

MONITORING PROGRAM OF THE OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)

The VAW Monitoring Program coordinates the activities of the National VAW Monitor Network in 25 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Mongolia. NGOs working in the fields of violence against women were invited to take the role of National VAW Monitor and facilitate the continued development of the StopVAW website. This website, launched in 2003, was developed by Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (MAHR) with the financial support and operational involvement of OSI. The website describes developments in combating VAW and offers unique resources, including legal analyses for advocates to promote women's human rights in the countries of the above region. The English language Country Pages of the website are maintained by the National VAW Monitors. The national language version of the Country Pages is launched in the framework of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, in 2006.

www.stopvaw.org/Country_Pages

For further information, see:

The Open Society Institute, a private operating and grantmaking foundation, aims to shape public policy to promote democratic governance, human rights, and economic, legal, and social reform. OSI was created in 1993 by investor and philanthropist George Soros. The Soros foundations network encompasses more than 60 countries.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: DO THE GOVERNMENTS

CARE? NGO reports on state response

The VAW Monitoring Program invited the 25 National VAW Monitors¹ to map the situation in their countries on violence against women, with special regard to the state response to it.

The monitoring methodology was built on Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the protection of women against violence. The examined questions include:

- ◆ Responsible government bodies and their mandate regarding violence against women
- ◆ Action plans and their implementation
- ◆ State budget to combat violence against women, including support for NGOs
- ◆ Available laws, regulations and codes of conduct
- ◆ Services and assistance to victims (shelters, hotlines, crisis centers, legal aid, etc.)
- ◆ Training and education at all levels
- ◆ Role of the media
- ◆ Awareness-raising activities
- ◆ Available research and statistics.

As a result of the monitoring, 25 Country Fact Sheets and Monitoring Reports have been prepared. These Fact Sheets and Country Reports issue clear recommendations to governments, serving as effective tools for advocacy at national and international levels. The reports will be available online at www.soros.org/women, and www.stopvaw.org/Country_Pages.

¹ Participating countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Tajikistan, Ukraine

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

In general, the reports show that although the problem of violence against women has received more attention in recent years, it is not a priority on the policy agendas of the countries monitored. States have not fulfilled their respective international commitments exhaustively. Recent years' legislation and policy activities have begun to address combating domestic violence and trafficking. However, appropriate financial means, monitoring mechanisms for full protection of women victims of violence and coordinated response, multi-agency cooperation in cases of violence against women are also lacking in most of the countries.

Assistance and services to victims of violence against women are provided by NGOs in the vast majority of the cases, with minimal, if any, state contribution, and in coping with financial uncertainty.

Despite some attempts, education and training systems at all levels, including in-service programs for the different professions, do not systematically integrate the issue of gender equality and the problem of violence against women into curricula.

Although its attention to the issue has increased, the media does not effectively use its potential to promote non-stereotyped images of women and men; rather, it often transmits stereotyped messages.

States have not developed common indicators to measure the scale of violence against women. The lack of gender-disaggregated data is still a huge problem. Statistics, if any, are not available to the public in most of the countries.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENTS

- ◆ Adopt national strategies or plans of action to combat violence against women, which include clear tasks, responsible actors, budgets, deadlines and monitoring mechanisms.
- ◆ Dedicate a special amount in state budgets, providing appropriate and continuous funds to combat violence against women, and including the regular support of NGOs working in the field, especially those providing services to victims.
- ◆ Adopt appropriate laws, and regulations ensuring the full protection of women victims of violence and avoiding secondary victimization, and calling for multi-agency cooperation of all relevant professionals, including NGOs.
- ◆ Establish monitoring mechanisms to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of existing laws and policies in the field.
- ◆ Incorporate the issue of gender equality and violence against women in educational curricula at all levels.
- ◆ Provide systematic, mandatory pre-service and in-service training programs for all professionals working in the field.
- ◆ Sensitize and encourage the media to eliminate gender stereotypes, and alert the public to the phenomenon of violence against women.
- ◆ Set up common indicators used by all relevant professions in the field to evaluate the scale of violence against women. Provide access to these statistics to the general public.

For further information about the Program and the Monitoring Reports, contact:

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DID YOU KNOW? SURVEYS SHOW?

- ◆ In Albania, the Vatra Shelter placed 312 girls and women victims of trafficking in 2004, while 27 offenders were convicted under the criminal act of trafficking in women for prostitution.
 - ◆ In Armenia, 70% of abusive acts and assaults against women are committed within the family.
 - ◆ In Azerbaijan, the number of cases of women killed by intimate partners (65%) surpasses that of women killed in accidents (35%) each year.
 - ◆ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 24% of women surveyed stated that their partner repeatedly beat them. 60% of the women never called for help from any institutions.
 - ◆ In Bulgaria, an opinion poll shows that domestic violence is considered a private issue, according to 49.2% of the respondents.
 - ◆ In Croatia, every third woman has been a victim of physical aggression by her marital/extramarital partner at least once.
 - ◆ In the Czech Republic, only 8% of women reported their partner's violence to the police; only 1% of the perpetrators were ever sentenced.
 - ◆ In Estonia, almost every other case of violence ends with physical injuries for the women: during a one-year period, 44,000 women are harmed, with 6,000 of them suffering serious injuries.
 - ◆ In Georgia, the police recorded 1,466 cases of domestic violence between August 2005 and January 2006.
 - ◆ In Hungary, a violent death resulting from violence within the family occurs at least on every third day.
 - ◆ In Kazakhstan, 29% of women from the ages of 17 to 29 are subjected to sexual harassment at the workplace or at schools and universities.
 - ◆ In Kyrgyzstan, Ministry of the Interior data shows that 873 registered crimes were committed against women during the first seven month of 2003.
 - ◆ In Kosovo, the overall number of women who experienced violence and reported it to the police was 1,054 in 2005.
- For the sources of this information see http://www.stopvaw.org/Country_Pages.html, and the respective Fact Sheets
- ◆ In Lithuania, an inquiry of women on domestic violence showed that 35% suffered from constant physical violence, 17% from sexual violence, 80% from emotional violence, 20% from economic violence.
 - ◆ In Macedonia, 55 domestic violence cases were registered in 11 of the 33 courts during the period of one year (2004-2005). Data from the National SOS line for the same period shows 905 identified victims.
 - ◆ In Moldova, approximately 90 persons were sentenced for trafficking in 2006.
 - ◆ In Mongolia, 30% of respondents noted decreased interest in work as effects of domestic violence; 23% and 20% noted negative effects on their self-confidence and social status.
 - ◆ In Montenegro, every fifth woman was thrown out of the house at least once by her husband.
 - ◆ In Poland, there were 92,495 police interventions in relation to domestic violence in 2004, while there were 96,773 such interventions in 2005.
 - ◆ In Romania, about 800,000 women were frequently subjected to domestic violence; over 277,000 women did not have possession of their own money or their money was taken against their will by other family members.
 - ◆ In Russia, in an opinion poll on violence in marriages, men interviewed were five times more likely to blame their wives than themselves for starting an argument that led to a beating.
 - ◆ In Serbia, in 2004, out of 69 reported offenses related to trafficking in human beings, only 4 adult perpetrators were indicted and 2 were sentenced.
 - ◆ In Slovakia, in 2002, only 26 perpetrators of domestic violence were imprisoned and prosecuted; in 2003, this number increased six times, to 166.
 - ◆ In Tajikistan, a WHO survey shows that 50% of Tajik women reported experiencing some form of violence by a family member, while 47% reported experiencing sexual violence by their husbands.
 - ◆ In Ukraine, of the 81,339 court decisions regarding domestic violence in 2004, 74 percent of those sentenced were punished by a fine.

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Country Monitoring Reports
and Fact Sheets

from
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2006