



REPORT OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SETTING THE PARAMETERS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE INSTRUMENT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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CHAPTER 1; BACKGROUND OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

"Women and children are often in great danger in the place where they should be safest: within their families. For many, 'home' is where they face a regime of terror and violence at the hands of somebody close to them – somebody they should be able to trust. Those victimized suffer physically and psychologically. They are unable to make their own decisions, voice their own opinions or protect themselves and their children for fear of further repercussions. Their Human Rights are denied and their lives are stolen from them by the ever-present threat of violence."¹

Domestic Violence is a problem that occurs in all cultures and countries. However, research² and experience shows, there is a great deal of variation from country to country, and from setting to setting. This highlights the fact that Domestic Violence is not inevitable and can be stopped.

GENDERED NATURE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence can be defined as any pattern of physical or psychological abuse, between intimately involved partners, roommates, or family members. Collecting reliable statistics on the prevalence of Domestic Violence is difficult. Victims are often afraid to speak out. However, most research on the prevalence of Domestic Violence indicates that while men may also become victims of Domestic Violence, in the vast majority of cases, the perpetrator is a man and the victim a women.

DEVELOPING A HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE INSTRUMENT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Aim for Human Rights is committed to the struggle for women's Human Rights and specializes in developing methods to gap the bridge between the international Human Rights Standards and the practice on the ground. The methods have become known as Human

¹ <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/digest6e.pdf>

² E.g. The 2005 WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women

Rights Compliance or Impact Assessment Instruments. Many organizations work hard to end Domestic Violence, but often find it difficult to use the existing Human Rights standards to strengthen their work and to hold their government accountable for the violations of the rights of the victims.

Aim for Human Rights has already developed one successful instrument to address violations of women's rights. HeRWAI, the Health Rights of Women Assessment Instrument³, is being used by many organizations worldwide to assess if women's rights to health are upheld.

From 2003 to 2006 *Aim for Human Rights*⁴ implemented a program with 14 partner organizations in 6 Western Balkan countries to improve their work on banning Domestic Violence. The partner organizations were assisted in setting up and carrying out research on the implementation of their government's international Human Rights obligations to end Domestic Violence⁵. The Western Balkan project gave the impetus to the *Aim for Human Rights* Women's rights team to explore the interest and need among partner organizations to take this process to the next level to develop Human Rights Compliance Instrument on Domestic Violence.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT PARTICIPANTS

Characteristics of the organizations

In order to assess whether a Human Rights Compliance Instrument on Domestic Violence would meet the needs of the potential user groups, *Aim for Human Rights* held 11 interviews in the fall of 2007 with 14 participants from 7 different countries (Croatia, Ecuador, Ghana, Macedonia, Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe). The organizations, who participated in the interviews, were presented with a standardized list of questions. Moreover a one day brainstorm session was held in November 2007 with a group of 7 potential users (representing experiences from the Netherlands, Croatia, Jamaica, Nepal, and Zimbabwe)

The participants in the needs assessment represent a broad range of organizations and experiences. Only two of the organizations involved in the needs assessment did not work directly on the issue of Domestic Violence. Their main focus is on the sexual and reproductive health of women. The majority of the organizations and participants had been involved in lobby activities to improve legislation and policy on Domestic Violence in their country. Often, this work included helping draft or giving input into draft legislation. Several of the organizations (3) provide shelter to victims of Domestic Violence and give legal aid (4) to victims of Domestic Violence. Two of the organizations do court monitoring as part of their work. Training and awareness raising was part of the work of 6 of the organizations. Two of the participants were involved in doing academic research on Domestic Violence at the university.

All participants indicated that they had worked with the law and that their organizations brought a rights based approach to their work. However, the majority of the participants indicated that the knowledge on Human Rights could and perhaps should be improved within the organization. About half of participants had some knowledge on Human Rights assessment instruments, especially HeRWAI. They had either received an introduction

³ For more information on HeRWAI and to find out more about a Human Rights impact assessment instrument in action, visit our Resource Center <http://www.aimforhumanrights.org/themes/women-s-human-rights/health-rights-of-women/>

⁴ Please note that *Aim for Human Rights* was known as HOM, the humanist committee on Human Rights until October 2007, when we adopted our new name.

⁵ <http://www.aimforhumanrights.org/about-aim-for-human-rights/publications/>

training or had been involved in carrying out a HeRWAI study. One of the participants had also been involved in the HOM Western Balkan project on Domestic Violence.

The organizations indicate that a lack of (sustainable) funding, makes it hard to improve the work they do. Furthermore a lack of staff or properly trained staff holds the organizations back.

Benefits and challenges of collaboration

All of the organizations collaborated with others in their work to stop Domestic Violence; about half did this at the regional and national level and half also collaborated on an international level.

They indicated that the main benefits of collaboration include strengthening of efforts, both in expertise, efficiency and impact. Some organizations also make a special effort to build collaboration with more unlikely partners in their work, such as church or traditional leaders. Moreover, collaboration makes it possible to pool limited resources.

Collaboration also brings challenges to the work. Many of the organizations indicated that the collaborating organizations may lack trust or have turf wars about who should get the credit for a project. These problems are often fueled by donor competition. It is also difficult to make sure all partners do the same amount of work and it can be challenging to find a compromise, if opinions differ.

For a complete list of all the organizations and people involved in the needs assessment, and the details of the questions and compiled answers, please see the annex to this report.

CHAPTER 2; ANALYSIS OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the analysis of the main outcomes of the needs assessment. The text will outline the issues on which common agreement existed and will point out those issues on which the participants did not present a common response or position. In italics, comments and/or considerations are given that may be of interest for the potential developers of the instrument

DEFINING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Comment: A variety of definitions for Domestic Violence was presented. It was interesting to note that most people made reference to their national legal definition of Domestic Violence rather than give their own definition of the concept. No one raised an objection to the term "Domestic Violence" and/or suggested another term might be more appropriate.

South Africa; The definition from the South African Domestic Violence Act was presented as a good example of an inclusive and encompassing definition of both the term Domestic Violence as the concept of Domestic relationship. The South African definition States:

"Domestic Violence means-

- a) physical abuse;
- b) sexual abuse;

- c) emotional, verbal and psychological abuse;
- d) economic abuse;
- e) intimidation;
- f) harassment;
- g) stalking;
- h) damage to property;
- i) entry into the complainant's residence without consent, where the parties do not share the same residence; or
- j) any other controlling or abusive behavior towards a complainant, where such conduct harms, or may cause imminent harm to, the safety, health or wellbeing of the complainant;

"Domestic relationship"

means a relationship between a complainant and a respondent in any of the following ways:

- a) they are or were married to each other, including marriage according to any law, custom or religion;
- b) they (whether they are of the same or of the opposite sex) live or lived together in a relationship in the nature of marriage, although they are not, or were not, married to each other, or are not able to be married to each other;
- c) they are the parents of a child or are persons who have or had parental responsibility for that child (whether or not at the same time);
- d) they are family members related by consanguinity, affinity or adoption;
- e) they are or were in an engagement, dating or customary relationship, including an actual or perceived romantic, intimate or sexual relationship of any duration; or
- f) they share or recently shared the same residence;"

Other Participants gave the following definitions of Domestic Violence.

Macedonia; "Any (direct or indirect) act of violence (psychological, sexual, physical) towards a women.+ "cruel act of discrimination= form of discrimination of women, which expresses male domination."

Ghana; "DV act is very broad, contains 5 areas physical, cultural, mental, sexual, ect. Single and multiple cases are possible. Family is very broad includes ex-partners and tenants"

Kenya; "Violence that is perpetrated by someone with whom the victim has a domestic relations, family relation/spouse/mother/sister/brother."

Zimbabwe; "Violence perpetrated on an individual by people living together or who are in some sort of relationship, can be domestics//maids as well."

Croatia; "Violence can include economic and psychological violence. The law has a narrow definition of family, Domestic Violence can only occur in marriage, ex marriage and registered partnerships (gay couples are excluded)"

Most of the national legal definitions of Domestic Violence do not specifically mention the gendered nature of Domestic Violence. The definitions tend to be gender neutral. In most

countries, however the law and/ or attached policy does address or ask attention for the gendered nature of the violence.

Consideration: Developers of the instrument should consider whether it would be useful to develop a working definition on Domestic Violence and discuss whether it should address the gendered nature of the violence.

CAUSES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

When asked to indicate which are the main causes for the prevalence of Domestic Violence in their country, the vast majority of the participants pointed to causes that relate to *gender roles and imbalances* such as traditional (religious) values and patriarchy (7), it is hard to get male dominated systems to pay attention to the problem, power imbalance (3), stereotypes about roles men and women (3); discrimination of women (2) and the socialization of men in culture; learnt behavior that violence is acceptable.

It is clear that these causes are not easy to change. As the main obstacles to effecting change in their own country, participants mentioned the following obstacles which correlated with the gender roles in society; high esteem of marriage in society, stigma on leaving a marriage for any reason (3), lack of reporting of cases by women; due to stigma attached in society (3), stepping out of the prescribed gender role makes you more vulnerable to violence (2), victims do not know they have the right to live without violence (2), wife battery is the norm, is seen as a sign of love (1), because of the dowry system, wives are seen as property (1), victims are blamed for the violence and other women pressure them to stay in the relationship (mother in law syndrome) and gender roles are reinforced by the traditional institutes and churches

Another group of mentioned main causes for the existence of Domestic Violence, were linked to *socio-economic circumstances* such as weak social and economic conditions in the country (6), substance abuse; alcohol and drugs (3) and the fact that there are no repercussions for the use of violence in society (2).

When describing the main obstacles to affect change and to start lowering the number of cases of Domestic Violence, participants mentioned obstacles that related to the overarching political system. They pointed to an indifference to the problem and lack of knowledge and awareness among the leadership and institutions (3). They also pointed to obstacles related to the weak infrastructures of the State; weak court systems and services.

STOPPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Awareness

The discussion regarding effective strategies to help stop Domestic Violence showed a strong emphasis on the need to raise awareness. The following strategies were mentioned in that category: ongoing public awareness campaigns (4) creating gender equality and awareness of rights (2), addressing and reshaping the ascribed gender roles (2), breaking the silence of victims, building self esteem of women, involvement of men in the discussion on stopping Domestic Violence and education from young age on the right not to be victim of (Domestic) Violence.

Victim's views of what happens to them are influenced by traditions, cultural norms and customs ("If he beats me, it means that he loves me.") and victims often are not aware they have rights. They need to be aware before they can act/change/demand change. But even if a victim is aware they have rights, they may be unwilling to leave the situation, due to

feelings of love for the perpetrator; by being trapped in a psychological cycle; by their economic situation; by their responsibility for their children and family. Raising awareness is not the whole answer.

Consideration: During the brainstorm, a discussion was raised if the instrument should focus on the perspective of women as the main victims of Domestic Violence or if we should include men and children. The participants seemed to agree we should include all three groups, if only for a strategic reason. Including all three groups would create more willingness on the part of the government to act. Leaving men and children out could be a risk.

NB As the lack of awareness and gender stereotypes are crucial issues in the fight against Domestic Violence, the instrument should pay attention to obligation of the State to address these issues.

The legal system

Improving gaps in the legal system was also seen as an efficient strategy to stop Domestic Violence. Mentioned strategies included; creating effective legal mechanisms to protect the victims (4), providing access to legal mechanisms and the need to make Domestic Violence a specific crime.

Attention to perpetrator

Some responses also focus on the role of the perpetrator and the need to interact with that group to stop Domestic Violence. Mentioned strategies included: a general focus on prevention, re-socialization of the perpetrator and education, treatment programs for perpetrators, and rehabilitation/counseling for families.

Policy measures

Some responses looked at the strategies to include the different government agencies into the solution by suggesting a multi-sectoral approach; including social justice, economic framework, awareness raising and the point was made that the State should make sure to collect adequate data on the prevalence of cases, to ensure an end to underreporting of cases.

ASSESSING THE NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION

Legal framework

The majority of the participants indicated that the legal framework of their country was good or adequate. In some cases, a new good to adequate law was pending.

The responses became more varied when looking at the question if the countries have a national action plan in place (as is required by CEDAW general recommendation 19). Very few of the countries had a national action plan in place, although in some countries it was under development. (It was encouraging to note that most countries that were developing a plan did it in collaboration with civil society organizations.) Most countries do have policies that refer to Domestic Violence e.g. an HIV/Aids policy or a gender policy.

Implementation

The most striking problems in attempts to curb Domestic Violence occur when one starts looking at the level of implementation of the laws and policies.⁶ In general the under staffing

⁶ The HOM Western Balkan project also concluded that the main issue with tackling Domestic Violence lay in the implementation of the laws and policies

and under training as well as lack of awareness of the appropriate service providers and government agencies are mentioned as major problems. In many countries, the government takes no role or a very limited role in the provision of shelter to the victims. Shelter provision is often done by the NGO's sector, with limited to no financial backing by the State.

When looking at the different chains of the justice mechanisms of the State, the following problems in relation to implementation are raised.

Police

In many countries the police is under resourced, under staffed and has limited or no training on the issue of Domestic Violence. The willingness of the police to act in Domestic Violence cases varies from station to station in most countries. In some situations going to the police will expose the victim to re-victimization or even more violence.

Prosecution

Most participants indicate that prosecution of cases of Domestic Violence does not have priority in their country. Only in cases of very serious physical harm or murder, is the prosecution service likely to take a case seriously. The prosecutors pay little attention to cases in which there is a repeated pattern of low level violence and seem to ignore cases of psychological violence.

Courts

The attitude of the courts to Domestic Violence in most countries seems to be very inconsistent and varies from judge to judge. One participant mentioned that in her country the judges were reluctant to impose temporary measures as they were seen as additional punishment of the perpetrator.

All participants indicated that in general the justice mechanisms tend to be a reflection of the general attitude in society towards Domestic Violence and that it is not perceived as an issue of public concern, but as a private issue. Moreover in some countries corruption is a major problem at all levels of the justice system. As victims often do not have access to money, access to justice is very hard to obtain in a corrupt system. And in some countries, the poor infrastructure and lack of money makes it impossible for victims to reach the justice mechanisms.

Comment: While in some countries absence or weakness of laws, a national plan and policies is a problem, in almost all countries the implementation of existing laws and policies is very problematic. This means the tool should pay ample attention to this issue.

CHAPTER 3, DEVELOPING AN HUMAN RIGHT COMPLIANCE INSTRUMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provided the outcomes in relation to the mapping of relevant (Human Rights) legal standards, consensus documents and looks at what arguments have the strongest impact in our lobby towards the government.

USEFUL LEGAL STANDARDS

National law

In some countries, like South Africa, relying on National law and especially the constitution would be the most effective strategy, both in the court room and in the political debate and lobby work. However, relying on the national law would not be successful in other countries, such as Croatia, as the constitution is not very strong.

International Human Rights standards

All of the countries of origin of the participants are Member States of CEDAW and in the majority of countries, civil society organizations were involved in drafting a shadow report to the governmental report to the CEDAW committee. These shadow reports do pay attention to Domestic Violence issues. However many of the countries have not (yet) ratified the optional protocol to CEDAW, which enables individuals to file a complaint to the CEDAW committee. Even if the optional protocol is ratified, organizations indicate they do not have much knowledge on the procedure and usefulness of filing an individual case.

Comment/consideration: Developers might want to add a part to the tool that encourages NGO's to push for the ratification of the CEDAW's optional protocol. The CEDAW commission has give some strong views in Domestic Violence cases on the due diligence obligations of the State. Perhaps the instrument could therefore also roll in a chapter on the possible use of the optional protocol.

CEDAW is generally perceived as at least a useful secondary argument, both in the court room and perhaps even more so in the political debate. In most countries the legal system seems very unfamiliar with the international Human Rights standards. In some countries, Human Rights are not part of the legal education and judges are rarely trained in the topic.

Regional Human Rights standards

In Croatia and Macedonia, arguments based on European Union law are convincing, especially in the political debate, as both countries hope to join the European Union in the future and realize their law and policies need to be in line with European Union standards. The standards of the European Convention on Human Rights can be used as additional arguments.

The African Charter on Human Rights but also the special protocol, can have relevance in the African Countries. The emphasis seems to be on relevance in the political debate again, and it was mentioned that the peer review system in the African system can have an impact as well. Countries do not like to be found lacking by their neighbors.

USEFUL CONSENSUS/POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Millennium Development Goals, MDG's seem to be the most popular policy or consensus documents (=non legally binding documents). Most governments are familiar with the MDG's as they took part in the negotiations and they often perceive them as a way to engage with their donor countries. They need/want to show progress on MDG's. Additional consensus documents that were mentioned include the Beijing platform for action, Beijing + 5 and ICPD.

HUMAN RIGHTS versus CONSENSUS DOCUMENTS

Participants were asked to make a choice. Which did they think would have more of an impact, referring to a violation of Human Rights law or to the norms of the consensus documents, in a lobby to their government? The responses to this question were very mixed.

About half the participants indicated that they believed they would be able to achieve more if they relied on the consensus documents and the other half believed relying on the Human Rights standards would have more impact.

Participants noted that collaboration on an international level or with international organizations can raise your local status and add to the impact of your work as it impresses the government.

CONVINCING YOUR GOVERNMENT

During the brainstorm session, the participants engaged in a mapping exercise to identify what would be the most convincing arguments to get your government to start working on stopping Domestic Violence. The arguments that were mentioned are listed below.

Impact on life and health arguments

- High level/increasing levels of death rates due to Domestic Violence
- Increased transmission of HIV/aids

Political arguments

- Working on Domestic Violence might get you more votes
- If you do not act, you might face public pressure or outrage
- If women can live a life free of Domestic Violence they can be much more productive and active members of the community and help develop the country
- Children are victims of Domestic Violence (as victim and witness) and tend to become perpetrators or victims themselves again as adults; Domestic Violence reproduces itself
- Domestic Violence breaks up families

Costs/budget related arguments

- Increased prison costs if you have to put perpetrators in prison if you do not act to prevent cases from happening
- Domestic Violence breeds Domestic Violence; intervention/prevention can lower the prevalence of violence in society
- Domestic Violence costs money (e.g. health and social services)
- Acting might free up resources (money, health services) that can be allocated elsewhere

Rights related arguments

- You can show in the international arena that you are implementing Human Rights and care about the rights of women
- As State party to CEDAW, making a policy on Domestic Violence can prove compliance with Human Rights obligations

Comment/consideration: The minority of the arguments given rely on Human Rights standards. The developers of the instruments must consider if they want to include the additional arguments into the instrument. Looking at the costs of Domestic Violence could be considered.

NB The fact that the arguments participants listed do not pay much attention to Human Rights standards, reflects the fact that our governments do not (yet) think of Domestic Violence as a violation of Rights nor feel it is an important public issue, but rather than a private matter. This lack of awareness runs through the entire society.

CHAPTER 4; WHAT COULD/SHOULD AN INSTRUMENT ADD TO THE CURRENT WORK BEING DONE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

INTRODUCTION

The needs assessment explored whether participants felt it was worthwhile to put time and effort into developing a Human Rights instrument on Domestic Violence and who would/should be the (potential) users and developers of the Instrument.

Useful addition

Even though the participants indicated they realized a Human Rights instrument on Domestic Violence, would not be able to address all of the identified issues and gaps, they supported the idea of developing a Human Rights Instrument on Domestic Violence.

An over arching argument was that once States commit to Human Rights, they have to be implemented. The governments have made these commitments and must be held to account. An instrument would assist the NGO's in holding the government to account. Using the instrument could help to educate the government on what their obligations actually mean and to give more insight into what really happens to women on the ground, by linking the Human Rights standards to reality. Practically all participants already make use of Human Rights in their work to strengthen their lobby and advocacy and to improve awareness that every one has the right to live without violence.

In the needs assessment interviews, the following arguments for developing an instrument were given.

"It would add strength to the arguments; shift focus from it only being a women's issue to it being considered a serious issue."

"Human Rights approach would strengthen the approach to see Domestic Violence as Human Rights issue and not a private matter"

"Human Rights approach on any topic is helpful, it looks at the whole person as a rights carrying being, not just at the specific problem and short term solutions."

"It can be convincing to advocate for change, based on Human Rights standards, but that will vary from local setting to local setting."

"A balance must be struck between making it a practical instrument without losing a strong theoretical background and using it, should not put too many demands on the time of the user."

"Developing an instrument would help to improve policies on the ground, moreover it will help with the professionalization of the NGO's, who are often doing competing and overlapping work. A tool could help them compare and evaluate their own work."

Overall the participants supported the development of the instrument. Their support to the process has highlighted by the fact that the majority of the organizations indicated they would be interested to be part of the developers group themselves or recommended another organization to join in the process. This commitment to the process was not diminished by

the fact that no funds are available at this point to compensate them for the time invested in the process.

Creating an instrument with a regional approach

None of the participants felt it would be efficient or strategic to develop an instrument that would focus on a specific region or a regional Human Rights system. They felt it would be much more strategic to find a way in which the relevant regional standards could be rolled into a universal/international instrument. We should also look at the way in which the instrument can incorporate relevant national legal standard.

Is there already such an instrument

While some of the participants in the needs assessment mentioned, rights bases training materials or methods of awareness raising based on Human Rights standards, no one was aware of an instrument to assist organizations in making a Human Rights based analysis on Domestic Violence.

POTENTIAL USER GROUP

The needs assessment also looked at the question which type of organization would be most likely to use a Human Rights Compliance or Assessment Instrument on Domestic Violence. Answers to this question were varied. Some participants felt it could be useful to community based organization in rural settings, where there is a lack of networks with Human Rights knowledge. Other felt that grass roots organizations would not be a likely user group by themselves but might use the instrument together with another organization. Participants indicated that the most likely users would be the bigger Women's and/or Human Rights NGO's or shelter organizations, with some lobby and advocacy experience and perhaps government (at provincial level) or research institutes.

Comment: All participants agreed that the most likely user group of an instrument would be Women's and/or Human Rights NGO's or shelter organizations, with some lobby and advocacy experience. The developers should considered if this will be their target user group or if they want to make the instrument fit the needs of a wider user group.

THE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Drafting the instrument

The needs assessment identified the following criteria as important for the type of organization that should be included in the development phase of the instrument.

We all agreed the co-developers group should include people who have expertise with the development and/ or of Human Rights assessment/compliance instrument, such as HeRWAI. It could also be beneficial to include some participants from the HOM Western Balkan project as the current plans developed from the expertise build up in that program.

The organizations and co-developers group should have knowledge on the relevant Human Rights standards on Domestic Violence, but it was also pointed out it might be strategic to draw in some experts to do in depth research.

Because of the choice to give the Instrument an international, universal character but still trying to include as much as possible regional relevant standards, it was deemed important to have the different regions of the world represented in the development process.

Organizations that combine service and shelter provision, with giving legal aid and advocacy, would be a useful addition to the co-developer group as they have information about the impact of legislation on the lives of the people.

Even though governmental organization might be potential users of the instrument, the needs assessment found, it would not efficient to include representatives of this group in the co-developer group. The needs assessment also felt as representatives of International Organizations could bring expertise to the process, but that this would not be a priority group to include in the co-developer group.

Testing phase

The needs assessment process did point out that it would be important to include service linked organizations in the testing phase. The co-developers could draw in local partners in the testing phase to make the testing more efficient and to draw on more experiences.

We should also not forget to involve minority groups in the testing face. Moreover the tool should pay attention to the fact that Domestic Violence issues may be different for certain groups such as rural women; LGBT community; handicapped; women with a religious background. The vulnerable groups that need to be looked at in the analysis should be made explicit in the tool.

TARGET OF THE INSTRUMENT

This issue was briefly discussed and there was clear agreement on this issue. The government should be the main potential target of the instrument. Only if possible should we try to adapt the instrument to also suit International organizations and/donors. No additional potential targets where identified.

CHAPTER 5; CONCLUSIONS

Stopping Domestic Violence requires a multi targeted approach. Bringing a Human Rights approach to the issue has an impact both on the level of awareness (Living a life without Domestic Violence is a Right) and on the level of law and policy making and implementation by the State. The participants to the needs assessment are not aware of any instruments that would enable them to make an analysis by linking up the Human Rights standards with the practice on the ground. The participants felt the development of such an instrument would be strategic and expressed a willingness to join into the development process.

Human Rights based analysis, lobby and advocacy will help strengthen the awareness that Domestic Violence is not a private matter outside of the public domain, but rather a public matter that needs to be addressed.

The development of the instrument and the use of the instrument will enhance the capacity of the developers and the users to work in a rights based manner. Having an instrument that can be used worldwide will also facilitate a sharing of expertise and best practices.