



Men's Violence Against Women, Honour-Related Violence and Repression and Violence in Same-Sex Relationships

*English summary of the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention
report 2010:18*

brå

Men's Violence Against Women, Honour-Related Violence and Repression and Violence in Same-Sex Relationships

English summary of report 2010:18 from the
Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention

Brå – a centre of knowledge on crime and measures to combat crime

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande rådet – Brå) works to reduce crime and improve levels of safety in society by producing data and disseminating knowledge on crime and crime prevention work and the justice system's responses to crime.

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Abbreviations

BOJ	The Swedish Association for Victim Support/Brottsofferjourernas riksförbund
Brå	the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention
HVF	Honour-related violence and repression/Hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck
NCK	National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women/Nationellt Centrum för Kvinnofrid
NTU	National Security Survey/Nationella Trygghetsundersökningen
RFSL	Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights/Riksförbundet för homosexuella, bisexuella och transpersoners rättigheter
ULF	Sweden's Survey of Living Conditions/Undersökningarna av levnadsförhållanden

Foreword

Men's violence against women is a social problem that has gained increasing attention in Sweden over the last few decades. In November 2007, the Government put forward an overall strategy for the work with preventing men's violence against women for the coming three years, known as the Action Plan for Combating Men's Violence Against Women, Honour-Related Violence and Repression and Violence in Same-Sex Relationships. In the plan, national and local authorities were given 56 different tasks aiming to achieve a sustainable level of ambition in the work against violence.

The Government gave the National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) the task to follow up and evaluate how the plan was implemented. Brå's report was presented in December 2010 (Brå Report 2010:18). It shows that the plan has substantially increased awareness and knowledge about men's violence against women among professionals in many different areas. It also shows that the actual support for women who are victims of violence has improved, even if it still needs to develop. The improved support has made more women motivated to report to the police when they are exposed to violence, but the report also indicates that the measures taken have not yet had any visible effects on the total amount of women exposed to violence by men.

It is our belief that the plan and its effects are of interest not just to a Swedish public, but also to decision makers and professionals in other countries. The study was made by Marcus Lundgren, Stina Holmberg, Ylva Lennartsson Hartmann and Amanda Netscher.

Stockholm, February 2011

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Summarising conclusions

In November 2007, the Government presented its Action plan for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships (Skr. 2007/08.39). The action plan covers 56 measures (appendix 1) aimed at improving the work within the public authorities and organisations concerned. In principle, the measures relate to the period 2007–2010, and the Government has allocated more than 1 billion Swedish crowns (approximately 110 million euros) for the work. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande rådet, Brå) has had the task of following up and evaluating the work with the action plan. An interim report was presented in January 2010, and this is a summary of the final report. With the action plan, the Government has placed a strong focus on men's violence against women and on honour-related violence and repression (Swedish: hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck=HVF. This abridgement will be used in this summary).

Now that Brå is summarising everything that was done within the framework for the measures in the plan, the picture from the interim report is reinforced; the action plan has resulted in an impressive number of activities. Within most of the professions affected, the plan has contributed to increased awareness of how important it is to work with these issues and to raise the level of knowledge, and it has also led to a better structure for the work, both within and between public authorities. The plan has also contributed to several new operations having been started, and to the development of existing ones. Finally, it has also meant that knowledge about good working methods has been disseminated and tried out in many different circumstances.

In the interim report (Brå 2010:4), Brå mentioned that the focus of the work so far has primarily been on supporting and helping the women that seek help from society because they were subjected to violence, while measures to prevent the violence of men had been emphasised to a relatively small extent. Now that the work during 2010 has been summarised, it is gratifying to find that the violence of men is being made visible and analysed to a greater extent, for instance by linking constructions of masculinity and the exercise of violence in things like training courses.

In terms of outcomes for the target groups, in the form of less exposure to violence, the results are more uncertain. From the recurring surveys made, no clear reduction can as yet be seen in the number of women who state that they were subjected to violence by a man during last year. However, it should be remembered that the last year for which there is information is 2009. It is reasonable to assume that it will take some time before the measures in the plan can take full effect and that any reduction will be seen only in a few years.

Another problem with interpreting the effectiveness of the measures against violence towards women is that there is no information at all about how many women are exposed again once they have reported an incident to the police. After all, it is this group of women, who by making a report become known to the authorities, that the action plan is largely focused on.

Training, legislation, and knowledge and operational development

The basic structure of Brå's report is the same as that of the action plan. We report how each individual measure was carried out, what experiences the actors tasked with the measures have had, and how they regard the future. However, it can be difficult to gain an overall picture of the work by simply reading the report through. For this reason, we have chosen to divide the measures/activities up into four groups in the summarising conclusions, in the same way as we did in the interim report. The four groups of measures are:

1. Training
2. Operational development
3. Knowledge development
4. Legislation

From the interim report, it emerged that educational measures were the most common type of activity. Training courses and/or educational material is included in almost half of the measures. These measures are partially a result of direct tasks in the action plan, and partially of the Government having set aside funds for which municipalities and organisations were able to apply. The applications have to a large extent concerned training. Almost as common is concrete operational development. Such concrete measures aimed directly at the target groups have increased over the course of time of the plan. The proportion of projects relating to concrete operations and getting money from county administrative boards has increased from one-third during 2008–2009 to half by 2010.

In the action plan, the Government initiates around 15 mapping projects of the problems and evaluations of working methods. These initiatives for knowledge development constitute a central part of the plan. Unfortunately, many of them are not yet completed, but will require another year or so before the results become available.

Finally, the plan includes around 15 measures for legislation, of which about half constitute a review and other half new pieces of legislation or changes to legislation. Now that the work in the plan is summed up, most of these measures have resulted in a report, a change to legislation or a new piece of legislation. Below follows a summary of what occurred within each group of measures during the plan period. To the extent it is justified, it is also stated whether the measures will be continued after the special funds from the Government have been used up.

A gigantic investment in education

In the interim report, Brå summarised the educational measures that had so far been carried out as a result of the action plan. Now that all education programmes held can be evaluated, it can be stated that the plan has entailed a gigantic investment in education. More than 350 projects relating to violence against women and children who have witnessed violence were started in the municipalities with financial support from the Government. 10,000 police officers have received training on the issues. The National Courts

Administration has held training courses regarding treatment for more than 1,800 employees within the courts system. The Swedish Prosecution Authority has included treatment issues in both the basic training and further training for prosecutors, and also in all courses within basic training for administrators.

The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has held training courses regarding treatment involving almost 500 employees within all parts of the judicial system, among them approximately 100 managers. A university course concerning men's violence against women, with a focus on women subjected to violence who are particularly vulnerable, was held three times under the auspices of the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (NCK) for around 70 persons.

As regards honour-related violence and repression, more than 150 training courses were held with the help of the almost 150 million Swedish crowns (approximately 16,5 million euros) distributed by the Government to the county administrative boards during 2008-2010. The training courses have mainly been regional, under the auspices of the country administrative boards, and have included specialist competence training in five counties. The Swedish National Agency for Education trained approximately 650 school leaders and principals and around 50 teachers attended a university course on HVF. The National Board for Youth Affairs arranged a course at university level for around 350 persons working in leisure services, social services and schools, and a specialist skills course for around 40 specialists working in the field.

Some training courses are continuing...

The Government's investment in training courses to raise the level of knowledge in the work with women subjected to violence is valuable. But training that is a one-off investment risks losing its effect fairly rapidly. After a while, many of those who received the training will have left or changed jobs and been replaced by new people who have not received the training. In particular within operations with rapid staff turnover, such as social services, this can happen fairly quickly. In addition, increased knowledge also generates increased interest in training – if you know more, you also become more aware of any gaps in the knowledge. One sign that there is still great demand for training is that all 400 places at a regional two-day course about violence against women, organised by one county administrative board during autumn 2010, was fully booked straight away. There was only room for participants from that particular county. Against this background, it is interesting to see to what extent those training courses started within the framework for the action plan have become permanent.

As mentioned above, the Swedish Prosecution Authority has included treatment issues in all basic and further training courses for prosecutors, and also all courses within basic training for administrators. With central funds, the National Police Board will also ensure that police officers continue to receive training on issues relating to men's violence against women and honour-related violence and repression (HVF), according to the same model as used to date. Finally, the university courses initiated by NCK, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women will continue.

...but many were one-off efforts

It is not possible to say what will continue of the major investment in training in order to improve the work of social services that has taken place with the help of the development funds for the municipalities (Measure No. 2). This is because the concluding follow-up by the National Board of Health and Welfare has not yet been published. As regards funds given to the county administrative boards in order to improve the measures taken relating to HVF issues only Östergötland County Administrative Board plans to continue with its regional training courses. The others respond with a "no", or are uncertain. The county administrative boards' assessment is that the number of local training courses

held with the aid of the development funds will probably fall markedly, but perhaps continue on a smaller scale.

Several of the national actors consider that they do not have the opportunity to continue working with the training courses unless they receive a continued mandate from the Government and special funds. This applies, for example, to the National Courts Administration's course about how to treat the victims of sexual crimes. It also applies to the National Board for Youth Affairs' training courses on HVF and men's violence against women for professional specialists and for managers within social services and schools. Nor will the Swedish National Agency for Education's courses in HVF for school heads, school leaders and teachers continue.

Operational development

The operational development achieved with the help of the action plan is primarily the result of the development funds that the county administrative boards have distributed to municipal and non-profit projects within the framework of Measures Nos. 2, 11 and 49.¹ Further funds for operational development were provided by the Swedish Inheritance Fund (Measure No. 27) and Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (Measure No. 28). In total, up until 2009, these development funds amounted to almost SEK 500 million Swedish crowns (approximately 55 million euros).²

300 projects about advice and support

In total, almost 300 projects aimed at developing the support for and treatment of women subjected to violence were started within the framework for Measure No. 2. They relate to direct support, such as crisis handling, but also about method development. Approximately 70 projects have received funds for protected housing, of which around half are aimed at developing support in existing housing schemes and other half to setting up new ones.

Of the approximately 30 projects that were granted funds from the Swedish Inheritance Fund, about half relate to operational development.

90 projects relate to honour-related violence and repression (HVF)

A further 90 projects relating to operational development focusing on honour-related violence and repression (HVF) were started with funds from the county administrative boards in Measure No. 11. These consist of various non-profit operations, for example networks for girls at risk, individual discussions with young boys and discussion groups for parents. The county administrative boards themselves have also started operations, such as drop-in reception centres and emergency operations for girls and women who are subjected to HVF. Most county administrative boards have also contributed consultancy support, for example to social services, both in individual cases and on a general level. Some county administrative boards have also provided funds for the creation of local and regional networks for professionals working with the target groups, such as police officers, social services and volunteer organisations.

¹ The National Board of Health and Welfare is responsible for following up on Measure No. 2, and will present a final report of the effects of the development funds by summer 2011. However, on the basis of the previous descriptive accounts from the National Board of Health and Welfare, Brå can reflect on what has been done in terms of operational development at an overall level.

² If the development funds of the entire action plan are taken into account, i.e. also the funds distributed during 2010, the total figure amounts to approximately 670 million (approximately 73,4 million euros), or about two thirds of the total cost of the plan.

The county administrative boards in the three large city counties were given special funds for the development of protected housing for women subjected to HVF. Today, there are around 185 such places available.³

Almost 130 projects relating to cooperation and physical improvement

Around 70 projects within the framework for Measure No. 49 have been granted funds for the municipality to establish new or further develop existing forms of cooperation, primarily with volunteer organisations, other municipalities, healthcare and the police. Within the framework for Measure No. 28, the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning has distributed funds to projects aimed at providing support to initiatives that strengthen security in town and city environments. Approximately 60 projects relating to physical changes, such as better lighting and clearance, were been granted funds.

In total more than 500 projects aimed at operational development

Our review shows that more than 500 projects aimed at operational development were started through the various development funds of the action plan. The 500 projects have primarily been local. In addition, there are measures that have contributed to operational development at national level:

- As a result of Measure No. 24, a national virtual youth reception centre on the Internet. www.umo.se, was started, providing advice about subjects including sexual and reproductive health and relationships and mental health.
- The National Board for Youth Affairs has developed the competence of emergency centres for girls about men's violence against women and in particular about HVF, which led to the Board, together with nine emergency centres for girls, starting up a virtual emergency centre for girls, which has since been replaced by a national portal for emergencies relating to girls, www.tjejjouren.se (Measure No. 26).
- Within the framework for Measure No. 46, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service has developed the programmes for sex criminals and those found guilty of violence in close relationships at all of the country's 32 probation centres and at the majority of prisons.

Gratifying development, but to what extent do the projects survive?

In the interim report published a year ago, Brå pointed out the importance of taking the step from general training efforts to concrete operational development. It is therefore gratifying to see that the proportion of projects aimed at operational development has increased since then. It is probably the case that training is seen as a logical first step when development work is initiated, while operational development becomes important when the next step is to be taken.

In the same way as for investment in training, we do not currently know to what extent the various operations tried out and developed with the aid of the development funds will survive when the Government funds run out. The National Board of Health and Welfare will deal with the issue in more detail in its final report on Measure No. 2.

Knowledge development

A prerequisite for the work of combating men's violence against women, honour-related violence and repression, and violence in same-sex relationships being successful is that

³ In April 2008, information about the number of places was summarised; there is currently no updated figure for this, but according to estimates made by the County Administrative Board in Västra Götaland, the capacity has at least not decreased. A new inventory is planned.

there is a good basis of knowledge for the measures. Without knowledge about the character of the problems and comprehension of which measures may be successful, there is a risk that the measures will be without effect. It is therefore gratifying that several of the tasks in the action plan relate to work on mapping, evaluating and summarising knowledge.

Four mapping exercises with strategic information

Four national mapping exercises were carried out as a result of mandates in the plan. They relate to

- the work of social services with women subjected to violence in a representative selection of municipalities (within the framework for the national supervision in Measure No. 4)
- the existence of forced marriage in Sweden (Measure No. 54)
- problems with HVF in schools (Measure No. 53)
- how women from national minorities who were subjected to violence are treated and supported by public authorities (Measure No. X⁴).⁵

These mapping exercises have provided valuable information for assessing the character and scope of the problems and the measures. As regards the work of social services with women subjected to violence, the mapping constituted a part of the supervision by the county administrative boards, and the failings that were found were followed up during subsequent supervisory visits. The mapping of forced marriage and the measures against them led to the Government in May 2010 deciding on a new action plan with particular focus on preventing and precluding young persons from being married against their will. In addition, some of the local mapping was carried out with the aid of the money allocated by the county administrative boards. They have concerned the existence of women subjected to violence in various municipalities (Measure No. 2) and the coordination of measures for women subjected to violence in different counties (48).

Two evaluations – with partially unclear results

The knowledge that has so far been added by means of the evaluation mandate of the action plan is considerably more meagre. This is because only two of the evaluations were completed. The central evaluations that relate to working methods within social services when it comes to women and children subjected to violence and the operations of the women's emergency centres are not yet finished.⁶ Two evaluations have been presented. Measure No. 44 investigates operations for men who subject women to violence, and Measure No. 50 relates to the police's Project Karin, a project for new premises and cooperation format of the police in Malmö. Unfortunately, neither of these two evaluations show such uniform results that they in themselves can serve as a basis for future policies in terms of working methods. In the evaluation of Project Karin, most women who reported being subjected to violence considered that it worthwhile if the police interviews are held on "good" premises. However, the researchers only managed to find a few women who had any experience of being interviewed on the new premises, and who could say how important this had been.

The evaluation of the activities of social services for men committing violence showed promising results – the proportion that had committed violence after having participated in the activities was smaller than during the previous period. However, as a control

⁴ On the basis of wishes stated by the Government Offices, two measures outside the action plan have also been part of the follow-up since the interim report. They are called X and Y and can be found in the report following Measure No. 56.

⁵ The first three mapping projects are summarised in Brå's interim report. The fourth is accounted for in the final report.

⁶ One of them is accounted for concurrently with the final report, the other in October 2011.

group was lacking, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether the reduction was due to having participated in the activities or whether it was a natural phenomenon that had occurred, irrespective of having taken part in the activities or not.⁷

Knowledge summary and evaluation instruments not completed

The plan also gives a mandate to the National Board of Health and Welfare aimed at developing scientifically based tools for good methods in the work with women and children who have been subjected to or witnessed violence, in the form of evaluation instruments and scientific knowledge summaries. One such mandate has been completed – an instrument for evaluating problems and needs among women and children subjected to violence (Measure No. 5). However, the risk assessment instrument for investigating care and housing will not be completed until March 2011 (Measure No. 6) and the knowledge summary about measures for women substance abuse problems subjected to violence will be ready only in October 2011 (Measure No. 14).

Several changes to legislation have been carried out

Around 15 of the measures in the action plan relate to legislation that in various ways is to contribute to improve the prerequisites of the work concerning men's violence against women. About half of these 15 legislative measures relate to a review of existing legislation, and the other half to new pieces of legislation or changes to legislation, most of which have entered into force.

The most crucial change in legislation has to be the tightening of the Social Services Act on 1 July 2007, which meant that the duty of the social welfare board to offer victims of crime support and help is more clearly defined. It is a clear indication on the part of society that victims of crime, in particular women who were subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence, have the right to help and support, and that the municipalities must develop their work in order to satisfy this requirement.

A crucial proposal for new legislation relating to men's violence against women is the report of the stalking enquiry (SOU 2008:81) concerning strengthened protection and supervision against systematic persecution, where a government bill was presented in October 2010 (Measure No. 17).

Among the reviews, the report of the sex crime enquiry (SOU 2010:71), which was presented on 29 October 2010 (Measure No. 18) can be highlighted. This report found that the aim of the change in the law dated 2005 had been achieved overall, but that some changes needed to be made in order to counteract specific failings. The enquiry found, among other things, that it should be possible to punish a sexual act that had occurred *without consent* and therefore proposed that a consent-based provision be introduced for a new type of crime – sexual assault (*sexuella övergrepp* in Swedish). This entails a prohibition against carrying out a sexual act with a person without the permission of that person. The provision shall be used only if the deed does not constitute rape or sexual coercion, and the punishment is proposed to be imprisonment for a maximum of four years.⁸

The review of crimes that constitute violation of personal integrity, which is to be presented in May 2011 (Dir. 2010:56), should also be pointed out.

⁷ It may be that the men who sought help in an acute situation would have ceased the violence without taking part in the activity.

⁸ In practice, this means that the minimum sentence is 14 days, as this is the shortest period of imprisonment that can be handed down. This means that the tariff of punishment is proposed to be the same as for a rape assessed as being non-aggravated. The proposed changes in legislation are proposed to come into force on 1 January 2012.

Children who have witnessed violence and persons subjected to violence in same-sex relationships are slightly overlooked

The action plan does not only relate to women subjected to violence and persons subjected to honour-related violence and repression, but also to children who have witnessed violence and persons subjected to violence in same-sex relationships. It is positive that the Government also emphasises these groups, as their exposure has been relatively invisible up until recent years. One complication, however, is that the problems and needs of both these groups tend to be relatively invisible in the action plan.

Violence in same-sex relationships

The measures relating to violence in same-sex relationships have partly been about volunteer organisations getting funds to work with these issues, and partly about efforts to raise the level of knowledge. The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights (RFSL) in Blekinge, the Swedish Association for Victim Support (BOJ), the Swedish Organisation for Women's Shelters and the Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centres have received funds via the National Board of Health and Welfare to cooperate in the work against violence against homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons. BOJ and RFSL have received funds to develop a crime victim support operation for persons subjected to violence in same-sex relationships (Measures Nos. 15 and 16).

The National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (NCK) has reviewed the knowledge and research into violence in same-sex relationships and produced a training film (Measure No. 51). They have also held a university course, where one of the elements was about same-sex violence. The National Police Board has included the subject in some measures. Their information campaign to the general public has had a gender-neutral message, and their handbook about crime investigations in close relationships includes a section on investigations into violence in same-sex relationships (Measures Nos. 29–32).

In addition to this, it should be mentioned that the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has granted funds to research into violence in same-sex relationships within the framework for Measure No. 52.

Children who have witnessed violence

One complication when reviewing the measures that relate to children who have witnessed violence is that the work is often accounted for together with measures relating to women or children who have themselves been subjected to violence (where both mothers and fathers can be the perpetrator). Among the measures aimed at children who have witnessed violence (and also children who have themselves been subjected to violence), special mention should be made of the National Board of Health and Welfare's mandate to summarise the level of knowledge and to develop methods for carrying out risk assessments when the social welfare board investigates issues such as care, housing and visiting rights (Measure No. 6). A new Government bill on support and protection for children and young persons (Measure No. 22) and a directive for a report into child marriage and forced marriage have also been adopted (Measure No. 40).

Other measures have also been aimed at children who have witnessed violence, but have not had the subject as the main theme. The National Board of Health and Welfare conducted a study of children as part of the mandate to evaluate methods and ways of working within social services-related operations (Measure No. 7). The general advice of the Board to social services with associated handbook includes advice about children who have witnessed violence. The Board has also developed the information about the work of social services by informing about the subject on its website (Measure No. 3). Finally, the Board has identified and quality-assured evaluation instruments that can be

used in the work of social services with women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence (Measure No. 5). One of the instruments in question relates to children who have witnessed violence. Three national and two local organisations have received grants through the Board for activities for children who have witnessed violence (Measure No. 15).

The county administrative boards have also allocated development funds to the municipalities in order to develop the quality of support to women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence (Measure No. 2). Almost 125 local projects have included support for children who have witnessed violence, and approximately the same number have raised the issue in training courses, educational material, etc. The county administrative boards have also been mandated to support *the coordination* in the counties of work aimed to provide support to children who are witnessing violence (Measure No. 48). The coordination work has led to an increase in the number of cross-municipal discussion groups for children who have witnessed violence.

The National Police Board have in some measures included the target group children who themselves were subjected to crimes and children who have witnessed violence. Among these should be mentioned a handbook about crime investigations in close relationships and the Board's measure card, which describes in bullet point form what police officers should think about when they arrive at a scene where crime in a close relationship is suspected to have occurred (Measures Nos. 29–32).

Within the framework for Measure No. 52, the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has granted funds to a couple of new research projects. One aims to investigate the effects on children who witness murders within the family; the other studies the need for support and help among children who have witnessed violence and how social services take these needs into account.

The National Inheritance Fund has granted funds to a project to support fathers, where methods are to be developed to recognise the situation and needs of children in families where violence is a feature (Measure No. 27).

The effects of the action plan for the professions

The action plan has therefore meant that many actors have initiated and carried out a large number of measures and activities. The question then arises as to what has been achieved by these inputs. This question is considered below, first from an operational perspective, and it is thereafter discussed to what extent any effects of the plan can be discerned among the target groups, in the form of increased security and reduced exposure, for example.

Increased knowledge and new, easily available sources of knowledge

A general picture of the public authorities who in various ways have worked with the measures of the action plan is that they have contributed to a higher level of knowledge within all sectors of society that encounter women who were subjected to violence or honour-related violence and repression. The initiative has also contributed to greater awareness and increased commitment to the issues.

The fact that awareness has increased is particularly noticeable when it comes to honour-related violence and repression.

Another clear result of the action plan is that there is today a greater range of easily available knowledge for those who need to learn more about how those exposed should be treated, how they can be helped and supported, and how one should work in order to better prosecute crimes. Examples of material that has been added and developed are

- The NCK's (The National Centre for Knowledge on men's violence against women) knowledge bank about men's violence against women, honour-related violence, and repression and violence in same-sex relationships, which in the first instance is aimed at those who work with persons subjected to violence (www.nck.uu.se).
- The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority's website with information about support for victims of crime
- The police's internal website, handbook and measure card for improving the investigation of relationship crime
- The National Board of Health and Welfare's general recommendations, handbook and website about how social services should support women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence
- The website of the Östergötland County Administrative Board regarding HVF issues, primarily aimed at professionals, but also containing information about where those subjected to violence can find help, www.hedersfortryck.se

A more specific knowledge support is the social service's evaluation tool. As a result of the plan, there is now such a tool that social services can use in the work with women and children subjected to violence. Finally, recommendations to healthcare professionals about how to ask questions in order to find out whether a woman has been subjected to violence should be mentioned. The recommendations were developed by NCK.

New local operations for women subjected to violence have started – but will they survive?

As mentioned earlier, the funds that were allocated to municipalities and to various volunteer organisations have led to a large number of projects with new operations starting to support and help exposed groups.

These can reasonably be assumed to have benefited the target groups during the time the projects were in force. As the National Board of Health and Welfare's evaluation of how the municipalities have used the development funds for support to women subjected to violence will not be presented until summer 2011, however, there are still many unanswered questions about the projects with new operations that have started in the municipalities. One question, for example, is whether the operations and efforts ceased after the end of the project period with Government money, or whether they have become permanent. The previous experience of the social work of municipalities that have received this type of development funds is that they are often closed down after a while when the financing is transferred to the municipality.

This problem exists to an even greater extent when it comes to project funds for non-profit operations. They are often completely reliant on long-term financing from society, if the projects are not to be simply "a flash in the pan".

New operational models – with intrinsic value

Trying out new operations can have a value in a wider sense if it means that new generalised methods of working can be tried and evaluated.

In this way, the experiences can become useful, not just for those who were directly involved in the project, but also for others. Before the National Board of Health and Welfare has made its report on the funds allocated to the municipalities for developing the work of social services, we do not know how much general knowledge about good working methods can be gained from the local projects.

One operation that is carried out permanently and that has started as a result of the Government's investment is worth highlighting. It is Project Karin – the new premises and cooperation format of the police in Malmö (Measure No. 50).

Other operating formats that have developed as a consequence of the action plan are support operations where several municipalities are cooperating.

Several of these were developed during the period. The county administrative boards have had an important task in supporting this development (Measure No. 49).

More uncertain to what extent the work in general has improved

The next question is whether the action plan in general has led to an improvement of the practical work in terms of women subjected to violence by men, honour-related violence and repression, violence in same-sex relationships, and children who have witnessed violence. Here, the grounds for drawing conclusions are thinner, as national follow-up is almost entirely lacking.

As regards the work of social services, the national review conducted in 2008/2009 is an important source of knowledge. The review covered just 80 of the country's 290 municipalities, but the selection was made in such a way as to reflect the situation in the country as a whole. The picture provided is that social services are well on the way towards fulfilling the demands in legislation for support of women subjected to violence. For example, all municipalities can offer emergency support and help. But there are still quite a lot of shortcomings. The failings apply primarily to *outreach* work, *long-term* measures and staff *competence*, in particular within care for the elderly and care for persons with functional impairments. One requirement for being granted development funds during 2010 within the framework for Measure No. 2 was that any such shortcomings should have been remedied.

More threat and risk assessments within the police – but uncertain whether more women get protective measures

When it comes to police work, improvements in the way of working with women who reported they had been subjected to violence can be measured in several ways. One way is to investigate whether the women who are in need of protective measures receive such help to a greater degree than before. Another is to see whether the police clear up more reports than previously.⁹

In order to illuminate the first aspect, Brå made a special study of police work with structured threat and risk assessments and protective measures (Brå Report 2010:20). Structured threat and risk assessments refer to those that are based on scientifically developed instruments for risk analysis, such as SARA.¹⁰ It emerged from the study that the police currently make structured threat and risk assessments to a greater extent than before the action plan, even if different authorities are at different stages in the use of these instruments.

On the other hand, the arsenal of protective measures has not increased to any great extent. They consist mainly of the police helping the woman to apply for a restraining order and/or providing her with an alarm telephone.

Nor has the number of women granted restraining orders increased during the years the action plan covers.

⁹ "Cleared up" here means personally cleared up, i.e. crimes for which a decision was made to prosecute, issue a sanction order or a waiver of prosecution. Personally cleared up means that a person was linked to the crime. At the completion of the investigation, the person was assessed to be reasonably suspected, but not yet prosecuted.

¹⁰ Spousal Assault Risk Assessment.

Both the number of reports and the number of crimes cleared up personally have increased – but the proportion personally cleared up is the same

One goal for the police has been to have more women report when they are subjected to violence, and for the police to clear up a greater number of the crimes reported. From the crime statistics relating to assaults against women,¹¹ it emerged that the number of reports and the number of cases personally cleared up¹² increased during the period 2007 to 2009. The increase in the number of reports is 10 per cent. On the other hand, the proportion of crimes personally cleared up has not increased, but remains fairly constant at just over 20 per cent.¹³

¹¹ Brå has investigated reports of crimes that have taken place indoors with a known assailant as the development work at the National Police Board concerns violence in close relationships.

¹² Personally cleared up means that the case has led to a decision to prosecute, to issue a sanction order or a waiver of prosecution. The Board's final report to the Government states that 26 per cent of all reports are reported to prosecutors. As this measurement also includes reports that were transferred to prosecutors, but then do not lead to a prosecution, Brå instead reports information on crimes personally cleared up, even if the two measurements describe approximately the same thing.

¹³ In 2007, 22.2 per cent of reports were personally cleared up (3 393 out of 15 251 reports), and in 2009, the figure was 21.4 per cent (3 577 out of 16 730 reports).

The action plan has, in summary, contributed to

- increased knowledge in the work with the target groups
- new, easily available sources of knowledge
- a large number of projects with new, local operations
- new, valuable operational models
- more structured threat and risk assessments within the police

It is more uncertain

- to what extent training courses will continue to be provided
- whether the local projects with new operations will survive
- whether the police's threat and risk assessments have led to more and better protective measures.

Uncertain effects for the target groups

An important issue when analysing the effects of the action plan is how it has affected the target groups. Has it led to those exposed being better treated by the authorities? Has it led to greater security among women? Finally, has it reduced violence against women, against persons in same-sex relationships, and reduced honour-related violence and repression? And in particular – has it led to reduced violence against those who in various ways have sought help from society in order to avoid being subjected again?

All target groups are equally important to study when it comes to the effects of the action plan. However, there are differences when it comes to availability of data that can be used to highlight the effects. For this reason, the focus of Brå's analysis is primarily about women subjected to violence, as information that can be used to follow up the other target groups is largely lacking.

Women subjected to violence are on the whole satisfied with the police's treatment – but not with their effectiveness

Once source for analysing women's trust in the police is Brå's annual National Security Survey (NTU). The survey asks questions about the trust in the legal system, both of women in general and women who have reported various types of crime. The surveys started in 2006 and the latest published survey was published in 2011.

The number of reports and crimes cleared up personally have increased, but the proportion of reports that are cleared up personally remains at approximately the same level. This contains information about what women who have had contact with the police because of being subjected to threats or violence think about that experience. For almost two thirds (65%) of the women, the experience was very or fairly positive. It should, however, be pointed out here that the responding women do not just belong to the group that was subjected to violence by a known man, but also women who, for example, were subjected to violence and threats by another woman at work.

Nevertheless, information from the suspects register show that the perpetrator in around 90 per cent of cases is a man when an assault has taken place indoors with a perpetrator who is known to the woman.

There are a couple of minor studies that are directly concerned with women who have reported to the police that they were subjected to violence by a man in a close relationship.

In these studies, the experiences of the police are also divided up into various aspects. It emerges that a large proportion of the women are satisfied with the police's *treatment*. This emerges both in a study by Brå from 2008, where 54 women who had reported that

they had been subjected to violence in a close relationship responded to a survey, and in a study from the police in 2010, where just over 200 women were interviewed¹⁴. In both the studies, around 80 per cent of the women were satisfied with the treatment, and only 10 per cent or less were directly dissatisfied.

In the Brå study, the treatment was divided up into different components. The police got the best views for their friendliness and respectfulness.

As shown above, a large proportion of the crimes are not cleared up, with the man being prosecuted. This is reflected in the women's responses when it comes to the effectiveness of the police. In Brå's study, approximately half were satisfied, and in the police study just over one third were satisfied, while almost 40 per cent were dissatisfied. The reason why a larger proportion was satisfied in Brå's study may be linked to the fact that women who had reported sex crimes were not included. In the police study, those who had been subjected to sex crimes were less satisfied with police effectiveness than those who had been subjected to violence in a close relationship or crimes against their freedom and peace.

The proportion of women who are afraid to go out has fallen slightly

One ambition of the action plan is to increase the security of women in public environments, and using this as a starting point the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning was mandated to stimulate work with security-enhancing measures in town and city environments. The Board has produced a knowledge basis for those who work on the issues, has held seminars and allocated funds to 70 projects. The projects have, among other things, entailed that lighting in public places has been improved. It may be interesting to compare these inputs in relation to developments in terms of women's security in their neighbourhood. The issue is highlighted in Brå's National Security Survey, which has been carried out since 2006¹⁵. This survey asks the question:

If you go out alone late one evening in your neighbourhood, do you feel very secure, fairly secure, fairly insecure, very insecure, or do you never go out alone late in the evening?

The survey shows that insecurity has fallen slightly, both among men and among women. Among women, the proportion that responded that they feel fairly or very insecure, or that they do not go out due to insecurity, has fallen from 28 per cent in 2007¹⁶ to 26 per cent in 2009. The same tendency appears in the Swedish National Institute of Public Health's annual national public health survey, where a question with a similar purpose was asked. The proportion of women who there answer that they *have refrained from going out alone due to fear of being attacked, mugged or otherwise molested*, has fallen from 41 per cent in 2007 to 37 per cent in 2009. Preliminary figures for 2010 show a further fall, to 35 per cent.¹⁷ To what extent this modest change is an effect of the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning's investment is difficult to say, but it does show that the development of perceived security is moving in the right direction.

¹⁴ 300 women were selected, and with 212 agreeing to be interviewed, the incidence of response was 71 per cent. The sample consisted of women who had reported violent crime in a close relationship, crimes against their freedom and peace or sexual crime. The study was presented in June 2010.

¹⁵ The survey started at full scale only in 2007.

¹⁶ As the survey was carried out at full scale only in 2007, we are using the information from that year as the introductory year.

¹⁷ The time series is as follows: 2005: 39%, 2006: 40%, 2007: 41%, 2008: 37%, 2009: 37%, 2010: 35%. It is also interesting to note that in this survey, the insecurity of men remains fairly constant at around 10 per cent over the time period in question.

Women's self-declared vulnerability remains more or less unchanged...

There are also surveys that ask about exposure to violence.

On the basis of self-reported *serious violence* and *violence in the home* in Statistics Sweden's Survey of Living Conditions (ULF), one can draw the conclusion that the scope of violence against women has stayed relatively constant during the first decade of the 21st century. Such an assumption is also strengthened by the fact that the proportion of women who have sought medical care due to exposure to violence by another person between the years 2000 and 2006¹⁸ remains at a fairly equal level (Brå Report 2008:23, pp 123–124).¹⁹

During the years 2004 to 2008, 3 per cent of women in the Swedish National Institute of Public Health's national public health survey reported that they had been subjected to *physical violence*. In the survey for 2009, this figure fell to 2 per cent, a change that remains in the preliminary figures for 2010.

When it comes to *threats of violence* in the same survey, the results of the women's responses are in line with exposure to violence. The proportion remained at a constant 5 per cent during the years 2004 to 2008, and then fell by one percentage point in 2009 to 4 per cent. This fall also remains in the preliminary figures for 2010.

The figures above do not just relate to violence and threats from men, but also from women. If one wishes to get a picture specifically of men's violence and threats against women, then Brå's National Security Survey (NTU) is a better source. The proportion of women who there state that they were subjected to *crime in a close relationship*²⁰ during the last year was the same in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010, at around 1 per cent.

The self-reporting studies above relate to events that have happened during the last twelve months. This means that the figure for 2010 reflects the exposure during 2009. The fact that exposure is more or less unchanged when comparing the time before the plan with the introductory years of the work in the action plan suggests that it is not yet possible to see whether the action plan has left any legacy in relation to women's self-declared vulnerability to violence.

...but reports to the police increased

The number of women who are subjected to violence in close relationships does not appear to have increased over the last few years, but the number of reports of assaults to the police have increased,²¹ as shown in *Figure 1*.

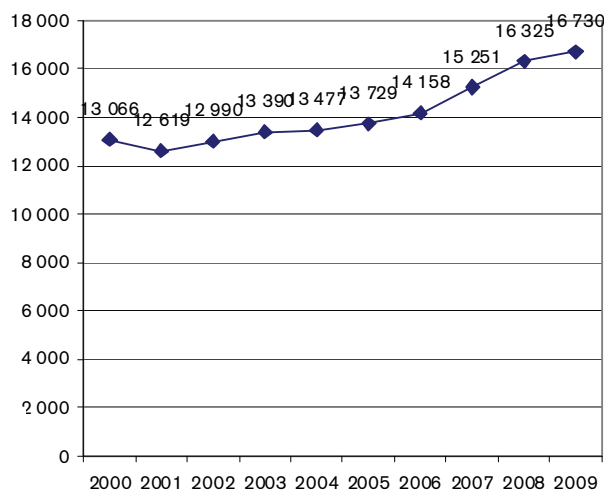
¹⁸ This information is gathered from Brå Report 2008:23. Brå does currently not have access to figures for later years.

¹⁹ The proportion of women who in ULF answered that they had been subjected to violence in the home is around 2 per cent. Brå Report 2008:23, and gradual information from Statistics Sweden for the years 2007–2009). The proportion of women who in ULF answered that they had been subjected to violence that had required seeing a doctor is around half a percentage point (Brå Report 2008:23).

²⁰ The crimes included are violent crimes, sex crimes, threats, and harassment, where the perpetrator is a partner or former partner.

²¹ Violence against women in a close relationship is operationalised here through assault (including aggravated) against a woman, indoors, where the perpetrator is known to the victim.

Figure 1. Number of reports of assault, incl. aggravated, against a women 15 years or older, indoors, known assailant, years 2000–2009.



As Figure 1 illustrates, the reports have increased by almost 30 per cent in ten years, from around 13,000 in 2000 to almost 17,000 in 2009. The increase has been particularly large in recent years. Considering the information in the self-reporting studies (the Swedish Crime Survey NTU, Statistics Sweden’s ULF survey and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health’s national public health survey), most factors indicate that the increase in reports is not due to an increase in violence, but that women have become more inclined to report when they are subjected to violence by a man. It is possible that the increased focus on the issue that the action plan has entailed has contributed to this; for example, both the police and social services have carried out considerable information work aimed at ensuring more women dare to make a report and feel that it is meaningful.

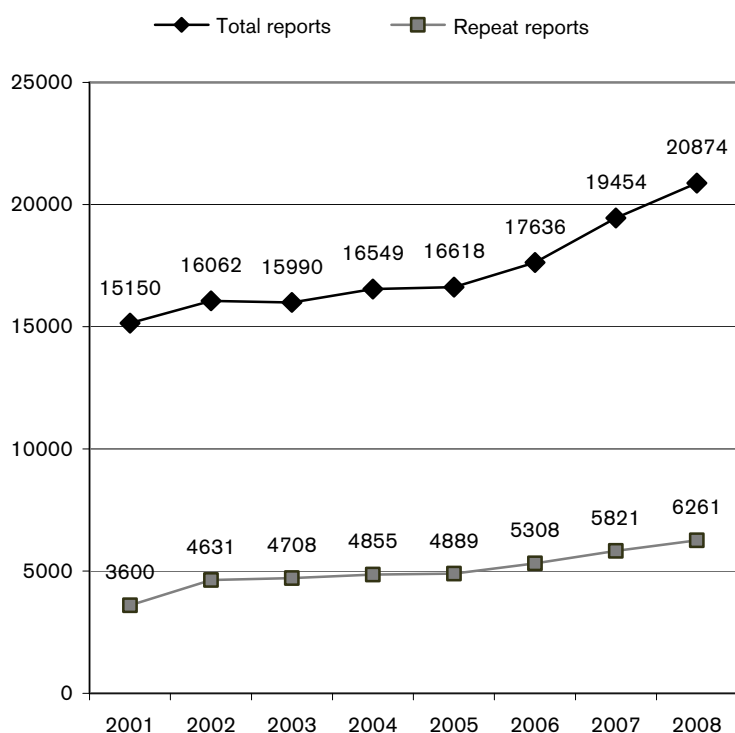
What reflects the development of the number of repeated reports?

The “fairest” measure of whether the investment has had any effect on the women exposed should be if the *repeated* exposure to violence has fallen. The majority of the measures in the plan 15 targeting women who have been exposed getting good help and thus preventing them from being subjected to violence again.

From ordinary crime statistics, it is not possible to find out the extent to which those women who report to the police that they were subjected to violence by a man make any new reports. As a part of the follow-up of the action plan, Brå therefore conducted a special study of this issue (Brå Report 2010:19). This shows that one third of all reports by women about exposure to various forms of violence and threats from a man were preceded by a previous report regarding the same man.²² This proportion remains fairly stable over time, which means that the increase in repeat reports is just about the same as the increase in first-time reports.

²² The time limit is twelve months.

Figure 2. Development in the number of reports relating to violence against women including repeated reports, and only repeated reports for the years 2001–2008. The crimes included are assault (incl. aggravated), sex crimes, aggravated infringement of female peace, molestation, unlawful threat and murder and attempted murder.



Regional analysis of the link between the working methods of the police and the development of reported repeated exposure

At a regional level, it is possible to see fairly large differences when it comes to the level and development of reported repeated exposure. In order to find out a bit more about the issue of whether the police’s efforts within the framework for the action plan has led to changes in the number of women who report that they have been exposed again, in the above-mentioned study, Brå has used these variations in a more in-depth investigation at county level (Brå Report 2010:19). Those counties that have the highest and lowest numbers of reported repeated exposure were compared in terms of quality of work, chiefly of the police, but to some extent of social services as well.

The conclusion drawn by Brå in the study is that one should not use repeat reports of violence and threats as a measure of actual exposure to new crimes. The study shows that the groups of police authorities with high reported repeated exposure fulfil the quality criteria for good work to a slightly greater extent than the group with low repeated exposure. The tendency is the same when you compare the work of social services at the county level, even if the differences there are smaller.²³

Together, the results indicate that good work within the police and social services may lead to a greater propensity to report, which shows up both when it comes to first-time reports and repeated reports, but that other factors must also be taken into account when explaining the level of reports. Against this background, it is necessary to conduct studies where the *actual* repeated exposure is followed up, and to ask those women who have made a first report whether they were exposed again within one year.²⁴ One would then

²³ However, the picture is not clear-cut. One of the two counties that have received the best marks in terms of work of both the police and the social services are included in the group with low reported repeated exposure.

²⁴ Since we know that those who have made a new report were exposed again, it is sufficient to ask those women who have not made a new report.

include both those who reported the crime and those who did not. In order to gain a picture of whether certain inputs are of greater importance than others, one could design a project where different police authorities work in different ways, and then see whether certain ways of working reduce the “relapse into exposure” to a greater extent than others.

The picture of the effects of the action plan for women subjected to violence is uncertain

- Reporting women are satisfied with their treatment by the police – but not with their clear-up effectiveness.
- NTU (The Swedish Crime Survey/Nationella Trygghetsundersökningen) indicates that the number of women who are subjected to violence from men has neither increased nor fallen.
- According to NTU, women’s security in public environments has increased slightly.

Honour-related violence and repression

Honour-related violence and repression in Sweden is something that was only seriously noticed in the first decade of the 21st century, and there is much less experience of working with these issues than with women subjected to violence in general. This means that it may be especially important for the Government to contribute to the development of this work. Against this background, Brå has found reason here to make a separate analysis of what the action plan has led to within the area of honour-related violence and repression.

Lower requirements for the local projects

If we compare the training courses and development projects relating to HVF with the other projects, we can see several differences. One is that the training courses about HVF that were held are often of a more basic character than other training courses, with overall descriptions of the problem and how it may express itself. The other training courses on women subjected to violence are more often of the ‘continuation course’ type, where either a specified sub-group of women is focused on, for instance women with functional impairments, or where the participants are expected to have some basic knowledge.

Another difference is that the more than 100 million Swedish crowns (approximately 11 million euros) in development funds allocated by the country administrative boards to HVF projects lack clear follow-up similar to that of the National Board of Health and Welfare’s follow-up mandate, linked to the general development funds allocated by the county administrative boards within the framework for Measure No. 2. It is against this background that Brå has taken the initiative, with the help of a survey to all county administrative boards, to make its own follow-up of these projects. The follow-up shows, among other things, that the funds have led to around 150 training courses and 90 other activities being arranged, primarily support activities for women subjected to violence. The survey also showed that several country administrative boards experienced difficulty in allocating the funds, both because the awareness of HVF was not that great in the counties, and also because the time allocated for the county administrative boards and other actors to plan and execute the projects was felt to be too short (see Measure No. 11).

Despite this, the county administrative boards and other authorities who have held mandates on the issue of HVF consider that the investment has been valuable. They con-

sider that it has led to increased awareness of honour-related violence and repression at the local level and within new networks. Schools and social services notice the problem in a different way compared to before. There are clear indications that the mapping of the existence of HVF in schools (Measure No. 53) would produce a different result if it was done today – more teachers would have come into contact with the issue in some way.

Disagreement about causes does not impede practice

In the interim report, Brå mentioned the disagreement that existed between various researchers and opinion-makers in terms of definitions of and overall causes of HVF. As shown in NCK's report (Measure No. 51), this disagreement remains to some extent, and against this background it is important to continue work with investigating and discussing the issues, in order to increase concordance.

However, the disagreement about definitions and overall causes is not felt to be such a great hindrance among practitioners. Most of those who work practically are agreed that there are persons, in particular young persons, who live under limitations that are associated with honour-related values.

Concrete knowledge about functional methods is still lacking

To a large extent, practitioners lack concrete knowledge-based guidance about the working methods that work best to redress problems in individual cases. There are no European evaluations that provide guidance, or any Swedish evaluations whatsoever. The next step must be to carry out "solid" evaluations in Sweden of the various working methods that are used.

Challenges for the future

Preventing men's violence against women, honour-related violence, and helping those subjected to it is an important task that cannot be time-limited. The Government's action plan has been a mustering of strength, which has raised both the level of knowledge and the degree of activity.

The big challenge now is to safeguard that the knowledge, the working methods, and the activities survive and develop.

Increasingly comprehensive view of preventative work

In its interim report, Brå pointed out that the work in the action plan in the first instance focuses on helping those women who were subjected to violence and that measures to prevent violence by men are not all that usual, in particular at a general level aimed at men as a group. Preventing the exercise of violence is a complex task that demands a broader view of preventative work than the current one. It requires efforts in more areas and from more actors than those that currently have mandates in the plan. But in order to contribute in the longer term to reduce the causes of violence, it will probably be necessary to develop such an increasingly comprehensive view.

Sustained work with long-term financing

What is now required is sustained commitment to continue the implementation of good working practice. The county administrative boards bear witness that there is currently project fatigue in the municipalities, in particular the smaller municipalities. They wish to work in peace and with more long-term financing in order to reinforce what has been

achieved or started in recent years. It is an important issue, both for the Government and the municipalities, to find ways of financing the continuing work.

Better structure for coordination of national mandates

Even if long-term financing of the work on these issues must be created, there will probably still be a need for temporary national investments in order to initiate work or to place increased focus on a particular area. Several of the authorities who held mandates in the action plan have mentioned that Government coordination of the various mandates has been lacking. Several national and regional authorities have received similar mandates or have made similar interpretations of their mandates, which has caused confusion both for them and their professional target groups. One example of this is that the National Board for Youth Affairs, the Swedish National Agency for Education and the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (NCK) have each started a course at university level about HVF, albeit with slightly different target groups and focus. Another is that development funds with similar purposes were allocated from various pots, with associated increased administrative burden. The Government has recognised this failing in the new action plan against forced marriage, and has there given the National Board for Youth Affairs the role as national coordinator. This is a model that can advantageously be used also in other future commissions involving several different actors.

Regular supervision of how work within social services is developing

It is also important at national level to monitor how the work is developing according to the action plan. When it comes to the judicial system, this is facilitated by there being national authorities with responsibility for supervision.

The problems are greater when it comes to social services. Social Services is an important actor in the work with women subjected to violence, but its work is difficult to survey. This is because the number of municipalities is so great, and because there is no national authority that has the overall responsibility to monitor how they carry out their work. The national supervision that the country administrative boards conducted together with the National Board of Health and Welfare in 2008–2009 provided an important knowledge input, but there is no procedure for following up how work is progressing on a day-to-day basis. The fact that the supervisory responsibility has now been transferred to the National Board of Health and Welfare may entail both problems and opportunities. On the one hand, it takes time to build up the new organisation for social supervision. On the other hand, it is an advantage that the regional units – as opposed to the country administrative boards – answer directly to the National Board of Health and Welfare. Irrespective of the organisational format of the supervision, it is important that the supervision that was carried out 2008–2009 can be followed up at regular intervals in the future, both in order to check the quality of work, and also as supervision appears to create incentives for improvements.

Continued weak scientific grounds for a large part of the work

The Government's goal may be said to have been that there should be scientific evaluations, knowledge summaries and evaluation instruments to serve as guidelines for the practical work when the action plan was implemented. Unfortunately, this has so far been achieved to a rather small extent. This is partly because this type of mandate largely has not yet been reported on (or so late that Brå has not been able to take part of it). It is also because the activities in the municipalities started with the aid of development funds to a great extent have not been evaluated.

But it is also because the studies of activities carried out did not produce as clear results about working methods as had been hoped. There are various reasons for this, such as large drop-out rates, poor outcome measurement, uncertain effects or lack of local studies on which a knowledge summary can be based.

Brå draws two conclusions based on the foregoing. One is that evaluations will probably never give us any simple, golden rules that tell us exactly what we should be doing. Reality is more complicated than that. The other is that follow-up and evaluation is still the best way to gain knowledge. There is no better alternative. But most of the things done in practice are not followed up or evaluated in any systematic way. It is therefore still important to invest in evaluation in order to carry the work forward.

Appendix 1. Action plan for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships

The Government presents this Communication to the Riksdag.

Stockholm, 15 November 2007

Fredrik Reinfeldt (Prime Minister of Sweden)

Nyamko Sabuni (Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality)

Brief summary of the Communication

In this Communication, the Government sets out its views on how men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships should be combated, and describes the main elements in its work against such violence during the present term of office. The Action Plan contains a wide range of measures in a variety of policy fields. These measures will be elaborated and specified more closely step by step. The Government intends to report back to the Riksdag on how work in this area has been conducted.

1 Introduction

Sweden is in many respects a pioneer in the gender equality field, not least in terms of how it views men's violence against women. The situation nevertheless remains serious. There is broad political agreement on the need to give men's violence against women high priority, but a cohesive strategy for dealing with the problem has long been lacking. Men's violence against women is a widespread problem affecting the whole community, both women and men. Ultimately, it is a question of gender equality and women's full enjoyment of all human rights to which every citizen is entitled. Sweden's commitments within the framework of UN and Council of Europe efforts in this area, therefore, represent an important basis for national action.

Men's violence against women is unacceptable. So, too, is men's violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The Government's aim is to put a stop to such violence. Women and men, girls and boys, shall have equal rights and opportunities in terms of physical integrity. All citizens must be able to live their lives free from the fear of being exposed to violence and abuse. If this goal is to be achieved, preventive and other measures targeting both potential and actual perpetrators must be strengthened and improved. Violence and oppression in the name of honour is one area covered by the Action Plan. This type of violence differs from others due to its collective nature, which means a number of perpetrators of both sexes may be involved and the victims may be either women or men, girls or boys. The Action Plan further extends to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people exposed to violence by their partners. All citizens at risk are entitled to the same kind of protection, support and assistance, regardless of their sexual orientation. Action to combat men's violence against women must proceed from a judicial, social, economic and health-related perspective, and also from a gender equality perspective. In cases where children are the victims of a criminal offence or are affected by the violence in some other way, special attention must be given to their particular needs, rights and capabilities.

All measures to combat men's violence against women must proceed from the needs of the victims. The responsibility for supplying the necessary support and protection to those exposed to such violence lies with central and local government authorities. The activities of voluntary organisations are an invaluable complement to public activities in this respect. Closer cooperation among the various actors is essential if efforts to contain this type of violence are to be forceful and effective.

A number of government agencies are already committed to working against such violence. In the Government's view, however, further measures of limited duration will be required over the next few years. To a great extent, these will be measures designed to raise awareness and enhance knowledge and competence. The Government takes the view that the measures set out in the Action Plan will lead to a higher level of ambition in the fight against this type of violence, and that this improvement will be lasting.

The Action Plan contains a range of proposals affecting a number of government agencies as well as municipalities, county councils and NGOs. In the course of work with this Action Plan, public authorities, organisations and individuals have contributed valuable views and opinions.

The Action Plan proposes a range of measures, of which a number have already been approved. The remaining measures will be implemented by the Government during the present term of office.

1.1 Areas for measures and specific activities

Men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships are all unacceptable and must stop.

The aim of the Action Plan is to present the Government's intentions in all three areas in a single policy document and to describe how the work is to proceed during the present term of office. The plan covers six areas for measures and specific activities, each of which is important in its own right but which also complement and reinforce one another.

These areas are:

- increased protection and support to victims of violence
- greater emphasis on preventive work
- higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system
- better measures targeting violent offenders
- increased cooperation and coordination
- enhanced knowledge and competence

Increased protection and support to victims of violence

All citizens are entitled to live in safety and security. People exposed to threats and violence must have the right to protection and support. This must be of a high standard, adapted to the individual and available to those who need it. People exposed to violence must be given public support so that they may lead normal lives in freedom. Public efforts must seek to prevent those who practice violence from committing such crimes and thereby threatening the safety and security of others. These perpetrators must have their freedom curtailed, while the freedom of those exposed to violence must be safeguarded.

All crime victims are to be treated in a professional manner, wherever they may be and wherever they may live in the country. Sweden's municipalities are obliged by law to offer crime victims the help and support they need. The municipalities must particularly bear in mind that women who are or have been exposed to violence or other forms of abuse by someone close to them may require help and support in changing their situations. Children, too, who have witnessed violence or other forms of abuse by or against adults close to them are defined as crime victims and may be in need of help and support. It is important to bear in mind that children's needs may differ from those of adults.

It is vitally important that people who are exposed to crime dare report this to the police and follow up their complaint. If people exposed to crime are to feel safe and secure, they must be kept informed about how the case is proceeding and what support is available during the judicial process. The authorities must provide adequate protection both during and after legal proceedings.

Greater emphasis on preventive work

Active and effective prevention involves both taking steps to prevent violence and stopping violence already occurring. Broad-based preventive efforts target both women and men, including those who are not personally affected by it in their everyday lives. Initiatives targeting both potential and actual perpetrators are a crucial part of this work. Children and young people are another important target group. It is essential, therefore, to take early action both in schools and in other contexts where children and young people are to be found.

The agencies responsible for the judicial system, the health and medical services, the social services and the education system all have an important part to play in this respect, due to their close contact with people in everyday life. People exposed to violence and people living under threat of violence stand a better chance of obtaining the right kind of help if professional treatment, documentation and procedures are available and if there is greater awareness of what men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships involve. The police must be able to respond and take rapid action when crimes are committed. If the crime prevention aspect is considered in spatial and community planning – especially as regards the vulnerability of women – the risk of exposure to crime in the outdoor environment can be reduced.

Higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system

Combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships is a responsibility and challenge for the judicial authorities. The legal chain – and in particular the police and prosecutors – must function efficiently so that crimes in this area are investigated and legal proceedings instituted with due dispatch.

The penalties for crimes of violence must be reasonable and proportionate. By their response, the authorities must clearly show how seriously they view the violation of personal integrity that such crimes represent to the victim.

Legislation relating to marriage, registered partnerships, divorce and the division of matrimonial property must be framed in such a way as to guarantee the rights of people exposed to violence. This also applies to the rules regarding custody and access. Everyone living in Sweden must be protected by the law. People's rights must not be curtailed on the grounds of religion or tradition.

People exposed to violence must be able to feel secure in their contacts with the judicial authorities. When children come into contact with the judiciary, due attention must be paid to their specific needs and capabilities.

It is important, therefore, to ensure that awareness of these issues is present throughout the legal chain. Also, those who report crimes must be treated in a professional manner by all actors in the chain.

Better measures targeting violent offenders

Programme activities must be available to violent offenders in the penal care system, and this must apply throughout the system. Such activities are also needed outside the system. Initiatives targeting men who use violence are to be evaluated, improved and quality-assured. The safety of women and children must be a key consideration in all activities directed at men in this category.

Increased cooperation and coordination

Many actors, both public and voluntary, come into contact with people exposed to violence. Closer cooperation and better coordination between and within agencies and other actors who are in touch with victims and perpetrators of violence is essential if people exposed to it are to receive the help they need.

A distinguishing feature of cooperation in this area must be an understanding of and respect for each individual agency's mission and competence. Regulations, procedures and differing agency methods must not without good reason stand in the way of deeper and broader cooperation.

Enhanced knowledge and competence

Greater knowledge, awareness and competence are crucial to the success of all efforts to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. Through research and by other means, awareness and understanding of these issues will be enhanced, as well as the competence of agencies and NGOs in contact with the victims and perpetrators of violence. Learning from the experiences of other countries and working with them to develop knowledge and effective measures is also important. The monitoring and evaluation both of agency activities and of special initiatives in this area is a key part of the quality assurance and competence enhancement process.

Basic premises

In preparing the Action Plan, the Government has sought to work across all areas of policy, overriding ministry and agency lines, with the perspective of those at risk as the point of departure and based on the knowledge available on the areas concerned. Freedom from violence and abuse is a basic human right. The Government's definition of men's violence against women is based on the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in 1993. Article 1 defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." This implies that the violence refers to physical, sexual or psychological violence whether in the home or in the community at large.

Violence and oppression in the name of honour has much in common with men's violence against women. As the Declaration notes, violence and oppression against women cannot be justified by invoking custom, tradition or religious considerations. Violence also occurs in relationships between people of the same sex. The problems associated with violence in same-sex relationships have much in common with men's violence against women but until now have seldom been brought to the fore. The Government has decided that this type of violence is also to be included in the Action Plan so as to focus attention on the needs of those at risk and not on their sexual orientation or their choice of partner.

In some countries, violence against women is accepted by the state; violence and oppression in the name of honour, for instance, may not be properly investigated and prosecuted in the courts. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women also defines such violence as violence against women.

Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children are entitled to protection against all forms of violence, both physical and psychological. Children who witness violence on the part of or against adults close to them are also crime victims. In cases where children are the victims of a criminal offence or are affected by the violence referred to in this Action Plan in some other way, special attention must be given to their needs, rights and situations.

3 Problem analysis

3.1 Men's violence against women.

Men's violence against women is a widespread problem in society and a serious crime. Most of the violence is perpetrated by a man with whom the woman is having a relationship or has had a relationship (intimate partner violence). It leads to physical and mental suffering and often affects the woman's life as a whole. Violence di-

rected at a woman by a man with whom she is having or has had a relationship occurs in all social groups.

Restricting women's lives, limiting their freedom and eroding their safety and security is unacceptable in a society. Although Sweden has made considerable progress towards gender equality, the exposure of women to violence by men remains a major social problem.

Children are severely affected by men's violence against women in the home. According to Swedish Save the Children, the number of boys and girls in Sweden who witness and thereby experience domestic violence is between 100 000 and 190 000. According to the National Board of Health and Welfare, a number of Nordic studies have shown that in the majority of cases of domestic violence, the children were present at the time.

Children with same-sex parents risk remaining even more 'invisible' than children in heterosexual families. One reason for this is that violence in same-sex relationships does not always receive proper attention since homosexuality continues to be surrounded by prejudice.

Initiatives targeting abusive and violent men have been neglected, in terms both of resources and of quality (see *Mäns våldsutövande – barns upplevelser/How Children Experience Men's Violence, 2006*). More research is needed into the question of why certain men are abusive and violent. So, too, is research into more sophisticated methods for helping violent men to desist from such behaviour. The fact that many men are under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they assault women does not mean that intoxicants can be blamed for the violence. Drug and alcohol abuse may, however, constitute a contributing factor in these men's use of violence. If the fight to end men's violence against women is to succeed, men must be involved in preventive and corrective action to a far greater extent than at present. This must be achieved without jeopardising the safety and security of crime victims and others in any way. All initiatives targeting violent men must adopt a risk-and-security perspective in respect of the women and children involved.

Statistics on men's violence against women

Information concerning the extent and direction of men's violence against women has definitely improved in recent years. In a recently published study on security in Swedish society (*Nationella trygghetsundersökningen 2006, Brå-rapport 2007:14*), 1.8 per cent of all women aged 16–79 stated that they had been assaulted at some point over the past year. In terms of the total population in this age group, this translates into some 60 000 women, of whom an estimated 70 per cent were exposed to violence by a family member, by someone else close to them or by an acquaintance. While in some cases it is a woman who is responsible for the violence, the great majority of perpetrators are men. Since the early 1990s, the proportion of women who state that they have been exposed to violence or threat has increased. In 2006, reported cases of assaults on women aged 15 or over numbered 25 491.

Since 1990, the number of reported cases has increased by an average 400 per year. According to the National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*), people's propensity to report has probably increased during this period, but a reasonable assumption is that actual violence against women in close relationships also increased in the 1990s. The term men's violence against women includes rape and other sexual offences committed by men. Reported cases of sexual crime have more than doubled since 1990. In 2006, some 12 500 sex-related offences were reported to the police, of which 4 200 involved rape. The number of reported rapes has increased significantly in recent years, due in part to the fact that the definition in the Swedish Penal Code was broadened in 2005 to embrace other acts as well.

Statistics relating to the crime of gross violation of a woman's integrity give a clearer picture of the relationship between victim and perpetrator. This offence consists of repeated acts such as assault, unlawful threat and certain types of sex-related crime where victim and perpetrator are or were previously married or co-habiting. As the figure below shows, the number of reported cases of gross violation of a woman's integrity has increased markedly since the offence was introduced in the Swedish Penal Code in 1998.

The fact that violence against women is increasingly classified as gross violation of a woman's integrity is partly due to the fact that police and prosecutors have become better at investigating whether violence and threats were previously a feature of the relationship.

Both Swedish research and studies from other countries (including Brå-rapport 2001:3) show that women exposed to violence from someone close to them often suffer such violence repeatedly. About half of the women who state that they have been exposed to violence say this has happened on more than one occasion. Almost a third of the women who report that they have been assaulted by someone close to them lodge a further complaint with the police within 12 months.

Every year, an average of 30 women die in Sweden as a result of lethal violence. Of these, some 17 are killed by a man with whom they have or have had a close relationship. Crime statistics on men's violence against women, however, only reflect what has been reported to the police. For all types of crime, there are generally a large number of unreported cases, especially when they involve violence on the part of someone with whom the victim has or has had a close relationship. The more serious the violence and the less close the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim is, the more willing people are to report crimes. Official crime statistics, therefore, must be combined with other types of knowledge and research, such as the findings of victim surveys, if a clearer picture of the extent of men's violence against women is to be obtained.

Costs of the violence

In a 2006 report (*Kostnader för våld mot kvinnor*), the National Board of Health and Welfare estimated that men's violence against women in Sweden costs approximately SEK 3 billion per year, in terms of direct and indirect costs to various public sectors. Direct costs totalled approximately SEK 2–2.5 billion for such things as medical care, the judicial system and social services, while indirect costs, including production losses and the value of voluntary work, were estimated at approximately SEK 720–76 million. Over and above direct and indirect costs, transfers totalled an estimated SEK 690 million, of which about half comprised sickness benefit. The National Board of Health and Welfare points out that some calculations were less reliable than others and that certain aspects could not be included in the study. Consequently, the figures should be seen as a cautious estimate of the costs to society.

3.2 Violence and oppression in the name of honour

The cultural perceptions that surround men's violence against women in general and violence and oppression in the name of honour are rooted in gender, power and sexuality. This is confirmed by the reports of the UN's Special Rapporteur on violence against women (see for instance 'Cultural practices in the family that are violent towards women' [E/CN.4/2002/83] and 'Intersections between culture and violence against women' [A/HRC/4/34]). There are many similarities in the structure and mechanisms of the violence, including the fact that it often occurs within the family and that the victim is in one way or another dependent on and has strong emotional ties to the perpetrator or perpetrators. The different ways in which women's and men's sexuality are perceived is crucial to an understanding of the

structure and mechanisms of the violence, both as regards men's violence against women in general and violence and oppression in the name of honour.

In the case of the latter, control over girls' and women's sexuality is a key aspect and is strongly linked to family and community norms. In the honour concept, the focus is on virginity and chastity, and the family's reputation and prestige are perceived to depend on the actual, alleged or suspected behaviour of girls and women. This may be explicit to a greater or lesser degree, and family control may range from everyday forms of constraint on girls' and women's lives regarding aspects such as choice of dress, social life and freedom of movement, to limiting life choices such as education and employment, marriage and divorce. In its most extreme form, the honour concept leads to threats of violence and actual violence, including lethal violence.

The collective nature of this type of violence indicates that a number of perpetrators of both sexes may be involved, and that the victims may be either women or men, girls or boys. It may also mean that the violence is sanctioned by the family and its immediate circle, and that this may include other women. As a result, special measures for combating violence and oppression in the name of honour may be required in certain cases. A familiarity with both such practices and with special procedures for dealing with them are required, for instance in connection with police investigations, when assessing risks, and when deciding what kind of support the victim should be given. The honour concept may take different manifestations depending on cultural perceptions and religious considerations, but is not associated with any particular culture or religion. The concept is also found in non-religious contexts.

Forced marriages and female genital mutilation are specific phenomena that stem from the perception that both family and male honour are dependent on the sexual behaviour of women and girls. Arranged marriages often have a strong element of family influence, and it is difficult to determine whether or not coercion is involved. For the individual girl or young woman – and also for young men – going against family tradition and the wishes of parents and other relatives may be such a sensitive course that in practice it is not viable.

Violence and oppression in the name of honour also affect LGBT people. In 2004, Swedish county administrative boards estimated that between 1 500 and 2 000 girls and young women were exposed to violence and oppression in the name of honour, and that 10–15 per cent of them required sheltered accommodation. In a 2006 report from the National Board of Health and Welfare (Frihet och ansvar), young people in their second year of upper secondary school were asked to what extent they felt free to decide over their own lives. One of the questions, designed to indicate the prevalence of violence and oppression in the name of honour, was whether the students were worried that they themselves would not be allowed to choose their future partners in life. Five per cent of the girls and three per cent of the boys replied in the affirmative.

3.3 Violence in same-sex relationships

All citizens are entitled to the same kind of protection, support and assistance in relation to their vulnerability or risk situation, regardless of their sexual orientation. Violence in same-sex relationships and men's violence against women in close relationships have much in common. They have similar patterns whereby one party seeks to restrict the other person's life, to exercise control, to threaten violence and to actually use violence. The power relationship between perpetrator and victim may be seen both as a cause of the violence and as a consequence of it. But there are also dissimilarities, which means that specialised knowledge of violence in same-sex relationships is required.

The sex of the perpetrator and the victim impacts on how others around them perceive the violence, how willing the person exposed to the violence is to report the

matter and seek help, and how he or she is treated by the authorities. The heterosexual norms of the community at large mean that violence in same-sex relationships often goes unperceived or is deemed to be of no great consequence. This in turn means that the community may have difficulty seeing, understanding and dealing with the violence, and thus providing adequate support and assistance.

A Swedish study of violence in same-sex relationships (Våldsamt lika och olika 2005) and past experience both show that homosexuals and bisexuals do not seek help to the same extent as heterosexuals. They seldom report violence in couple relationships to the police, for instance. This may be because many people in this category have previously experienced unfavourable treatment by various public authorities, and do not expect to receive the same kind of help as people in heterosexual relationships. Experience from both Sweden and other countries shows that homosexual and bisexual women and men are reluctant to contact regular crime victim emergency services as to do so presupposes a degree of openness. According to the above study, nor are they inclined to contact emergency services that have homosexual and bisexual crime victims as their target group, since they are unsure whether they can remain anonymous when doing so.

Today, men exposed to violence in either same-sex or heterosexual relationships have virtually no access to sheltered accommodation, and this deficiency needs to be addressed. There are, however, a handful of operations in Sweden that people can contact where staff have extensive knowledge of violence in same-sex relationships. Also, a number of women's emergency shelters have embarked on training programmes that will enable them to deal with the special needs of lesbian women exposed to violence. The activities of the women's shelters need to be expanded so that homosexual and bisexual women can receive the help and assistance they require.

All this underlines the importance of acquiring a better understanding of violence in same-sex relationships and of ensuring that public authorities in the judicial, social service, health care and other fields have the knowledge and means to focus attention on, treat and support homosexual and bisexual women and men exposed to violence.

3.4 Particularly vulnerable groups

Certain groups of women are particularly at risk from violence. Many who have personal experience of violence state that people focus more on their disabilities, their foreign background, their substance abuse/addiction or their age than on the fact that they have been assaulted. National minorities experience similar problems. The Government views this situation with concern and wishes to make clear that all women exposed to violence must be given the requisite support and protection based on their needs, whoever they may be and whatever background they may have.

Efforts to combat violence and abuse directed at women with mental and physical disabilities need to be intensified. A number of studies of this kind of abuse (including *Vi är många – övergrepp mot kvinnor som använder psykiatrin. En omfattningsstudie*, Utredningsinstitutet HANDU, 2007) show that disabled women are more vulnerable than other women. People with disabilities are often more dependent on others and may have difficulty defending themselves against violence and abuse, especially when the perpetrator is the victim's carer. Perpetrators of violence can include the woman's contact person, teacher, superior, municipal transport service driver and relative. The Swedish Disability Ombudsman has noted that people with disabilities are often viewed primarily as disabled persons or objects of care. Disabled women and their families describe how this kind of objectification causes sexual abuse to be overlooked since people do not perceive women with disabilities as individuals with the same right to physical integrity as everyone else.

Women with substance abuse/addiction problems, especially homeless women, are at heightened risk of exposure to violence and other forms of abuse. Women who abuse drugs and alcohol can become dependent on men and exploited by them. The causal connections are sometimes the reverse; a woman may for instance abuse alcohol to allay the deep anxiety she feels as a result of the violence and abuse to which she is exposed. Battered women with abuse/addiction problems may find it harder to obtain help with sheltered accommodation and the like. In their contact with the authorities, they are not always treated with the respect that a crime victim is entitled to.

Older women exposed to violence are more likely than other women to be in a dependency situation. According to a 2001 study by the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (Ofriid – våld mot äldre kvinnor), 16 per cent of these older women were exposed to some form of violence or abuse after the age of 65. The study showed that significantly more older women than men were at extreme risk, i.e. that they were exposed to several types of assault and that the number of attacks increased with age. These women may also find it difficult to seek help and protection due to the fact that people do not take their accounts seriously. Violence by older men is often kept hidden and excused on the grounds that the perpetrator was raised in a different era and/or a different kind of society, or that he shows signs of illness and therefore cannot be held accountable for his actions.

Young women, too, are particularly at risk. According to the above-mentioned study by the National Council for Crime Prevention of security in Swedish society, women aged 16–24 are the group most exposed to sex offences (4.9 per cent compared with 1.6 per cent of women in general). Exposure to assault and threats is also greatest among this group of women, a situation confirmed by Statistics Sweden's surveys of living conditions.

Immigrant women tend also to be particularly at risk, due to factors such as a poor command of Swedish and a lack of awareness of the country's laws and regulations. Newcomers to Sweden often have a limited social network, which gives violent men greater opportunity to strengthen their hold on a woman and keep her isolated from the community.

4 Measures during the present term of office

The Government is adopting a broad-based approach in the fight to stop men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. Through the measures outlined in this Action Plan, the Government is creating the potential for a higher and more enduring level of ambition at national, regional and local level, on the part of government agencies, county councils and municipalities.

NGOs operating in the areas dealt with in the Action Plan also have an important role, and measures will therefore be instituted to better enable their involvement in the future. Funding, however, will only be provided to NGOs that have a democratic structure and that undertake activities which promote national interests and goals. The Action Plan covers a range of measures in different policy areas. The initiatives outlined in the plan comprise both measures already adopted and measures that the Government will be developing and specifying more precisely as time passes. Implementation of the Action Plan is to be followed up. The Government intends to provide the Riksdag with regular accounts of how implementation is progressing and will also be reporting on the outcome of the follow-up in 2010.

In preparing the Action Plan, the Government invited the relevant agencies and organisations to attend two separate hearings. In addition, one of the meetings of the Council of Equality Issues was devoted to enlisting views and opinions concerning

the Government's Action Plan. Prior to embarking on its evaluation, the Government will invite these actors to attend a follow-up seminar to assess progress and discuss the implementation of the Action Plan.

Amendments to the Social Services Act

Measure 1: On 1 July 2007, Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act (2001:453) was amended to clarify the obligation of social welfare committees regarding the provision of help and support to crime victims.

The amendment is intended to clarify the responsibility of municipalities to help and support crime victims. The revision specifies that a municipality shall – rather than should – give special consideration to the needs of women exposed to violence and of children who have witnessed violence.

Funding to municipalities to develop and strengthen sheltered housing for battered women

Measure 2: The Government has decided to allocate funding to the municipalities to enable them to realise the higher level of ambition proposed by the Government in its bill, Social Service Support for Women Exposed to Violence (Govt Bill 2006/07:38). The National Board of Health and Welfare is, together with the county administrative boards, responsible for following up and evaluating this initiative at national level. A final report is to be delivered no later than 1 June 2009.

The purpose of this initiative is to strengthen and improve the quality of support to battered women and their children at local level, through the work with women's shelters and crime victim programmes etc. The funding is distributed by the county administrative boards on application from the municipalities.

Improved knowledge-based support to the social services

Measure 3: The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to improve knowledge-based support to the social services for their work with battered women and with children who witness violence. The board is to present its report no later than 1 December 2009.

The aim is partly to support the municipalities in their implementation of the amendments to the Social Services Act (2001:453), but also to meet the need for knowledge support to social service staff working in this field. A further aim is to find ways of disseminating information concerning knowledge, method development, experience and good practices on an ongoing basis. In its instructions to the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Government emphasises that the funding should be used both to help social service staff adapt their work to meet individual needs and to make it accessible to all who need support. This includes women with abuse/addiction problems, women with disabilities, women with foreign backgrounds, older women and women exposed to violence in the name of honour.

Intensified supervision of the social services

Measure 4: The Government has decided to intensify supervision of the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence. The National Board of Health and Welfare is responsible for delivering a report on the county councils' supervisory activities in December 2009.

The purpose of the assignment is to achieve an actively critical and inquiring supervision focusing in particular on the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence, including support to the municipalities. It is particularly important to examine how the social services deal with the vulnerability of women with disabilities, women with abuse/addiction problems, women with foreign backgrounds and older women exposed to violence, and how the authorities deal with the special challenge posed by violence and oppression in the name of honour. As part of the task, common assessment criteria are to be drawn up for supervision in this area so that it may become more distinct and more uniform across the country.

Quality assured assessment instruments for social service measures

Measure 5: The Government has instructed the Institute for Evidence Based Work Practice (IMS) at the National Board of Health and Welfare to identify and assure the quality of assessment instruments for use in the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence. A report is to be delivered on 1 December 2009.

4.1 Increased protection and support to victims of violence

The purpose of the assignment is to improve the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence and to reduce discrepancies between municipalities in this respect. A further aim is to achieve a more uniform assessment of what measures should be made available to the women and children. By using a national assessment instrument, in the form of a scientifically based questionnaire, it will become possible for the social services to assess the situation and needs of these women and children in a systematic and standardised way. Part of the assignment involves addressing the special needs that particularly vulnerable groups of women have, for example older women, women with abuse/addiction problems, women with foreign backgrounds and women with disabilities.

Funding to develop the social services' work with risk assessment in connection with cases of custody, residence and access

Measure 6: The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to compile a report on the current state of knowledge concerning risk assessments relating to custody, residence and access, and to report on how methods in this area might be improved. A report was presented on 30 November 2007. The Government intends to give the board a mandate to initiate development work in this area. In view of the changes introduced into the Children and Parents Code (Chapter 6, Section 2 a), which has been assigned to compile knowledge on risk assessments in connection with custody, residence and access reports. These changes will clarify the responsibility of social services to assess the risk of a child or someone else in the family being exposed to abuse. Such cases may for instance concern women who are exposed to violence or children who witness violence.

Evaluation and development of social service work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence

Measure 7: The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to evaluate methods and procedures used in the social service's work with battered women and children who have witnessed violence. When this assignment has been completed, the Government intends to give the board a further mandate to initiate development work based on the evaluation findings.

The purpose of the evaluation is to initiate development work in the social services aimed at enabling improved and more knowledge-based work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence. It is important that the evaluation includes an analysis of how safety aspects are considered in the various services in relation to battered women and, where applicable, also to children exposed to violence. If the evaluation identifies shortcomings in risk and safety assessments, the National Board of Health and Welfare is to propose measures to improve the situation. In this assignment, the board is to observe how the methods and procedures used meet the special needs that women in this category have, due to such factors as abuse/addiction problems, disabilities, foreign background and age.

The mandate also includes disseminating the knowledge acquired so that services targeting battered women and children who have witnessed violence are able to avail themselves of the evaluated methods and procedures.

Rights of children who have witnessed violence

Measure 8: The Government intends to initiate a general review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act (1978:413) during the present term of office. This review is to consider in particular whether the support currently available to children who are forced to live with violence in the family is adequate. In addition, the Government intends to evaluate whether these children are sufficiently well protected.

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act regulates the extent to which crime victims can be compensated for injury. A general review of the law is needed to ensure for instance that it is having the desired effect. As the result of an amendment that became law on 15 November 2006, children who have witnessed violence against a family member may be granted this type of compensation. One of the purposes of the amendment was to spotlight the situation of such children. The Government intends to set up an inquiry to analyse and consider whether access to criminal injuries compensation for children in this category has meant that they have received better support.

Evaluation and development of voluntary women's shelter work with battered women

Measure 9: The Government intends to provide funding for the evaluation and development of work at voluntary women's emergency shelters.

The voluntary women's emergency shelters are today an invaluable complement to the work undertaken in the municipalities on behalf of battered women. The aim of this evaluation funding, as in the case of the mandate relating to social service-related women's shelter activities (see 4.1.7), is to facilitate and initiate development work in these voluntary shelters, with a view to increasing the potential for better, more knowledge-based efforts in this field. The evaluation and development work is to be undertaken in collaboration with participating women's emergency shelters.

Extended assignment to develop programmes for the care of victims of sexual crimes

Measure 10: The Government intends to provide Uppsala University with funding so that the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence against Women (NCK) can develop its mandate to draw up a national programme for the care of victims of sexual crimes.

NCK at Uppsala University was assigned in February 2007 to draw up a national programme for the health care service focusing on care to victims of sexual crimes.

The purpose of the mandate is to improve the care of victims of sexual crimes in the health care service. A further aim is to develop procedures for testing (taking specimens) and documentation to ensure that the data available to the judiciary is as comprehensive and expedient as possible.

There is currently too little available knowledge and information on sexual violence in same-sex relationships. Also, people in these groups are less inclined to seek help. The mandate, therefore, should be broadened to encompass violence in same-sex relationships and violence and oppression in the name of honour. In order to implement the programme in the health care service – and also to enhance knowledge and awareness about both violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships – the Government intends to allocate further funding.

Assignment to the county administrative boards to counteract violence and oppression in the name of honour

Measure 11: The Government has assigned the county administrative boards to provide funding for measures to prevent violence and oppression in the name of honour. The Östergötland County Administrative Board, in addition to its regional mandate, is to provide funding for action at national or supraregional level against violence and oppression in the name of honour. A final report on the funds requisitioned in 2007 is to be delivered no later than 31 March 2009.

It is vital that the county administrative boards maintain their efforts to improve sheltered accommodation, knowledge enhancement and preventive work. The aim of this initiative is to provide the means for the relevant authorities to integrate long-term, sustainable work in this area into their regular work, and also as far as possible to coordinate work against violence and oppression in the name of honour with general work on combating men's violence against women. The county administrative boards are to provide consultative assistance, especially to social services working with these issues. The boards in metropolitan areas are to continue providing funds for the development of sheltered housing. Special consideration is to be given to the needs of abused persons following their placement in such accommodation.

Training for staff providing support and services to people with disabilities

Measure 12: The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to produce training materials focusing on the problem of violence directed at women with disabilities.

This training material is to be used in introduction and in-service training for personal assistants and other care staff working with those who provide support and services to people with disabilities. The aim of such training is to raise awareness of the heightened risk of violence and abuse to which people with disabilities are exposed. The mandate includes taking appropriate steps to ensure that the existence of the training material is made known to and can be used by education providers.

Support to disability organisations

Measure 13: The Government intends to allocate funds to the disability organisations to better enable them to detect and prevent violence against people with disabilities and to support those who are exposed to violence. The National Board of Health and Welfare will be instructed to distribute and follow up this targeted funding.

Many people with disabilities belong to one or other of the disability organisations. The Government takes the view that a targeted grant to certain specific organisations will give these bodies a better chance of addressing the problem of violence against people with disabilities. This may include addressing and preventing violence against women and men with disabilities in a more systematic way, for instance by improving current information on places to which the disabled can turn for help.

Enhance knowledge about violence against women in substance abuse/addiction care

Measure 14: The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to compile and disseminate current knowledge on women exposed to violence to those working in the substance abuse/addiction care field. The aim is to enhance knowledge about the specific needs of women in this situation and about the forms of treatment required.

Research shows that women with abuse/addiction problems are more prone to assault than other women. A survey of outpatient substance abuse care in five Swedish counties, however, shows that only four per cent of the measures taken by the municipalities to help people with abuse/addiction problems specifically address women's needs. The purpose of enhancing knowledge in substance abuse care is to encourage the development of forms of treatment that correspond to the specific needs of women, such as working through their experience of violence.

Increased support to women's shelters and crime victim support centres etc

Measure 15: The Government intends to increase the organisational funding distributed by the National Board of Health and Welfare to organisations involved in combating violence against women.

The work undertaken by voluntary women's shelters, crime victim support centres and other voluntary organisations are a valuable complement to the support services provided by the municipalities. Also, these organisations work across a broad spectrum to raise awareness in the community about issues relating to men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The Government considers it necessary to increase the organisational funding distributed by the National Board of Health and Welfare to such bodies.

Funding for the development of work on violence in same-sex relationships

Measure 16: The Government intends to set aside special funding in 2008–2010 for crime victim emergency services and women's shelters working against violence in same-sex relationships. The funds are to be available for use in such areas as skills enhancement and the adaptation of activities so that homosexual and bisexual women and men exposed to violence in close relationships may receive proper consideration.

A small number of voluntary women's shelters and crime victim emergency services have improved their understanding of violence in same-sex relationships and integrated this knowledge into their activities. Today, a limited number of women's shelters have special qualifications in this area and offer support to women exposed to violence by a partner of the same sex. The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights also operates an emergency service for crime victims,

including people from the LGBT community. They can seek help for all forms of exposure to violence, including both hate crimes perpetrated by persons unknown to them and partner violence. The Government considers that a higher level of preparedness and skills enhancement are both needed in this area, and therefore intends to encourage such a development.

Improved protection for people exposed to threats or persecution

Measure 17: The current government inquiry into stalking (Min. of Justice 2006:09, ToR. 2006:84) is reviewing the question of what measures need to be taken to strengthen protection for people exposed to threat or persecution. A report is to be delivered no later than 30 September 2008.

The current government inquiry into stalking is reviewing the question of what measures need to be taken to strengthen protection for people exposed to threat or persecution. The committee of inquiry will also consider whether there is a need for supplementary economic support in certain cases where people are exposed to persistent and serious threat or to some other form of serious criminal behaviour. The mandate includes reviewing compliance with the rules on protection orders, and preparing and presenting proposals for a legal solution that would enable such orders to be monitored by means of electronic surveillance. The inquiry will also present proposals designed to make day-to-day life easier for people with protected identities. In addition, it will consider whether legislation should be amended so as to strengthen protection against stalking, i.e. persistent harassment and persecution.

Inquiry into right of access and protection of address information etc in legal proceedings

Measure 18: The Government has decided to appoint an inquiry (ToR. 2007:120) into access and confidentiality in certain parts of the judicial system etc. The mandate includes considering how the suspects' right of access should be regulated. A report is to be delivered no later than 1 September 2008.

One of the purposes of the inquiry will be to establish the extent of a suspect's right of access during preliminary investigations and trials, and after a court verdict has been delivered. A question of particular significance in this connection is how the right of access is viewed in relation to the need to keep protected personal data secret. Hitherto, it has been unclear whether the right of access to which a defendant is entitled under the Code of Judicial Procedure extends to address and telephone data etc that refers to the injured party, witnesses or co-defendants and which is subject to confidentiality at court hearings. According to the Personal Safety Commission (SOU 2004:1), current regulations do not prevent sensitive address data from being kept secret from the defendant, on condition that it is not of importance to the case. The inquiry will consider whether the present regulations give the courts sufficient power to uphold confidentiality of address data etc.

Enhanced security in courts

Measure 19: The Government has instructed the National Courts Administration to evaluate certain changes in the Act on Security Checks at Court Hearings (1981:1064). A report was delivered in October 2007.

All persons visiting a law court must be able to feel safe there. This applies in particular to people who have been exposed to threats or violence. The increasingly tough social climate in Sweden means that greater priority must be attached to safety and security in courts. In December 2006, the Government entrusted the National Courts Administration with the task of evaluating certain changes in the Act on Security Checks at Court Hearings (1981:1064). The mandate included assessing de-

velopments in respect of security risks and threats against courts, and considering whether the regulations in the above act were appropriately worded. The National Courts Administration presented its findings in a report (Allmän säkerhetskontroll i domstol – en utvärdering, DV-rapport 2007:1) in October 2007. This report will serve as a basis for the Government's continuing work on safety and security in Swedish courts.

Better information to crime victims

Measure 20: The Government decided in the spring of 2007 to introduce statutory amendments so that both women exposed to crime and other crime victims could receive information about when a person serving a prison sentence is in custody and when that person is outside prison, and about the possibility of applying for a protection order.

The right of injured parties to information about an internee's parole periods, date of release and the like, previously regulated only by the Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions (1974:203), should as a matter of course also apply in cases where the convicted person is in custody (Ordinance [2007:102] amending the Ordinance on the Treatment of Detained and Arrested Persons etc [1976:376]). Similarly, defendants have a justified interest in information about decisions whereby sentences are served by means of electronic surveillance (Ordinance [2007:103] amending the Ordinance on Intensive Supervision with Electronic Monitoring [1994:1060]). The two amendments introduced here mean that defendants' right to information is now viewed in a more cohesive manner.

Inquiry into municipal responsibility for those staying in the municipality

Measure 21: The Government intends to appoint an inquiry to review the provision in the Social Services Act on the responsibility of municipalities to provide services to those staying in their area.

The Inquiry on Social Services' Support for Women Subjected to Violence calls attention in its final report (SOU 2006:65) to the cost implications of the provision in the Social Services Act concerning the responsibility of the municipality in which a person is staying to provide services and support to that person, and how this affects cooperation between municipalities. Conflicts arise as to which municipality is required in a given situation to provide support under the Social Services Act (2001:453). The report notes that such disputes may adversely affect others besides women exposed to violence, including witnesses exposed to threats.

Inquiry to review the Social Services Act and the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (1990:52)

Measure 22: The Government intends to appoint an inquiry to review the provisions concerning the protection and support of children in vulnerable situations (announced in Govt Bill 2006/07:129 Utveckling av den sociala barn- och ungdomsvården m.m.).

It is vitally important to ensure that the legal basis for social services measures to help and support children who either are or risk being neglected, abused or maltreated is brought into line with developments over the 25 years that have passed since the Social Services Act first came into force. The committee of inquiry's mandate may include the question of whether it should be possible to start an investigation into the situation of a child or young person – termed a child care investigation – without the knowledge of his or her custodian.

Methods for detecting people's exposure to violence

Measure 23: The Government intends to instruct NCK at Uppsala University to further develop methods for including issues relating to personal experience of violence into case histories in the health care service.

The purpose of the assignment is to enable health care staff to discover at an early stage when women or children, or partners in same-sex relationships, are being or have been exposed to violence.

The assignment will build on the method development project undertaken by the National Board of Health and Welfare in 2001, whereby women visiting either midwives at antenatal care clinics or youth guidance centres were routinely asked whether they had been exposed to violence. This procedure – previously called screening but now more commonly referred to as questions concerning personal experience of violence as a part of individual case histories – proved a valuable way of detecting the presence of exposure to violence. On completion of the project, a majority of both patients and staff felt the procedure should be maintained as a regular feature of work at the clinics. The Government takes the view that the knowledge thus acquired in antenatal care should be used as a basis for the introduction of such procedures in the health care service as a whole.

Virtual youth centre for sexual and reproductive health

Measure 24: The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to provide funding for the development of a virtual youth centre for sexual and reproductive health. A report is to be delivered on 31 March 2009.

The overall purpose of a virtual youth centre is to strengthen and support young women and men in their personal development by furthering their chances of establishing sound relationships with others, by improving their health situation through information provision, and by making available reliable and easily accessible information in areas that they may find sensitive or difficult to discuss in their regular contact with health services. This youth guidance service is to offer advice on sexual and reproductive health matters and on relationships and mental health. The centre is to be an integral part of the medical guidance service (Sjukvårdsrådgivningen SVR AB) offering nationally coordinated and quality assured health consultation and advice on the Internet. The mandate also includes informing the public about this new service.

In-service training on violence and oppression in the name of honour

Measure 25: The Government intends to instruct one of its agencies to offer school heads in-service training on the problems surrounding violence and oppression in the name of honour.

Head teachers, teachers and other staff must be able to interpret signals if they are to detect problems. A government agency will therefore be charged with offering school heads at both compulsory and upper secondary level in-service training on the problems surrounding violence and oppression in the name of honour.

Further skills development for young women's shelters

Measure 26: The Government has instructed the National Board for Youth Affairs to take steps to combat violence and oppression in the name of honour via the activities of the country's young women's shelters. The board is to deliver its report on 28 February 2008.

Girls and young women exposed to violence and oppression in the name of honour must have access to support via the activities of young women's shelters. The aim of the current initiative is to equip staff at the shelters with a better understanding of how honour-related violence and oppression works and how they can reach women exposed to such practices. Measures are to focus on enhancing the skills of staff at young women's shelters through the provision of national training programmes and local seminars – bringing together the shelters, schools, youth guidance centres, the police and social services – and also on the provision of funding for an Internet forum where young people can obtain information about violence and oppression in the name of honour.

New priority areas for the Swedish Inheritance Fund

Measure 27: The Government has proposed new areas of priority from 2007 for the funding provided by the Swedish Inheritance Fund in connection with men's violence against women and violence and oppression in the name of honour.

One such priority is projects aimed at preventing violence, bullying and harassment and strengthening support to crime victims in the Swedish Inheritance Fund's target groups. Particular attention is to be paid to projects aimed at combating violence, bullying and harassment due to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability. The Government also considers it important to support projects designed to develop new

4.2 Enhanced preventive work

Methods for helping and supporting children and adolescents exposed to violence or who have witnessed domestic violence, and to projects aimed at combating men's violence against young women and women with disabilities. This includes projects concerned with preventing or combating violence and oppression in the name of honour. The Swedish Inheritance Fund distributes project funding for the benefit of children, young people and people with disabilities. Non-profit organisations and other voluntary associations with innovative projects may apply. In 2006, the Swedish Inheritance Fund granted funding totalling SEK 20 million to projects concerning violence, crime, bullying and harassment directed at its target groups.

Greater security for women in urban environments

Measure 28: The Government intends to allocate funds for the intensification of work aimed at creating a more secure local environment.

City and other urban environments must be designed and built in such a way that people are able to lead good lives and feel both trust and a sense of community. Many urban areas have environments that encourage crime, either because they are in out-of-the-way places or because they are poorly lit. By their design, certain environments create fear and insecurity among those who live in them. Fear of attack is a problem for many people, particularly for girls and women, and can restrict their chances of a good life since they dare not use certain urban environments. With the aim to promote gender equality, a number of municipalities have established a dialogue with local residents and organisations by means of what are termed security walks. These involve police, social service staff and citizens of different ages and backgrounds meeting to discuss people's feelings of insecurity and the reasons for them, thus paving the way for changes in the local environment and consequently a greater sense of security in the community as a whole. The work of improving security for women in urban environments should be led by municipal staff concerned with the preparation and implementation of plans. If this is to succeed, both staff working with technical services in the municipality and local housing managers/providers should also be involved.

The Government intends to set aside funding during the present term of office for following up and supporting such a development. Urban planning with a more pronounced gender equality perspective can liberate people from the limitations and constraints that many of them experience today.

Intensified police work to combat men's violence against women

Measure 29: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to further intensify its efforts to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The mandate is to run from 1 September 2007 to 31 December 2009.

The measures undertaken are to cover training and education, information dissemination and other courses of action deemed likely to strengthen regular police activities in this area in the long term. The aim is to improve the ability of the police to proceed in this work from the perspective of the crime victim. The purpose of the assignment is to enhance police skills and capacity in respect of such issues, and to strengthen public faith in the police so that more crimes may be reported. The assignment is to be undertaken in consultation with the Swedish Prosecution Authority and others. The Government also intends to review the need for allocating additional resources to other agencies in the judicial system, including the Swedish Prosecution Authority and the National Courts Administration, in connection with this mandate.

Improving police capability to prevent and investigate men's violence against women

Measure 30: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to ensure, in consultation with the Swedish Prosecution Authority, that each police authority has access to the expertise it needs for the purpose of preventing and investigating men's violence against women and violence directed at children, e.g. in the form of special family violence units. The board is to report its findings when presenting its annual report for 2007.

Improved skills and know-how will give the police a better chance of preventing and investigating crimes of violence in this category.

Improving police capability to provide crime victims with relevant information

Measure 31: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to take steps to ensure that each police authority has access to the expertise it needs for the purpose of providing crime victims with relevant information on the public support measures available to them. The board is to report its findings when presenting its annual report for 2007.

Improved police ability to supply crime victims with relevant information will give this group a better chance of obtaining help and support.

4.3 Higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system

Improved police capability to prevent, detect and investigate criminal offences in the name of honour

Measure 32: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to take steps to enhance police skills and capability to prevent, detect and investigate violence and oppression in the name of honour. The board is to report its findings when presenting its annual report for 2007.

Improved skills and know-how will give the police a better chance of preventing, detecting and investigating this type of criminal offence.

Improving the ability of prosecutors to attend to crime victims

Measure 33: The Government has instructed the Swedish Prosecution Authority to report on the measures it has taken to develop the knowledge and skills of prosecutors and other prosecution authority staff with respect to crime victim issues, especially as regards the treatment of victims. The Swedish Prosecution Authority is to present its findings in conjunction with its annual report for 2007. Measures in respect of victims of sexual crimes are to be reported.

Professional treatment of crime victims and witnesses creates the potential for safer and more secure providers of evidence. It is important, therefore, to ensure that both victims and witnesses are treated correctly during preliminary investigations and in court. Prosecutors have an important role to play in this respect. In its appropriation directions for 2007, the Government instructed the Swedish Prosecution Authority to report back on the measures it has taken to develop the knowledge and skills of prosecutors and other prosecution authority staff with respect to crime victim issues, especially as regards the treatment of victims.

Better treatment in courts

Measure 34: The Government has instructed the National Courts Administration and the courts in its appropriation directions for the 2007 financial year to report what measures they have taken to ensure that parties litigant, defendants and witnesses are treated correctly. This applies in particular to crime victims, including women exposed to sexual crimes of one kind or another.

Measure 35: The Government has appointed an inquiry to examine communication between courts and citizens (Utredningen om förtroende och kvalitet i domstolarna, Min. of Justice 2007:08, ToR 2007:93). A report is to be delivered no later than 30 November 2008.

The way people are treated in court must not deter them from contacting the courts or attending court proceedings to give evidence. Issues such as how parties litigant and others are treated in court are crucial to public faith in the court system. In June 2007, the Government appointed an inquiry charged with analysing communication between courts and citizens, particularly as regards the treatment issue. Based on its findings, the committee of inquiry is to consider how such communication may be improved. The committee will then report its analysis, considerations and recommendations in such a way as to provide a basis for the courts' continuing work with these issues.

Training programme for the improved treatment of sex crime victims

Measure 36: The Government has instructed the Criminal Victim Compensation and Support Authority to draw up and, in consultation with other relevant agencies, provide a training programme aimed at improving the treatment of victims of sexual crimes and targeting police authorities, public prosecution offices and courts of law. The Criminal Victim Compensation and Support Authority will deliver a report on the assignment no later than 1 October 2009.

The purpose of the programme is to give a clearer picture of victims of sexual crimes and improve the way they are treated in connection with complaints to police, preliminary investigations and court proceedings. In the case of children exposed to sexual crimes, the programme will focus in particular on clarifying both the particularly vulnerable position they are in and their needs as victims.

Evaluation of the provisions concerning gross violation of a woman's integrity

Measure 37: The Government intends to evaluate current provisions concerning gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity in Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code.

The provisions concerning gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity in Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code have been in force since 1 July 1998. To determine how the provisions have been applied and whether they have had the desired effect, and also whether the law needs changing, the Government intends to initiate an evaluation of the application of the provisions.(JU/L5)

Evaluation of legislation on sexual crimes

Measure 38: The Government intends to appoint an inquiry in 2008 to evaluate the legislation on sexual crimes.

On 1 April 2005, new and reformed legislation on sexual crimes entered into force, containing a series of important changes, including stronger protection against exposure to sexual violations. In connection with the introduction of this legislation, emphasis was placed on the need to monitor its impact and to determine whether it was being applied in an appropriate and effective way. To determine how this new legislation has been applied and whether it has had the desired effect, the Government intends to appoint an inquiry in 2008 to evaluate its application. Part of the mandate will involve considering the question of lack of consent.

Stricter view of serious crimes of violence

Measure 39: The Government has instructed an inquiry (ToR. 2007:48 and ToR. 2007:137) to consider and propose changes to current penal legislation so as to establish a meeting out of punishment that reflects a stricter judicial view of serious crimes of violence. The inquiry is to look at a number of areas, including assault and violation of integrity. An interim report on an appropriate scale of punishment for murder is to be delivered no later than 30 November 2007. A final report on the mandate is due on 31 July 2008.

As a society changes and develop, the seriousness with which courts view various crimes changes with it. The rules governing the meeting out of punishment should reflect how reprehensible the offence is. A stricter view of serious violations of personal integrity has already developed in Sweden, e.g. regarding sexual crimes. The laws regarding serious physical abuse, however, have not been subject to any general re-

forms. The Government considers that there is reason for a stricter view of such offences in the meeting out of punishment.

Child marriages and forced marriages

Measure 40: An inquiry has been instructed to analyse whether current legislation offers adequate protection against child and forced marriages in terms of penal sanction (ToR 2005:152, 2006:78 and 2007:88). A report is to be delivered no later than 30 April 2008.

In Sweden, actions against child and forced marriages has been discussed for some time. The situation of young people leading lives characterised by lack of freedom, coercion, threats and violence has received growing attention in recent years. Some are promised away in arranged marriages while they are still children, or are forced to marry, while others are exposed to threats and coercion when they try to live like other young people around them.

Longer statutory limitation period for female genital mutilation

Measure 41: A ministry memorandum (Ds 2007:1) proposes that the statutory limitation period for female genital mutilation be extended so that it only commences once the defendant turns or would have turned 18 years of age. The proposal has been circulated for comment and the Ministry of Justice is preparing legislation in response.

Genital mutilation of girls is carried out at some point between infancy and puberty, usually at the initiative of someone in the family. Since the statutory limitation period is ten years for moderately serious breaches of the Act Prohibiting the Circumcision of Women (1982:316), the offence may be statute-barred before the girl comes of age. For a variety of reasons, many cases of genital mutilation are not detected until a considerable time has passed. To ensure that crimes against the above act reach the courts, they must come to the attention of prosecutors before the statutory limitation period has elapsed.

Improved legal provisions on the division of property

Measure 42: New rules concerning the division of matrimonial property became law on 1 July 2007.

On 1 July 2007, an amendment to the Marriage Code (SFS 2007:184) was introduced whereby compensation awarded to a spouse for a personal injury or degrading treatment/abuse may be exempted from the division of property. A spouse must also be compensated when property is divided if the other spouse has run into debt or has reduced his/her marital property. The purpose of the amendment is to avoid undesirable effects when property is divided, especially when one spouse has received criminal injuries compensation as a result of violence on the part of the other.

Follow-up of new arrangements for the issuing of medical certificates

Measure 43: The Government aims to follow up the reform introducing a new system for the issuing of medical certificates.

Medical certificates and the medical examinations that precede them are crucial to the detection and investigation of criminal offences and the institution of legal proceedings. In order to improve the quality of crime-related medical certificates, a new system for their issue was introduced on 1 January 2006 (lagen [2005:225] om rättsintyg i anledning av brott). Under the new arrangements, the National Board of Forensic Medicine is primarily responsible for this activity. When the new system has

been in place for a few years, there may be grounds for reviewing how it has worked and what impact it has had.

4.4 Better measures targeting violent offenders

Evaluation of methods and procedures used in social service work with violent male offenders

Measure 44: The Government has allocated funding to the IMS at the National Board of Health and Welfare for the purpose of evaluating and improving current social service-related measures targeting men who use violence. The IMS is to present its report no later than July 2010.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine impact, i.e. whether male violence and threatening behaviour has diminished. The study is to include how the women and children involved experienced the threats and violence. It will also contain an analysis of how and to what extent the various operations ensure the safety of the women and children concerned. In addition, the report is to show how documentation, follow-up and evaluations are dealt with. A further requirement is an analysis of how the operations live up to the goal of persuading men to assume responsibility for and understand the consequences of their actions, and, where the man is a parent, of making him realise that the violence he commits against the woman also affects the children.

Development of social service work with violent male offenders

Measure 45: The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to develop methods and procedures for social service-related measures targeting men who use violence. The assignment is to be coordinated with the above-mentioned evaluation assignment (Measure 44).

The outcome of the evaluations in 4.4.1 is to provide a basis for a better, more uniform level of methodology in social service-related measures targeting men who use violence. The purpose of the evaluations is to launch development work in the social services and pave the way for better, more knowledge-based measures in this area. If the evaluations reveal shortcomings in risk and security assessments, the National Board of Health and Welfare is to propose corrective measures. The board is also required to disseminate the knowledge acquired in the process.

Investment in the work of the Prison and Probation Service targeting violent men

Measure 46: The Government intends to instruct the Prison and Probation Service to introduce a special set of measures targeting men convicted of sexual crimes and those convicted of violence in close relationships. The measures should be designed to ensure that all men convicted of this type of crime are asked, when the sentence is to be served, to take part in an appropriate programme. In addition, the Prison and Probation Service is to intensify its efforts on behalf of these client groups in terms of risk assessment, methodology, controlled release into society and collaboration with other principals.

To combat men's violence against women in a sustainable way, measures will be needed targeting the men who use such violence. The Prison and Probation Service has been working for some years with scientific, quality-tested programmes directed at offenders convicted of sexual crimes and those convicted of violence in close relationships. These programmes must be scientifically shown to have an impact on recidivism. If further offenders of the type to which the Action Plan refers are to be

reached with such activities, these must be made available to a wider circle of prison service clients, including those with a mother tongue other than Swedish. Programme activities targeting men convicted of sexual crimes and of violence in close relationships must also be developed further, along with risk assessment methods in respect of these clients, which also affect parole and release decisions etc during their incarceration. Collaboration between the Prison and Probation Service's various branches of activity and with other agencies and principals is to be intensified. In this connection, special attention should be given to improving opportunities for controlled release into society, combined with support measures on behalf of such inmates to combat recidivism.

Improved conditions for the Prison and Probation Service's programme activities

Measure 47: In a bill amending penal care legislation, the Government has proposed making changes in the Prison Treatment Act (1974:203) concerning the right of inmates to possess personal property (Govt Bill 2006/07:127). These changes authorise the Prison and Probation Service to ban the possession of books, newspapers and magazines deemed to have a detrimental effect on the treatment an inmate is undergoing. It is proposed that the amendments enter into force on 1 April 2008.

If the Prison and Probation Service's efforts to combat recidivism are to have the desired effect, it is self-evident that the rules regarding possession of property must not run counter to them. It must be possible, therefore, to forbid inmates to possess books, newspapers and magazines deemed to obstruct the treatment they are receiving. Such a regulation makes it possible to prevent inmates convicted of sexual crimes, for instance, from having pornographic magazines in their possession.

4.5 Increased cooperation and coordination

Support for the coordination of regional initiatives

Measure 48: The Government has instructed the county administrative boards to initiate and support, within their areas of responsibility, regional coordination of efforts both to combat men's violence against women and on behalf of children who witness violence. A report is to be delivered no later than 1 May 2009 .

The aim is to ensure effective and legally secure support for women exposed to violence and children who have witnessed violence. Exchanges of knowledge and good practices should be encouraged. Important actors are to be found in the judicial system, the social services and the health care service, and among voluntary organisations.

Support for local cooperation to counteract violence against women

Measure 49: The Government intends to allocate funds for local cooperation to counteract violence against women at municipal level.

In several parts of the country, government agencies and voluntary organisations that come into contact with the problem of violence have developed models for joint action to combat men's violence against women. These models are based on a comprehensive, integrated approach to the problem: the woman is given the support and protection she needs, the children are given the opportunity to work through their experiences, and the man is offered programme measures to help him deal with his violent behaviour. This collaboration is undertaken at local level.

The Government intends to allocate funding both to municipalities that have already initiated such joint efforts, to enable them to evaluate progress, and to municipalities that are in the process of developing similar models.

These funds may be used to develop models for cooperation that also include efforts to combat violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships, and additionally for cooperation to combat violence against particularly vulnerable groups of women.

Development of physical environments for the investigation of violence against women

Measure 50: The Government intends to instruct the National Police Board to take steps to develop a physical environment that is specially adapted to the investigation of crimes of violence and other forms of abuse directed at women. The location, design and furnishing of such premises, and the choice of technical equipment and other aids, is to be based on and adapted to the requirements deriving from the situation of women at risk. Since the overall aim of the assignment is to develop a model for nationwide use, an important part of the work will involve disseminating information about the work and receiving study visits. The work is to be undertaken jointly with the police authority in Skåne, and activities are to be based on the collaboration between the police authorities of Skåne and the City of Malmö initiated as part of the Programme for Combating Violence against Women.

A woman who is exposed to violence is in a highly vulnerable and dangerous position. If public efforts on her behalf are to be effective and helpful, the woman herself must be given every opportunity to contribute. This means that in addition to effective legislation, adequate staff resources and individual skills, an appropriate physical environment must be available where premises and technical equipment for interrogation etc are adapted to the woman's situation and the working methods in use. Extensive collaboration between relevant authorities and organisations is crucial to a successful outcome in this respect.

Dissemination of knowledge and information concerning issues relating to violence and oppression

Measure 51: The Government intends to strengthen the financing of the NCK at Uppsala University to enable it to disseminate knowledge and information concerning violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. One of the tasks of the NCK is to disseminate knowledge and information about men's violence against women, to provide training on this subject, not least to health care staff and other staff categories, to monitor, compile and disseminate research findings and to analyse the need for further research in this area, to conduct research associated with clinical activities, and to act as a source of support for government agencies and organisations on issues relating to men's violence against women.

The NCK has a key role to play as regards the dissemination of knowledge and information about men's violence against women. There is a need for this work to be widened to encompass violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

4.6 Enhanced knowledge and competence

Establishment of a research programme

Measure 52: The Government intends to establish a research programme encompassing men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

Further knowledge is needed concerning men's violence against women. The Government intends, therefore, to establish a research programme aimed at improving knowledge in this area, by such means as developing research-based working methods for action targeting both women exposed to violence and children who have witnessed violence, and interventions targeting violent men. In order to prevent and combat violence against women in the long term, more knowledge is required not only concerning the impact of such crimes on the victim but also concerning the perpetrator. Consequently, closer study is needed both of those who commit the violence and of methods and developments relating to their treatment. The research programme will also cover violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

Survey of violence and oppression in the name of honour

Measure 53: The Government has instructed the Living History Forum to conduct a nationally representative survey of the extent to which teachers at compulsory school (Years 6–9) and upper secondary school are aware of violence and oppression in the name of honour directed at children and young people, especially girls and young women. A report is to be delivered no later than 31 March 2008.

The Living History Forum has initiated a nationally representative survey of teachers, undertaken in cooperation with the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations at Stockholm University and with Statistics Sweden. The principal aim is to determine what experience the teachers have of Holocaust education and how in their opinion it is viewed by students. The survey also examines what values teachers hold and their attitudes in respect of other community matters. The Government considers it important that a study be undertaken in connection with this survey focusing on teachers' level of awareness concerning violence and oppression in the name of honour. This study would examine the extent to which teachers are aware of violence and oppression in the name of honour in their particular student groups. The questions concerning this form of violence are to be included as a part of the larger teacher survey. The purpose of this mandate is to enhance the knowledge on which future efforts in this area may be based.

Survey of arranged marriages

Measure 54: The Government intends to initiate a survey into the prevalence in Sweden of marriages arranged against a person's will. The mandate will also include assembling an overview of the knowledge available in this field among relevant agencies. The report is to include proposals for preventive action.

Not all young people are able to decide for themselves when and who they will marry. Marriages arranged against a person's will may have cultural, social or economic causes. In such circumstances, family formation, marriage and divorce may be a collective matter that leaves little scope for individual choice on the part of the person concerned. Such practices affect girls and boys, women and men, but girls and women are particularly exposed. Defying family tradition and the wishes of parents

and other relatives may be such a sensitive course for young women – and for young men – that in practice it is not a viable alternative.

Enhanced knowledge on the extent of arranged marriages against a person's will is needed, and also information on the underlying causes. The level of competence among agencies that come into contact with people who risk being exposed to such marriages needs to be reviewed, and recommendations on preventive action are also needed.

The Government will assign the National Board for Youth Affairs to conduct such a survey. The assignment should be carried out in consultation with relevant agencies and with organisations possessing specialised knowledge in this field.

Training mandate for the National Board for Youth Affairs

Measure 55: The Government has instructed the National Board for Youth Affairs to provide training programmes targeting staff charged with coordinating and developing leisure-time activities, social services and education at municipal level. Other groups may also be affected. A report is to be delivered on 31 March 2009.

Staff working with the provision of out-of-school services, social services and education must have adequate knowledge about men's violence against girls and young women and about violence and oppression in the name of honour, which mainly affects girls and young women but which can also affect boys and young men. To this end, they should have access to training in such matters. The purpose of this training is to ensure that the participants are aware of issues relating to men's violence against girls and young women, and especially of the situation of people exposed to violence and oppression in the name of honour. The training programmes should also provide knowledge on how those affected by such violence can be strengthened and given access to the support available. In addition, the programmes are to discuss current methods in connection with youth work for preventing men's violence against women. Such training must focus in particular on the question of which preventive measures and methods are appropriate and applicable.

Inquiries concerning women who died as the result of a crime in a close relationship

Measure 56: The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to investigate and analyse the prospects for introducing inquiries that focus on women who died as the result of a crime in a close relationship.

The purpose of such inquiries is to analyse whether and if so how the public safety net has failed. By systematically analysing cases where women have died as the result of a criminal offence in a close relationship (intimate partner violence), the board can draw the kinds of conclusions that are essential to the task of supporting and protecting women in close relationships. Such inquiries can, for instance, review both the extent to which certain agencies have been aware of the situation and what measures have been taken or could have been taken as a result of this awareness.

Organisations and agencies that have taken part in hearings

When developing the Action Plan to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships, the Government invited a number of organisations and agencies to contribute their views at an early stage in the proceedings. The following took part:

Hearing with NGOs, 7 May 2007

Forum – Women and Disability in Sweden (Forum Kvinnor och handikapp)
Men for Gender Equality (Män för jämställdhet)
National Association for International Immigrant Women
(Riksförbundet internationella föreningen för invandrarkvinnor, RIFFI)
National Association of Swedish Crisis Centres for Men
(Riksorganisation Sveriges professionella kriscentra för män)
National Organisation of Women's and Girls' Shelters in Sweden
(Riksorganisationen för kvinnojourer och tjejjourer i Sverige, ROKS)
Swedish Amnesty
Swedish Association for Victim Support (Brottsofferjourernas riksförbund, BOJ)
Swedish Association of Women's Shelters (Sveriges kvinnojourers riksförbund, SKR)
Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights
(Riksförbundet för homosexuellas, bisexuellas och transpersoners rättigheter, RFSL)
Save the Children Sweden (Rädda Barnen)
Terrafem
Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (Riksförbundet för sexuell upplysning, RFSU)
Uppsala Reception Centre for Men (Mansmottagningen i Uppsala)

Hearing with government agencies, 28 May 2007

Children's Ombudsman (Barnombudsmannen)
Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (Brottsoffermyndigheten)
National Agency for School Improvement (Myndigheten för skolutveckling)
National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen)
National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen)
National Centre for Research into Men's Violence against Women
(Nationellt kunskapscentrum för frågor om mäns våld mot kvinnor)
National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande rådet)
National Courts Administration (Domstolsverket)
National Institute of Public Health (Statens folkhälsoinstitut)
National Police Board (Rikspolisstyrelsen)
Prison and Probation Service (Kriminalvården)
Public Prosecution Service (Åklagarmyndigheten)
Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
(Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL)
Swedish Disability Ombudsman (Handikappombudsmannen)
Östergötland County Administrative Board (Länsstyrelsen Östergötland)

Meeting with the Council of Equality Issues, 23 May 2007

Business and Professional Women Sweden
Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (Jämställdhetsombudsmannen)
Foundation of Womens Forum (Kvinnoforum)
Fredrika Bremer Association (Fredrika Bremer förbundet)
Green Women (Gröna kvinnor)
Haro, National Association for Freedom of Choice, Gender Equality and Parenthood
(Haro – riksorganisationen för valfrihet, jämställdhet och föräldraskap)
Liberal (Party) Women (Liberala kvinnor)
Men for Gender Equality (Män för jämställdhet)
Moderate (Party) Women (Moderatkvinnorna)
National Association for Home and Society (Riksförbundet Hem och samhälle)
National Association for International Immigrant Women
(Riksförbundet internationella föreningen för invandrarkvinnor, RIFFI)
Swedish Sami Association (Svenska samernas riksförbund)
National Organisation of Women's and Girls' Shelters in Sweden

(Riksorganisationen för kvinnojourer och tjejjourer i Sverige, ROKS)
Soroptimist International
Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (Riksförbundet för sexuell upplysning, RFSU)
Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
(Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL)
Swedish Association of Women's Shelters (Sveriges kvinnojourers riksförbund, SKR)
Swedish Women's Europe Network (Svenska kvinnors Europa nätverk)
Swedish Women's Left Association (Svenska kvinnors vänsterförbund)
Swedish Women's Lobby (Sveriges kvinnolobby)
The 'Women Can' Foundation (Föreningen Kvinnor Kurdistan)
The 1.6 Million Club (1.6 miljonersklubben)
The Centre Party (Centerpartiet)
The Christian Democratic Party (Kristdemokraterna)
The Green Party (Miljöpartiet de gröna)
The Liberal Party (Folkpartiet)
The Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokraterna)
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Swedish section
(Internationella kvinnoförbundet, IKFF)
Women's International Zionist Organisation

Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality

Extract of the minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 15 November 2007

Present: Prime Minister Reinfeldt, Ministers Olofsson, Odell, Ask, Husmark Pehrsson, Larsson, Erlandsson, Torstensson, Hägglund, Björklund, Carlsson, Littorin, Borg, Malmström, Sabuni, Billström, Adelsohn Liljeroth, Tolgfors and Björling.

Presentation: Minister Sabuni

The Government adopts Communication 2007/08:39 Action Plan for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

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