



Co-funded by the Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship (REC) Programme  
of the European Union



MINISTRY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AND EQUALITY



Full Cooperation  
**ZERO** Violence

# Full Cooperation: Zero Violence

## FINAL REPORT





Co-Funded by the Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship (REC) Programme  
of the European Union



MINISTRY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AND EQUALITY

#istandforzeroviolence



Full Cooperation  
**ZERO** Violence

#istandforzeroviolence



# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	9
<b>BACKGROUND</b> .....	11
The Istanbul Convention .....	12
Strengthening the coordination between agencies.....	13
Further training.....	14
<b>THE PROJECT</b> .....	15
Project’s logistics .....	15
Project Partners .....	16
Project’s workstreams .....	18
Aims of the project .....	20
Expected results.....	21
<b>PROJECT’S RESULTS</b> .....	22
The formation of a Steering Group Committee .....	22
Research Study .....	24
Training for professionals.....	27
Collection of Services.....	34
MARAM .....	36
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): .....	38
Awareness Raising Campaign .....	40
<b>THE WAY FORWARD</b> .....	43
<b>LEARNING POINTS FROM THE EXTERNAL EVALUATOR</b> .....	49
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	51
<b>DIARY OF EXPERIENCES</b> .....	53

## ACRONYMS

A&E	Accident and Emergency Department
CDV	Commission on gender-based violence and domestic violence
CRPD	Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability
DMO	Designated MARAM Officer
DPP	Department for Probation and Parole
DV	domestic violence
EU	European Union
FSWS	Foundation for Social Welfare Services
GBV&DV	gender-based violence and domestic violence
HRID	Human Rights and Integration Directorate
IMC	Inter- Ministerial Committee
MARAM	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Meeting
MDH	Mater Dei Hospital
MEAE	Ministry for European Affairs and Equality
MEDE	Ministry for Education and Employment
MFCS	Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Security
MHAS	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security
MJCL	Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government

MOP	Manual of Procedure
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPF	Malta Police Force
MSDC	Ministry for Social Dialogue and Consumer Affairs
NCSPVA	National Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence and Abuse
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
NSSS	National School Support Services
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Health
PHC	Primary Health Care
PSCD	personal, social and career development
REC	Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020
SFCE	Secretariat for Catholic Education
SOP	standard operating procedure
UoM	University of Malta





# INTRODUCTION

As part of the successful implementation of the Istanbul Convention, the Human Rights and Integration Directorate (HRID) within the Ministry for European Affairs and Equality (MEAE) has implemented the project '*Full Cooperation: Zero Violence*' under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014 - 2020 (REC) which is co-funded by the European Union (EU).

The aim of this project was to implement a number of actions which also reflect the articles of the Istanbul Convention, such as, the need to strengthen multi-agency cooperation, provide training for professionals working in the sector, and raising awareness on gender based violence and domestic violence (GBV&DV).

*'Full Cooperation: Zero Violence'* (period of implementation: 2017 - 2018) aimed to strengthen multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation by developing and implementing training programmes, and a manual of procedures. Through the project, HRID also worked with Aġenzija Appoġġ, the Malta Police Force, the National School Support Services and the Primary Health Care in order to develop and implement a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These SOPs enables cooperation and coordination of professionals from various sectors that come into contact with victims, potential victims and perpetrators. This will lead to an upgrade in the quality of services and the introduction of national minimum standards.

The project also fulfilled Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention by carrying out a local research undertaken with victims of GBV&DV and professionals so as to gain a better understanding of the stumbling blocks being encountered when accessing services.

Additionally, three Stages of training were delivered to various professionals working in the sector, ensuring that the services available are provided by trained and equipped professionals. A result of the training is the creation of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Meeting (MARAM) and the Collection of Services document; two useful tools for professionals to provide a better service and ensure multi-agency coordination.

# BACKGROUND

Since its inception in 2015, HRID has embarked on various initiatives aimed at successful implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Indeed, the Directorate within the Ministry for Social Dialogue and Consumer Affairs (MSDC) submitted a project application in June 2016. MSDC was awarded the project in November 2016. Its implementation started in January 2017 and the completion date is end of 2018. The project started off by MSDC and continued through MEAE (following the general election of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017).

The project developed through 3 pillars:

Malta's ratification of the Istanbul Convention

The need to strengthen the coordination between agencies

- a. The need for further training for professionals
- b. The need to strengthen the coordination between agencies
- c. The need for further training for professionals



## THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

The Istanbul Convention is a Council of Europe Convention from 2011 aiming at combatting violence against women and domestic violence. It is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights. It aims at zero tolerance for such violence and is a major step forward in making Europe and beyond safer. It recognises violence against women as a human rights violation. It aims to bring societal change by challenging acceptance or denial of such violence and gender stereotyping. It calls on men and boys as key actors in such a process.

The main objectives of the Convention are to protect victims from violence, and educating and raising awareness to increase understanding of the issue of violence against women and its consequences. The Convention also aims to improve the skills of professionals working in the field, allowing better support and advice for women experiencing violence and give victims of violence a stronger role and better rights in criminal proceedings.

**Preventing** violence, **protecting** victims and **prosecuting** the perpetrators are the cornerstones of the Convention. It also seeks to change the hearts and minds of individuals by calling on all members of society, in particular men and boys, to change their attitudes. In essence, it is a renewed call for greater equality between women and men, because violence against women is deeply rooted in the inequality between women and men in society and is perpetuated by a culture of intolerance and denial. The Convention also ensures that stakeholders work in a coordinated approach in carrying out risk assessments and devise an accurate safety plan for victims experiencing GBV&DV. This is mainly done through **integrated policies**.

Indeed, Malta ratified the Istanbul Convention in November 2014 and committed itself to strengthen national legislation and reorganise current services in the field of GBV&DV.

# STRENGTHENING THE COORDINATION BETWEEN AGENCIES

Prior to the project, victims experiencing GBV in Malta could seek help through these channels:

- Filing a report at a police station;
- Calling the national helpline (179) to be referred to FSWS;
- Social work intervention and support by FSWS;
- Medical intervention at the health centres or general hospitals;
- Emergency shelters in case of women ready to leave the household;
- Legal, psycho-social support provided by various NGOs working on VAW and GBV; and
- The victims' unit within the Department of Justice.

These services had their own methods and practices in response to victims of violence. Lack of coordination and follow-up often hinders victims from accessing adequate protection and safeguards from their perpetrator. Moreover, the situation was further aggravated by delayed responses to victims' needs.

Fragmented services hinder this immediate protection and victims lack the necessary timely information and guidance to access rights appropriately. The channels listed above also lacked the necessary guidelines and tools to refer victims to other support services.

## FURTHER TRAINING

Another area of concern is the fact that several professionals were not specifically trained on the procedures to follow and even how to detect victims of violence. Professionals required specialised training when dealing with victims of violence, who could help prevent or detect acts of such violence, or prevent secondary victimisation. Thus, because of these gaps, a specialised training programme for professionals was required on the protection of victims and how to avoid jeopardising victims' wellbeing when seeking help. This is also emphasised in Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention which focuses on the need to provide appropriate training for professionals dealing with victims or perpetrators of violence, on the prevention and the detection of such violence, equality between women and men, the needs and rights of victims, as well as the need to prevent secondary victimisation. Such training should also include training on coordinated multi-agency cooperation to allow comprehensive and appropriate handling of referrals in cases of violence.

# THE PROJECT

Following a successful submission of the project proposal of the REC programme, the project Full Cooperation: Zero Violence focused at implementing some of the Articles of the Istanbul Convention, mainly Articles 15, 18 and 26:

- ✓ Article 15 on the importance of training for professionals to enable the prevention and detection of DV, gender equality, the needs and rights of victims and prevention;
- ✓ Article 18 on having appropriate mechanisms to provide for effective co-operation between all relevant state agencies and NGOs in protecting and supporting victims and witnesses of all forms of violence; and
- ✓ Article 28 on ensuring reporting of professionals is not hindered by the confidentiality rules imposed by law on certain professionals (to be addressed in the MOP and training).

As outlined, the ratification of the Istanbul, the lack of coordination and the need for further training to professionals has led to the creation of this project, aiming for victims to receive a holistic service which address their needs ensuring that all persons in Malta feel safe, and that they should become victims of violence, the right set of services are there for them.

## PROJECT'S LOGISTICS



Months  
Project



Project Partners



Workstreams

350,000 €

Budget

## PROJECT PARTNERS

The project included two main partners, namely, the University of Malta and the National Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence and Abuse (NCSVPA) within the University of Worcester.

The University of Malta was the leading partner of Workstream 1, which carried out a research study undertaken with victims of GBV&DV and professionals so as to gain a better understanding of the stumbling blocks being encountered when accessing services.

The University of Worcester was responsible for Workstream 3 by developing and delivering training for professionals working in the sector.

The project also incorporated a total of 8 associate partners, whose role was to develop and implement the MOP and the SOP; receive training; and continue and enhance the multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary working approach following the end of the project. These partners are:

- ✓ Aġenzija Appoġġ, Foundation for Social Welfare Services
- ✓ Malta Police Force, Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security
- ✓ National School Support Services, Ministry for Education and Employment
- ✓ Department of Justice, Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government.
- ✓ Commission on Domestic Violence, Ministry for European Affairs and Equality
- ✓ Primary Health Care, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Health
- ✓ Legal Aid Malta, Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government
- ✓ Eight [8] NGOs (incl. Dar Merhba Bik, Fondazzjoni Dar il-Hena, Women's Rights Foundation, Malta Girl Guides, Dar Qalb ta' Gesu, SOAR, Victim Support Malta and Men against Violence)



Throughout the project, various other departments have joined the project in one way or another, by attending the training sessions, attending the Steering Group Committee and be involved in other aspects of the project. These departments are:

- ✓ Department of Probation and Parole, Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security
- ✓ Accident and Emergency Department (Mater Dei Hospital), Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Health
- ✓ Gozo General Hospital, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Health
- ✓ Secretariat for Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Malta
- ✓ Parentcraft and Perinatal Mental Health, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Health
- ✓ Child and Family Welfare, Ministry for Gozo
- ✓ Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability, Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity

# **PROJECT'S WORKSTREAMS**

## **WORKSTREAM 0: MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE PROJECT**

### **WORKSTREAM 1: RESEARCH**

The objective of this workstream was to carry out a research study on the experiences of victims of GBV&DV with a specific focus on the barriers they encounter when seeking help and the experiences of professionals who provide services to victims of GBV&DV in relation to current multi-sectoral work.

The findings of this study were fed into the training (workstream 3), the awareness raising campaign (workstream 4), as well as the guidelines/ protocols (workstream 2) and general recommendations for policy development.

### **WORKSTREAM 2: MANUAL OF PROCEDURE**

This workstream aims to equip multi-sector, multi-disciplinary professionals with protocols and guidelines to be able to respond effectively to GBV&DV in conjunction with other professional entities in Malta in a coordinated and safe way. The objectives also include the development of multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation that enables relevant professionals to effectively collaborate to prevent and respond to GBV&DV in terms of best practice and to strengthen coordination in the provision of all related services to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation and work towards prevention of GBV&DV.

### **WORKSTREAM 3: TRAINING**

The objectives of this workstream are to equip multi-sector, multi-disciplinary professionals with the knowledge, understanding and skills to respond effectively to domestic violence; to develop multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation that enables relevant professionals to effectively collaborate to prevent and respond to domestic violence and to strengthen coordination in the provision of all related services to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation and work towards prevention.

### **WORKSTREAM 4: AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGN**

This workstream focuses on raising awareness and encourage victims and potential victims, witnesses and bystanders to report violence and seek help through the upgraded services. This is done through social media, radio programmes, Bus Shelter Poster Campaigns, toilet-frames posters, and Online newspaper adverts.

## AIMS OF THE PROJECT

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 GBV&DV effectively;
- b. To develop and implement training programmes, a MOP and a SOP 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 learnt in EU fora and bilaterally.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- a. A functioning multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary group with focal points from the associate partners coordinated by CDV;
- b. Use of MOP and SOP in victim support;
- c. Trained professionals ready to support victims and potential victims and work with professionals from other sectors and disciplines;
- d. Increased reporting and referrals across sectors and disciplines;
- e. Society in general more aware of GBV&DV and existing responses via awareness raising campaign;
- f. Greater prevention and reduction of re-victimisation as perpetrators and potential perpetrators are made aware of Malta's legislation and commitment to stamp out GBV&DV via public awareness campaign and actions by trained professionals;
- g. Policy makers and practitioners will benefit from the project via project report and dissemination activities (knowledge exchange) and the learning of the project team; and
- h. Local, national and international fora participants will benefit from the project report and resources.

# PROJECT'S RESULTS



## THE FORMATION OF A STEERING GROUP COMMITTEE

One of the main objectives of the project *Full Cooperation: Zero Violence* was the formation of a steering group committee. This consisted of representatives of the Commission on gender-based violence and domestic violence (CDV) and HRID falling under MEAE; the National School Support Services (NSSS) falling under the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE); Aġenzija Appoġġ from the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) falling under the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Security (MFCS); the Department for Probation and Parole (DPP) and the Malta Police Force (MPF) falling under the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (MHAS); the Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government (MJCL); and the Accident and Emergency Department (A&E) and Primary Health Care (PHC) falling under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Health (ODPM).

The aim of this committee is to coordinate policy development on GBV&DV and to be responsible for bringing together the main stakeholders working in the sector so as to disseminate good practices for preventing GBV and strengthening support services. The setting up of a steering group enabled project partners to develop and implement multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary MOPs and SOPs to ensure an effective referral system and the immediate protection of victims.

The steering group committee used to meet bimonthly, thus, a total of 12 Steering Group meetings were held throughout the project. The last steering group meeting was organised in collaboration with the project's external evaluator in order to identify the learning wave of the project, and the way forward post project.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) will continue the work that was done by the Steering Group Committee as part of the strategy and action plan 'Society's Concern'.



*Steering Group meeting 11 (28th September 2018) held at HRID.*

## RESEARCH STUDY

The project included a local research study carried out by the Department of Gender Studies, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta. The study is called, 'Barriers to Help-Seeking in Gender-Based Violence against Women: A Research Study'. The research attempts to identify and explore the barriers being faced by survivors of gender-based violence against women in Malta and Gozo when seeking help at the various state and voluntary services as seen from their perspective, as well as those faced by professionals when delivering a service to the survivors as seen from the professionals' perspective.

This study adopted a qualitative research design and the data collection strategy used included 16 qualitative interviews and six focus groups with both survivors and professionals. A total of 50 participants took part in the study - 23 survivors and 27 professionals. The interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed; the transcripts were subjected to rigorous coding following the Constant Comparative Method. A strict adherence to the principles of research ethics was crucial given that participants included vulnerable persons. The credibility and trustworthiness of the research was ascertained mainly through a respondent validation process, data and observer triangulation and reflexivity.

The study identifies eight main interrelated categories of barriers including: (1) Cultural barriers, (2) Socioeconomic barriers, (3) Survivor-related barriers, (4) Perpetrator-related barriers, (5) Offspring-related barriers, (6) Informal networks (Family and Friends) barriers, (7) Psychosocial / Health Care / Education provision barriers and (8) Justice system barriers (including police and courts).

The predominantly patriarchal Maltese society remains an underlying and ubiquitous barrier. Gender inequality still manifests itself in social attitudes, gender roles and dominant discourses. Some barriers appear to be internalised by survivors in the context of this patriarchal society leading to possible negative emotional states, most notably shame. Economic dependence, unaffordable rent conditions and employment challenges emerged as barriers that exacerbate the help-seeking process.



Perpetrators are perceived as one of the major barriers to help-seeking behaviour because they tend to be manipulative and controlling. Moreover, children seem to be the primary motivating factor for the survivor to leave an abusive relationship acting as ‘push factors’. However, there are instances when children are the ‘pull factors’ barring the survivor from exiting the abusive situation. Moreover, though informal support can enhance help-seeking behaviour, this study shows that there are instances where such involvement may hinder help seeking. Survivors report finding effective help from the supportive system including public agencies and NGOs, however, they felt they were not sufficiently informed about the available services, resources and their rights. Poor inter-agency collaboration (in some instances) and the lack of specialisation are also considered service-related barriers. Health services and schools were reported as serving as the first contact point for some survivors or their dependents.

Survivors’ re-victimisation through the justice system emerged as a real concern. Survivors feel that the justice system is insensitive and inflexible. Moreover, perpetrators tend to use the justice system to institutionalise their control over the survivor. The study results indicate that the police need to increase their competence in dealing with situations of violence against women. The judiciary process is another source of re-victimisation for the survivor. The process is too lengthy and slow. The judiciary’s sensitivity towards survivors and their situation is deemed essential.

## **THE STUDY IDENTIFIED**

A list of 32 recommendations were presented by the University and which were categorised in accordance with the Four Ps of the Istanbul Convention, namely, Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Integrated Policies. Awareness campaigns, specialist training, promotion of gender sensitivity in the justice system, the provision of handbooks and training to first responding officers and investigators, better legal provision, addressing the gap between service availability and accessibility, specialist services in Gozo, mechanisms for more effective

inter-agency collaboration, gender-mainstreaming in areas of policy, and further research are some of the presented recommendations in this study.

The findings and recommendations of the research study were presented to The Hon. Dr Helena Dalli, Minister for European Affairs and Equality on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018.



*Launch of research findings presented by Dr Marceline Naudi and Mr Holger Spiteri (5th February 2018).*

*Source: The Independent*

## TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

As per Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention, the project focused on strengthening appropriate training for the relevant professionals dealing with victims or perpetrators of all acts of violence, on the prevention and detection of such violence, equality between women and men, the needs and rights of victims, as well as on how to prevent secondary victimisation. The aim of this training is to encourage professionals to work together in a coordinated multi-agency co-operation to allow for a comprehensive and appropriate handling of referrals in cases of violence. The training to professionals aimed to advance the skilling of professionals with greater awareness, sensitisation and knowledge on how to behave with victims and how to better identify victims of violence.

Hence, for this reason, a personalised training programme for professionals was developed by the NCSPVA at the University of Worcester. The training was divided into three Stages: Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 Train the Trainer. Training was delivered by Ms Beverly Gilbert, Profs. Elizabeth Gilchrist and Profs Erica Bowen. The training was delivered at the Academy for Disciplined Forces.

Training for professionals aimed to:

- ✓ equip multi-sector, multi-disciplinary professionals with the knowledge, understanding and skills to understand, identify and respond effectively to GBV&DV;
- ✓ develop multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation that enables relevant professionals to effectively collaborate to prevent and respond to GBV&DV;
- ✓ equip professionals with skills to support victims and appropriately handling of referrals to GBV&DV; and
- ✓ strengthen coordination in the provision of all related services to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation and work towards prevention.

### Three Stages of training:

- ✓ Stage 1 was delivered three times for 9 groups throughout 2017 and another 2 groups in January 2018. 716 professionals have completed a 3-day training programme.
- ✓ Participants who completed Stage 1 training were re-invited for Stage 2, which was delivered in 2018. 600 professionals have completed another 3 days of training.
- ✓ Stage 3 was specifically designed for professionals who have the capacity and motivation to train their peers and colleagues. 98 professionals have completed a one day Train the Trainer programme.



*Professionals attending Full Cooperation: Zero Violence training on International Women's Day*



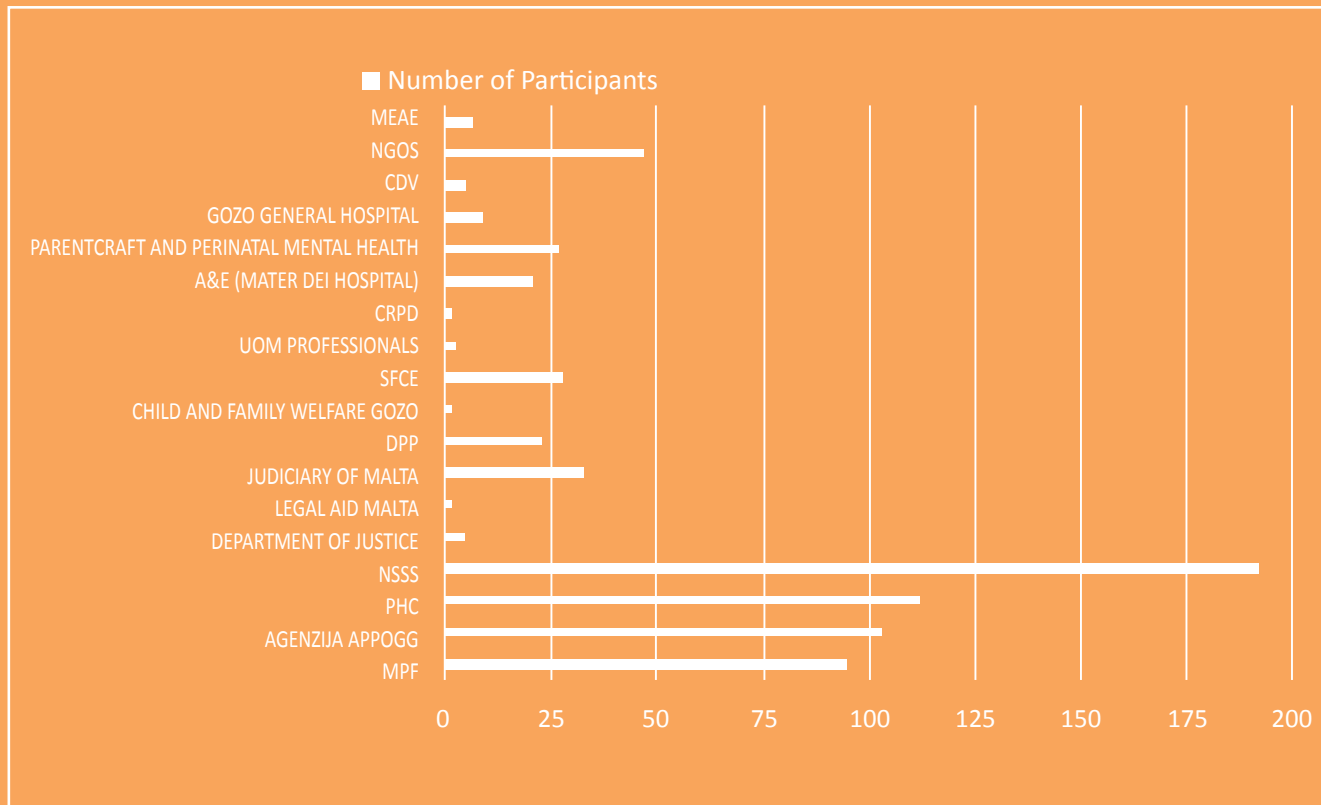
Stage 1 Plan	Stage 1 Actual Attendance	Stage 2 Plan	Stage 2 Actual Attendance	Stage 3 Plan	Stage 3 Actual Attendance
520	716	520	600	100	98

*The table above only includes the number of participants who competed all three days of training.*

Professionals included:

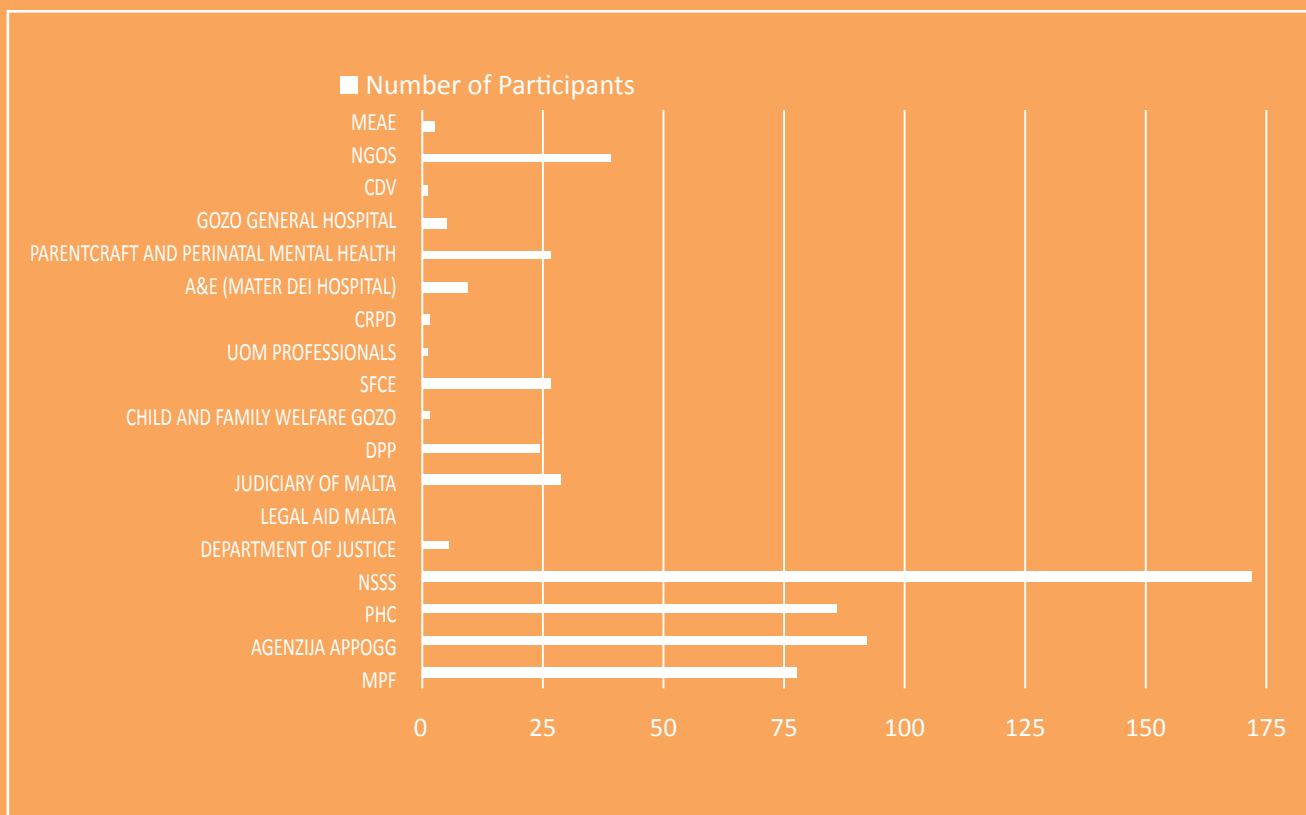
- Doctors and Nurses from A&E Department, Primary Health Care, and Gozo Hospital
- Midwives and Gynecologists
- Social Workers
- Psycho-social professionals, PSCD and guidance teachers
- Legal Aid Lawyers and professionals from the department of Justice
- Judges and Magistrates
- Probation Officers
- Police Officers
- NGOs professionals
- Other professionals (MEAE, UoM, CDV, CRPD)

## PROFESSIONALS ATTENDED STAGE 1 (3 DAYS)



*The figures shown in the above table only include those participants who have completed the full training, i.e., 3 days of training. Only the Judiciary of Malta attended a one-day training.*

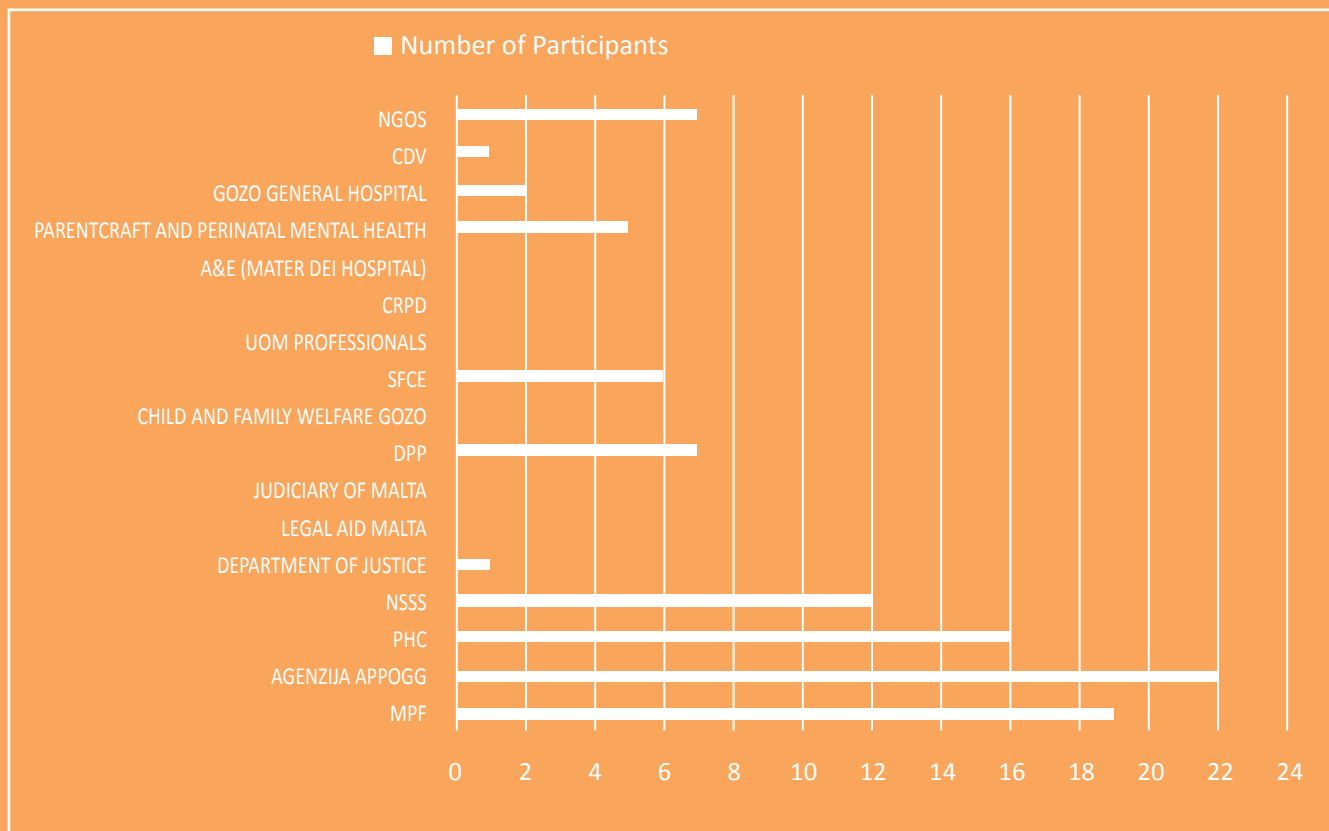
## PROFESSIONALS ATTENDED STAGE 2 (3 DAYS)



*The figures shown in the above table only include those participants who have completed the full training, i.e., 3 days of training. Only the Judiciary of Malta attended a one-day training.*



## PROFESSIONALS ATTENDED STAGE 3 (1 DAY)



## COLLECTION OF SERVICES

A result of Stage 1 training for professionals is the Collection of Services document. During Stage 1 training, professionals expressed their interest to have a list of entities and departments that they could be in contact with in cases of GBV&DV. For this reason, HRID in collaboration with all project partners have created this document which organises the services working in the field.



This collection of services is intended to serve as a practical tool for professionals in supporting victims of GBV&DV. This manual refers to GBV as any act that is perpetrated against another person's will, and is based on gender norms and unequal gendered power relationships. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men, boys and gender diverse persons alike.

Thus, this document aims to equip professionals from various sectors and disciplines with knowledge about services available and thus be able to respond effectively to GBV&DV in conjunction with other professionals in Malta in a co-ordinated and safe way. While legislation ensures the safeguarding of victims and potential victims against perpetrators, this document is intended to serve as a tool to coordinate services in the prevention of violence, and provide the necessary assistance when violence occurs. It also provides a graphical representation of the services available, a brief explanation on each service and contact details of the various institutions working in the field.

This document was provided to all professionals attending Stage 2 training as a training tool. Professionals were encouraged to disseminate this document with colleagues and peers.

The document is available in English and Maltese language and is available online on the project's webpage <https://meae.gov.mt/en/ZeroViolence/Pages/Zero-Violence.aspx>.

## MARAM

The role of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Meeting (MARAM) is to facilitate, to monitor and to evaluate effective information sharing between entities and to enable appropriate actions to be taken to reduce risk of harm to victims of domestic violence and to increase public safety. In a single meeting, a domestic violence MARAM combines up to date risk information with an accurate and up to date assessment of a victim's safety needs. This will link directly to the provision of appropriate services for all those involved in a domestic violence case, i.e. victims and children, other family members, individual entity staff and the perpetrator of abuse.

All entities across Malta and Gozo will appoint at least one Designated MARAM Officer (DMO), who should be a manager or person who has authority within their entity to prioritise actions that arise, be able to make a commitment of resources and share appropriate information. The DMO should have received Stage 1 and Stage 2 Full Cooperation: Zero Violence training including specific domestic violence risk assessment and risk management training.

It is very important that the responsibility to take appropriate actions as a result of the MARAM remains the responsibility of individual entities; the responsibility is not transferred to the MARAM.

Entities or agency professionals should not wait until a case has been discussed at MARAM before taking necessary action or giving advice or access to services. It may be vital for a victim to receive help prior to the meeting, and information regarding actions should then be brought to MARAM. The DMO should always consider referring a high-risk case to Aġenzija Appgħo and to Police in advance of the MARAM.

The MARAM is a tool and a result to bring about multi-agency co-operation. The MARAM was used a training material in the training for professionals.



*MARAM enactment by the project partners and guided by Ms Beverley Gilbert from the University of Worcester*

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS):

Another objective of this project is the creation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), aiming to enable cooperation and coordination of professionals from various sectors who come into contact with potential victims and upgrading the quality of services and the introduction of national minimum standards. HRID in collaboration with Aġenzija Appoġġ, the Malta Police Force and the Primary Health Care Department have worked on three SOPs, with the aim to improve the working system between one agency and another.

- ✓ An Inter-Agency Protocol between Aġenzija Appoġġ and the Malta Police Force focusing on Adult victims of Domestic Violence to enhance better working relationships between the Social Workers / Professionals of the Domestic Violence Services and the Police Force to be able to offer a better service and protection to adult victims of domestic violence.



*Mr Lawrence Cutajar, Commissioner of Police and Mr Alfred Grixti, Chief Executive Officer of FSWS signed the Inter-agency protocol between the MPF and Aġenzija Appoġġ on 19 October 2018 (Source: Community and Media Relations Unit)*

- ✓ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) and the Students Services Department (NSSS) with the aim to serve as a means for Child Protection Service and the Students Services Department (NSSS) staff to update parts of the Child Protection Procedures, National Policy on how best to proceed in cases wherein present, suspected or potential child abuse and/or neglect toward students is observed. Both entities have signed a MoU in 2016 which is presently being reviewed to reflect the Child Protection Act of 2017.
  
- ✓ An Inter-Agency Protocol regarding Adult Victims of Domestic Violence between the Domestic Violence Services, Ghabex Shelter, Out of Hours Emergency Services, Care for Victims of Sexual Assault Team and Supportline 179 within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) and Primary Health Care which ensures collaborative working relationships and full cooperation between services. This collaboration is envisaged to offer an effective and efficient service and protection to adult victims of domestic violence. This protocol also clarifies the respective roles of workers within these respective organisations and enhance the coordination between the two entities involved.

## **AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGN**

The raising awareness campaign of this project is divided into two stages:

1. Focusing on victims of GBV&DV; and
2. Focusing on the general public (possible witnesses and bystanders) who will be encouraged to be more vigilant and ready to report GBV&DV.

During 2017 and 2018, the project included a public awareness raising campaign encouraging victims and potential victims, witnesses and bystanders to report violence and seek help through the upgraded services. Throughout these campaigns, the aim was for society in general to become more aware of GBV&DV and existing responses and to strengthen the prevention and reduction of re-victimisation as perpetrators and potential perpetrators are made aware of Malta's legislation and commitment to stamp out GBV&DV via public awareness campaign and actions by trained professionals.

This campaign included:

- Social Media Clips (incl. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Google) [Annex 1];
- Bus Shelters;
- Online Newspaper Ads;
- Radio Clips;
- Posters in public entertainment spaces.



**Il-*vjolenza domestika*,  
QATT mhi aċċettabbli.**

Full Cooperation  
**ZERO** Violence

**Elimina l-*vjolenza***  
Aghmel rapport mal-pulizija  
minnufih jew  
**ċempel 179**  
ghal ghajnuna u sapport.

 Kofinanzjat mill-Programm tad-Drittijiet,  
l-Ugwaljanza u s-Cittadinanza  
(REC) tal-Unjoni Ewropea

 MINISTERU GHALL-AFFARUJIET EWROPEJ  
U L-UGWALJANZA

Now is the right time to take a stand.  
I stand for **ZERO** Violence.

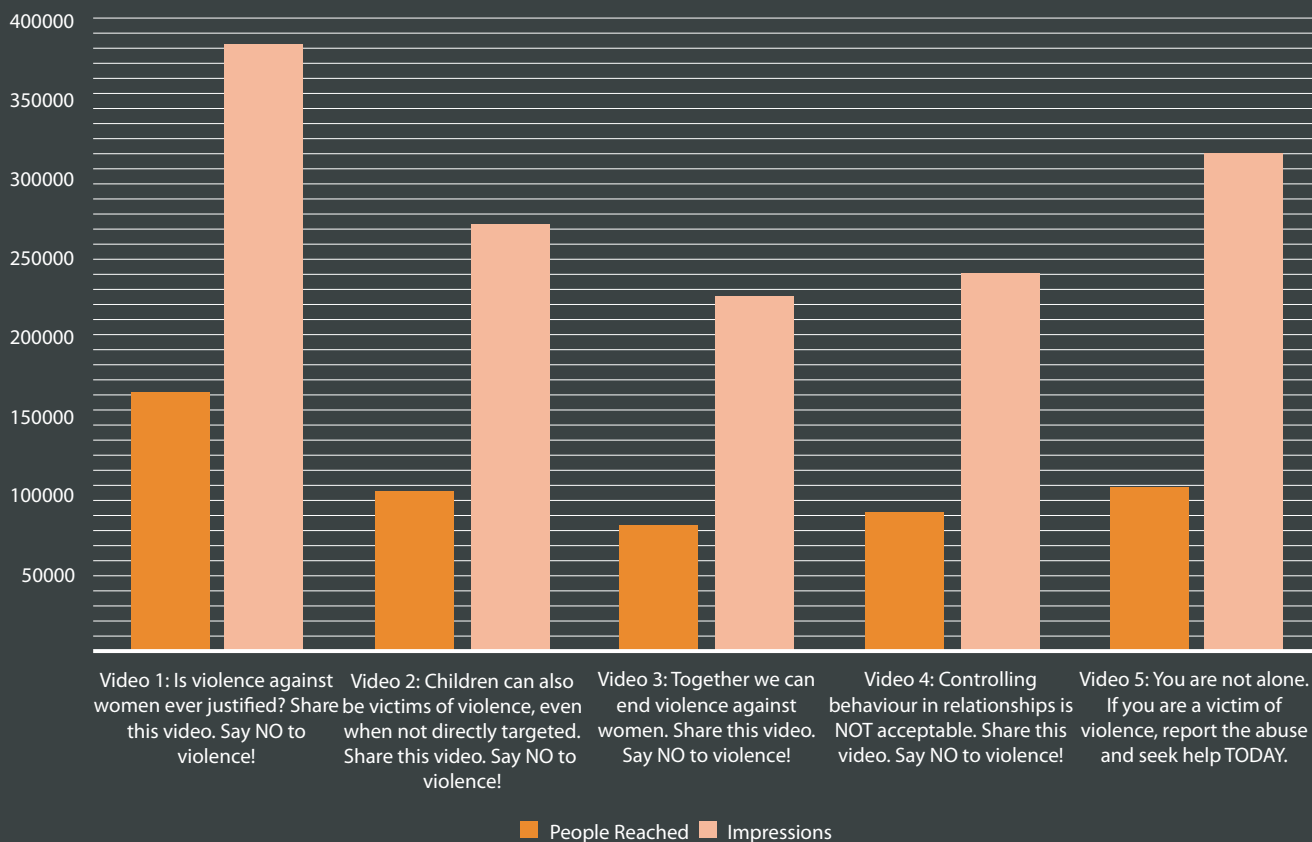
Full Cooperation  
**ZERO** Violence

**Eliminate violence.**  
Immediately report cases to the  
police or **call 179** for help and support.

 Co-Funded by the Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship (REC) Programme  
of the European Union

 MINISTRY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AND EQUALITY

## Facebook Raising Awareness Campaign 2017 & 2018



Video 1: Is violence against women ever justified? Share this video. Say NO to violence!

Video 2: Children can also be victims of violence, even when not directly targeted. Share this video. Say NO to violence!

Video 3: Together we can end violence against women. Share this video. Say NO to violence!

Video 4: Controlling behaviour in relationships is NOT acceptable. Share this video. Say NO to violence!

Video 5: You are not alone. If you are a victim of violence, report the abuse and seek help TODAY.

■ People Reached ■ Impressions

*Impressions is the total number of times that the content was displayed in the news feed of anyone, any number of times on Facebook. Reach is the total number of people that saw the content.*

# THE WAY FORWARD



It was crucial for Malta to ensure that the project Full Cooperation: Zero Violence does not end after the two-year period. Sustainability was a priority and this could only be ensured via the GBV&DV Strategy and Action Plan – Society’s Concern. This Strategy, launched on 25 November 2017, is the first national framework to ensure that legislation, policies and services address victims’ needs holistically and as a societal concern. This Strategy is also in line with the policy recommendations included in the Council of Europe Convention on prevention and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), which Malta ratified in 2014.



Photo: DOI - Anthony Sultana

*Minister Dalli launches the Strategy and Action Plan ‘Society’s Concern’ on 25th November 2017 as part of the 16-day awareness campaign.*

This strategy and its corresponding action plan also seek to change the hearts and minds of individuals by calling on all members of society (in particular men and boys) to change attitudes. In essence, it is a renewed call for greater equality between women and men and freedom from gender stereotypes. This is because GBV&DV are deeply rooted in the inequality between women and men as well as imbalanced gender expectations, which are further perpetuated by a culture of tolerance and denial of the prevalence of such violence.

The action plan follows four key areas, legal measures and integrated policies; data collection, research and training; raising awareness; and protection and support for victims. The action plan includes the measures which need to be taken; the action needed for these measures; and the responsible bodies for these measures and actions. This Strategy will also be accompanied by monitoring and evaluation and shall be reviewed every three years.

One of the measures of the Action Plan was the need to adopt appropriate legislative measures. The Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act is another stepping stone in this field. The main objective of this Act is to fully integrate and implement the provisions of the Istanbul Convention in national law, repeal and replace the Domestic Violence Act with a stronger and wider-reaching legislation, and amend various other important laws in order to ensure that adequate, sufficient protection is available to victims of violence, and ensure that justice is made with regard to perpetrators of such violence. Overall, this legislation has introduced various new elements aimed at providing better protection for victims of violence.

The Act came into effect on 14 May 2018. The main changes brought about by this new legislation include the establishment of the new Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence, which replaced the Commission on Domestic Violence by giving the Commission additional responsibilities and a wider mandate; a coordinated Action Plan for the relevant bodies and service providers; the full enforcement of the Istanbul Convention in Maltese Law, and a considerable number of amendments to various laws to broaden the protection provided to victims of GBV&DV.

A number of amendments were made to the Criminal Code, including:

1. A considerable increase in penalties of various offences relating to violence, in order to reflect the seriousness of the illegal act.
2. The removal of the concept of solitary confinement, since this prejudices the rehabilitation process of the guilty person.
3. More detailed definitions of offences, in order for the victim to be more protected, and to ensure that offences are fully prosecuted. Most importantly, the definition of rape has been amended and detailed as follows:
  - There is now no need for the victim to make a complaint in order for the Police to open an investigation (*ex officio*);
  - The requirement of the element of violence in the act has been removed, and the offence now focuses on the lack of consent of the victim;
  - The forms of penetration considered in the offence were specified for more legal certainty; and
  - It was specified that rape occurs as soon as penetration commences, and there is no need for further proof.

## Increase in Punishments

	OFFENCE	BEFORE	NEW PEN-ALTIES
197 (1)	Prostitution of minor descendants by ascendants	3 – 6	6 – 12
-3	Prostitution of adult descendants	1 – 4	3 – 6
198 (1)	Rape	3 – 9	6 – 12
199	Abduction	9 – 18mths	6 – 12
	Aggravating circumstances	18mths – 3	1/2 degrees
203	Defilement of minors	Max 3	4 – 8
	Aggravating circumstances	3 – 6	6 – 12
203A	Instigation, etc., of defilement of minors	Max 2	3 – 6
		Max 4	4 – 8
204	Inducing, etc., persons under age to prostitution	2 – 5	3 – 6
		3 – 9	6 – 9
204A	Instigation with violence of persons under age to prostitution or to participation in a pornographic performance	3 – 12	6 – 12
204B	Inducing persons under age to prostitution or to participation in a pornographic performance	2 – 9	5 – 10
		3 – 12	6 – 12
204C	Participation in sexual activities with persons under the age of sixteen.	Max 5	5 – 10 1/2 degrees
204D	Unlawful sexual activity	3 – 10	5 – 10
205	Forcing or encouraging someone under age for prostitution	Max 5	3 – 7
		2 – 7	4 – 9

207	Non-consensual act of a sexual nature	3mths – 1	3mths - 7
208AA	Solicitation of persons under age	2 – 5	3 – 6
208E	Non-consensual disclosure of private sexual photographs and films.	Fine of 3000 – 5000 Euro and two years imprisonment	Fine of 4000 – 8000 and five years imprisonment
216	Grievous bodily harm	3mths – 3	1 – 7
217	Grievous bodily harm with arms proper, etc. Use of explosive fluid or substance	5mths – 4 Min. 2	2 – 10 Min. 4
218	Other cases of grievous bodily harm	9mths – 9	5 – 10
220	Grievous bodily harm from which death ensues.	4 – 12 3 – 9	6 – 12 05 - 10
221	Slight bodily harm Use of weapons	Max 3mths / fine 2mths – 1	Max 5mths / fine 2 – 7
248A	Traffic of a person of age for the purpose of exploitation in the production of goods or provision of services.	4 – 12	6 – 12
249	Threats by means of writing. Ground	1mth – 6mths	6mths – 1 / max. fine of 5,000E. Max. fine of 10,000E
251A	Harassment	1mth – 6mths / fine 2,500 – 5,000	6mths – 2 / fine 5,000 – 10,000 1 / 2 degrees

<b>251AA</b>	Stalking	6mths – 1	1 – 2
<b>251BA</b>	Stalking involving fear of violence, serious alarm or distress	9mths	2
<b>251E</b>	Female Genital Mutilation	3 – 9	5 – 10
	If woman dies after 40 days	4 – 12	6 – 12
	If death ensues as a result of supervening accidental cause	3 – 9	6 – 12
<b>412C</b>	Violation of a Protection Order	2329Euro	7000Euro

This legislation has also introduced the concept of the temporary protection order. The aim of this article is to give immediate protection to victims who have suffered harm from serious offences and who are at urgent risk of further harm. When these persons file a complaint, the Police, together with a professional from Agenzija Appogg, must immediately carry out an assessment of the risk of that person, or of other persons, for instance, that person's children.

If the risk assessment clearly shows that the person evaluated is at a serious risk of harm, the Police should:

1. Immediately apply to a Magistrate requesting the issue of a temporary protection order;
2. State the grounds for such request, and give all such information that might be of aid to the Magistrate.

This protection order shall be given by the Magistrate within 6 hours from the request made by the Police.

Once the temporary protection order is issued, the Police are bound to enforce it. This includes all the necessary measures, including the removal of the perpetrator from the shared household.



# LEARNING POINTS FROM THE EXTERNAL EVALUATOR



The project's external evaluator has pointed out some recommendations to the agencies and project partners involved in the project. The below are the learning points outlined:

- 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 the GBV&DV Act and a Q & 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 GBV&DV 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 is required at undergraduate and professional levels, and through continuous

professional development provided inservice.

- Provide training at the point of entry to the jobs/agencies, E.g. through the Academy for Disciplined Forces.
- Further work within the criminal justice system and in particular with lawyers.
- 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 after 12 months (to identify what's working, what need to be re worked etc.).
- Advancing the establishment of the hubs, a dedicated physical space, one each in the north and in the south of Malta, to provide both police and social work services.
- 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.
- Holistic support to the women: The next step is to include more housing, employment, and financial supports as focus.
- Review of the Strategy and Action Plan before 2020.

# CONCLUSION



The project *Full Cooperation: Zero Violence* was designed to advance the work on GBV&DV in Malta. Alongside the project's development, HRID within MEAE, also developed the framework to ensure that legislation, policies and services address victims' needs holistically and a societal concern.

The two-year project has resulted in the attainment of all of the project objectives and planned activities to a very high standard, and in many cases exceeding the targets. Multi-sectoral cooperation could only be achieved through concentrated effort from all the project partners by joining forces and working together towards improving the quality and effectiveness of the services provided to victims of violence. The project partners engaged in the project with enthusiasm, energy and focus to create change and to collaborate with other entities, with the aim to provide a better service, based on providing a risk management service resulting in safer conditions for victims of GBV&DV. The steering group made up of the various stakeholders was a platform where professionals discussed their work across sectors and a way to strengthen multi-sectoral coordination. Project partners are to continue delivering the training to their members using their own financial resources, so that the benefit and impact of the training developed can be maximised.

The project did not only focus on building the cooperative channels but also focused on empowering professionals through the delivery of specialised training and victims and potential victims through the awareness campaign on newly improved services and to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation and work towards prevention. The raising awareness campaign, particularly, encouraging victims to report such cases to the police and to call the national helpline for help and support. Raising awareness campaigns also targeted potential victims, bystanders and witnesses of GBV&DV. HRID also made sure to be present in TV programmes and radio programmes to ensure that this message is spread across Malta and Gozo. The campaign also promoted the strengthened collaboration among services.

Multi-agency cooperation in Malta shall be maintained after the end of the project, through the developed SOPs, and continuation of the steering group meetings as to enhance collaboration

and cooperation for better service provision through the Inter Ministerial Committee, thus making the project sustainable.

Following the completion of the *Full Cooperation: Zero Violence* project, HRID, together with CDV is to ensure that the activities and results of the project are shared with other organisations and EU and national policy makers to ensure a multiplier effect and renewed cooperation and sharing of best practices on a European level. This is done through the final conference and dissemination of this booklet.

# DIARY OF EXPERIENCES

## EXPERIENCE 1:

*Our experience of this training as a team has been fantastic. The training was as trainings should be done. Intensive and recurring. For persons who work in wider fields, such as health practitioners and police officers, one half day of training will never be enough. Training needs to be allocated enough time and be revisited every year and this was a great example of that. The experience of attending this training highlighted this for us more than ever, when it became obvious that so many did not understand the very basics of domestic violence and gender based violence. In fact, during the first batch of training, we did think that it may have been too 'advanced' for many in the room who had no concept yet of what constitutes domestic violence and gender based violence and the patterns of such violence. If I could have changed anything, I would have had an extra lecture on these basics for those who don't already specialise in the area before starting the training.*

*We appreciated meeting other workers from different fields and working in groups with them. As an NGO which comes into contact with high risk cases, we hope to be included in the MARAM following this training. We understand and now recognise what we have to offer to a MARAM. The train-the-trainer was a great training as this gives us the skills to pass on the training we received.*

*We also saw survivors and stakeholders taking part in the research and the results of that research are a very important tool for us to continue to understand the obstacles faced by victims and survivors and start a discussion on how these obstacles can be eliminated.*

Thanks to the project, we networked with the trainers and this led our team to visit one of the trainers (Beverley Gilbert, Cohort4) overseas for specialised training in accredited DASH 2009 Risk Assessment Checklist and peer-mentoring in November 2018.



Elaine Compagno  
Service coordinator  
SOAR

## EXPERIENCE 2:

This project continued to assist us in improving the practice and the much needed coordinated approach through:

1. Consolidating our professional insight and practice including the identification of and interventions on Gender Based Violence.
2. It supported us to understand the roles and role boundaries of other professions and stakeholder involved in the area.
3. It also facilitated the engagement and enhancement of the collaboration and networking with other stakeholder especially through the SOP's.
4. The voice of the victims and survivors was present especially through the involvement of particular NGO's as well as the research which was carried out and eventually presented.

Suggestions:

1. Review and gain further knowledge about the emerging trends in the areas-by doing so we will be able to intervene in a timely manner;
2. Space to discuss challenges and ways of collaborating with the stakeholders; and
3. Forums to exchange good practices.



**APPOGG**  
Għat-Ifal, Familji, u l-Komunità

Domestic Violence Services  
Aġenzija Appogg

### EXPERIENCE 3:

- *Full Cooperation: Zero Violence* was incredibly well organised. Particularly relevant given the complex nature of rolling out such triple layered training to a large number of professionals from many different agencies.
- The challenge to collate information, feedback and necessary statistical information would be high, and the Project Manager completed this excellently.
- There were times during the two years where challenges occurred regarding rooms and facilities, the Project Coordinator worked swiftly to ensure that these were managed and we were able to be very adaptable as a training team.
- The change in positivity and engagement was dramatic between Stage 1 and then Stage 2 training, even in occupations that had initially showed some reluctance.
- The development of *Full Cooperation: Zero Violence* into a full MARAM process and risk assessment/management enablement has been amazing and is testament to the training, additional assistance from UK experts, and from MEAE colleagues who enabled this to progress, with the steering group.
- Survivors of GBV within the teaching participants was unusually high, (within many professional groups, including police and health), and it was wonderful to hear from many of them of how empowering they felt that the overall training messages were.

#### Negative comments:

- The cleanliness of training facilities has frequently been an issue, so too internet access and extraordinary circumstances around the Shotgun World Championships and adaptations made to the Armed Forces Academy grounds.



## Suggestions

- That the Steering Group should have consisted of representatives from all those participating in the project. This would reflect the multi-agency, multi-disciplinary nature of Full Cooperation: Zero Violence.
- That the Project Management be recognised as being excellent during the whole of this two-year project.
- That the steering group meet at 6 months and 12 months' post completion of the project to evaluate ongoing impact and direction.



Beverley Gilbert

Senior Lecturer, University of Worcester

## EXPERIENCE 4:

Overall the experience in this project was positive, felt that the groups of people who attended engaged in the training, they learned and remembered the key messages delivered, they developed their skills increased their awareness of multi-disciplinary working in response to intimate partner abuse, evidenced better understanding of the reality and complexity of intimate partner abuse, and risk assessment in intimate partner abuse.

Very helpful Maltese professionals supporting the training, helpful and supportive with practical aspects, however it was a pity there was not as much opportunity to engage with material wider than the training, other than the MARAM and the Judges training.

Suggestions it would be excellent if the momentum that is built up with this project continues, and the MARAM is supported, and training in risk assessment is supported.



Professor Elizabeth Gilchrist  
University of Worcester

## EXPERIENCE 5:

- Full Cooperation: Zero Violence was a very good opportunity for a number of professionals from different areas to come together, network and share information as well clarify roles
- The venue was also adequate with ample parking space- which was an asset
- Given that the training was not jam packed in one day, participants had the chance to learn about GBV in all its complexity as well chance for discussion, clarification of queries and workshops
- Having a parallel steering committee also helped for continuation and seamlessness
- At times there was frustration because of mixed messages of what can be and what cannot be done, in line with the new law and lack of clarity in regards about data protection/ consent issues

Feedback from staff / colleagues:

- Increased consciousness of topic and gaining more insight about the complexity of the issue.
- Helped to reduce feelings of practitioners' helplessness and to decrease misconceptions/myths
- Helped to look at the person experiencing violence more holistically

*Suggestions:*

- Follow up of this training and a centralised body which will ensure that training is given to more professionals (by train the trainer participants) and that SOPs are implemented into practice.
- Get MARAM rolling



**Primary  
HealthCare**

*Michelle Cilia*

*Deputy charge nurse*

*Primary Health Care*

## EXPERIENCE 6:

My experience in this project was mainly very positive. I must start by showing my gratitude towards the organizer and moreover the project manager who showed a high level of competence throughout, the program was very well organized. This encouraged me to look forward for the next step in the program. The 3 phases of the program were intense yet very informative and interactive too which helped me gain a better insight of knowledge to identify domestic violence, the way to approach victims and how I can help victims. Thanks also goes to the quality, style and knowledge of the speakers, it was very much enjoyed.

I feel privileged of being involved in such a well coordinate and organized program which involved diverse professional audience hence enabling me to know and form part of a large network of professional in view to help women in such difficulties.

The book compiled "Collection of Services" is very useful and handy to use. Well done again. My colleagues have positive feedback too "very informative", "it was a thought provoking experience" and "empowering".

The only negative comment is the lack of access to internet during the course. I suggest that we are given regular updates of the work carried out by the Steering Group. Thank you and well done once again.



Ms Claire Zerafa  
Midwifery Officer  
Mater Dei Hospital

## EXPERIENCE 7:

*As a police officer I feel that this project was very beneficial as it has trained a number of our first responding officers on various aspects of domestic violence. Such training has helped them gain additional knowledge and information, primarily on the indicators of domestic violence and understand the importance of collaborating with the relevant stakeholders to assist victims in the best way possible throughout the process. It gave us professionals from different fields the opportunity to share each one's experiences and best practices, whilst at the same time voice out our concerns to help improve and add on to the services already available to such vulnerable victims. This was partly achieved through the drafting of SOPs with the various organizations, new laws and the recommendation of the MARAM. I believe that all this, together with the positive feedback reported by our police officers has made the project successful.*



*Inspector Sylvana Gafa  
Victim Support Unit  
Malta Police Force*

## EXPERIENCE 8:

The course shed light on the harsh realities experienced by many girls and women in today's society. The trainers were highly professional, and keen to share their extensive knowledge and expertise in the area of gender-based violence. Presentations were varied, and brought about interesting discussions on a range of topics. Through networking with professionals from different areas in society (e.g. education, social care, justice system) and multidisciplinary discussions, I was given the opportunity to explore ways of identifying and supporting women and children who are experiencing different forms of gender-based violence. Consequently, I feel better equipped to recognise and adequately address issues of gender-based violence in my practice, from a multidisciplinary approach.



Dr Madeline Duca

Educational Psychologist

Secretariat for Catholic Education

## EXPERIENCE 9:

The training of Zero tolerance to violence was very interesting and quite intense. The knowledge we gained was on various levels. It was quite helpful to know certain statistics and the actual psychology behind gender-based violence and domestic violence. This helped our insight on what actually happens, how to identify it and what helps and what doesn't help the victim. During our training, video clips and stories sensitized us more towards the victims.

One of the very helpful tools we gained from this training was networking. It was helpful having different professionals coming together, get to know each other, listen to each other's perspective while having one aim: to help and protect the victim in the best way possible and in the least time possible. Exchanging each other's contacts will help us during real life situations of domestic violence. MARAM was an excellent example for us professionals to come together to help the victim. We hope that MARAM continues to function and improve it as a system.

There were also amendments in the Domestic Violence Law, where some terms were modified to include in it crimes which were not considered by the law although they were harming victims, and perpetrators were getting away with it due to loop holes in the law, like the definition of rape, which was not considering the consent of the other person. On the other hand, I did not like how the age for sexual consent was deduced to age 16, since this is opening up again for abuse and manipulation of perpetrators (adults) when they want to take advantage of the adolescent who is still discovering their identity and how to handle their independence and going into adulthood and thus more prone to being manipulated. Perpetrators might take advantage of the "less guided/ followed" adolescents which are still searching for their place in the world.



I think that having all these professionals working together, including persons from the jurisdiction would lessen the power issue, which basically is what domestic violence is all about. Additionally, having professionals, who are abler to meet such cases, on a daily basis, makes it easier for the victim to find help and feel less helpless.



*Ann Marie Bonnici*

*Church Schools Social Worker*

*Secretariat for Catholic Education*

## EXPERIENCE 10:

We found that the project was a worthwhile venture. The presentations were down to earth and addressed a very difficult topic in a comprehensive way. We especially liked the fact that we could work alongside people coming from various professions. It helped us to understand the ramifications of how different professions and agencies address the issue. We confirmed that there exist various lacunae in how domestic violence situations are tackled locally, but it was encouraging to learn about the new important initiatives in having better coordinated efforts towards tackling domestic violence effectively.



George Zarb

School Counsellor

Secretariat for Catholic Education

## EXPERIENCE 11:

*I found that participating in the “Full Cooperation: Zero Violence” has been a fruitful experience, particularly being involved in the steering committee, as it facilitated the dialogue between various stakeholders within the field. The structure of the programme that attempted to target and essentially bring together a number of professionals together was also a positive attribute of the project. Another advantage to the project was the provision of training to different professionals, that offered a broad understanding of domestic violence, together with a critical evaluation of the intervention strategies currently in place.*

*One main aspect however that is still unclear and essentially is still expected to come to fruition is the implementation of the strategy itself. Again, as the purpose of the project was to devise a strategy, it is interesting to see how this strategy will come into effect in the near future. I would also advise to have an evaluative component that would serve to both inform research as well as policy.*



MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Dr Chantal Avellino

Department of Probation and Parole

## EXPERIENCE 12:

My experience in this project is definitely a positive one. 'Full Cooperation: Zero Violence' has been an intensive and challenging project, but the results speak for themselves. The training was very well received by the professionals, especially, since this was a multi-agency training. Because of this, professionals were able to understand the role of each agency and the work done by other professionals. In view of this, rather than playing the blaming game, professionals understood better the difficulties and challenges faced by other professionals, thus allowing them to work collaboratively better together.

The Steering Group was also fruitful, where the members used to discuss their challenges and how can we address these all together. Through the Steering group, HRID has built a referral system, and hence, victims of DV who were seeking for our help via Facebook, they were referred to according to the case.

This project has also dedicated a number of raising awareness campaigns to address GBV&DV as to encourage people (victims, potential victims, perpetrators, witnesses and bystanders) to seek help from the agencies available. It was very crucial for us to inform the general public that domestic violence is a crime and under no circumstances it is acceptable.

Although the project has come to an end, it was the starting and the bridge point to the GBV&DV Strategy and Action plan. This Strategy ensures that all stakeholders are responsible for the safety of victims of domestic violence and the right services are available.



MINISTRY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AND EQUALITY

Annalise Muscat

Project Manager

Human Rights and Integration Directorate

## ANNEX 1:

Social Media Video Clips link:

Video 1: Is violence against women ever justified? Share this video. Say NO to violence!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Np4bJq2nxbA&index=6&list=PLoRtZdzDrK105gU5XvZDAB-iKBGX0rGMb>

Video 2: Children can also be victims of violence, even when not directly targeted. Share this video. Say NO to violence!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLWwpeyivXQ&index=5&list=PLoRtZdzDrK105gU5XvZDAB-iKBGX0rGMb>

Video 3: Together we can end violence against women. Share this video. Say NO to violence!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2kmwYeZw3U&list=PLoRtZdzDrK105gU5XvZDAB-iKBGX0rGMb&index=4>

Video 4: Controlling behaviour in relationships is NOT acceptable. Share this video. Say NO to violence!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfSby\\_OZBVw&list=PLoRtZdzDrK105gU5XvZDAB-iKBGX0rGMb&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfSby_OZBVw&list=PLoRtZdzDrK105gU5XvZDAB-iKBGX0rGMb&index=3)

Video 5: You are not alone. If you are a victim of violence, report the abuse and seek help TODAY.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaYdTOS2Hk8&list=PLoRtZdzDrK105gU5XvZDAB-iKBGX0rGMb>

Facebook link:

<https://www.facebook.com/HRIDmt/>

Twitter link:

[www.twitter.com/HRIDmt](http://www.twitter.com/HRIDmt)



**Contact Details:**

Human Rights and Integration Directorate  
A3 Towers, Level 0,  
Triq l-Arkata,  
Paola PLA 1211

[www.facebook.com/HRIDmt](https://www.facebook.com/HRIDmt)  
[www.twitter.com/HRIDmt](https://www.twitter.com/HRIDmt)  
[hrid@gov.mt](mailto:hrid@gov.mt)