



# MWIA TRAINING MODULE ON VIOLENCE

## Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme

### General information

Perpetrator intervention programme work intensively with men who carry out domestic and family violence. Different terms are used in different countries - for example the Domestic Violence Perpetrator programme in the U.K., the Batterer Intervention programme in the US, the Men's Behaviour Change Programme in Australia, and the Stopping Violence Programme in New Zealand.<sup>1</sup> Men can self-refer to these programmes, or they may be referred via the criminal justice system or Social Services. The programmes last from three to six months, with weekly sessions with trained facilitators. There is a rigorous assessment system as to the men's suitability for the programme, and there is a significant drop-out rate. Community-based perpetrator programmes are the most effective, incorporating gender perspectives, and a focus on victim welfare and safety, as well as that of any children involved.

### Evaluating the effectiveness of Perpetrator Programs

- Research evaluating the efficacy of perpetrator programmes is costly and complex.
- Recent research in the U.K. has suggested some positive outcomes.<sup>2</sup>
- Evidence from the US is mixed and subject to significant methodological limitations.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Most evaluations fail to consider the multiple ways in which these programmes contribute towards the safety of women and children, and operate as part of an integrated service system rather than as stand-alone interventions.

### Examples of Perpetrator Programs

**Work with Perpetrators European Network (WWP EN)** is a network of European organisations and individuals whose primary aim is to improve women's and children's safety from domestic violence by promoting accountable and coordinated work with perpetrators that fulfils internationally accepted quality standards.<sup>5</sup> It is an NGO supported by the European Union and OAK Foundation. One of its roles is to collect national reports from across Europe in order to develop an overview of the most pressing issues. WWP EN hosted webinars in 2016, covering best practice examples.<sup>6</sup> One such webinar is 'First Steps: Engaging with Men Who Abuse their Partners' by David Moran. It explores issues such as men's denial, lack of motivation to engage, and fear (often presenting as anger).

In Norway, **Alternative to Violence (ATV)**<sup>7</sup> was the first treatment centre for perpetrators, opening in 1987. This organisation contributes actively to research in the area, and offers treatment and support services to all family members affected by violence.

**In Australia**, an excellent resource is the National Domestic and Family Violence Bench Book.<sup>8</sup>

### Challenged for Perpetrator Programmes<sup>6</sup>

- Lack of resources/money
- Lack of support from and cooperation with governmental services and authorities
- Cooperation with other NGOs, including women's support groups and/or partner support services is not developed or not developed enough
- Laws and legal development (e.g. In Russia there is still no law on domestic violence)
- Getting sufficient court referrals

## References

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