



# Full Cooperation: Zero Violence Project Evaluation

## Final Report

### 1. Background to project and evaluation.

Following the ratification of the Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2014, Malta committed itself to strengthen national legislation and reorganise current services in the field of VAW and GBV. A set of amendments, intended to update existing legislation in line with the standards of the Convention, were adopted by the end of 2017, with implementation from 2018. These changes to the law were included in the project actions through the training programme.

In addition, the Human Rights and Integration Directorate (HRID), the project leader, developed a Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence, which was published and launched in 2017. This provided a framework for the project and supported the holistic and multi-agency approach suggested in the project. While not a product of the project, and therefore outside the scope of this evaluation, the Strategy became a key element in how GBV is addressed in Malta during the lifetime of the project, and it will frame the on-going work recommended below.

At the outset of the project all of the services had their own methods and practices in response to victims of violence. Lack of coordination and follow-up often hindered victims from accessing adequate protection and safeguards from their perpetrator.

The various services also lacked the necessary guidelines and tools to refer victims to other support services. For example, if a victim filed a report at a police station, the incident was only then addressed in court. The victim was not referred to Aġenzija Appoġġ



(FSWS) for social work intervention, the development of a safety plan or for emergency shelter. The victim had to seek alternative pathways after filing a police report, in a range of different settings, at different locations and with subsequent repetition of information.

Therefore, it was identified as crucial for victims to receive a holistic service addressing their needs, revolving around safety, financial independence, alternative accommodation and legal assistance as well as access to legal information.

### **1.1 Theory of change underpinning the project.**

The assumptions underpinning the project were that a coordinated model of service delivery would contribute to better outcomes for victims of domestic violence; secondly, that trained professional staff in all of the services would provide the holistic service more appropriately and with outcomes that are victim centered; thirdly that increased awareness about domestic violence against women and its consequences and how people can be supported would contribute to a change in attitudes and behaviours leading to a decrease in domestic violence against women, and increased reporting.

Creating Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and a manual of operating procedures (MOPs), co-designed by the various stakeholders, would underpin this model of service provision.

In order to design the coordinated, inter-agency model of services, research on the existing practices, the experiences of services users and the experiences of professionals providing the different services was undertaken. This research data provided the baseline for measuring change/improvement in the services, and informed the training delivered to the services' professionals.

In addition, further recommendations to improve the services offered to victims and survivors of domestic violence were based on the research data.

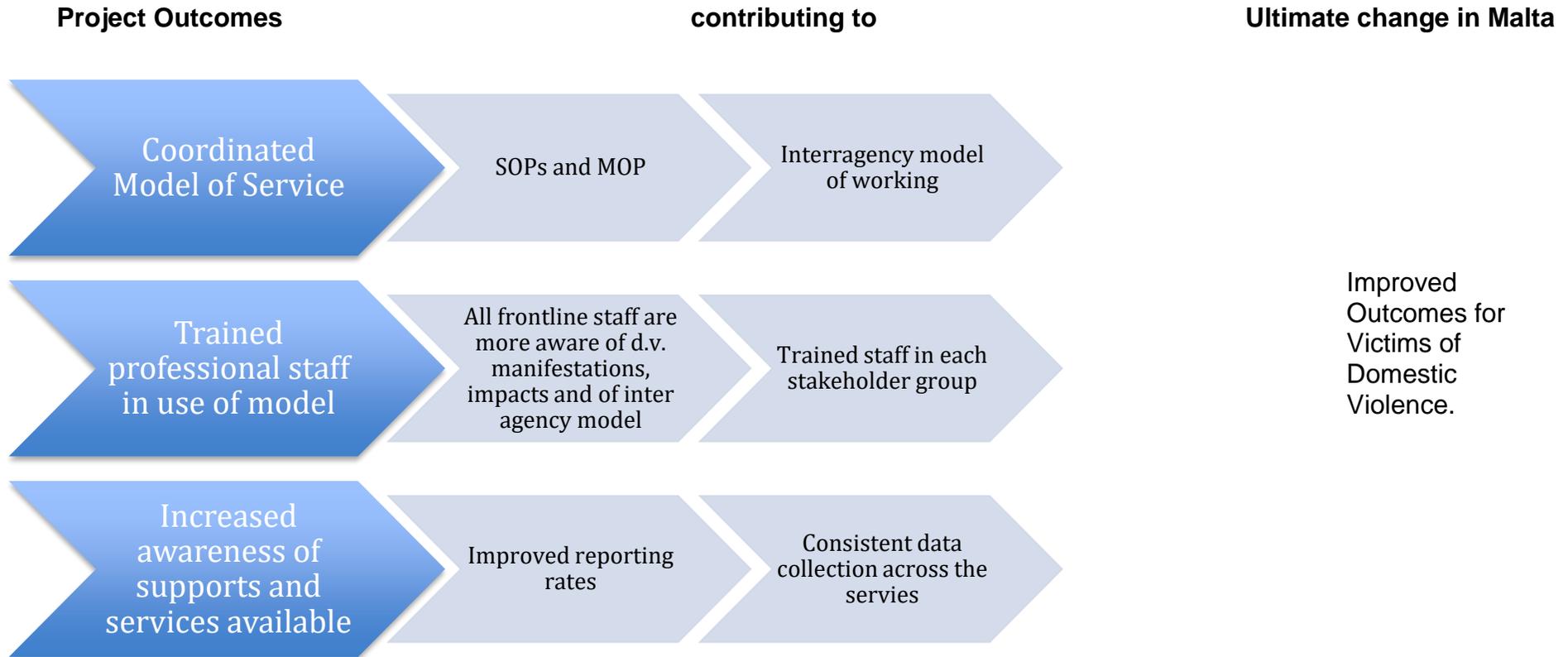


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Fig. 1 Theory of Change underpinning the project.





## 1.2 Identified Needs and actions.

The project addressed three identified needs, namely:

- a. Data collection, research, analysis and dissemination of results:
  - Review of existing literature, placing current issues regarding VAW and GBV in Malta in context and critically reviewing them in contrast with international literature and best practice to pave way for the setting up of an SOP;
  - To conduct empirical research to gain a better understanding of victim and professional responses, to identify needs and gaps to be included in the training and in the MOU and SOP;
- b. Establishment of a steering group consisting of key contacts in stakeholder entities to facilitate and coordinate VAW and GBV services:
  - Development and implementation of multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation among professionals to prevent and respond to VAW and GBV;
  - Development and implementation of multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary MOU and SOPs to ensure an effective referral system and the immediate protection of victims;
- c. Professional training and awareness raising:
  - Train professionals thoroughly on VAW and GBV, and adequate responses to such forms of violence;
  - Raise awareness amongst professionals, victims and/or potential victims on the new procedures in place;
  - Raise awareness among the general public, possible bystanders and witnesses to encourage reporting.



### 1.3 Project Objectives

The overall aim of this project was to provide a more effective response to victims, and help prevent re-victimisation and enable prevention through multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation. The main objectives were:

- a. To establish multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation, enabling relevant professionals to collaborate on, mitigate and respond to VAW and GBV effectively;
- b. To develop and implement training programmes, an MOU and SOPs enabling cooperation and coordination of professionals from various sectors who come into contact with potential victims, thus ascertaining an upgrade in the quality of services and the introduction of national minimum standards;
- c. To raise awareness and encourage victims and potential victims, witnesses and bystanders to report violence and new procedures in place to seek help through the upgraded services; and
- d. To share lessons learned in EU fora and bilaterally.

### 1.4 Target Groups

A holistic multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach was put into effect by bringing all relevant stakeholders to work together:

- a. Research and training
  - The professionals included in the training and research elements included teachers, guidance teachers, nurses, doctors, social workers, psychologists, counsellors, community workers, police officers, lawyers, and members of the judiciary. In addition, probation officers and midwives among others, also participated in the training once the roll out of training began.
- b. Steering group



- Senior officials appointed by MEAE(MSDC), MEDE, ODPM MFH (MEH) MJCL, CDV, FSWS, MPF. A representative from Probation Service joined the Steering Group once the project was initiated.
- c. Awareness Raising Campaign
- Victims of Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence; and
  - The general public (possible witnesses and bystanders) who will be encouraged to be more vigilant and ready to report VAW and GBV.

## **2. Evaluation Framework.**

The external evaluation included half yearly reports on progress, attainment of targets and milestones and yearly reports on the progress towards the project objectives to each of the project partners, as well as an overall mid and end of year progress reports. The process of qualitative facilitative interviews with the project partners throughout contributed to an active learning culture within the project structures and facilitated refinement of the actions and activities based on feedback and learning from the work.

### **2.1 Evaluation Objectives.**

- Development of a robust evidence based methodology including reliable monitoring, evaluation and reporting;
- Consultation with the relevant project partners to define the expected impact of the activities in measureable terms;
- Measurement of the impact of the activities;
- Evidence of changes in both attitudes and behaviours of professionals, service providers, general public and victims of violence;
- Assessment of how the activities and the use of deliverables have led to attitudinal and behavioral changes among the target group. The relevant professionals collaborate more effectively, witnesses are more likely to report violence and are aware of the authorities to which they should report and victims receive an improved comprehensive service;



- Reflection on the possible effects of social desirability bias in the project, amongst the stakeholders and in the evaluation of the project;
- Clear indication on 'what works' and 'what does not work' in the context of services and the realities for victims of gender based violence against women.

## **2.2 Evaluation Process.**

The evaluation used action research and formative methodology, with regular meetings and reports to the Project Coordinating Team. The evaluation was based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collected, with opportunities for reflection, learning and enhancement of programme activities accordingly. It also included meetings with and observation of the activities, outputs and activities of the Research Team, the Steering Group, the Training team and training sessions. Data analysis included reflection on and monitoring of programme activities, and assessment of impact of programme actions.

## **3.0 Evaluation Data.**

The project was delivered very successfully; attaining more than the target numbers attending the training; creating an invaluable baseline data in the research report on the experiences of the victims and survivors of domestic violence and of the experiences of the professionals working to support them; creating an inter disciplinary approach to service provision, agreeing SOPs between key service providers, generating awareness of and about the services available and of the actions people can take around domestic violence and in fact going beyond the project outputs, delivering some additional activities.

## **3.1 Workstream 0 Project Management.**

A Project Coordination team within the Human Rights and Integration Directorate managed the project actions, activities, and finances. A Project Manager was appointed for the duration of the project and provided an excellent administrative and support and



documentation framework. In particular, documenting and monitoring the project actions, numbers of participants and coordinating the training and public events of the project was seamlessly delivered, and facilitated the actions. The project financial management, reporting and engagement with The European Commission and the project evaluation were all accomplished to support the project outcomes, and to best practice standards.

#### Recommendation for further project activity

- Once the project was awarded an inception meeting of project partners to generate a revised timetable for synchronising the project actions would be useful.

### **3.2 Workstream 1. Research.**

The research used a mixed methodology; including literature review, qualitative interviews and focus groups. In total 50 participants, 23 survivors and 27 professionals provided the source data for Malta. From the data 8 types of barriers were identified and 32 recommendations addressing these barriers presented. The barriers included: cultural; socioeconomic; survivor related; perpetrator related; offspring related; informal networks related; psychosocial/healthcare/educational provision; and justice system barriers – including courts and police. The recommendations are clustered under the Istanbul Convention 4P's of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Integrated Policy. The full research report is available at [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Zero Violence/](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Zero%20Violence/)

As the project progressed, a number of these recommendations were addressed, in particular the integrated services, the legal framework, the policy and legislative framework, and the focus on risk assessment and victim support. The research data confirmed what had been known but wasn't documented, and which formed the basis for the project design. Hence, there seemed to be a very swift progress on the recommendations within the timeframe of the project. In particular, the recommendations relating to advancing on legal changes; development of an overarching GBV&DV strategy; policy and practice changes and developments within the services and agencies were all advanced by the project and during its timeframe because these gaps were already known by the key project partners, and only required the focus of the project to support their implementation.



The research findings were presented to the Steering Committee and at the Final Conference of the project and are available on the webpage of the project.

A key outcome of the research is the baseline data on the experience of the services, by the services users and the professionals. When the Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence Strategy and Action Plan Vision 2020 – Society’s Concern is reviewed and evaluated, comparison of the experience of the services with this baseline data from 2017 research report, would be very useful to assess the impact of the Strategy and its associated actions.

A recommendation from the Final Conference is that the Strategy and Action Plan be reviewed early in 2019, so that concerted progress can continue to be made. This could be undertaken either through the Inter Ministerial Committee or the Commission on Gender Based and Domestic Violence.

Recommendation for future projects.

- Maintaining an on-going, formal, relationship between the research team and the other project partners would contribute to focus on the data and the recommendations for improvements articulated in the data.

### **3.3 Workstream 2 Developing Interagency cooperation and working systems.**

Creating the Steering Group to develop MOU’s and SOPs between the agencies was the key driver in achieving progress on these outputs. The Steering Group had a twofold function – to provide the contact points from each service for participants to the training, and to generate the SOPs/MOU’s required to provide a multi-agency response to victims of domestic violence.

Through the meetings of the Steering Group, and in conjunction with the initial findings from the research, it was decided to create a guide to the services, and a mapping of the various services involved in supporting survivors. This resulted in a booklet, Gender-



Based Violence and Domestic Violence Collection of Services. This was then provided to all the participants on the training courses and has advanced the networking and exchange of contacts and knowledge of where services are located. Lack of this knowledge had been acknowledged as a barrier to the comprehensive and holistic service provision, which is best practice. This Collection of Services was generated instead of the Manual of Procedures (MOP) as it became clear this was a more useful and beneficial output which would have a lasting impact on service delivery.

The Steering Group worked bilaterally to create SOPs between Appogg and the Police, and Appogg and PHC. These SOPs are now in place and operational.

In addition, the services began to reflect on the need for consistency of approach internal to each of their services/agencies. Because of this, development and revision of internal SOPs is progressing in a number of the agencies. During the Roundtable, this internal examination of consistency within services was identified as a recommendation for all services/agencies. Ensuring that all branches of each service use the same approach, have the same procedures and reporting mechanisms is essential to embed the multi-agency and inter agency approach developed.

During the training programme, participants were introduced to the concept of a multi-agency risk assessment conference, which led to the development of MARAM as the approach to risk assessment and management, which is planned to be implemented from March 2019 in Malta. This Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Meeting (MARAM) will be chaired by Appogg and will include a designated MARAM officer (DMO) from all agencies. A video of a sample MARAM was developed and was used during the training in Stage 2. It will also be used in the roll out of training within the services. This is a significant development of an inter-agency, holistic approach to service provision for victims of domestic violence, and is a key project outcome.

A further development as outcome form the inter agency collaboration and cooperation is the emergence of the possibility of two 'hubs' for addressing gender-based and domestic violence in Malta. The proposal would include a dedicated physical space, one each in the north and in the south of Malta, to provide both police and social work services. The discussion about staffing, financing



and establishment of these hubs is ongoing and is being strongly considered. The specialist staff providing services in the hubs would be key in the MARAM conferences, and in delivering the holistic service to women. This is a development that will require further resourcing and therefore monitoring its implementation.

The final action taken was a roundtable for reflection and learning from the project. This was facilitated by the external evaluator, providing a final, collective opportunity for documenting the learning from the project, while acknowledging the outputs and outcomes. It also provided the project partners with the opportunity to identify how the outcomes from the project can be embedded and mainstreamed. A learning note from the Roundtable was made available to Steering Group members, and particular points highlighted in the final evaluation reports to each project partner to facilitate their on-going change. See conclusions and recommendations below for ensuring the success of the project's achievements.

A key learning point from the inter agency working is that it needs to be continued. As the project concludes the Steering Group is disbanded, but other opportunities continue to exist, which can be used to monitor the on-going implementation of project outcomes. An Inter-Ministerial Committee was established during the lifetime of the project, where the members of the IMC come from the same agencies as the agencies involved in the Steering Group Committee. This can provide an opportunity to monitor the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan, as well as the roll out of training, the establishment of MARAM and possibly, the creation of the hubs, and the continued development of SOPs between agencies. Secondly, the Commission on Gender Based and Domestic Violence will continue to take a lead role in addressing the issues of gender based and domestic violence in Malta and continue to work closely with HRID to ensure the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. As with all new practices and systems, it will be important for the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Commission on Gender Based and Domestic Violence, along with HRID to continue to support the implementation of these new mechanisms in Malta.



## Recommendations for future

- To sustain the outcome of the project there is a need to have consistent practices and policies in each agency. Each individual agency needs to update its own practice guidelines for the full range of staff operating in the service, detailing the logistics of the procedures, with the identified focal point for MARAM communicated and known in each. This would then result in Internal Standard Operating Procedures for each agency, as well as any bi lateral SOPs and MOUs generated.
- Cross agency policies can be further developed where this is useful, once the operation of the MARAM is rolled out and a need is identified.
- All staff needs to have a full knowledge and application of the legal basis for all services. Clear text and points for application for each service on new law and a Q and A for developmental purposes in each service could usefully be developed.

### **3.4 Workstream 3 Training Programmes.**

Training of professionals was the second major activity of the project, and was delivered to a total of 716 people working in a range of services. The anticipated training cohort had been for 520 people. The table below gives the numbers and range of professions who accessed the training, and demonstrates the impact the provision of the training had. Given the much greater number who accessed the training it is clear there was a very high level of interest and demand for the training, and that there was openness to enhancing the services provided, an awareness of the need for improvement and development in Malta. Once the training began, there was an immediate request for an additional Stage 1 training, which was organised and delivered by HRID and UoW, and professionals from other departments of the various services, and from other services requested attendance. This is indicated in the table below.

In addition, a one-day training for judges was organised and delivered. As well as providing an opportunity for the research data to be explored by the judges, the training provided a very useful opportunity for the judges to collectively address the gaps in the system from the judicial perspective. As a result of the training it was agreed to continue links between HRID, the department of Justice and



the Judicial Studies Committee, to explore further future training, and to discuss further the needs of the judges from other service providers such and the Police and from Agencija Appogg.

It was regrettable that the legal aid lawyers were not able to participate in the numbers anticipated. The rationale offered about the self-employed work status of the lawyers might need to be considered for future training opportunities. Secondly, consultation about the duration and timing of the training might possibly have facilitated attendance.

Table 1. Training participants - anticipated and actual numbers

		<b>Target as per Grant Agreement</b>	<b>Attended Stage 1 Training</b>	<b>Attended Stage 2 Training</b>	<b>Attended Stage 3 Training</b>
<b>Primary Healthcare Department</b>	<b>Doctors</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Primary Healthcare Department</b>	<b>Nurses</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Accident &amp; Emergency</b>	<b>Nurses</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mater Dei Hospital (MDH)</b>	<b>Various health Professionals (incl. midwives)</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5</b>



<b>Gozo General Hospital (GGH)</b>	<b>Nurses, other health professions</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>FSWS</b>	<b>Social and Community Professionals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>MEDE</b>	<b>Psycho-social school Professionals</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>MEDE</b>	<b>Guidance Teachers</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MEDE</b>	<b>PSD Teachers (*Some PSD Teachers are also Guidance teachers)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>MJCL</b>	<b>Legal Aid Lawyers</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>MJCL</b>	<b>Judges*</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>MJCL</b>	<b>Senior Professionals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DPP</b>	<b>Probation and Parole Officers</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>MPF</b>	<b>Police Officers</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>19</b>



NGOs	NGO Professionals	50	46	39	7
MSDC/ MEAE	Professionals	n/a	7	3	0
CRPD	Professionals	n/a	2	2	0
CDV	Professionals	n/a	5	1	1
UoM	Professionals	n/a	3	1	0
Secretariat for Catholic Education (SFCE)	Social workers, counsellors, psychologists	n/a	28	26	6
MGOZ	Child and Family Welfare (Social Work Services)	n/a	2	2	0
		520	716	600	98



Stage 1, 2 and 3 training programme outlines are available on the webpage of the project, with resource material, references, links etc. all made available ([https://meae.gov.mt/en/Zero Violence/](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Zero%20Violence/)).

In addition, a comprehensive report documenting the training and the outcomes in terms of changes to attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, and confidence of professionals is provided by the trainers Prof Elizabeth Gilchrist and Beverley Gilbert and is also available on the project webpage. Please refer to this report for further details.

The outcomes and impact of the training element of the project are:

- Statistically relevant positive changes in the participants in relation to their knowledge about the forms, experience and impact of domestic violence;
- Awareness and experience of the benefits of inter-agency working both as individuals and between agencies;
- Awareness of the need for and the benefits of a common risk assessment tools;
- Increased networking and trust between the agencies;
- Awareness of the other agencies and their contact details;
- Confidence of the professionals to provide a better service based on risk management and safety of the woman and her children.

Stage 3 training equipped the participants with the skills and information to deliver training within the various different services and agencies. By end of 2018 Appogg had begun to roll out its internal training programme. PHC, MEDE and the Police are scheduled to progress the internal training from 2019.

### **3.5 Workstream 4 Awareness Raising.**

The awareness raising campaign included a range of formats to bring the different messages to the general public. These included posters, video clips, radio and social media clips, on-line newspaper ads, and information shots at bus shelters and in public



entertainment spaces. The themes covered focused on the access to services; coercive behaviours; standing against violence; and exploring attitudes to domestic violence and violence against women.

A detailed report on the reach, clicks, impressions, and conversations started for each of the Google, Facebook and newspaper on-line ads, the insertion of the video clips on Facebook was produced by the campaign company covering the different campaign periods in 2017 and 2018. Samples of the posters, messages and adverts are also available online on the project's webpage.

In addition, the project developed a brand image, colouring, font etc. to provide a consistent theme for the various products. These included a project logo, branded pens, notebooks, back drop, roll up banner and the certificates awarded to all of trained personnel for each of the three stages of training.

Monitoring data for reach, views, impressions and conversations started indicate is useful in that we can see a degree of engagement with the awareness raising campaign. It would be useful in the coming months and years to gather data on the impact of these ads. After the 2017 campaign there was no increase in the numbers reporting or using the emergency helpline number, a target which could have been expected to change as a result of the campaign. (As reported by Appogg project partner, interview 1 2018). It would be useful in the coming year to gather data on whether people recall the ads, whether it contributed to a change in behaviours or in attitudes and whether it contributed to better services outcomes for victims of domestic violence.

Dissemination of the project's material was available through the project's webpage. Making all of the research, training and awareness raising materials available online will contribute to good practices throughout Europe, and continue to raise awareness of 'what works'.

A launch event was held in 2017, setting out the project aims and objectives, with participation from the project partners and relevant stakeholders. This provided an opportunity for further clarification of the project and the timetable of actions and activities.



The final conference of the project, held in November 2018 was well attended and addressed by the Minister, thereby gaining further media coverage on the work and the outcomes from the project. It provided an opportunity for the project partners to engage with each other, addressing the progress and the gaps still remaining to provide the best service to domestic violence victims.

It also provided another opportunity for the voice of women, through the Women's Rights Foundation NGO to be brought into the discussion.

As with all public awareness raising campaigns, it is important to ensure the messages are about changing the 'unwanted' behaviours and attitudes, and increasing knowledge about services and supports. In this particular work on DV and GBV it is important to ensure there is a focus on both the victims and the perpetrators. It is the unacceptable behaviours of the perpetrators that ultimately need to change. In the interim, messages encouraging changes in the behaviours of victims, such as of seeking help, support and information about services will be necessary so that the services can be best provided.

Recommendation for future projects.

- Inclusion of the expert by experience voice in the design and delivery of services – either directly or through survivor advocates.

#### **4. Learning Points for Reflection and next steps for all project partners.**

While the project delivered on all of its actions and activities, and generated a number of additional outputs and outcomes as outlined above, it is important to note the learning points raised during the project and specifically in the Roundtable for further and continued work articulated by the project partners. These are clustered all together here, some having already been included under specific work streams.



### Project Management

- Once the project was awarded an inception meeting of project partners to generate a revised timetable for synchronising the project actions would be useful.

### Research Team and Steering Group

- Maintaining an on-going, formal, relationship between the research team and the other project partners would contribute to focus on the data and the recommendations for improvements articulated in the data.

### All agencies

- To sustain the outcome of the project there is a need to have consistent practices and policies in each agency. Each individual agency needs to update its own practice guidelines for the full range of staff operating in the service, detailing the logistics of the procedures, with the identified focal point for MARAM communicated and known in each. This would then result in Internal Standard Operating Procedures for each agency, as well as any bi lateral SOPs and MOUs generated
- Cross agency policies can be further developed where this is useful, once the operation of the MARAM is rolled out and a need is identified.
- All staff needs to have a full knowledge and application of the legal basis for all services. Clear text and points for application for each service on new law and a Q and A for developmental purposes in each service could usefully be developed.
- Data sharing between the agencies needs further attention
- Each service has its own culture, and there is a process of socialisation to that culture, which can be different from the policies, and practices of the service. It is important that training in the various professions address attitudes, beliefs and behaviours about gender, roles, stereotypes, gender based violence as these contribute to the culture which the research data has shown is a strong inhibitor to addressing gender based and domestic violence in Malta.
- Bullying and GBV within the services is an issue linked to the culture in agency and in society. This requires focus and interventions



### Training/professional Development

- Training is required at undergraduate and professional levels, and through continuous professional development provided in-service.
- Provide training at the point of entry to the jobs/agencies, E.g. Academy for Disciplined Forces
- Further work within the criminal justice system and in particular the lawyers will be needed given the lack of reach to this cohort during the project.

### Advancing on progress made and monitoring the implementation of progress made during the timeframe of the project

- Exploring the extension of the use of video conferencing for evidence, affidavits for medical evidence and alternative safe venues for undertaking video conferences
- It would be useful for monitoring progress on the implementation of MARAM and roll out of DASH training for a review to be carried out after 6 months and again 12 months (what's working, what need to be re worked etc.).
- Advancing the establishment of the hubs
- The range and extent of the training being delivered by the Stage 3 trained personnel being rolled out
- The training offered at the Academy for Disciplined Forces could be linked to the Diploma in Policing at the University of Malta in order to identify further protocols on a system wide basis.
- Offer holistic support to the women to include focus on housing, employment, and financial support.
- Review of the Strategy and Action Plan before 2020.

### Specific learning and development points which emerged from the final conference:

- ✓ The MARAM is an integrated, multi-agency practice and will provide best service to victims of DV.
- ✓ It requires adequate resourcing and implementation, and non-replication of tasks.
- ✓ Looking at the impact of GBV could be a useful next step – economically, socially, on children, culturally, and not only seeing it as an individual issue.



- ✓ It is important to have leadership champions for the multi-agency approach in each of the agencies, and to continue providing training on an on-going basis.
- ✓ Next phase of work could usefully explore cultural definitions of femininity, masculinity, relationships, respect and equality.
- ✓ Re- Victimization can occur easily, and the training within services needs to address this.
- ✓ Role of media in covering and reporting cases, in identifying law and new development. The next step is training of journalists etc.
- ✓ All protocols, MOU's and SOPs need to be available in English and Maltese, communicated internally in each service, and training provided to everyone in the system. These need to be identified as official documents, and updated as required.
- ✓ A focus on how to develop this multi-agency practice on GOZO is required.
- ✓ Need to link this work to non-discriminatory service delivery – on grounds of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability – and how the services consider the intersectionality of the issues, the multiplier effects and any specific vulnerabilities experienced by women who have additional barriers to inclusion.
- ✓ Cultural acceptance of the importance of the issue and in particular to design interventions that address the following; Focus on boys and men; What is unacceptable discourse?; What is a crime?; Challenging the myths of masculinity, victim blaming, judgemental and 'not believing women' culture. Expand discourse to coercive control, DV not a one off incident, to the continuum of socially unacceptable/criminal acts.

All of the project partners engaged with the external evaluator in a learning and reflection process, addressing their separate goals and objectives in a spirit of development. Specific end of project notes have completed the individual agency learning cycle, and will hopefully contribute to the on-going focus. While the model of formative evaluation was a different approach for some agencies, the benefits of using the opportunity for internal learning as undertaken well by all, and will hopefully contribute to internal organisational development into the future.



## 5. Conclusion.

The project was designed to advance the work on gender based and domestic violence in Malta. Alongside its development, the HRID was also developing the framework to reduce the incidence of, and increase the professional and societal response to violence, which resulted in the Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Based, and Domestic Violence.

The work across the two years of the project has resulted in the attainment of all of the project objectives to a very high standard, and in many cases exceeding the targets.

The project partners engaged in the actions with enthusiasm, energy and focus on improvements, developments and collaboration to provide a better service, based on providing a risk management service resulting in safer conditions for women and their children.

It is too early to say if the ultimate outcomes of the project's theory of change have been attained, but the building blocks for the inter agency, holistic service are well in place, with trained professional staff in all the required services.

This was a well-designed, conducted and delivered project, which has achieved its objectives, contributed to practice and to the theory of gender based and domestic violence responses and services.

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