



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Agenda: OSCE Experts' seminar on innovative approaches to combating violence against women (VAW) - Dushanbe, 20 to 22 October 2008

ABSTRACTS OF PANELISTS' PRESENTATIONS¹

Panel I: Efforts to combat VAW in Tajikistan

Ms. Khairinisso Yusufi:

The presentation refers to the main activity of the Committee on Women and Family Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan to reduce violence against women (VAW). It focuses on the improvement of the legal basis and the lobbying made for the adoption of the draft law «On social protection of victims of domestic violence». Ms. Yusufi also presents the institutional coordination mechanisms of the activities of the Government structures and of the public organizations (NGOs) and the establishing and functioning of the Crisis Centers which provided social and psychological services by the Committee on Women and Family Affairs in partnership with NGOs and international organizations.

Ms. Tatiana Bozrikova:

The presentation focuses on the cooperation mechanisms among public organizations (NGOs) in Tajikistan to reduce VAW, the national and regional working groups of Coalition of NGOs "From Legal Equality to Factual Equality", and the development of a partnership with the State Statistic Committee and the Information Board of the Ministry of Interior for the provision of access for NGOs to official statistics on VAW.

Ms. Bozrikova explains the creation of a unique data base of applications to Crisis Centers based on Microsoft Access program and how it is being used in the lobbying for the adoption of the Law «On social protection of victims of domestic violence».

Ms. Nargis Azizova:

The presentation relates to the work to prevent and respond to Gender Based Violence as one of the areas for potential joint programming for UN agencies within their next Development Assistance Framework for 2009-2014. CEDAW Committee's concluding observations also provide a good ground for joint support by UN agencies on responding to needs and priorities in the field of violence against women. The findings of the country visit (May 2008) by the UN Special Rapporteur Ms. Yakin ERTÜRK on violence against women, its causes and consequences will be also used by UN agencies for strengthening a dialogue with government's officials, parliamentarians, members of justice system and CSOs to find more efficient ways to overcome gender-based violence and discrimination.

On 6 August 2008 the Framework for Action of the Secretary General's Campaign to End VAW 2008-2015 was issued with an overall objective to increase public awareness,

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political will and resources for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls. It is expected that “by 2015 the Campaign will have made an impact in terms of an increased number of counties, at both national and local levels, with dedicated laws, action plans, and budgets in place, including programmes for prevention and multi-sectoral services for abused women and girls.

Panel II: Prevention of violence against women

Ms. Rosa Logar:

As a member of the Council of Europe Task Force for the campaign on violence against women, Ms. Logar presents the development, implementation and results achieved in the fight against violence in the members states of the Council of Europe.

Ms. Gemma Connell:

The presentation refers to the work of the United Nations to address violence against women, such as the Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women (2006), and the Secretary-General's "UNITE to end violence against women" campaign, 2008 to 2015. In particular, it focuses on ongoing work to establish a coordinated database on violence against women, as requested by the General Assembly. The database, to be launched in March 2009, will contain information on measures taken by Member States to address violence against women in their legal framework; policies and programmes; institutional mechanisms; domestic, regional and international coordination and collaboration initiatives; services for women victims/survivors of violence; allocation of resources; awareness raising and capacity-building; research and evaluations; data and statistics; and promising practices. A second focus of the presentation is the questionnaire, sent to Member States in October 2008, to collect information for inclusion in the database.

Ms. Ema Kamkia:

The presentation focuses on the strategies Fund Sukhumi has chosen with the purpose of supporting internally displaced women from conflict regions, including their psycho-social and economic rehabilitation and integration in the local community.

Women from post-conflict regions appeared in a new and irrelevant social reality, in the conditions of total destruction of fundamental values, followed by disharmony in human relations in family, loosing of functional roles, feeling of instability. In post-conflict periods, the threat for women of being subject to domestic violence increases. It is very important not to work with results of violence, but to prevent violence. Thus, it is necessary that women be aware of their rights, have good education, be communicative and economically independent.

Taking measures for supporting women will not be effective, if we do not communicate with their family members – husbands, parents and children. The methods used give the opportunity to get completely acquainted with the culture of the families. Conversation moves from known to unknown, from simple to difficult, in the way that audience makes each conclusion around the problem without being influenced. These methods are discussions, analysis and elements of forum-theatre. For example, the fact that different forms of violence take place in the families is not the “ready-made” information that participants are given, but they admit this reality on their own and try to find the ways out of the problem.

Ms. Marie-Christine Crespy:

During 2000, a large survey took place in France. About 7,000 women were questioned. This survey revealed that about 1,300,000 women have been victims of gender based violence within the year: 1 woman out of 10 has been a victim of domestic violence. This was the beginning of major awareness campaigns towards women, then towards witnesses and perpetrators.

In 2001, the slogan was: "In case of violence, break silence". Then, in 2006, the slogan was "Stop violence, to act is to tell it" and now, from the 2nd October 2008 "Don't let violence settle in, react", a slogan to incite action. This campaign addresses not only women, or potential victims, but also targets the perpetrators of the violence, and the witnesses of these acts. There is a major change concerning these messages: VAW doesn't concern women only, but the whole society. The more the silence is broken, the more everybody can act against it. A national free number is available for everybody: 3919.

Panel III: Protection from violence against women

Mr. Andrei Sinelnikov:

The presentation focuses on ANNA's experience in using international women's human rights standards for improving response to VAW. In order to raise standards for service provision, to make legislation more effective for the protection of survivors, and to improve NGO and government cooperation, ANNA has founded the Independent National Women's Human Rights Commission on VAW. As a result, the monitoring established by the Commission assesses the current situation and identifies the obstacle and limits in the system of response to VAW in Russia. At the same time, ANNA's model of monitoring which is presented in the seminar is aimed at not only describing and diagnosing the situation, but as well at implementing changes. The Report prepared by the Commission is expected to be used as a tool in the actions in the interests of survivors of VAW.

Ms. Helena Ewalds:

Since the end of 1990's several national programmes aiming to reduce violence or to develop services for victims of violence have been implemented in Finland. Despite continuous efforts, violence against women remains a big problem, especially violence against women in the domestic sphere. Indeed, a national survey shows that the number of women victims of violence have not decreased during the period of eight years. This is, we could argue, that the long tradition of equality between men and women has insufficiently facilitated perceiving the problem of WAV as a human rights matter rather than a private matter. Therefore, the main question is how to ensure a comprehensive, coordinated and rights-based approach against VAW at different levels, throughout the country.

In recent years the focus has been in particular on the development of multi-professional cooperation at all administrative levels. A good example is an inter-ministerial coordinating body set up by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in spring 2008 with a mandate to coordinate, develop and internally monitor and evaluate polices on domestic violence and violence against women. In the course of the last four years different agencies in the municipal level have purposefully created co-operative structures. A milestone was May 2008 when the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities provided municipalities with the recommendations for the

prevention of interpersonal and domestic violence. The recommendations stress the importance of strategic planning and a comprehensive approach. The recommendations emphasize that appropriate services and care models are needed especially for people with disabilities, immigrant people and elderly people suffering from violence. The implementation of the recommendations will be assessed during the year 2011.

Finally, the innovative element of the experiences presented draws, in a way, back to very basics: the development of new kind of services and a genuinely victim-centered approach is not always dependent on resources only, but more on ways of working together (coordination), including with the third sector.

Ms. Orzu Ganieva:

The presentation shares the experience of the shelter for victims of violence supported by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan managed by the Women's center "Gulrukhsor" since 2005 in Kudjand. Besides presenting the protection services offered through this shelter (psychological support, juridical help, education programmes, etc), the presentation also focuses on the innovative method of the social patronage.

Panel IV: Prosecution of violence against women

Ms. Rosa Logar:

Ms. Logar introduces the experience of Austria in developing a comprehensive system to prevent violence and support survivors of violence. Her presentation argues that ensuring a good legal basis for prosecution is not enough, but that a comprehensive and coordinated approach to combating violence must be ensured in order to successfully address violence against women. Some of the aspects covered are quality service standards for victims, police work, eviction and barring orders, civil law measures, etc.

Ms. Sonia Chirinos:

The presentation answers questions regarding the situation in Spain, in general and in particular, within the judicial organisation and the new Act on integrated protection measures against VAW. The presentation focuses on the functioning of the new VAW Courts. The presentation highlights that in order for things to change, the first thing to change are the instruments that can be used to combat VAW. At the same time, having new laws is not enough: the battle against VAW is a permanent battle, and governments must be very "active" to achieve the goal.

The presentation highlights the importance on giving a specialised answer to the problem of VAW and how the judicial system in Spain can be used as a good model for other countries.

Ms. Nidzara Ahmetasevic:

Ms. Ahmetasevic gives a short overview about the post war life of victims of war time rape. Nobody knows how many victims suffered rape during the war. Even with trails against some of those who committed crimes, on the international and domestic level, many of those victims are still not ready to talk about what happened to them during the war. In the worst case, they still blamed themselves and feel shame because of what has been done to them. One of the reasons for this is still the State's attitude toward them since there is not much encouragement for them to talk about their faith or to openly condemn those who committed crimes like rape is.

Panel V: Addressing and involving men as role models and actors in ending VAW.

Mr. Scott Cameron & Ms. Heather Coady:

The presenters speak about the important role that young people can play in combating violence against women and children, and more specifically about Scott's own campaigning role on behalf of children and young people (he started this work as a 14 year old and is now 21) and the significant difference this has made to influencing Scotland's commitment to this agenda.

Mr. Saghir Bukhari:

The presentation mainly focuses on the importance of engaging boys and men to prevent and address gender based violence. It describes key concepts, masculinities and its relationship towards effective response. The presentation also describes relationship of masculinities in shaping gender socialization and reproduction of inequalities. In addition to the above, the presentation also puts light on some of the key experiences and recommendations on working with men and boys to prevent and address Gender Based Violence from South Asia and Pakistan. E.g. the attitudinal change process focusing on men and boys at individual level and coordination and networking at the country and regional level as two innovative and catalytic aspects presented.

Mr. Neil Blacklock:

Male perpetrators of domestic violence are known to many different agencies and networks both formal and informal. However we often avoid direct engagement with these men about their behaviour. Often we fear that we could make things worse and place the women and children at even greater risk. This presentation looks at the UK experience engaging with perpetrators of domestic violence, how we have tried to do this safely, using of service's standards to improve performance and some of the challenges ahead. The key messages of the presentation are: How to make work with domestic violence perpetrators safer for women and children, why to use service standards for perpetrators services, and using service standards to make safer services.