

# **COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**Annual Report**

**March 2010 – February 2011**



# **COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



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## **Message**

It is with great satisfaction that I note the Commission's achievements in its fight against domestic violence at the close of the second year of its second term since the adoption of the Domestic Violence Act in 2006. The Commission has been persistent in fighting domestic violence and raising awareness about this phenomenon through various initiatives. These include, among others, the training of professionals from different disciplines and the enhancement of services provided to victims of domestic violence.

In this regard, I wish to congratulate the Commission on Domestic Violence on the launch of the study 'Prevalence of Domestic Violence Against Women in Malta and its Impact on their Employment Prospects' that documents the extent and nature of domestic violence in Malta, as part of the project 'Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors'. The results of this study will surely enable the better development of policy and service planning in the field of domestic violence and indicate areas of prevention, in order to enhance projects and awareness campaigns.

Policy development and the provision of services to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence should be founded on a pro-active approach, which also includes vision based on research and sound data. Undoubtedly, research and consistent evaluation will help to establish affective interventions, develop common indicators and enhance monitoring and tracking of initiatives against domestic violence. Further collaboration and coordination between professionals working in the field of domestic violence is always highly encouraged as the multi-dimensional aspects of domestic violence require a holistic professional response.

Finally, I would like to thank the Commission on Domestic Violence for its continuous mission and the volunteers who assist organizations with the provision of services in this sector. Let us work together to eradicate domestic violence and provide a secure environment free of abuse through multi-disciplinary collaboration founded on better research and evaluation.

**Dolores Cristina**

Minister of Education, Employment and the Family



## **Foreword**

The Commission on Domestic Violence has worked to continue pursuing the various corridors of action that constitute the Commission's mission.

The great strength of the Commission is drawn from the various members' commitment to make a difference to the many women and others who have experienced domestic violence. All the members come to the Commission from their various jobs, many of them are connected directly or indirectly to domestic violence. So they continue to come up with ideas to find ways to enhance the quality of life of citizens who have been effected by domestic violence and encourage these people to be strengthened and to leave the negative and damaging experiences behind them. I must thank all the members including the Commission's executive secretary who is a font of support, information and reliability. Thanks must also be extended to all the collaborating agencies and individuals who have contributed in the many ways.

This is not a detailed report but a report that briefly describes what has been going on during the current year under review which is the second year of the second term

This year has been dominated by Commission's ESF project, Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors. with key achievements being the publication of the prevalence study, entitled 'Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta and its Impact on the Employment Prospects of the Women', the training of professionals during July 2010 and the start of the Publicity Awareness Campaign that was launched in February 2011.

The National Action Plan and the related activities are described. I would say that if the Commission manages with the support of all involved, to achieve all that is written then the country would have achieved much for the prevention, safety, rights, equality and independence of the women and family members. With sufficient resources even more can be achieved.

All the various activities are given some coverage. These activities and involvements give a clear indication that the Commission on Domestic Violence is involved with various sectors both on a national and international platform. All are working with the same aim for the victims, survivors and their families. Cumulatively there will be benefits for society.

**Ms Joanna Xuereb**  
**Chairperson**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Commission on Domestic Violence and its remit

The Commission on Domestic Violence was established under Article 3 of the Domestic Violence Act, Chapter 481 on the 1st March 2006<sup>1</sup>. The main role of the Commission is that of advising the Minister responsible for social policy on all aspects of Domestic Violence, which is defined in the act as any act of violence, even if only verbal, perpetrated by a household member upon another household member and includes any omission which causes physical or moral harm to the other.

The terms of reference of the Commission on Domestic Violence are laid down under Article 4, of the said Domestic Violence Act. These are reproduced below.

“The Commission shall have the function of advising the Minister on all aspects of domestic violence and in particular on:

- (a) increasing the awareness and understanding of domestic violence and harassment and their consequences and on ways and means to reduce their incidence;
- (b) areas of domestic violence on which research is necessary or desirable;
- (c) strategies to expose domestic violence and to facilitate the intervention of public and private agencies and entities with respect to victims and perpetrators of such violence;
- (d) educating the public on all aspects of domestic violence;
- (e) ways to facilitate communication between public and private agencies and entities involved in action against domestic violence;
- (f) standards for care facilities for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, including public or private shelter services or facilities;
- (g) standards and protocols for practitioners;
- (h) procedures for the effective co-ordination on a national level of the activities of public and private agencies and entities engaged in the giving of services on domestic violence issues including support services;
- (i) a comprehensive and co-ordinated plan for the collection of data concerning domestic violence for use by the courts, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, health care practitioners, social workers and other agencies and entities in a manner that protects the identity of victims of domestic violence;
- (j) developing a comprehensive plan for a multidisciplinary approach of active prevention and early intervention;
- (k) specialized training for professional groups involved; and
- (l) consulting and networking with other relevant national and international entities.”

The Chairperson and the members of the Commission on Domestic Violence are responsible for advising the Minister on the above.

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<sup>1</sup> Law can be accessed through [www.domesticviolence.gov.mt](http://www.domesticviolence.gov.mt)

### **1.1.1 Members of the Commission**

At the start of its reporting year, the Commission was composed of a chairperson and seven members. The members continue to enrich the Commission and its work with their own expertise and experience, varying from hands-on experience to policy, service provision, planning and research, and continue to learn from the field and from each other. As in previous years, Gozo was also represented on the Commission to ensure that Gozo's specific situation is addressed.

The Commission started the year, with the following members:

#### **Chairperson**

Dr Marceline Naudi Ph.D.(Manchester), M.A.(Bradford), B.A

#### **Members**

Ms Maria Attard M.A.T.C.

Dr Albert Bell Ph.D.), M.A., B.A (Hons.), B.A. (Gen.).

Inspector Louise Calleja Dip in Mngt. Studies, MBA (Grenoble)

Dr Taygeta Firman M.D.

Sr Joan Garner RGS. MQR.

Dr Roberta Lepre' Camilleri B.A., LL.D

Mr Cornelius Mulvaney Dip.Family Therapy (UK); CQSW (UK)

In March 2010, Dr Roberta Avellino was nominated as a member on the Commission as a representative and focal point of the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family. In mid-July 2010, Ms Joanna Xuereb was nominated as Chairperson of the Commission. Dr Marceline Naudi had offered her resignation. Ms Joyce Damato was nominated as a Commission member to represent Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs. This will be conducive for closer collaboration with this Ministry.

Thus the current members are as follows:

#### **Chairperson**

Ms Joanna Xuereb Dip. App.Soc.Studies (Social Work)

#### **Members**

Ms Maria Attard M.A.T.C.

Dr Roberta Avellino LL.D

Dr Albert Bell Ph.D.), M.A., B.A (Hons.), B.A. (Gen.).

Inspector Louise Calleja Dip in Mngt. Studies, MBA (Grenoble)

Ms Joyce Damato BA (Hons) Youth and Communication Studies

Dr Taygeta Firman M.D.

Sr Joan Garner RGS. MQR.

Dr Roberta Lepre' Camilleri B.A., LL.D

Mr Cornelius Mulvaney Dip.Family Therapy (UK); CQSW (UK)

The Commission is also supported by Ms Doris Vassallo, DPA, who performs the functions of Secretary to the Commission.

### 1.1.2 Premises

The Commission's office is at Block C Beltissebh Floriana. Within its office, the Commission has a resource library. The Commission has continued to gather films, books, theses, reports and other relevant documents for this Library. All items have now been catalogued and it can be used as a reference library for those requiring information related to domestic violence.

## 1.2 Summary of work carried out

### 1.2.1 Commission Meetings

Between March 2010 and February 2011 the Commission met ten times, as follows:

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Meeting 03/10:	Thursday, 23 March 2010	6/8
Meeting 04/10:	Thursday, 29 April 2010	6/9
Meeting 05/10:	Tuesday, 25 May 2010	8/9
Meeting 06/10:	Tuesday, 22 June 2010	9/9
Meeting 07/10:	Tuesday, 07 September 2010	6/9
Meeting 08/10:	Thursday, 07 October 2010	3/9
Meeting 09/10:	Tuesday, 17 November 2010	6/9
Meeting 10/10:	Wednesday, 14 December 2010	8/10
Meeting 01/11:	Thursday, 27 January 2011	7/10
Meeting 02/11:	Friday, 25 February 2011	6/10

The duration of each meeting was approximately two to three hours. All the meetings were held at Block C Beltissebh Floriana.

### 1.2.2 Subcommittees convened by the Commission

During the year under review the Commission convened various subcommittees and groups, as reported in more detail later in this report. These included:

- The Subcommittee on Service Development<sup>2</sup> – Members of this subcommittee are workers in the field representing the various direct service providers. This committee meets regularly to discuss standards, practice issues, problems and solutions.
- The Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation<sup>3</sup> – Members of this subcommittee are representatives of the research/data sectors who come from various entities and Ministries where the issue of domestic violence is also dealt with.

<sup>2</sup> For subcommittee report see appendix B

<sup>3</sup> For subcommittee report see appendix C

- The Subcommittee on Awareness Raising<sup>4</sup> - Members of this subcommittee are representatives from the public relations offices of the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (designated agency).
- The Subcommittee on Legal Issues<sup>5</sup> – this subcommittee was set up and held its first meeting in November 2010. The members of this subcommittee are representatives from the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs and the Malta Police Force, Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family, and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services. The aim of this subcommittee is to review the present legal implications and present recommendations to the Minister.
- The Task Group for Seminar<sup>6</sup> – an ad hoc subgroup of the commission was convened to organize the practical elements of the Seminar held in December 2010.
- The Task Group for the setting up of a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)<sup>7</sup> – this task group consists of representatives of the main stakeholders and is working on a proposal for the setting up of an effective and sensitive sexual assault response team to operate out of Mater Dei Hospital.

### 1.2.3 Other committees

The Commission continued to form part of the Platform for Children organised by the Commissioner for Children, which brings together various organisations that work with/for children to create better networking and a stronger voice in policy making. The Commission continues to be represented by Ms Maria Attard and Sr Joan Garner at the regular Platform for Children Meetings. After May 2010, the Platform for Children ceased to function.

## 1.3 The Commission's Participation in Local Activities

As in previous years, between March 2010 and February 2011, the chairperson and members of the Commission were again invited to attend and participate in a number of seminars, conferences and other activities, as listed hereunder. The Commission was represented by at least one or more members, including the Secretary to the Commission, at most of the various activities that it was invited to attend, however this has not always been possible. Participation in these activities continues to enable the Commission to maintain its profile and emphasize the importance of Domestic Violence as an issue in Malta. Participation is also useful to gather useful information, and enables networking with national and international entities.

- Seminar entitled Engagement of Civil Society in Public Health Research organized by STEPS at the Victoria Hotel, Sliema on 26 March 2010

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<sup>4</sup> For subcommittee report see appendix D

<sup>5</sup> For subcommittee report see appendix E

<sup>6</sup> For Seminar report see appendix F

<sup>7</sup> For Sexual Assault Response Team report see appendix G

- Seminar on *Il-Prevenzjoni tad-Dipressjoni u s-Suicidju: Possibbli?* organized by Richmond Foundation at the Grand Hotel Excelsior, Floriana on 14 April 2010
- Seminar entitled Children's Access to Justice organized by the Commissioner for Children on 28 April 2010
- Conference entitled Road Map for Equality organized by the Spanish Ambassador at the Corinthia Palace Hotel, Attard on 12 May 2010
- A mid-term evaluation process organized by PPCD at the Westin Dragonara Resort Hotel, St Julians on 12 May 2010
- *Laqgha ta' Konsultazzjoni dwar il-Politika Kulturali* organized by the Parliamentary Secretary for Culture was held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta on 01 June 2010
- Sixth annual conference organized by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality held at The Palace Hotel, Sliema on 4 June 2010
- First National Conference on Elder Abuse organized by the National Working Group on Elder Abuse (NWGOEA) in collaboration with the Ministry for Health, Elderly and Community Care held at The Corinthia San Gorg St Julians on the 15 June 2010
- PACT Promoting Awareness for Cooperation and Training in the Field of Domestic Violence organized a networking lunch for stakeholders that was held at the Corinthia Palace Hotel in Attard on the 18 June 2010
- Freedom of Information training organized by the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs at the Mediterranean Conference Centre on 06 August 2010
- Conference organized by Richmond Foundation entitled *Problemi ta' Saħħa Mentali, il-Faqar u l-Esklużjoni Soċjali* held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta on 8 October 2010
- A one day training session organized by Agenzija Appogg, FSWS held at Ewropa House, Valletta on 14 October 2010
- A half day seminar on Young People who sexually abuse organized by the Salesians of St Patrick's which was held on 27 October 2010

The Commission was also invited to a number of other conferences and seminars but was unfortunately unable to attend due to lack of human resources.

## **1.4 Other work**

The Commission continued to work on awareness raising, both with the general public and with specific professionals, and research as well as service and policy development, as detailed later in the report.

During the period of reporting the Commission gave four presentations to specific bodies and participated in thirteen media activities. Details of these are to be found in section three of this report.

### **1.4.1 International Work**

The Commission also represented Malta at various European Union and Council of Europe fora. Details of these appear later in the report (see section 5).

### **1.4.2 Projects**

The Commission was awarded funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) for the project ‘Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors’ under which it has already carried out various activities, with several others planned (see section 5.1.1). This project ends in November 2011.

The Commission has further been involved in other ESF funded projects which are detailed in Section below.

## **1.5 Financial overview**

In January 2010, the Commission was allocated a budget of €27,000. The annual awarded honoraria of the chairperson (€2,329.37) and the members of the Commission (€1,747.03 each) were paid From this budget. The The remaining €12,732.59 were utilized by the Commission for its various projects, including the following:

- 1) a seminar with international speakers;
- 2) contributions towards the topping up of funds which were set up in collaboration with other entities to provide police protection to people experiencing domestic violence when attending Court sittings;
- 3) additional material for the library and
- 4) contributing towards the ESF project until its funds were allocated for the project<sup>8</sup>.

The Commission’s budget was again decreased to €25,000 in January 2011. This limited budget has caused the Commission to forego certain plans and re-prioritise its work for the coming year.

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<sup>8</sup> For Financial Statement see appendix A



## 2 National Action Plan on Domestic Violence

### National Action Plan

After publishing the Action Plan, which was based on the Blueprint of the Council of Europe Campaign to Prevent And Combat Violence Against Women and including Domestic Violence, the Commission continued to plan its work and prioritise accordingly.

#### 2.1 Legal and Policy Measures

	<u>Action needed</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Review legislation – identify gaps in the protection of women from all forms of domestic violence;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>1.1</b> The legal subcommittee was set up and met in November 2010 following recommendations made to the then Minister for Social Policy. The objectives of the subcommittee on legal issues is to evaluate the process of legal aid, to review the law and to enable constant monitoring and evaluating.</p> <p><b>1.1.2</b> Ms Joyce Damato, a representative from MJHA was appointed with an honorarium as from November 2010 following the recommendation that a specific official be appointed.</p>	<p><b>Subcommittee on Legal Issues</b></p> <p><b>Commission</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Establish effective legal protection, including protection orders, for all women victims of violence, and regularly monitor and evaluate its effective implementation;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>1.2</b> The Commission is currently evaluating the terms upon which a focal point may be employed, in view of available resources. In the meantime, the Commission is also considering the use of the resources provided by the Ministry through its research unit.</p>	<p><b>Commission/ Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation/Focal Point</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ensure that immigration laws and administrative procedures do not prevent women from leaving violent relationships due to fear of deportation, loss of legal status or revoked custody over the children;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>1.3</b> The legal subcommittee will also be considering the issues under this heading, since it is clear that more work needs to be undertaken. The subcommittee on legal issues will be inviting personnel from the Immigration office for meetings to discuss this issue.</p>	<p><b>Commission/ new Subcommittee on Legal Issues</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Identify and put in place measures to increase the rate of reporting, prosecution and sanctions of perpetrators of domestic violence against women;</i></li> </ul>	

<p><b>1.4</b> The Commission is planning to request that the guidelines for police practices are re-distributed to all serving police officers, against signature.</p> <p>1.4.1 Raising-awareness for the general public of the changes instituted as part of the Domestic Violence Act 2006 regarding prosecution and the rights of victims is ongoing through various media interventions by the members of the Commission. This will be further increased through the national awareness raising campaign as part of the ESF funded project which was launched in February 2011.</p> <p><b>1.4.2</b> Gathering and Monitoring of data on the reporting, prosecution and sanctioning of perpetrators is necessary</p>	<p><b>Commission/ new Subcommittee on Legal Issues</b></p> <p><b>Subcommittee on Awareness Raising/ ESF project</b></p> <p><b>Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation/ Focal Point</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide victims with legal aid, psycho-social support and guarantee protection for witnesses;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>1.5</b> The subcommittee on legal issues will identify the process required for legal aid. Once the focal point will be employed, there will be active liaison with the subcommittee on legal issues.</p> <p><b>1.5.1</b> With regard to psycho-social support, the Commission has continued to raise the issue of the need of more human resources (social workers, psychologists) within the designated agency, <i>Agenzija Appogg</i>, with the relevant authorities. This issue has been discussed and will continue to be raised.</p> <p>The Commission also negotiated an agreement with Richmond Foundation to provide support to workers in the field dealing with domestic violence service users who have mental health problems which will be renewed till end 2011.</p> <p><b>1.5.2</b> The fund set up last year between the Commission and the designated agency, <i>Agenzija Appogg</i>, to pay for private police protection to accompany witnesses and victims to court has been renewed for a further year.</p>	<p><b>Commission/ new Subcommittee on Legal Issues/Focal Point</b></p> <p><b>Commission</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop risk assessment and safety planning as standard procedure in crime prevention to prevent violence against women, and ensure special attention is given to high risk victims who face repeated incidents of violence.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>1.6</b> Risk assessment and safety planning continues to be standard procedure at the Domestic Violence Unit, <i>Agenzija Appogg</i>, for those women who seek help there.</p> <p>Following the seminar ‘An Integrated Response to Domestic Violence’ held in November 2009, the Commission intends to study a checklist that was presented by an Inspector of the Metropolitan Police. This checklist will be discussed with the Commissioner of Police and hopefully be adapted to local needs for use by local district police.</p>	<p><b>Commission</b></p> <p><b>Commission</b></p>

## 2.2 Support and Protection for Victims

	Action needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide the necessary resources for free 24 hour help lines;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.1</b> The free 24 hour help line Supportline 179 is managed by <i>Agenzija Appogg</i>, and operated by trained volunteers.</p>	None
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide support and advocacy services, that meet quality standards, to all victims of violence and empower women ensuring that services are accessible to all women, including socially excluded women and recent migrants, refugees and women from ethnic minority groups and women with disabilities and old people</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.2</b> The commission is collaborating with JRS on the project undertaken by JRS on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) amongst the refugee and asylum seeker community..</p>	<b>Commission/ Subcommittee on Awareness Raising / ESF project</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Work to ensure that adequate resources for the established number of safe shelters for women victims of violence who have to flee from violence, as well as for advocacy services and crises centres, and provide these services with the necessary human and financial resources;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.3</b> The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) has finalized the report on Developing a Sexual Assault Response Team and will be presented to the Minister of Education, Employment and the Family, the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs and the Minister of Health.</p>	<b>Commission/ Task Group</b>
<p><b>2.3.1</b> It is still being suggested that in the longer term, a proper evaluation of the training needs of staff working in this sector in Malta and Gozo is carried out, and recommendations made on how best to meet these needs. An initial identification of training needs has been carried out in the subcommittee on services development. The Commission also raised the issue of the need for better liaison regarding training activities with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services – this needs to be followed up. The Commission will keep in contact with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services with regards to training requirements through the Subcommittee on Service Development.</p>	<b>Commission/ Subcommittee on Service Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop a coordinated well resourced Interdisciplinary specialist sector to increase capacity building across core national and local agencies such as health, justice, social welfare and education, in order to provide women victims</i></li> </ul>	

<p><i>of violence with immediate, comprehensive and coordinated support;</i></p>	
<p><b>2.4</b> The proceedings of the seminar held in November 2008 entitled ‘Working Together To Combat Domestic Violence’ for workers from different sectors, such as social workers, police, lawyers etc that touch with domestic violence were published. A second seminar was held in November 2009 entitled ‘An Integrated Approach towards Domestic Violence’, the proceedings of which were posted on our website. A third seminar entitled ‘An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence’ was held in December 2010. The proceedings of the seminar were uploaded on the commission’s website. The usefulness of joint training was strongly emphasized by the participants at all three seminars.</p> <p>One of the planned activities of the ESF project awarded to the Commission is training for professionals in health care, justice, social welfare and education. The training took place in July 2010. Further training for professionals and other sectors will be organised during 2011 through the publicity awareness component of the ESF project.</p>	<p><b>Commission/ Subcommittee on Service Development/ ESF project</b></p>
<p><b>2.4.1</b> The various subcommittees of the Commission provide a forum for different sectors to interact and network; these will continue to do so.</p>	<p><b>Various subcommittees</b></p>
<p><b>2.4.2</b> Following a detailed evaluation of the training needs of professionals a structured plan for the training of professionals will be required(see 2.3.1 above).</p>	<p><b>Commission/ Subcommittee on Service Development</b></p>
<p><b>2.4.3</b> The ESF project includes a training component which will be used to help develop draft protocols to regulate joint working between the various professionals. Depending on available resources within the Commission, it is hoped that feedback from the three seminars organised by the Commission and the feedback from the ESF will be integrated with the drafts to produce more holistic protocols. These would then need to be adopted by the various stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Commission/ESF project</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Organise training on domestic violence against women for professionals (e.g. police, medical professionals, judicial officials etc.);</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.5</b> The Commission will continue to meet any requests for training.</p> <p>As stated above, the training component of the ESF project also included sensitisation for professional groups (lawyers; police; teachers; social workers; health professionals; employment advisors) on domestic violence issues.</p>	<p><b>Commission</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Include the issue of violence against women as a violation of women’s human rights and a public health issue in the</i></li> </ul>	

<p><i>education curricula of all studies and training for judicial and security personnel, health care professionals, social workers, teachers and others;</i></p>	
<p><b>2.6</b> It was suggested that in the longer term, the Commission will initiate negotiations with various university departments to offer a post-graduate certificate course on domestic violence open to various professions.</p>	<b>Commission</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Encourage at all levels the work of NGOs involved in combating violence against women, and establish active cooperation with these NGOs, including appropriate logistic and financial support;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.7</b> The Commission has continued to encourage and support the work of, as well as advocate on behalf of, NGO's, through: its subcommittee on service development; the task group on a sexual assault response team; facilitating access to training. The Commission is one of the partners in Flagship Project for the EU Year for Volunteering whose main partner is the National Council of Women. It will continue to do this as well as deal with ongoing issues as they arise.</p>	<b>Commission/ various subcommittees</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide financial support, housing, independent rights to residence as well as training and employment to women victims of violence to enable them to freely decide whether or not to leave their violent partner;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.8</b> The ESF project 'Dignity for Survivors of Domestic Violence' aims at increasing access to employment for women victims of Domestic Violence. This is being tackled through: training for various professionals on the availability of and accessing of various employment schemes; sensitisation of employment professionals on Domestic Violence; awareness raising campaign.</p> <p><b>2.8.1</b> The subcommittee on service development has been monitoring public housing allocation and time lapse of receipt of social security benefits. The monitoring needs to be better structured and this will be undertaken by the 'focal point' once the person is in place.</p>	<b>Commission/ESF project</b>  <b>Subcommittee on Service Development/Focal Point</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Encourage the establishment of nationally coordinated and locally based programmes for perpetrators. These programmes must have at their core the need for women's safety and be organised in close cooperation with services for women victims.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.9</b> The locally based programme for perpetrators exist. is service already exists in Malta.</p>	<b>None</b>

### 2.3 Data collection

	Action needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure the systematic collection of statistical data disaggregated by sex, by type of violence as well as by the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim in all fields</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>3.1</b> Over the past year, the Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation together with the Chair of the Commission has continued to work on the structure necessary for this to happen. The focal point was created on advice of the Commissioner for Data Protection to enable the harmonisation of the statistical data. Once the person is engaged the Commission will be able to give this the priority it deserves.</p>	<b>Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation/ Focal Point</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Use a methodology that allows for gender analysis and comparison with other member states of the Council of Europe;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>3.2</b> Once the focal point is engaged they will be liaising with other entities within the Council of Europe member states to be able to provide data that is comparable across countries under the supervision of the subcommittee on research.</p> <p>The Council of Europe is in the process of drafting a legally binding convention which includes a research component, and the EU is considering the setting up of an observatory to monitor data from the member states. Hence this element of the action plan has further gained in importance and will need to be given priority.</p>	<b>Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation/Focal Point</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collect and disseminate good practices for preventing violence occurring in the family or domestic unit, protecting its victims and prosecuting the perpetrators</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>3.3</b> Some initial work has been done in regard to prevention. The EU observatory mentioned above will also be including this element, so this will have to move up in importance.</p>	<b>Commission/Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation</b>

## 2.4 Awareness raising

	Action needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Publicly denounce domestic violence against women as a violation of women's human rights and commit to taking action against it at the highest political level</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.1</b> The Commission's second presentation to the Parliamentary Social Affairs Committee on Domestic Violence in Malta was delivered.</p> <p>The Commission's last annual report 2009-2010 was distributed to all members of Parliament and the proceedings of the 2010 seminar were uploaded on the Commission's website.</p>	<b>Commission</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Raise awareness on domestic violence against women using all available means, in particular through the media and educational curricula to challenge prevailing gender stereotypes, and discriminatory cultural norms and public opinion about its acceptability;</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.2</b> The Commission has continued to respond to requests from the media to the best of its ability, and various members of the Commission have participated in television and radio programmes as well as been interviewed for print media.</p> <p>The awareness raising sub-committee has been reconvened.</p> <p>The ESF project includes a national media campaign and this was initiated in February 2011</p> <p><b>4.2.1</b> With regard to educational curricula, see also 2.6 above.</p>	<b>Commission/ Subcommittee on Awareness Raising/ ESF project</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Encourage national and community leaders and opinion formers to publicly acknowledge the gravity of violence against women occurring in the family or domestic unit, to condemn its perpetration and the use of custom, tradition or religion to excuse it.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.3</b> The second presentation to the Parliamentary Social Affairs Committee was delivered (see 4.1 above).</p> <p><b>4.3.1</b> A presentation was delivered to the Gozo College of Chaplains.</p>	<b>Commission</b>  <b>Commission</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Support specific awareness raising initiatives aimed at men in order to mobilise them to take an active part in eliminating all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence .</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.4</b> One of the activities requested in the tender document for the national awareness campaign as part of the Dignity for Survivors project, funded through ESF, is a football match with the players publicly supporting men against violence against women, through the wearing of the white ribbons. This will be held during 2011.</p>	<p><b>Subcommittee on Awareness Raising</b></p>

### 3. Awareness-raising

Raising awareness on domestic violence and its effects remains a priority for the Commission.

#### 3.1 Presentations

Dr Marceline Naudi was invited by the Gozo College of Chaplains to give a presentation to parish priests. This presentation was held on 05 May 2010.

Dr Marceline Naudi, the then chairperson of the Commission was one of the speakers at a conference entitled Road Map for Equality after 2010 organized by the Spanish Ambassador on 12 May 2010.

The second presentation to the Parliamentary Social Affairs Committee was given on 18 May 2010 by Dr Marceline Naudi, together with Ms Maryanne Gauci, Adult and Family Service Manager, *Agenzija Appogg*.

Dr Marceline Naudi was one of the speakers at the 'First National Conference on Elder Abuse' which was held at The Corinthia San Gorg St Julians on the 15 June 2010.

#### 3.2 Communicating with Judiciary and the Courts

The Commission invited members of the Judiciary to attend a seminar entitled 'An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence' organized to mark the International Day of Violence Against Women. One member of the Judiciary attended the seminar which was held on Friday 03 December 2010.



### 3.3 Awareness raising: General public

The subcommittee on awareness raising continued to meet to discuss the items to be included in the tender for the publicity campaign as part of the ESF 3.43 project Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors partly financed under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 Operational Programme II, Priority Axis III Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life .

The Commission responded to some requests for participation in events and interviews in the press, on radio and television, as listed below:

- Participation in the programme *Inwar* aired on *Radju RTK* on 9 March 2010 hosted by Ms Susan Mulvaney (Inspector Louise Calleja)
- Participation in the programme *Inwar* aired on *Radju RTK* on 16 March 2010 hosted by Ms Susan Mulvaney (Dr Marceline Naudi)
- Participation in the programme *Inwar* aired on *Radju RTK* on 23 March 2010 hosted by Ms Susan Mulvaney (Dr Marceline Naudi)
- Participation in the programme *Inwar* aired on *Radju RTK* on 30 March 2010 hosted by Ms Susan Mulvaney (Dr Albert Bell)
- Participation through an interview published on the Sunday Circle in March 2010 (Dr Marceline Naudi)
- Participation through an interview for an article for *Illum* published on 07 March 2010 (Dr Roberta Lepre’).
- Participation through an interview for the programme by MEUSAC aired on *Radju RTK* on 15 April 2010 (Dr Marceline Naudi)
- Participation through an interview for the programme *Sehemna fl-Ewropa* by Ms Svetlana Curmi from MEUSAC aired on *Radju Malta* on 30 April 2010 (Dr Marceline Naudi).
- Participation in the programme *Riflessi* hosted by Ms Lynne Chircop aired on Education 22 on 19 April 2010 and repeated on 24 April 2010 (Dr Marceline Naudi).
- Participation in the programme *Perspettiva* hosted by Ms Joyce Grech aired on Education 22 on 07 May 2010 (Dr Roberta Lepre’).
- Participation in the programme *Ir-riedni f’idejk* hosted by Ms Joyce Grech aired on *Radju RTK* on 09 September 2010 (Inspector Louise Calleja).
- Participation through an article in the *Fempower Magazine* published by WAVE Women against violence Europe in December 2010 (Dr Marceline Naudi).

- Participation in the programme hosted Ms Cynthia Zerafa aired on *Radju RTK* on 10 February 2010 (Ms Joanna Xuereb)

Press releases<sup>9</sup> were also issued by the Commission as indicated hereunder:

- The Commission issued a press release on 26 October 2010 after holding training sessions for professional as part of the ESF 3.43 project ‘Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors’.
- The Commission issued a press release on 03 December 2010 after holding the seminar ‘An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence’.

### 3.4 Website

The Commission’s website [www.domesticviolence.gov.mt](http://www.domesticviolence.gov.mt), which forms part of the Ministry’s website, includes information on the Commission and its activities as well as links to the laws related to domestic violence. It further contains links to websites of other organizations which deal with issues of domestic violence. The website is continually being updated. The proceedings of the Seminar organized by the Commission in December 2010 were also uploaded. The study entitled ‘A Nationwide Research Study on the Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta and its Impact on their Employment Prospects’ which was commissioned by the Commission as part of the ESF 3.43 project ‘Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors’ will also be uploaded in due course. Other material uploaded on the website include press releases issued by the Commission.

## 4. Service and Policy Development

The subcommittees on service and policy development continued to function and the Commission also held various meetings with key stake holders.

### 4.1 Meeting with the Designated Agency responsible for the provision of preventive, therapeutic and, or treatment programmes for persons experiencing domestic violence and perpetrators of domestic violence.

Ms Joanna Xuereb, Chairperson of the Commission held a meeting on 11 November 2010 with Ms Sina Bugeja, Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Ms Yvonne Mallia, Operations Director, *Agenzija Appogg*, Ms Maryanne Gauci, Adult and Family Service Manager, *Agenzija Appogg* and Ms Doreen Camilleri, Service Area Leader, *Agenzija Appogg*. The discussion focused on the issues of:

- the problem women are facing when they have to change the children’s schools for their safety.

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<sup>9</sup> Press releases can be found on [www.domesticviolence.gov.mt](http://www.domesticviolence.gov.mt)

- the problem the women are facing is that both parents' signatures are required for the transfer to take place since due to the length of Court Cases the woman does not have full care and custody of the child.
- a revision of the procedure with regards to the accompaniment of women to Court by Police Officers and the payment for this service needs to be reviewed.
- it is not always appropriate for the women to attend a mediation session on their own. The importance of using video conferencing in Court was stressed.
- the protection order is not being used by the Court.
- an increase in human resources are required in Court.

They agreed to work closely together to try and resolve these issues.

## **4.2 Review of Domestic Violence Law**

In order to look at the problems and issues being encountered in practice in relation to the law and legal matters, the Commission set up a Subcommittee on Legal Issues to review the law and suggest the necessary amendments to increase the legal effectiveness. The terms of reference were drawn up and a letter for nominations of members to sit on the Subcommittee were sent to the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family, the Office of the Attorney General, the Social Affairs Committee, the Commissioner of Police and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services. The Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs and the Commissioner of Police, Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family, and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services nominated their representatives to sit on this Subcommittee. The Subcommittee is chaired by the Commission's representative. The amendments to be recommended will address the difficulties being faced in relation to the law by women attempting to escape domestic violence as well as by the frontline workers.

## **4.3 Liaison with entities**

### **4.3.1 Liaison with the Domestic Violence Worker's Forum**

Dr Marceline Naudi, continued to convene regular meetings of the domestic violence worker's forum ('the shelters' meeting') in a personal capacity. The social workers employed in the sector, as well as representatives of the various shelters attend these meetings.

### **4.3.2 Liaison with Richmond Foundation**

Social Workers who deal with service users with domestic violence and mental health issues at times require an additional support service. The fund for this service was sponsored by the Commission. This arrangement will continue to be monitored and reviewed as required.

### **4.3.3 Liaison with the Police Commissioner**

Private police protection was welcomed by social workers and women to attend at court sittings. This service of private police protection was used on several occasions during 2010. The fund was set up between *Agenzija Appogg* and the Commission, with the aim of paying for private police protection when necessary. The respective fund was fully utilized during 2010. The Commission's shared sponsorship of the service will continue to be monitored and reviewed.

### **4.3.4 Liaison with Lions Club Mdina**

The Commission sponsored the printing of bookmarks for Lions Club Mdina. These bookmarks were distributed during a walk organized through an EU programme Youth in Action with the aim of raising funds for Dar Qalb ta' Gesu'. The Walk For Freedom was held on Sunday 14 November 2010 in Sliema.

The Chairperson met with the organizers on the 28 September 2010 to discuss the Commission's contribution for this walk. The Chairperson also met the Lions Club Youths Mdina on 03 October 2010 to raise awareness about issues of domestic violence and to encourage their volunteering in this sector.

## **5. European Union, Council of Europe and International Projects**

### **5.1 European Social Fund**

#### **5.1.1 ESF 3.43 Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors**

The European Social Fund project 'Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors'<sup>10</sup> under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 Operational Programme II, Priority Axis III Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life, was awarded to the Commission as the lead partner with the cooperation of several other organisations. This project has been ongoing since September 2009. The award of this project has enabled the Commission to continue its work in the area. It will run till November 2011.

The project includes:

- Study on the Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta and its Impact on the Employment Prospects of the Women: This started being undertaken in October 2009 and was launched during the annual seminar in December 2010. The results of this study, will enable the better development of policy and service planning in the field of domestic violence;
- Study visit abroad for domestic violence workers: This was undertaken in October 2009, with nine workers selected from the Domestic Violence Unit (*Agenzija Appogg*) and from the various shelters, visiting a shelter in the Czech

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<sup>10</sup> For ESF3.43 Project report see appendix H

- Republic. This visit proved fruitful for the workers who were able to see different ways of working and learn from them;
- Development of standards for shelters to include provision for inclusion of victims of domestic violence within the labour market. The training took place in July 2010. This component is ongoing through the Subcommittee on Service Development.
  - Development of co-ordination plans including protocols for sectors involved in domestic violence including:
    - police
    - government entities
    - health service providers
    - NGO's
  - National Media awareness campaign – A tender for this component was awarded in December 2010 but due to unforeseen delays, the campaign was launched in February 2011. The campaign will end in November 2011.

The new project administrator was appointed as from April 2010.

### **5.1.2 Care Creates Change**

The Commission was approached by WasteServ Malta Ltd to be a partner for a project entitled 'Care Creates Change' under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 Operational Programme II, Priority Axis III Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life. The Commission was asked to organise a half day seminar on Domestic Violence For Trainees which was held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta on 03 November 2010<sup>11</sup>. The seminar was organized with the collaboration of the members of the Subcommittee on Service Development. The Chairperson and various members of the Subcommittee on Service Development delivered short presentations on different aspects of domestic violence. Some video clips related to domestic violence were shown during the seminar.

### **5.1.3 Encouraging and strengthening interaction between volunteers and society in an active citizenship and the creation of improved structures**

In November 2010, the Commission was approached by the National Council of Women to be a partner for a project entitled 'Encouraging and strengthening interaction between volunteers and society in an active citizenship and the creation of improved structures' as part of flagship projects in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011. The Commission will give its input in this project in collaboration with the National Council of Women.

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<sup>11</sup> For Seminar programme vide appendix I

## **5.2 DAPHNE III Programme, 2007-2013**

### **5.2.1 DAPHNE Meetings**

As Malta's representative for the DAPHNE programme, the Chairperson attended a meeting on 13 September 2010 in Brussels. The DAPHNE Programme awards funds for projects aimed at preventing and combating violence against children, young people and women and to protect persons experiencing violence and groups at risk. The meeting was held to approve the projects that were chosen for funding.

## **5.3 Council of Europe**

### **5.3.1 Committee meetings on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**

Dr Marceline Naudi as Malta's representative has continued to attend the Ad Hoc Committee meetings on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women And Domestic Violence (CAHVIO). This committee has been meeting on regular basis to work on the drafting of a convention that will eventually be legally binding in all Council of Europe member states. During the year of reporting meetings were held in Strasbourg in June 2010, September 2010, November 2010 and December 2010. Ms Joanna Xuereb, Chairperson of the Commission attended the four-day meeting between the 18 January and 21 January 2011 with the objective of finalizing the explanatory memorandum of this convention.

## **5.4 European Union**

### **5.4.1 Meeting Women Ministers' Summit on Violence against women**

Ms Joanna Xuereb, Chairperson of the Commission participated at the "Women Ministers' Summit on Violence Against Women", on behalf of Minister Dolores Cristina, Minister for Education, Employment and the Family. The meeting organized by the Belgian Presidency of the European Union, took place at the Hilton Tower Hotel, Brussels, Belgium on 24 November 2010. The objective of this meeting was to highlight the importance of the struggle against the different forms of violence with which millions of women within the European Union are confronted.

### **5.4.2 Conference on Violence against Women**

Ms Joanna Xuereb participated in the Conference organized by the European Commission in cooperation with the Belgian Presidency on Violence Against Women. The conference was held in Brussels between 25 November and 26 November 2010. The conference was attended by leaders, parliamentarians, experts, NGOs and international organizations who are active in the field of combating domestic violence against women.

### **5.4.3 2010 European Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion**

The European Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010 was organized for all member states through EU funding. Individuals from various sectors of society were approached to act as ambassadors. Their role was to be present in the various activities that were organized during the year. Dr Marceline Naudi, the then Chairperson of the Commission gave a presentation on domestic violence during a breakfast press meeting on 30 July 2010. Ms Joanna Xuereb, Chairperson of the Commission attended a Round table event held at Intercontinental Hotel St Julians on 18 November 2010.

Ms Joanna Xuereb, the new Chairperson of the Commission gave a presentation entitled *Domestic Violence of its very nature is a state of poverty and social exclusion* during the closing conference held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta on 10 December 2010.

The Commission participated in an exhibition that was organized in relation to the European Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion that was put up in the courtyard of the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family at Palazzo Ferreria, Republic Street Valletta. The exhibition took place on 07 May 2010.

### **5.5 WAVE Women against violence Europe**

WAVE is a network of European women's non-governmental organizations working in the field of combating violence against women and children. The Network sets out to promote and strengthen the human rights of women and children in general and to prevent violence against women and children in particular.

The Commission also contributed in replying to questions to comply the “WAVE Country Report 2010“ which focused on the issue of violence against migrant and ethnic minority women and situation of survivors of violence and their children in Europe.

The Commission also contributed for the WAVE newsletter through an article entitled ‘Malta – continue struggling in hope’ written by Dr Marceline Naudi which appeared in the December issue.

### **5.6 Questionnaires and reports on domestic violence**

The Commission on Domestic Violence received various questionnaires from various entities related to domestic violence and they were duly filled in. The Commission was also asked to give its feedback or updates on various reports. This was duly complied with.

## **6 Conclusion**

The Commission on Domestic Violence has been operating since its foundation in 2006. Much has been carried out but the Commission must now engage the wider civil society to contribute to eradicating domestic violence through zero tolerance to this abuse.

The upcoming year will see to the completion of the Commission's project 'Dignity for Survivors of Domestic Violence under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME II - Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality Of Life. Through this project, the Commission on Domestic Violence would have conducted a Nationwide Research Study on the Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta and Its Impact On their Employment Prospects, delivered training to professionals who work in the field of domestic violence and conducted a publicity awareness campaign. Furthermore, draft protocols for inter-agency working have been outlined and will be discussed and approved by the various stake holders.

The research study was launched during the conference organized by the Commission in December 2010 and provided a realistic picture of the scenario of domestic violence in Malta. Undoubtedly, this study is a rich source of evidence based data to policy makers and professionals within the field. The resulting figures have also been a source of much concern as facts show that domestic violence has been experienced by 1 in 4 women at some time during their lifetime and that 2 out of 4 women were experiencing domestic violence during the period under study, February – March 2010. Moreover, the national awareness campaign has recently been launched in February 2011.

Much of the work carried out throughout the development and implementation of the ESF 3.43 project 'Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors' has been possible through the hard work of the Commission members and the Research Sub-Committee, who have actively contributed to ensure the project's success.

Finally, thanks is due to all those people who work and believe that it is possible to prevent domestic violence and in turn, gain independence in a peaceful way of life. Surely, prevention is key in fostering a society, which condemns violence in all its forms.



## Appendix A

**Financial Report**  
**Breakdown of Item 5477**  
**Domestic Violence Commission**  
**up to and including 31.12.10**

<b>Budget</b>	<b>€ 27,000.00</b>
<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Amount paid</u></b>
Seminar	€ 4,760.02
Honoraria 2009	€ 14,267.41
Overtime Secretary	€ 1,323.91
Printing of bookmarks in collaboration with Lions Club Mdina	€ 149.10
Expenses re adverts as part of ESF project	€ 1,366.83
Library	€ 893.03
Refurbishment of premises	€ 448.41
Fund in collaboration with FSWS for Private Police Protection	€ 215.00
Administrative Services	€ 3,172.50
Advert – Focal Point for harmonization of data	€ 175.11
Services rendered by Focal Point for harmonization of data	€ 231.00
Adjustment incidence re travel expenses	€ 4,140.00
Travel expenses for conferences abroad	€ 2,365.87
Conferences in Malta	€ 45.00
Stationery	€ 436.00
Member's travel expenses	€ 102.30
Miscellaneous	€ 103.25
	<b>€ 25,466.33</b>
<b>Balance left</b>	<b>€ 1,533.67</b>

## Appendix B

### Commission on Domestic Violence Subcommittee on Service Development

#### Annual Report March 2010- February 2011 Ms Pamela Cuschieri

From March 2010 to February 2011 the Subcommittee on Service Development met five times on the following dates: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010, and 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

#### **The current members of the subcommittee are:**

Ms Joanna Xuereb (Chairperson)  
Sr Joan Garner (Commission on Domestic Violence)  
Ms Christine Camilleri (Dar Tereza Spinelli)  
Ms Pauline Mercieca (DVU, *Agenzija Appogg*)  
Ms Pamela Cuschieri (Dar MerhbaBik)  
Ms Josette Stensen (Dar Qalb ta' Gesu')  
Ms Inez Azzopardi (Ex-service user)  
Ms Charmaine Vella (Ex-service user)  
Ms Rita Caligari (Dar Guzeppa Debono)  
Mr Peter Paul Portelli (Centru Hidma Socjali, Gozo)  
Ms Doris Vassallo (Secretary)

The sub-committee aims to look at service provision, and to ensure good liaison with the people and agencies in the front line. It is to be noted with satisfaction that despite the members' work commitment, this subcommittee met regularly, managing to meet four times during the year 2010 and once this year, and continuing to work on new issues.

These included the following:

- 1) **Police protection for victims attending Court** – In 2009 the fund for the Special Police Protection Services was set up in collaboration with *Agenzija Appogg*, and renewed for a further year in December 2010. Social workers reported that there was a misunderstanding because the Police were provided but transport was not. This was discussed during our meetings. We agreed that Police officers had to use the same transport as that chosen by the woman requiring protection.
- 2) **Support for Workers dealing with women who have mental health problems** - The service offered by Richmond Foundation has been renewed for a further year in December 2010. Professionals from Richmond Foundation were asked to give guidance to social workers dealing with domestic violence cases involving mental illness. In January 2011,

professionals from Richmond Foundation contacted the shelters & the agencies to inform them that the service is still available.

- 3) **Policies** - Work continued on harmonizing minimum standards regarding shelter policies. These are a) termination and refusal; b) standards and procedures. The latter include boundaries, integrity, personal information, giving and receiving gifts, personal errands & dress code.
- 4) **Social Security** – Members of the subcommittee had a meeting with Mr. Alfred Portelli who was an Assistant Director at the Social Security department and discussed financial matters concerning women who had suffered domestic violence. The members divulged that when the clients leave the shelters, they do not inform the Social Security Office and this enhances the risk of abuses. To avoid this, a letter was formulated regarding those women who left the residential setting. All the members agreed that before doing so the clients should be informed about such the procedure.
- 5) **Prevalence Study** – The study results were launched during the seminar in December 2010. The study indicated that a high amount of women admitted to being abused.
- 6) **Campaign** – The tender for a National Publicity Campaign through the ESF 3.43 project Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors was issued. A selection process took place with the aim of organizing a campaign to raise awareness on domestic violence.
- 7) **ESF 3.43 Project** - Services and standards and networking between all professionals do improve through the organization of courses for social workers and other professionals in this field of domestic violence. The training was organized for seven full-day sessions. On the last sessions the representatives from the seven groups of participants attended a final meeting to set a number of protocols. The training was held in July 2010. The participants included ETC advisors, domestic violence workers, police, lawyers, law students, teachers, health professionals and generic social workers.
- 8) **Seminars** – The members of the subcommittee together with the Chairperson organized a training session on 3 November 2010 for WasteServ course participants. This was part of an ESF project known as ‘Care Creates Change’.

### **Conclusion**

The Subcommittee on Service Development wishes to thank the Domestic Violence commission chairperson, Dr. Marceline Naudi for the excellent work carried out in the Domestic violence field. Her input was of great encouragement to this committee.

The members of the Subcommittee are grateful to Ms. Joanna Xuereb for her continual urge to promote awareness on domestic violence and for strengthening the services offered.

The subcommittee members have worked hard to put their thoughts and ideas into action and promised to continue working for the improvement of the service.

## Appendix C

### Commission on Domestic Violence Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation

#### Annual Report March 2010 - February 2011

Dr Albert Bell B.A., B.A. (Hons.), M.A., Ph.D.

An evidence-based ethos has characterised the Commission on Domestic Violence's vision and *modus operandi* from the outset of its naissance shortly after the introduction of the Domestic Violence Act in 2006. The institution of a Research and Data Collation Subcommittee in September 2007 (bringing together researchers and experts in the field and dove-tailing with service providers) has provided a productive forum which has facilitated and spurred efforts to ensure the requisite empirical grounding for the Commission's extensive remit and action plan.

From March 2010 to February 2011 the Commission's Research and Data Collection Subcommittee was comprised by the following members:

Dr Albert Bell (Commission on Domestic Violence) – Chairperson

Dr Marceline Naudi (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Dr Taygeta Firman - (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Ms Joslyn Magro Cuschieri (NSO)

Insp. Trevor Sammut (Malta Police)

Ms Christine Agius Marchand (FSWS)

Mr Joseph Deguara (IMU, MSOC)

Dr Audrey Galea (Health Division, MSOC)

Mr Francis Xavier Mangion (Courts of Justice, MJHA)

Ms Doris Vassallo (MSOC) - Secretary

In July 2010, Dr Marceline Naudi was replaced by Ms Joanna Xuereb (the Commission's present Chair) following the former's resignation from Chairperson and member of the Domestic Violence Commission. During the period under review, the Subcommittee convened four times at the Commission's premises at Belt is-Sebh, Floriana on the following dates: Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010, Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010, Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Each meeting extended to approximately two hours. Several *ad hoc* meetings were held between various members of the Subcommittee and other parties on subcommittee-related work.

As previously reported, the Research and Data Collection Subcommittee's strategy centres on a three-tiered or pillared approach, namely:

1. The replication of previous studies in the field to ensure a cumulative and longitudinal approach to evidence building that effectively takes stock of previous studies;

2. The harmonisation of routine administrative data and the creation of a secure data collection focal point infrastructure that provides clear indication of related trends in the field, particularly in relation to demand for domestic violence services and police reporting; and,
3. The design and implementation of a domestic violence prevalence survey that provides insights on the magnitude and nature of domestic violence against women in Malta and within a comparative pan-European framework.

Notable progress has been registered on most of these fronts since the Subcommittee's inception. Our first priority was to replicate the 2003 study titled "*Domestic Violence against Women: Perceptions of the Maltese General Public*" conducted by the National Statistics Office (NSO). As previously recorded in the Commission's 2009-2010 annual report, the report documenting the findings of the 2008 replication study was published in November 2009 and offered telling insights on changes in public perceptions on domestic violence against women. These proved pivotal for audience targeting in the Commission's on-going awareness raising campaigns.

The Subcommittee's main focus in 2010 was to facilitate the completion of the national domestic violence prevalence survey. It is indeed quite gratifying to report that after considerable groundwork (which included *inter alia* identifying, refining and contextualising a tried and tested survey instrument) the Commission's unrelenting efforts to get the first national prevalence survey on domestic violence finally off the ground and completed reached fruition during the period under review. This study was made possible through ESF funds and commissioned to M.Fsadni and Associates. As a result, we now have a clear-cut and thorough picture of the extent of domestic violence amongst Maltese women aged between 18 to 59 years and its impact on the employment prospects of victims of abuse. Moreover, the Commission is now in a better and more informed position to advise Government on evidence-based pathways for the improvement of related services and the amelioration the life chances of domestic violence survivors.

Unfortunately, however, the requisite headway for the setting up of a focal point structure for the collection of domestic violence routine data (another key priority for the Subcommittee) projected for the period under review was not achieved. Although steps were taken for the recruitment of a part-time data management officer to this effect; the appointment proved to be short-lived and the position remains vacant. More funds and human resources need to be allocated for this initiative to finally get up and running. This current lacuna should encourage policy-makers to consider the possibility of the creation of a domestic violence focal point within a more centralised social welfare data management and information structure that would allow for maximisation and rationalisation of resources.

This said however, the Subcommittee's efforts for the forthcoming term shall thus continue to centre on the setting up of a national domestic violence routine data infrastructure. Moreover, while the completion of the national domestic violence against women prevalence survey has indeed been a milestone for the development of the sector, it is crucial that the Commission retains its evidence gathering focus and branch out into unchartered territory where required. To this effect, we first need to

continue to build a longitudinal picture of trends in relation to both attitudes towards domestic violence in Malta and domestic violence prevalence by replicating previous studies. Such replication is *sine qua non* for the on-going development of the sector's evidence base. This is now possible through the benchmark data that the Commission has strived to ensure over these past years. Conversely, however, we need to develop a stronger understanding on how effective our services are proving, whether they are reaching the targeted outcomes and how they can be improved. We also need further understanding on the phenomenon of elderly abuse in the Maltese Islands and to undertake or facilitate studies that unravel partner violence in all its ugly shapes and hues. In this respect, and given the constraints on human and financial resources in the sector, the Commission must continue to strive ahead with tapping potential funding sources and to partner with other experts in the field who share our vision and interest in securing an evidence-based response to domestic violence.

## **Appendix D**

### **Commission on Domestic Violence Subcommittee on Awareness Raising**

#### **Annual Report March 10 - February 11**

The Subcommittee on Raising Awareness continued to meet to discuss raising awareness activities as part of the ESF project which links domestic violence and women's unemployment. This will be aimed at the public in general as well as to targeted professionals, including employers, in order to enhance co-operation between all the relative players and promote zero tolerance to domestic violence amongst the Maltese population.

The Subcommittee on Awareness Raising is comprised of:

Mr Cornelius Mulvaney, (Commission on Domestic Violence) - Chairperson

Sr Joan Garner, (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Ms Joanna Xuereb (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Ms Janet Debrincat, (MEEF)

Ms Marianne Gauci, (FSWS)

Mr. George Papagiorcupolo (Secretary/Project Administrator)

The Subcommittee held various meetings. The members communicated through emails to discuss the awareness campaign activities. The various activities that were suggested aimed at reaching all age groups and all strata of society. In order to avoid an influx of cases on the service providers, the activities will be staggered throughout the whole period. These will include amongst others:

- Billboards
- Roadblock adverts
- Bus shelters
- Football match
- Participation in radio and television programmes, as well as 'spots'
- Articles in magazines and newspapers
- On-line communication

The tender was awarded to MPS Limited. A key expert on domestic violence also forms part of the MPS team whose role it will be to help the contractor in formulation of the wording of the adverts or articles and will also to participate in media programmes in consultation with the Commission. The launch of the awareness campaign took place on 21 February 2011 and will continue till November 2011.

## **Appendix E**

### **Commission on Domestic Violence Subcommittee on Legal Issues**

#### **Annual Report March 10 - February 11**

The Subcommittee on Legal Issues was set up and held its first meeting in November 2010. The terms of reference of the subcommittee are as listed below.

The Subcommittee on Legal Issues is comprised of:

Dr Roberta Lepre', (Commission on Domestic Violence) - Chairperson

Dr Roberta Avellino, (MEEF)

Inspector Louise Calleja, (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Ms Doreen Camilleri, (FSWS)

Insp Graziella Muscat, (MJHA & Malta Police)

Ms Joanna Xuereb (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Ms Doris Vassallo (Secretary)

The members of the subcommittee met on 18 November 2010 and on 25 January 2011. During the first meeting, the members were briefed on the terms of reference on which the subcommittee members had to work on. The members agreed that possibly a report which will include recommendations on the required changes in the law will be finalized by December 2011.

It was also agreed that meetings will be held with representatives from other entities so as to discuss issues related to the various sectors and domestic violence. During the first two meetings the way forward was discussed on how to proceed keeping in view the functions listed in the terms of reference which also include issues that have emerged after the Domestic Violence Act was issued in 2006.

It is the intention of all members to work hard so as to put forward amendments that will improve the Domestic Violence Act for the benefit of people who are experiencing domestic violence.



## **Commission on Domestic Violence**

### **Subcommittee on Legal Issues**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **Preamble:**

The Commission acknowledges the importance of the Domestic Violence Act and its relevance to the field of domestic violence. From its work in the various other subcommittees, the Commission also acknowledges that the application of the law needs to be monitored and possible improvements or amendments suggested to enable people experiencing domestic violence to continue to obtain the maximum benefit from the law. To this end this subcommittee is being set up to focus on this specific issue.

##### **Functions:**

1. To review legislation – identify gaps in the protection of women from all forms of domestic violence
2. To evaluate and monitor legal procedures
3. To ensure that immigration laws and administrative procedures do not prevent women from leaving violent relationships due to fear of deportation, loss of legal status or revoked custody over children
4. To evaluate and monitor legal aid provided to persons experiencing domestic violence
5. To further facilitate networking between practitioners in the field and on a broader level, to enhance dialogue and exchange between practitioners in the domestic violence sector and other practitioners in related spheres.
6. To advise the Commission on legal issues and training needs pertinent to the domestic violence sector.

##### **Constitution:**

###### Chairperson:

- To be nominated by the Commission on Domestic Violence. Ideally, the nominee should possess the requisite legal experience.

Members:

- Commission on Domestic Violence member. As above, ideally, the nominee should possess the requisite research knowledge and experience.
- Representative from the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family
- Representative from the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs
- Representative from the Police Force with regards to legal procedures
- Representative from the Office of the Attorney General
- Representative from the Social Affairs Committee
- *Agenzija Appogg* (Foundation for Social Welfare Services) staff member. Ideally, the nominee should be knowledgeable in the problems facing domestic violence service users in dealing with legal matters,

**Meetings/logistics/reports:**

- The Subcommittee may be convened whenever agreed upon by the members as necessary, however, at least once on a quarterly basis.
- The Subcommittee will regulate itself on quorums and other proceedings.
- Administrative support, if necessary, shall be provided by the Commission on Domestic Violence.
- Recommendations by the Subcommittee to the Commission must be made in writing.
- The Chairperson (Subcommittee) is expected to present progress reports (verbal and/or in writing) to the Commission on an on-going basis.

## Appendix F

### Commission on Domestic Violence

#### An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence – 2010

##### Seminar Report

Ms Doris Vassallo DPA

On the 03 December 2010 the Commission on Domestic Violence organised a one day seminar titled *An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence*<sup>12</sup> to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The seminar was held at the Grand Hotel Excelsior, Floriana and was attended by 150 participants from different organisations involved directly and indirectly in Domestic Violence issues, including social workers, police, lawyers and magistrates.

The participants were welcomed for the seminar by Ms Joanna Xuereb, Chairperson of the Commission, and Chair of the Seminar.

Dr Marceline Naudi, gave a short introduction to the seminar with a particular emphasis to the link of domestic violence and the 2010 European Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion.

This was followed by the keynote speaker Ms Hilary Fisher, Director Dying Matters Coalition and who is also a member of Council of Europe Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CAHVIO) whose presentation was ‘An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence – The Process in Policy Development. Ms Fisher was invited to Malta to speak at the seminar by the Commission on Domestic Violence. She spoke about the importance of evidence, governments’ responsibility and the importance of collecting data that will lead to the development of evidence based policy making. This was followed by questions from the floor.

After a short coffee break, due to unforeseen circumstances the second presentation was replaced by workshops which was based on the presentation given by Ms Fisher. The various professionals present at the seminar were represented within each of the various workshop groups to encourage inter-agency working. This was followed by a plenary with the various groups giving feedback.

During the afternoon session, Ms Marika Fsadni from M Fsadni & Associates presented the results of the study ‘Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta and Its Impact on Their Employment Prospects. This study was commissioned as part of the ESF 3.43 project Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors which is co-financed by the European Union. This was followed by a panel to discuss The Way Forward after the results of the study was presented. The members of the panel were Dr Albert Bell, Dr Marceline Naudi, and Ms Sina Bugeja.

The concluding speech was delivered by, the Honourable Dr Stephen Spiteri, Parliamentary Assistant within the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family.

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<sup>12</sup> For the full proceedings of the Seminar please access [www.domesticviolence.gov.mt](http://www.domesticviolence.gov.mt)

## Appendix G

### **TASK FORCE FOR THE SETTING UP OF A SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM**

Insp Louise Calleja Dip in Mngt. Studies, MBA (Grenoble)

The group of professionals that was set up in mid-2009 with the aim of improving the systems to respond to sexual assault survivors, continued to meet in the year 2010, in order to finalise the proposed plan for the creation of a sexual assault response team.

Meetings were held on 05 March 2010, 30 April 2010, 26 June 2010, 22 July 2010, 28 September 2010, 20 October 2010 and 10 December 2010.

The members of the task group were:

Insp Louise Calleja (Commission on Domestic Violence) Chairperson

Dr Marceline Naudi (Commission on Domestic Violence)

Ms Joyce D'Amato (MJHA)

Dr Raymond Galea (Gynecologist)

Ms Maryanne Gauci (FSWS)

Ms Renee' Laiviera (MCWO)

Dr Roberta Lepre' (Victim Support Malta)

Ms Antoinette Martin (Psychologist)

Ms Doris Vassallo (Secretary)

Throughout 2010, the task group remained dedicated to prepare the best set up for the creation of a sexual assault team dedicated to serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child sexual abuse. Thanks to this strong team and the expertise of its members, the draft report was completed and is now in the stage of being presented to the Ministries concerned.

The report covers the importance of establishing a Sexual Assault Response Team, with its primary objectives being the improvement to the provision of services given to victims of sexual assault, an accurate collection of evidence and a more effective prosecution of perpetrators. The Task Force remarked that through coordination of a thorough investigation process, a SART seeks to reduce repeated questioning for the victim and to increase effective collection and preservation of evidence.

The Task Force has worked on listing out the functions of the SART to ensure the prompt and proper response within the expert team members *per se* and the victims who make use of this service. This was discussed and dealt with from initial reporting of an assault to any follow-up services that would be recommended to the victim.

While there are many benefits that accompany the SART programme, the Task Force felt that there should be appropriate procedures and protocols put into place,

particularly those relating to the interviewing and reporting processes. For example, a victim who is uncertain about whether to report an assault to the police may feel pressured to report when protocol requires law enforcement personnel to interview the victim.

The proposal also presents the main roles of each service provider namely the health services, the law enforcement unit and the advocacy/support services to the victim. This ensures that there would be no overlapping of work and/or the re-victimisation of victim. It is a known fact that repetition of the account of the assault in detail is certainly an unpleasant experience that most victims want to avoid.

One cannot exclude the fact that through the setting up of the SART programme, there would be benefits throughout. Victims will benefit from a compassionate and innovative system of care-giving. Health care systems would have all the facilities required to carry out the best medico-legal and forensic examinations, including evidence gathering, which is crucial for investigators and public prosecutors in the event of a prosecution.

Finally, the Task Force submitted a list of recommendations for an efficient operational SART taking into consideration the best interests of the victims. In fact, the issue of giving proper training to all actors and investing in all essential resources, was highlighted. Undoubtedly a properly trained SART prevents any confusion among professionals trying to meet the needs of an assaulted victim during the progression through the health care and criminal justice system.

## **Appendix H**

### **Report on the ESF 3.43, Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors**

Mr. Cornelius Mulvaney Dip.Family Therapy (UK); CQSW (UK)  
Project Leader

Work on the project ‘Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors’, which commenced in August 2009, continued throughout 2010. I took up the responsibility of Project leader from Dr. Marceline Naudi in June, assisted by the present project administrator – George Papagiorcopulo - who was appointed in April of this year.

The project includes a number of components:

- International Study Visit
- Prevalence Study
- Training of Professionals
- Awareness Campaign
- Final Conference

A first component of the project - a study visit for nine workers in the domestic violence field – was in fact completed during 2009, however administrative work relating to this activity (such as settlement of payments, issuing of certificates, internal reporting) continued well into 2010. The aim of the study visit was to learn how other shelters for victims of domestic violence in European countries empower their residents and promote social inclusion through employment and self-employment, including through the setting up of co-operatives in their operations. Through the project’s foreign partner, the study visit took place in the Czech Republic. The study visit was organized by the Commission in collaboration with the representative of the Good Shepherd Sisters who is responsible of the Shelter in the Czech Republic. The participants’ feedback on their return was positive and it enabled them to learn from the initiatives that the workers take for residents in shelters to integrate in society.

A second component - a study on the prevalence of domestic violence in Malta – also commenced in 2009, and continued well into 2010. Following a call for tender the study was awarded to M. Fsadni & Associates. M. Fsadni worked closely with members of the Subcommittee on Research and Data Collation and of the Commission to finalise the data collection tool and the methodology, as well as the training given to the interviewers. The collection of data was completed during 2010, and interim and draft final reports were presented to the Commission as per tender contract. The results of the prevalence study were presented at the Commission’s annual seminar ‘An Evidence-Based Response to Domestic Violence’ in December 2010.

A further component in the project included the organisation of specialized training for the various professionals in touch with domestic violence. These include legal professionals, police officers, health professionals, educational professionals, social workers and employment advisors. The training was organised in July at the Grand

Hotel Excelsior and was made up of two main elements. While Antoinette Gatt Rutter focused on sensitization to the issue of domestic violence, Anna Borg elaborated on employment opportunities and information on accessing employment for survivors of domestic violence. A final session, facilitated by Patrick Psaila, was organised to enable the drafting of protocols to guide inter-professionals who work in the field of domestic violence. A total of 128 professionals completed the training.

The largest component of ESF 3.43 is the awareness campaign, and the tender for this was published in February 2010, closing in April. The appointed evaluation committee, chaired by Dr. Marceline Naudi made recommendations to the Department of Contracts for award of this tender, following an evaluation process. However, an appeal was made by one of the companies who put in a tender for the project. This delayed the process of award and the commencement of the campaign. The Appeals Board eventually decided in line with the recommendations of the evaluation committee, and the contract with the successful contractor – MPS Limited – was signed at the end of December 2010. The campaign will be completed by November 2011. The Subcommittee on Awareness Raising worked on this component of the project. The media awareness campaign will focus on domestic violence and the importance of labour market participation for victims of domestic violence. The message that domestic violence cannot be accepted has to be delivered to perpetrators and also to the general public.

## Appendix I

### Programme

#### Seminar on Domestic Violence For Trainees ESF Project *Care Creates Change*

WasteServ

#### Objectives:

1. To awaken awareness about domestic violence
2. To use this knowledge to:
  - a. prevent domestic violence
  - b. to avoid re-victimization
3. To discuss the services available
4. To discuss the way forward

- 9.15 Introduction – Joanna Xuereb**
- 9.20 Clip *Jealous Abusive Woman***
- 9.30 *Definitions and Types of Abuse* - Ms Pamela Demicoli – Dar MerhbaBik**
- 9.45 Clip *Children See Children Do***
- 9.50 *Cycle of Abuse & Power and Control -The Effects* – Ms Pauline Camilleri – Domestic Violence Unit –Agenzija Appogg**
- 10.15 Coffee Break**
- 10.45 Service Provisions:  
Domestic Violence Services – Agenzija Appogg  
Dar MerhbaBik - Ms Pamela Demicoli  
Dar Qalb ta' Gesù - Ms Josette Stensen  
Dar Theresa Spinelli – Ms Christine Camilleri  
Dar Giuseppa Debono – Ms Maria Attard**
- 11.00 *Domestic Violence Act 2006* - Dr Roberta Leprè**
- 11.25 Clip *The Son and His Father***
- 11.40 Clip *Healthy Relationships***
- 11.45 *I Left Domestic Violence And I Found The Freedom To Be*  
Ms Rita Caligari**

Last responses and questions from the floor.





