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"The Other Side of the Story: Perpetrators in Change" (OSSPC)

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**Public policy recommendations on the needs and importance of developing perpetrator
programmes in the form of noncriminal justice intervention in Cyprus**

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Time for Change: Evidence based research for new practice approaches (WP 2)

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1. Introduction

"The Other Side of the Story: Perpetrators in Change" (OOSPC) project was launched on May 1st, 2020. The APHVF– APHVF in Cyprus is the Coordinator of the project and the partners are: Bournemouth University (BU) - United Kingdom, Centro di Ascolto Uomini Maltrattanti Onlus (CAM) - Italy, The Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (UWAH) - Greece, European Knowledge Spot - Greece and Direcția de Asistență Socială și Medicală (DASM), Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

The aim of the OSSPC project is to prevent further DVA and change violent behavioral patterns by increasing the capacity of frontline workers, which will further teach perpetrators of DVA to adopt non-violent behavior in interpersonal relationships and understand the impact of DVA on them, their family and community.

One of the objectives of the project is to facilitate national agencies and or community-based organizations in formulating or re-formulating action plans, for better and more effective responding to DVA through the provision of evidence-based research on the effectiveness of perpetrators program. For this reason, all the participating countries carried out fieldwork research. More specifically, all participating countries organized focus groups with frontline workers, conducted questionnaires to victims of DVA in order to study the victims' view on perpetrators' treatment programs; implemented interviews with perpetrators in order to explore their attitudes and perceptions of DVA; and finally, collected the statistics and demographics available by the Police regarding DVA.

Based on the findings and data analysis of the fieldwork research implemented, the consortium partners will formulate five policy recommendations (one in each country) on the needs and importance of developing perpetrators programs in the form of non-criminal justice intervention, in order to reach the above-mentioned objectives/aims of the project.

2. Defining the problem / identifying the needs

2.1. Defining the problem

European data show that 1 in 5 of Cypriot women have suffered physical and/or sexual violence by a partner and/or a non-partner since the age of 15, and 39% of Cypriot women have suffered psychological abuse by a partner and/or a non-partner since the age of 15 (FRA, 2014).





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VAWG still remains one of the least reported crimes mainly due to the ingrained socio-cultural attitudes and misconceptions about gender roles and patriarchal views, which render victims' attempts to disclose the abuse and violence. As research (Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, 2010, 2011; Vasiliadou, 2004) show, Cyprus society seems to maintain conservative perceptions in regards to gender roles, migration, sexuality or diversity, as this is also reflected on social norms in all aspects of the society and laws related to GBV issues.

Both the review of existing data and the fieldwork findings show that socio-cultural attitudes and misconceptions about gender roles and patriarchal views exist in Cyprus; which in turn affect the support of victims of violence, especially of women victims of DVA and IPV, and the lack of establishment and support of DVA perpetrators' treatment programs. Even though there is an increase of the DVA cases reported and handled by the Police, which is consistent with the increase of the DVA cases reported to and handled by APHVF; this observed increase still does not reflect the pragmatic number of the DVA cases. National statistics on VAWG in Cyprus are limited, while VAWG still remains one of the least reported crimes.

2.2. Needs in relation to domestic abuse perpetrator work in Cyprus.

A holistic approach when dealing domestic abuse is necessary, and for this reason, supporting and providing services to both victims and perpetrators is essential in order to have significant changes to behaviors and attitudes of victims and perpetrators. By providing services to victims without providing treatment to perpetrators is inconclusive in breaking the cycle of violence and vice versa.

Victim Support Services

Even though there has been an improvement in recent years regarding access to victim support services, the number of services that victims can access is quite limited and there is no generic national victim support service. Specialist services exist but are limited to victims of DVA, trafficking, and child victims. Only recently, in December 2020, the Women's House was established, as a need to cover all victims of violence, having the Competent Authorities, the Professionals, Lawyers and Mental and Medical health representatives, working together under the same roof, thus allowing/assisting the victims to access all necessary services at once. However, these services are not available throughout the country making it difficult for victims that reside in rural areas for example, as this may discourage them from reporting a criminal offence. Also, efforts are made by APHVF, to expand its services' accessibility in other cities such as the creation of a fourth shelter in the province of Larnaca (covering also the province of Ammochostos), as well as, the expansion of the services of the Women's House outside Nicosia.





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In addition, practical issues regarding the coordination and cooperation of different services and the case overload cause unnecessary delays. The existence of a detailed protocol regarding the duties and responsibilities of each service as well as trained individuals with the appropriate responsibilities, could improve some issues regarding delays and coordination.

Perpetrators' Treatment Programs

APHVF established a new perpetrators program in July 2020, which is currently the only program for perpetrators of DVA and IPV, which offers individual and group counselling sessions. Before that, APHVF was operating a different program named "Love without Pain" which offered individual and group counselling sessions. The current program, is running either by self-referrals or referrals by agencies (Police, Social Welfare Office, Mental Health Services, and Rehabilitation Programs). However, due to the fact that this is a new program, further awareness raising and collaborations needs to be achieved. Also, the evaluation of the program will be implemented after completing 1 year of running. Moreover, APHVF is intending to establish a perpetrators program in prison settings, in order to reach a different target group, at a different setting, at a different time of their lives.

Interpretation and Translation

Difficulties exist regarding the availability of translators, as well as the quality of the interpretation. These issues cause delays in offering services to victims and/or perpetrators, and may affect the criminal proceedings and put the victim in an unfavourable position, if performed inappropriately. Some private law-firms and organisations hire their own private translators when required in order to avoid issues with delays and quality. There is no official evidence regarding the identification and training of translators which is also an issue. A solution to this situation could be seen in employing translators who are specially trained to deal with sensitive cases in a professional and confidential manner. Also, the number of translators speaking a wide variety of languages could reduce delays and increase the quality of the interpretation.

Court and Trial Delays

The trial period for most cases may last for approximately 2-3 years. This may be due to case overload, as well as to difficulties concerning the cooperation and coordination of different organisations and authorities involved as well as practical issues that arise during the criminal proceedings, which are time consuming (Michael, and Argyridou, 2019). The use of electronic means and online communication between the judicial authorities and the lawyers could benefit the faster processing of cases. In general, the development of computerised systems to avoid





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delays during criminal proceedings is recommended.

Data Collection, Statistics and Research

With respect to the victims' privacy and the Law 138(I)/2001 on protection of personal data, all organisations and authorities should develop a data system where they could keep record of the incidences and the victims' reports. This could contribute in recording statistical data which can be used to identifying vulnerable victims or in high-risk of victimisation, to studying the geographical distribution of victimization, and to analysing the efficiency and efficacy of victim support services. New research regarding the victims' needs, the state of VAW, as well as the identification of the challenges and gaps that both professionals and victims meet in practice should be promoted as a preliminary stage for the design and implementation of new policies as well as the evaluation of the existing ones.

Training of professionals

Even though training for professionals who come in contact with victims are available in Cyprus, it is uncertain how often and to what extent they are available to all professionals; hence this may result in lack of constant update of the knowledge and capacity building of professionals. Moreover, there is a lack of evaluation of those trainings and there is no system of quality assurance. Awareness raising seminars on the notions of 'victims' and certified trainings on methods, practices and techniques for the support and protection of victims and the treatment of perpetrators are essential for practitioners in public services and NGOs who deal with cases of VAW and DVA.

Coordination and cooperation between services

While protocols and other manuals promote the cooperation between all competent authorities and services, as well as suggest ways and mechanisms for the coordination of services, there still seems to be some minor gaps in providing coordinated actions and procedures in which victims are involved. These gaps are usually caused by the lack of sufficient training of all professionals involved, and the coordination of the inter-departmental procedures in handling DVA cases, e.g. minor delays in the communication among the competent services, lack of coordination during the meeting of inter- and multi- disciplinary meetings, case- and work- overload in competent services (Apostolidou, 2004). The evaluation of existing policies, the constant renewal of the guidelines and the development of protocols of cooperation among all the relevant services will contribute to better coordination of services and the improvement of the services provided to victims and perpetrators.





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Use of Technology

The use of New Technologies for the prevention and handling of VAWG includes a range of services, professionals, methods and tools - such as electronic communication with the Police, online counselling, electronic surveillance of places and perpetrators. Also, the use of special safety gadgets consists of a new trend used by the women survivors of IPV and DVA, as an additional protection measure allowing them to gain greater control of their daily lives. There is no use of such gadgets in Cyprus yet.

Legal framework

In order to harmonize with the national legislation of the Istanbul Convention, bills criminalizing various forms of VAWG and harassment, as well as sexist behaviour and acts, are pending to be voted by the House of Representatives, in Cyprus

2.3.Problems/needs identified within the research developed within WP 2 (fieldwork research and data analysis) of the project OSSPC

The victims' survey results reflect the state of support and protection of DVA victims in Cyprus. The victims acknowledge the importance of a getting help and support by practitioners and the competent authorities in a professional manner. The victims' dissatisfaction of the CJS responses was evident and reflect the gaps that are generally observed in practice, and are related to the lack of adequate trainings, the lack of services coordination, as well as the lack of evaluation (Michael and Argyridou, 2019).

With regard to the victims' suggestions (obtained by the survey implemented to the victims) for changes in the way abusers are responded to, the victims mentioned the improvement of communication as a way to change perpetrators behaviour and attitudes, the development of more anger management programs, the need to take account of the children and trauma caused, as well as more awareness raising on violence, especially to older people.

The findings derived from the survey to the perpetrators are also interesting. One of the participants of the program, in an effort to explain his own abusive behaviour as a parent, described that, as a child, he was a victim of physical, psychological and verbal abuse from the individual's family environment. This suggests through research that abused children are more vulnerable to delinquent behaviours and often become victims themselves. Many experts argue that parts of the parents' behaviour seem to be passed on to the next generations, which suggests





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that when they become parents they behave in similar ways towards their family. The same perpetrator mentioned how he felt as abused child that he was "underestimated and considered incompetent". This makes the perpetrators have the desire as an adult to use his own strength, ability and control, but also the need to prove his usefulness. Based on this, it could also partly explain his own course as an adult with a tendency for violent behaviours. Moreover, perpetrators' interviews presented stress is a trigger for violent incidents. Experts claim that the modern stressful lifestyle causes intense stress which has a negative effect on a person's behaviour (irritable); a fact that may explain the abusive behaviour of a perpetrator. Notably when perpetrators were able to understand and recognize their violent behaviour through a self-awareness process, they were motivated to change in an attempt to improve their relationship with their partners and children. These findings reveal the importance of perpetrators' treatment programs in helping perpetrators recognizing their abusive behaviour towards their partners, and in motivating them to work for change in order to be a better role models towards their children.

The development of the perpetrators' treatment program in Cyprus stems from the need for an integrated/comprehensive approach to prevent and address DVA against women. The program officially launched on July 2020 and its objective is to enhance the safety of the victims of DVA by reducing the intensity and frequency of the violence exhibited.

The route that a perpetrator must follow to get involved to the program is either via referral by other services and bodies such as the Cyprus Police or Social Welfare Services, by court order or self-referral, i.e., the perpetrator calling himself to the 1440 Helpline run by APHVF on a 24/7 basis. Taking into account that the perpetrator program "PROTEAS" has only been running for a couple of months, its visual identity has not been yet established, something that has been translated in the findings of the current organisational response and structure outlined, derived from the perpetrators' interviews, victims' survey, and the focus groups with key-professionals.

Following the analysis of the fieldwork findings, the following recommendations for practise have been identified:

- More dissemination and awareness-raising efforts should be made regarding the Perpetrators' program, as the public, victims, perpetrators, and professionals to be informed about the services that the program provides.
- Engaging with GPs and other medical services, and schools, to promote awareness and the ability to recognise forms of DVA.
- Various professionals that are involved in issues related to violence, should be informed through meetings with professionals running the perpetrators program, in order to know how to refer individuals to the perpetrator program.
- The professionals of the perpetrator program, are invited to find ways to encourage perpetrators to participate in the program.





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- An evaluation of the newly established perpetrator intervention programme should be made in due time.
- An investigation into purported associations between traditional minority religious ideology and DVA.
- Acknowledgement of the barriers to reporting victimisation faced by women, in particular the two elements of criminalisation because children are victims, and the fear of children being removed from their houses.

Experience of the perpetrators' program thus far show that there are perpetrators that acknowledge their abusive behaviour and decide to change. In other cases, there are many individuals who, when starting a program they don't understand to what extent their violent behaviour is harming their relationship and their partner and children. By building self-awareness, the perpetrator can find ways to reduce their anger, or their violent behaviours. They can also be aware of what triggers them from losing control. Current fieldwork findings support previous research finding on DVA and victim support in Cyprus. Yet the findings support the need of the perpetrators program and show that there are many positive outcomes that can help a perpetrator manage his abusive behaviour.

3. Beneficiaries affected by the effects of the policy recommendations

The beneficiaries affected by the effects of the policy recommendations include:

- Perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse
- Victims of domestic violence and abuse
- Competent authorities

4. Public policy recommendations (proposed solutions to solve the identified problems)

The following section outlines the problems/needs identified at local, regional, and national level. Whereas part (a) presents the recommendations made at each level, part (b) provides the justification for each recommendation made.





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4.1. Public policy recommendations at local level

a) Proposed recommendations/solutions for the problems/needs identified at local level (defining the solutions, presenting concrete measures).

1. Awareness raising of local authorities on domestic violence issues.

2. Development of safe referral pathways for domestic violence victims to victim support services by local authorities and services.

3. Dissemination of APHVF perpetrators' program on local level.

4. Development of referral pathways for domestic violence perpetrators to perpetrators' program by local authorities and services.

b) Justification of the recommendations: why they are necessary, why we consider that they will be effective and will lead to solving the problem/ to satisfying the identified needs.

1. Awareness raising on domestic violence issues is included in the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence. Awareness raising should be promoted on national and local level, so as to reach a wide range of beneficiaries and the public. Research has shown that awareness raising in rural areas remains limited.

2. Many domestic violence cases are disclosed to community members and local authorities and services, as local authorities and services, e.g., municipalities, local cultural centres, local youth centres are often considered safe places by domestic violence victims to seek help. Yet local authorities are often unaware of victims' support services. APHVF is making efforts to reach as many local authorities and services as possible to create safe referral pathways for domestic violence victims. However, more systematic and organized action should be taken to inform all communities and develop referral pathways with each community to competent services for the support and protection of domestic violence victims.

3. APHVF's perpetrators' program that has recently fully operated is yet unknown to the public and community services. An intensive dissemination action will strengthen the program and raise the requests for admission.

4. Many domestic violence cases are disclosed to community members and local authorities and services. In some of these cases local authorities are making efforts to advice the perpetrator and prevent further escalation of violence. Yet local authorities are unaware of APHVF's perpetrators' program. APHVF is making efforts to disseminate its perpetrators' program.





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However, more systematic and organized action should be taken to inform all communities and develop referral pathways of perpetrators to APHVF's perpetrators' program.

4.2. Public policy recommendations at county/regional level

a) Proposed recommendations/solutions for the problems/needs identified at county/regional level (depending on country).

1. Establishment of domestic violence support services for victims and perpetrators in both urban and rural areas in all providences of the Cyprus Republic, especially developing infrastructures to support the victims of DVA.

2. Development of extensive cataloguing of available general and specialist victims support services in each region.

b) Justification of the recommendations: why they are necessary, why we consider that they will be effective and will lead to solving the problem/ to satisfying the identified needs.

1. Victim support services are not available throughout the country making it difficult for victims that reside in rural areas for example, as this may discourage them from reporting a criminal offence. Efforts are made by APHVF, to expand its services' accessibility in other cities such as the creation of a fourth shelter in the province of Larnaca (covering also the province of Ammochostos), as well as, the expansion of the services of the Women's House outside Nicosia. By supporting the victims of DVA in a professional and ethical manner, victims are more likely to receive the support needed. By helping victims break the silence of abuse, perpetrators may be more likely to make the first step towards asking for help and working towards change. The need for change may arise from the perpetrators' needs to save their marriage, the fear of losing their spouse and the need to become better role models for their children.

2. Extensive cataloguing of available general and specialist support services for victims and offenders of domestic and intimate partner violence in each region that will be available for the development of referral pathways, will strengthen the support and protection for domestic violence victims, as well as the prevention and handling of domestic violence cases.





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4.3. Public policy recommendations at national level

a) Proposed recommendations/solutions for the problems/needs identified at national level.

1. Include actions related to perpetrators' programs services and treatment of domestic violence perpetrators, as well as adequate monitoring of the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence.

2. Extensive national awareness raising activities for the dissemination of the perpetrators' program.

3. Define priorities for, and support research on the phenomenon of domestic violence in Cyprus, including study on the different forms of violence, its causes and consequences, as well as the costs of domestic violence and, preventive actions of violence. Research could also be conducted regarding the effectiveness of the existing policies and guidelines.

4. Promote primary prevention responses, including awareness raising on healthy relationships, by integrating violence prevention into social and educational policies, and thereby promote gender and social equality.

5. Establish a national database where all organizations and authorities will keep record of the incidences and victims' reports. Enhance capacity for collecting data on violence among all front line professionals/institutions.

6. Establish collaborations, memorandums of understanding, and protocols with relevant authorities and services and implement awareness raising activities regarding the perpetrators program. Special focus should be given in developing effective means of communication with the judicial authorities and lawyers.

7. Promote and monitor adherence to international treaties, laws and other mechanisms to protect human rights.

8. Strengthen legal Framework in Cyprus on preventing and tackling violence against women and domestic violence

9. Establish a national awareness day on domestic violence.

10. Annual and continuous trainings to all relevant services with regards to DVA, including trainings on providing specialised services to victims and offenders.

11. Establish a perpetrators program in prison settings.





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- 12. Employ specially trained translators to deal with sensitive cases in a professional and confidential manner.**
- 13. Develop detailed protocols on interdepartmental procedures regarding the duties and responsibilities of each service in regards to perpetrators' programs.**
- 14. Annual evaluations of the perpetrator intervention program.**
- 15. Psycho-education, support, dissemination and awareness raising of the available support services and follow up to the victims of domestic violence to combat the barriers to reporting victimization.**
- 16. The use of New Technologies for the prevention and handling of VAWG**

b) Justification of the recommendations: why they are necessary, why we consider that they will be effective and will lead to solving the problem/ to satisfying the identified needs.

1. The National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence includes the need for the implementation and evaluation of perpetrators' programs. Actions related to the abovementioned recommendations should be included in the national action plan. The monitoring and improvement of the national action plan is essential, as one of the most important tools for the prevention of DV. The existence of a detailed protocol regarding the duties and responsibilities of each service as well as the training of individuals, can improve issues regarding delays and coordination.

2. Dissemination of the perpetrators' program on national level is of great importance for the wide awareness raising of the public. A visual identity of the program has to be established, in order for the competent authorities, services and professionals to refer perpetrators to the program as well as for the perpetrators themselves to reach APHVF and join the program (self-referrals).

3. Research can aid the development of evidence-based interventions, the definition of the priorities and goals as to combat domestic violence. When combating DVA and understanding the difficulties associated with running a program so as to find ways to work on any upcoming issues, can help the program evolve in order to help in the best possible means the victims and perpetrators of DVA. The evaluation of existing policies, the constant renewal of the guidelines and the development of protocols of cooperation among all the relevant services will contribute to better coordination of services and the improvement of the services provided to victims and perpetrators. Professionals will have the opportunity to identify gaps and needs for improvement and proceed to necessary changes in order to improve the program as to reduce violent behaviours and establish a safe environment for the children.





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4. On a national level, we provide primary prevention programs. The improvement of communication as a way to change perpetrators behaviour and attitudes; the development of more anger management programs, the need to take into account the trauma caused as a result of the DV, and the development of more awareness raising activities disseminated especially to older people. It is important to help perpetrators recognize their abusive behaviour towards their partners and family members, and to motivate them to work for change in order to become better role models towards their children. As, research suggests, abused children are more vulnerable to delinquent behaviours and often become victims and/or perpetrators themselves. Primary prevention should be targeted towards schools, other professionals and communities, to increase awareness. Increasing awareness especially in schools helps children understand that violence should not be accepted and targeting communities will help victims have the strength to speak up about the violence.

5. A national record of domestic violence cases could contribute in recording statistical data which can be used to identifying vulnerable victims or in high-risk of victimisation, to studying the geographical distribution of victimization, and to analysing the efficiency and efficacy of victim support services. New research regarding the victims' needs, the state of VAW, as well as the identification of the challenges and gaps that both professionals and victims meet in practice should be promoted as a preliminary stage for the design and implementation of new policies as well as the evaluation of the existing ones.

6. Due to the fact that the perpetrator program is a newly established service of APHVF, and thus the competent authorities are not aware of it, by informing relevant authorities and services, by establishing protocols, memorandums of understanding will result in a better collaboration, better understanding of how the program can help both the victims and the perpetrators and referrals of perpetrators to the program will be achieved, increasing the exchange of information on violence prevention and establishing cooperation among the relevant services and political parties to aid prevention. Collaboration is important for strategy planning and for exchanging information to prevent and combat violence. Each professional brings in their skills and knowledge. By having professionals with different skills working on the program can bring in different views on the issues that will potentially arise considering that the program has only been running for a couple of months. Professionals give their intake and plan in on an orderly matter to help perpetrators change through the program. Collaboration among all related authorities and services are essential to avoid re-victimization of the victim. When all related authorities collaborate, the DVA victims will have a supportive network that will better read any red flags and use skills/techniques to help victims avoid re-victimization in the future. Special focus should be given in informing the judicial authorities about the perpetrators' program so as to increase awareness and protect the victims by having the perpetrator being engaged in the program.





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The use of electronic means and online communication between the judicial authorities and the lawyers could benefit the faster processing of cases. In general, the development of computerised systems to avoid delays during criminal proceedings is recommended.

7. The state is obligated to observe and promote the laws for the safety of the victims. When the state promotes laws against violence and informs the community about them, increases the chances that victims will break the silence and help the community understand that violence cannot be tolerated, and perpetrators gain awareness regarding the consequences of their actions.

8. In order to harmonize with the national legislation of the Istanbul Convention, bills criminalizing various forms of VAWG and harassment, as well as sexist behaviour and acts, are pending to be voted by the House of Representatives, in Cyprus. These bills, are very important for the safety of the victims. Support from political leaders is also necessary, in order to ensure proper funding and effective legislation, but also to give prevention efforts increased legitimacy and a higher profile within the public consciousness. In addition to working at their own level of government or authority, decision-makers and practitioners can and must work together across levels for significant progress to be made.

9. The development of a national awareness day of DV to increase awareness about DV. Having international days intended to inform communities and the world about DV and how to help victims and perpetrators is very important. Using certain days and events will help communities understand that they will need to step up and break the silence when needed in order to help the victims of DV.

10. Trainings are essential for all professionals to enhance their knowledge and for the exchange of best practices. The more trainings are provided to professionals either working with victims or perpetrators, the more competent they will be to handle diverse cases of DVA by using a range of techniques. Each case of DV is different and needs to be handled in a certain way. This complies with the relevant articles of the Istanbul Convention and the Victims' Directive. Continuous and long-term trainings will help professionals understand how to tackle diverse issues with regards to domestic violence and provide science-based means to support both the perpetrators as well as the victims of DV. Awareness raising seminars on the notions of 'victims' and certified trainings on methods, practices and techniques for the support and protection of victims and the treatment of perpetrators are essential for practitioners in public services and NGOs who deal with cases of VAW and DVA.

11. A perpetrators program in prison settings can help in the reduction of recidivism when the offender is re-integrated in the society. The creation of programs in a prison setting may help perpetrators change their behaviours and help them start a new life away from violence. Giving offenders the option to join programs while in prison can make reintegration easier either by





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helping perpetrators of DV be role models for their children, helping them establish new relationships and/or modifying violent behaviours.

12. Translators working with cases of DV need to be trained as to acquire skills in order to understand how to handle the cases in a professional and confidential manner. To this end, a possible solution could be to employ in employing translators who are specially trained to deal with sensitive cases in a professional and confidential manner. Also, the number of translators speaking a wide variety of languages could reduce delays and increase the quality of the translation.

13. While protocols and other manuals promote the cooperation between all competent authorities and services, as well as suggest ways and mechanisms for the coordination of services, there still seems to be some minor gaps in providing coordinated actions and procedures in which victims are involved. These gaps include minor delays in the communication among the competent services, lack of coordination during the meeting of inter- and multi- disciplinary meetings, case- and work- overload in competent services (Apostolidou, 2004). The evaluation of existing policies, the constant renewal of the guidelines and the development of protocols of cooperation among all the relevant services will contribute to better coordination of services and the improvement of the services provided to victims and perpetrators. The development of protocols that inform about duties and responsibilities, ensures the smooth and effective collaboration between all relevant DV services. When following protocols which outline in detail the responsibilities of front-line professionals and key-stakeholders so as more coherent and holistic services will be offered to the victims of violence. It is important that the protocols are revised and updated/improved when needed.

14. Annual evaluations of the program will be conducted for maximum quality and effectiveness. Evaluation of existing policies, the constant renewal of the guidelines and the development of protocols of cooperation among all the relevant services will contribute to a better coordination of services and the improvement of the services provided to victims and perpetrators. Also, this will contribute to the referral of perpetrators to the program.

15. Continuous support must be provided to the victims, in order to find the strength to talk about the violence they are going or went through. When victims understand that there is no barrier leaving an abusive relationship there is a better chance of helping other victims to speak up and break the silence in order to get the support and help the victim needs. Professionals use techniques and skills to help the victim express the violence they endured i.e., by using open ended questions. By helping victims to be more open and speak about their experiences of violence this can help professionals may better interpret what therapy or what techniques can help victims of violence work on the trauma of DV. This will in turn help the victims in order to use different techniques and therapy in their life rather than living in fear of moving away from the abusive relationship.





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These, can be achieved by continuous dissemination and awareness raising as well as psycho-education of the victims and the public in general, i.e., regarding stereotypes and myths around violence. Also, by increasing the awareness of the available services which can help and support the victims, increases the possibility of a victim to seek help. Moreover, engaging with GPs and other medical services, and schools, to promote awareness and the ability to recognise forms of DVA.

16. The use of new technologies includes a range of services, professionals, methods and tools - such as electronic communication with the Police, online counselling, electronic surveillance of places and perpetrators. Also, the use of special safety gadgets consists of a new trend used by the women survivors of IPV and DVA, as an additional protection measure allowing them to gain greater control of their daily lives.

5. Authorities that have the capacity to initiate / promote / implement / support public policy recommendations

5.1. Authorities that have the capacity to initiate / promote / implement / support public policy recommendations at local level

- Municipalities
- Community Centres
- Local Youth Centres
- APHVF
- NGOs
- The Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family
- National Machinery for Women's Rights

5.2. Authorities that have the capacity to initiate / promote / implement / support public policy recommendations at county/regional level (depending on country)

- The Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family- Municipalities
- Community Centres
- APHVF
- NGOs
- Multidisciplinary Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons Rights





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5.3. Authorities that have the capacity to initiate / promote / implement / support public policy recommendations at national level

- Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family
- National Machinery for Women's Rights
- Social Welfare Services
- Cyprus Police
- APHVF
- Cyprus Bar Association and legal practitioners
- Law Office of the Republic of Cyprus
- Health professionals
- NGOs
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order
- Ministry of Health
- The Commissioner for Administration and Human

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