



**Action plan to stop men's domestic
violence against women and children
2005–2008**

April 2005

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Foreword

Denmark has come a long way in breaking down the taboo surrounding violence against women. Our experience from the previous action plan shows that political focus, information and multi-agency activities are all key aspects in the efforts to eliminate violence against women.

The results have been excellent: abused women have achieved easier access to help, professionals have accumulated greater knowledge and awareness, and focus has centred on men's role in breaking the cycle of violence. A study has also documented an intensifying public debate on the issue.

But a need exists for continuous activities in the area and a strengthening of our focus on prevention. The statistics speak for themselves. Annually, 64,000 women are exposed to violence, two-thirds of them being exposed to violence perpetrated by their current or former partners.

Jointly with its rate adjustment pool partners (Sat-spuljepartierne), the Government has earmarked DKK 64 million for all activities in the coming four years. The activities are targeted not only at the women, but also at their abusers. Additionally, special activities target ethnic minority women as well as children and young people. All action plan activities must contribute to preventing violence against women, supporting victims and preventing repetition.

The action plan involves four ministries: the Ministry of Interior Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality.

The action plan has four main goals:

- Giving victims the support they need
- Halting violence through, for instance, treatment offers to abusers
- Strengthening multi-agency activities of professionals
- Compiling more knowledge on violence

The action plan envisions local authorities playing a larger role in the work related to abused women and children. For this reason, the action plan should be thoroughly embedded in local authorities' work.

The action plan gives new impetus to the work of stopping men's domestic violence against women and children.



Eva Kjer Hansen
Minister for Gender Equality

Introduction

Each year, 64,000 women are exposed to physical violence. In two out of three cases, their current or former partners perpetrated the violence. Each week, a woman is the victim of an attempted homicide, and in every second case the woman dies. Estimates indicate that each year about 20,000 children aged 5-14 experience their mothers being abused¹. Each year, about 2,000 children move into shelters with their mothers.

Young women face triple the risk of being exposed to violence compared to women in general².

Annually, just over 3,000 cases of violence against women are reported.

The above figures show that far too many women experience violence in their daily lives, and far too many children witness their mothers being abused. Thus, special efforts must still be expended to stop violence against women.

In its action plan for 2005–2008, the Government will uphold focus on:

- Support to victims
- Activities aimed at perpetrators
- Activities aimed at professionals
- Knowledge and information³

Another key point of the action plan is a strong focus on prevention.

Ideally, prevention revolves around preventing violence before it ever occurs, possibly by ensuring that the surroundings take rapid, professional action to stop violence as early as possible.

Preventive activities target the general population as well as the professionals who encounter the violent families.

This is why the action plan encompasses an array of information campaigns and training offers.

The information campaign aims at establishing that men's violence against women is in no way acceptable, and at telling both victims and abusers where to find help.

Thus, all action plan activities must aid in preventing violence against women and preventing repetition.

Special target groups

The action plan is far-reaching; women, children, perpetrators and professionals. It also envisages information campaigns aimed at the population in general.

Experience from implementing the 2002–2004 action plan also convinced us that special attention must be given to particularly exposed groups and to prevention. In particular, this action plan will centre on:

- Ethnic minority women
- Children and young people
- Men

Ethnic minority women

Abused women of minority ethnicity constitute a particularly exposed group. Forty-four percent of women at Denmark's shelters have non-Danish ethnic backgrounds⁴, one-third of these are married to Danish husbands.

¹ Estimates show that each year about 29,000 children aged 0-15 witness their mothers being abused or threatened with abuse. Source: Danish Centre for Research on Social Vulnerability.

² This group of women are aged 20-24. Source: "Mænds vold mod kvinder", (Men's violence against women), prepared by the National Institute of Public Health, Nov. 2004.

³ Rambøll Management has evaluated the Government's action plan for stopping violence against women (2002–2004) and concluded that the selected key action areas of the action plan covered the essential needs in the area. This action plan will continue the work of the selected key action areas.

⁴ National Organization of Shelters for Battered Women and their Children, 2003 annual statistics, Danish Centre for Research on Social Vulnerability.

The support normally offered abused women may have difficulty in reaching ethnic minority women. Moreover, their often complex problems necessitate special efforts if they are to receive the necessary support.

Thus, several action plan initiatives aim to stop men's violence against ethnic minority women.

The action plan must ensure that initiatives aimed at abused women in general also benefit ethnic minority women, and that their special needs are met.

Children and young people

Each year, about 20,000 children aged 5-14 witness violence perpetrated on their mothers, and each year about 2,000 children move into shelters with them.

A survey among ninth-grade students (aged 15-16) showed that 9% of the girls had been exposed to violence, and every tenth of these stated that their boyfriends had abused them.

The surveys indicate that, having witnessed their mothers being abused, children generally rate their own health and wellbeing lower than children growing up in families without violence. And children witnessing domestic violence are more likely to repeat the pattern of violence in adulthood. Boys witnessing physical abuse in their childhoods are ten times more likely to expose their female partners to violence⁵.

This fact underlines the necessity of securing the necessary help for children and young people witnessing domestic violence. For this reason, the action plan sets up a selection of activities catering to the special needs of children and young people.

Men

Violence against women is not just physical and psychological abuse, but also a sign of insufficient gender equality and respect between women and men.

Men represent a key resource in the fight to break taboos and prevent violence against women. The use of initiatives like role models - "Men say no to violence against women" - will help involve men more greatly in attitude-readjustment work.

In the same spirit, abusive men must be given help when they want to depart from violence. This action plan prioritises treatment of abusive men by launching a nationwide perpetrator programme for men. In the 2005 rate adjustment pool settlement, the parties agreed to allocate an annual sum of DKK 5.8m for a four-year period to a "Dialogue against Violence", a scheme to expand and strengthen a perpetrator programme for men.

The Danish Government's action plan to stop violence against women

In general, the Government gives high priority to stopping violence and assault against Denmark's citizens. This action plan is also part of the overall efforts, which encompass special initiatives aimed at:

1. Combating sexual violence and rape
2. Forced marriages, semi-forced marriages and arranged marriages
3. Violence against children

Initiatives supplement each other, merging to form a holistic approach to the issue of violence.

Debates have, for instance, focused on whether sexual violence and rape should figure in the key action areas of this action plan, but the conclusion was that the complexity of this problem calls for special attention.

Ad 1. Sexual violence and rape represent abuse of women, and are areas that need special attention. Since 1999, the areas have been in focus, and emergency and treatment centres for rape victims have been established in several places around Denmark. At the centres, rape victims are offered a forensic rape examination to document any physical consequences of the assault, as well as subsequent relevant medical treatment. Victims are also offered overnight accommodation in a safe environment and referral to a psychologist.

The Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault at the Copenhagen University Hospital fulfils the role of national research and documentation centre, heading the work of preparing standard protocols and procedures. In addition, the Centre heads training and research in the area. The 2005-2008 rate adjustment pool agreement allocated DKK 20m to these activities.

⁵ "Tab af rettigheder" (Loosing rights) by Terese Halskov, Per Schutz Jørgensen and Polakow, V. (2000, p. 226).

Ad 2. The Government's action plan against forced marriages, semi-forced marriages and arranged marriages (2003–2005) sets out 21 initiatives aimed at:

- preventing forced marriages
- preventing injudicious family reunifications based on arranged marriages
- helping to improve integration and increase gender equality
- strengthening focus on marital problems of young people from ethnic minorities in Denmark
- communicating knowledge on key action areas to everybody in contact with ethnic minorities, including GPs, social workers, health visitors, teachers, child and youth educators, etc.
- guidelines for handling child abuse cases, explaining procedures related to police, hospitals, etc.
- improving multi-agency activities related to police and social authorities
- strengthening training of professionals who handle child abuse cases in their work
- exchanging constructive experience from multi-agency efforts.

A telephone counselling service for young people of minority ethnicity, networks for ethnic minority girls, and counselling for professionals on severe generation conflicts among ethnic minorities, including counselling related to semi-forced or forced marriages have been set up. In intense conflicts involving violence or threats of violence, advice and counselling on violence against women and children are available for both professionals and the young people involved. Residential accommodation will be arranged for young women of non-Danish ethnicity who have entered into or are in danger of having to enter into a forced or arranged marriage.

Via the rate adjustment pool, the sum of DKK 40m has been allocated to finance initiatives under the action plan.

Ad 3. In early 2004, the Government launched an action plan against child abuse. The plan was motivated by the fact that children die every year as a result of violence and many others sustain permanent injuries. There is also a major risk that children witnessing domestic violence will repeat the pattern of violence in adulthood.

The action plan contains a range of initiatives for preventing violence against children and ensuring that public authorities take action when such violence occurs. The action plan is targeted at families with children aged 0-7 and incorporates the following:

- tightening legislative requirements on reporting
- information campaigns for professionals and citizens, aimed at raising awareness of symptoms indicative of violence
- preparatory parental courses and campaigns for parents-to-be aimed at preventing domestic violence from arising

The Government's initiatives to stop men's domestic violence against women and children

Support to victims

Action is needed to improve support to women and children victimised by domestic violence.

Women who leave violent homes must get help to create lives without violence. Thus, information work targeted at abused or threatened women is one focus of the action plan activities. The website www.voldmodkvinder.dk and the 24-hour hotline 70 20 30 82 give women easy access to help.

The plan centres on support to shelter work, including shelter offers to disabled women. Additionally, the shelters offer emergency psychological assistance to women and children. The objective of the scheme is to create order in an acutely chaotic situation. Several of these activities represent continuations of activities launched under the Government's first action plan to stop violence against women (2002–2004).

A key point to remember is that despite the violence, many women possess a great deal of resources. This fact became apparent in the nationwide association "Network of abused women", launched as an initiative under the first action plan. This network addresses women who often do not use the services of Denmark's shelters. Instead, they find support by networking with other women in the same situation.

Ethnic minority women exposed to violence constitute a special target group. Ethnic minority women often know little about Danish legislation and regulations and their rights in Danish society. And many of the women face a higher risks of social isolation if they leave an abusive husband.

The action plan focuses specifically on information work targeted at ethnic minority women. Such information must be accessible in the ethnic minority women's own environments and must be available in several languages. A special initiative focuses on developing networks for ethnic minority women who have been exposed to violence.

Children growing up in violent families are the targets of special action plan activities. Children experiencing domestic violence live in precarious conditions and seriously risk becoming abusers or being exposed to

partner abuse later in life. Thus, activities are designed to eliminate this risk. Young people need to know about domestic and partner violence, including sexual violence. Knowledge is the first step on the path to breaking the cycle of violence and preventing children from repeating violence in adulthood. Another action plan initiative sets up a children's digital network, where children can ask professionals for advice and chat with other children about their problems.

Activities:

1. Network for abused women

In autumn 2004, the nationwide "Network for abused women" was set up as a national association with local branches distributed throughout the country. To support the initiative, grants are given to cover expenses for consultants and secretariat.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality

2. Hotline for abused women

The abused women Hotline will be continued in the 2005–2008 action plan. The Hotline is open 24 hours and offers access to interpretation service.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality

3. Emergency psychological assistance to women

The scheme of shelters' emergency crisis help will continue, such as psychological assistance to women and children where needed.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality

4. Legal advice to professionals and abused women

A legal advice forum will be set up to which professionals and abused women can turn if they have legal questions in the area of men's domestic violence against women and children.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality

5. A study of victim's procedural legal rights in criminal cases

The Ministry of Justice has asked the Standing Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice to review victims' procedural legal rights in criminal cases and consider the need for changes, including considerations regarding victims' possibilities of monitoring criminal case hearings against perpetrators. The deadline for completing the Committee's work is end-2006.

Further, the Ministry of Justice has requested the Standing Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice for its opinion on several matters, especially rape victims' rights pertaining to assignment of a victim's advocate and that advocate's access to participate in case proceedings, including investigation and court proceedings. In March 2005, the Committee published report no. 1458 on improving rape victims' legal rights. The Minister for Justice will present a bill on the matter in autumn 2005.

Authority responsible: Ministry of Justice

6. Methodology development project on disabled women at shelters

Existing offers at shelters are highly dependent on residents' ability to help themselves. Thus, residents must manage the practical daily work of cleaning and household chores. On this background, disabled women can be expected to need practical assistance if they are to participate in the community on a par with other residents. This is the background for launching a methodology development project aimed at pinpointing good practices in terms of supporting abused women with physical disability at shelters.

Authority responsible: Ministry of Social Affairs

7. Accumulating knowledge on disabled women at shelters and shelter staff training

Courses will be offered to the women's shelters that accommodate physically disabled women and offer other shelters the option to participate.

Authority responsible: Ministry of Social Affairs

8. Focus on abused women with substance misuse

The National Organization of Shelters for Battered Women and their Children 2003 annual statistics show that individual shelters ask a certain group of women to move out because they need other social services. These are primarily women with mental diseases and/or alcohol and/or substance misuse. Women outside the shelter target group are refused accommodation because the shelters lack the resources to cater for these women's special needs.

In recent years, efforts to treat people with alcohol misuse have been renewed, for instance, in the form of aided places in a range of 24-hour institutions, primarily envisaged to help the most marginalised misusers. These efforts could help limit the number of rejected women. This development will be aided by the alcohol treatment guarantee coming into force on 1 July 2005 and the implemented treatment guarantee for substance misusers. To this should also be added the reinforced family treatment offers related to alcohol misuse. The Ministry of Social Affairs will monitor developments.

Authority responsible: Ministry of Social Affairs

For ethnic minority women:

9. Information campaign targeted at ethnic minority women

An information campaign aimed at ethnic minority women will be launched. The campaign will describe women's rights in relation to children and divorce, violence and financial conditions. The women need to understand the basic rights they enjoy in Denmark, that women and men are equal and what gender equality involves.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs

10. Information on rights and the encounter with public bodies for ethnic minority women

Five short films will be produced to show ethnic minority women what happens when they meet with the shelter, the local authority, the regional authorities, an attorney and the police. The films will be produced in several languages. The target group consists of ethnic minority women at shelters, language centres, etc.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs

11. Campaign "Stop violence against women – break the silence" aimed at ethnic minority women

A campaign aimed at ethnic minority women will commence. The campaign will be designed for and shown in media addressing this target group. An element of the campaign will focus on distributing information leaflets with advice and guidelines for abused ethnic minority women in their own language. It will build on the experience from the "Stop violence against women - break the silence" realised in November 2003.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs.

12. Expanding the network of ethnic minority women

Ethnic minority women leaving their partners because of violence risk losing their networks through such breaks. During and after a stay at a shelter, this group of women should be helped with a new network in the shape of aftercare. Means will be allocated for training and administration to voluntary organisations that set up networks for abused minority women nationwide.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs

For children and young people:

13. Children living with domestic violence

A development project will be initiated, aimed at giving an option of treatment to children subjected to domestic violence and at preventing violent behaviour from being replicated.

Authority responsible: Ministry of Social Affairs and the Department of Gender Equality

14. Children's digital network

A digital network for children will be set up to give children and young people in violent families the possibility of chatting with others in similar situations. The website will contain information on domestic violence, where to turn for help, etc. It will also encompass an electronic question-and-answer site, where visitors can ask experts for advice on what to do if they experience domestic violence.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality

15. Information campaign with focus on young people, gender and violence

The campaign will be designed as teaching material for young people enrolled in youth educational programmes and will focus on young people and violence from a gender perspective. Experts and young people exposed to partner violence will conduct the teaching.

Authority responsible: Department of Gender Equality

Activities aimed at perpetrators

This action plan gives high priority to treating abusive men.

To break the cycle of violence, efforts must be targeted at perpetrators. The abusive partner is responsible for stopping the violence and also for assuring that violence is not replicated in new relationships or inherited by children. To this end, abusive men must be treated to prevent additional violence. These efforts presuppose that experts are trained to intervene in situations involving abusive men and refer them to supporting bodies.

In 2004, the Aliens Act was amended with a view to preventing men resident in Denmark from behaving abusively to women, particularly foreign women, who often find themselves in an especially exposed situation after their arrival in Denmark. The act provides that residents of Denmark may not reunify with a spouse, if they have been convicted of certain types of violent crime against former spouses or partners within the last ten years.

The 2005 rate adjustment pool compromise decided to allocate DKK 5.8m annually for a four-year period for perpetrator activities. These means were allocated to broaden and strengthen the treatment service offer, "Dialogue against Violence", which spearheads the treatment offer. As of 1 May 2005, the offer became nationwide, with Dialogue against Violence opening branches in Odense and Aarhus.

Dialogue against Violence will also develop and implement a treatment programme targeted at women with partners receiving treatment under the Dialogue against Violence programme.

Dialogue against Violence has been charged with regularly communicating knowledge and results from its treatment offers, and research in the results of the treatment offer must continue so the offer can be improved. The next action plan period will put special focus on how efforts can also be aimed at men with non-Danish ethnicity.

The Government will continue to evaluate the options for treatment of perpetrators serving prison sentences, and the possibility of compelling perpetrators to receive treatment as a condition for suspending their sentences must be reviewed in detail.

Men are significant resources in the battle to break the silence of violence against women and must be more actively involved in preventing it. The Government

therefore intends to ally itself with male role models, including ethnic minority men, to spread the message that "Men say no to violence against women".

Activities:

1. Treatment of the abusive man

Dialogue against Violence offers one-year treatment programmes for abusive men. The treatment involves four phases: individual interviews, group therapy, integration of the training and reintegration into society.

2. Women's programme

The treatment programme targets the partner of the abusive man being treated by Dialogue against Violence. The female partners need the same tools as the abusive men, and the problems women suffer due to the violence must also be addressed.

3. Communication

As an element of the project "domestic violence", Dialogue against Violence has trained various experts in how to intervene appropriately in families of abusive men. Communication of knowledge about abusive men and the treatment offer will continue to be a major part of the Dialogue against Violence work.

4. Research

As an aspect of the Dialogue against Violence activities, research has in the last two years focused on learning more about abusive men. This research will continue with a view to attaining increased knowledge of the target group and raising awareness of indicators characteristic of domestic violence families.

Authority responsible for activities 1-4: Ministry of Social Affairs

5. Treatment during prison term

Most Danish prison facilities offer "anger management" treatment to people who have trouble controlling their own aggression. Anger management treatment builds on cognitive learning theories and addresses detainees who want treatment. In 2004, the Prison and Probation Service set up treatment for de-

taineers convicted of violent crimes and having a history of violent behaviour. The Prison and Probation Service constantly monitors the need to expand treatment offers.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Justice

6. Treatment as condition of suspended sentence

The Ministry of Justice has started negotiations with the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Directorate of Prisons and Probation on implementing a scheme that allows treatment to be set as a precondition of suspending sentences for people convicted of less serious violent offences. If the scheme is implemented, people convicted of partner violence would be a key target group.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Justice

7. Follow-up on the Act of temporary removal and powers to issue injunctions, etc.

On 1 July 2004, the Act on temporary removal and powers to issue injunction, etc. came into force. The Act allows the police temporarily to remove an abusive or threatening person from the family home for up to four weeks, with an option to extend the removal for up to four weeks at a time. Concurrently with the removal, the police must report the incident to the social authorities. After some time in operation, the temporary removal scheme will be evaluated on the basis of practical experience with a view to determining whether additional legislative measures are needed.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Affairs

8. Campaign: "Men say no to violence against women"

Just as efforts to combat violence against women require a general change in people's attitudes, a change that clearly signals violence against women as being unacceptable, men must, regardless of ethnic backgrounds, be involved in the work to stop violence against women.

The Government therefore intends to ally itself with male role models, including ethnic minority men, to spread the message that "Men say no to violence against women". The campaign will use relevant channels, including media that reach ethnic minority environments.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs.

Activities aimed at professionals

The Government aims to guarantee targeted prevention of men's domestic violence against women. This goal requires holistic, multi-agency activities. Thus, Denmark's efforts involve many public and private players, and to improve cohesion and utilise the many players' resources and competences, these players must be informed of the options available to them and others for preventive intervention and also support both victims and perpetrators. Thus, public and private players need to update their knowledge on men's violence against women and children, and cooperation between the players must be reinforced.

Children experiencing domestic violence are distressed. Research reveals that children suffer permanent harm by witnessing ongoing physical violence against a close relative. An aspect of up-dating courses for experts would focus on providing the information they need to recognise the signals children of violent families send.

As an element of the first action plan to stop violence against women, a number of local social workers, child and youth educators at day-care facilities, health visitors and police staff have received updating training. In addition, multi-agency teams have been established as part of the project "domestic violence" to improve cooperation between public institutions and authorities in a range of local and regional authorities.

Containing relevant tools and advice, toolboxes have also been prepared for professionals who help abused women and children in their work. The toolboxes target police, local social workers, medical doctors and nurses, professionals working with young children and professionals working with older children.

The new action plan starts off where the previous one stopped, while also focusing on new areas.

Embedding activities and knowledge at the local level will form a key element of this action plan. A dialogue must be launched with professionals and involve local authorities. The process kicks off with a conference for the heads of social service departments in Denmark.

As a follow-up on the Act on temporary removal and powers to issue injunctions, etc., DKK 2m annually have been allocated for updating the knowledge of local authority staff, intended to heighten attention on the problem. The individual social workers will also be given better possibilities of dealing with and counselling in cases involving violence.

As a novelty, the Government will involve residential counsellors in non-profit housing and supported private cooperative housing associations involved in social support to residents in its work against violence against women. This will give families experiencing violence easy access to counselling. Residential counsellors often have contacts to women, men and children of minority ethnicity, thus becoming relevant players in combating violence against ethnic minority women and breaking the silence on the violence perpetrated.

The Government will improve efforts targeted at ethnic minority women and children. Thus, the staff at Denmark's shelters must be familiar with the special problems of this group.

Activities:

1. Conference for heads of social service departments

A conference for heads of social service departments will be organised to heighten attention on the problem and ensure embedding in the local authorities, including closer cooperation with the police. The conference will discuss principles, ethics and priorities related to the subject of men's violence against women. The social authorities' rapid contact to the partners is decisive for an early assessment of how the problems can be solved, including implementation of the necessary supportive measures.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Social Affairs and the Department of Gender Equality

2. Seminars for professionals

The nationwide information campaign for professionals "Stop violence - Break the silence", continues, with the main focus on the health area, schools and the legal system, but also on how to embed new knowledge. The aim is to update professionals' knowledge on men's domestic violence against women - from a holistic approach that involves abused women and children and the men as well as aspects of special concern to ethnic minorities. Children will constitute a special focal group.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

3. Men's domestic violence towards women and children as subject in relevant education programmes

Ensuring that professionals are trained in identifying violence and how to alleviate the impact of violence are basic elements in preventing men's domestic violence towards women and children.

The Department of Gender Equality has requested the Danish Centre for Research on Social Vulnerability to determine how the subject of violence towards women figures in the teaching of relevant basic and supplementary education programmes. The survey is set to be completed mid-2005. On the basis of the survey results, the options for strengthening the subject at relevant education institutions will be studied.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

4. Supplementary training of local authority staff

As a follow-up on the Act on temporary removal and powers to issue injunction, etc. and in the context of the reinforced efforts against violence, social activities will be upgraded, for instance, by providing supplementary training to local authority staff to equip them better to handle and advise on domestic violence cases.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Social Affairs

5. Training resident advisors

Training in domestic violence and the special problems that characterise domestic violence in ethnic minority families will be offered to resident advisors in non-profit housing and supported private cooperative housing who are involved in social support to residents.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Social Affairs

6. Enhancing shelters' knowledge on ethnic minority women and children

Ethnic minority women and children constitute a particularly exposed group. Denmark aims to focus on disseminating knowledge of this group's specific problems and enhancing shelter staff's qualifications in this area.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality jointly with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs

Knowledge and information

Knowledge on the scope, character and impact of violence is a key condition for planning targeted prevention of men's domestic violence towards women and children. And knowledge is the key to breaking taboos and changing attitudes. Thus, the action plan spotlights documentation in the form of a national database on violence against women as well as annual statistics on women and children at shelters. Such knowledge is a necessary tool in planning local and national activities, and the statistics are a tool for enhancing professionals' knowledge.

The Government advocates breaking the taboo surrounding violence against women. Experience from the previous action plan for stopping violence against women shows that public information campaigns pave the way for breaking that taboo. Men will be involved as strategic partners in the campaign "Men say no to violence against women", and a campaign will be launched targeted at ethnic minority women.

Moreover, the Government will initiate an array of activities to ensure that knowledge on the scope, character and impact of the violence be reaped and subsequently communicated. The Government will also set the scene for debates on men's domestic violence towards women and children.

In this action plan, the Government will focus on the interrelations between exposure to violence and exclusion from the labour market. Shelter statistics and data from the network for abused women show that many abused women are excluded from the labour market.

No studies have been made to reveal the relationship between violence against women and labour market exclusion. To boost preventive efforts, the path that places abused women outside the labour market must be charted.

The Government will promote prevention of violence. In this context, children and young people are important targets. Unfortunately, surveys document that partner violence is a known phenomenon among ninth-grade girls at Danish secondary schools. Shelters do not admit women below the age of 18, and only 5% of women at shelters are under 20. But shelter statistics tell us that at least 20% of the women aged 20-29 have previously been exposed to partner violence. More data is needed on this aspect to qualify the preventive activities targeted at children and young people.

In its previous action plan, the Government initiated a range of activities in Denmark to support ethnic minority women exposed to violence. Help must also be given to the ethnic minority women who return to their native country after having been exposed to violence. A survey will be initiated into the possibilities of supporting rehabilitation in the country of origin via women's associations and other networks.

Activities:

1. Study of relationship between violence against women and labour market exclusion

We need knowledge on the interconnection between violence against women and labour market exclusion. A survey will be launched to constitute the background for recommendations on preventive activities.
Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

2. Maintaining national database on violence against women

On 25 November 2004, a new database on violence against women launched. The national database contains substantial data volumes that still need to be analysed and communicated, and the database must also continuously be updated and maintained to ensure that it contains the latest data.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

3. Compiling and communicating annual statistics on women at shelters

The objective of the annual statistics is to monitor and document developments at shelters. The annual statistics are instrumental to our understanding of abused women and children's living conditions.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

4. Compiling and communicating annual statistics on children at shelters

The objective of the child statistics is to obtain more profound and detailed knowledge on the particular hardships to which children in violent families are exposed.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

5. A study of ethnic minority children at shelters

As an element of the 2004 annual statistics on children at shelters, a study was made of children of non-Danish ethnicity staying at shelters. The study was meant to determine the characteristic living conditions of ethnic minority children who stay at shelters for short or long periods of time. A need exists to compile knowledge on the special problems affecting children of non-Danish ethnicity whose everyday lives are characterised by domestic violence. Based on the study results, the concrete initiatives that may help to improve the lives of these children will be determined.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

6. A study of partner violence among young people

A survey will be commissioned to determine the character and impact of partner violence among young people. The study must prepare the basis for preventive activities targeted at young people.

Responsible authority: Department of Gender Equality

7. Determining possibility of support for rehabilitation in country of origin

Denmark will conduct a study into the possibilities of supporting rehabilitation via, for instance, women's associations and other networks that can guarantee responsible support to women moving back to their native country after having been abused.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs

8. Enhanced victims' statistics

Initiated by the Committee for Research Policy of the Ministry of Justice, Denmark decided to prepare annual statistics on the gender and age of victims of violent crimes in 2001. The first of these statistics was published in 2002 and related to violent crimes reported in 2001. Statistics Denmark is in charge of preparing the statistics.

The Committee for Research Policy of the Ministry of Justice is currently working to enhance victims' statistics so that they will also include information on scene of the crime, relations between victim and perpetrator (partner, acquaintance, etc.) and any use of weapon.

Responsible authority: Ministry of Justice

Financial aspects

The Christian Democratic Party, the Danish Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, the Danish People's Party, the Socialist People's Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Danish Social-Liberal Party agreed in the implementation of the 2005 rate adjustment pool to allocate DKK 15 million annually in the years 2005–2008 for strengthening the activities targeted at stopping men's domestic violence against women and children, a total of DKK 60 million. Of this sum, DKK 5.8 million will be allocated for Dialogue against Violence and DKK 2 million for upgrading social activities in local authorities.

Further, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs has allocated DKK 4 million for the initiatives aimed at ethnic minority women.

The inter- ministerial working group

In spring 2000, the then government set up an inter-ministerial working group on domestic violence against women and human trafficking. In addition to the Department of Gender Equality, it seats members from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs. The working group has discussed various aspects of domestic violence as well as initiatives to intensify efforts in this area. The working group has previously presented a status report for central government, regional and voluntary activities against domestic violence against women, recommending a range of initiatives aimed at strengthening efforts in the area. The working group involved experts and voluntary associations in preparing the status report.

The Government prepared its 2002–2004 action plan to stop violence against women on the basis of this status. In that context, the working group functioned as coordinator of the joint and cross-departmental activities in the Government's 2002–2004 action plan and also evaluated the efforts launched under that action plan. The working group had a corresponding role in preparing the 2005–2008 action plan to stop men's domestic violence against women and children.

Evaluation

Whenever an action plan is prepared and realised, the activities and achieved results have to be evaluated. The evaluation will be realised in the last three months of 2008.

Further, annual status notes will be prepared for implementation of the action plan and the results achieved in the relevant year. The inter-ministerial working group will hold responsibility for publicising status notes.

Evaluation of the Government's action plan to stop violence against women (2002–2004)

Rambøll Management has evaluated the previous action plan to stop violence against women.

Rambøll Management concludes that the activities under the action plan (2002–2004) succeeded in promoting the process of breaking the silence of violence against women. The general public, professionals and politicians no longer view these problems as being private matters.

The evaluation report recommends that future activities focus more sharply on embedding, and ensuring that managements become more involved and assume responsibility - especially in local authorities. The evaluation underlines that professionals' knowledge has increased significantly, but that integrating the knowledge in their workplaces is a challenge still to be faced.

The evaluation identifies a need to strengthen activities for children of violent families and ethnic minority women, and also recommends that a nationwide men's counselling service be established.

The evaluator's recommendations agree with the focus set out in the new action plan.

Annex to the action plan

Initiatives launched under the Government's action plan to stop violence against women 2002–2004

Support to victims:

- **Study** of shelter capacity and number of women denied access
- **Study** of special problems for ethnic minority women
- **Information leaflet** for abused women in more than 1,000,000 copies in Danish and five foreign languages (English, Somali, Turkish, Bosnian and High Arabic)
- **Nationwide campaign** "Stop violence against women – break the silence"
- **Website** "www.voldmodkvinder.dk" with hotline telephone number, links to relevant documents and links to shelters
- **Hotline** (at tel. no. 70 20 30 82)
- **Project "Domestic violence"** with special focus on children's welfare in the regions of Aarhus, Ribe and Roskilde and the five local authorities of Roskilde, Esbjerg, Randers, Silkeborg and Aarhus
- **Supplementary training** of shelter staff to improve activities for ethnic minority women
- **Documentary** on violence against women targeted at shelter staff and other people with interest
- Police **issue of assault alarms** to women risking abuse
- **Teaching material for Danish language teaching** for immigrants, covering four different gender equality topics
- **Psychological assistance** to children and women at 8 shelters throughout Denmark
- **Local and national networks** for abused women and a national association called "Network for abused women"

- **Annual conference** on violence against women on the occasion of UN's International day for the elimination of violence against women
- **Database** containing documentation and statistics on gender-related violence, as publicised in the report "Men's violence against women – scope, character and activities against violence"
- **Support to theme days** at schools throughout Denmark as an aspect of the project "Teenage children living in violent families".

Activities aimed at perpetrators:

- **Regional offers of treatment** to abusive men, involving counselling for abusive men and a website www.dialogmodvold.dk
- **Perpetrators can be temporarily removed from the home** as provided in the Act on temporary removal and powers to issue injunctions, etc., which came into force on 1 July 2004. The scheme reflects the Standing Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice's report no. 1439 on temporary removal of violent and threatening persons from the home, etc.
- The Ministry of Justice has started **discussions** with the Directorate of Prisons and Probation and the Director of Public Prosecutions on the possibilities of implementing a scheme that **enables courts to give perpetrators suspended sentences on condition of treatment**
- **Offers of "anger management" training** in most Danish prisons for people who find it difficult to control their aggression
- In 2004, the Prison and Probation Service initiated an offer on **treatment under the Prevention of Violence Programme**. The programme addresses inmates sentenced for violent crime who have demonstrated recurrent violent behaviour.

Activities aimed at professionals:

- **Information campaign** for professionals and local politicians (police, social workers, shelter staff, emergency room staff, etc.)
- **Nationwide training** of professionals who are engaged in the work related to violence against women in the local authorities
- **Analysis** of efficiency of current multi-agency cooperation
- **Multi-agency teams** were set up as an aspect of the project “Domestic violence”
- **Toolbox for professionals:** police, local social workers, doctors and nurses, and professionals working with children
- **Cooperation forums** for professionals from the public authorities and shelter staff.

Knowledge and information:

- **Charting scope** of violence against women (International Violence against women Survey – IVAWS)
- Statistics Denmark prepares **statistics on gender and age of victims** of violence against individuals, e.g. assault and sexual assault
- **Survey of abused women**, conducted for the purpose of describing the women’s social and family backgrounds as well as the patterns of violence
- **Annual statistics on children at shelters**
- **Study** of teaching in the subject of violence against women
- **Survey** of special problems for abused disabled women, which has resulted in special offers and capacity and quality improvements at shelters with focus on accessibility
- **National database** on violence against women, describing scope and character of violence against women in Denmark
- **Report** on the National Observatory of Violence in Denmark

- **Ethics seminar** for shelter volunteers and staff
- **Study** “Danish men’s concept of families – gender equality, learning or violence” on Danish men’s reasons for establishing bi-cultural migration marriages
- **Research project with focus on perpetrator** to determine reasons for and impacts of domestic violence
- Support to **Danish Broadcasting Corporation’s features** on violence, including a theme evening and 4 programmes.

Status on implementation of initiatives in the Government’s action plan against forced marriages, semi-forced marriages and arranged marriages

Initiatives 1+2: In September 2003, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs launched a nationwide information campaign about the 24-year rule and the possibilities of receiving help if a person has entered into or is about to enter into a forced or arranged marriage. All Denmark’s youth education programmes received booklets and posters with information.

Initiative 3: The National Organization of Shelters for Battered Women and their Children (LOKK) has set up telephone counselling for professionals; see also initiatives 5, 12 and 14 about LOKK’s efforts in this area. A booklet has been published, containing information about the rules on family reunion.

Initiative 4: The Government has supported two books about the problems of forced marriages and one book about arranged marriages. Manu Sareen’s book about forced marriages, “Når kærlighed bliver tvang” (When love becomes force), was published in August 2003. Mohammed Rafiq’s book on arranged marriages “Kærlighed kan ikke arrangeres” (Love cannot be arranged) was published in September 2004. LOKK’s “toolbox” also received financial support (see initiative 14).

Initiative 5: A nationwide series of lectures for students in youth education programmes has been launched, with information on the 24-year rule and on possibilities of guidance and help. Manu Sareen will give the lectures. LOKK will publish a booklet with general information about forced marriages for young people, to be handed out at the lectures. Deal-

ing with issues such as the rules on family reunion and free choice of spouse, lectures about women's rights and lectures addressing Turkish parents in particular have also been supported.

Initiative 6: Support was granted to a project on networking and starting up associations for ethnic women. Support was also granted to projects on network activities for women and young girls who have stayed at shelters. The network activities also form part of many of the projects.

Initiative 7: Mediation should be used with caution and only by professionals. However, the Government believes that in cases where mediation is an option, this is the best solution as it allows the young people to maintain relations with their families and networks. Conflict resolution and mediation courses have been held.

Initiative 8: LOKK held a conference on forced marriages on 20 October 2003.

Initiative 9: In January 2004, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs held a seminar of to impart experience to players in the field.

Initiative 10: LOKK expanded its telephone advisory service for professionals to include enquiries from young people, setting up its counselling service "Your future marriage is your choice" for young people on 1 March 2004.

Initiative 11: The booklet about the 24-year rule includes information on the possibility of making enquiries to a Danish representative abroad.

Initiative 12: Information material was published for local authorities, including a booklet and an Internet "toolbox" where social workers can obtain help in handling cases of forced marriages, etc. LOKK's "toolbox" will form the basis for a set of instructions to be prepared for the local authorities, containing further information about funding, etc. Professionals can call LOKK for advice and guidance.

Initiative 13: A nationwide and ethnic team of consultants, working free of charge, has been appointed and a booklet for local authorities was published about the team.

Initiative 14: Support was given to establish a "toolbox" on LOKK's website, which is updated regularly.

Initiative 15: The local authority of Høje Taastrup received support to upgrade staff members for a special emergency team.

Initiative 16: Support was granted for establishing and running several girls' clubs throughout the country. The Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs campaign "A need for all young people" is in the process of helping schools establish homework clubs/girls' clubs at the schools.

Initiative 17: The Danish Association for International Co-operation received support for employing a consultant and expanding its website with "Project Girls' Lives", a network of girls' clubs. Moreover, the Association set up a youth counselling service about forced and arranged marriages, etc. Young people can contact the association by telephone or via the Internet.

Initiative 18: A mentor scheme has been established for women of non-Danish ethnicity to help them advance in the education system and find work. Support was also granted to other network activities.

Initiative 19: The Danish Red Cross and several shelters received support for aftercare activities for women who have stayed at shelters.

Initiative 20: Residential accommodation will be arranged for young women of non-Danish ethnicity who have entered into or are in danger of having to enter into a forced or arranged marriage. The residential accommodation is intended to offer the young women emergency relief and, longer term, to help them advance in the education system and find work. Another DKK 6.4 million has been earmarked for each of the years 2004 and 2007 for arranging residential accommodation. Tenders have been invited for the residential accommodation, and a decision was subsequently made to have the Rehabilitation Centre for Ethnic Women in Denmark establish and run the accommodation. The accommodation opened in early 2005. Additionally, Save the Children received DKK 1.3 million in 2004 for the establishment of residential accommodation. The purpose was to arrange treatment offers and residential accommodation for young girls of non-Danish ethnicity. In October 2004, the accommodation opened under the name Kastanjehaven.

Initiative 21: In August 2003, the Danish Research Centre on Gender Equality published its report "Forced marriages in a European Context", outlining initiatives against forced marriages in England, Norway and Germany. Further, the Danish National Institute of Social Research was supported in preparing the report "Couple formation among ethnic minorities in Denmark", published in May 2004 as was Marianne Nøhr Larsen's book "The little revolts – ideas for methods of work with minority girls", published in November 2004.

Activities launched under the action plan against child abuse

1. Background

On 16 March 2004, the Minister for Social Affairs launched an action plan against child abuse.

The background for this initiative is that every year children die in Denmark as a result of violence and many others suffer serious injury to body and mind after having been abused. The action plan must help prevent this.

The action plan sets out a wide range of elements intended to heighten the attention of both professionals and private people while also preventing child abuse in high-risk population groups and building cooperation between various parts of the public sector. The aim is to prevent any assaults through campaigns for the general public, professionals and expecting parents as well as through parent courses for high-risk parents.

The objective of the plan is to impact on both relevant education programmes, hospitals, GPs, school teachers, child and youth educators, parents and citizens in general.

2. Status of activities under the action plan against child abuse

Several of the measures set out in the plan have been realised or are being realised. The list below is a status statement of the initiatives launched under the "Action plan against child abuse".

Sharpening the awareness of professionals and private citizens

- *Publication of "Dialogue guidelines"*⁶, which contains a description of the duty to report and what professionals must and can do when they suspect a child is distressed
This booklet has been published and distributed.
- *Preparing a set of guidelines for symptoms and case handling of child abuse, for use in relevant professionals' education programmes*

The Ministry of Education will write this aspect into the executive orders for the education programmes, and the Danish National Centre for Social Efforts against Child Sexual Abuse (SISO) will prepare and print the teaching material for activities against sexual abuse. SISO started preparing the material on 1 May 2005 and expects the material to be ready in February 2006.

- *Ensuring that hospitals use relevant procedures in cases of child abuse*
The Danish National Board of Health will prepare information on the subject, to be published in the weekly medical journal. The information is planned for publication in the journal in May 2005.
- *Information campaign on child abuse*
The purpose of the campaign is to encourage the population to report suspected child abuse to the social authorities. The campaign targets the general public, professionals and parents-to-be alike and is planned for spring 2005.
- *Guidelines for handling child abuse cases, procedures related to police, hospitals, etc.*
The Development and Communications Centre - Children and Youth is preparing a leaflet. It will be released around the time of the information campaign in spring 2005.
- *Setting time limits for social authorities to reply to all inquiries about suspicions. Time limits for when social authorities must act on reports must also be set*
This is an aspect of the out-of-home placement reform coming into force 1 January 2006.

Targeted work on prevention of child abuse in high-risk population groups

- *Ensuring that constructive experience in various ways and methods relating to multi-agency efforts targeted at misuse families and families with mental problems is communicated nationwide*
Together with consultant doctor May Olofsson, the Danish National Board of Health publishes a catalogue of experience compiled by the family treatment unit of Hvidovre Hospital in treating controlled-substance misusing pregnant women and of experience with continuing treatment after birth.

⁶ "Handbook on help for children and young people through dialogue and cooperation with parents – including a description of the rules of reporting and duty of secrecy", Ministry of Social Affairs, 2004

- *Enhancing efforts for children of misusing or mentally ill parents*

The 2004 rate adjustment pool negotiations allocated DKK 80m for a four-year period for improving multi-agency activities aimed at children of misusing or mentally ill parents. The means went into an application pool, from which the funds were distributed.

- *Special preparatory parental courses aimed at high-risk parents must be developed*

Parental preparatory courses preparing prospective parents for parenthood may lower the risk of the parents resorting to violence in desperate situations. The work of developing the special preparatory parental courses will initiate in the first six months of 2005.

Developing cooperation between various parts of the public sector to streamline efforts against child abuse.

- *Ensuring efficient and timely cooperation between police and social authorities*

A letter has been forwarded to the Danish National Board of Health, the National Commissioner of Police and the Department of Private Law under the Ministry of Justice.

- *Improved multi-agency efforts targeted at children in misusing families*

Individual regional authorities can apply for subsidies to finance a families-with-children expert. One of the expert's main tasks would be to set up routines that ensure the needs of children of misusers are evaluated through personal interviews. Was launched in 2004.

Activities to combat sexual violence and rape

A total of eight centres for victims of sexual assault have been set up throughout Denmark. The centres are located at Copenhagen University Hospital, Aarhus regional hospital, Odense University Hospital and at the hospitals in Aalborg, Hillerød, Kolding, Herning and on the island of Bornholm. With one exception, the centres are open 24 hours daily. Victims can contact the centres without referral, and police reports are

not required. The centres are open for both men and women.

The centres were set up in accordance with the Danish National Board of Health guidelines from 1999 on the future structure of the health sector efforts aimed at women exposed to violence or rape. According to the Danish National Board of Health guidelines, the centres should offer: overnight stays; psychologist and social worker attached to the centre; medical doctors on call and with the necessary competence to examine, evaluate and possibly treat injuries from violence, ensure samples and - perhaps in cooperation with the nearest forensic institute - make statements on the examination for the police and legal system; procedures for follow-up; and possibly contacts to attorneys.

The Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault at Copenhagen University Hospital

The Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault at Copenhagen University Hospital is a national knowledge centre conducting research and methodology development and developing standards, procedures and instructions for the area. Thus, the Centre both conducts research and charts research needs for the purpose of determining the scope and character of the problem and thus strengthening efforts to help rape victims.

The Centre's systematic compilation of data into the centre database and its research help provide an understanding of who the rape victims in Denmark are, which types of assaults they are exposed to, where the assaults occur, in which circumstances, etc. In this way, the Centre can pave the way for preparing strategies for society's prevention of rape and sexual assault.

Work is constantly done to develop standards, procedures and instructions aimed at improving multi-agency efforts to help rape victims. Thus, the Centre has set up standards for registration of rape victims, examination for and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases in rape victims. In addition, the Centre has played a part in standardising procedures for receiving rape victims in all Denmark's emergency rooms by setting up emergency-room instructions containing guidelines for hospital staff's contact with rape victims, the securing of evidence, police reports and referrals. In the same way, the Centre has prepared drug-rape instructions⁷ for forensic institutes, other rape centres, emergency rooms, etc., describing the sub-

⁷ Drug rape is rape of a victim whom the perpetrator has, without the victim's knowledge, drugged with a narcotic or a substance, typically by adding it to a drink.

stances used in drug rapes, how they affect victims, drug-rape indicators and securing of evidence.

For rape victims, the Centre has made leaflets describing the Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault and its service offers. Likewise, the Centre has prepared a leaflet on reactions to sexual assaults and a leaflet containing information on legal assistance after a sexual assault.

In addition, the Centre gives external lectures on various aspects of rape. It trains emergency room staff and has set up cooperation with the Police College on training all graduating classes of the school. The Centre also teaches “advanced investigation” at the crime investigation department’s continuing education.

A more detailed description in Danish of the Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault at Copenhagen University Hospital, including the Centre’s research production, statistics, etc. is available at www.centerforvoldtaegtsfre.dk, a site that also provides information on emergency help to rape victims.

In the period 2000–2003, the Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault at Copenhagen University Hospital received a total of DKK 20m via the rate adjustment pool. In 2004, the Copenhagen Hospital Corporation financed the centre, while the rate adjustment pool has allocated another DKK 20m for the period 2005–2008.

Centre for Rape Victims at Aarhus Hospital

The Aarhus Centre for Rape Victims has, as the other centres, a complete offer of emergency help and care to victims. In addition, the Aarhus Centre also performs research and disseminates knowledge in the field as the only other Centre besides Copenhagen University Hospital.

The Ministry of Interior Affairs and Health has initiated a comparative evaluation of research and dissemination activities at the two centres. The evaluation is slated for completion in spring 2005.

