

The National Action Plan on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence was prepared by Dr. Martha Apostolidou (Associate Professor - Frederick University) and Marina Pagiatsou (Sociologist) for the Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms..., without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." (Article 2 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

"State parties shall take all appropriate...measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse..." (Article 19 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child)

"Discrimination against women, violates the principles of equality of human rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women on equal terms with men, hampers the growth of prosperity of society, the family unit and the full development of the potential of women in the service of their countries and of humanity..." (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women)

"Violence against women is an old plague on society and a blatant violation of the basic human rights. Unfortunately, it is a widespread phenomenon in all societies and in all social classes, irrespective of the level of development, political stability, culture or religion and it is encountered in public and private life. It is a worldwide phenomenon and as such widespread in the countries of the Europen Union" (European Commission)

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INTRODUCTION

The Advisory Committee was set up under the 47(1)/1994 Law, Section 16, which was replaced by the 119(I)/2000 Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, as amended by the 212(I)2004 Law. The responsibilities of the Committee, as put forward in section 7(1) of the law, are the following:

- 1. To monitor the Domestic Violence problem in Cyprus.
- 2. To inform and enlighten the public and the professionals through various means, including special sessions, training programmes and seminars.
- 3. To promote scientific research related to domestic violence.
- 4. To promote the Services in dealing with all aspects of the domestic violence problem.
- 5. To monitor the effectiveness of the respective operating services, as well as the implementation and adherence to the respective legislation.

Composition of the Advisory Committee

Under Section 7(2) of the 2000 and 2004 Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Laws, the Committee consists of persons who are appointed in their personal capacity by the Council of Ministers and have knowledge and experience on the issue. Appointments are made by the public and private sector. The persons appointed by the public sector are selected by the Ministries and the Services referred to in Section7, subsection (4) and are the following:

- Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance: Ms Chara Tapanidou member
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order: Ms Maro Varnavidou Vice Chairwoman
- Ministry of Health: Ms Semeli Vizacou member
- Ministry of Education and Culture (Educational Psychologist): Ms Christina Ioannou – member
- Attorney's General Office: Ms Louiza Zannetou member
- Police Department: Mr Kostas Veis member

The persons appointed by the private sector are selected by members of the Associations or Organizations involved in preventing and combating domestic violence and are the following:

- Association for the Prevention and Handling of Domestic Violence: Dr. Martha Apostolidou Chairwoman
- Cyprus Association for the Promotion of Children and Adolescents' Mental Health: Dr. Neophytos Papaneophytou
- Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies: Ms Susana Pavlou
- Cyprus Family Planning Association: Ms Zena Paidonomou
- Cyprus Psychologists' Association: Mr Panagiotis Kalogirou

AIM OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

The aim of the National Action Plan is to promote measures and policies for the prevention and combating of domestic violence on a holistic, integrated and systematic basis.

The definition of specific goals and measures, as well as competent bodies which will implement them, shall contribute to facing the problem more effectively.

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROBLEM

The problem of domestic violence is not a new phenomenon, however in the recent years it emerges more and more to the surface and it is acquiring greater dimensions in the Cypriot society. Domestic violence, mainly targeted against women (Stark, E. and Flitcraft, A. H. 1979&1992, Walker et al. 1999, WHO 1997 & 1999, Krug et al. 2002), children (Jaffe et al. 1990, Lavergne &Tourigny, 2000, Holder, R.et al. 1994, WHO 1999), the elderly and persons with disabilities, is a crime and at the same time an important social problem with serious consequences for the persons suffering from it and by extension for their families and societies. It may appear in any family, irrespective of financial, social and educational status, age, colour, religion or ethnic origin. The increasing trend of incidents coming to light causes concern as to the number and the forms of cases presented, as well as the consequences for the social environment of the country.

Despite the fact that violence affects the victims themselves by discrediting their selfesteem, causing them physical and psychological problems that may linger even when violence has ceased (Krug et al., 2002; Spertus et al., 2003), it also has a number of repercussions in the life of all family members and especially children for which violence is a traumatic experience and may irreparably affect their emotional development and social adjustment (Briere, J., & Runtz, M. 1988; Jaffe et al., 1990; Briere, 1992; Krug et al., 2002).

International research indicates that domestic violence is directly linked to and expresses gender power relations (Kendall-Tacket, 1993; Stark, E. and Flitcraft, A. H. 1992), and possessive relations, i.e. man to woman, parents to children. International literature indicates that, in most cases, domestic violence is exercised by men towards women (Straus, 1990; Straus and Gelles, 1990; WHO, 2002), while the vast majority of parents accountable for serious abuse and/or death of their children are fathers, who had a background of violence against their partners (Cawson et al, 2000; Christofel, K. 1990). The majority of persecutors had also been victims of violence. (Creigthon and Russel, 1995).

In Cyprus domestic violence incidents coming to light in the recent years mainly concern:

- abuse of women by spouses partners
- abuse of children under 18 years old by the parents or the spouses of parents from their second marriage or partners with whom they live together

It has been ascertained that abuse of the elderly and persons with disabilities are forms of domestic violence that are not as prevalent. There is no sufficient statistical evidence or research on these forms of violence.

With regard to the extent of violence, the only Pancyprian research in this field was conducted on account of the Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (AC), (see: Apostolidou et al., 2004). The findings showed that 20% of the sample of children aged 12-18 had suffered some form of physical abuse while 10% had suffered some form of sexual abuse by members of the close family environment. At the same time it was shown that 50% of the children of the sample had witnessed some form of domestic violence.

The above figures are particularly alarming, if we also take into consideration the stance and views of Cypriots in relation to domestic violence, as presented in research conducted by the Advisory Committee (Intercollege 2000). Indicatively, 20% of adults stated that victims themselves are to blame for the violence exercised, while 33% believe that men should demonstrate their power/ authority. Additionally, 20% say that they believe that one or two slaps in the face are not an issue. Moreover, 36,5% of those asked stated that they had witnessed scenes of domestic violence, more than four times.

In this framework it appears that the state has a significant role to play in addressing the problem holistically. The responsibilities and commitments of the Cypriot state emanate from the 1960 Constitution, (article 7(1): Safeguarding the right to life and and physical integrity, article 8: prohibition of subjection to torture or inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment) as well as from the international conventions that the Republic of Cyprus has ratified and the commitments for the measures to implement the United Nations declarations. (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Dec. 1948), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (L.78/1985), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (UN resolution 48/104, 20.12.1993), Convention on the Rights of the Child (L. 243/1990), Recommendation of the Council of Europe on the Protection of Women Against Violence Rec (2002)5.

Also, the National Reports of the Government of Cyprus (2002-2005) on the implementation of the Action Platform adopted in Beijing in 1995, mentions as the basic commitment of the Government the prevention and combating of domestic violence and, in particular violence against women (p.39). Despite the fact that, as mentioned above, the biggest percentage of domestic violence incidents have come to light in Cyprus in the recent years regarding the abuse of women by spouces-partners, no research has yet been carried out on the extent and forms of violence against women. However, through statistics attained in the recent years it is ascertained that women constitute the majority of all violence victims, with the percentage amounting to 80%.

In 2006 the European Commission in its communication on the 2005-2009 strategic goals, recognized children's rights as one of its main priorities and mentioned that special priority must be given to the effective protection of children's rights, to the combating of economic exploitation, as well as all forms of maltreatment, so that the European Union can become a model for the other countries of the world. (EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child).

In 2005, the Council of Europe adopted an Action Plan including the 2 measures below to combat violence against women, including domestic violence:

- setting up a "Task Force to combat violence against women, including domestic violence" that will evaluate the progress at a national level and establish tools for quantative analysis at European level, aiming at designing actions,
- carrying out a "Pan-european Campaign (2006-2008) for the combating of violence against women, including domestic violence" in cooperation with other European and nationall partners, including NGOs.

With regard to children, Article 3 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that State Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being. Additionally, Article 19 of the Convention stipulates to "protect from all forms of abuse-neglect while in the care of parent(s) and legal guardian(s).

Besides the International Conventions on safeguarding human rights and handling all forms of violence, the Cypriot Legislation, with the 47(I)/94, 119(I)/2000 and the 212(I)/2004 Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, penalizes all acts of domestic violence, safeguarding the protection of the victims and simultaneously providing the court with dicrestion to issue an order to keep the persecutor away from the family home. Additionally, legislation recognizes marital rape, imposes the report of incidents of violence and provides for appointing Family Councillors who will be dealing with incidents of domestic violence. The legislation also provides for the establishment and operation of the Advisory Committee (ACPCDV), aiming at preventing and combating domestic violence.

The responsibilities of the Advisory Committee, as put forward in section 7(1) of the same law, are the following:

- 1. To monitor the Domestic Violence Problem in Cyprus.
- 2. To proceed to informing and enlightening the public and the professionals through various means, including special sessions, training programmes and seminars.
- 3. To promote scientific research related to domestic violence.
- 4. To promote the Services for the handling of all aspects of the domestic violence problem.
- 5. To monitor the effectiveness of the respective services as well as the implementation and adherence to the respective legislation.

THE NECESSITY TO PREPARE A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON THE PREVENTION AND COMBATING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In order to reduce and prevent domestic violence an integrated strategic approach is needed, rather than a fragmented one, which will dynamically invest in all prevention fields (primary, secondary and tertiary), and comprehensively cover the field of handling all forms of violence. This strategic approach shall be implemented at a national level

It is believed that only when the government and society become aware of the consequences and the dimensions of the domestic violence problem and show the necessary political will and financial commitment, will the necessary financial and human resources be allocated for concerted action, and only then can there be effective prevention and handling.

The adoption of an Action Plan on preventing and handling domestic violence shall mark the change in approach and shall emphasize the commitment on behalf of the government to take decisive measures initially contributing to the decline and finally to the prevention of acts of domestic violence. The policies that shall be adopted must aim at granting equal opportunities to children, men and women, given that domestic violence is, in most cases, the cause and effect of discrimination from which women and children are suffering in all sectors of their social and private life. Providing education based on equality and free from any gender-related discrimination must constitute the basis for primary prevention. At the same time, parents must shake off traditional possessive and over-protection stereotypes in their relationship with their children. Children must be faced as individual entities and as equal family and state members and not as a possession of the parents.

The Action Plan presents and analyzes the goals and proposed actions and the bodies/ services that are called to undertake the responsibility of implementation are mentioned. The timetables shall have to be defined by the competent bodies in the framework of the five-year programme. Additionally, action evaluation mechanisms in different stages are proposed.

An effective action plan on the prevention and handling of domestic violence shall undoubtedly have significant benefits for the state, the victims, their families but also for the entire society, given that:

- The problem of domestic violence exists irrespective of the socio-economic and educational status of its members.
- There is a direct link between all forms of domestic violence, which frequently escapes attention or is not comprehensible.
- There is a direct link between the domestic violence problem and other social problems, such as aggression, delinquency, criminality as well as drug abuse, alcohol abuse etc.

- Non-effective/ untimely intervention/ management brings about a great economic cost (absenteeism, productivity decline, cost in the family and state budget) as well as emotional cost – especially for children and women – and causes significant loss of human resources.
- The cost for the handling of child abuse cases burdens the state budget, not only as regards service provision but also in finding foster families or creating additional child protection institutions.
- The extent of the abuse acquires serious dimensions given that it affects a large percentage of women and children during their life without seeing any signs of decline of this phenomenon. On the contrary, many European countries present increasing trends due to marriage crisis, as well as due to the general repercussions of globalization.
- It appears as though the need to support victims and provide them with specialized services will continue to present an increasing trend.

Basic Principles

The actions proposed in this Action Plan are based on the following basic principles:

- 1. Recognition on behalf of the competent authorities that the exercise of domestic violence is an infringement on the victims' human rights and that their protection is a responsibility of the state.
- 2. The conviction that the domestic violence problem constitutes a matter of public health. (WHO, 1996, 1997 and 2004).
- 3. Recognition on behalf of the state that only the holistic and concerted effort of the bodies and Services shall bring about the expected result.
- 4. The necessity to provide a wide range of services covering all aspects of prevention and handling.
- 5. The necessity of documented scientific data on the extent, forms and repercussions of domestic violence in Cyprus.
- 6. Recognition that emphasis must be given to preventing domestic violence.
- 7. Taking political decisions based on scientific data and true needs and not the budgetary policy of the state.

METHODOLOGY

Besides the overview of the respective literature, the preparation of the Action Plan included an extensive study regarding the situation of domestic violence in Cyprus, the respective programmes and services offered by the various Services as well as the respective International Conventions and Recommendations of other countries. In particular, the following were studied:

- 1. Data from the various services
- 2. Relevant research work
- 3. Annual reports of the Advisory Committee
- 4. The Manual of Interdepartmental Procedures
- 5. The Evaluation Report of the Implementation of the Interdepartmental Procedures
- 6. Reports of the House of Representatives on implementing the respective Cypriot legislation
- 7. Relevant Action Plans from other countries
- 8. The Action Plan to Prevent and Handle Drugs
- 9. The Action Plan on Juvenile Delinquents.
- 10. The Action Plan on Gender Equality
- 11. The Action Plan on the Elderly
- 12. Studying the Conventions, Recommendations and Legislations of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

The draft of the Action Plan was a subject of consultation with the members of the Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence, the competent Government Services and the respective Non Government Organizations.

VISION

The Prevention and Elimination of all forms of domestic violence through effective, concerted government policies and practices including the participation of civil society and peaceful development of the family members based on the notions of equality, diversity and mutual respect.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 1. Monitoring the domestic violence problem
- 2. Preventing the domestic violence phenomenon
- 3. Awareness-raising and training the professionals and the public
- 4. Implementing the legislation
- 5. Protecting the domestic violence victims
- 6. Coordination and evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

Implemenation table of the National Action Plan on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (2010-2013)

Strategic Goal 1: Monitoring the Domestic Violence Problem

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
1.1	Broadening and Strengthening the Advisory Committee's Role on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence	Undertaking the coordination of the implementation of the Action Plan on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence on decision of the Council of Ministers.	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		
1.2	Establishing a Central Data Bank Recording Domestic Violence Incidents	 Creating and adopting a form recording all reported domestic violence incidents on behalf of all interested services. Analysis and process of statistical data Issue and communication of the results 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
1.3	Carry	ring out scientific research				
	1.3.1	Carrying out research regarding the dynamics of domestic violence in Cyprus. Investigating the link between the problem and other social problems (use of substances, agressivity, crime, mental illnesses, delinquency et al.)	 Encouraging research bodies to carry out research relating to the domestic violence problem in Cyprus. Cooperation with research bodies. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		
	1.3.2	Investigating social perceptions regarding domestic violence	 Encouraging research bodies to record and interpret the perceptions regarding issues of domestic violence in relation to women and children Carrying out composite research on the general public and research focused on special population groups Investigating and interpreting the perceptions of youth. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		

1.3.3	Carrying out research in relation to the extent, forms, repercussions, estimation of the economic cost and knowledge of the public on the offered Services and the Legislation on domestic violence and violence against the vulnerable population groups (women, children, persons with special needs and chronic diseases, aliens)	 Encouraging research bodies to carry out research in relation to the extent, forms, repercussions, estimation of the economic cost and knowledge of the public on the offered Services and the Legislation on domestic violence and violence against the vulneralble population groups Carrying out research related to the extent, forms, repercussions, estimation of economic cost and the knowledge of the public on the offered Services and the Legislation on domestic violence and violence against the vulnerable population group 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)	

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
	1.3.4	Carrying out long-lasting research to evaluate the domestic violence prevention and handling programmes	to carry out evaluation research on the domestic violence prevention and	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		
	1.3.5	Investigating the repercussions of violence and the recording of experiences based on gender	 Encouraging research bodies to carry out research on the repercussions of violence and gender-based recording of evidential experience. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		

Strategic Goal 2: Preventing the Domestic Violence Phenomenon

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
2.1	Strengthening and supporting the family	 Developing programmes aiming at the improvement of the population's quality of life, safeguarding basic housing and living condition needs, access to work and education, as well as strengthening the parental role, including interpersonal and communication skills and conflict resolution skills. 	Social Welfare Services		
		 Including subjects related to the parental role, interpersonal relations, communication and alternative conflict resolution skills at the prenatal seminars of the Ministry of Health 	Ministry of Health		
		 Information and recreation programmes at community level. 	Union of Cyprus Municipalities		

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
	2.1.1	Supporting families that are vulnerable to violence by involving the local authorities	 Creating networks at local level which facilitate the timely notice of high- risk families. Self-help groups for victims operating at local level. Playgrounds and Toy Libraries Operating at local level. Creating the necessary infrastructure for timely intervention at local level. Childcare programmes for preschool children with flexible hours, also accessible to children with disabilities. 	Union of Cyprus Municipalities		
			 Education programmes on family and parental roles. Provision of family support services especially for high-risk families. 	Social Welfare Services		
			 Introducing reconciliation measures between family life and professional life. 	Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance		

2.2	Information / enlightenment and awareness raising of the public on the repercussions of violence to the victims and especially the vulnerable groups (in order to foster zero tolerance towards violence)	 Setting up Premarital Counseling Centres for young couples and parental role training. Conveying messages regarding womens' equality. 	Ministry of Health – Mental Health Services National Machinery for Womens' Rights	
2.2	awareness raising of the public on the repercussions of violence to the victims and especially the vulnerable groups (in order to foster zero	regarding womens' equality.	Machinery for Womens'	
	tolerance towards violence)			
		 campaigns of the public regarding the repercussions of violence and the existence of the respective legislation. Organising information 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)	

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
		Empowering children with the development of social skills and resistance to violence	 Conveying messages especially towards men that violence against women and children, besides being criminal offense, has negative consequences on their personal, family and social life. Conveying messages to the community that the safety of women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities is everyone's responsibility. In schools, in all ranks: Creating a child-friendly school environment. Promoting programmes empowering self-esteem and self-respect of students. Accepting diversity. Promoting the module of sex education in an interdisciplinary framework in all ranks which will aim at empowerment, the 			Budget
			creation of sound relations, the knowledge and ability to claim rights, respecting one's will, the development of social skills and			

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S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
			 Promoting programmes on the appropriate parental role. Promoting the understanding and implementation of childrens' rights. Empowering children by facilitating them to express their views, concerns and feelings. Including the subject of violence in the curricula. Promotion of seminars / workshops on anger management Information on subjects of violence against persons with disabilities and the elderly. Utilizing the possibilities offered by the internet as a tool diffusing information, communication and training Creating audiovisual material for the schools 			
	2.2.2	Change in stereotypical standards which govern gender- behaviour.	In schools, promoting in all ranks prevention programmes in all ranks of the education, that include:	Ministry of Education and Culture		

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
		 information / awareness raising on the theme of gender roles and gender equality. information on the provisions of the legislation. information on international conventions that regard equality and the principle of non-discrimination at all levels. awareness raising with the aim of promoting understanding and mutual respect in interpersonal relations. developing the_critical thinking of children and providing them with opportunities to consider and question the stereotypes and prejudice regarding the issues of roles, gender equality, domestic violence and child abuse. 			

Strategic Goal 3: Awareness raising and Training the Professionals and the Public

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
3.1		eness raising, education and alization of Tutors				
	3.1.1	Informing the tutors in all ranks (Preschool / Primary / Secondary Education) as well as Professors Councilors / Education Psychologists and acquiring knowledge and skills on the features and repercussions of violence, the procedures of handling these incidents and the legal framework	Introducing the subject of domestic violence in sexual education and the development of skills to detect and handle cases of violence especially regarding sexual abuse and in-service training of the professionals of all ranks and positions.	Ministry of Education and Culture		
	3.1.2	Group of tutors acquiring knowledge and skills on recognizing child abuse and child neglect.	 Specialization and continuous training of education psychologists and professors councilors and creating an information – training guide of tutors and professionals. 	Ministry of Education and Culture		
	3.1.3	Training groups of tutors in domestic violence prevention programmes.	Training a group of tutors with the aim of including subjects which tackle gender relations, conflict resolution and rights of children in the school curriculum.	Ministry of Education and Culture		

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
3.2		mation / awareness raising raining of the Social Services				
	3.2.1	Training and awareness raising of all the members of the Social Services staff, on issues of domestic violence, legal framework and case-handling procedures.	 Introducing the subject to the in-service training of Officers; dissemination of informational material to all Social Service Officers. 	Social Welfare Services		
	3.2.2	Specialized training of the professionals in Social Services so as to recognize abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation of children, women, the elderly and people with special needs.	 Training of tutors. Training of all officers and dissemination of training material for awareness-raising and handling of abuse cases. 	Social Welfare Services		
	3.2.3	Strengthening the institution of Family Counsellor.	 On-going training of family councellors on new trends related to the subject, new forms of violence and abuse syndromes, interview techniques with children and handling abuse cases, especially sexual abuse; dissemination of training material. 	Social Welfare Services		

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
3.3		eness-raising and training of Police ers (in all ranks)				
	3.3.1	Awareness-raising on issues of domestic violence and familiarization of police officers of all ranks and Police Attorneys with the legal framework and incident handling procedures.	 Strengthening the teaching of this subject in pre-service and in-service training. Organizing intra-departmental and interdepartmental training programmes. Organizing special programmes also with presenting interventions from international and local examples. 	Police		
	3.3.2	Training a group of Police Officers in relation to the handling of incidents of violence and sexual abuse of women and children.	 Training of Police Officers for the effective provision of protection and assistance to victims and perpetrators to develop skills of tracing and handling incidents of violence especially regarding sexual abuse. Developing and implementing information programmes for the officials of the police to recognize violence incidents, develop skills to detect and interview with possible victims and perpetrators 	Police		

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
			as well as information on the mechanism of handling / dealing with these incidents.			
	3.3.3	Specializing a group to take statements / video-recorded statements from minors	 Organizing a programme for training with educational seminars and workshops 	Police		
3.4		ming / awareness raising and training rvice Professionals				
	3.4.1	Awareness-raising and acquisition of skills from all health professionals on issues of domestic violence, sexual education and abuse of children as well as knowledge of the Interdepartmental Procedures	 Including the subject to inservice training of School-Doctors, Paediatricians, General Practitioners, First Aid Doctors, Gynaecologists, Health Visitors, Midwives, Community Nurses, Dentists, Psychologists and Child Psychiatrists and provision of information material. Organizing interdepartmental, interdisciplinary and intradepartmental training programmes. 	Ministry of Health		
	3.4.2	Training of the First Aid Staff to recognize the abuse of women and children	 Training of a group of tutors on all different subjects. Carrying out interdepartmental training programmes. 	Ministry of Health		

S/N	Goal		Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
3.5	Profe	eness raising and educating essionals\ Volunteers of Non rnmental Organisations (NGOs)				
	3.5.1	Awareness raising and continuous training of professionals and volunteers on the causes, dynamics, features and repercussions of violence, the legal framework and the incident handling procedures	 Organizing special programmes for volunteers and professionals of NGOs to inform them on the existing incident handling procedures, on the legal framework in Cyprus in order to familiarize themselves with programmes of other services and NGOs. Specialized training of guardians / volunteers of Services to recognize abuse – neglect, sexual exploitation of children, women, the elderly and persons with special needs. 	Pancyprian Voluteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC),		
	3.5.2	Empowering, awareness raising of the NGO officers dealing with domestic violence		Pancyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC)		

Strategic Goal 4: Implementing the Legislation

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
4.1	Improving Legislation	 Continuous monitoring of legislation implementation and pointing out difficulties. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the respective Legislation and promotion of the necessary Law amendments (i.e. compulsory reporting from all professionals of the violence cases that come to their attention) Preparing regulations for the operation of shelters and including them to the respective legislation 	Social Welfare Services		
		 Institutionalising the Interdepartmental Procedures Munual in the form of regulations and its approval from the House of Representatives in order to become legally binding, providing in detail for: a) the responsibilities of each body/ service b) the sanctions (under the law) 	Social Welfare Services		

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S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
		in case that responsibilities are not undertaken.			
4.2	Implementing and Improving Legislation in the Criminal Justice System	 Utilising Section 25 to impose a remedy/ guardianship instead of imprisonment or fine (this also falls within the "Handling" target and presupposes the immediate establishment of remedy programmes). Creating properly built areas for a video-recorded statement in the police stations. Studying when domestic violence cases began and went to trial, subject to the provisions of the legislation. Creating a proper waiting room in the Court for witnesses that need protection, including the professionals. Creating programmes that prepare child-victims for the judicial proceedings. 	Ministry of Justice and Public Order		

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
		 Creating programmes that prepare women – victims for the judicial proceedings. Creating a child-centred waiting room for children - witnesses Installing video-recorded systems in Courts as well as an acoustic contact system (no visual contact between the victims and the accused) 			

Strategic Goal 5: Protecting the Domestic Violence Victims

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
5.1	Promoting the Creation of a Registry for Child Abuse Incidents	 Keeping a separate registry for Child Abuse Incidents in order to: record and process figures / information. coordinating / monitoring all incidents that are communicated to the competent services. continuous evaluation of all incidents that are entered in the Registry for Child Abuse Incidents 	Social Welfare Services		
5.2	Detecting, in time, abused children (and especially children with disabilities / intellectual disabilities)	 Establishing the institution of home call to families with children under the age of 5 years old, where necessary, from the health visitors in the framework of primary health care. 	Ministry of Health		
		 Creating programmes to recognize violence victims in schools. 	Ministry of Education and Culture		

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
		 Creating manuals for recognizing and helping abused children. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		
		 Contact and cooperation between the A.C., state services, NGOs and the community aiming at the child abuse incidents. Institutionalizing and empowering cooperation with bodies / services. Improving the speed and efficiency of the circulation of information. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		
5.3	Detecting, in time, abused elderly people or adults with intellectual disability or other form of disability	 Establishing the institution of home call by the Health Visitors to families that have persons belonging to the vulnerable groups, wherever necessary. 	Ministry of Health		
5.4	Offering safety and protection to the domestic violence victims	 Defining clusters of trained professionals in every service to safeguard the tracing / referral / managing of the domestic violence 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
		incidents.			
		 Guaranteeing the offer of security on behalf of the police. 	Police		
5.5	Creating supportive structures for violence victims protection at Pancyprian level	 Institutionalizing regulations for the operation of Shelters for violence victims in all cities. Technical and financial support of the NGOs/ Local Authorities dealing with service provision to domestic violence victims, given that they meet the conditions determined by the Grants Scheme for the creation of shelters and the provision of a 24-hour hotline for domestic violence victims. 	Social Welfare Services		
5.6	After the Shelter support to violence victims	After the Shelter technical, financial support to Local Authorities/ NGOs for developing programmes: 1) for victims who leave the Shelter and 2) parents- children meeting places in cases of separation/ divorce with family violence history.	Social Welfare Services		

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
5.7	Offering treatment to domestic violence victims	 Establishing a standing multidisciplinary group in every district, according to the 2000 and 2004 Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law. Creating prerequisites for the timely access of violence victims to social protection programmes (urgent financial assistance, educational programmes etc). 	Social Welfare Services		
5.8	Implementing the Interdepartmental Procedures fo the handling of domestic violence incidences	 Organizing interdepartmental one-day seminars in order to discuss and better communicate the procedures and evaluating their implementation, on behalf of all services. Informing all the staff of the involved services in relation to the procedures of handling abuse incidents with specific timetables. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget
5.9	Offering treatment to persecutors and victims	 Creating Treatment Programmes for Persecutors aiming at the development of self-control of the persecutors and the change of their bahaviour. Participation of the victims in social education programes. Implementing Treatment Programmes for inmate Persecutors. Creating Treatment Programmes for domestic violence victims including victims from the vulnerable population groups. 	Ministry of Health		

Strategic Goal 6: Coordination and Evaluation of the Implementation of the Action Plan

S/N	Goal	Actions	Implementing Body	Timetable	Budget of the MLSI
6.1	Systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan	 The AC undertakes the coordination and monitoring of the Action Plan. Defining a coordinator in every Service / NGO. Defining regular interdepartmental meetings for the discussion and evaluation of the effectiveness in managing domestic violence incidents. Every service / NGO shall annually send a Progress Report to the AC. Preparing a Progress Report on behalf of the AC including the programmes / activities / Service actions / NGOs The Progress Report of the Action Plan shall be integrated to the AC Annual Activities Report. 	Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence (A.C.)		

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