

**Ending domestic violence in Russia and the UK:
Opportunities and challenges in international action research**

Final report

Renate Klein, Miranda Horwarth, & Liz Kelly

London Metropolitan University

4 August 2009

Contact:

Renate Klein
Department of Applied Social Sciences
London Metropolitan University
Ladbroke House
62-66 Highbury Grove
London N5 2AD
Renate.klein@londonmet.ac.uk

Summary

This report analyses the outcomes of an external evaluation for the project Life without Fear. Life without Fear was jointly developed and implemented by The Haven, a domestic violence project in Wolverhampton, England, and Crisis Centre Ekaterina, a non-governmental women's organisation in Ekaterinburg, Russia, that addresses domestic violence.

The goals of the evaluation were to assess outcomes and impact of project Life without Fear, contribute to the evidence base on domestic violence in Russia, and provide recommendations for the future.

The intended overall outcome of Life without Fear was to put domestic violence on the agenda of the Russian government and to facilitate changes to the legal system in Russia in accordance with international standards. Towards this goal the project devised and implemented an ambitious programme of Russian-led research and NGO-led public relations, professional training, and coalition building.

Because of the project's dual purpose of conducting research and implementing practical activities the evaluation needed to take into account the importance of the local production of evidence, the role of such research in social change, and the significance of local women's NGOs as agents of civil society and the opportunities and challenges this implies when working across borders.

Project Life without Fear for the first time compiled data on domestic violence and the criminal justice system in the Sverdlovsk Region; it brought the issue of domestic violence to the forefront of discussion on municipal and regional policy levels; and it galvanized the legal community, setting the stage for changes in legal procedure that are likely to benefit women affected by domestic violence who want to take their case to the courts.

This report describes project Life without Fear and the methodology used to assess it. It reflects on multi-country action research, its challenges and opportunities, and sketches out the comparative social and cultural context of the partners who collaborated in project Life without Fear. The outcomes and impacts of the project are discussed under five headings: Coalitions and multi-agency work, local evidence base, criminal justice practice, women's quality of life, and ideas for continuation projects. The report concludes with recommendations for how project "Life without fear" could be developed into the future.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

- I.1 Background
- I.2 Criminal justice interventions in domestic violence in UK and Russia
- I.3 Context of the evaluation

II. Project “Life without Fear”

III. Multi-country action research

- III.1 Creating and sustaining partnerships
- III.2 Interpretation and translation
- III.3 Exchanging expertise
- III.4 Social and cultural contexts
- III.5 Importance of local data

IV. Outcomes and Impact

- IV.1 Coalitions and multi-agency work
 - Public relations
 - Coalition-building among women’s organisations
 - Formal agreements between women’s NGO and local authorities
- IV.2 Local evidence base
 - Crime statistics and case reviews
 - Women’s accounts
- IV.3 Criminal justice practice
 - Background
 - Training
 - Impact on case processing and offender accountability
- IV.4 Women’s quality of life
- IV.5 Continuation Projects

V. Recommendations

VI. References

Appendix: Development of Legislation in UK and Russia

I. Introduction

I.1 Background

Research about domestic violence in Russia is still limited but recent studies suggest that psychological, financial, physical and sexual abuse is widespread (MSUWC, 2003). Gondolf & Shestakov (1997) estimated that women in Russia may be two and one-half times more likely to be killed by husbands or partners than women in the United States. Police records from 2007 for the Sverdlovsk Region in Western Siberia indicate 255 domestic violence homicides in a population of 4.5 million people, or about 57 DV murders per one million population. This figure is 19 times higher than the annual UK estimate of 160 DV homicides in a population of 60 million (3 per one million population) presented recently by the British Home Office (Dunworth, 2006).

Interventions in domestic violence in Russia are becoming more frequent but are at an early stage: victim support services tend to be scarce; multi-agency work and community coordination are only beginning. Criminal justice interventions have been described as ineffectual if not outright counterproductive. A Human Rights Watch (1997) investigation found that a hostile and biased process made it difficult for women to bring cases and in effect seemed to obstruct investigation and prosecution. Barely a decade later Amnesty International (2005) reported that the situation had not changed much: institutionalised discrimination continued to deter victims. Domestic violence is often considered part of everyday life, victim-blaming is common, and for many women the process of escaping from domestic violence is long and difficult (Vogodskaya, 2008).

Project Life without Fear set out to address these problems, raise awareness, improve the judicial process, and ultimately enhance the quality of life for women and children. How this was done and to what extent the project reached its goals is the topic of this report. A recent review of crime in Russia—while notably silent on violence against women and children—provides important context information that helps to appreciate the challenges a project like Live without Fear would face. Gilinskiy (2006) describes social patterns and practices that work against the prevention of violence against women and children: high rates of violent crime in general, the brutalisation of men in the military and the prison system, high rates of drug abuse, and widespread corruption that undermines the rule of law.

I.2 Criminal justice interventions in domestic violence in UK and Russia

Since the 1990s good practice standards for criminal justice interventions in domestic violence have converged internationally. While they continue to be debated nationally and across countries, there is relative agreement about the usefulness of three approaches: multi-agency work, multi-professional training, and specialised domestic violence resources in the criminal justice system (CJS).

Multi-agency work means that crisis centres, police departments, child protection, prosecutors, courts, emergency rooms, housing, and other systems work together to protect victims of domestic violence and hold offenders accountable. When systems work at cross-purposes victims find it difficult to escape domestic violence and perpetrators are too often treated with impunity.

Multi-professional training refers to training for members of different professions (such as health, mental health, CJS, and child protection) and by cross-disciplinary teams of trainers such as crisis centre staff presenting jointly with a police officers and a substance abuse counsellor.

The third element of good CJS practice is specialised resources. In the UK they currently include Specialist DV courts (SDVC) and Independent DV advocates (IDVA). In the U.S. they include DV courts and victim witness advocates in district attorney's offices.

The legal systems in Russia and the UK differ considerably as does the structure of civil society. This includes the organisation and function of agencies and institutions that may have bearing on, or direct involvement in, the provision of services for victims of domestic violence. Grassroots efforts against domestic violence exist in both countries but their scope and impact differ. At present, research and activism against domestic violence are more developed in the UK than in Russia in terms of public attitudes and awareness, support available for victims from both the statutory and voluntary sector, and legal provisions such as specialist courts for dealing with DV cases and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates. While the criminal justice system response to DV has improved significantly in the UK, using the system can still be difficult and frustrating for women. This is even more so in the case of Russia. Here, using the legal system for redress in DV cases appears extremely challenging. The system at present puts particular burdens on women who wish to take their case forward that are related to a structural bias that makes legal representation for defendants much more likely than legal representation for plaintiffs (in part this maybe related to relative financial means but it part it is built into the legal system because in specific circumstances the state pays defendants' legal fees).

At the moment, neither country has a specific offence of “domestic violence” under criminal law. There has been considerable development of civil and criminal law in both countries over the past decades (Appendix 1). However, more important than nominal listings of laws on the books is the extent to which legislation reflects understandings of domestic and sexual violence in terms of victim impact, and the extent to which police, prosecutors and judges are trained to put these understandings into practice. For example, the law in both countries has long since defined assault and rape as criminal offences. Nonetheless, domestic and sexual violence have traditionally not been “seen” as assault or rape, largely because of historically grounded patterns of gender inequality but also because “crime” is often viewed in terms of isolated incidents and not as ongoing patterns of coercive control within which any one action may not rise to the level of “crime”.

Although lacking a criminal offence of “domestic violence”, the UK Home Office has a policy definition of DV as “any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality”. The downside of this definition is that it lumps all cases of violence in families together, although the dynamics, risks and intervention needs of cases in which a male intimate partner abuses a female spouse or partner are often very different from the dynamics of other cases of violence among family members. While the absence of a clear definition in the criminal code makes it difficult to track cases through the criminal justice system, the fact that there is a policy definition in place (even if it is subject to ongoing debate) reflects the extent to which domestic violence is acknowledged in the UK as a significant problem in society and that the state has a responsibility to intervene.

In both countries strategies to improve the legal systems have included efforts to strengthen the teeth of existing laws and to develop new legislation that makes legal interventions more effective. For example, the introduction of injunctions into civil law can facilitate criminal intervention when the breach of injunctions becomes a criminal offence upon which police can act. This work is more advanced in the UK, although even here the significant progress made is—on a historical scale—relatively recent.

Because domestic violence denotes crimes in the context of relationships with emotional, interpersonal and cultural attachments and interdependencies, enforcement of DV-related legislation requires specialised training for police, lawyers, prosecutors, and judges on the dynamics of domestic violence and on common misconceptions that can interfere with due process. Historically, the legal systems in both countries had de facto barriers that made it difficult for women to seek redress. They include lack of transparency of legal procedures, costs

associated with various legal fees, and risks of experiencing further abuse in the course of legal proceedings, either from the abuser or from members of the legal system. Thus, awareness raising and training have been central strategies in improving the justice system response in both countries.

1.3 Context of the evaluation

Life without Fear has been one of the most recent collaborations between the British domestic violence project The Haven, in Wolverhampton, England, and Crisis Centre Ekaterina in Ekaterinburg, Russia. Supported by the British Big Lottery Fund and building on previous collaborations between the two agencies Life without Fear for three years implemented an ambitious programme of research and intervention in the city of Ekaterinburg and the wider Sverdlovsk region.

The goal of the collaboration between The Haven and Crisis Centre Ekaterina was to advance effective intervention in domestic violence locally in Ekaterinburg and to increase the knowledge base on domestic violence in Russia. The data collection activities—from surveys to interviews—had to serve dual purposes of gathering evidence and affecting local change.

As external evaluators the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit (CWASU) at London Metropolitan University entered the process not until the project was well under way. Its research design and questions and most of the measurements had been devised before CWASU were involved. Two things soon become clear: One, the project was very active, collecting data, training large numbers of professionals, holding conferences, and building coalitions among crisis centres and with local authorities. Two, the reliability and validity of much of the data collected was difficult to determine, there was little baseline information, and the research activities did not grow from a systematic comparison design. While these issues may be peripheral from the perspective of making things happen on the ground, they do affect the type of evaluation that can be done (Berk & Rossi, 1990).

CWASU's evaluation aimed to provide an analytical overview of the project, reflect on action research in multi-country projects, and recommend next steps. In addition, we tried to gauge impact by identifying activities, events, or pieces of evidence that suggest actual change in practice attributable to the project: in the judicial process, in relationships between community agencies and local authorities, in the experience of the beneficiaries of the project, and in the development of a local evidence base.

In the course of the evaluation CWASU reviewed existing research tools and drafted new ones including a survey for lawyers and a template for a domestic homicide review. CWASU further analysed the documents provided by the project partners; reviewed the literature; conducted site visits; and met with and interviewed project partners in Ekaterinburg and Wolverhampton.

The report has four sections. It first provides an overview of project Life without Fear, then reflects on aspects of international action research. Section 3 focuses on project outcomes and tries to gauge impact. Section 4 offers recommendations.

II. Project Life without Fear

Supported by the British Big Lottery Fund, Life without Fear is a joint project of The Haven and Crisis Centre Ekaterina. The two organisations have been collaborating since 1997 and “share the same vision of supporting women and children to be free from violence and abuse and to promote and uphold their human rights” (Rees & Wilson, 2008, p. 3).

Life without Fear builds on this shared history and takes work that began a decade ago another step further: with the current project interventions in the criminal justice system were to shift from police training done previously to training for lawyers and Justices of the Peace. Public relations and coalition-building have advanced each year. Notably, the research conducted by Life without Fear has contributed to the growth of a new and original local evidence base. In particular, women’s own accounts of their experiences with domestic violence, for the first time in the region, have been documented in surveys, interviews, and case studies.

The Haven is a British charitable organisation set up in 1973 to serve women and dependent children affected by domestic violence. The Haven provides safe emergency accommodation and a range of other support services. It is one of the largest refuges in Britain, fielding approximately 6,000 hotline calls per year. The organisation is located in the city of Wolverhampton in the West Midlands, an area of 900 sq km in western central England and a population of 2.6 million people. Wolverhampton has a population of about a quarter million.

Crisis Centre Ekaterina is a Russian women’s NGO set up in 1998 by journalist Ludmila Ermakova, who is the director, psychologist Olga Selkova and Nadejda Kuzina to support women and children who experience domestic violence. Among the many challenges the organisation has faced were attitudes that dismissed

domestic violence, an unresponsive criminal justice system, and the lack of local data (Ermakova, 2008). Crisis Centre Ekaterina confronted these challenges and developed a track record of forging good working relationships in the community. Amnesty International highlighted the Centre as a promising example of effective collaboration between a crisis centre and law enforcement (http://www.amnesty.org/russia/womens_day.html; retrieved 3 August 2009). Crisis Centre Ekaterina is located in Ekaterinburg, a city of 1.3 million people and the administrative centre of Sverdlovsk Oblast, an industrial region of 195,000 sq. km on the Eastern side of the Ural Mountains, about 1,700 kilometers east of Moscow. The population of the region is about 5 million.

Crisis Centre Ekaterina has worked with the Haven since its inception about 10 years ago and through periods with and without external funding. Funding for collaborative projects has come from several British agencies including the KnowHow Fund, DFID UK, and most recently Big Lottery. What is remarkable is the extent to which efforts have taken hold locally. These successes speak to both the astuteness of the partners and the quality of the partnership (Sutherland, not dated).

Project Life without Fear ran for three years from 2006 to 2009 and focused on examples of local criminal justice practice in Sverdlovsk region, in particular the workings of the courts, on protecting the rights of women and children, and supporting women through the court system. The stated goals of the project were to:

- “Examine the extent of DV in the Sverdlovsk Region, Russia, by reviewing statistics from the Sverdlovsk Regional Court, local Police and referral system of the Crisis Centre “Ekaterina”.
- Examine how DV cases are processed through the Criminal Justice System (CJS) in Sverdlovsk Area, Russia.
- Examine the role of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in supporting women and children experiencing DV, their relationship with the law enforcement agencies, their confidence and capacity and examples of good local practice.
- Evaluate changes to attitude and perception of DV of the legal profession in Sverdlovsk Area, Russia, after the training provided as part of the project.
- Evaluate changes to attitude and perception of general public to DV issues.
- Examine whether women are better supported as a result of the effort of the NGOs to raise awareness of Domestic Violence and the development of multi-agency approach.” (Research proposal, page 4)

In preparation for the project a number of things had been identified as problematic (Ermakova, 2008):

- Lack of Russian research on domestic violence in Russia
- Lack of data from the Sverdlovsk region
- Lack of official statistics
- Views of domestic violence that blame women and keep the problem away from public scrutiny
- Ineffective responses from police, prosecutors, lawyers and judges

To address these issues the project devised a programme of activities that included:

- A survey of 322 women in Ekaterinburg about their attitudes and experiences with domestic violence
- Interviews with 36 women who used the services of Crisis Centre Ekaterina
- Interviews with 10 women who had taken their case to trial

- A repeat survey of 275 higher education students about their awareness of trafficking in people (Not addressed in this report)

- Compilations of police statistics
- Compilation of court statistics
- Compilation of statistics from crisis centres

- A survey of 112 Justices of the Peace about their attitudes to domestic violence
- A survey of 17 professionals working in crisis centres
- Interviews with 10 experts from the criminal justice system and others

- A review of 200 criminal domestic violence cases that were processed by Justices of the Peace
- An analysis of criminal justice practice from the perspective of Sverdlovsk Court based on 53 cases
- An analysis from a lawyer's perspective of 10 criminal domestic violence cases

- Training for all Justices of the Peace in the region and for others in the CJS on domestic violence and the handling of domestic violence cases
- Feedback from the participants of this training

- Training for 45 lawyers on domestic violence and the handling of domestic violence cases
- Feedback from the participants of this training
- Public conference in Ekaterinburg, October 2007
- Visit of British partners and evaluators to Ekaterinburg, October 2007
- Meetings of British and Russian partners with evaluators in Wolverhampton, December 2008
- Public conference in Wolverhampton, March 2009
- Visit of Russian partners to Wolverhampton, March 2009
- Meetings of British and Russian partners with evaluators in Wolverhampton, March 2009
- Publication of conference brochure, October 2007
- Publication of research overview “Domestic violence: Monitoring and Analysis—Examples from Sverdlovsk Area, Russia”, November 2008
- Publication of conference brochure, March 2009
- Information about Life without Fear on The Haven’s website (<http://www.havenrefuge.org.uk/Research/Research%20into%20Domestic%20Violence%20in%20Russia.html>, Retrieved 19/06/2009)

This report offers analytical reflections on these activities without listing each finding in detail. We quote figures where they seem to illustrate important context, progress made or areas for further intervention. From our perspective much of the quantitative data was difficult to interpret. Although we do quote numbers, we do so with some trepidation and urge the reader to keep the overall picture in mind and not rely too heavily on any one finding.

III. Multi-country action research

Multi-country projects need to address and cope with differences between project partners that are likely to influence communication and interaction throughout the project. Partners tend to bring different kinds of expertise and local knowledge to the collaboration, which requires strategies for translation, interpretation and exchange. Use of language and terminology are issues everywhere but pose particular barriers where translation between different languages is needed and project members rely on interpreters and translators.

The project needed to address the challenges of working with multiple equal partners and resolve questions of who should take the lead, how to maintain adequate communication among partners, and how to balance interventions for social change with scientific rigour in knowledge creation. The project shows that the demands of social change and knowledge creation need not be oppositional, although what counts as significant knowledge is a difficult question in itself, which we discuss further below. Social change and knowledge creation can be worked on simultaneously but such efforts require clear communication, patience and team spirit from activists and researchers alike. It may be necessary to settle for compromise (such as, how to present data) and re-negotiate expectations and outcomes in a constantly evolving organic process facilitated by clear language and an agreed-on communication structure.

III.1 Creating and sustaining partnerships

The core project team consisted of two UK members and three Russian members. In addition, several more people were associated with the project in different capacities. Project partners were the two agencies: The Haven, Wolverhampton, UK, and Crisis Centre Ekaterina, Sverdlovsk, Russia.

As the lead agency, The Haven provided the project manager and a second staff person who started out as an administrative assistant but whose position was upgraded to Public Relations Officer because she learned Russian and went through considerable staff development on public relations, marketing, and website development. The project manager is a native of Russia, long-time resident in the UK, and fluent in Russian and English.

On the side of the Russian partner, Crisis Centre Ekaterina, there were three team members: the director of the crisis centre; a researcher who has held a position associated with the police and who is currently deputy assistant to the Chief Executive of the Sverdlovsk Magistrate Court (she is also a project consultant representing the court); and a university-based Russian researcher in early stages of her career. In addition there were two Russian project consultants connected to the practice and policy areas the project addresses (e.g., police, human rights).

III.2 Interpretation and translation

The project director from The Haven speaks Russian and English fluently and served as the primary link between the Russian-speaking and the English-speaking project

partners. With the language training for the Public Relations Officers for this project at The Haven, this person has been able to shoulder some of the burden of translation. At the same time, due to the volume of work, translation of documents from Russian into English and from English into Russian was sub-contracted to external translators, which on occasion caused misunderstandings as translators often used different terminology.

Translation is time-consuming, strenuous work, in particular where terms and phrases reflect disciplinary or cultural specialties and go beyond language that can be looked up in the dictionary. Challenges arise in particular where terms refer to concepts or institutions in one country for which there may be no direct equivalent in the other, such as “organs of trusteeship and guardianship” (these seem to be formal bodies involved in foster care, child custody and related issues). Any one translation hurdle may be a minor issue but cumulatively they bog down communication and introduce an added layer of work necessary to remove linguistic road blocks.

In addition to the translation services of the director of The Haven (and the public relations officer), the Russian partners provided interpreters when CWASU researchers visited Ekaterinburg in fall 2007, using the services of a translation agency and individual translators and interpreters. Similar problems as those described above for the translation of documents also exist in simultaneous interpretation, in particular when interpreters have limited specialised expertise such as knowledge of legal terms and societal institutions. Interpreters can be excellent in one area of expertise but poor in another. For CWASU it is difficult to assess just how well the interpreters had been trained.

The role of interpreters also is interesting from a further perspective. Depending on how interpreters interpret and what they might add or subtract in the process of interpretation—in particular when they add personal commentary—interpreters may become incidental native informants. An example is a side remark by one of the interpreters about how normal domestic violence is in Russia: “men beat their wives/partners – that’s just what happens”. Thus, interpreters may constitute an additional source of evidence that, although anecdotal, may nonetheless be telling in terms of cultural understandings of gender relations or suggestive of current public discourse about domestic violence. The actions of interpreters illustrate how varied and incidental evidence can be and how important it is to construct the meaning of cultural practices from triangulating multiple sources of information.

Aside from the logistics of coordinating interpretation and translation services, the realm of translation implies further challenges. The term “translation” does not quite

capture the complexity of the social processes involved in moving between languages and cultures. Even seemingly straightforward translation of text and interpretation of speech are more strategic and equivocal than common use of the terms suggests. Translation involves weighing connotations, gauging impact, making choices. This holds in particular for the translation of social change strategies. In evaluating how well the project has progressed towards outcomes it can be difficult and may sometimes be misleading to take translations at face value. Instead one needs to be reminded of the power of language to construct reality and not merely reflect it, and that interpretation and translation to some extent constructs knowledge transfer and exchange of practices.

III.3 Exchanging expertise

Knowledge and expertise cannot simply be exported or imported. Instead, they need to be translated and adapted to local circumstances (Roggeband, 2004). Writing about the implementation of human rights law Merry (2006) called this process “translation into the vernacular”. While Roggeband (2004) wrote about adopting and adapting pragmatic interventions, further challenges arise in projects that also conduct research because then questions arise about what are good data and which knowledge counts (Jordan, 1980).

With its focus on research and intervention to realise the human rights of women Project Life without Fear is in the tradition of feminist action research (Reinharz, 1992). Action research emphasises the interplay between social action and scientific research (Smail, Whyte & Kelly, 1982). The boundaries between research and implementation may be blurred; data are often collected both to improve the local knowledge base and serve as campaign tools.

Cross-cultural action research has additional features. Transfer of knowledge and expertise are often central. Life without Fear capitalised on The Haven’s expertise in working with the criminal justice system in the UK. The Haven staff trained Russian legal professionals on domestic violence dynamics and how to deal with domestic violence cases throughout the judicial process.

In project Life without Fear the Haven’s work in Wolverhampton as well as other British experiences with multi-agency work and work between voluntary sector and government served as example and inspiration. Train-the-trainer models were used to transfer knowledge and skills such as when The Haven trained Russian lawyers who then drafted the Russian manual for the training of Justices of the Peace and lawyers in Sverdlovsk. While train-the-trainer models are widely considered good

practice, they need to rest on a foundation of established working relationships and mutual trust. Without such a foundation international collaborations can easily get bogged down in misunderstandings and resentment (Sperling, Ferree & Risman 2001).

The project could build on a foundation of good working relationships that had been forged during the previous collaborations between The Haven and Crisis Centre Ekaterina. Thus, Crisis Centre Ekaterina was able to benefit from the Haven's experiences with how domestic violence cases were prosecuted and moved through the criminal justice system in the UK. The Haven learned more about domestic violence in Russia and expanded its expertise in working with a different criminal justice system. The partnership has inspired and impacted the Haven and strengthened its local and national relationships in the UK (Rees & Wilson, 2008). It was also expected that the Haven would benefit from the collaboration by learning more about how to implement good practices under challenging circumstances.

Crisis Centre Ekaterina navigated a successful course between partnering with a Western agency that brought Western expertise into the country, while insisting on locally produced evidence to present to local stakeholders, building regional coalitions among like-minded crisis centres, and forging ground-breaking cooperation agreements with local authorities.

III.4 Social and cultural contexts

Systematic organising against sexual and domestic violence in the UK began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Refuge, a national charity, opened the first women's refuge in 1971 and has been supporting women's refuges ever since. The first Women's Aid federation was set up in 1974. Women's Aid now supports over 500 domestic and sexual violence services. The Haven has been part of this process. It is one of the largest refuges in the country outside London with over 30 years of experience in providing services to victims, shaping progressive legislation, and organising at local and national levels.

Notwithstanding ongoing debates and occasional setbacks, the situation in the UK, although not perfect, now is such that British business partners, statutory agencies, and the national government have joined in the effort to end violence against women. These developments took place in a period of relative domestic stability and prosperity that ensued after the trauma of World War 2 and the deprivation of the immediate post-war period. Britain continued to face domestic challenges through immigration, market deregulation, the effects of globalisation, and more recently the

“war on terror”. While class inequalities may be pronounced, civil society in Britain is also rooted in centuries-old traditions of resistance to state authority. It is these traditions of joining forces at grassroots level against structural injustice that the women’s movements of the second half of the 20th century took a step further by successfully organising resistance against gender injustice and the exploitation of women and children. However, despite this strong civil society tradition women’s NGOs, in particular in the specialist sector on violence against women, continue to struggle against fragmented policies, gender neutral approaches, lack of funding, lack of systematic implementation of policy directives, and lack of mainstreaming of successful pilot projects (Sen & Kelly, 2007).

Russia’s story has been different. World War 2 took a devastating toll on the Russian population. The immediate post-war period was marked by the further excesses of Stalinist resettlement policies and suppression of political dissent. During the Cold War a militarised state apparatus and weak civic institutions balanced precariously on a crumbling economy and did not do much to address the traumatic experiences of millions of citizens. Abusive practices in the military and in the prison system continue to brutalise each new generation of Russian men. Nor did gender equality policies introduced under Communist rule survive the collapse of the Soviet Union. Traditional gender relations in much of Russia were patriarchal and had been interwoven with notions of male authority that go back at least to the 1500s and that gave male heads of household the right to violently discipline wife, children, and servants. Although the Bolshevik revolution of the early 20th century introduced nominal gender equality, such change seems to have been largely on paper. Violence in the home continued but was trivialised as a bourgeois problem. In the course of the 1990s gender quotas in politics disappeared and the proportion of female lawmakers dropped significantly. As a result, grassroots efforts against domestic violence in Russia today face triple jeopardy: a history of widespread traumatisation and brutalisation; relative disregard for civil and human rights; engrained patriarchal traditions, and a recent removal of women from positions of political and economic power.

However, despite the disappearance of women from top political and business posts, an impressive number of women hold important professional positions. Most notably for the present project, 82% of the Justices of Peace in Sverdlovsk at the moment are women. There are also many women police officers and lawyers. Furthermore, Russia’s legal codes include numerous statutes outlawing crimes against the person such as assault, rape and degrading treatment. In addition, Russia recently adopted new legislation to address instances in which the country did not adhere to the international human rights agreements it signed on to. Russia also adopted

legislation to address the growing housing crisis. Thus, there is legislation on the books that women's advocates could utilise to support victims of domestic violence (see Appendix 1). One of the challenges is implementing the law and making the changes in everyday legal practice that would reflect the spirit of the law.

Alongside these differences between Russia and the UK there are similarities in terms of the challenges women's advocates in each country have faced when trying to make the legal system more responsive to women struggling against domestic violence. These similarities concern the need to develop and refine criminal and civil law, introduce training on domestic violence for police, prosecutors, and judges, and link legal agencies with community-based services (including victim advocates, health, employment, and child protection).

This comparison between the UK and Russia suggests that despite historical and cultural uniqueness women's advocates in both countries have been facing similar problems—at least in principle—in terms of challenges and barriers to changes in the legal system. These include the need to put domestic violence on policy agendas, keep it there and integrate it into mainstream policy issues (rather than rely on ad hoc policy responses to sensationalised crises), influence public discourse, strengthen working relationships between and among victim advocates and civic and state institutions, and deliver specialised training to lawyers and judges. How best to do this in practice depends in part on local circumstances. It would be unrealistic to assume that implementing policies and procedures from the UK would work if translated wholesale. Social change efforts require local knowledge and culturally specific skills. These include language skills but also insight into local power dynamics, the response to the presence of foreign partners, a sense of timing, and a feeling for when to act and when to let things move on their own momentum.

III.5 Importance of local data

Entwined with the development of support services and legal change has been British research on domestic violence. Britain has a strong tradition of scholar-activists and many of the key figures in research have also been working for social change at grassroots level, in refuges, and with policy makers. A review of this research is beyond the scope of this report but a few landmark studies can be pointed out along with examples of current research. Two classics are the Dobash and Dobash (1979) study on wives' experiences of domestic violence and Kelly's research on the "continuum of violence", which has been influential far beyond the UK (Kelly 1988). Walby advanced research on the prevalence and economic cost of domestic violence (Walby & Allen, 2004; Walby, 2004). Other significant areas

include research on the criminal justice response to domestic violence (Hester et al., 2003) and the connections between mental health and domestic violence (Thiara & Humphreys, 2003). Current research also focuses on a wide range of issues.

Examples include:

- South Asian women (Thiara & Gill, 2009)
- IDVAs and ISVAs (Robinson; <http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/research/projects/violenceadvisors.html>)
- Domestic violence and black and minority ethnic women (Kotecha, 2009)
- Screening for domestic violence in health care settings (Feder et al. 2009)
- Domestic violence homicides (Regan, et al. 2007)
- Domestic violence courts (Hester et al., 2008)
- Distribution of and gaps in services across the UK (Coy, Kelly & Foord, 2007).
- Children and domestic violence (Hester et al., 2007)
- Domestic violence in same-sex relationships (Donnell et al., 2007)
- Specialist domestic violence courts (Robinson & Cook, 2006; Robinson, 2007; Cook et al., 2004)
- Mothering through domestic violence (Radford & Hester, 2006)
- Disability and survivor participation (Hague & Malos, 2006)
- Attrition of domestic violence cases in the criminal justice system (Hester, 2006)
- Evaluations of services and programmes (Hester & Westmorland, 2005)
- Multi-agency work (Hague & Malos, 2005)

Most research on domestic violence in Russia has been done by foreign agencies. Although the reports by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International are cited widely in the international research literature, knowledge based on foreign research may be considered irrelevant locally and less authoritative than knowledge generated by local researchers and may thus not rise to the level of “authoritative knowledge” (i.e., knowledge that counts; Jordan, 1980). If data produced by outsiders is rejected, local stakeholders may be reluctant to fully appreciate the scope of the problem locally. This dynamic also occurs within countries (when data about one region are considered irrelevant or not compelling enough by other regions) but may be heightened in cross-country projects if differences between insiders and outsiders are (or appear to be) pronounced. Therefore, there was good reason for the Russian partners to gather their own data and establish a body of locally produced evidence that may be more accepted than research conducted by outsiders.

The upshot of this is that action research projects need to grapple with issues of data quality, authoritative knowledge, and the purposes of research. For example, while CWASU considered much of the data collected to date unsuitable for publication in British academic journals, the Russian partners had already published in Russian legal journals. This hints at different “politics of publication” in multi-country projects (Kirsch, 1999) that affect the choice of research outlets and audiences. On the plus side, such differences can contribute to healthy debate and learning. In this regard a positive outcome of the project may have been that as a result of comparing research approaches in UK and Russia the project enhanced the partners’ understanding of the value of research.

In general, project partners in multi-country collaborations need to be aware that assessments of data quality may be rooted in different research cultures influenced by a number of factors including national academic traditions, the relative weight given to the different purposes of action research, and publishing expectations held by academic disciplines in different countries. While stringent research designs with randomised control groups may be impractical for many social change and intervention projects, it will be necessary to come to shared understandings of what are reliable and valid data. Otherwise the notion of evidence-based practice would be undermined to the point where systematic progress could no longer be documented at all.

IV. Outcomes and Impact

The intended outcomes for the project were to give women the ability and confidence to make independent choices about their domestic violence case, support women’s rights, and enhance women’s safety and health and their ability to move forward mentally and emotionally after domestic violence, plan their future, and improve their own and their children’s quality of life.

Progress has been made toward several project goals: expanding coalitions and multi-agency work, growing the local evidence base, improving criminal justice practice, and impact on women’s quality of life. The project also generated ideas for continuation projects that would build on what has been achieved so far. The review begins with the project’s impact on coalitions and agency cooperation. This is an area that reflects the quality of working relationships, and good working relationships are a key to successful data collection and social change.

IV.1 Coalitions and multi-agency work

This aspect of project impact is reflected on here as an ongoing process of public relations, coalition building, and formal agreements between agencies and authorities. These activities, and the training sessions that will be addressed separately below, have created opportunities for learning and professional development and constitute steps towards social change. There is clear evidence of successful systems change in terms of increased collaboration and networking.

- Public relations

Media coverage and attendance at conferences suggest that the project successfully increased acknowledgment of domestic violence as an issue of public concern. The project created spaces in the media, at press conferences and at research conferences to articulate issues and generate momentum for change. Raising awareness among professionals who work with domestic violence cases was a particular goal. Feedback from a small sample of professionals had shown that, while they thought domestic violence was a problem, they tended to blame victims for the inadequate societal response.

An international meeting in September 2006 at the beginning of the project provided a forum for the British and Russian partners to meet and exchange views and experiences of criminal justice interventions. The Russian delegation included the director, deputy director and training co-ordinator of Crisis Centre Ekaterina, the Chair of the Board of the Guild of Lawyers of Sverdlovsk Area, the Assistant Chief Executive of the Public Safety Police Section of the Department of Internal Affairs of the Sverdlovsk Region, the Assistant Chief Executive of the Regional Magistrates' Court of the Sverdlovsk Region, and the Deputy Assistant to the Chief Executive of the Regional Magistrates' Court.

The programme featured meetings with the head of the domestic violence unit in the British Home Office and representatives of Wolverhampton Magistrates Court, other legal professionals, and members of the Crown Prosecution Service. The visitors were able to observe how UK courts handled domestic violence cases, and discuss with their British counterparts recent innovations in British criminal justice procedure such as the Specialist Domestic Violence Court and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates. The visitors also met with the mayor and members of Wolverhampton City Council and with representatives of women's organisations.

Russian and British partners met several more times. The final project event in Russia was a conference in March 2008 that again drew a multi-disciplinary audience and important stakeholders from the criminal justice system and civil society.

A large conference on domestic violence organised in Ekaterinburg in October 2007 was significant because it appeared to have been the first ever regional conference on domestic violence in Russia that was

- Organised jointly by a local women's NGO and the regional authority
- Supported by the regional government and held on government premises
- Attended by a broad range of professionals and by representatives from local and regional justice system authorities, the Coalition of Crisis Centres of the Ural Siberian Region and other NGOs.

The event received media coverage including local television.

Another large conference in the UK followed in March 2009 in Wolverhampton. Here again attendance was multi-disciplinary with high-profile speakers and considerable publicity.

For each conference the project created a dedicated publication: conference reports for the events in October 2007 and March 2008 in Russia, and a compilation of research conducted by the project for the March 2009 conference in Wolverhampton ("Domestic violence: Monitoring and analysis", 2008).

The long-term impact of conferences and high-profile meetings is difficult to determine. The feedback gathered after these events suggests that the immediate impact was very positive. The meeting was considered an important, well-organised step forward towards the goals of the project. Both partners are likely to have benefited from the prestige such events incur. Meetings in person are also useful for strengthening the working relationships between long-distance partners. The meeting provided first-hand information about British practice on domestic violence, both in the criminal justice system and the voluntary sector.

Important in terms of impact on local practice, the Russian partners reported that the conference led to an expansion of the coalition of crisis centres, resulted in more requests for training on domestic violence, generated the idea of a domestic homicide review, and highlighted gaps in services and the need for better provision.

- Coalition building among women's organisations

Crisis Centre Ekaterina facilitated the development of the Coalition of the Crisis centres of the Ural-Siberian region "Together we are Strong". Ludmila Ermakova, the director of the Centre, became Chairman of the Board of the Coalition. The coalition grew to 23 members who have signed an Agreement of Cooperation. The coalition covers six administrative districts in the Ural and West Siberian region and a population of about 10 million people.

- Formal agreements between women's NGO and local authorities

Crisis Centre Ekaterina signed formal agreements with key partner agencies in Russia:

- An agreement of collaboration between the Centre and the Regional Court was signed 28th March 2007. The agreement aimed to facilitate interagency working in line with the principles and norms of international law, Russian law and the concepts of the 'Federal Plan for the Development of the Court System 2007'.
- A formal agreement with the Guild of Lawyers of the Sverdlovsk Oblast was signed in March 2008.
- "Ekaterina" also signed an agreement with the Ministry of Social Protection of the Sverdlovsk Area on the 1st December 2006 and an agreement with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (known as the MVD) of Ekaterinburg on 1st February 2007.

The project raised the national and international profile of both partners. Their representatives were invited to share their experiences at a national seminar on the "Prevention of Domestic Violence" organised by the Consortium of Women's Non-Governmental Organisations in April 2009 in Moscow, Russia. The seminar was attended by Russian police officers, the Institute of Civil Society, representatives from crisis centres in Russia and Russian human rights workers. Through the work of Life without Fear Crisis Centre Ekaterina has evolved to such a degree that the organisation now is regarded as one of the most advanced sites in Russia on interventions in domestic violence. The Centre has been asked to conduct training at different sites in Russia, including at a crisis centre in Perm.

IV.2 Local evidence base

Life without Fear's research philosophy emphasised the dynamic nature of social and cultural contexts and the need for interpretation and understanding of such dynamics. Data were collected through quantitative surveys, interviews, court case analyses, and review of official statistics. The significance of the research lies in the fact that it achieved many 'firsts': First compilation for the Sverdlovsk region of domestic violence statistics and women's experiences with domestic violence; first detailed analyses of court practice in Russia with regard to domestic violence cases.

From a technical standpoint, the reliability and validity of some of the quantitative data is difficult to assess. Therefore, numbers will be reported here only to highlight examples of findings; further details can be found in the publications by the project, its conference proceedings and progress reports. The qualitative material about the experiences of women who lived with domestic violence is very rich; the stories are sometimes reminiscent of similar stories from women in other countries but also illustrate Russian circumstances and enable insights into women's experiences with the justice system in Sverdlovsk.

The extent of domestic violence in Sverdlovsk and its impact on the lives of women and children become apparent in the data the project collected. These include statistics from police, crisis centres, and courts; women's attitudes and their accounts of living with domestic violence and bringing their cases to the criminal justice system.

- Crime Statistics and Case Reviews

The project compiled police statistics about domestic homicides. Having obtained these statistics and being able to view them from the perspective of domestic violence prevention is a significant project outcome and important first step towards systematic domestic violence crime reporting and monitoring of trends.

At the moment these statistics are still difficult to interpret. Official record keeping seems inconsistent; in some cases an officer may have indicated that the crime was in the context of domestic violence; in other cases this information is not available. There is a sense that a large number of crimes are domestic violence crimes and that therefore general crime categories should be used but this is not reflected in the records because cases are not tagged accordingly. Table 1 illustrates selected numbers from the Department of Internal Affairs of Sverdlovsk for five years from 2004 to 2008.

Table 1 Selected murder crimes over four years

Crime	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Difference since 2004
Murder (Art. 105/107)	1292	1164	1198	928	749	-543 (-42%)
Murder (Art. 111)	2549	2421	1964	1779	Not available	-770 (-30%)
Women killed	290	295	307	207	168	-122 (-42%)
DV Homicides	528	399	344	255	149	-379 (72%)

Table 1 shows two things clearly: The numbers are high and they have dropped dramatically since 2004. For the category of DV Homicides this drop is particularly striking and looks like a continuous trend over five years. For the category of Women Killed a noticeable reduction begins in 2007 and has continued through 2008. It is difficult to say why these changes occurred and how reliable record keeping has become (which may have been a project impact). A comparison with similar statistics from a different region would be helpful. One might be able to see if such trends have occurred elsewhere during the same time period. If that was not the case, the reduction in women killed may indeed be due to the project's work with the criminal justice system.

Table 2 presents recorded cases of crimes against women in 2006 and 2007, also for the Sverdlovsk region. Crimes against women were high, although they dropped from 2006 to 2007. Murders from family members other than husband or civil partner also were surprisingly high (compared to figures from the West). The murders in Table 2 add up to 45 cases for year 2007. This is much lower than the figure of 255 for DV homicides in 2007 (Table 1) and makes interpretation of the statistics difficult.

Overall, these figures show that crime rates are high, which is consistent with criminological research in Russia (Gilinskiy, 2006). It appears that in some crime categories steep drops occurred but that did not happen everywhere: murders by civil partners stayed about the same from 2006 to 2007.

Table 2 Crimes against women over two years

	2006	2007
Total number of crimes	47869	41577
Committed by family members (father, mother, son, daughter)	1027	700
Murders	18	14
Murder Threats	148	83
Severe bodily harm	5	9
Committed by spouse	997	707
Murders	15	10
Murder threats	328	190
Severe bodily harm	22	8
Committed by civil partner	842	713
Murders	22	21
Murder threats	248	175
Severe bodily harm	44	32

The main conclusions regarding project impact on the local evidence base are (1) that the project was successful in accessing and publicising official statistics so that (2) one can now make a good case for more systematic and consistent record keeping by police. Ideally, cases should be systematically and routinely tagged for domestic violence and gender of victim and perpetrator.

The project also conducted a review of 53 homicide cases in which men killed their wives or partners. These were cases processed in Sverdlovsk Court in 2007. Most of the killings occurred at home in the shared residence. Most were in urban settings. Most offenders were between 30 and 59 years old; victims were between 19 and 59. In 14 cases, children lived in the household; in 11 cases children witnessed the man beat their mother and threaten to kill her.

Records showed that many victims had been afraid of the offender and describe offenders as cruel, cynical, and extremely disrespectful toward the victim. In several cases the context of the killings involved heavy drinking and quarrelling, but in 36 cases (68%) there was no prior history of conflict. Offenders tended to deny prior abuse. Almost all defendants said that they did not mean to kill the woman but wanted to punish her for “bad behaviour” (in one case the woman had sold her partner’s tape recorder without his permission). Most of these “punishments” were savage beatings or attacks with knives that killed the woman.

About half of the offenders were unemployed or employed sporadically. About a quarter went to college or technical school; the others had a lower level of education.

The records indicate that most offenders tried to hide signs of their crime and dispose of evidence but they also state that two thirds of offenders told third parties what they had done (relatives of the victim, neighbours, acquaintances).

For 36 cases (68%) records indicate that third parties had seen bruises on the victim, and for 32 cases (60%) records indicate that third parties knew there was domestic violence.

- Women's accounts

A survey of 322 women in Ekaterinburg conducted between August and October 2006 suggests that experiences of domestic violence are common: 40% of all respondents had direct experience in that they suffered or witnessed domestic violence. A further 9% said that their children had suffered from violence in the home.

Table 3 shows service user statistics from Crisis Centre Ekaterina for years 2006, 2007, and 2008. The increase in year 2007 may be due in part to the fact that during this year 14 staff worked at the Centre, compared to nine in 2006 and seven in 2008.

Table 3 Women served and consultations provided

Type of support or problem addressed	2006	2007	2008
Women who received general support	627	1263	928
Consultations via the Help line	242	775	591
Victims of violence	130	352	465
Victims of domestic violence	107	236	460
Victims of sexual violence (not within the family)	10	33	5
Victims of trafficking	10	83	0
Psychological consultations	99	438	343
Legal consultations	289	32	465

If women sought help in a crisis situation, they were most likely to contact police, followed by emergency medical units. A smaller number of respondents who had been victims of domestic violence reported contacting a crisis centre. Most respondents said they would want a psychologist to help them in a crisis.

All respondents said that a broad range of things were needed to end domestic violence, including help from qualified specialists, police action, special legislation, financial stability, improved living conditions, and safe refuges. There were clear differences in how women who have experienced domestic violence ranked the importance of these interventions compared to women who had never experienced it. Respondents who had experienced domestic violence found qualified specialists, police action, and safe refuge more important than respondents without such experiences.

Participants were also asked about informal support; responses to these questions presented a complex picture. Nearly half of all respondents were certain they could not escape an abuser by moving in with relatives and friends. This portion included women who had never experienced domestic violence. Amongst women who had experienced domestic violence, only about one third said they would not be able to move in with family or friends. The majority of victims and witnesses of domestic violence said they would be willing to flee the home in a crisis. Eighty percent of all respondents, regardless of personal experience, said a refuge for women in Ekaterinburg was essential and the majority of those who had suffered or witnessed domestic violence said they would flee to a refuge in a crisis. Many women said they would take legal action to defend their rights and the rights of their children.

More detail about women's experiences comes from in-depth interviews with ten women who had suffered abuse from men in the family and brought their cases to trial. In nine of the ten cases the abuser was the woman's husband or ex-husband, in one case it was the younger (adult) brother. Most of the women were in their thirties, the youngest was 28, the oldest 41. The interviews were long and resulted in extensive transcripts; details can be found in the 2008 report "Domestic violence: Monitoring and Analysis – Examples from Sverdlovsk Area, Russia". The stories are summarised here and conclusions are drawn about what they tell us about the problem of domestic violence and intervention.

The stories are remarkable for many things: they show that the women suffered emotional, sexual and physical abuse for many years and were often trapped in the abusive relationship for lack of outside support but certainly not for lack of effort to

change their situation. The women tried different strategies to protect themselves and their children. They engaged police, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, child welfare agencies, medical professionals, Ekaterina crisis centre, helpline support over the phone, and the abuser's employer.

Experiences with these services were mixed: good with staff at crisis centres and in hospital emergency departments but poor with police and child protection agencies. The women described medical staff at Accident & Emergency departments as kind but unable to help with the domestic violence problem. Crisis Centre Ekaterina provided emotional support and help with the legal process. In some cases this support helped victims to get their abuser convicted in court.

Police responses were described as cynical, dismissive, arrogant, cold-hearted and unprofessional. The criminal justice system seemed biased in favour of the abuser, letting him off the hook easily, colluding with him and in at least one case the abuser openly bragged that he had bribed the judge. Prosecution seemed to be thorough in questioning witnesses but also ridiculed women at the trial, as did judges. From these accounts the conduct of legal professionals handling domestic violence cases appears to have been sorely lacking, reflecting sexist attitudes, victim-blaming, and poor professional practice.

Several stories were of repeated, severe, and prolonged abuse—all involving excessive humiliation and physical abuse severe enough to cause serious injury. The women spoke of being taunted, belittled, humiliated and ridiculed; of being beaten, kicked, and strangled; threatened with death and stalked after separation; of being forced to have sex and forced to have sex in ways they did not want. At least one woman suffered severe head injury. Nonetheless, these experiences were trivialised, ignored or dismissed by police and judges. The stories are also about a housing crisis that further traps victims in overcrowded living quarters they need to share with abusers or other family members who may collude with the abuser: the woman who was abused by her brother received no help from her parents.

The women also commented on issues of children and child protection. They described the effects of domestic violence on their children such as sleep disturbance and behavioural problems and lamented the lack of protection the criminal justice system offered their children. In one case in which the husband sexually abused the woman he also displayed exhibitionist tendencies in front of his step-daughter and pressured the mother to have sex in front of the girl.

The context of the abuse varied. In some cases there had been violence in the family of origin but in other cases that was not the case. Alcohol is mentioned in some cases but not in others. In many of the cases both victim and perpetrator were highly educated professionals; in other cases they had mid-level education and secretarial

or trade jobs. Neither of these contextual factors does much to “explain” why there was violence. Whatever the motivation of the perpetrator may have been, what stands out is that the women suffered serious and prolonged abuse, tried very actively to change their situation, and found little support in the criminal justice system. In fact, it seemed the criminal justice system was making bad situations worse. The tendency of the criminal justice system to let the perpetrator off the hook was a disaster for these women. It denied them protection and justice, it signalled to victim, abuser, and the public that men have the right to abuse women, and further endangered the victims because abusers felt validated, took revenge and became even more cruel and violent.

These stories tell us that understanding domestic violence is not so much a matter of finding “causes” for abusive behaviours but of making visible destructive cultural patterns in which the abusers and the criminal justice system (and others) collaborated. Intervention then becomes a question of cultural change. There were no “causes” for abuse. The perpetrators had no reason to abuse. With the tacit validation or active support of police officers, prosecutors, judges and others they acted out a misogynist cultural repertoire that may have drawn on particular opportunities in the Russian context (e.g., historical traditions, current housing crisis) but that also exists in other parts of the world. They could have done otherwise, but they chose to be abusive. Abusers may justify or “explain” their behaviour and give “reasons” but those “reasons” are not scientific explanations of cause and effect; they are social and cultural performances within particular repertoires. These repertoires need to change. As of yet, nobody has found a quick and easy way to do this. We are relying on awareness raising, training, policy change, and the promotion of peaceful ways of living together in hopes that such work, when integrated and sustained long enough, will give rise to new cultural patterns of fair and respectful gender relations.

Of 36 service users of Crisis Centre Ekaterina all but one had suffered serious health consequences, including physical injuries, head injuries, psychological trauma, heart problems, and problems with the reproductive system. Twenty-percent of the women had been sexually abused. In addition, the majority of service users had suffered or witnessed domestic violence in their childhood. Half of the women’s children had witnessed domestic violence; one out of four children had been the target of emotional abuse.

Abusers were predominantly male and mostly intimate current or former partners (including husband, partner, and boyfriend). Other abusers were relatives, mostly father, brother, or son. Most abusers were well-educated and had work. This abuser profile is slightly different from the profile of perpetrators that emerged from the

homicide review where perpetrators had not been well-educated and half of them had been unemployed.

IV.3 Criminal justice practice

- Background

Project interventions in criminal justice practice focused on training for Justices of the Peace and lawyers. This focus had three reasons: reviews of court cases showed that a majority of cases involved domestic violence; recent law reform had shifted responsibility for handling domestic violence cases to Justices of the Peace, which created confusion about responsibility among different departments of the criminal justice system; it is easier for defendants to get legal representation in court, which creates a structural bias that favours perpetrators of domestic violence and means that most lawyers in domestic violence cases are defending the perpetrator. The project conducted case reviews, and—building on the working relationships between the women’s NGO, law enforcement and the courts that had been established previously—designed and implemented training.

An analysis of 200 court cases from the ten courts in Sverdlovsk showed that the majority of these were cases of intimate partner violence, in which a woman had been abused by a current or former intimate partner (husband, ex-husband, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend). Where parents had abused their children, 23 victims were daughters and step-daughters, and 16 victims were sons and step-sons.

The homicide review referenced above also indicated that police and courts tended to be lenient towards perpetrators, dismiss prior abuse and impose weak sanctions, in particular in cases where the perpetrator had high social status (good job, well educated) and the victim had a lower status or could easily be blamed (“she drank too much”). These findings suggest that police and court held misogynist attitudes and engaged in favouritism, both of which undermined proper handling of domestic violence cases and application of the law.

Before the current project Crisis Centre Ekaterina had focused on training police officers. Live without Fear prioritised training for Justices of the Peace and lawyers, while also including interested police officers and other professionals. The shift from police officers toward Justices of the Peace had several reasons. In 2002 a new Criminal Justice Code moved jurisdiction over so-called “private charges”—the category that includes domestic violence cases—to Justices of the Peace. The original project application argued that the new law changed the way in which

domestic violence cases were processed and initially created confusion among different branches of the criminal justice system about whose responsibility domestic violence cases were. Police officers sent women to the Justices of the Peace; these in turn sent women back to police requesting evidence of the crime. Amnesty International (2005), too, had pointed out that Russian Justices of the Peace were unprepared to handle domestic violence cases properly. In addition, turnover among Justices of the Peace is lower than among police officers. Therefore, training for Justices of the Peace was an important step towards implementing the new law and promised to be more sustainable investment in the long-term.

- Training

Prior to the current project high ranking representatives from law enforcement, the regional magistrate court, and Crisis Centre Ekaterina convened a working group whose task was to clarify responsibilities and determine how different agencies can best support women and children experiencing domestic violence. This working group set the stage for subsequent training of Justices of the Peace that was implemented by project Life without Fear.

Legal professionals from Russia travelled to Wolverhampton where staff from The Haven trained them as trainers for legal professionals in Sverdlovsk. Based on this experience the Russian project partners wrote a training manual for Justices of the Peace and began training. In the third project year focus shifted to training lawyers for whom the Russian partners developed a separate training manual. Training sessions were instructor-led and in person (as opposed to training online or self-study). All participants received a copy of the training manual.

By the end of the project all 220 Justices of the Peace in Sverdlovsk Oblast had been trained on the dynamics of domestic violence and how to handle domestic violence cases. Other professionals also attended these training sessions, including lawyers, police officers, and crisis centre staff. Feedback from staff at crisis centres suggested the majority of crisis centres help clients with the court process but that workers lack sufficient legal knowledge and court experience. The project trained 295 staff members in newly formed crisis centres. This is a remarkable achievement (Table 4).

Table 4 Number of people trained during the project

	JPs		Lawyers		Crisis Centres		Police		Sub-Total		Total
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	
Year 1 2006- 2007	32	127	14	24	1	67	25	20	72	238	310
Year 2 2007- 2008	8	53	15	22	5	150	18	18	46	243	289
Year 3 2008- 2009	0	0	13	50	0	72	0	0	13	122	135
Sub- Total	40	180	42	96	6	289	43	38	131	603	734
Total	220		138		295		81		734		

Note. M=Men; W=Women

The project has reached significant outcomes in terms of

- Creating tailored training manuals for lawyers and Justices of the Peace and
- Implementing training on a large scale for multiple professions throughout the entire region

The project has been very successful throughout the entire process from the initial train-the-trainer sessions in Wolverhampton to drafting Russian manuals and delivering training in Russia.

Feedback from the training sessions was positive and indicates that they were well organised and delivered. Results based on eight questions from training feedback forms show broad endorsement of the training. Almost everyone who provided feedback found the training useful, found at least one topic interesting, and on the whole, learned something worthwhile. However, this feedback tells us little of more depth. It is also unclear how to interpret the feedback that calls for more focus on, and relevance for magistrates if the training was specifically geared towards this group.

A survey of 112 Justices of the Peace provides additional information. Justices of the Peace had numerous suggestions for changes at different levels of governance. It is

difficult to assess the significance of these suggestions but they may be useful in developing lobbying strategies. For instance, several respondents suggested abolishing the “private charge” in order to shift the burden of seeking redress from victims to judicial bodies. Further suggestions included the creation of victim support centres, improved coordination among legal entities, and awareness campaigns.

- Impact on case processing and offender accountability

Training feedback is useful for improving the design and delivery of training but says little about how lessons from training are used in daily practice. Similarly, attitude surveys can provide snapshot of people’s views on a topic but are not necessarily reliable indicators of their behaviour. A more compelling source of information may be the court statistics reviewed in Table 5. They suggest that the training did impact how courts process domestic violence cases, so-called “private charges”.

Table 5 Processing of domestic violence cases in court

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of “Private Charge” cases	7366	8125	7883	8293	7930
Number and percent of “Private Charge” cases that were closed without going to court	6026 (82%)	5681 (70%)	5068 (64%)	4709 (57%)	3926 (50%)
Total number of defendants	7983	8 756	8 617	8 987	8 755
Number and percent of defendants found not guilty	243 (3%)	221 (3%)	272 (3%)	257 (3%)	281 (3%)
Number and percent of defendants found guilty	949 (12%0	1991 (23%)	2548 (30%)	3371 (38%)	3849 (44%)

Table 5 suggests that due to the project the processing of domestic violence cases began to change. The number of private charge cases and defendants increased. More importantly, fewer cases were closed without going to court and there were fewer “amicable reconciliations”. The number of defendants found not guilty

remained constant at about three percent, whereas the number of defendants found guilty increased from twelve percent in 2004 to 44 percent in 2008. Thus, more perpetrators were held accountable and brought to justice. To emphasise the improvement over time Figure 1 shows the case information again, and Figure 2 the information about defendants and verdicts (guilty/not guilty).

Figure 1 Number of criminal cases and cases not proceeding to court

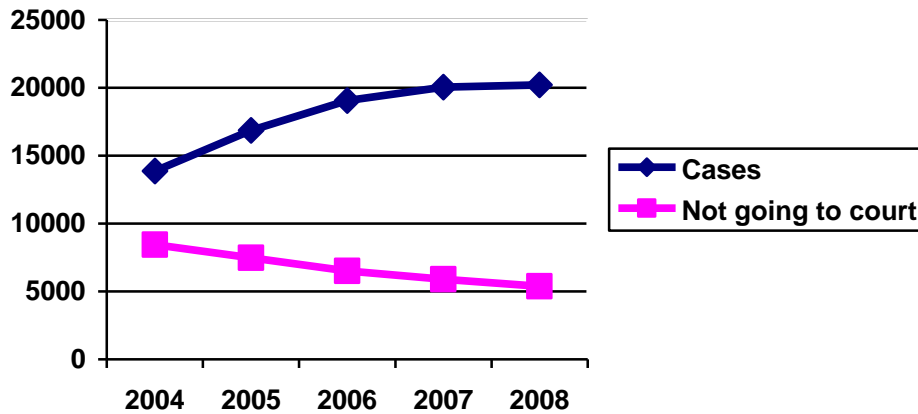
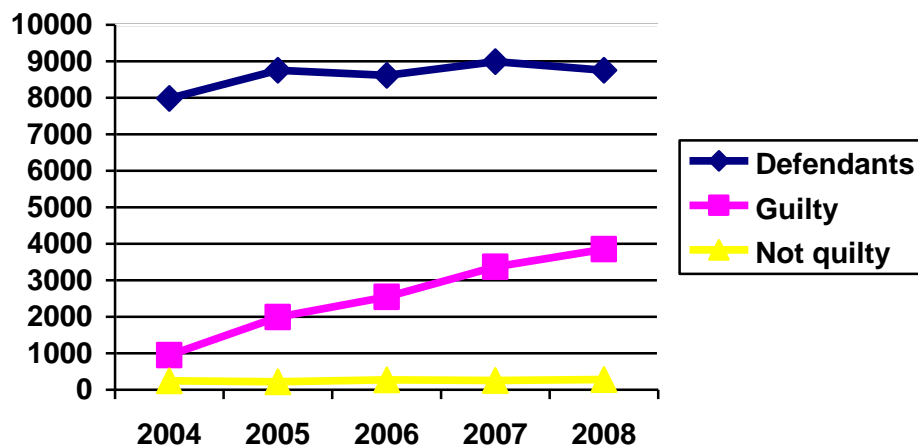


Figure 2 Number of defendants and verdicts (Guilty/Not guilty)



A representative of the Sverdlovsk Regional Court explicitly attributes these changes to the combination of training for legal professionals and willingness of the Court to improve practice (Gaidardjiiskaya, 2008). A comparison with court statistics from a different region that did not implement training for Justices of the Peace would lend

further support to this conclusion. The preponderance of evidence suggests that the changes were due to the activities of the project. This is a major accomplishment. It is also in line with international standards of good practice for criminal justice interventions.

IV.4 Women's quality of life

The improvement in case processing provides significant evidence that the project improved women's quality of life. Women who experience domestic violence turn to the criminal justice system for justice and redress. If more cases progress to the court and more perpetrators are found guilty, then women's quality of life improves. More dramatically, the remarkable downward trend in women being killed in domestic violence circumstances suggests that the project may have increased women's survival.

There is further evidence that the project improved women's quality of life but that rests mostly on one case study ("Diana"). The case study is suggestive of the potential of training to improve the situation of women but the empirical evidence of this happening on a larger scale is, at least at the moment, lacking.

III.5 Continuation Projects

The project generated ideas about next steps. They include:

- Creation of a multi-agency forum on domestic violence for the Sverdlovsk area
- Pilot project with the health sector: supporting women victims of DV at A & E departments in Ekaterinburg
- Creation of a refuge in Ekaterinburg

V. Recommendations

The project has been very successful. It built on previous achievements and has advanced these systematically. Most notable are the expansion of the crisis centre coalition and multi-agency work with law enforcement and the courts, the compilation of regional statistics and the collection of women's accounts, and the extensive training for professionals.

The project had significant impact on strengthening multi-agency work in the region, building the local evidence base, and improving the ways in which domestic violence cases move through the criminal justice system. More cases are going to court and more perpetrators are found guilty.

The project further raised the profile of Crisis Centre Ekaterina, which is now a leading organisation in Russia for enhancing the criminal justice response to domestic violence, and of The Haven, which improved its understanding of criminal justice systems abroad and international cooperation with women's NGOs in the specialist violence against women sector.

Crisis Centre Ekaterina can build on the achievements of project Life without Fear to further advance interventions in domestic violence in Russia.

Suggested next steps:

In collaboration with local and national stakeholders:

- Develop a plan to move domestic violence and other forms of violence against women into mainstream policy arenas so that issues of woman abuse are taken into consideration routinely when policy decisions are made in housing, child protection, employment, health care and elsewhere.
- As planned by project partners, create a multi-agency forum on domestic violence
- Work with police and courts to implement systematic coding of domestic violence cases so that these can be tracked through the criminal justice system from the moment police are called in to the final deposition of the case.
- Include the health care and education sectors in the multi-agency forum and develop a programme to teach health care providers about how to ask about abuse, how to be supportive and refer to resources
- Design a campaign to teach informal third parties like family members and friends about domestic violence and how to reach out and offer support.

- In partnership with health care providers address the issue of alcohol abuse in a way that makes it clear that heavy drinking is a health problem that needs to be addressed, but that it is neither an excuse for nor a cause of domestic violence.
- Design a programme to involve educators at all levels so that they can recognise warning signs of abuse, understand the dynamics of abuse and can be a resource for pupils and students and give accurate information in class

VI. References

- Amnesty International (2005). Russian Federation: Nowhere to turn to—Violence against women in the family. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR46/056/2005>; accessed 3 August 2009.
- Berk, Richard A. & Rossi, Peter H. (1990). Thinking about program evaluation. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Cook, Dee, Burton, Mandy, Robinson, Amanda & Vallely, Christine (2004). Evaluation of specialist DV courts/fast track systems: Evaluation of the effectiveness of 5 specialist domestic violence courts in Cardiff, Derby, Leeds, West London, and Wolverhampton [\[http://www.caada.org.uk/library_resources/CPS1.pdf\]](http://www.caada.org.uk/library_resources/CPS1.pdf); accessed 3 August 2009].
- Coy, Maddy, Kelly, Liz & Foord, Jo (2007). Map of gaps: The postcode lottery of violence against women support services. London: End Violence Against Women.
- Dobash, R.E. & Dobash, R. (1979). Violence against wives. New York: Free Press.
- Domestic Violence: Monitoring and Analysis—Examples from Sverdlovsk Area, Russia, 2008. Technical Report.
- Donnell, SC, Holmes, J, Hester, M & McCarry, M. (2007). Research update: comparing domestic abuse in same sex and heterosexual relationships. *Safe: The Domestic Abuse Quarterly*, 21, 1-23.
- Dunworth, John (2006). Domestic violence homicide reviews. Home Office. <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/34728>; accessed 28/08/2009.
- Feder, G., Ramsay, J., Dunne, D., Rose, M., Arsene, C., Norman, R., Kuntze, S., Spencer, A., Bacchus, L., Hague, G., Taket, A. & Warburton, A. (2009). How far does screening women for domestic (partner) violence in different health-care settings meet criteria for a screening programme? Systematic reviews of nine UK National Screening Committee criteria. *Health Technology Assessment*, 13, No. 16.
- Ermakova, Ludmila (2008). Foreword to Domestic violence: Monitoring and analysis – Examples from Sverdlovsk area, Russia. Crisis Centre Ekaterina.
- Gaidardjiiskaya, Natalia (January 2009). Statement of project impact from the perspective of Sverdlovsk Regional Court.
- Gilinskiy, Yakov (2006). Crime in contemporary Russia. *European Journal of Criminology*, 3, 259-292.
- Gondolf, Edward W. & Shestakov, Dmitri (1997). Spousal homicide in Russia versus the United States: Preliminary findings and implications. *Journal of Family Violence*, 2(1), 63-74.
- Hague, Gill & Malos, Ellen (2006). Who listens? The voices of domestic violence survivors in service provision in the United Kingdom. *Violence against Women*, 12(6), 568-587.
- Hague, Gill & Malos, EM (2005). *Domestic violence: Action for change*, 3rd edition, New Clarion Press.
- Hester, Marianne (2006). Making it through the criminal justice system: attrition and domestic violence. *Social Policy and Society*, 5 (1), 79-90.

- Hester, Marianne, Hanmer, S, Coulson, S, Morahan, M & Razak, A. (2003). Domestic violence - Making it through the criminal justice system. University of Bristol.
- Hester, Marianne, Pearce, J. & Westmarland, N. (2008). Early evaluation of the Integrated Domestic Violence Court, Croydon, Ministry of Justice Research Series 18/08. London: Ministry of Justice.
- Hester, Marianne, Pearson, C., Harwin, N. & Abrahams, HA. (2007). Making an impact: Children and domestic violence: 2nd edition, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Hester, Marianne & Westmarland, N. (2005). Tackling domestic violence: Effective interventions and approaches. Development and Statistics Directorate, Home Office.
- Human Rights Watch (1997). Human Rights Watch World Report 1997 - The Russian Federation [\[http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8ae24.html\]](http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8ae24.html) ; accessed 3 August 2009].
- Jordan, Brigitte (1980). Birth in four cultures: A cross-cultural investigation of childbirth in Yucatan, Holland, Sweden and the United States. Montreal: Eden Press Women's Publications.
- Kelly, Liz (1988). Surviving sexual violence. MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kirsch, Gesa (1999). Ethical dilemmas in feminist research. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Kotecha, Nutan (2009). Black and minority ethnic women. In S. Fernando & F. Keating (Eds.), Mental health in a multi-ethnic society: A multidisciplinary handbook (2nd ed., pp. 58-71). New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.
- Merry, Sally E. (2006). Human rights and gender violence: Translating international law into local justice. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Moscow State University Women's Council (2003). Domestic violence and women. Paper presented at the conference on domestic violence: Nature and scale of the problem and society's concept of it. May 15-16, 2003, Moscow.
- Radford, Lorraine & Hester, Marianne (2006). Mothering through domestic violence. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Rees, Kath & Wilson, Elvira (2008). Foreword to Domestic violence: Monitoring and analysis – Examples from Sverdlovsk area, Russia. Crisis Centre Ekaterina.
- Regan, Linda, Kelly, Liz, Morris, Anne & Dibb, Rebecca (2007). 'If only we'd known': an exploratory study of seven intimate partner homicides in Englishshire. Final report to the Englishshire Domestic Violence Homicide Review Group [\[http://www.cwasu.org/publication_display.asp?pageid=PAPERS&type=1&pagekey=44&year=2008\]](http://www.cwasu.org/publication_display.asp?pageid=PAPERS&type=1&pagekey=44&year=2008) ; accessed 3 August 2009].
- Reinharz, Shulamit (1992). Feminist methods in social research. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robinson, A. L. (2007) Domestic violence courts. In Cutler, B. (Ed.), Encyclopedia of Psychology and Law. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Robinson, A. L., & Cook, D. (2006). Understanding victim retraction in cases of domestic violence: Specialist courts, government policy, and victim-centred justice. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 9(2), 189-213.
- Roggeband, Conny (2004). 'Immediately I thought we should do the same thing': International inspiration and exchange in feminist action against sexual violence. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 11, 159-175.
- Sen, Purna & Kelly, Liz (2007). CEDAW thematic shadow report on violence against women in the United Kingdom. [<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/UKThematicReportVAW41.pdf>, accessed 21/06/2009].
- Smail, Barbara, Whyte, Judith & Kelly, Alison (1982). Girls into science and technology': The first two years. *SSR*, 64, 620-630.
- Sperling, Valerie, Ferree, Myra N. & Risman, Barbara (2001). Constructing global feminism: Transnational advocacy networks and Russian women's activism. *Signs*, 26, 1155-1186.
- Sutherland, Barbara (not dated). Social audit and partnership analysis. External evaluation report.
- Thiara, Ravi & Gill, Aisha (2009). Violence against women in South Asian communities: Issues for policy and practice. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Thiara Ravi, Humphreys, Cathy (2003) 'Mental health and domestic violence: 'I call it symptoms of abuse" *British Journal Of Social Work* 33 (2), 209 – 226
- Vogodskaya, Anna (2008). Strategies used by women to overcome domestic violence. Synopsis of doctoral research. Ural State University.
- Walby, Sylvia (2004). The cost of domestic violence. London: Department of Trade and Industry, Women and Equality Unit.
- Walby, Sylvia & Allen, Jonathan (2004). Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. London: Home Office Research Study 276.

Appendix: Development of Legislation in UK and Russia

Year	United Kindom	Russian Federation
1970s	Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act 1976 Domestic Proceedings & Magistrate's Courts Act 1978	
1980s	Matrimonial Homes Act 1983 Children Act 1989	
1993		Constitution of the Russian Federation as of 12/12/1993 —Article 21 outlaws torture, violence, humiliation or degrading punishment
1995		<p>Civil Code (part 1) as of 30/11/1994—Espouses fundamental rights such as equality for all citizens; inviolability of private property; freedom of contact; free exercise of civil rights; legal protection of civil rights, regulates the process of compensation for damages, including emotional.</p> <p>Family Code as of 29/12/1995 — Regulates relationships and ownerships between members of a family. Details divorce procedures, rights and responsibilities of marriage. Article 1 states that the rights of a family members can be limited by Federal Law only if it is necessary to protect health, rights and dignity of other embers of the family or other people.</p> <p>Federal law on “Social Services for the Population of Russian Federation” No 195 – F3 as of 10/12/1995 – regulates the social services for vulnerable people, including social, medical, psychological, educational. Legal and financial support, social adaptation and rehabilitation of citizens in a difficult circumstances of life..</p>
1996	Family Law Act Part IV —Introduces more effective civil remedies	<p>Criminal Code as of 13/06/1996 (as well as Criminal Code as of 1960) — Outlaws crimes against human beings, including beating, torture, threatening to kill or injure, insult, and rape.</p> <p>President's Directive No 712 on “Main Directives for Family Policy” as of 14/05/1996 state</p>

		<i>that the aim of government family policy is to provide necessary conditions for a family to realise its functions and to improve quality of life within the family.</i>
1997	<p>Protection from Harassment Act— Links criminal and civil provisions, addresses stalking</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Act— Addresses community safety, support multi-agency DV groups</p>	<p>Government Decision No 222 “Programme of Social Reform in Russian Federation for the period 1996 – 2000” as of 26/02/997 states that to improve the position of women one of the seven main directions would be “forming a system of government measures on preventing violence against women and social rehabilitation of victims”.</p> <p>Decision of Federal Commission of the Russian State Duma No 1929 – II on “Concept of legal activity on providing equal rights and opportunities for men and women” as of 20/11/1997 – section 4 is devoted to prevention of domestic violence and personal safety. It raises the need to adopt a range of state measures to prevent the crime against human being and securing human rights of every family member, eg rights for life, freedom, dignity and also social prevention measures.</p>
2001		Criminal Procedural Code as of 18/12/2001 —regulates court proceedings for all categories of criminal cases, including cases of “private charge” and is mandatory for courts, prosecution, investigation and other departments and agencies involved in court proceedings.
2004	Domestic Violence Crimes and Victims Act— Includes provisions to make legal response to DV more effective (new offences; including violation of civil non-molestation order; same-sex relationships; Victim Code of Practice, provision for homicide reviews)	
2004		Housing Code 29/12/2004 — Regulates housing as well as regulating housing problems (e.g., divorced couples needing to continue to live together in same flat)