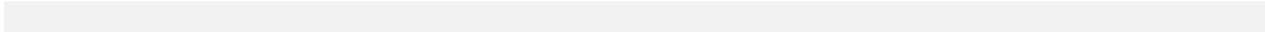


**SOCIAL AUDIT AND PARTNERSHIP ANALYSIS
EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The benefits of the *Haven – Ekaterina* partnership are numerous and central to future organisational development. The success of the partnership is the result of strategic, deliberate and persistent actions by both organisations.

It is clear that considerable benefits have accrued to both partner organisations, in terms of professional development and capacity building from their involvement in the partnership. The expertise they have each developed has undoubtedly enhanced the profile and credibility of both organisations in the perceptions of key opinion-formers and decision-makers in both countries.

The partnership has been assessed as successful by all those involved in it. The range and level of engagement amongst the project's participating agencies, individuals and key stakeholders has been impressive and powerful.

One of the stakeholders said: "Successful partnerships don't just happen. It takes a lot of time and resources to build a partnership. Strong partnership is an important outcome of ten years of working together."

The most noticeable success factors included:

- Personal growth and development
- Institutional capacity building
- Commitment at senior level and strong leadership
- Action planning and attention to details
- Clear line of responsibility between partners
- Commitment of direct and in-kind resources
- Relations of trust and respect in the partnership

A key factor in the success of the partnership has been the relationship developed between the two project partners over many years of working together: a relationship based on shared values, open and frank communications, responsiveness to each other's needs and acceptance of differences and diversity and mutual trust. This relationship alone, however, would not necessarily have ensured success, and in this regard the investment of resources both financial and in-kind has clearly paid off.

The most frequently mentioned benefit has been the increased organisational capacity of both partners to manage a partnership and to provide sustainable support and expertise.

Ekaterina's organisational development has been identified as one of the indicators of the effectiveness of the *The Haven – Ekaterina* partnership. The partnership also improved leadership, organisational management, strategic planning, financial management, reporting, human resource management and resource mobilization.

Many respondents said that the results of the partnership went beyond their highest expectations. They identified the tangible, noticeable changes that the partnership brought on all levels from personal development to organisational systems, culture and advocacy impact.

Other major outcomes have been the heightened awareness and understanding of the issues around domestic violence and its impact on individuals, communities and society, as well as the developed capability to strategically influence the opinions and policies of the stakeholders and gradually gain their support and trust. This resulted in an expressed determination by individuals and agencies to begin the process of changing practice within the Russian criminal justice system.

The Haven and *Ekaterina*, both non-governmental agencies in their respective countries, have been able to ‘punch well above their weight’, most notably by their ability to secure and maintain the support, motivation and commitment of influential agencies and decision-makers in both the UK and Russia. This support has, in turn, been secured thanks to the expertise and credibility, which both partner organisations have developed over a number of years, and, in this regard, it is apparent that the successful implementation and management of the joint initiatives and projects itself has had a direct influence on the way the two organisations are perceived by others.

In order to move the partnership to the next level of development it is important to invest time and resources into creating a detailed partnership strategy including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor the progress of the partnership. Partnership as a form of collaboration might be expensive. Setting SMART objectives would help with management of expectations and would identify areas for future development.

One of the main challenges facing the partnership is its sustainability. Partners experience difficulties in identifying and securing funding to sustain organisations, partnership and the work of the partnership beyond the funding period of each project. For the long-term impact it is important that the partnership is either mainstreamed, or at least closely integrated into the organisational structure.

LIST OF ACRONYMS, ADEVIATIONS AND TERMINOLOGY USED

Terminology

To mean:

*The Project Partners/
The Partners/
The Partnership*

The Haven, Wolverhampton, in the UK, and the Crisis Centre, *Ekaterina*, Ekaterinburg, in Russia.

Ekaterina Staff

This term is used throughout to include both remunerated staff and volunteers.

Key Stakeholders

Other participating organisations and agencies - such as the *Sverdlovsk Guild of Advocates*, *Sverdlovsk Regional Court*, *Sverdlovsk Ministry of Social Protection*, *Sverdlovsk Women's Coalition 'Together We Are Strong'*, *Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court*.. *Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum*, *Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse*, *Home Office* (Domestic Violence Team and Domestic Violence Virtual Office), *Foreign and Commonwealth Office* (Russian Section), *Wolverhampton Council*, *Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court*, *West Midlands Police* (Domestic Violence Unit), *Walsall Primary Care Trust*, *Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit*, *Metropolitan University London*, *University of Wolverhampton*

The Project Manager

Project Manager, *The Haven*

The CEO

The CEO of *The Haven*

The Director

Director of the CC *Ekaterina*

The Coalition

'Together We Are Strong', the coalition comprising both NGOs and government agencies working with women and children in the Sverdlovsk/Urals region

CJS

Criminal Justice System

CWASU

Child and Women Abuse Study Unit, London Metropolitan University

NGO

Non-governmental Organisation

WOW

Women Organising in Wolverhampton – network of women's agencies and organisations

1.0 EVALUATION PLANNING AND METHODOLOGY

In the spirit of transparency and inclusion, evaluation planning consultations with the two principal partners took place to determine the scope of, and arrangements for, undertaking this work. The following terms and conditions of the evaluation work to be undertaken for *The Haven's* joint international project: "*Life Without Fear*": *Protecting the Rights of Russian Women and Children Experiencing Domestic Violence – Supporting Women in the Court System* with *Ekaterina* were agreed:

The purpose of the research: to conduct a social audit and partnership analysis, review findings and prepare a recommendations report to evaluate:

1. Partnership investment and collaborative working (between *The Haven* Wolverhampton and *Ekaterina*) through reviewing and evaluating, project management and cross cutting outcomes: capacity building (human resources, finance, funding, information technology), influencing opinion, networking, collaboration, participation, gender, diversity and other (provision of services, facilities etc).
2. Review the investment resource, methodology, impact and sustainability of the approaches taken in point 1 within the partnership during the course of the project.
3. Recommendations and best practises for consideration in developing, implementing and managing similar future international work.

The evaluation has been carried out by two main methods – review and scrutiny of documentation made available by both partner organisations; and interviews (either face to face, by telephone or e-mail) with key personnel involved in the project - with the emphasis particularly in Ekaterinburg, the principal beneficiary of the partnership.

Two sets of interview questions were designed for discussion with members of each partner organisation, and which were made available to them in advance, and for discussions with other stakeholders and project participants (Appendix 3a and 3b).

Those stakeholder participants chosen for interview were selected for their potential ability to provide a diversity of perspectives, special insights and directly relevant experience of the partnership's working relationship and management of the joint initiatives.¹

¹ It should be noted the efficient response of the Director of *Ekaterina* in making arrangements for meetings with so many key individuals during the evaluation team's visit to Ekaterinburg (30 March-3 April 2009), despite the relatively short timescale involved. Equally, staff at *The Haven* made themselves available for either face-to-face or telephone interviews, responding to questions freely and openly.

2.0 HISTORY OF PARTNERSHIP

The partnership relations between *The Haven* Wolverhampton and *Ekaterina* started in 2000 when both organisations were involved in a project to create a network of social partnerships between NGOs, local authorities, police and business communities in addressing the problem of domestic violence. The project was funded by the *British Know How Fund* and within the framework of the project the participants received training in participation and development, capacity building, networking, social research, campaigning and lobbying. The training improved the effectiveness of the NGOs in representing and promoting issues of domestic violence on local, regional and national levels.

In 2001- 2003 *The Haven* and *Ekaterina* were partners in the DFID funded project 'Strengthening the Russian Association of Crisis Centres', commissioned by *The Women's Aid Federation of England*. The goal of the project was to improve the quality of life of women experiencing domestic or sexual violence and to promote a multi-agency approach. By developing active links between the law enforcement agencies, government departments and the crisis centres the project focused on the provision of more appropriate services to women.

Currently, *The Haven* and *Ekaterina* have been implementing a three year project funded by the Big Lottery Fund, entitled 'Protecting the Rights of Women and Children Experiencing Domestic Violence: Supporting Women in the Court System'. The project aims to do the following:

- To influence the attitude, perception and opinion of the Russian general public and professionals (judges, lawyers, police) in responding to domestic violence cases.
- To support Russian women affected by domestic violence to make independent choices about whether and how to proceed with charges and cases against violators of their human rights.

3.0 MAIN FINDINGS

3.1 PARTNERSHIP ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

At the April International Conference in Russia it was stated that the crisis centre, *Ekaterina* became the leader of the Russian movement against domestic violence. The Director of *Ekaterina* said: "The achievements, which were made by *Ekaterina* were only possible because of the partnership with *The Haven*. The partnership evolved over the period of 10 years and started as a pilot project. Ten years ago, in Russia there were no training programmes for the police, judges and prosecutors; there were no research projects which investigated the court system of dealing with domestic violence. The results of our joint work within the partnership exceeded all our expectations: we have collected unique and very interesting statistics; we gained invaluable experience, which has been applicable to our environment. This experience could be studied, analysed

and shared – that is our plan for the future. We will share what we've learned from *the Haven* with young, newly created women's NGOs, who do not have such fantastic partners as *the Haven*."

The Project Manager, *the Haven*, considered the following as the main partnership achievements to date:

- Increased awareness about domestic violence among professionals and the general public.
- Improved support for women and therefore improvements in their lives.
- Enhanced image and reputation of *the Haven* and *Ekaterina* as a result of success and achievement.

The Haven's staff provided a very positive assessment of their involvement in the partnership. During the visit of the IP (Investing in People) Assessor to *the Haven* the staff commented that they were: "proud to participate"; "international projects have had a big impact on *the Haven*"; "It is reinforcing our knowledge and experience"; "It has strengthened local and national relationships and has also raised awareness of domestic violence"; "It is wonderful that people come to see how *the Haven* works and they take back what they have learnt. We all benefit from sharing our experiences".

Partners came to recognise that the new type of relations required new approaches, models of operation and different professional skills. The partnership between *Ekaterina* and *the Haven* has created positive change at all levels. In the course of the interviews with staff and stakeholders the following have been identified as key success factors in the partnership's development:

PERSONAL LEVEL

- Professional growth and development of transferable skills
- Enhanced sense of belonging to a wider group
- Sharing of values
- Improved communication, presentation and IT skills

TECHNICAL LEVEL

- Improved management and project management skills
- Improved indicators' tracking, data collection and reporting skills
- Enhanced decision-making techniques
- Improved monitoring and evaluating skills
- Improved financial and currency handling skills

ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

- Strengthened and improved management practices
- Strengthened capacity to work with target groups and local communities
- Greater capacity for training, dissemination and research
- More effective and appropriate internal systems and processes
- Product innovation to deliver better services to target groups
- Development of more holistic approaches, ability to see bigger picture

- Strengthened financial management and accountability of the organisations thus ensuring organisational transparency
- Recruitment and retention of high performing staff
- Strengthened capacity to develop policies and influence opinions

PARTNERSHIP LEVEL

- Enhanced image, reputation and credibility with key stakeholders and peer groups
- Enhanced visibility
- Greater ability to anticipate and mitigate risk
- Equality of partners in the decision making process
- Capability to engage with stakeholders in new innovative ways
- Building capacity of individuals and institutions
- Added value by helping to strengthen local partners, local communities, local governments and civil society in general
- Greater access to local and international expertise and skills
- Strengthened capacity to develop policies and influence opinions
- More negotiating power and wider impact

OPINION INFLUENCING LEVEL

- Greater opportunities for influencing opinions and raising awareness
- Wider and more targeted influence on domestic violence legislation and practices
- Improved access to wider and strategically important areas and networks
- Enhanced capability in strategic planning and management
- Greater awareness of domestic violence issues among stakeholders

It is clear that considerable benefits have accrued to both partner organisations, in terms of professional development and capacity building from their involvement in the partnership work. The expertise they have developed, not solely but in large part through their involvement in the joint projects, and their skilful management of them, has undoubtedly enhanced the profile and credibility of both organisations in the perceptions of key opinion-formers and decision-makers in both countries. When asked to name the main reasons for the partnership success the respondents identified the following:

- Commitment at senior level and strong leadership
- Carefully nurtured relationship between the leaders of the two partner organisations over many years
- Dedication and passion to eliminate domestic violence
- Trust and respect between partners
- Ongoing learning
- Enthusiasm and optimism in overcoming difficulties
- Very high level of professionalism of *The Haven* staff
- Setting up achievable objectives, not rushing the process
- Personal friendly relations between partners at all levels

- Clear line of responsibility between partners
- Understanding of the differences in culture and operational management
- Ongoing commitment of direct and in-kind resources
- Building on previous experiences and success stories
- Planning and attention to detail
- Ongoing evaluation and monitoring against shared objectives

One of the important aspects of the partnership was that it created a platform for the development of further strategic partnerships. Both *Ekaterina* and *the Haven* have been very successful in the development of strategic alliances with a range of appropriate partner and stakeholder organisations, mainly in the criminal justice systems of both countries. They have better understanding about the processes of partnership, developed skills, confidence and knowledge about working in national and international partnerships outside the donor funded initiatives.

The partnership has been built around individual projects; therefore, the successful implementation of the projects has been of the utmost importance to the success of the partnership. One of the main strengths of the partnership has been meticulous planning work between staff of *Ekaterina* and *the Haven*. This joint planning work had established specific goals, targets, outputs, supporting activities, and achievement indicators against each of the projects' aims and activities, as well as against its cross-cutting objectives. Payment scheduling, risk assessment, and documentation and record keeping had also been the subject of considerable discussion during the planning phase.

Ekaterina staff suggested that this rigorous approach to project planning and implementation was a relatively new discipline for them. Despite their initial concerns that this would be an overly bureaucratic approach, all of the staff members in fact came to recognise and appreciate its benefits, both in terms of maintaining focus and in facilitating the preparation of progress tracking reports. The project-planning/tracking documents were displayed around the office walls as a constant visual checklist for all *Ekaterina* staff.

The CEO of *the Haven* and the Director of *Ekaterina* both held the view that their sense of shared values and common purpose - developed and nurtured over a period of more than 10 years, and maintained even during periods when there was no funding for any joint work - had also been a significant factor in keeping the partners and stakeholders determinedly 'on task' and motivated. The clearly evident passion, drive, personal motivation, political and networking skills of these two leaders has undoubtedly also been a significant factor in their ability to keep stakeholders on board, and to maintain the core of their work, notably, in the case of *Ekaterina*, the one-to-one counselling and support for women and children experiencing difficulties, including referral to a wide range of services provided by members of the coalition, even during difficult times financially and logistically. It was clear from the discussions with these two leaders, as well as with the Project Manager at *the Haven* and the Deputy Director of *Ekaterina*, that communications between the two organisations are very frank and open. It was also very clear, however, that the investment of time and resources at the earlier stage of the

partnership meant that the potential for conflict or misunderstandings between the partners during joint activities was successfully kept to an absolute minimum.

The methodology developed by *the Haven* had been based on an innovative, hands-on approach in which its role was not limited to capacity building of the developing organisation. All through the collaboration it was involved as an active partner, which allowed greater synergy and impact.

International partnerships enabled *the Haven* to further develop their expertise and provide advice, support and guidance to victims of domestic violence and to support partner NGOs in improving their capacity, impact and recognition using a variety of mechanisms – from direct partnership involvement to e-mail support and encouragement. Partnerships with *Ekaterina*, *Sabr* and other NGOs prompted long-term, constructive relations with the UK's stakeholders and service providers, particularly with the Police, CPS and Courts, increased their awareness and understanding of the work of *the Haven* and the services it provides.

The Haven also relies on its partners to contribute to its capacity work by working with local stakeholders and making important contributions to *the Haven's* advocacy work on issues of domestic violence.

A new role of the 'partnership co-ordinator' emerged over the years. In the early days the role was performed by the CEO and the Director of the partner organisations. In *Ekaterina* the function is still, to a greater extent, performed by the Director, whether *the Haven* created and financed a post within the organisation dedicated to the management of the project and subsequently the partner relationship. All project participants stated that *the Haven's* investment in building professional skills in terms of partnership management and development has been crucial to the success of the individual projects and partnership as a whole.

The evident sense of common purpose and focus was also accompanied by an appropriate degree of flexibility by both parties. For example, during the early stages of the training delivery in Ekaterinburg, it became clear both from the trainers' own perspective, and indeed from initial participant feedback, that there would be considerable merit in running the training sessions on a multi-agency basis - to include police officers, social workers and other agencies alongside the original target audience of judges and lawyers. It was recognised that this multi-agency involvement in the training would help the different participating organisations to better understand each other's cultures, practices, perspectives and services – a vital stage in developing any multi-agency forum or approach to problems – and beneficial to minimise opportunities for each agency to simply lay the 'blame' for any failings at each others' doors. The main disappointment for the partners in this otherwise successful widening of the project participants had been their inability to get health professionals on board – a goal to which *Ekaterina* and the CJS professionals remain committed to achieving.

The trainers had also been prepared to adapt the content of the training sessions slightly, drawing upon the professional expertise of members of *Ekaterina* to respond to

participants' feedback to learn more about the psychological and sociological aspects of domestic violence in addition to the court practices, which had been the initial focus for the training programme.

THE MAIN BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

The participants and staff stated that the partnership work had its challenges and pitfalls. Nobody anticipated that it would take nearly ten years for the partnership to develop and reach relative stability. Some of the challenges were identified as follows:

- Lack of sustainable funding
- Differences in the organisational cultures
- Difficulties of breaking down stereotypes about NGOs within the wider society
- Lack of trust and understanding of the role of NGOs in service delivery
- Mistrust towards “Western intervention” in Russia
- Lack of understanding amongst decision makers about domestic violence, role of NGOs and the level of support required
- Developing the partnership as a long term objective
- Identifying the cost of the partnership to the organisation
- Different expectations of stakeholders and partners
- Limited skill base and technical expertise
- Staff rotation, losing best staff to private businesses or INGOs
- Dependencies on grants - can partnership survive without grants?
- Limited ability to communicate in English by *Ekaterina* staff

3.2 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

3.2.1 Capacity-Building

Ekaterina staff were able to identify an impressive development of knowledge and skills obtained through their participation in the partnership initiatives, which should stand them in good stead for the future development and work of their NGO. These included:

- (a) Project planning, management and organisational skills** – setting goals, objectives, targets, achievement indicators, output/outcome tracking
- (b) Improved professional knowledge and in-depth understanding of domestic violence** – including psychological, sociological and legal aspects and issues, as well as of international standards in service provision and differing practices at local, national and international levels.
- (c) Presentation skills** – the Director and Deputy Director particularly cited what they had learned about structuring presentations and speeches for maximum

impact. They, and indeed others, had remarked particularly upon how impressed they had been by the brevity and clarity of presentations made by participants from the UK's *Criminal Justice System*, and how they had now taken on board some of that learning in their own practice.

(d) Political, conflict-management and negotiation skills – for example, The Director of *Ekaterina* cited her sharpened understanding of the value of negotiating written agreements of understanding and co-operation with key stakeholder agencies (e.g. the *Regional Courts*, the *Police Service*, the *Coalition of Crisis Centres*). Written agreements had proved especially useful in times of changing personnel within those agencies. The Director explained that she had also learned the value of not always tackling difficulties 'head-on', but rather to consider more lateral-thinking approaches where necessary. Here, she cited an example when a senior figure in one of the key stakeholder organisations in Russia had displayed considerable resistance, even hostility, to the work of *Ekaterina* and the project. Rather than capitulate to her initial instinct to challenge this attitude (a dismissive approach outright) she instead took the advice of others and worked 'around' the individual concerned, biding her time until, fortuitously, there was a helpful (to *Ekaterina*) change of personnel at this senior level.

(e) External 'marketing' and publicity-generating skills – gained from direct observation of marketing and publicity materials in their visits to the UK, and put to use, for example:

- in generating awareness-raising leaflets, posters (some of which are displayed in police stations and in the Mayor's Library in Ekaterinburg), as well as in publishing research reports, and in capturing the interest of newspaper and broadcast-media (a large file of press cuttings is available from the Project Manager);
- in providing training support materials and guidance booklets for professionals in the criminal justice and social protection fields.

All of this has been instrumental in raising and maintaining a relatively high public profile and in enhancing the credibility of *Ekaterina* amongst professionals on a local, regional and national level in Russia.

For *the Haven*, the partnerships with *Ekaterina* and other international NGOs generated opportunities for publicity and further promotion of their work both in the UK and overseas. It also stimulated the existing relations with the UK's stakeholders and service providers and presented opportunities for developing new ones.

(f) Conference management skills – gained through participation in and exposure to conferences and seminars organised by others at regional and national levels in both Russia and the UK, as well as learning through their

own experiences of hosting/co-hosting conferences, seminars and training events.

(g) Conducting research, formulating survey questionnaires, data-gathering and analysis - The expertise of both *London Metropolitan University's* CWASU, and the Social Work Department of the *Ural State University*² has been significant in developing the capability of *The Haven* and *Ekaterina* staff, and indeed some of the key stakeholders, in these fields. For example, Assistant Chair of *Sverdlovsk Regional Court* and Head of the Research Group in Ekaterinburg cited useful feedback provided by CWASU in planning the data-gathering and questionnaire design for her analysis of the handling of criminal DV cases within existing legislation in Russia. Similarly, two of the project's professionals in the *Guild of Lawyers* who were responsible for delivering much of the training to other professionals, cited the usefulness of the research reports produced during the project in supporting and lending credibility to their training interventions.

(h) IT skills - The provision of computer hardware and software funded by the project has enabled *Ekaterina's* staff to develop their understanding, knowledge and skills, most notably of database construction and use.

(i) Financial management skills - Early on in the life of the partnership, it became clear to both partner organisations that the complexities of and differences between the Russian and UK taxation regimes, and, to some extent early 'teething' difficulties with the transfer of funds through the UK and Russian banking systems, required the skills of a qualified accountant. Both organisations invested into the recruiting and/or training of the suitably qualified staff to fill that role. The accountant from *Ekaterina* explained some of the challenges with keeping on top of fairly regular changes in the taxation regime in Russia, both to ensure compliance with the tax regime and to determine the most tax-efficient management of the project's finances. She had navigated their way through different interpretations (between the UK and Russian authorities) of certain budget headings and terminology. However, some difficulties in different interpretations of project funding had been experienced.

Ekaterina has had successful experiences of audits by the Russian taxation authorities in the past – which is seen as a testimony to their financial probity and management capabilities. Recently however, a change in Russian law had led to an audit by the registration authorities. Any non-compliance identified by such an audit, would have jeopardised not simply the finances of the organisation, but the reputation and potentially therefore the very existence of the NGO itself. It is to the credit of *Ekaterina* staff that this audit by the registration authorities reported no such non-compliances.

² where Ekaterina's Co-ordinator, is a Lecturer and PhD researcher has been undertaking research in domestic violence.

Although *the Haven* is the more experienced of the two partners in terms of the issues that this project has been targeting, the interviews held with staff there also revealed considerable professional growth and development amongst those involved in this initiative.

The CEO cited the benefits to the reputation and 'standing' of *the Haven* in the UK, both locally and nationally, which derive from their international work generally as well as the development of strong relationships with local and national politicians and key players in the criminal justice system in the UK. The Project Manager, pointed to her greater knowledge and skills in managing international projects – experience which she had been able to draw upon in achieving an MBA qualification, with support from her employer. *The Haven's* Economic Development Manager cited benefits in terms of potential income-generation (and hence, ultimately, enhanced resources for provision of services for local women and children) from its growing reputation and capacity in providing consultancy, training and project management advice in the UK and internationally. The Publicity Officer at *the Haven* - a post which has itself been developed as a result of a need identified during the life of the partnership, and which it is anticipated will continue to benefit the organisation after the conclusion of the current project - cited considerable personal and organisational learning in terms of gaining press, media and political attention, nationally, internationally and locally, about the project specifically, and hence about the issue of domestic violence more generally. The Finance Manager believed that much had been learned from the initial problems regarding the transfer of monies between UK and Russian banking systems, which should greatly benefit the financial management of future international projects, whether funded through grant-making bodies or commissioned directly by clients with the financial means to do so.

3.2.2 Influencing Opinion

Numerous evidence indicates that the partnership has been instrumental in considerably raising the profile and credibility of both of the partner organisations - in their own and each other's localities and countries. This has confirmed that the issue of domestic violence emerging on the agenda amongst CJS and social work professionals, amongst member agencies of The Coalition in Sverdlovsk, as well as amongst politicians and the media, and (albeit that evidence for this is more difficult to gauge within the scope of this evaluation) amongst members of the public in Sverdlovsk and the West Midlands. Certainly, the discussions with "Olga"³, one of the victims of domestic violence who spoke highly of the support and assistance she had received from *Ekaterina* over the last year, would indicate that there is likely to be an increase in 'word of mouth'

³ Olga had come to Ekaterina after seeing their poster displayed in the public library. Ekaterina, and indeed other members of The Coalition, had supported her through a divorce from her violent husband, and had helped her to re-train and secure employment, and hence some financial independence for herself and her child.

awareness within families and communities of the issues and support that is available to victims.

Scrutiny of the written feedback from professionals who underwent the training programme in Ekaterinburg indicates a desire and determination, albeit not unanimous, to address the inadequacies of judicial and social protection services to victims in Russia. Although *Ekaterina's* and to some extent the Partnership's objective to establish a multi-agency domestic violence forum in Sverdlovsk has not yet been formally realised, it would seem that the building blocks for such a development are beginning to be put in place. Both the Assistant Director of *Sverdlovsk Regional Court* and the two representatives of the *Guild of Lawyers* have reported on the establishment of a network of professionals involved in the project, who now maintain communications and regular consultations with one another to further their own professional development, and hence the aims of the project.

The Assistant to the Chair of *Sverdlovsk Regional Court* explained that, from the early stages it was recognised that there was a need to address *behaviours*, not just *opinions*, amongst CJS professionals if practice was to change. Work which she had started initially by analysing 200 private prosecution cases of DV to identify omissions and inadequacies in their processing, was now a continuing part of her role. Her initial research findings had formed part of the practical syndicate work of *Ekaterina's* training/seminar programme, aimed at identifying ways of *requiring* appropriate actions and behaviours via changed systems, procedures and processes - for example, in preparation of case files, evidence-gathering, production of sample questions, provision of guidance in terms of conducting investigations, and in provision of legal advice to would-be private prosecutors/victims.

Continuing development of this work was now written into the Regional Court's quarterly plan, and had also been the subject of a two-hour presentation which The Assistant to the Chair had been invited to make to a regional police service conference in January 2009. These have great significance as it was clear from the participants and trainer feedback, that receptiveness to the 'message' of the training programme varied considerably amongst the different vocational groups involved, with social workers being identified as the most sympathetic, and police officers and federal judges being regarded as the least receptive. This work, and indeed other references to the work of *Ekaterina*, had also been cited very positively in the opening remarks of the Governor at a recent meeting of the Regional Security Council, to which the Director of *Ekaterina* had been invited as a keynote speaker. The Governor of the Sverdlovsk Region reiterated his belief in, and continuing support for, the work of *Ekaterina* and the project - and indeed his belief in the role of NGOs generally in helping to forge a strong and organised civil society in Russia. Such recognition from senior figures, as was told by several interviewees, would have been 'unthinkable' without the UK partner's involvement, or the lessons learned from examining the UK CJS's approach to domestic violence cases. This international interest also helps to ensure that *Ekaterina's* 'voice' continues to be heard within the *Ministry of Internal Affairs*, the local Administration, as well as amongst Police Officers, Judges and Lawyers.

Additionally, as part of their continuing development work, the Assistant to the Chair of the Courts reported that, on a recent visit to Nizhni Novgorod to examine the handling of DV cases there, she was approached by a number of CJS professionals keen to learn more about how they may learn from the project and improve their own processes and practice.

The Head of Family and Children's Support Services and member of The Coalition for over 10 years, emphasised the considerable impact of the work of *Ekaterina* in helping to establish a women's Crisis Centre in Chelyabinsk - the first-ever women's refuge in the Urals region. *Ekaterina* staff, and others in The Coalition, had helped, for example, with training and training-support materials for their professionally-qualified staff and volunteers; with public awareness-raising through the provision of leaflets, booklets and posters; and with guidance on how to manage the initial stages of caring for and admitting women and children presenting themselves at the refuge – including, for example, in preserving evidence of violence for potential court cases. One of the lessons learnt from the process was how to 'leverage' opinion of decision-makers in the social protection system in Chelyabinsk, as well as how to fight for funding, resources and assistance. For example, under current legislation, it had originally been suggested that the local administration could provide refuge only for women, and not their children. With the assistance of *Ekaterina*, the Head of Family and Children's Support Services had 'educated' senior managers in the government about the impact of such separation, and had eventually managed to overcome this legal obstacle, principally by means of a change of nomenclature for the service.

The Head of Family and Children's Support Services was able to provide a further example of the spread of the project's influence beyond its original target audience. Following a spate of physical attacks on some of the refuge workers, she had approached and established a partnership with pastoral workers from the local Orthodox Church, initially to provide psychological and emotional support for these staff. However, arising from their involvement with the issues, the Church is now determined also to begin a programme of preventative work with perpetrators.

In the UK, the CEO, the Project Manager and the Economic Development Manager of *the Haven* are confident that their international work has undoubtedly helped to maintain a high profile for their organisation and its work amongst opinion-formers, politicians, criminal justice agencies and the public in the UK. In addition, their growing expertise and external recognition for their work in such projects is enabling them to 'spread the message' more widely - for example through their provision of training and consultancy services in the UK and internationally⁴; through having a respected 'voice' in government consultative processes; through addressing and presenting papers at local, national and international conferences; and through the strongly enhanced relationships with criminal justice agencies who have been such key players in the development of the partnerships.

⁴ See the 2008/9 Annual Report, which gives information about some of the work in the UK, Russia, India, Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia.

3.2.3 Building Alliances, Networking and Collaboration

Most of the evidence of success in influencing opinions and policies, as cited above, is the direct result of both partner organisations' ability to build alliances, and maintain networks and collaborative working with a wide range of appropriate governmental and non-governmental organisations in both countries. The CEO of *the Haven* and the Director of *Ekaterina* in particular have clearly demonstrated their capabilities in exploiting (in its most positive sense) the benefits of their personal and professional contacts. They have also been highly successful in seeking out and winning the active support of influential organisations, agencies, and individuals either with decision-making powers, or with access to available resources, services and expertise.

In this regard, perhaps one of the potential 'casualties' of the ending of the current project will be the cessation of funding which had allowed for regular meetings, usually twice a year, of the coalition of women's organisations in Sverdlovsk. Two of the most active members of the coalition, the *Family and Children's Support Services* in Chelyabinsk and the *Fund for the Support of Businesswomen*⁵, expressed their concerns about the future development and particularly how it might affect agencies and individuals in the provinces. Member organisations reported on the value of opportunities to learn about each other's services, expertise and resources, to analyse problems and jointly seek solutions, to make recommendations for campaigning/lobbying activities, and to maintain morale amongst those working in this very difficult field. As the Deputy Director of *Ekaterina* had also put it, involvement in both the coalition and the *Life Without Fear* project had helped many to recognise that they are 'not alone in a sea of violence'.

Although the Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum in Ekaterinburg has not yet been formally established, a network of legal and social protection professionals who are 'graduates' of the partnership's training programmes has now emerged. This network, especially given the apparent support of senior figures in for, example, the *Regional Courts*, the *Administration*, and the *Interior Ministry*, might well form the cornerstone for the establishment of such a forum.

Skills in setting up and maintaining partnership relations allowed the staff and volunteers both in Russia and the UK to identify new, unusual approaches in the development of networks and collaborations. For example, the chair of the *Guild of Lawyers* has identified another potential 'network' of contacts which she was also hoping to exploit. As a music graduate herself, she is now looking to work with some of her former peers who teach music to children, using them as a point of access for potential work with children and teachers. She also believes that the recognition and continuing support of the Governor's Legal Advisor could also help potentially with opportunities to influence the *Ministry of Education* in this regard.

⁵ One of the agencies to which Ekaterina may refer clients for assistance with vocational training, job-seeking or business start-up skills.

International work and long-term partnership with *Ekaterina* has improved *the Haven's* existing relations with their beneficiaries and stakeholders. It raised *the Haven's* profile nationally and demonstrated that the organisation's experience was valued both in the UK and internationally. During the DV Conference in Russia of October 2007, the key UK stakeholders and beneficiaries who travelled to Russia with the *Haven* delegation, had an opportunity to personally observe the scale of the problem in Russia and assess the value of the international assistance provided by *the Haven*. The UK delegation included Head of the Domestic Violence Team and Domestic Violence Virtual Office, Home Office, District Judge, West Midlands, Senior Legal Advisor, Wolverhampton Magistrates Court and Project Researcher, CWASU. Involvement of the stakeholders, their awareness and trust helped in building long-term support and relationships.

In recognition of their achievements *the Haven* was invited to become a member of the *Wolverhampton Global Partnership Forum* led by The Mayor of Wolverhampton.

3.2.4 Participation, and Gender and Diversity

The partnership in general and each individual project implemented by partner organisations have focused particularly on addressing the needs of women and children experiencing domestic violence. However, participants in all aspects of the joint initiatives – for example, in the research programme, in international visits, in regional and international conferences, and in the training and seminars programme - have been both male and female, and have included a diverse range of individuals and agencies: professionals from the CJS and Social Protection communities; national and local government officers and elected representatives in both countries; staff and volunteers in a variety of NGOs, particularly within the Coalition of Crisis Centres. These individuals have all been actively involved in varying ways (or at the very least had the opportunity to be actively involved), in developing a greater awareness and shared understanding of the issues, in analysing problems and in identifying potential ways forward in forging effective judicial and social protection for women and children in these circumstances.

Reports from those responsible for delivering the training and seminars programme suggest that the 'receptiveness' of participants varied more between different agencies and organisations than between, for example, male and female. This would suggest that the working practices and organisational cultures experienced by people in those agencies is a more significant factor than gender in terms of individuals' attitudes towards the handling of victims of domestic violence – an important learning point for future work in this field.

Some aspects of diversity monitoring of its clients (e.g. the client's age, nationality, education level, and vocation/profession) has been captured by *Ekaterina*, particularly of those women interviewed for the publication '*Domestic Violence: Monitoring and Analysis – Examples from Sverdlovsk Area, Russia, 2008*'. However, from the available data, it was not entirely clear whether diversity monitoring data has yet been analysed or used either to inform *Ekaterina's* targeting of publicity and awareness-raising work, or in

identifying whether the organisation is reaching out to all sections of society in the area it serves. Whilst there will be different levels of sensitivity towards diversity monitoring in Russia for those still prevalent in the UK, it may well be an area worthy of attention by *Ekaterina*.

3.2.5 Other

The discussions with two project trainers and influential figures in the *Guild of Lawyers*, indicated that following *The Haven's* example of developing strong collaborative links with academic institutions i.e. *London Metropolitan University, University of Wolverhampton*, negotiations are under way with the *Sverdlovsk Academy of Law* to develop a module on domestic violence as an integral part of the basic training of Advocates. Such a development would help to ensure the continuation of the considerable work already undertaken in developing the training programme and training-support materials for this project. These negotiations are also looking at potential use of the Academy's library as a repository for the project's research materials, as well as for the database of professionally trained expertise now available within the *Guild of Lawyers*, thus ensuring wider access to all this information amassed within the project.

It was not clear whether these negotiations with the *Academy of Law* might lead to income-generating activity to sustain the continuing work of *Ekaterina* (for example, via the sale of the training materials or commissioning of inputs from *Ekaterina's* experts and trainers in the Academy's module on domestic violence). However, such a relationship could almost certainly open up opportunities for raising greater awareness of the issues, and of *Ekaterina's* work, through publication of journal articles, for example.

As has already been noted, some of the project participants who are members of the *Guild of Lawyers* remain active in the issues through their involvement of the networks amongst CJS professionals. Most of these have also reportedly offered assurances of their determination to pass on the knowledge they have gained to their own Interns, thereby ensuring that the work of the project is carried forward into the future.

UK and Russian staff and volunteers were encouraged by a recent pronouncement by President Medvedev (himself a professional lawyer who has previously published a number of articles about the rights of women in Russia) recognising certain 'gaps' in Russian legislation aimed at protecting the rights of children and young people. It was suggested that this expressed interest by the Russian President might well open up fruitful possibilities for further work with *Ekaterina* in helping children and young people who have been witness to or victims of domestic violence

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Haven - Ekaterina partnership has evolved over a ten year period from occasional meetings at conferences to small initiatives to large-scale projects. The starting point for the partnership was their shared desire to offer support to victims of domestic violence and abuse, which lead to other initiatives for partnership to develop. The partnership started with small achievable initiatives and gradually progressed to more ambitious and complicated projects thus allowing the partnership to mature. Both partners have improved their management, communication and networking skills and strategically positioned themselves for further developments.

The development process involved regular communication, creating relations of trust and respect and encouraging an equal participation in the building of the partnership. The partnership recognised diversity of experiences and built on the strengths of the partner organisations.

The experience gained from international partnership work is an important outcome. The partnership has raised the image and profile of the partners in the area of domestic violence against women and children. Major outcomes of the partnership have been the greater awareness and understanding of the impact of domestic violence on individuals, communities and society, realisation that domestic violence has no geographical or state boundaries and can occur to women and children regardless of their ethnic group, age or religion as well as the unity of different agencies and individuals in their determination to eliminate domestic violence and abuse.

Both partners developed a network of stakeholders and supporters, who in turn brought their specific expertise and skills into the partnership. As the partnership matured the stakeholders started to take more active role in supporting both *The Haven* and *Ekaterina* and forming their own networks and alliances. The range and levels of engagement amongst the participating agencies and individuals and key stakeholders has been impressive and powerful.

The 'standing' of *Ekaterina*, and the development of its expertise and management capabilities arising from its involvement in the partnership, will be increasingly significant if *Ekaterina* is now to move - as indeed it should - towards lessening its dependence on 'top' leadership, and on personal links and connections, important though these have been to date. If only as a means of guarding against the impact of changes in personnel, either within the organisation itself or amongst its partners and stakeholders, *Ekaterina* needs to develop an open and transparent, objective and accountable strategy for 'recruitment' of both stakeholders/partners and its own staff.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended to formally constitute the long-term partnership. It will benefit both *The Haven* and *Ekaterina* if they invest time and resources into creating a detailed partnership strategy. Partnership building activities should be identified clearly in relation to inputs and measurable outputs and milestones, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor the progress of the partnership.
- One of the main challenges facing the partnership is its sustainability. Partners experience difficulties in identifying and securing funding to sustain organisations, partnership and the work of the partnership beyond the funding period of each project. For the long-term impact it is recommended that the partnership is either mainstreamed, or at least closely integrated into the organisational structure. Exit strategies at the end of each project and indeed at the end of the partnership should be developed and costed.
- An immediate priority for the partnership should be the identification of alternative sources of funding to secure and build upon the good work of this project. Indeed, it is imperative that work on securing funding is continuous, and always planned for well in advance of the cessation of any current funding.
- Both *Ekaterina* and *the Haven* need to promote the benefits and challenges of the partnership, particularly when dealing with institutional donors and trusts. Developing and maintaining partnerships could place extra demands on limited organisational resources. The cost of the partnership should be included in the budgets when applying for funding / grants.
- Proactive and positive engagement with institutional donors, trusts and charities is vital for the success in the acquisition of grants. For the last 3-5 years, funding allocations for the Russian Federation and majority of countries of the former USSR have been significantly reduced. The donors who support the development programmes in Russia tend to work with long-term well-known partners; therefore it is crucial for the future financial support to establish constructive and open relations with the donors. Both partners play key roles in the process of finding new donors and building donor loyalty. *Ekaterina* should actively engage with the donors and trusts, which have representatives in Russia and are looking for reliable local partners in the countries of operations. *The Haven's* role is crucial in identifying donors, who are UK based , in cultivating long-term relations with them and in investigating opportunities with new international donors.
- *Ekaterina* should be alert to potential funding opportunities, which might arise given the declared interest of the Russian President in improving legislation protecting the rights of children and young people.
- Both partner organisations should develop a system of calculating the cost of the partnership. Some of the costs are covered by grants, but between the externally funded projects, it is up to the partners to support the process using their internal,

sometimes already stretched resources. *The Haven's* investment in the partnership is particularly impressive both in financial and in-kind contributions, which need to be measured and accounted for.

- The partnership should develop system for measuring the partnership development process and for measuring the impact of the partnership on each organisation.
- Future project bids should include the fully-costed professional services of a qualified financial manager, as well as of high-quality translators and interpreters. *Ekaterina* might also consider following the example of its UK partner in securing funding - appointing a dedicated Partnership/Project Manager in Ekaterinburg.
- Ten years of partnership have generated information, which wasn't always appropriate for the official reports. A case study about partnership development could be a very useful tool in assessing the past and planning for the future. It could also be used for the awareness raising, marketing and promotion of the partnership.
- Any future initiatives should seek to involve external evaluators from the very beginning, in order to jointly determine the information-gathering requirements, and to aid the evaluator's familiarisation with key aspects of the project's scope, activities, stakeholders, etc.
- Systematic and deliberate dissemination of the learning and good practice resulting from the partnership activities should be undertaken both within and beyond the Sverdlovsk region and the *Ekaterina's* current networks. Consideration should be given, for example, to broadening links with appropriate organisations and networks throughout other post-Soviet republics, built on the existing links with CC SABR in Uzbekistan.
- *Ekaterina* should continue to prepare the ground for widening the range of stakeholder organisations in Sverdlovsk region - particularly involving relevant sections or individuals in the medical and education services, with a view to their involvement in the Multi-Agency Forum.
- Both partners should promote and disseminate the best practices and experiences generated by the partnership so that the fight against violence and abuse against women and children could be mainstreamed into the humanitarian work.
- Determined efforts should now be made to establish formally the Multi-Agency Forum on Domestic Violence in Sverdlovsk.
- A strategy should be developed by *Ekaterina* for the future 'recruitment' of and working alliances with key stakeholder organisations and individuals, as well as for recruitment and selection of its own staff, in order to lessen its current dependence on personal links and connections.

- Real concerns were raised by *Ekaterina* and members of *The Coalition* about their ability to continue regular meetings, given the cessation of funding with the ending of the current project. These concerns need to be taken seriously if much of the good work supported by the project is not to dissipate. Consideration should be given to making better use of modern technology, to create 'virtual' meetings via the use of webcams, Skype, and IT.
- *Ekaterina* might give consideration to better data-collection and analysis of diversity monitoring data for its clients, to help in targeting of awareness-raising publicity, and in ensuring that it is reaching out to all sections of the society it is seeking to serve.

APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- Pages from the original project bid
- Development Plan and Outcome Tracking Documents (Years 1, 2 and 3) for the project
- Interim project progress reports, Years 1 and 2
- Charter of *Ekaterina*, dated 1 March 2006
- Booklet of Coalition 'Together We Are Strong' Booklet 'Life Without Fear Plan of Action', including definition of the term 'domestic violence', description of its stages and outcomes, review of the relevant laws, recommendation of the professionals, hot lines/refugees contact details.
- Record of attendance in the training of Judges of Peace from 8 local districts
- 31-page handbook for teachers of the course 'Crimes in the sphere of family-household relations: legal and social bases of their prevention'
- Small booklet 'Domestic Violence - How to Help Yourself Guide'
- Small leaflet 'Domestic Violence - Where to find a help?'
- Leaflet 'Domestic Violence How to Help Yourself' – including examples of an Application Form for the Judges of Peace
- Article in Russian state newspaper 'Rossiyskaya Gazeta' dated 05/03/2009 named 'Crisis Centres are created in Ural for women in difficult situation'
- Booklet of The International Multi-agency Conference 'Peace in the family - Society without Violence', which took place on 09/10/2007. Participants included *Ekaterina* and experts from UK
- Agreement between *Ekaterina* and *Guild of Lawyers* of Sverdlovsk region
- 37-page Booklet 'Life Without Fear Practical Guide Plan of Action'
- Booklet 'Health and Security' published by the Family and Reproduction centre of Sverdlovsk region with the help of *Ekaterina* and covering issues of safe sex, rape, domestic violence including contact details for *Ekaterina*
- Poster 'Domestic Violence is Crime' including contact numbers of local police offices
- Poster of Crisis Centre *Ekaterina* with their contact numbers
- Various leaflets and newsletters on *The Haven's* work, including the 2007/08 Annual Report and a leaflet advertising its international programmes, training and consultancy
- *Amnesty International's* Report 'Russian Federation; No-where to turn to' – violence against women in the family, December 2005

APPENDIX 2 – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Ekaterina Staff

- Director, and President of *The Coalition 'Together We Are Strong'*
- Deputy Director, and head of *Ekaterina's* psychological department
- Lecturer/PhD candidate in Sociology at the *Ural State University*
- Child Psychologist
- Accountant
- Volunteer

Members of *The Coalition of Women's Crisis Centres 'Together We Are Strong'*

- President of the *Fund for the Support of Businesswomen*
- Head of Family and Children's Support Service in Chilabynsk, and Director of the first women's Refuge centre in Urals region

Sverdlovsk Regional Court:

- Assistant to the Chairman, former Police officer, Head of the Research Group and a key partner in the project

Sverdlovsk Guild of Lawyers:

- Chairman of the Presidium of the Guild, partner and one of the trainers of the project
- Member of the Guild, partner and coach for the training programme
- Legal Advisor to the Sverdlovsk Regional Governor

Other:

- Olga, client of the crisis centre *Ekaterina*
- Director of the Mayor's Library

The Haven, Wolverhampton:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Project Manager
- Economic Development Manager
- Finance Manager
- Publicity Officer

APPENDIX 3a – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROJECT PARTNERS

Introduction

The key purposes and benefits of evaluating the cross-cutting objectives of this project will help everyone involved in or affected by your work to:

- Learn from your experience
- Record what you have learnt, and share it with other stakeholders
- Check whether what you are doing, or have done, is still what the project's beneficiaries and stakeholders want or need
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in your project
- Create a basis for future planning
- Demonstrate whether you have used your resources – people, time and money – effectively
- Explain to funders, and others involved in your work, what you have achieved and how successful it is

Questions and Issues to Discuss:

1. What, if any, *continuous* evaluation processes were in place to inform planning and delivery as the project developed?
For example:-
 - What milestones, sign-posts or indicators were you looking out for?
 - Did you undertake any kind of risk-assessment or contingency planning exercises?
 - Were records made of events such as:
 - minutes of intra- or inter-agency meetings
 - records of attendance and feedback from either group events (including training events), or one-to-one advisory or counselling sessions with participants or service-users
 - face-to-face or telephone conversations with your partners, key stakeholders or service-users
 - agreed or changed action points or work programmes
 - diary entries or personal observations of how the project was going, including how any differences of opinion were resolved
2. Did those working on the project stay focused on the ultimate goals of the project? If so, who or what made maintaining this sense of focus possible? If not, what were the main distracting factors?
3. Within your own organisation, who has benefited from the project, and who has not?

4. Have you experienced any major problems, with external circumstances (such as local or national policies?)
 - implementing your plans (for example, you didn't allow enough time or resources for certain things, or a key worker left, or there was confused leadership, or low levels of skill/knowledge/organisational ability),
 - the ideas behind what you wanted to achieve (for example, different people involved in the project were working towards different goals)
5. If you did experience any major problems, how were these discussed and resolved either within your organisation, or with your partners and key stakeholders?
6. What skills do you think you personally, and your organisation as a whole, have developed, or improved upon, as a result of participation in this project (e.g. leadership and management skills, political, organisational or promotional skills, team-building, accountability, fund-raising, influencing, negotiation, risk-management, conflict-resolution skills).
7. What impact has the project had on how (a) your organisation, and (b) the issue of domestic violence, is perceived and understood by external bodies and the wider public?
8. With the benefit of hindsight, are there things that you would do differently?
9. At the conclusion of your project, what will be different about the original problem(s) which your project was set up to address?
10. At the conclusion of your project, what arrangements are in place to ensure the continuation of your work and achievements?

APPENDIX 3b – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR OTHER PROJECT PERSONNEL

The following questions guided my interviews with all involved with the project, though follow-up questions to probe or explore issues raised varied according to the responses received.

1. Tell me about your role and involvement in the project.
2. What have you been most pleased or impressed with in terms of the project's implementation and/or impact?
3. With the benefit of hindsight, what, if anything, could have been done differently?
4. How do you think the project has shaped people's opinions of the work of *Ekaterina* or *The Haven*?
5. How do you think the work of the project can be sustained once the project has ended?