



# toolkit against violence

Combating Honor Related Violence,  
Forced Marriages and Abandonment

## Colofon:

**Released by:** The “Flying Team against Violence”, a cooperation project between:  
MOVISIE , Foundation Welsaen and Foundation Kezban (the Netherlands)  
ALMAeuropa (Sweden)  
Papatya (Germany)  
MIGS (Cyprus)  
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**Editor:** Emilin Lap Translations

**Design:** Ontwerpburo suggestie & illusie

This Toolkit is (from august 2012) also available in Dutch, Swedish, German and Turkish.  
The Toolkit can be downloaded on the website of each partner organization.

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# Toolkit against violence

Combating Honor Related Violence,  
Forced Marriages and Abandonment

Project Flying Team against Violence

## Index

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Introduction	3
Chapter 1. Definitions	6
Chapter 2. Good Practices	11
Perspective	13
Domestic Violence Training Program	16
Papatya	19
LGBT AND HONOR	22
Know your Rights	25
Chapter 3. Success factors of good practices	28
Address list	38

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# Introduction

## Toolkit against Violence

### Combating Honor Related Violence, Forced Marriages and Abandonment

This Toolkit was especially developed for grass root organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in Europe that are addressing honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment. The content is based on practical experiences from sister organizations in Sweden, Germany, Cyprus, the Netherlands and Turkey.

The experiences from the participating organizations were collected and described by the project team of the “Flying Team against Violence”, a collaboration between organizations from the aforementioned countries. Each team member interviewed several grass root organizations and NGO's in their respective countries. Good practices were described and an inventory was made of conditions and factors that made these practices successful.

## 1. Content of the toolkit

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The information in the toolkit is based on experiences and discussions from the participating countries. The kit contains a number of practical recommendations for other European grass root organizations and NGO's from the field.

### **Definitions**

What do we mean when we speak of ‘honor related violence’, ‘forced marriage’ and ‘abandonment’? The people from ‘Flying Team against Violence’ found that the participating countries all use different terms and definitions. The term ‘honor related violence’ for example, is quite common in Western European countries but never used in Turkish feminist circles. In chapter 1 this is explained, along with the importance of having clear definitions.

Chapter one furthermore provides an overview of the definitions that are used in the various participating countries, and several recommendations for grass root and non-governmental organizations.

## Good practices

Chapter two offers a description of five good practices, one from each participating country. More than one project focuses on awareness and education. The Cypriot project addresses young people and the use of peer educators; the Turkish partner targets women and the Dutch project focuses on migrant girls/women and boys/men.

Two projects offer online help to young people; the Swedish one especially targets lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans genders who are in danger because their families regard their sexual preference as a loss of honor. The German online help is part of a shelter, which is one of the good practices.

If you are interested in more details about a particular project, please use the information at the end of each description, to contact the workers.

## Factors of success

All respondents of the interviews, working in NGO's and grass root organizations, were questioned on the factors in their work that make it successful. Despite differences between social and political context in the countries, the answers were very similar. Based on the interviews the project team identified four (external) conditions (like solid and secure funding) and seven factors of success.

The conditions and success factors are described in Chapter three.

## 2. About the project

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In January 2011, MOVISIE and foundations Welsaen and Kezban from The Netherlands launched the European project "Flying Team against Violence". They were joined by the following partners: ALMAeuropa (Sweden), Papatya (Germany), MIGS (Cyprus) and (until 2012) Kalkinma Atoyasi (Development Workshop) from Turkey. As of January 2012, the new Turkish partner is the Autonomous Women's Association (Bağımsız Kadın Derneği). MOVISIE operates as the project manager.

Main goal of the project is to increase attention and support for the work of grass root organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) against harmful traditional practices like honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment. The work of these organizations is infinitely valuable and mostly unappreciated. Furthermore, the project aims to unite relevant organizations in an international network in order to learn from each other, develop work methods and enhance their position. The project is financed by Daphne funding of the European Commission.

Each Flying Team-partner wrote a 'National Report' on the situation in their respective country, within the framework of this project. This includes the description of all good

practices in the country, including an inventory of success factors. In the reports the countries were also requested to render an impression of the national attitude and policy on honor related violence, forced marriage, abandonment and migration, including the political climate.

All reports in the countries' mother language<sup>1</sup>, can be downloaded via the website of the respective project partner<sup>2</sup>. The English 'European Report' has included a summary from the five countries. This can also be downloaded from all the partners' websites (available summer 2012).

### **Flying Team**

The toolkit here before you will be distributed by the "Flying Team", consisting of representatives of grass root organizations and NGO's, one person from each participating country. The Flying Team will present the toolkit at the 'national meetings', which each project partner (except the Turkish) organizes in 2012. Invited are representatives of grass root organizations, NGO's and stakeholders, policy makers and politicians.

The European project aims to create a network of grass root organizations and NGO's from different European countries and Turkey, the homeland of many migrants in Europe. Organizations should learn from each other's experiences as well as adopt successful strategies and methods.

### **Policy influencing**

An additional project aim is to inform stakeholders, politicians and policymakers about the work of grass root organizations and NGO's. In the report and at the national meetings the project team presents recommendations for regional, national and European politics and policy makers.

### **Good luck**

The project partners of the Flying Team against Violence trust and believe that this Toolkit can positively contribute to the work of grass root organizations and NGO's in their actions against honor related violence, forced marriages and abandonment.

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1 The report from Cyprus is in English

2 See list of contact information in this Toolkit.

# Definitions

## 1.1. The importance of definitions

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Honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment are hot topics in in different countries, but do they mean the same in all these countries, in these different languages? The experience in the Flying Team-project is that definitions and perspectives differ in each country, and that sometimes there are no specific definitions at all.

For example, in Cyprus the term ‘honor related violence’ does not exist. Instead this type of violence is defined as ‘family violence’ or ‘domestic violence’. Cypriot women’s organizations also use the term ‘gender based violence’. In Turkey the term ‘honor related violence’ is rejected by feminist women’s organizations because they feel that the word ‘honor’ suggests a ‘license’ or an ‘excuse’ for violence and murder. The terms ‘tort’ or ‘custom killings’ are used in Turkey, but women’s organizations mainly prefer the terms ‘domestic violence’ or ‘gender based violence’.

In Sweden, Germany and The Netherlands on the other hand, the use of the term honor related violence is quite common. Organizations strategically choose the term they prefer, either more politically or bearing in mind the target group they intend to serve. For example, some prefer to use ‘free choice of partner’ instead of ‘forced marriage’.

### **Different perspectives**

The approach and discourse in a country and within government often differs from the perspective of women’s and grass root organizations. Many governments in the participating countries do not adhere a clear gender perspective. The terms honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment are mainly used in legal regulations and criminal law of a country. German criminal law speaks of ‘honor killing’, but there is no mention of ‘honor related violence’. German legislation, doesn’t differentiate between domestic and honor related violence, while from a victim’s perspective there are many considerable differences, like the fact that in most domestic violence cases there is one perpetrator only, where honor related violence cases often involve entire (extended) families. The differences between these forms of violence largely affect victims. In some cases, victims who are threatened or even cast out by their relatives need to move to another part of the country or even abroad to be safe.

### **Influencing government agenda**

Social factors, like immigration and migrant integration, have shown to be of influence on the development of government definitions and approaches. Also, lessons learned from daily practice concerning the combat of and relevant research have a positive effect. Grass root and non-governmental organizations work hard to influence the government's agenda in the field of legal regulations and laws. Clear definitions of the issues of honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment are crucial to the acknowledgement of the problem and to ultimately achieve adequate perspectives and solutions.

In this light, the Swedish and Dutch national governments are exemplary; as they have formulated clear definitions as well as developed special programs on honor related violence and forced marriages. In other words, the Swedish and the Dutch government actively strive to prevent honor related violence and protect the victims. Grass root organizations and NGO's in both countries have played an important role in putting the issues on the agenda and developing definitions and approaches.

### **Political reality**

The fact that there are (criminal) laws, does not guarantee that problems are combated or addressed adequately. As of April 2011, a new law in Germany states that forced marriage is indeed a criminal offence. In Germany as well as in Cyprus, forced marriages are mostly referred to as marriages of convenience (which can be voluntary or involuntary), and perceived as political or fake marriages to acquire a residence permit. Sometimes, the issue of forced marriage is linked to human trafficking. Several governments, including the Dutch administration, counteract forced marriages by employing restrictive migration laws.

In Turkey, forced marriages include mostly early or child marriages, and religious marriages (often with a considerable age difference between the spouses). Economical, social and traditional reasons (including honor) form the background of this common practice. Officially, forced marriages are illegal in Turkey, but in daily practice the religious government's attitude has quite the opposite effect.

### **No definition, no legislation**

Apart from the Netherlands, not many countries use the term 'abandonment' as an official phenomenon, which means that there is also no legislation on the matter. However, the participating countries of the Flying Team-project, the partners, do recognize the existence of the problem among migrant communities. In the Netherlands, abandonment is considered to be a form of domestic violence, as are honor related violence and forced marriage. Where Morocco has an official Support Center, Turkey offers no organized help in any way for abandoned Turkish migrant women from Western European countries. Also, the problem is not included (yet) in the curriculum of Turkish women's organizations.

In the Turkish context the term ‘abandonment’ is new, but there is a poignant similarity with the situation of Turkish women who are left behind by their husbands who move to another (part of the) country to work. This is imminent when men provide the money and women economically depend on their male partners. While the men are working far away or abroad, the women are expected to stay with the husband’s family where they live in harsh conditions. Obviously, the social pressure these women are dealing with is considerable. One can speak of abandonment when the husband stops sending money to the family. The woman feels abandoned, as she depends on him economically. Due to social pressure, however, it is virtually impossible to get a divorce and marry another man. The main difference between the European and the Turkish context is the legal position of women. The similarity is that both groups of abandoned women are forced to live in a situation where they have no choice. Women in Turkey face economical dependency, assuming the deprived position of a divorcee, often lowly educated and ill-informed.

## 1.2. A few recommendations

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The Flying Team against Violence provides a few recommendations to grass root organizations and NGO’s, working on one or more of these subjects, now or in the future.

- Formulate a clear and workable definition of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment, as a base for collaborations and decision-making. Make use of, or be inspired by the following possibilities:
  - The general accepted definition in your country
  - An internationally accepted definition, for example by the European Council or the United Nations (CEDAW), if your organization aims to put the issue on the national agenda.
  - Alternative concepts and definitions like ‘domestic violence’ or ‘gender based violence’, for example, if the term honor related violence is not commonly used in your country.
  - The model definitions described below.
- Make sure your definition includes the gender perspective.<sup>3</sup>
- To better reach the (national or local) government or financiers, formulate a description of the framework, i.e. the description and analysis of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment, its roots in gender inequality, the patriarchal system and group pressure, its context and occurrence.

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<sup>3</sup> See also Chapter 3. Success factors.

- Have a discussion on the definition with your project team and possible partner organizations, and come to an agreement on the content, before you start the project. Conformity is one of the keys to success<sup>4</sup>.
- Try to convince your government to develop a definition, legal regulations and laws to protect victims and prosecute perpetrators. Use actual cases of violence you know of, perhaps from your daily practice, and use figures of occurrence from (national or international) research to illustrate the necessity to address the problem.

### 1.3. A selection of definitions

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In this paragraph, we offer definitions on all the different terms, based on widely used definitions from the participating partner countries from the Flying Team against Violence-project. To cover as many of the above-mentioned differences, next to definitions on honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment, we have included definitions of violence against women and domestic violence.

#### **Violence against women**

- Violence against women includes 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 private life.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Domestic Violence:**

- Domestic violence includes any act, omission or behavior, which causes physical, sexual or mental injury to any member of the family by another member of the family. Member of the family can mean (ex) partner; the parents; the children and/or other relatives or any person residing with the aforementioned persons. Examples of domestic violence are child abuse and neglect, elder abuse. Also referred to as: "Family Violence". It also includes honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment.

#### **Honor related violence**

- Honor related violence refers to mental or physical transgressions in the context of patriarchal family structures/communities/societies, that are carried out especially but not exclusively against women and girls, who are seen as the carriers of the family honor. Boys and lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans genders are also known victims. The

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<sup>4</sup> See also Chapter 3. Success factors.

<sup>5</sup> Beijing Platform of Action:

violence is rooted in the patriarchal desire to control women's sexuality. Collective ideas and social pressure play an important role. As women are held responsible for the education of the children, they are often the ones being punished when the family's honor is jeopardized by rumors. In similar cases the other women in the family often take part in the oppression and even the violence. Honor has its origin in cultural conceptions about gender, power and sexuality. There are strong beliefs about virginity and chastity and the family's reputation and good name in the community largely depends on the actual or alleged behavior of the girls and women in the family. Discipline and control ranges from limitations in everyday life, like choice of clothes, social life and freedom of movement to influencing important choices in life, like education, work, marriage or divorce. In its most extreme forms the rigid control can lead to threats of violence and actual violence, including murder.

### Forced Marriage

- Forced marriage is the act of forcing a girl/woman or boy/man into marriage. The core concept is 'coercion'. There is a sliding scale of soft coercion in the form of social and psychological pressure, to forcing a son or daughter to get married by threatening with physical and/or psychological violence. The persuaders are mostly parents or other relatives, from the victim's family as well as the chosen partner's family.
- Child marriage: Marriage where one of the parties is under the age of 18. In the period before a child marriage, the child has often been subjected to serious pressure, including criminal coercion. In some countries criminal coercion is mentioned in the definition.

### Abandonment

- Abandonment refers to a situation where a family sends one or more members of their family back to their country of origin, or leaves them there during a longer period of time (mostly during holidays), while taking their passport and residence permit to prevent them from returning to the new homeland. There are several known reasons: the victim is endangering the family honor by his or her behavior, and by putting him or her under the care of the grandparents or other relatives, the family hopes they will be educated more traditionally and strictly. Sometimes the husbands who abandon their wives (and/or their children) in their country of origin are in the process of marrying someone else.

# Good practices

## 2.1. Justification

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During the first phase of the project Flying Team against Violence each project partner collected information on good practices in the field of combating honor related violence, forced marriages and/or abandonment, from their respective countries. The practices were selected based on criteria the partners had formulated before. The most important criteria were: sufficient knowledge and experience of the team; working from a gender perspective; aiming at awareness and dissemination on a grass root level; (intended) continuity; implementation of the results and finally, existing collaborations with relevant institutions.

Each Flying Team-partner described the projects from their countries in a National Report on the situation in their respective countries. All National Reports can be downloaded via the websites of the respective project partners<sup>6</sup>.

This Toolkit only contains five good practices; one from each country. To select the five practices, the Flying Team- partners nominated two projects from their country. The ten selected practices were rated and compared by the complete project team. The final decision for the five projects was made on the basis of these three criteria:

- The three topics of the Flying Team- project should be equally represented (combating honor related violence, forced marriages and abandonment).
- The project had to be interesting for many other European countries.
- The project had to be transferable to other countries.

## 2.2. The final five

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Below are the short abstracts of the five good practices that were selected for this Toolkit.

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<sup>6</sup> See the list of contact information in this Toolkit.

The short abstracts are followed by more detailed descriptions of the good practices. For more information, please use the contact information at the end of each description.

### **1. Perspective: Peer Education Roots for School Pupils to Enhance Consciousness on Violence Against Women.**

The specific aim of this project of Cyprus is to raise young people's awareness on gender violence. It proposes emotional and relationship models based on mutual respect between the genders. The main aim is to prevent violence in (future) relations. The project team trained young people as 'peer educators' to transfer knowledge and awareness to members of their own age group.

### **2. Domestic Violence Training Program: Raising Women Awareness of Domestic Violence and their Rights**

Through "home based meetings" with women in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Turkey, the project team is raising awareness on "violence". The moderators teach the women that much of the behavior, which is considered 'normal', is in fact not acceptable or tolerable. Also discussed are suppression and violence in the name of 'honor'. During the meetings the participating women also receive information on women's legal rights and existing services for victims.

### **3. Papatya - Anonymous Shelter and Counseling**

Papatya provides anonymous shelter, safety and psychosocial and concrete support to girls and young women in Germany. It has a secret address and a qualified staff. Papatya also provides easy to reach counseling services for the target group. Papatya aims to prevent (further) violence, honor crimes, forced marriages and kidnapping to the home country

### **4. LGBT AND HONOR ([www.hbtheder.se](http://www.hbtheder.se))**

This project offers specialized on-line support and advice to lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans-gender young people in Sweden, who are (possible) victims of honor related violence. The experts are trained mentors who have professional and/or personal experience of honor related violence with being lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans-gender. Through the website help-seekers can stay anonymous at first and move on at their own pace.

### **5. 'Know your Rights': Public information campaign Rights and Abandonment for Moroccan and Turkish women, men and young people**

The project informs migrant women on the Dutch, Moroccan or Turkish legal system, legal issues and procedures in the fields of family law and right of residence. The project creates awareness and empowers migrant women in the Netherlands on their rights and thus aims to prevent abandonment. The project also provides knowledge to institutions and organizations and aims to build a solid network of expertise and collaboration.

# FIVE GOOD PRACTICES

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## Perspective: Peer Education Roots for School Pupils to Enhance Consciousness on Violence Against Women.

# 1

Young people are generally unaware of gender stereotypes and gender-based violence (GBV). In Cyprus, the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) initiated the project 'Perspective'.<sup>7</sup> The overall project aim was the reduction and prevention of violence against women. The specific objective of the project was to raise young people's awareness on gender violence and to promote emotional and relationship models based on mutual respect between the sexes, thus preventing violence in the future.

The project team developed a 'peer education' method to spread their message to young people. In this method, a group of trained 'peer educators' is mobilized to educate members of their own age group. The program began with initial awareness raising sessions with large groups, followed by specific training activities for volunteer peer educators. During their training they acquired the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to moderate sessions with other young people in their schools.

### Target group:

Primary: Adolescents between the ages of 15 to 17

Secondary: Teachers on secondary education institutes

### The approach:

After the selection of a number of suitable secondary schools, the training program was ready to start. MIGS provided trainings on gender-based violence in different classes and identified and scouted potential candidates among the students to become volunteer peer educators.

### Phase 1:

Four general two-hour classes on gender issues, relationships between genders, gender roles, gender stereotypes and the relation between these issues and gender based violence.

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<sup>7</sup> MIGS operated from a partnership coordinated by the City of Modena, Italy, and funded by the **Daphne III Program** of the European Commission, with organizations in five European countries: Centro Documentazione Donna (Italy); UNIFCEF (Italy); the Province of Alicante (Spain); European Anti-violence Network- EAVN (Greece); Strategy Transnational (Germany); Cap Sciences Humaines (Belgium).



The last training session was devoted to ‘training the trainers.’ Now, a selection of (preferably 8) students was trained to be group trainers and assume their role as peer educators. Two more peer education-training sessions of 1.5 hours each followed. As the students were inexperienced and new to the concept of peer educators, it was important that they understood the key principles of the method. During the training they were encouraged to share their concerns and fears about becoming peer educators and to explore the skills and qualities they needed to be successful in their role. An important part of the training was spent on competencies and qualities aimed at participatory and interactive learning among peer groups. After studying the key principles of group facilitation (like good communication skills, impartiality, inclusion, flexibility, creativity, etc.) the acquired theories were applied and experimented with during practice sessions.

### **Phase 2:**

The group of peer educators conducted trainings for their peers. The trainings focused on awareness raising on gender roles and social expectations and gender, and they explored the occurrence of GBV in adolescent romantic relationships, and its impact. The project facilitators were present during the peer education trainings. This way, the peer educators felt safe and could turn to them in case of uncertainties or complicated questions. Finally, peer educators made use of handouts, manuals, the Internet, etc.

### **Phase 3**

After the trainings the project team launched a media campaign. This campaign included the key messages on the impact of GBV, which were formulated by the participants of the trainings. The campaign was aired on TV and radio and secondary schools provided written information.

## **Results**

The project aimed to actively engage students in the prevention of gender-based violence and make a difference in their student community. Fifty adolescents were trained to become peer educators who subsequently trained about 150-200 peers.

The peer educators were worried that their friends and classmates would not listen to them or criticize them. They were afraid that students of their own age would not take them seriously.

However, the peer educators were pleasantly surprised to find that this wasn't the case at all, their classmates fully accepted them as trainers.

Peer educators are in no way expected to be experts nor do they carry too much in-depth knowledge about the subject they are training on. They appeared to have gained just the right level of knowledge necessary to entertain effective discussions on GBV with their peers.

The participating pupils enjoyed the trainings by the peer educators, which can be concluded from their positive and enthusiastic evaluations. The students stated that they found it easier to learn from peers as they 'speak the same language,' and 'relate to you,' 'they can understand you better' and use 'language and examples that are relevant to your reality'. Peer education is more informal and they were not 'subjected to any authority' or 'forced' to listen. Within the school environment they were able to express their thoughts and opinions in front of their peers, which was highly appreciated. Finally, the 'all inclusive' approach of the trainings was also well-received.

## Basic conditions

### Cooperation

- Recommended is a close collaboration with and the support of a teacher, or a youth worker in a youth center, who is sensitive to gender equality and GBV. They can introduce you to the schools management (or at youth centers), and promote this type of training to their young audience. Similar professionals may also see to it that the subject of GBV is integrated in the curricula of the school or youth center.

### Budget

- A budget to cover a project coordinator, a trainer and one facilitator. And a budget to launch a media campaign for radio and TV.

## Additional information

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/news/perspective-peer-education-roots-for-school-pupils-to-enhance-consciousness-of-tackling-and-impeding-women-violence-in-europe/>

View the campaign TV spot: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MeZhJjJ68I>

Report on GBV among young people in EU countries (in English)

> <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/Report-on-Peer-Education-Trainings-on-Gender-Violence.pdf>

The project leaflet (in Greek and English): logos and messages are available to other organisations.

### Contact information

Mediterranean Institute on Gender Studies (MIGS)

46 Makedonitissas Avenue,

Box 24005, Nicosia 1703, Cyprus

[georgina@medinstgenderstudies.org](mailto:georgina@medinstgenderstudies.org)

[www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org)

# Domestic Violence Training Program: Raising Women Awareness of Domestic Violence and their Rights



Violent behavior is often deemed 'normal', not only by men but also by women and society in general. Women are often unaware of the rights and regulations that should protect them from violence. The Autonomous Women's Association in Mersin organized "home based meetings" with women from disadvantaged neighborhoods. They aimed to show these women that what goes on in their homes is not normal family behavior but "violence", and therefore unacceptable and intolerable. Many women experience suppression and violence in the name of honor. However, the perception of "honor" needs to be changed, honor is not something positive. During the sessions the participating women also received information on women's legal rights and available services for victims of domestic violence.

## Target group

Women living in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

## The approach

Prior to "home-based meetings", contact persons of the project visit the selected neighborhood to recruit volunteer hostesses among the target group. Together with the hostess, they fix the dates of the meetings and instruct the hostess to invite 15-20 women, relatives and/or neighbors, to attend the meetings in her home.

Trained moderators conduct the home-based meetings with 15-20 women. The group starts by watching a video with short films showing different types of violence in everyday life and information about counseling centers. The moderators then open the discussion. They invite the participants to think and reflect about the kind of domestic violence shown in the video. They then ask them to share their own experiences with violence during their life: how they were treated in their extended and nuclear families during childhood, how they got married, their lives with their husbands and family in law. The moderators guide them to understand that their experiences, parallel to what is shown in the film, are not 'normal' but should be considered as violence. By sharing their stories the women define "domestic violence", which includes physical, psychological, economical, and sexual violence.

The violent experiences are often related with honor, and many women were forced into marriage. Issues like parenting, different attitudes towards teenage girls and boys, decisions on marrying, dealing with the family in law, etc., are also discussed under the heading of 'domestic violence'. It teaches women that these practices are forms of violence, rather than acceptable and tolerable normal life behavior.



BAĞIMSIZ KADIN DERNEĞİ

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After the discussion the moderator offers information in oral, written and visual forms, on women's legal rights, how to exercise legal rights, legal procedures, and provides names of women's organizations for information about legal counseling, medical aid, psychological counseling and shelter services.

The sessions are evaluated by means of an evaluation/observation sheet.

### **Research Activities**

In the Turkish project the meetings were tape-recorded, but only after all the participants gave their consent. This was a part of the research and monitoring. The project team reviewed the discussions and evaluated them to reveal the violence perception of the women, their attitudes towards violence and formulate recommendations for the women to cope.

At the end of the home-based sessions the project staff interviewed each participant using both the questionnaire and the Abuse-Index sheet. The questionnaire was developed and prepared as part of the research component of the project. It serves to collect data about the socio-economic status of targeted women; their perception of violence; forms and strengths of violence experienced by the target group, and to identify their needs and demands. Finally, it specifies mechanisms that are activated to cope with domestic violence.

The Abuse Index, as a tool to gather data, measures the type and density of the violence experienced by the targeted women. The Index is a supplement to the questionnaire.

### **Results**

The home based meetings were quite successful as the women felt comfortable in their friend's/ relative's house instead of in an unfamiliar location. After the meetings they had a greater

awareness of violence against women in society, although they tended to focus on physical violence only. It is not fully possible to measure the impact of this project on the participating women. However, the public information and advocacy activities did significantly increase the number of women visiting the counseling centers.

## Basic conditions

### Well-prepared professionals and volunteers

- The (professional and volunteer) moderators must be trained to make sure they start out with the same information about and principles of home-based training programs to create awareness and raise consciousness among women groups. Prospective moderators always participate in home based meetings moderated by a professional trainer as part of their training.
- Before starting the home-based meetings, local organizations for counseling and support and crisis intervention, should be warned. This can be done by informing and/or involving these organizations in the project, or even providing in-company trainings on (domestic) violence.
- Home based meetings are an interactive training-learning method where both sides (trainers and the trainees or organizations and targeted women) train each other and/or learn from each other. Here, success is heavily based on active participation from everyone in the group.
- Necessary materials for moderators: the video and a handbook about violence, legal rights, and women's organizations. For participants: a brochure on domestic violence and addresses for counseling and support. Also, small stickers, 2x4 cm size, with telephone numbers of relevant call centers, police station and women counseling centers to call in emergency situations.

### Media attention

To reach as many women as possible, to inform them about the meetings and about the counseling services, the project team appears on local radio and TV channels, joins panels and conferences. Also, by increasing the visibility of domestic violence, public interest and sensitivity will grow.

### Money for costs of hostesses

The project will pay for any food and drinks (such as tea, coffee and cakes) that are served during home based meetings. In addition, the hostess will receive a small fee for the use of her home.

## Contact information

Autonomous Women's Association (Bağımsız Kadın Derneği)  
Mesudiye Mahallesi Cemalpaşa Caddesi No: 110/3 MERSİN  
Tel: +90-324-337 20 21 E-mail: [mersin\\_bkd@hotmail.com](mailto:mersin_bkd@hotmail.com)

# Papatya

## Anonymous Shelter and Counseling



Girls and young women from migrant backgrounds suffering from family violence and oppression like honor related violence (HRV) and forced marriage (FM), cannot turn to the regular youth support system for help as these are public, open institutions and they are in serious danger if they leave their families. Some of them live very restricted lives and have little freedom of movement. In extreme cases they are highly isolated, aren't allowed to have friends of their own or keep a mobile phone and are under constant supervision. Even professionals caring for these girls run a risk of being threatened by the families and have to take precautions for their own protection. To prevent (further) violence, honor crimes, forced marriages and kidnapping to the home country, Papatya provides anonymous, accessible counseling for girls and young women and a shelter with a secret address and qualified staff. Papatya offers safety as well as psychosocial and concrete support.

### Target group:

**Shelter:** Girls and young women with migrant backgrounds aged 13-21 years, who are afraid of sanctions, abduction or even to be murdered if they reject their families' prohibitions and future plans for them.

**Counseling:** All people who are confronted with honor related violence and forced marriage with all its consequences –the victims themselves, friends or partners of victims, and professionals.

### The approach

#### The shelter

The shelter is located in a nice house with enough space for staff and girls, in a neighborhood where it may remain unnoticed. The shelter focuses on care around the clock by a professional all-women- team from different ethnic backgrounds. A professional staff member is available at all times. At least two staff members are present during the busiest hours on weekdays. The team members speak several languages among them and have an intercultural approach. Human rights form the basis of everything else. The individuality of each girl and young woman is utterly encouraged and respected.

The shelter has room for no more than nine girls/women because one of the shelter's main aims is to create a family-like atmosphere. Girls and young women who flee from family violence often show a high level of ambivalence and are often incapable of dealing with their newly gained freedom. To help them regain some stability and protect them from running into danger, life in the shelter is structured and a strict set of rules applies. Anyone who reveals the address is

dismissed and transferred to an alternative youth care institution.

The girls and young women are not primarily treated as victims but also as individuals with incredible courage and an abundance of individual resources. Papatya works to empower girls and young women and develop a perspective in terms of education and work. The workers are there to support the girls, no matter what, as well as listen to and respect their wishes. Ground rule is to focus on talents and resources of every girl, more than on possible problems.

Every girl will be assigned one or two workers who will keep a close eye on her development and future possibilities. They keep track of all contact moments with social services and family members. Contrary to impartial mediation, the staff openly takes the side of the girl and promotes and aims to further her situation, needs and rights in confrontations with the family and sometimes social services. Relatives are confronted with their behavior towards the girl and are given a chance to reflect and change; positive contacts with family members are identified and nurtured. Family contacts are escorted closely by staff members and reflected upon with each girl individually. To minimize risks and danger face to face confrontations are only arranged at social youth services; further contact takes place by mail or by phone.

The stay should be as long as necessary and as short as possible. Ideally, a stay should never last longer than 8 weeks. If a girl decides to return home, clear appointments are made on structural monitoring by the authorities.

### **Anonymous online counseling**

The expert team offers counseling in German, Turkish, French and English. The counselors use a secured Internet platform to ensure the anonymity and safety of the visitors of the site. To introduce the service it was promoted at schools and counseling centers as well as in the local press. Several federal states of Germany financed the project.

## **Results**

Papatya has been active for over 25 years. Key activities have always been locating and tackling gaps of the support system through lobbying, networking and rising problem awareness with authorities and politicians. Currently, Papatya focuses on the situation and problems of young adults and their special needs. New technologies like the Internet are included in the strategies and new safety rules are being developed.

For many girls moving to a specialized shelter is the only way to escape violence. It can be a major relief to have some distance between you and your home town; or to know that you are safe and that your anonymity is guaranteed. The majority is very positive about the intercultural team and project setting. It is easy to feel accepted and at home, and at the same time stimulates the girls to participate and collaborate. Some girls find it too hard to be away from home and stay only for a couple of days. Most girls have no problems accepting the rules as they guarantee their safety, but some show risky behavior. Dominant boyfriends are a tough test for the girls and may ask them to bend the rules a little 'in the name of love'. The balance between "backing" and "binding" is a precarious one, especially if girls stay longer than two months. The girls that do not return to their families often keep in touch for years.



**papatya**

anonyme Kriseneinrichtung  
für Mädchen und junge Frauen  
mit Migrationshintergrund

## Basic conditions

### A professional team

Required is a team of trained professionals (in social education or psychology) with excellent intercultural competencies. They have to have explicit expert knowledge in the field of anti-violence work, especially with regard to trauma and post-traumatic situations, and the special implications of HRV and FM. In addition, affinity towards women's and children's rights, stress resistance and flexibility are prerequisites. Finally, the team members must be reasonably informed about the legal aspects of the youth care system and migrant legislation.

### Sufficient financial support

The program needs a financial structure that allows a non-bureaucratic intake system and does not link intake and individual claims to social services money, which have to be proven first. Funding is necessary for a minimum of 260 staff hours/week (=6,5 fulltime posts) (168 hours in a week) and a spacious flat. The shelter must be located in a larger city, to increase anonymity.

### cooperation

Twofold:

- A close collaboration-partner, operating as an outstation (for telephone and postal address).
- Participation in a network of other organizations from the field, and collaboration with youth social services and local police.

## Tools

The website provides information for girls in different languages. A flyer and a mini-flyer (the size of a business card) and a poster are distributed at schools and other relevant organizations frequented by the target group. Additional information is available for professionals.

## Contact information

PAPATYA, c/o Jugendnotdienst,  
Mindener Str. 14, D- 10589 Berlin

[www.papatya.org](http://www.papatya.org)  
[info@papatya.org](mailto:info@papatya.org)

# LGBT AND HONOR

([www.hbtheder.se](http://www.hbtheder.se))



Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gender (lgbt)-youth should be recognized as possible victims of honor related violence (HRV), both girls and boys. They are vulnerable because of their sexual identity and often forced to go into hiding. Lgbt-youth also run a heightened risk of abandonment, forced marriage and domestic violence. Many methods and programs on these particular issues fail to consider this specific group. ALMAeuropa and RFSL Ungdom, the national organization for the rights of lgbt-youth, initiated the project "LGBT and Honor". The project offers specialized support and advice by mentors who are professional experts on the subject of lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans-gender people and HRV, and often are from the target group themselves. They are trained to work via email and chat. Through the website, help-seekers can remain anonymous and build up contact at their own pace.

## Target group

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gender-youth (16-25 years) that are victims of or at risk of honor related violence, abandonment, forced marriage and/or domestic violence.
- Professionals working with the primary target group
- General public

## The approach

The website [www.hbtheder.se](http://www.hbtheder.se) (in Swedish so far) has a direct and simple outlook with pictures of some of the mentors. This creates a sense of openness and warmth that appeals to young people. On the website you can either choose to email and receive a response within 24 hours, or chat with the mentors. The role of the mentor is to be supportive and guide the youth towards help and resources; it is not their role to be professional counselors/therapists and build up long term relationships with the help seekers. As the schedule rotates, the youths who contact the website will have contact with multiple mentors. To keep the role of the mentors and the kind of help the website is offering clear, it is not possible to request a specific mentor. Often, youths use the website to speak about their experience for the very first time; it is supportive and open, a place to share your story without being judged.

Seven mentors have been selected because of their professional or personal background with HRV and lgbt. The mix has proven to be effective, because the mentors can help each other and have different areas of strength. The mentors discuss the help seekers and difficult cases among themselves and with their supervisor and the project manager. This is mostly done by email or telephone since they are all stationed in different parts of Sweden.

Next to this, the website offers information on recommended safe houses and other organizations working actively with HRV and LGBT. The website does not recommend women's shelters in general, because not all of them offer help for LGBT-youth, many are not open to men or couples. The project team only recommends organizations that, in their opinion, adequately support young people regardless of their gender, sexual identity or orientation; this is their trademark. For publicity, the website is promoted on other websites aimed at LGBT-youth and at organizations working with HRV. Information material has been sent to all secondary schools, youth clubs, youth health centers and school counselors in Sweden.

### The mentors

The team of mentors gets together three times a year for a two-days training session and internal evaluations. A professional psychologist is connected to the project as supervisor and is present at the team trainings to work on group processes. Throughout the year, the project manager and the supervisor can be consulted by email or telephone.

The project manager has access to all that is written in the chat-room or on the email, which means that he or she is also ultimately responsible for all the work via the website. Next to this, the manager is responsible for the training and supervision of the mentors, evaluations, etc. The mentors are educated on the work methods of institutions like social services, the police, and shelters; how to work via the internet; how to separate personal experiences from those of the youths; useful strategies for youths; risk assessment and LGBT, HRV and FM.

All mentors receive a small economic compensation for their work, which is mainly performed on a voluntary basis (about € 1300 per year)

The website, [www.hbtheder.se](http://www.hbtheder.se), is part of a larger project which includes a research report on the situation for LGBT-youth suffering HRV, published in 2011 in Sweden. The project also includes awareness raising, training programs for professionals, conferences open to the general public, media exposure, etc.



[www.hbtheder.se](http://www.hbtheder.se)

## Basic conditions

### Privacy and secrecy

It is crucial that the website has highly secure email and chat functions as the visitors are sharing their innermost feelings and problems. The mentors did not take a legal oath to secrecy but they all took one voluntarily. That means that the information is only shared within the team and with the supervisor. This is clearly stated on the webpage.

### Sufficient funding

Sufficient funding is necessary for the 6 days of training per year: travel, accommodation, food and a small economic compensation to mentors. In addition, there has to be full funding for the project manager and money to hire a professional supervisor. The mentors must be prepared to work at odd hours, at night and during the weekend whenever the chat is open.

## Results

The website was launched in October 2011, so far there have been seven visitors seeking help each week. The target group is hard to reach because of the double taboo; it will take a lot of effort to find ways to reach them. Some mentors are currently experimenting with new ways to reach the target group.

The reactions of the target group are positive; many youths are really looking for a place to go or just happy to know that someone is there for them. The mentors can help to start processes of change. They have to be able to respond fast, and be both friendly and professional in the chat. This is a skill that takes some time to develop.

## Material

A report (in Swedish) about LGBT-youth who are victims of HRV, posters in different sizes and cards. All these items are free of charge to order from ALMAeuropa. The website and its functions are easily transferred, the recommendations must be adapted to fit each specific country and their respective legal frameworks.

### Contact information

ALMAeuropa,  
Östermalmsgatan 6  
114 26 Stockholm, Sweden,  
**[cecilia@almaeuropa.org](mailto:cecilia@almaeuropa.org)**,  
**[www.almaeuropa.org](http://www.almaeuropa.org)** and  
**[www.hbtheder.se](http://www.hbtheder.se)**

# ‘Know your Rights’ Public information campaign Rights and Abandonment for Moroccan and Turkish women, men and young people



Migrant women who get involved in the Dutch, Moroccan or Turkish legal system are often confronted with complicated legal issues and procedures concerning family law and right of residence. Each year, dozens of women, children and young people are abandoned in Morocco, Turkey, and other countries (their parents' motherland), during holidays or family visits. They are often dealing with family/marital and/or parenting problems or have a history of arranged or forced marriages. Abandonment in itself is a traumatic event and should be treated as abuse and a form of violence.

National working group 'Mudawwanah' initiated the project "Know your Rights" to educate and inform migrant women on their rights and to empower them, and thus prevent problems. The project also aims to enhance and increase knowledge in institutional and organizational programs and create a solid network of expertise and collaboration. Finally, 'Mudawwanah' aims to improve the legal status of migrant women, children and young people

## Target group

Primary target group: Moroccan and Turkish migrant women and young people (and men).

Activities for other nationalities are in progress.

Second: Professionals and volunteers active in health care and welfare, care and legal services

Third: policy makers and politicians on a national and international level.

## The approach

The project adheres an integral approach consisting of:

- **Training for information officers** with an Arabic/Berber and Turkish/Kurdish background. About 100 women and men from five regions in the country are trained to speak at meetings for migrants. Work has started on training programs for other nationalities like Afghan, Somali, Iraqi, Iranian, Egyptian, etc.
- **Information meetings for migrants** at a local level; in neighborhoods, schools, community houses and organizations. The meetings are organized by local or regional partners and moderated by the information officers.
- **A support point and phone line** for abandoned women, offering support from the first call to the return to the Netherlands, as well as organizing care and shelter, in close cooperation with the Dutch Support group Returning Emigrants, SSR.

- **Information meetings for professionals**, like social workers and solicitors, in the shape of a national conference, linked to regional working conferences. Information, tips and consultation on identification, referral and support, also to strengthen cooperation and optimize (joint) care and support.
- **Cooperation agreements** with organizations of relevant chain partners to secure continuity of activities in organizations throughout the Netherlands. Building a network of expert solicitors and social workers, with main focus on identification, referral and support.
- **Lobby** among policymakers and politicians to improve the policy on human rights and the legal status of migrants.
- **Working groups in Morocco and the Netherlands** with Dutch and Moroccan experts, politicians, policy makers and relevant institutes and women's organizations. Working Group Mudawannah is joining forces with the Dutch Support group Returning Emigrants (SSR). The latter works on the expansion and strengthening of networks and collaboration with other countries.

## Basic conditions

Togetherness and mutual support between the participating migrant organizations is crucial, including at least one 'instigator' within each organization, who is supported by and represents the grass roots. One (local or regional) organization must apply for funding to finance at least the local activities, travel fees and a small reward for the information officers, as well as (part of) their continuous training.

Exchange groups, expert meetings and seminars throughout the year are important for the project team in order to keep moving along the same lines as the information officers, professionals and participating organizations. Commitment and collaborations with all partners on a local, regional and national level are prerequisites to reach the intended goals. It is crucial to develop structural approach and a broad supportive political and ministerial base.



To guard both the project contents and the logistics the project team must have a central coordination point.

## Results

Migrant women and men participating in the information meetings became more aware of their rights and felt stronger in the end. Aspects like the influence of social environment, the lack of communication, traditional patterns and parenting between two cultures were discussed. Personal experiences were shared and a lot of questions arose on procedures, applications, regulations, marital problems, partner choice, children and divorce. Other subjects were nationality or double nationality, abandonment of women and children, naturalization, right of residence and (returning or) emigration. Education and discussions empower women and enables them to be independent and claim their rights and their children's rights.

The working conferences for policy makers, professionals and volunteers in the regions are well received and the contents provide the participants with better insight in various situations, effective identification and referral and practical support. It offers them a platform for discussion, to learn, exchange and be informed of the latest developments as well as meet experts in the field. Nowadays, abandonment regularly appears on the political agenda and is listed and treated as a serious form of violence. Now, all women have the right to return to the Netherlands to deal with the necessary legal procedures. Finally, there is more emphasis on preventive measures to avoid abandonment. It is also important that the expertise gained in the Netherlands and Morocco can be transferred to other countries.

## Material

- Bilingual brochures on family and alien law and abandonment for the Turkish and Arabic target groups and for care workers:
  - 'Turk Medeni Kanunu' 'Mudawwanah – Marokkaans familierecht' ('Moroccan family law') on Turkish and Dutch family law, immigration law and abandonment.
  - 'Achtergebleven of achtergelaten?' (Remaining or Abandoned? In Dutch)
- A (emergency) booklet in three languages – with tips and addresses for Morocco, Turkey and the Netherlands.
- Bilingual educational films, in Arabic and Turkish, to use in trainings, at information meetings and to stimulate a discussion on the themes.

### Contact information

National working group Mudawwanah – [mudawwanah@upcmail.nl](mailto:mudawwanah@upcmail.nl)

Latifa Lazaar – Foundation Kezban – [llazaar@stichtingkezban.nl](mailto:llazaar@stichtingkezban.nl) - +316-22418085

Joke Verkuijlen – Foundation Steun Remigranten – [jokeverkuijlen@chello.nl](mailto:jokeverkuijlen@chello.nl) – +316-44614237

[www.steunremigranten.nl](http://www.steunremigranten.nl) and [www.st-kezban.nl](http://www.st-kezban.nl)

# Success factors of good practices

“What factors make your work on combating honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment successful?” This is the question the Flying Team project partners had answered by many different grass root and non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) in Turkey, Cyprus, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands. Despite differences between the social and political context in these countries, the answers were quite similar. This chapter starts with a description of the necessary conditions for NGO’s and grass root organizations to be successful in their work. After this, a survey of the success factors of their good practices in combating honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment and how to create these circumstances<sup>8</sup>.

## 3.1. Conditions for success

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The interviewed NGO’s and grass root organizations stated that the following external conditions enabled them to work satisfactorily, with respect to continuity and financial security for their projects, a range of sensitized stakeholders to identify the problems, a help-system with specialized and accessible aid, and a legal framework to support the work.

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<sup>8</sup> Disclaimer: ALMAeuropa does not share all views expressed in this chapter.

## 1. Continuity and financial security

NGO's and grass root organizations need to be financially stable to be successful. One of the biggest challenges (and frustrations) for organizations is the lack of money to execute their programs. A secure financial basis means that less time and energy needs to be spent on attempts to find sufficient funding.

## 2. Sensitized stakeholders

A key factor for the successful work in this field is that all relevant stakeholders are sensitized to the existence and the mechanisms of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment. In addition, the target group must acquire adequate intercultural competences. Intercultural work implies an open culture, sensitive attitude and the ability to communicate with people of a different social-cultural background, on norms and values and any other subjects. This implicates that workers should also be aware of their own norms, values and prejudices.

Teachers, officers of youth agencies and other professionals who deal with risk groups must be able to identify (possible) victims and intervene or refer to potential support before real danger occurs. If, for example, teachers are not sensitized to this issue, they may endanger affected pupils by speaking with their parents without consulting the pupils first. Also, well-intended direct interventions of untrained teachers towards the parents can turn out to have a complete opposite, thus, negative effect on the affected pupil.

In short, trained professionals should join forces in a comprehensive and integrated network. They should be offered training on intercultural competences and improve their knowledge and understanding of this type of violence.

## 3. Specialized and accessible help-system

The existence of a specialized and accessible help-system is another success factor in the fight against honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment.

- Knowledge about nationwide professional help is a success factor. It is very important to thoroughly inform the affected groups about possible support.
- The support system must be accessible and equipped for (potential) victims. The required institutions should form a 'chain of help' and offer the whole range of different services (police, crisis centers, shelter, social services, youth agencies, legal aid etc.). The respective distinct roles, tasks and responsibilities must be clear for all parties involved. Transparency, unambiguous agreements and respect for each role and task are crucial.
- Shelters should have secret addresses, as this will guarantee safety for potential victims. Specialized shelters that work only with victims of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment are very successful because they have the special expertise to deal with the particular problems of this high-risk target group.

#### 4. Legal Framework

For successful protection from and prevention of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment the legal framework has to be sensitive to the needs and situations of victims.

- A national government policy on combating honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment is a success factor, as it tells (potential) perpetrators that this violence is not acceptable. Laws on these issues can protect (potential) victims, and further the work of grass root and non-governmental organizations in the field.
- The acknowledgement of the (long term) harmful effects of psychological violence on a legal level is a success factor with regard to victim care and protection from honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment.
- The legal protection of the rights of parents as caregivers is often in conflict with the protection against violence against their children. When youth agencies and family courts recognize the potential escalation in affected families and intervene at an early stage in a family conflict this is a success factor.
- Shelters that work with girls or women who feel threatened by their families reported specific methods to analyze the level of danger as a success factor for their work. If public authorities act fast in cases of emergency and take responsibility, help is often successful.
- When victims leave their families to live in anonymity (for their own safety) they often have to deal with bureaucratic public authorities that fail to withhold the victim's personal information from their families. More alert and careful public authorities are a success factor for effective support and protection.

### 3.2. Success factors for good practices

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The following success factors were identified in the projects of the grass root and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in the field of combating honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment. Information was also collected from the interviews of the Flying Team-project with several of the organizations from the five countries.

The identified success factors are:

1. Bottom up strategies
2. A gender and human rights perspective

3. Confidence building and sensitivity
4. Professionalism and intercultural competence
5. A variety of strategies and methods
6. Cooperation
7. Continuity and sustainability

### 1. Bottom up strategies

Organizations that use direct involvement and commitment, including lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans genders, who are actually from the communities with problems like honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment, have more chance to reach and appeal to their target group. However, this does not mean that a top-down approach is never successful. Initiatives for activities by local or national governments can be very successful. Professionals who manage to get involved in and work with the affected communities will be able to achieve more.

Professional institutions or NGO's, for instance, should join forces with with grass root organizations that are closely connected with and respected by certain communities. These organizations know how to reach their audience, how to get their interest and participation. Furthermore, because of their close relation with the affected groups, they can mediate and explain the needs of a group within the community, and towards professionals and policy makers. Because of their inside knowledge and practical experience, grass root organizations are able to identify relevant problems and develop new strategies and ideas. Involvement and commitment of the affected communities and their grass root organizations is also important for the sustainability of the project results. It stimulates further actions to prevent and combat honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment, also after the project has ended.

### How to achieve?

- Make sure the process is transparent and that there is a mutual understanding and agreement about the project aims and the roles of the participants. Also, there has to be mutual trust before as well as during the entire project.
- Focus on the questions, experiences and needs of the (intended) participants. Make sure to work with them, not for them. Use the term “participants” or “co-owners”, instead of “target group”.
- Put yourself on the same level as your participants and realize that we all share similar problems, one way or another. Learn from each other; do not put yourself above the participants. Avoid one-way traffic and aim to collectively raise consciousness.
- Talk openly and be patient. Let affected persons speak for themselves, recognize, appreciate and respect their stories and listen to them carefully.
- Create a climate where there are open discussions and everyone is treated equally. Make sure you don't talk about migrant communities over the heads of the participants, but that they are invited to speak or discuss any problems that may affect them.

- Avoid external attributions. The frequent and generalizing use of attributes and ascriptions can have a discriminating effect toward the target group and will diminish their willingness to speak.
- Involve a grass root organization in every stage of the project: initiation, development, implementation and evaluation. This means grass root engagement in decision making, priority setting and performance evaluation.
- Make sure that the partnership between all project team members, including the grass root organizations, is based on equality; avoid a top-down approach. Keep an open communication towards each other, respectfully and on equal footing.
- Be flexible to reach the best results. Keep in mind that the participants set the pace and content of the program.

## 2. A gender and human rights perspective

For a project to be successful it is important to describe and analyze the problem that the project is addressing. The description should include a clear definition of the problem, its roots, its occurrence and a possible solution. The project team and its partners have to agree on this description.

A successful approach of honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment is based on gender perspective. By focusing on gender inequality, based on the patriarchal system, as the root of the violence, the project team avoids the risk of stigmatization, of suggesting that, as in Western European countries, this type of violence only exists in migrant communities. It also allows you to differentiate the ‘target’ group, or group of participants in terms of gender, age and sexual orientation. This way, the needs and interests of each subgroup can be carefully specified, and different approaches can be developed. Methods and materials can be adapted to the different participants, ranging from a single or multiple ethnic group, a cultural or a religious homogeneous group, a group of men, women, youth or a mixed group.

Problem analysis also means focusing on the effect of group pressure on the individual. The power of the collective influences the existence and the continuation of traditional harmful practices. Focusing on human rights in the strive against violence, could take the pressure of the often precarious discussion on cultural and religious habits and justifications.

### How to achieve?

- Describe the framework of the problem, which includes the description and analysis of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment, its roots in gender inequality, the patriarchal system and group pressure. The framework should also include the problem’s context and occurrence, as well as a clear definition of the issue(s).
- Discuss the results with the project team, the grass root organizations, and possible partner organizations, and formulate your targets.
- With the project team, formulate your main objectives: firstly, the empowerment and emancipation of (potential) victims, raising awareness on their rights. Secondly, the

change of attitude and behavior towards women and men, girls and boys, lesbian, gay, bisexuals and trans genders. Finally, the empowerment of the individual against the group. The objectives apply on micro (family), mesa (community) and macro (society) level.

- This does not mean that each organization has to work with all target groups, at all levels. Depending on available human and financial resources each organization makes a choice and is able to justify it to its audience.
- Clearly formulate additional specific objectives: What do we want to achieve with each activity? Which indicators do we use to measure success?
- Organize activities for both genders, for different age groups and, at the same time, facilitate exchanges and dialogue between the genders and age groups. Decide on your methods at the start of the project.

### 3. Confidence building and sensitivity

Next to the need of access and especially when it comes to awareness rising and educational programs, the success of a project also depends on whether it reaches its target group emotionally. “Sensitivity” and “confidence building” are key words. If a project aims to effectively implement measures against honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment, the team should never forget that these topics are taboo topics - especially with affected groups. In awareness raising and information activities the concepts used in the program, have to concur with the experiences of the participants, otherwise they will not show up. If, for example, an NGO wants to carry out a workshop on forced marriages with young students, it should always be aware that these issues could be taboo and evoke the fear of being stigmatized. Furthermore, it can really be dangerous especially for girls to speak up about certain things in public. Project teams should always create a safe atmosphere for participants to speak.

Sometimes it is better to not address issues directly, but to use indirect terminology, for instance, words like ‘family matters’ instead of ‘honor related violence’.

Finally, the central question always is: to what extent is the problem of violence that we are addressing recognized and/or acknowledged by the participants?

#### How to achieve?

- Treat your participants with respect and appreciation to reach a certain level of confidence. Keywords of the project team should be “sensitivity”, “confidence building” and “trust”.
- Be aware of potential taboos and fears that prevent the participant from fully joining the discussion. People may be afraid of stigmatization.
- Use the language of your participants. They seldom use the term ‘honor related violence’. To them there is no clear distinction between domestic violence and honor related violence. In the title of your information meeting you may want to use “Domestic Violence” instead of “Honor Related Violence”.

- The use of alternative terms may lower the threshold, if necessary. Instead of “Forced Marriage” use “Mother, daughter and partner” and instead of a workshop on “Sexuality” present a meeting on “Health Education” or, for teenagers “How do I want to live my life?”. Afterwards, during the session you can address the issues of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment.
- Be aware of the possibly precarious legal position of participants. Do not ask questions about legal residence status, this may instill fear and distrust. In this context, more often than not it is not productive when public authorities initiate information activities for an audience without papers. This group often has little trust in the authorities
- Do not make idle promises to your participants, but be realistic about the problem and the solutions. People need adequate solutions for their daily problems, and answers to their questions.

#### 4. A selection of strategies and methods

Important success factors are the strategies, methods and materials that are used to reach and involve participants, to present a project, and to achieve goals. It is recommended to use different strategies and methods in a project, and to be open to change when a method or strategy does not work out properly. Sometimes participants are limited in their options. For example, some girls and women are unable to come to a shelter or other support agencies because they are not allowed to go out alone, or they are forbidden to make private phone calls. For these girls and women, the shelter can organize anonymous online counseling.

Also, different target groups have different needs and demands. Professionals need other information materials about forced marriage than young people do. Layout, language (formal, informal, language of country of origins or of residence) should always be adapted to the needs of the different participants.

#### How to achieve?

- Always keep your intended audience in mind with the production and distribution of written materials (invitations, information brochures, etc). Aim to speak their language.
- Use multiple disciplines and methods, like discussions, workshops, film, soap, excursions, arts, like painting, music or theatre. Mind your language.
- Use biographic work to raise substantial awareness for the work with (potential) perpetrators.
- Encourage and challenge the participants to be critical. Stimulate critical thinking and open discussion. Never “point the finger”; do not tell the participants what is right and what is wrong. Instead have an open discussion, without blaming or shaming each other.
- Whenever you organize an information meeting, inform the local shelter, police and psychological services, so they are prepared for possible referrals

- (Re) consider your activities and methods on a regular basis during the implementation process. Why do we use this method, does it suit our participants, does it help us reach our goals, or does it need adjustment?

## 5. Professionalism and intercultural competence

If project team members are experts on the issues of honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment this is a factor of success. Both paid and volunteer employees have to be sensitized to the existence and mechanism of these problems. They need to have a good understanding and ample experience in how to address and discuss these issues in a safe and open atmosphere. Professionalism is imperative (also in volunteers).

A certain degree of personal engagement can work out well. Engaged employees may add to the success of a project as the struggle against violence and its connected mechanisms of oppression, requires both personal engagement and professionalism. Both aspects are necessary ingredients. However, too much personal engagement in a project may lead to inadequate decisions and a risk of “burn out” amongst employees. On the other hand, being too strictly professional could lead to a lack of empathy and commitment. It is virtually impossible to feel nothing in this line of work.

In the recruitment of the counselors, advisors and educators, the organization has to carefully consider whether they should be of the same ethnicity as the participants. In any case, impartiality and independence of the trainers and the counselors is essential. Knowledge must be the main argument, not a person’s ethnic background. Every volunteer or employees needs to be trained on intercultural competences.

### How to achieve?

- Try to form intercultural teams and include professionals with migrant backgrounds. Carefully select and guide project members and train them to address the issues honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment with different participants. Be aware of who you send out to address a group, should it be someone of the same gender and/or ethnicity as the intended participants or willfully not. The staff should be adapted to the participant group.
- Work on intercultural competences by training and regular work supervision on topics like an open, culture sensitive and attitude, communicating with people of a different social-cultural background, dealing with different norms and values and with prejudices.
- Consider collaborating with persons who have personally experienced the problem at hand, but who lived through it, and are able to live with it. These so called “experience experts” appeal to participants because of the similar background and problems they are dealing with. Participants might recognize their story.
- You could also let these “experience experts” play a role in the training of public authorities or professionals, who often do not have personal experience and/or knowledge about honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment. However,

it is important that these experts are equal partner in the team and that they will be supported and, if necessary, mentored by the other project members.

- Be aware that working together with “experience experts” can also form a risk. Some experience experts tend to have a narrow view on the issue, due to their personal experiences, and can’t relate adequately to what the participants need.
- Execute a regular quality control of the employees in your organization. Be aware of the risks of ‘burn out’.

## 6. Cooperation

An integrated, comprehensive approach in the prevention and combat of honor related violence, forced marriage and abandonment is a factor of success. Cooperation between all stakeholders along the whole range of activities, from awareness raising, interventions and support to the prosecuting of perpetrators, leads to better results. Grass roots organizations and NGO’s cooperate with professionals in social services, schools, police and the judicial system, including immigration officers, and policymakers. This cooperation strengthens their position, brings forward their issues and furthers the development of better strategies and standards for their work.

Cooperating institutes and policymakers must be encouraged to realize and acknowledge that grass roots organizations and NGO’s, working directly with the affected groups, hold valuable knowledge and insights into the problems. Grass roots organizations and NGO’s can transfer and exchange ‘inside’ knowledge and practice based expertise to the different stakeholders and politicians. Because of their close relation with the affected groups they can play a mediating role and transfer the needs of these groups to policy-makers. Because of their overview and practical point of view they are also able to identify relevant problems and develop new strategies and ideas.

Nationwide and European networks, instead of only local, are an important success factor in the fight against violence.

### How to achieve?

- At the start of cooperations, reach an agreement with the partners on the definition of domestic violence, honor related violence, forced marriage and/or abandonment.
- Exchange ideas, but don’t let prejudices, judgments and fears be your guide, on either side. Make sure that a mutual and sustainable relationship is carried by more than one person.
- Reach an agreement (on paper) with the partners on tasks, roles and responsibilities as well as common methods and priorities. This will prevent misunderstandings.
- Transfer knowledge about the mechanisms of honor related violence, forced marriage and abandoning in a close exchange between different stakeholders and offer trainings for authorities by experts
- Cooperate not only on a practical level, but also on the policy level. Building alliances

between governmental organizations and NGO's (local, regional as well as national and European) is the most effective in combating the problems of violence and oppression.

- Join forces with colleague grass root organizations and NGO's, to strengthen your position towards institutions and financers. Ample documentation and sharing of good practices can improve the success of your programs and methods.

## 7. Continuity and sustainability

Successful programs can be repeated or adapted for further implementation in different and/or broader (regular) settings, in other organizations, with other groups of participants, or for other useful purposes. Often, after a project has finished there is no funding for further implementation of the results. Continuation can't be guaranteed by money alone. Experiences and expertise of successful projects are best spread by participants; word to mouth.

### How to achieve?

- Formulate a description of the project and its methods, including accountability and evaluation. Evaluation and monitoring at the end of the project are essential for constructive accountability, but also for successful dissemination.
- Make sure that, from the very start of the project, there is a plan for dissemination and continuation to create sustainability.
- Also think of ways to implement experiences and expertise of a project without funding. For example, ask the participants to communicate and share the results with their relatives or peer groups.

# Address list

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## ALMAeuropa

Östermalmsgatan 6  
114 26 Stockholm  
Sweden

[cecilia@almaeuropa.org](mailto:cecilia@almaeuropa.org) & [eduardo@almaeuropa.org](mailto:eduardo@almaeuropa.org)  
[www.almaeuropa.org](http://www.almaeuropa.org)



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## Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies

46 Makedonitissas Avenue  
P.O.Box 24005  
Nicosia 1703  
Cyprus

[christina@medinstgenderstudies.org](mailto:christina@medinstgenderstudies.org)  
[www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org)



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## Papatya/TDF

Postfach 41 02 66  
12112 Berlin  
Germany

[info@papatya.org](mailto:info@papatya.org)  
[www.papatya.org](http://www.papatya.org)



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## Autonomous Woman Association (Bağımsız Kadın Derneği)

Mesudiye Mahallesi Cemalpaşa Caddesi No: 110/3  
Mersin  
Turkey

[mersin\\_bkd@hotmail.com](mailto:mersin_bkd@hotmail.com)



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### Foundation Welsaen

Jufferstraat 4  
1508 GE Zaanstad  
The Netherlands  
[annelies.jansen@welsaen.nl](mailto:annelies.jansen@welsaen.nl)  
[info@welsaen.nl](mailto:info@welsaen.nl)  
[www.welsaen.nl](http://www.welsaen.nl)



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### Foundation Kezban

Markenlaan 1  
1355 BA Almere  
The Netherlands  
[info@stichtingkezban.nl](mailto:info@stichtingkezban.nl)  
[www.stichtingkezban.nl](http://www.stichtingkezban.nl)



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### MOVISIE

Catharijnesingel 47  
P.O. Box 19129  
3501 DC Utrecht  
The Netherlands  
[p.snelders@movisie.nl](mailto:p.snelders@movisie.nl) & [h.bakker@movisie.nl](mailto:h.bakker@movisie.nl)  
[info@movisie.nl](mailto:info@movisie.nl)  
[www.movisie.nl](http://www.movisie.nl)



kennis en aanpak van  
sociale vraagstukken





