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National Programme for Perpetrators of Violence against Women

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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Programme

The National Programme for Perpetrators of Violence against Women (hereinafter the Programme) is an initiative built on the principles of strategic intervention and psycho-social rehabilitation for those who have committed violence against their female partners.

The programme aims to change the violent behaviours of perpetrators through a transformational journey that leads to the adoption of non-violent and respectful behaviours in interpersonal relationships.

Although the emphasis of the Programme is the reformation and rehabilitation of the perpetrators, in essence, it ultimately aims at creating a safe environment for the survivors, by providing them with the support and security necessary to be empowered and to move forward.

The Programme is in full compliance with the "Curriculum for the training of professionals for the provision of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in the Republic of Kosovo" and the "National Strategy for Protection from Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2022-2026". The programme also complies with the standards of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (also known as the Istanbul Convention).

The Programme is based on the "Duluth model of power and control" and is based on mixed psycho-educational methods integrated into a series of structured sessions. This model aims to address the psychological factors that contribute to abusive behaviours. At the beginning, the assessment phase includes individual sessions which are followed by subsequent group sessions run until the end of the Programme.

The Duluth model highlights the influence of social norms and especially gender norms. The model notes that domestic violence reflects and reinforces patriarchal structures, which expect men to exercise control over their partners.



"The Programme is based on the Duluth model of power and control"

Through this lens, violence does not appear as an isolated or individual act, but as a manifestation of a deep social pattern. This model argues that the perpetrator's motivation to perpetrate domestic violence is directly related to the desire to be controlling and does not result from an individual pathology. The model frames domestic violence as a deliberate choice driven by a desire to dominate.

This interpretation emphasises that domestic violence should not be considered only as a series of isolated incidents, but as part of a wider system that is intertwined with social beliefs and structures. Therefore, our approach to intervention aims to influence not only individual behaviours, but also to change beliefs and social norms that contribute to the existence and continuation of domestic violence.

Programme Approach

The psycho-educational approach, which is central to this Programme, helps participants to understand the dynamics of domestic violence, its social and legal consequences, and the essential need for behavioural change. This Programme raises awareness of the effects of abusive behaviours on survivors and its impact on families and society as a whole.

Participants will benefit from hands-on and educational activities that help them to develop the skills needed to manage stress, communicate effectively and create healthy relationships. These activities include, but are not limited to, exercises to increase self-confidence, non-violent conflict resolution and building empathy.

The structure of the intervention programme for perpetrators of violence adopts a comprehensive approach, starting with a detailed assessment, followed by target group work and ending with a carefully planned exit strategy. Understanding this process in its entirety allows facilitators to see how each stage builds upon the other, creating a comprehensive and coherent path to positive changes.

By delving into each phase with this holistic perspective, facilitators can more effectively tailor their approaches to the individual needs of participants, increasing the programme's success in reducing domestic violence.



Professionals engaged in delivering the Programme

The Programme aims to achieve a permanent change in the behaviour of perpetrators of violence and build healthy interpersonal relationships. Professionals from various fields – including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, correctional officers, probation officers, lawyers and activists – can be facilitators of this program. The duration of training for facilitators is 7 to 14 days, with continuous professional training. The Programme Facilitator(s) will be trained and certified to implement the comprehensive guidelines containing advanced methodologies and techniques for service delivery.

Effectively implementing and managing each step of the intervention.

Evaluating and continuously improving the program.

Devising an exit plan to ensure a sustainable transition and long-term behaviour change.

In implementing the Programme, special attention is paid to awareness of the potential risks such as survivors' potentially false hopes for change and the possibility of perpetrators manipulating the program to their advantage.

This aspect is discussed in detail with the participants and also monitored by the facilitators to ensure that the Programme delivers healthy and safe intervention.

These guidelines include the following steps:

Assessing the perpetrator's compliance with the programme.

Establishing relationships of trust between the perpetrator and the facilitator.


Cooperating with support services for victims.

Programme structure

The programme is a six-month structured intervention that contains 24 two-hour group sessions, which includes various modules addressing different aspects of the behaviours and mentality of perpetrators of violence.

Each module is based on internationally recognised methodologies and practices that are proven to be effective in changing violent behaviours and attitudes.

During this six-month period, participants will be guided through a series of sessions which aim to stimulate reflection and promote a positive transformation in behaviours and ways of thinking. Each module addresses a specific topic and contributes to the development of a more positive and non-violent behaviours.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair and a young girl with blonde pigtails looking at a book together. The woman is smiling and pointing at the book, while the girl is also smiling. The background is blurred, showing an indoor setting.

"The programme is a six-month structured intervention that contains 24 two-hour group sessions"

MODULE 1

De-escalation Techniques – Includes anger management strategies and techniques to reduce tension in conflict situations.

MODULE 2

Attitudes towards women – Analysis of gender roles and understanding the impact of stereotypes and prejudices on violent behaviours.

MODULE 3

Understanding the cycle of violence and abuse – Knowing the dynamics of domestic violence and awareness of the abusive cycle.

MODULE 4

Respectful Relationships – Building an understanding of healthy and responsible relationships.

MODULE 5

Emotional abuse – Recognising forms of emotional abuse and ways to prevent manipulative and controlling behaviours.

MODULE 6

Sexual respect – Education on Consent and the importance of respect in intimate relationships.

MODULE 7

Building Empathy/Compassion – Developing the ability to feel and express feelings in a constructive and non-violent way.

MODULE 8

Understanding the effects on children – Sensitization on the impact of violence on the emotional and psychological development of children.

MODULE 9

Reviewing past and current abusive behaviours – Reflecting and processing past behaviours and committing to change.

MODULE 10

Parenting – Promoting positive and responsible parenting practices to influence the next generation.

Each of these sessions and modules are designed to work synergistically with each other to provide a complete and comprehensive approach to changing violent behaviours and preventing the reoccurrence of domestic violence against women.

The conclusion of the Programme does not simply mean the end of the sessions, but the beginning of a new chapter for the participants, who are equipped with new knowledge and skills to operate through the complexities of interpersonal relationships without resorting to violence.

The success of the Programme is assessed not only through behaviours changes and the reduction of recidivism, but also encompasses survivors' freedom to build a life without fear and the increased empathy and understanding that the participants show in all their relationships.

This essential goal turns the programme not only into an intervention, but also a guide for individual and societal transformative changes.