

MIND THE GAP!

**IMPROVING
INTERVENTION IN
INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE
AGAINST OLDER WOMEN**

**A training programme for
law enforcement agencies**

Heloísa Perista and Alexandra Silva

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Training aid: *Power-point* show



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Our thanks also go to the Lisbon District Public Prosecutor's Office for allowing us access to court cases based on domestic violence against older women, as well as the interest and willingness the Office has shown us throughout the five years in which we have been doing research work on intimate partner violence against older women.

Lastly, we would like leave a word of encouragement to all older women who have been victims of intimate partner violence – you have the right to live your lives free from intimate partner violence! It is up to all of us, each and every one of us, to help ensure that this right is actively upheld and that the dignity due to them will be respected.

1. The Project: Mind the Gap! Improving intervention in intimate partner violence against older women

This project, which is coordinated by the "Zoom – Society for Prospective Developments" ran from March 2011 to February 2013. Its aims were to increase the capacity of law enforcement and social support organisations to tackle intimate partner violence against older women, in addition to increasing public awareness of the issue and reaching out to victims.

Judging from the outcomes of our previous research (IPVoW¹), we noted that only a small minority of older women victims seek help; it is evident that they are less aware of existing support systems and less able to access support than younger women. It was also apparent that law enforcement and social support agencies, as well as the general public had little awareness of the complexities of the issue.

Many practitioners and professionals throughout the law enforcement and social support environments acknowledge that there is a serious lack of information about how to deal with these cases, that their actual options for handling these cases are limited and that examples of good practice are not widely available. Furthermore, on frequent occasions cases of IPV against older women cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved.

¹ *IPVoW – Intimate Partner Violence against OlderWomen* was a research Project developed with the same partners as for the Project Mind the Gap!. Information about the Project and its respective reports are available at: www.ipvow.org

Our project focuses explicitly on developing the capacity of law enforcement and social support agencies to deal with these issues.

In order to better understand how law enforcement agencies currently deal with cases of intimate partner violence against older women, our research comprised the quantitative and qualitative analysis of police and public prosecutor case files, reinforced by national workshops and consultation with experts, professionals and practitioners. This research resulted in the following outcomes:

- gained more insight into factual interventions and support by law enforcement agencies;
- raised awareness within law enforcement and social support agencies about older women as victims of intimate partner violence (IPV);
- encouraged agencies to tackle the problem and to improve outreach to this subgroup of victims;
- assisted in building the capacity of law enforcement and social support agencies so that they can respond to and intervene successfully in these cases.

The project is coordinated by the "Zoom – Society for Prospective Developments" and is developed in partnership with seven organisations in six different European countries.

The following organisations and individuals took part in the project:

- Austria – IKF (Institute of Conflict Research), Vienna: Birgitt Haller e Helga Amesberger

- › Germany - Zoom - Society for Prospective Developments e.V., Goettingen: Barbara Nägele, Nils Pagels e Sandra Kotlenga
- › Germany - German Police University (DHPol), Muenster: Thomas Goergen, Anabel Taefi, Sabine Nowak e Benjamin Kraus
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- › Portugal - CESIS - Centro de Estudos para a Intervenção Social, Lisboa: Heloísa Perista e Alexandra Silva.

2. Introduction to the Module

Intimate partner violence against older women is a socially relevant question and it shows a tendency to increase in the way that society is growing older. Despite the progress registered in the effort made to combat intimate partner violence against women, our research has indicated that such incidents are frequently aggravated by the dynamics of aging, such as retirement, chronic illnesses and dependency on care providers.

All too often, these situations have not been acknowledged or understood by law enforcement officers and by professionals working in social support agencies particularly when abusive behaviour does not include physical or sexual violence, but rather, manipulating control, financial exploitation and negligence. Such situations do not often find their way into the reports and few cases are filed. Furthermore, the frailty and vulnerability of some of the victims and/or some of the perpetrators give rise to special challenges that have to be tackled by intervening institutions.

One thing is certain and that is domestic violence has gained a lot more visibility in Portugal. The path that has been followed in the sphere of defining policies and making support measures in conformity with such policies has been remarkable particularly during the last ten years. In 1999, Portugal adopted the National Plans for Domestic Violence. At the moment, the 4th National Plan against Domestic Violence (2011-2013) is being implemented. The Plan is structured



around five strategic areas of intervention: Inform, raise awareness and educate; Protect victims and promote their integration in society; Prevent recurrence – measure taken as regards the perpetrators; Train Professional; Investigate and monitor. The present Training Module is integrated in the section dealing with Training professionals, where it seeks to comply with Measure 36 – Training professionals to intervene in cases of domestic violence, and with Measure 42 – Promoting specialised training where working with particularly vulnerable victims is concerned.

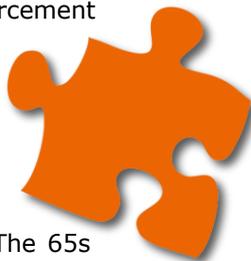
Moreover, within the sphere of some research recently carried out by the project Daphne IPVoW – Intimate Partner Violence against older Women (referred to above), it was noted that training modules that would specially deal with the problem of intimate partner violence against older women needed to be developed and adopted. The present Training Module is therefore a concrete contribution in this domain.

The fact also needs to be mentioned that the training contents we are introducing here, were tested in two training sessions in the pilot schemes stage that took place in February 2013. The trainees were law-enforcement officers from the Public Safety Police (*Polícia de Segurança Pública*) and the National Republican Guard (*Guarda Nacional Republicana*), covered by a partnership between the Directorate-General of Internal Administration / Ministry of Internal Administration (*Direção-Geral da Administração Interna*) and the police forces. The pilot scheme had the participation of 32 law-enforcement officers and it accomplished its mission, which was to check the Module's contents for their interest and their suitability for training purposes. Likewise, the Criminal Police School (*Escola de Polícia Judiciária*) was asked to validate the Module's contents.

The Manual presented here, therefore is based on the duly tested training module and has been approved by the agencies intervening in this field. It has the purpose of being used by these agencies so that they can carry out training activity targeting law-enforcement officers whose special duty it is to intervene in cases of domestic violence and/or the “The 65s Support Programme– Keeping the Elderly Safe” (*Programa Apoio 65 - Idosos em Segurança*).

2.1. Who is this Programme meant for?

The training module is targeted at law-enforcement officers who are being or have already been trained to deal with domestic violence and/or violence against the elderly. It is particularly aimed at police officers who are working in specialised support teams falling within the sphere of Domestic Violence programmes and “The 65s Support Programme– Keeping the Elderly Safe”.



However, in the likelihood of the Module being used in training groups that have their own distinct profiles, the didactic contents should be appraised as to their suitability. Accordingly, it is possible to choose to include all the topics or only some of them taking into account the groups’ training needs. Similarly, some of the topics we have suggested may be dealt with in depth or skimmed over.

The Module caters to groups consisting of between 15 to 20 participants.

2.2. Duration and framework

The Module is designed to last 4 hours.

The Module is built around three topics: i) Intimate partner violence against older women - cross-referencing gender and age; ii) Addressing violence with the victim; and iii) Support services, cooperation and contact networks: the role of the police force. The first topic requires about 80 minutes; the second topic about 65 minutes and the third topic about 55 minutes. In addition, 25 minutes should be reserved for the participants to introduce themselves and for the trainer to speak about the programme contents, and 15 minutes should be occupied with the participants' final assessment. The time slots may obviously be reduced if the Module is included in a training course on domestic violence or violence against the elderly.

2.3. Aims

At the end of the Module, the trainees should be able to:

- Understand the issues connected with gender and age underpinning violence;
- Identify the main risk factors in intimate partner violence against older women;
- Address violence with an elderly woman victim of intimate partner violence;

- Identify likely partners in the areas of health care, the social services and specialised local agencies as well as what each services provides when responding to cases of intimate partner violence against older women.

In this training module, the term 'older women' refers to women aged 60 and over; the term 'violence' as used in intimate partner violence, includes sexual harassment and violence; psychological, verbal and emotional violence; financial exploitation; manipulative control; stalking and negligence, as well physical violence or assault perpetrated by cohabiting or former partners.

Furthermore, the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator' also need mentioning as they are frequently used. We would like to point out that the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator' do not presuppose a criminal conviction, and there is thus no legal finding of guilt or innocence.



The legal framework of domestic violence has not been the object of any special focus here, as we presume that the people targetted by this Module will already have received a training in this subject.

2.4. Methodology

The course relies on different methodologies that range from practical tasks to theoretical explanations. The goal is to involve trainees in active learning processes leading to practice.

We recommend that the power point show is used as a teaching-learning aid (Cf. slides in the Annex).

2.5. General Module Plan

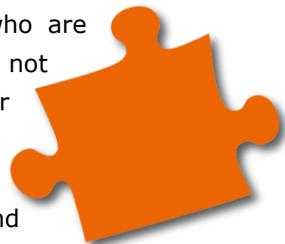
Topics	
Participants introduce themselves; introducing the Module programme contents	25'
Topic 1: Intimate partner violence against older women - cross-referencing gender and age	10'
1.1. Getting to know the reality – Incidence and prevalence of violence against elderly women happening in the family	40'
1.2. Understanding the reality – Gender, age and the social dynamics of violence	15'
1.3. Perceiving the reality: Risk factors and the social / structural causes of violence against older women	15'
Topic 2: Addressing violence with the victim	5'
2.1. Addressing violence with an elderly(possible) victim of intimate partner violence	55'
2.2. Difficulties and strategies in addressing violence with an elderly victim of intimate partner violence	10'
Topic 3: Support services, cooperation and contact networks: the role of the police force	5'
3.1 Multisectoral and multiprofessional cooperation	40'
3.2 Basic guidelines to successful cooperation	10'
Assessment	15'

3. Intimate partner violence against older women – The Training Module

3.1. Topic 1: Intimate partner violence against older women. Cross-referencing gender and age

The way in which violence will be addressed in this Module is (i) from a gender point of view, and (ii) from a multidimensional perspective. Both these perspectives are grounded in a life-cycle approach. When looking at gender, violence against elderly women is understood to be a socio-cultural product and calls attention to the reality that throughout her life-cycle, the fact of being a woman has brought her accumulated disadvantages. The multidimensional perspective deals with her personal history (for example, her prior experiences in terms of a violent family environment), the lack of tenable solutions for older women who are victims of violence (in the present, but most of all in the past), building gender identities and the power relations that predominate socially and culturally.

It should not be forgotten that older women who are victims of violence are 'women'. Their age should not be (and in most cases is not) the main reason for provoking the violence they are subjected to. For this reason, intimate partner violence against older women is a complex reality where age and gender meet at the crossroad.



Aims of do topic 1

- Learn about the incidence and the prevalence of violence against older women happening in the family
- Understand questions connected with gender and age underpinning violence and get to know about the dynamic of violence
- Become familiar with what the risk factors are and the social / structural causes of violence against older women.

Plan of Topic 1

Topic	Methods	
Topic 1: Intimate partner violence against older women. Cross-referencing gender and age	Introducing the aims of the topic (slide 4)	5'
Getting to know the reality - the incidence and the prevalence of violence against older women within the families	<i>Brainstorming</i> about our perceptions of Intimate partner violence against older women; Presenting and discussing the statistics and data gathered by the IPVoW e MtG! Projects (slides 5 – 20)	45'
Getting to know the reality - gender and age and the social dynamics of violence	Presenting and discussing the main social dynamics of intimate partner violence against older women (slide 21)	15'
Getting to know the reality - the risk factors and the social / structural causes of violence against older women	Presenting and discussing the main causes and the risk factors leading to intimate partner violence against older women (slide 22)	15'

3.1.1. Getting to know the reality - the incidence and the prevalence of violence against older women within the families

In Portugal, obvious progress has been made by research in field of (domestic) violence, more particularly during the last ten years mainly where various Master's and PhD theses have been written. We have also witnessed the fact that there is a growing availability of statistics based violence that come from government and non-government sources.

This progress has helped to publicise violence against women and make it more visible at social and political level. It has resulted in making new laws and channelling funding so as to set up and run agencies that support victims of domestic violence.



Nevertheless, we have discerned an almost total absence of any research carried out on older women who are victims of violence, and here it is important to say that the gap is seen both at national and at European level. The focus has always fallen on working women. What we have found, although only a few of them as yet, are studies that have been on violence against the elderly, often pin-pointing \specific localities where gender has not been taken into account in analytical terms.



Indeed, most of the statistics produced in Portugal has been insensitive to breaking down the data into sex and age which would

allow a more effective profile on violence against older women to be made.

Be that as it may, if we take the statistics into consideration, we soon see that two facts emerge: 1) domestic violence is mostly perpetrated by men against women; 2) in violence against the elderly, the amount of intimate partner violence is significant. Even in situations involving extreme violence (murder) against women and against older women, intimate partner violence (meaning husbands or companions) stands out.

Therefore, what we propose to do here is look at a series of official and non-government statistical data on the one hand. On the other hand, we shall be giving data and qualitative information gathered in the Projects undertaken in the domain of the *IPVoW – Intimate Partner Violence against older Women* and *Mind the Gap! Improving intervention in intimate partner violence against older women*.

3.1.2. Getting to know the reality - gender and age and the social dynamics of violence

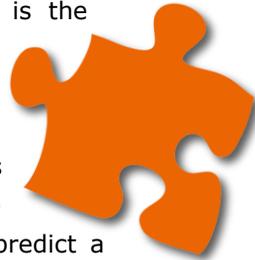
Violence perpetrated by men against women is one of the most serious crimes against humanity. It is grounded in unequal power relations in terms of gender, feminine and masculine identity built upon principles governed by asymmetrical rules, and upon more or less permissive, tolerant expectations and social pressures in terms of intimate partner violence.

In the event of older women who are victims of intimate partner violence, other factors cross with gender, mainly their *time* of life

(referred to here, as the generation issue), (long-standing) intimate partner relationships characterised by violence, possible up-bringing amid family violence, questions dealing with autonomy and dependence throughout their life course and questions connected with (swapping roles in) care-provision.

3.1.3. Getting to know the reality - the risk factors and the social / structural causes of violence against older women

Violence against the elderly / older women is the result of a complex interaction of individual, relational, local community and social factors. In the Report issued by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2011), a set of risk factors is indicated which concentrate on a (potential) victim on the one hand, and on the other, predict a (potential) perpetrator. Therefore, in this chapter, we shall be looking at the structural or generic risk factors that are differentiated according to gender as well as factors related to age. Both gender and age-related risk factors may be considered in an individual, relational, community or social dimension².



² In agreement with the ecological model based on the four levels of intervention against abusing elderly people, as described in WHO, 2011.

Risk factors

Dimension	Victim	Perpetrator
Individual	Feminine sex	Masculine sex
	Age	Age
	Physical frailty	Abusive consumption of alcohol or other substances
	State of mental health (e.g. dementia, depressive disturbances)	State of mental health (e.g. dementia, depressive disturbances)
	Growing need for care-provision – care transfer	Growing need for care-provision – possible over-burden
	Financial dependence	Financial problems
	Socio-economic situation and financial ability to pay for support services needed	
Relacional	Long-standing intimate partner violence – state of incapacity	Long-standing intimate partner violence – the power is in his hands
	Forms of organisation and family dynamics rooted in gender roles – wife/woman	Forms of organisation and family dynamics rooted in gender roles – man/boss of the household
	Isolation from the (rest of the) family	Isolation from the (rest of the) family
Comunitário / local	Social isolation – little contact with the neighbours and women friends	
	Unaware of the existence of local agencies offering support to victims of domestic violence	
Societal	Social practices biased against gender – linking women to dependence, female identity	Social practices biased against gender – linking men to power, male identity
	Unaware of older women's rights mainly to do with cases of domestic violence	
	Economic factors (female life course characterised by material inequality, becoming more apparent in old age.	

Note: Within the sphere of the Project Mind the Gap!, a *check-list* was drawn up to assess the risk factors in intimate partner violence against older women. The *check-list* is included in the Directorate-General of Internal Administration Manual on law enforcement in cases dealing with domestic violence.

3.2. Topic 2: Addressing violence with the victim

Knowing how to address an older woman who has fallen victim intimate partner violence is particularly relevant in the activity undertaken by law-enforcement agents. It is already a well-known fact that older women do not often contact the police about this problem or lodge a complaint. We also know that in some situations, when they do contact the police, what many of these women most want is to stop the violence without incriminating their husband / partner. It is therefore particularly important that law-enforcement officers are provided with the skills that will allow them to address the subject of intimate partner violence against older women.

Aims of topic 2

- Train members of the Security Forces to address the problem with older women who are victims of violence;
- Sensitise members of the Security Forces about the difficulties they are likely to come across, and train them to use strategies that will help them to deal with such problems.

Plan of Topic 2

Topic	Methods	
Topic 2: Addressing violence with the victim	Introduce the aims of the topic (slide 23)	5'
Addressing violence with an older (possible) victim of intimate partner violence	<i>Role-play</i> : Dona Emília goes to the Police Station (see the task; slide 24); introducing and talking about general conduct guidelines and asking questions (slides 25 – 31)	55'
Difficulties and strategies in addressing violence with victim of possible intimate partner violence	Introducing possible difficulties and talking about strategies to solve them (slides 31 - 34)	10'

3.2.1. Addressing violence with an older (possible) victim of intimate partner violence

There is no perfect, single solution in addressing the subject of intimate partner violence with older women. Nevertheless, our guiding principle is that we start off by adapting the questions to suit the situation. Also, the law-enforcement agent has to feel comfortable with the questions s/he asks and the expressions s/he uses. But it may be useful for law-enforcement officers to get to know how to start off a conversation about the subject, how to ask for detailed information and how to deal with the emotional responses and information that is being given to them which is often shocking and of a sensitive nature.

Some guidelines are therefore given about setting up empathy and gaining the confidence and trust of the older woman so that she feels respected, comforted and that her decisions have been taken into

consideration. The guidelines listed in the Annex should nevertheless be discussed so that the law-enforcement officers feel as if they thought of them themselves.

Before the discussion about these guidelines begins, we suggest doing the following task:

Role-play – Dona Emília goes to the Police Station



Step 1: After introducing the task and its aims, the trainer should read the scene-set to the group. Two members of the group are invited to role play the scene where a police officer is talking to an older woman about her being the victim of violence. The other members in the group are invited to follow the conversation.

Many people dislike taking part in role plays because they are afraid of exhibiting themselves and they feel inhibited about playing their role “correctly” and making a good job of it. In this particular case, the role of the law-enforcement officer should reverse her/his role in that s/he does everything wrong, instead of doing everything by the book, correctly. This will help the trainees to act more freely during the role play. Some instructions are:

- The person playing the role of the law-enforcement officer should try and behave “incorrectly”; s/he should proceed by doing everything that prevents setting up a confidential atmosphere (e.g. refusing to maintain eye contact; underestimating the situation, etc.) and withholds her/his help from the older woman.

- The person playing the role of the older woman should try to act as if s/he were really the victim of intimate partner violence.
- It is important that the role-players do not only speak their parts but play their parts as if in real life. The law-enforcement officer is sitting in her/his chair. The older woman comes in, walking with some difficulty due to poor mobility. She has hearing problems too. She goes up to the law-enforcement officer.
- The trainees observe the whole procedure and take notes on what they see, indicating what should not have been said or done.

Step 2: Setting the scene. "The policeman on duty has been working at this Police Station for a relatively short time. He is at the attendance desk when Dona Emília comes in. She is a woman of 80 years of age with a few hearing problems and difficulty in walking although in full possession of her mental faculties, She complains that she has been beaten up by her husband who is 10 years younger than she is. Dona Emília is very upset and asks the police to intervene and try and calm down her husband."

Step 3: Role-play. The two trainees have a few minutes to prepare their roles and then, during the next 10 minutes they play out their roles while the other observe them and take notes about what was "wrong".

Step 4: Lockstep - whole class discussion. The trainees open the discussion:

- Firstly, the older woman who has been abused describes how she felt and what her needs are. Secondly, the police officer describes how s/he felt. These descriptions should not be open to

discussion. This is because the trainees can share their feelings but are not allowed to make any comments or express their opinions about them. Finally, all the observers say what they found to be incorrect and the trainer writes them down on the board or on a flip-chart.

- At the second stage, the trainer asks the trainees to enumerate the most important aspects that should be taken into account when talking to an older woman who is a victim of violence. The trainer writes down all the suggestions and the role-play feedback on the board or on a flip-chart.

Step 5: In this last task, the trainer introduces and discusses the guidelines to general conduct when dealing with intimate partner violence against older women, and at the same time gives a list of likely expressions and questions that may be used when addressing the subject of violence.

3.2.2. Difficulties and strategies in addressing violence with an older woman of possible intimate partner violence

There are a certain number of difficulties attached to older women who are victims of intimate partner violence and which need to be taken into account, mainly when the victims suffer from mental health problems, or have linguistic barriers or belong to specific ethnic/cultural or religious groups.

It is also important to remember that these kinds of victims are particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence. In the case special facilitating strategies spoken about in this Module have to be used.

3.3. Topic 3: Support services, cooperation and contact networks: the role of the security forces

As we have mentioned above, intimate partner violence against older women is a complicated problem. In many cases, older women who are victims of violence need specialised attention and crisis-counselling services. Apart from this – and when it possible to do so – it is useful to have official or unofficial support given by people who can follow-up the older woman’s state after a violent incident. In most European countries there are agencies which cater to women victims of violence seeking help.



Very often, victims also seek the assistance of the social services or the health department or other institutions instead of going straight to either the agencies that specialise in protecting victims or to the police. It is therefore important to consider a holistic approach when intimate partner violence against older women happens.

Aims of topic 3

- In a general way, talk about the importance of developing multiprofessional and multisectoral cooperation so as to deal with violence against older women;
- Pinpoint partners in the field of health-care, the social services, specialised and local agencies, as well as their respective duties, when seeking to redress violence against older women;
- Learn about some of the basic guidelines leading to successful cooperation.

Plan of topic 3

Topic	Methods	
Topic 3: Support services, cooperation and contact networks: the role of the security forces	Introducing the aims of Topic 3 (slide 35)	5'
Multisectoral and multiprofessional cooperation	Case study: 'How to help Dona Antónia' (see the task; slide 36); introducing and discussing the guidelines and types of services (slides 37 – 39)	55'
Basic guidelines to successful cooperation	Introducing and discussing the basic guidelines (slide 40)	10'

3.3.1 Multisectoral and multiprofessional cooperation

This topic should begin with a brief introduction about multisectoral and multiprofessional cooperation as well about the advantages of cooperating itself on the one hand, and the barriers jeopardising it on the other. Following on from this is a case-study.

The case study requires the class of trainees to get into groups of five people. The case study is given to each of the groups which are asked to answer the questions on the survey and draw up a sociogram of local organisations that are likely to be involved in helping cases of intimate partner violence against older women.

Case Study – How to help Dona Antónia

At the beginning of March 2008, law-enforcement officers were approached in the street by a woman who said that she had just seen her neighbour of 81 years of age being beaten up by husband who was also aged 81. The woman added that she was constantly hearing her neighbour screaming.

The officers went to the house pointed out by the woman; after having spoken to both the victim and the suspect they concluded that the complaint was true. A report was written up in which reference was made to large wounds on the victim's heels and suggested that home medical supervision be given to both the victim and the suspect, taking into account their advanced age and their fragile mental states.

At the end of September 2008, the police requested a hearing with the witness. She confirmed that she had seen the suspect beating the

victim's shoulder with a stick until the stick broke. The only thing the victim did was try to protect herself with her shawl. Both the victim and her husband were very old. The victim was thought to be bed-ridden. The couple lived in very precarious hygienic conditions and seemed to be under-nourished. The husband showed signs of being very stubborn, violent and abusive.

The Public Prosecutor's Office delegated the case to the Police Criminal Department which would proceed with the necessary investigation. In mid-October 2008, the Police opened a hearing with the victim and went to her home whereupon she swore that she had never been attacked by her husband although they quarrelled now and again. They had been married for so long that she had forgotten how many years it was. She did not wish to press charges against her husband.

On the same day, the police opened a hearing with the suspect who was also present at the couple's home. A few years before, he had been cited for disobedience, having been given a suspended two or three year sentence. He denied that all the allegations against him were not true.

The police officers then produced the substantiating investigation report. They said they had gone to the couple's home because they had been informed that the victim was unable to come to the Police station. Both the victim and the suspect were advanced in years. The victim also suffered from health problems of a psycho-motor nature. In talking 'off-the-record' to the suspect, the law-enforcement officers tried to persuade him to seek the help of the social services but he was adamant that he did not want any kind of assistance.

At the end of January 2009, the police sent the case on to the Public Prosecutor's Office where it was only read in September 2009 by a Public Prosecutor who had hitherto been absent on maternity leave.

At the same time (September 2009), the Public Prosecutor's Office ordered that the records be sent to the Police so that the police officers could testify as to the facts of the case. However, due to lack of staff at the Public Prosecutor's Office, the records were only sent to the Police at the beginning of February 2010.

At the beginning of February 2010, the police officers were heard. They confirmed all the facts. They did not check whether the victim had any bruising on her shoulder because she did not wish to undress in front of them. The victim could hardly speak, limiting herself to shaking her head when she meant 'no'. The house was filthy. After the incident, the police checked up on the couple at home every now and then to see if everything was in order. In December 2009, they were told by neighbours that the victim had died.

The Public Prosecutor's Office solicited the victim's birth certificate on which it was stated that she had died in mid-February 2009. It also requested information from the Social Security about the victim's situation as a complainant. The Social Security stated that no court case had been registered and that no information about it could be found in their data basis.

At the end of March 2010, the Public Prosecutor's office concluded the witnesses' statements on file and that indicated that a crime consisting of simple physical assault had been committed. Owing to the fact that the victim did not wish to lodge a complaint and the accused did not oppose desisting, the case was annulled and the

records were shelved due to the legal inadmissibility of criminal proceedings.

In giving the trainees the facts of the case, they are then asked to get into groups and discuss it by considering the following three issues:

- What would they have done.
- What agencies /services would they have involved (at this point they would produce the sociogram – see below).
- What steps would they have taken to involve these organisations.

SOCIOGRAM SHOWING THE ORGANISATIONS

Please think about the organisations/ professional groups, indicated in the boxes in the sociogram, which would be likely to help in intimate partner violence against older women. Describe the different kinds of cooperation that exists (now or potentially) among the organisations. Also describe the nature of these institutional and their professional relations.

By relying on your own experience, answer the following questions:

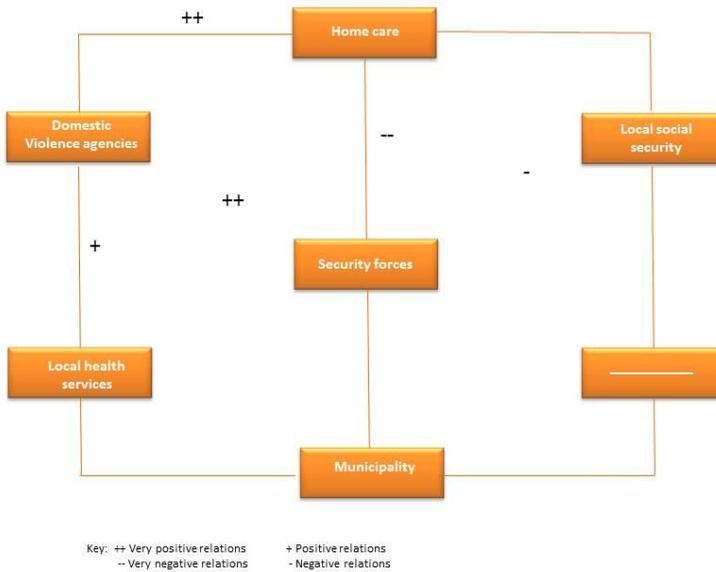
- What are the usual duties of these organisations as regards intimate partner violence against older women?
- What sort of cases would you take to one of these organisations?

- What kinds of professional groups work in this organisation?
- Are you obliged to contact this particular organisation / professional group?
- What are the other organisations/professional groups that this particular organisation works with?
- What are the respective contacts and during what timetable can we get in touch with this organisation?
- Do you have any sort of positive or negative experience as regards working with this organisation? If yes, give some examples.
- How may successful contact and communication be kept up with this organisation?
- What problems may come up when working with this organisation / professional group?



If it is not possible to complete the sociogram based on the organisations during the training session itself, we suggest that the task be finished after the course. In completing the exercise, the sociogram could prove to be very useful as it allows the law-enforcement officer to see what resources to call upon in the local surroundings, find out ways of activating them and detect any hurdles that need overcoming. The sociogram is also useful when gathering information at a later stage in terms of what the different organisations do in the local community (how to contact them, during what working hours, etc.).

An example of a local-community organisations sociogram



After having thought about the questions suggested above and having compiled their sociograms, ask the trainees to show the results of their group work and discuss it with the whole class.

3.3.2. Basic guidelines to successful cooperation

There are many kinds of cooperation involving different professional groups. In a multiprofessional network of effective operational cooperation, we should be mindful that each group and organisation has its own duties and responsibilities. Given this fact, it is important to clarify what each entity's roles, tasks and responsibilities are. It is also essential to learn about the limitations and the problems that

could possibly arise when working with other professional groups and organisations.

4. References

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