programme is based on 10 themes/topics, each one to be dealt with over 2 to 4 sessions, to provide enough time for reflective learning. Graduated methods allow to introduce participants to the theme/topic, comprising: a module presentation, active participation, structured discussions involving value-awareness, exercises about understanding, and developing self and the impact of their violent behaviour on the victims (women and children).

### STAGE 3

**Completion and evaluation (combining individual and group sessions)**

**1 month minimum**

Over the whole duration of the programme, participants attendance is recorded by facilitators and reflective notes are taken at the end of each session. This is not only to monitor attendance and engagement, but also to evaluate progress and evidence any feedback requested by referrers, or by the victim, at the end of the intervention.

Completion of a perpetrator programme is not marked with a certificate; however, in some cases detailed reports can be required by courts or other agencies, with regard to participant's engagement, activity, and evidence of change in attitudes and beliefs and his understanding of the impact of violence on the victims (women and children).

Evaluation is a very crucial step of each perpetrator programme and should be developed and adapted to the intervention according to its objectives. In addition to the service's internal evaluation, programmes should undergo a yearly evaluation conducted by an external evaluator, inviting all relevant stakeholders involved in measuring change, results, and cost effectiveness of the programme's interventions (for more information, see below "7. Evaluation).

#### 5. Provision of the programme and Service providers

Several entities can deliver perpetrator programmes, including public institutions and civil society organisations (NGOs). However, all entities should comply with international standards. One of the most critical elements of delivering successful domestic abuse perpetrator programmes is the ability of the service provider to become part of a multi-agency approach, ensuring strong partnerships and information sharing. This will affect the quality of the intervention as well as the increase on referrals and providing victims and survivors with vital support. Services willing to take on the delivery of perpetrator programme's need to ensure they have organisational capacity to deliver a programme that requires long-term commitment. Service providers need to ensure, that they have:

- Management capacity;
- Trained and highly motivated staff;
- Appropriate safe space;
- Financial resources.

##### 5.1 Professionals involved

According to international practice and standards, several professionals can be involved in delivering perpetrators programmes, including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, trainers, lawyers, activists, etc. Depending on each national context, multidisciplinary professional teams can deal with perpetrators of domestic violence, individually or in group sessions. However, it is of paramount importance that staff operating a perpetrator programme



have experience in the work with women victims of domestic violence and to know how to deal with the dynamics of power and control. Staff has to go through specialised initial and in-service training and to have supervised regular (individual or group) meetings. Training of professionals can be promoted by encouraging the development of specific knowledge and competences on domestic violence, with a specific gender-perspective. Training opportunities could involve decision makers and statutory agencies as well as different professional categories. Several actions can contribute to increase professional skills, such as participating in study visits, training exchanges and meetings with professionals from other countries or with organisations members of the WWP EN.

#### *Example of profile of the professionals*

In the UK, all Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes are delivered by accredited organisations (Respect 2012) and the main requirement for practitioners/professionals involved in direct delivery is full training in one of the recognised and accredited intervention programmes.

Professional backgrounds vary and there is no minimum educational requirement for facilitators. This often empowers ex-perpetrators (on successful completion of a perpetrator programme) to train and become directly involved in supporting others to change their behaviours, thoughts and feelings around power and control, through co-facilitating. However, majority of facilitators come from psychology, psychotherapy, correctional, probation, healthcare, social care, and educational professional backgrounds. They generally hold BA, Master and PHD degrees. Apart from completing the training and gaining the accreditation on a domestic abuse intervention programme (Respect group facilitator training) all facilitators are also trained in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and most have at least a counselling qualification.

The programmes are always provided by two facilitators, one man and one woman, both trained and accredited in delivering a perpetrator programme.

#### 5.2 Licencing procedures

At this stage, it is premature to establish definite licensing procedures for services delivering perpetrator programmes. The authors of this document suggest that, following the experimental application of the pilot project and its evaluation, the Working Group on the development of the perpetrator programmes in Kosovo could elaborate national guidelines and specific licensing procedures for service providers (possibly differentiating between mandatory and voluntary programmes). The WWP EN is currently working on an “European model of accreditation of perpetrator programmes”. Once adopted, perpetrator programmes delivered in Kosovo can align to this model in order to comply with an international set of standards.

#### *Example of licensing procedures*

In the United Kingdom Respect is the entity responsible for the accreditation of perpetrator programmes. The organisation indicates that accreditation standards apply “to all organisations providing domestic violence prevention programmes (DVPPs) working with men who use intimate partner violence (IPV), and also providing integrated safety services (ISS) for partners and ex-partners of these perpetrators” (Respect 2012, 1). They describe the development of accreditation so people can be assured of a “high quality safety-focused service from organisations accredited by Respect”. Working with both perpetrators and victims is Respect’s minimum unit that is required for consideration for accreditation.

The aims of a RESPECT-accredited service include (Respect 2012):

- increase the safety of victims,
- assess and manage risk,
- be part of a community response to domestic abuse,
- and provide services that recognise a diverse community which includes being accessible, promote respectful relationships, work accountably, support social change, and offer a complete response.

There are two stages of accreditation including Safe Minimum Practice, which involves being assessed and meeting the majority of the criteria, and full accreditation, where an organization meets all 94 of the requirements in the standard. The accreditation materials then go on to detail these criteria under a series of headings around management of the organisation, service structures and process, diversity, risk management, children, and partnership working.

The model is based on feminist practice and focuses on a man's use of violence as an instrumental mechanism to exert violence and control over his female partner. Programmes should reflect this by ensuring the perpetrator is held completely accountable and responsible for his violence, which is considered a behaviour he has chosen to engage in. The principles here clearly state that "a willingness to choose to use violent and abusive behaviour towards a partner is influenced by learnt expectations and a gender-based sense of entitlement" (Respect 2012, 28) and the "denial and minimisation of abusive behaviour or any justifications for using abusive behaviour including the use of drugs or alcohol" (Respect 2012, 29).

## 6. Referral to the programme

In its country-by-country evaluation procedure, GREVIO has emphasised that national authorities should not only expand the number of programmes available, but also the types of services, providing both voluntary and mandatory programmes, in custodial and non-custodial settings. However, perpetrator programmes should never, under any circumstance, be used as an alternative to criminal proceedings. Since domestic violence is often under-reported and conviction rates are often still low, mandatory programmes end up reaching only a minority of perpetrators, leaving out a significant number of violent men who are not being referred to any treatment. For this reason, voluntary participation should also be available, targeting perpetrators of several forms and degrees of abuse, including boys previously exposed to violence that could potentially reproduce abusive behavioural patterns. Ensuring both mandatory and voluntary programmes is considered a way to prevent the risk of an escalation of violence.

Criminal justice-based programmes are usually run by probation or prison staff, and only take referrals from the criminal courts as part of a sentence for a conviction for a domestic violence. On the other hand, voluntary community-based programmes are usually run by a voluntary sector organisation or part of a voluntary/statutory sector partnership and can also take self-referrals. Both types of programmes have to set formalised protocols to coordinate with specialised women's support services. In particular, it is important to establish safe victim-contact procedure to contact perpetrators' female partners (Respect, 2018).

Perpetrator programmes are open to all men 18+ wanting to reduce their level of danger to others. Referrals come from a variety of sources such as family courts, social services, police, or self-referral.

During the assessment period participants will be informed that:

- Those not wanting to engage will be asked to leave the room as soon as this becomes apparent;
- The attendees cannot miss any of the sessions as they will be removed from the current programme being delivered;
- Confidentiality applies in that perpetrators must feel confident and must feel safe to speak in the group.

### 6.1. Example of perpetrator's programmes in custody and community settings

#### *Programmes in custody*

In the UK, most of the domestic abuse perpetrator programmes for prisoners convicted as perpetrators of domestic abuse are delivered by accredited NGO's and specialist charities, however they are financed and supervised by the prison management and Ministry of Justice. Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Services (HMPPS) support several accredited programmes that, as part of a wider package of rehabilitation, target domestic abuse. They also offer specialist accredited domestic abuse perpetrator programmes for inmates convicted of domestic abuse crimes or others that may have been identified as perpetrators of domestic abuse and want to change.

The programmes are held in the prison building, in a safe communal area and delivered by the same standards as those delivered in the community settings. Video monitoring of the group work delivery is a practice used in prisons, and samples of these videos are often used by the treatment manager. Administration aspects are same as those in the community settings; following the programme and procedures as stated in the programme manual, the group size, gender, and consistency of the facilitators.

#### *Programmes in the community setting*

Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes in the UK, when offered in the community, are delivered in a variety of places. Most groups will meet at the building of a specialist accredited organisation offering the programme; however, often alternative spaces may be used to reduce risk. The location of the group meetings is always considered in relation to the whereabouts of the victim, distance from their home, college, working place, children's school etc, when assessing risk. The safety of the victim and their children remains paramount.

When a perpetrator has an accredited programme requirement on their sentence or a licence condition to complete an intervention, the referral will come from the probation practitioner. Referrals are also received by social workers and other social care professionals with a signed consent from the individual. However, groups are open to self-referrals and any man willing to change his behaviour, is welcome to join.

During the assessment, the practitioner will identify the level of motivation of the participant and if any additional work needs to be undertaken prior to an individual joining the group.

## 7. Evaluation

Evidence-based research enables a better understanding of community and judiciary practices. This also applies to perpetrator programmes, where evaluation allows identifying "what works" with different perpetrators and in different circumstances. Integrating evaluation procedures in the conception, development and implementation of a perpetrator programme also implies that adequate human and financial resources should be allocated to this purpose. It is important to note that political authorities and funders are primarily looking for

interventions that are appropriate to the local context, and that are effective, efficient and sustainable. This is even more relevant in contexts marked by limited access to resources.

Although several studies have identified methods and strategies to evaluate perpetrator programmes, this curriculum mainly focuses on the principles elaborated by the European project IMPACT<sup>14</sup> and the British project MIRABAL (Kelly, Westmarland 2015). Both programmes have embraced a wide notion of “success”, which is not limited to the completion of the programme or to the measurement of recidivism through judicial statistics. Measuring the outcomes of a programme includes a set of indicators aimed at considering the change in perpetrator’s attitudes and behaviours. The IMPACT project revealed that participation in a programme, “in addition to promoting a reduction in domestic violence, is likely to change the nature of the violence committed and reduce the risk of victimisation. It would change participants' attitudes towards women and the use of violence in general, and gender violence in particular” (BFEG 2016, 36). The MIRABAL project marks a shift away from the traditional evaluations approach to perpetrator programme, by underlining that the evaluation of the impact of perpetrator programmes has to be conceived on the basis on victims’ experience and perspective. It therefore proposes 6 indicators to measure the effectiveness of the programme:

- (1) Respectful communication and improved relationship;
- (2) Expanded space for action;
- (3) Safety and freedom from violence and abuse for women and children;
- (4) Safe, positive, and shared parenting;
- (5) Enhanced awareness of self and others;
- (6) Safer, healthier childhoods.

These indicators integrate a questionnaire that has to be filled by both participants to the programme (perpetrators) and their partners or ex-partners, and has to be completed at set times (at the beginning, halfway through, and 12 months after the beginning of the programme). This kind of evaluation provides a vast amount of quantitative and qualitative data that can be extremely useful for service provider, judicial actors, interinstitutional coordinated community case management. The implementation of these indicators also shows that simply reporting “programme completed” or registering “no more incidence of domestic violence” are insufficient criteria to measure the effectiveness of a perpetrator programme intervention.

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<sup>14</sup> The WWP EN IMPACT outcome Monitoring Toolkit, available online: [https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP\\_Network/redakteure/IMPACT/WWP\\_ImpactToolkit\\_A5\\_publication\\_w eb.pdf](https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/IMPACT/WWP_ImpactToolkit_A5_publication_w eb.pdf)

### Part III: Training modules and content

#### 1. Forms of domestic violence/abuse

##### Istanbul Convention Explanatory Report Definition of “Domestic Violence”

41. Article 3 (b) provides a definition of domestic violence that covers acts of **physical, sexual, psychological** or **economic** violence between members of the family or domestic unit, irrespective of biological or legal family ties. In line with what is mentioned in paragraph 40, economic violence can be related to psychological violence. Domestic violence includes mainly two types of violence: **intimate-partner violence** between current or former spouses or partners and **inter-generational violence** which typically occurs between parents and children. It is a gender-neutral definition that encompasses victims and perpetrators of both sexes.

42. Domestic violence as intimate-partner violence includes physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence between current or former spouses as well as current or former partners. It constitutes a form of violence which affects women disproportionately and which is therefore distinctly gendered. Although the term “domestic” may appear to limit the context of where such violence can occur, the drafters recognised that the violence often continues after a relationship has ended and therefore agreed that a joint residence of the victim and perpetrator is not required. Inter-generational domestic violence includes physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence by a person against her or his child or parent (elderly abuse) or such violence between any other two or more family members of different generations. Again, a joint residence of the victim and perpetrator is not required.

##### Forms of abuse

[www.duluthmodel.org](http://www.duluthmodel.org)

- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** Putting her down or making her feel bad about herself, calling her names, making her think she’s crazy, and mind games.
- **ECONOMIC ABUSE:** Trying to keep her from getting or keeping a job, making her ask for money, giving her an allowance, or taking her money.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE:** Making her do sexual things against her will, physically attacking the sexual parts of her body, or treating her like a sex object.
- **USING CHILDREN:** Making her feel guilty about the children, using the children to give messages, using visitation as a way to harass her.
- **THREATS:** Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her emotionally, threaten to take the children, commit suicide, or report her to welfare.
- **USING MALE PRIVILEGE:** Treating her like a servant, making all the “big” decisions, acting like the “master of the castle”
- **INTIMIDATION:** Putting her in fear by using looks, actions, gestures, loud voice, smashing things, destroying her property.
- **ISOLATION:** Controlling what she does, who she sees and talk to, where she goes.

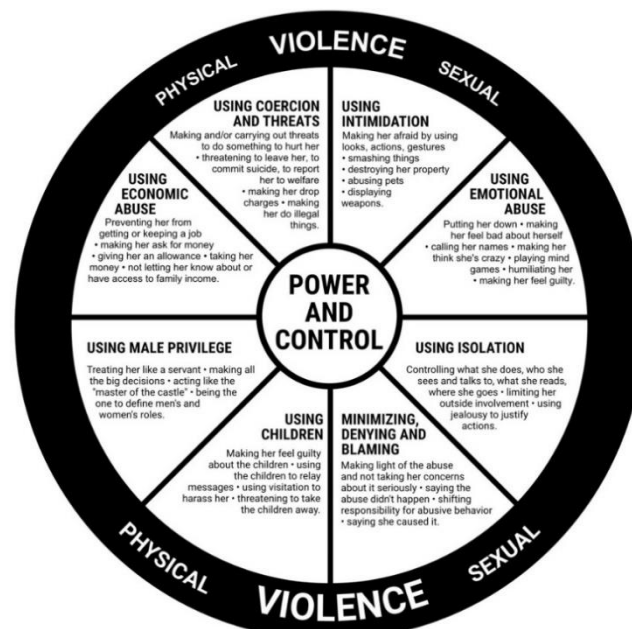
## 2. The Wheel of Power and Control

The Wheel of Power and Control offers a concise diagram of some of the most common behaviours experienced by people in abusive relationships and the range of behaviours used by manipulative and abusive partners. See the wheel:

- Power and control are the centre of the wheel, representing the goals of abuse, exerting power and dominance to maintain control in the relationship.
- Within the spokes, you will find the various tactics used to achieve these goals and keep the person experiencing the abuse feeling powerless to act.
- On the outside of the wheel appear physical expressions of abuse: bodily harm or sexual assault. This rim closes the wheel, in a manner of speaking: abusers often use physical aggression to reinforce the pattern if intimidation playing out on a more everyday basis.

The wheel breaks from the cycle of abuse by making it clear that, whilst acts of violence may not happen regularly, abuse usually happens on ongoing bases. By giving specific examples of emotional and verbal tactics, this wheel also makes it easier to identify abuse and get support.

Domestic violence perpetrator programme providers always work in partnership with other organisations providing a support service for partners, victims of domestic abuse, offering information and support. In fact, in the UK a domestic abuse perpetrator programme without such an offer for the woman who has suffered the abuse is likely to increase the risks towards her rather than promote her safety. It is up to the victim to choose if they want to engage in support. The support is usually voluntary, free of charge and confidential. An integrated support service should ensure that the victims views, fears, and concerns about ongoing abuse are listened to and acted upon, while the attendee is on the programme and few months after the completion.



DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS  
 202 East Superior Street  
 Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
 218-722-2781  
 www.TheDuluthModel.org

### 3. Modules

<b>MODULES</b>		
1	TECHNIQUES FOR DE-ESCALATION	2-3 sessions
2	ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN	2 sessions
3	UNDERSTANDING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSE	2 sessions
4	RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS	2-3 sessions
5	EMOTIONAL ABUSE	2-4 sessions
6	SEXUAL RESPECT	2 sessions
7	BUILDING EMPATHY	2-3 sessions
8	UNDERSTANDING EFFECTS ON CHILDREN	3-4 sessions
9	EXAMINING PAST AND CURRENT ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR	2-3 sessions
10	EXPLORING PARENTING	2 sessions

Forms of domestic abuse are addressed in each of the modules below as part of the sessions. They are explored through: definitions as stated above in session presentations, exercises, and reflective conversations with the individual or the group attending an intervention. The interrelations between each form of abuse is also actively addressed. Special attention should be paid to sexism, addressing it by paying attention to how it interacts with racism, homophobia, ableism etc.

The emotional abuse module is explored as the foundation of an actively abusive relationship under which perpetrators use strategies to implement full control over the victims, and it includes the addressing of economic/financial control as well as online violence (use of social media, blackmailing etc).

#### **1. TECHNIQUES FOR DE-ESCALATION**

This module fosters long-term changes in perpetrators' attitudes, beliefs, and ways of thinking in their ability to manage their behaviours and emotions, all with the aim of long-term behavioural change.

Definition: Escalation could involve the use of voice, negative self-talk, derogatory insults, names and put down, intimidating body language etc. Positive change for this step involves men speaking quietly, taking a step back, thinking about how their partner could perceive their words and actions, being aware of how they use their body and voice to intimidate their partner (Kelly, Westmarland, 2015, p,13).

The module is delivered over 2-3 sessions: 2 at the beginning and 1 towards the end of the programme, aiming to teach participants specific skills that can assist them, in the short-term, to remain calm and in control of themselves in potentially risky situations. Sessions should cover, self-awareness, signals, self-calming and time out.

#### Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations

- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

Example:

## TIME OUT

### WHEN SHOULD I USE A TIME-OUT?

The time-out procedure is based on one simple fact: if you're not near the person you're annoyed with, you can't hurt them physically. Use it every time you recognise that:

- **You want to have an argument** - Typical examples include conflicts over, money, going out, jealousy, who is right, and any other time you recognise that you don't want to let go of the fight.
- **Bodily signals** - You start to feel tension in the stomach /shoulders/ jaw/ neck, raising your voice or shouting, pacing, swearing etc.
- **Emotional signals** - Feeling trapped, angry, confused, persecuted, resentful, jealous etc.
- **Mental signals** - winding yourself up: you tell yourself the other person is controlling you; you use degrading names such as 'bitch', or you're thinking to yourself 'Here we go again!' and are wanting to shut them up. You start seeing them as the enemy - you despise them.

As soon as you recognise any of these signs in yourself (don't wait until you get worse), tell the other person 'I need to take a time-out', **and leave!!**

### WHAT IS A TIME-OUT?

Taking a time-out means that you *calmly* leave the argument wherever you may be for an agreed time – 30 minutes is a good amount of time. There are two important reasons why you need to stick to the agreed time:

- The other person is more likely to trust you if you stick to a standard format.
- For most people, half an hour is a realistic length of time in which to calm down. If you start to shorten this to, say 10 minutes, you increase the risk of returning and kicking off again.

During that period, do the following:

- Calm yourself down
- Don't drink alcohol, drive, or take drugs. During this first part of the half hour (*about 15 minutes*), calm yourself down by working off adrenalin – walk fast, do sit-ups, run etc.
- Examine your behaviour During the second part of the half hour (*about 15 minutes*)
- Think about what was going on for the other person – why would *they* say they were acting like that? How were *they* feeling?
- Think about *your* behaviour and figure out in what ways you've already been abusive. What might you have to apologise for?
- If you're going to be non-abusive, you will need to be able to return to the situation and *be* different rather than try to make the other person different. Think about what you're going to do or say when you go back that's honest but that won't escalate the situation.

**Return** - If the other person doesn't want to talk when you return, propose a better time when you could both do so. It's very important to talk about time-outs with relevant other people



well ahead of when you will need to use one. Do this at a time when you're calm. Show them this handout and give them time to read it. They may not want to talk about it with you. If this is the case, leave this handout with them to look at. Remember though, a time-out is a tool for *you*, not for your partner – you don't need their support to use it. (RESPECT, 2019, www.respect.co.uk)

## **2. ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN**

This module focusses on individual and collective attitudes towards women, including shared values and beliefs in regards to their gender, the social norms and expectations.

Definition: Gender role attitudes are typically believed to be learned through the process of socialization. Gender role socialization is “the process by which social institutions-including families, peers, schools, workplaces, and the media-inculcate a society's expectations of acceptable dress, speech, personality, leisure activities, and aspirations for each sex” (Padavic & Reskin, [2002](#), p. 53).

This module should be delivered over 2 sessions and cover:  
Definitions of Sex and Gender and explore:

Objectification of women and girls

Personal traits that affect intimate partner & family member violence, like low self-esteem, insecurity, emotional dependence, impulsiveness, aggression, anger, antisocial tendencies, and high control and power needs.

Gender inequality – including unequal power relations between women and men, rigid gender roles, norms and hierarchies, and ascribing women lower status in society.

The effect of gender-based discrimination against women and its intersection with other grounds of discrimination including disability, sexual orientation, socio economic status, language, religion, national/ethnic origin, and nationality.

Gender stereotypes: beliefs about women and men that are commonly seen as true and unchangeable

Violence against women as a form of discrimination against women, and the role of gender stereotypes in perpetuating such violence

Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

Example:

Introduction to “The dominator and the friend” - The “Dominator” was inspired by the Duluth Domestic Violence Intervention Project in Minnesota. He is one man, but the facilitator describes him as changing into the other characters to use different kinds of controlling behaviour. “He can change from one character to another” (Craven, P, 2009, p.3). Video from “the Freedom programme” created by Pat Craven as presented in her book *Living with the dominator*.

### **3. UNDERSTANDING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSE**

This module should cover the 4 stages that make up the cycle of violence and abuse:

The module is delivered over 2 sessions, 1 at each end of the programme, and often re-visited over the duration of the programme.

Definition: A cycle of abuse is a four-part pattern that helps identify a pattern of abuse in relationships. “The cycle continues because there is a power imbalance in a relationship, meaning that one person has a hold on the other” (Walker, L, 1970, p.?).

Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

Example:

Explain the four stages to help participants understand the common patterns of abuse that occur in relationships and why it can be so difficult for the person experiencing the abuse to leave their situation.

Share the Cycle of Abuse on the screen, analyse the cycle of abuse stages and explain each through a presentation and use of examples:

Tension -external stressors may begin to build within the abuser. External stressors could include financial problems, a bad day at work, or simply being tired. When an abusive partner feels tense because of outside factors, their frustration builds over time.

Incident-Eventually, the built-up tension must be released by the abuser to help them feel as though they have power and control again. They will then begin to engage in abusive behaviours such as: calling their partner names, threatening to hurt them, trying to control how they act, dress, cooks, etc, commit physical or sexual acts of violence against them, or manipulate their partner emotionally.

Reconciliation- period occurs when some time has passed after the incident and the tension begins to decrease. In many cases, the person who committed the abuse will try to make things right by offering gifts and being overly kind and loving. The reconciliation period is often referred to as a "honeymoon stage" because it mimics the beginning of a relationship when people are on their best behaviour.

Calm- justifications or explanations are made to help both partners excuse the abuse. For example, an abusive partner might say they're sorry but blame the abuse on outside factors such as their boss or work life to justify what they did. The abuser may also deny that the abuse occurred or that it was as bad as it was. In some cases, the abuser may throw some accusations towards the person that was abused to try to convince them that it was their fault. (Bottaro, A, 2022, p.1)

#### **4. RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

**Definition:** A respectful relationship is one of mutual respect, trust, good communication, understanding and honesty.

This module promotes respect and gender equality and helps participants learn how to build healthy relationships.

The module is delivered over 2-3 sessions and its main objective is to promote the consistent message that abuse is not acceptable, it can never be justified and it is a crime.

##### **Materials:**

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

##### **Example:**

Challenging assumptions about gender, power, and equality- group discussion

Revisit The Wheel of Power and Control- powerpoint

The Dominator and The Friend (Craven, P, 2009, P.2,3)- video vignette

Reflect on close family relationships; MY grandmother, My mother, My wife's- AND I (exercise-individual reflection, feedback shared with the large group)

Beliefs and attitudes about men and women- presentation

Understanding the difference between abusive and non-abusive relationships- presentation, large group discussion

Understanding that domestic abuse is a crime- presentation, group discussion.

#### **5. EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

**Definition:** Emotional abuse, also known as mental mistreatment, is a form of abuse that abusers use to make their partners feel mentally or emotionally hurt or damaged. The intent of this abuse is to gain power and control by forcibly changing someone's emotional state. (Valdez, R, 2021, p.1)

This module is delivered over 2-4 sessions and forms part of reflective conversations with participants over the duration of the programme.

##### **Materials:**

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

Example: Start off the discussion by working together to come up with a definition of emotionally abusive behaviour.

Use Emotional Abuse Information sheet to lead a discussion and explain the strategies used in emotional abuse, using examples of different situations like:

- swearing and general often sexual put downs,
- making her feel stupid or crazy,
- getting calm just as she gets angry then imitating her
- writing off her viewpoint by exaggerating it and making it seem ridiculous or using sarcasm,
- lying to her and then making out she's got a problem with trust,
- get at her weak points and making her feel unattractive or bad about herself,
- answering a criticism with countercriticism or an accusation with a counteraccusation
- putting her down in front of others,
- refusing to consider changing own behaviour (RESPECT, 2018).

Exercise – group discussion, questions like:

- List ways in which people can be abusive emotionally – what have you seen in your friends or family's relationships?
- What have they used in their own relationships?
- Were children in your family put down or labelled?
- How do you think you might be emotionally abusive to your partner and children?
- What are the effects of these behaviours? What is the cumulative effect if they go on for a long time?

## **6. SEXUAL RESPECT**

Definition: Respect is the most important aspects of all relationships, but when it comes to sex, it's really important for mutual respect to be a priority. In order to have respectful sex of any kind, partners need to have a solid understanding of each other's boundaries around physical and sexual activity.

The module is delivered over 2 sessions and revisited when talking about Respectful relationships (part 2) and Attitudes Towards Women (part 2). This module should give participants a chance to reflect and discuss their beliefs about sexual relationships and consent.

Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

Example: Share the Sexual Controller persona as shown in The Dominator (Craven, p, 2009, p11)

(He uses sex to control his partner. He refuses sex, demands sex and rapes his partner. As a result, women feel dirty and used and unable to stand up to him.)

Show the video vignette (Craven,P, 2009, video 3)

Have a group discussion:

How sexual abuse occurs as part of domestic abuse and violence and different types of sexual abuse

Understanding consent online and offline.

End the session with The Lover- video vignette and discussion (Craven,P, 2009, video 4)

## **7. BUILDING EMPATHY**

**Definition:** Empathy is defined as the ability to sense other people's emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling.

This module is delivered over 2-3 sessions and it aim is to increase the participants:

- capacity for empathy-based guilt, the painful discomfort that is felt when we harm another person,
- their understanding of the effect domestic abuse has on victims and their children, and
- their sense of dissonance- the discomfort felt when we realise, we have acted in a way which is not in line with our preferred self-image and how we want others to see us.

When delivering this module, we make sure to leave time at the end of the session for debrief and provide private space for those participants that may need additional support, because of the difficult emotions that the session may trigger.

### **Materials:**

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

### **Example:**

Facilitate a guided discussion with a few separate sections:

*“Did you see or suffer violence/abuse as a child?”* You may touch on difficult and powerful memories here. Acknowledge these and hold these disclosures in mind for later in the discussion.

*“Think of a time when you remember feeling powerless and afraid”.* (you may need to clarify that you are talking about *physical* powerlessness as opposed to “When she insults me, I feel powerless” etc.).

Ask participants to think back to that time, to revisit it in their imagination and to let some of the feelings associated with that time come back for him. What scene does he visualise in his mind’s eye? What was he thinking and feeling? Give time to really their accounts here and

allow yourself to empathise with them. Then consider how they each made sense of that experience at the time and how they feel now about the person(s) they were afraid of then. When listening to their description, on the flipchart identify one or two central aspects or phrases: e.g. *“I thought I was going to die” “I had no control” “I was terrified” “I didn’t know what was going to happen next”*.

When they have concluded their account of their own powerlessness say that we have been thinking about how women might feel when they experience violence and abuse. Allow anyone that may feel ready to make a more direct connection to how his partner might have felt about the violence and in similarities in feelings to when he was violent and abusive.

## **8. UNDERSTANDING EFFECTS ON CHILDREN**

Definition: Domestic violence has a devastating impact on children and young people that can last into adulthood. Children can be affected by domestic abuse directly and in-directly.

This module is delivered over 3-4 sessions, each time re-visiting how children are exposed to Domestic Abuse and Violence and its impact on their emotional, interpersonal, behavioural, cognitive and physical development and well-being.

### Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

### Example:

To discuss the effects domestic abuse and violence on children in a focussed way, start off with an exercise. Split the group into 3 smaller groups and ask them to work together, each group looking into one of the following:

- The first group is comprised of an unborn child, a pregnant woman, and a new-born child.
- The second focuses on a six-year-old.
- The third considers a teenager.

On the first module session: The participants are asked to investigate the needs of each child at the age as stated in the example of their exercise.

On the second module session: They re-visit the same group, reflecting on what are each of the children in their exercise experiencing when living in domestic abuse household.

On the final revisit of the exercise, on the third module session, they are asked to imagine that the parents have been separated for 6 months, the father is attending a perpetrators programme, and asked to think what could be going on for the children in the age group they are involved in working. (Craven,P, 2009, p,22)

The small groups take 30-45 minutes to come up with all the answers and then all participants get together and share feedback which leads to discussion.

## **9. EXAMINING PAST AND CURRENT ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Definition: This module focusses on encouraging participants, to look at their behaviour and facilitating a safe space to ensure they identify past abusive behaviours, take responsibility for the pain and fear they caused and adapt positive and non-abusive future behaviours.

This module is delivered over 2-3 sessions.

### Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

### Example:

Facilitate a large group discussion and then provide Individual reflection exercise, before you bring the group together to continue the discussion, cover the following:

- The ways culture and history have influenced the beliefs and behaviours of an abusive man and all who live alongside him.
- Intergenerational Abuse Patterns- Personal history past and current behaviours (Victim to perpetrator, childhood abuse related trauma)
- Cultural influences and the use of Male privilege
- Denial, Minimisation and Victim-blaming
- Accountability
- Domestic Abuse additional factors; Mental health, drugs, alcohol, gambling

## **10. EXPLORING PARENTING**

Definition: This module focuses on teaching positive parenting and co-parenting, helping to understand the impact of domestic abuse on children and aiding the attendees in forming effective parenting plans. “It is uncommon for men who use violence to recognise that their violence toward their (ex) partner is also abuse of their child; this in turn prevents them from seeing or understanding its impact on the child. While a perpetrator of violence might express love for his child, it is important not to mistake this for empathy for his child’s needs and experiences”. (RESPEKT,2019)

**The module is delivered over 2 sessions and should cover the:**

impact of Domestic Abuse on Parenting Capacity,  
impact of an inconsistent and unpredictable care environment on child development, and  
link between presence of domestic abuse and child maltreatment

### Materials:

- Session handouts for participants
- Visual presentations
- Flipchart and colourful pens
- Group and individual exercise using a variety of prepared scenarios
- Group discussion

Example:

Use the Iceberg: ask participants what their child shows on the surface when mum and dad have a fight. What is visible in terms of their actions and feelings? Draw or write this into visible section of the iceberg. Remind them that as children there are a lot of things that go on inside us that we never tell our parents. There are things that we sense shouldn't be spoken about, including things about the parents themselves. Ask the participants what their fears are about what their own child doesn't show, and what lies underneath the surface. Draw or write the answers on the flipchart.



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This document has been produced with the financial support of the project "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence - Phase III", implemented by the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.