



MINISTRY FOR JUSTICE,  
EQUALITY AND GOVERNANCE

## Breaking the Cycle of Violence



### **Training Pack for LGBTI Women**

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

## MESSAGE

The project *Breaking the Cycle of Violence* is co-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union and builds on a previous project *Full Cooperation: Zero Violence* with the same theme. The project is aimed to complement Malta's plan of action to implement the Istanbul Convention, with the objective to raise awareness among victims of domestic violence as well as potential victims, with a particular focus on women with disabilities, LGBTI women and migrant women.

The identified objectives of this project were: 1) to carry out research in order to identify behaviours of target groups which need to be changed in order to break the cycle of violence; 2) to develop and implement an educational programme for children and young adults; 3) to raise awareness among the different target groups on violence prevention, victims' rights and support services available to them; and 4) to develop and implement mentoring workshops for victims of violence in a second stage shelter and female survivors who receive support services from the national agency.

These training packs are aimed to ensure the sustainability of the project and may thus be replicated. They include an outline and resources for eight mentoring workshops – which tackle topics such as self-awareness, communication and empowerment amongst others – and two one-to-one sessions. They also include recommendations based on an ongoing evaluation of the sessions themselves.

Despite the success in these sessions, they should not be viewed from a one-size-fits-all perspective. This project in fact tried to shift away from this approach by addressing the different needs of the different target groups identified for this project. Therefore, these training packs shall act as a guidance and may be tailored to suit the needs of a different audience.

Finally, let's hope that this training pack will serve as a practical tool that will break the cycle of violence.

**Commissioner on Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence**

**Audrey Friggieri**



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# 1 Introduction

MGRM was set up between 2001 and 2002. As an organisation, MGRM's main aims were to bring about change that could be translated in the equality of civil rights and opportunities for the LGBTIQ community in Malta. The organisation's lobby for such changes can be witnessed in the changes in legislation that happened in the span of the last five years. Over the years, MGRM felt the need to support individuals from the community and the Rainbow Support Service was initiated in 2013. Over the past six years the Rainbow Support Services of MGRM have grown and from two-part time social workers the service grew and currently employs five-part time social workers, a youth worker and a full-time community outreach officer. The need for more professionals to be involved rose following an influx of cases where individuals and families needed support. To this day, cases of SSIPV (same-sex intimate partner violence) are some of the least common with the service having only met with around 7/8 cases with identified SSIPV issues. The service continues to increase its knowledge on the issues and has also engaged in research studies that revolve around the issues of domestic abuse and intimate partner violence within same sex relationships.

MGRM was interested in taking up this project as at that time the organisation was working on increasing its human resources and areas of work. Moreover, the drive to participate in such projects was encouraged in view that the professionals involved in the organisation had identified a gap in both research and service provision when it comes to SSIPV. During this same period some of the staff of the RSS was carrying out a research study assessing the knowledge, skills and access for support in cases of SSIPV. The results of the research indicated that there was a lack of knowledge and access for support in such cases and further encouraged the organisation to engage in such a project. MGRM has had the opportunity to carry out a number of projects, both as an individual organisation and in collaboration with other organisations. However, the project Breaking the Cycle of Violence was the first of its kind for MGRM. A crucial difference between this project and previous endeavours was the way how the organisation had to create a training pack dealing with SSIPV while keeping in mind the wider context of working with victims of Gender-Based Violence. Having said this, this project also gave MGRM the opportunity to reflect on the work that was being done by the organisation and the intersectionality of the individuals with whom MGRM is dealing.

## 2 Summary

### 2.1 Training Sessions

#### 2.1.1 *Session 1:*

- Introduce MGRM
- Introduce the project
- Introduce basic concepts

#### 2.1.2 *Sessions 2 & 3:*

In sessions II and III we will be looking at various case studies that will present us with scenarios of violence. We will be looking at four different case studies in each session allowing forty minutes for each case study.

#### 2.1.3 *Session 4:*

Objectives: In this final session we will be having a look at different services available. The services being presented directly work with clients who are or were victims of gender-based, domestic and/or intimate partner violence. Following this we will be discussing possible ways of how to empower individuals to seek support in moments of needs.

### 2.2 One-to-one mentoring sessions:

Women taking part of the seminar also attended one-to-one mentoring sessions with trained professionals.

### 2.3 Certificate Award Ceremony:

A seminar will be held to bring together NGOs working in the field of VAW and DV. Participants will exchange information and knowledge about their experience of the mentoring workshops. Certificates will also be awarded to all the participants.

### 3 Logistics

MGRM was participant in several network meetings with other stake holders and partner organisations. During these meeting issues related to the training modules were being discussed, such as recruitment, planning, venues, transport etc.

Periodically there were meetings that helped the different organisations to discuss different ways of implementation and challenges that were being encountered. During these meetings feedback gathered was quite useful in the design of the training modules and the execution of the training itself. These meetings were carried out before and during the delivery of the training. A number of meetings followed the actual training sessions.

These meeting with other professionals in the field were beneficial as they acted as a reflective ground for trainers. Conversations that took place in these meetings helped the trail of thought that led to the final design of the training. Some of these professionals were present in meetings where different partner organisations participating in the project were present. This allowed a certain level of cohesion and consistency in the training modules.

#### 3.1 Consulting the local research to prepare the content for the presentation

The preparation that led to the completion of the training module involved a lot of input from different sources. As mentioned previously professionals from the field were consulted. However, the intersectionality of the target groups needed to be catered for. Apart from professionals with a background of gender based and domestic violence, there was also an involvement from professionals who have worked with the LGBTIQ community. In this context having trainers who are sensitive to the needs of the trainees was beneficial. The way participants were engaged during the training went on to show how important it is to be sensitive to the intersectionality of the participants.

Although the training module was originally intended for individuals from within the community, the way recruitment was carried out changed the thought process with which the training was prepared. In the light that the training that was aimed towards individuals coming from professional background it was decided that there will be an element of research and literature included. Namely, basic terminology and theoretical concepts relating to queer theory and issues of Same Sex Intimate Partner Violence. Having said this, trainers were also aware that this training module was going to be presented to members of the community who were at

the time of the training incarcerated within the Corradino Correctional Facility. The training material in the power point presentation can easily be adaptable to fit a more casual setting.

## 4 Sessions

### 4.1 Session 1

#### 4.1.1 *Objectives:*

- Introduce MGRM
- Introduce the project
- Introduce basic concepts

#### 4.1.2 *Details to discuss are on each individual slide:*

- **Slide 1 – 2:** Cover pages
- **Slide 3:** MGRM
- **Slide 4 to 5:** Introduce Project
- **Slide 6:** Four areas to be explored during the project
- **Slide 7:** LGBTIQ issues to be kept in mind – terminology and how do these affect our understanding
- **Slide 8:** Cycle of Violence
- **Slide 9:** Prevalence of violence in LGBTIQ community
- **Slide 10 to 13:** Stigma, minority stress, Internalized homophobia
- **Slide 14:** Mutual battering
- **Slide 15 to 17:** Obstacles in accessing the services
- **Slide 18:** Intersectionality – discussion
- **Slide 19:** Patriarchy and other social constructs

### 4.2 Sessions 2 & 3

#### 4.2.1 *Objectives:*

In sessions II and III we will be looking at various case studies that will present us with scenarios of violence. We will be looking at four different case studies in each session allowing forty minutes for each case study. The exercise will be carried out as follows:

- Introducing the scenario



- Identifying theme and key persons in scenario
- Reflecting team
- Bystander approach – What would you do in that scenario?
- Other options

#### 4.2.2 *Case studies:*

- **Slide 22:** Down over situation
- **Slide 23:** Discuss option
- **Slide 24:** Dangerous play situation
- **Slide 25:** Discuss options
- **Slide 26:** Slap Shot situation
- **Slide 27:** Discuss options
- **Slide 28:** Foul Ball Situation
- **Slide 29:** Discuss options

### 4.3 Session 4

#### 4.3.1 *Objectives:*

In this final session we will be having a look at different services available. The services being presented directly work with clients who are or were victims of gender-based, domestic and/or intimate partner violence. Following this we will be discussing possible ways of how to empower individuals to seek support in moments of needs.

- **Slide 31 to 33:** Domestic violence unit
- **Slide 34 to 36:** Managing Abusive Behaviour Services
- **Slide 37 to 39:** Ghabex Emergency shelter
- **Slide 40:** Dar Merhba Bik
- **Slide 41:** Other shelters
- **Slide 42:** The Commission on Domestic Violence
- **Slide 43 to 45:** Advocacy

## **5 One-to-one Sessions**

Each participant attended a 2-hour individual tutorial with one of the trainers to further discuss the training sessions as well as anything they wished.

## 6 Observations and Recommendation

### 6.1 What worked? What could have worked better?

During the initial phase of recruitment, MGRM started to liaise with other organisations in order to get participants for this project. This has proven to be difficult because of the target group. LBT women in the community who are survivors of SSIPV were not willing to come forward and engage in this sort of project because of the implications this identification may put forward. Following peer discussions with our colleagues within the network meeting for this project and the meetings and discussions held with other stake holders has led MGRM to shift the training to have a more of a train the trainer approach. When promoted as such MGRM managed to secure a number of individuals from within the community who were willing to participate. In this case the almost every participant came with a professional background in a helping profession.

With regards to recruitment I believe that we could have had a more aggressive promotion to get more participants. Having said this we also acknowledged the difficulty of the possible participants and how delicate these situations are. The way the project allowed for follow up one to one sessions is important because it allowed us as trainers to have the opportunity to meet with participants another time. This was helpful especially with the participants who were incarcerated at the CCF.

Some of the participants from the professional's group were not interested in accessing the one to one session however there were another few who were interested and attended for the appointment. The conversation during the one to one sessions were mainly based on the material covered during the training and how the professionals have indeed met with similar situations in their different practices or through their friends.

During the run up of towards the actual training, personnel from MGRM and RSS members of staff worked on creating a training module that would cater for the group of trainees and that would be in line of what the aim of the project is.

## 6.2 What to consider during the planning phase: Planning the days of training to fit the schedule of the identified participants

The participants there were engaged to receive this training were in our case all employed. Asking the participants to take time off work to attend this training might have been counter-productive. Moreover, organising four different sessions of three hours each over a span of four weeks proved to be difficult because of availabilities. Because of this it was decided that the training sessions would be combined and be carried out over two days in the same week. This meant that we had two, three hours' sessions spread over two Saturdays. The schedule was of a 9am to 12noon, a one-hour lunch break and networking session and the second session being carried out between 1pm and 4pm. This schedule seemed to have worked with these participants; however, one can plan accordingly and in agreement with the prospective participants. Having said this, there will be individuals who are interested to receive the training but would not be available to attend on the set time and date. It is difficult to accommodate all individuals interested so our recommendation would be to either organise separate groups with different dates on a different schedule.

## **7 Resources**

1. Link 1