

Fact Sheet

UN Strengthening National Capacities to Prevent Domestic Violence



The Challenge

Domestic violence is a crime that deeply impacts its victims, and affects the lives of children, families and communities. Domestic violence is a scourge that affects all societies around the world. A study shows that as many as 50%¹ of women in the country are affected by this crime at some point in their lives. Yet, the majority suffers in silence – not aware of their legal rights or that help is available.


In 2008, to respond to domestic violence in the country, the Government adopted the **National Strategy for Protection Against Domestic Violence (2008-2011)**. The Strategy sets targets on improving domestic violence awareness, response and prevention. The strategy also commits the Government to improve cooperation and coordination between public institutions and civil society actors working on domestic violence, so that anyone who comes forward can expect an appropriate range of coordinated services—from protection, to legal aid, to measures aimed at empowering victims—no matter in which town or to which institution they report the crime. The objective is that standardized and efficient responses, which comply with international standards, alongside better public awareness, will meet the needs of victims and reduce domestic violence in the country.



How the UN helps

The UN is supporting the Government's efforts so that victims of domestic violence will be able to access better support services and enable them to make the changes they need to prevent becoming victims again. The programme contributes to national policy, victims' support, and public awareness:


Better National Policy


 The programme has provided technical advice and training to the **National Coordinative Body**, enabling it to effectively coordinate the implementation of the Strategy across all relevant ministries and NGOs, and to develop related policies. The programme also helped the Body develop and adopt the first ever protocols for dealing with domestic violence cases and referral mechanisms.

The National Coordinative Body established by the Government in 2008, is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the national domestic violence strategy. This Body is chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and comprises 31 members from all relevant Ministries and civil society organizations (See the NCB's website: <http://nkt.mtsp.gov.mk/nkt/>).

programme supported a comprehensive assessment of the national legislation resulting with recommendations for needed changes and amendments to the national domestic violence legal system.

Better Victim Support

 The first ever mechanism for **economic empowerment of victims** was developed and it is already effective. So far, the mechanism has supported 57 victims of domestic violence, including supporting them to establish their own business, subsidized employment, and improve their professional qualifications. Victims also receive adequate psychosocial support to overcome trauma and plan better futures.

 The provision of **legal aid to victims** was improved and increased. 17 NGOs, which cover the whole country, 30 professionals from the Centres for Social Work and 35 members of the Bar Association have been provided with training on the provision of legal aid to victims of domestic violence. 7 NGOs have been financially supported in their efforts to enhance the outreach of free legal aid services to victims of domestic violence and increase the awareness of local communities on the provision of free legal aid. Since June 2010, the programme provided legal aid to over 300 victims.

Key Programme Information

Duration: December 2008 - August 2012

UN Agencies: UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UN Women

Partners: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science

Funding (US\$ approximate):

2,500,000 Netherlands

1,000,000 UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

70,000 Government in-kind

"I decided a long time ago that I have to change something in my life. I hope that with the business I'm doing, which was established with the support of the UN programme, in a few years I will be able to continue my life the way I want"

Victim who benefitted from economic empowerment support

¹ latest domestic violence survey carried out in 2006 by the Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE)

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🎗 The programme supported the establishment of a **National Civil Society Network to End Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (www.glasprotivnasilstvo.org.mk)**, an informal entity of 20 organizations committed to work on prevention and protection from violence against women. The programme continues to develop the capacities of this network.

🎗 The programme has provided training for 180 **professionals dealing with domestic violence** from the Ministry of Interior, and social workers, judges and public prosecutors. The workshops enhanced their capacities in the area of criminal and civil domestic violence legal procedures and promoted a multi-institutional approach to deal with domestic violence cases.

🎗 The employees of almost all (25 out of 30) **centers for social work** and judges gained knowledge about how to protect the best interests of children in cases of divorce and separation, particularly when it is related to domestic violence.

🎗 14 professionals were trained and certified by the Society of Psychological Assistance from Zagreb to provide **psychosocial treatment of perpetrators** of domestic violence. The provision of targeted support to perpetrators can contribute to stopping the chain of violence.

🎗 A **Domestic Violence Counselling Centre** for Children and Families at Risk of Domestic Violence was opened in Skopje in March 2011. The Centre has a pedagogue, psychologist and psychiatrist offering professional services to clients referred from the Centres for Social Work. Thus far, support was provided to 38 beneficiaries.

🎗 For the first time ever, in 34 municipalities in the country, an institutional coordination mechanism is established in the form of **local coordinative bodies**. These bodies involve all stakeholders at municipal level, and are led by civil society. In addition, the programme promoted the British **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Coordination mechanism** in 6 municipalities and continues to work towards widening of this model throughout the country.



Better Public Understanding

🎗 Two national scale **public awareness campaigns** have been carried out. These campaigns included flyers, posters, billboards, public appearances, TV spots and outdoor events. The first one, *'A Real Man Never Hits a Woman'*, carried out in 2009, featured three famous male sports stars. The TV spot was seen by 89% of television viewers across the country. During and shortly after the campaign, calls to the national domestic violence helplines doubled.



The second, 2010 campaign *'I have the courage and the strength to say no to violence. You can do it too'*, used 16 distinguished women from different areas of social life as role models, who jointly sent a message that women should feel empowered to take a stand against domestic violence.

🎗 Meanwhile, in 34 municipalities across the country, civil society organizations worked on **raising local awareness** and influenced community behavior.



"Violence is when the stronger humiliates and abuses the weaker" – 7th grade student.

🎗 A study into the perceptions of seventh-grade students revealed that all forms of violent behaviors are observed in **schools**. Children point to ignorance, prejudice and stereotypes related to gender, ethnicity, disabilities, culture, appearance and religion, as the reasons for violence. The findings have been used to design a campaign against violence for schools, which actively involves school children in raising their voice against violence (www.beznasilstvo.mk; www.facebook.com/unicef.mk).

Key Future Work

- Conduct a National Baseline Survey on Domestic and Gender-Based Violence for the first time
- Carry out the third national domestic violence public awareness campaign
- Support the process of ratification and implementation of the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – CAHVIO
- Implement a campaign against violence in schools
- Support the development of a new National Domestic and Gender Based Violence Strategy (2012-2015)
- Support the establishment of shelter centers for victims of domestic violence

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