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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL COMMISSION

Two years ago, we consulted women across Britain on what they wanted to see done to improve the grim statistics on domestic violence: two women a week are killed by their partner; 25 per cent of pregnant women experience domestic violence; and nearly half of women suffer from domestic violence, sexual harassment or stalking at some point in their life. Further, in 2005 just 5.3 per cent of rape charges ended in a conviction. Women told us then, and continue to tell us now, the same things: that services are not joined up; that funding is patchy and often lasts only for one or two years at a time; that some services depend on time-limited lottery funding, instead of being reliably and securely funded by the Government; and that women and their children often slip through the many gaps in provision. Violence against women is not just a crime – it's a major driver of women's inequality. It reduces their lifetime earnings, limiting their opportunities economically and socially and causes a major impact on their health and the lives of their children.



This report is designed to shed light on these gaps by bringing together, for the first time, a survey of the work being done by central Government in the UK on violence against women. We were interested in investigating whether there was a strategic framework to underpin the many projects that Government has initiated to tackle the different forms of violence against women, as they are obligated to do as signatories to the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action. What follows demonstrates clearly that women are right to applaud the good work, but also right to identify the gaps, criticise the limited funding, and the absence of a strategy that recognises the links between the different forms of violence, as well as measures to address it. As this report makes clear, this lack of an integrated approach means that few targets are set; there is very little monitoring or evaluation of policies, or funding, and very little prevention work – which could prevent extensive human suffering and spending millions of pounds each year on picking up the pieces. It also means, critically, that neither we, nor the Government, can see whether things are getting better – and that is what counts.

We plan to publish these reports annually, to assess progress. We hope this will not only enable Government to plug the gaps, but more importantly build a strategic approach that supports women, demands accountability of perpetrators and in the longer term, begins to reduce the incidence of all forms of violence against women.

Margaret Prosser

The Baroness Prosser of Battersea
Chair

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is Violence Against Women?

Violence against women (VAW) includes, but is not limited to: domestic violence (DV), forced marriage, crimes in the name of honour, rape and sexual assault, murder, trafficking and sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual harassment and stalking.

How common is VAW?

These are just some of the statistics that illustrate the scale of VAW across the UK:

- Almost half of all adult women in England and Wales have experienced DV, sexual assault or stalking¹.
- One in four women in England and Wales² and one in five women in Northern Ireland³ have experienced DV. DV in England, Wales and Northern Ireland has the highest rate of repeat victimisation⁴. In 2003, DV alone accounted for a quarter of all violent crime⁵.
- In 2002, 36,010 incidents of domestic abuse were recorded by Scottish Police. Ninety per cent of the incidents involved a female victim and a male perpetrator⁶.
- In England and Wales, the rate of conviction for rape, after trial, has decreased from one in three cases reported (32 per cent) in 1977, to one in 16 (5.6 per cent) in 2002⁷ and in 2003, 5.3 per cent of reported cases ended in conviction⁸.
- Women between the ages of 20 and 45 years who experience rape or sexual assault, are most commonly assaulted by a current or ex-partner. In addition, two of the locations where sexual assaults occur are the victim's or perpetrator's own home⁹.
- Eighty-five per cent of forced marriages cases dealt with by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office involved female victims¹⁰.
- While there has been no Government-funded prevalence study of FGM, it is estimated that 74,000 women in the UK have been genitally mutilated and 7,000 girls under the age of 16 are at risk of FGM¹¹.
- Recent research has found that, at the time of survey, only 19 per cent of women working as prostitutes in flats, parlours and saunas were originally from the UK¹².

The costs of VAW

- Government research puts the cost of DV (including domestic sexual abuse) in England and Wales alone at £23 billion¹³. In Northern Ireland the direct cost of DV to services and lost

economic output is estimated to amount to £180 million each year – and this does not include the cost in human and emotional suffering¹⁴.

- The most costly violent crime in terms of health-related costs is now estimated to be rape¹⁵.
- Violence causes extensive physical damage, ranging from cuts and bruises to grievous bodily harm, miscarriages, broken bones and permanent disability to death. Sexual offences bring additional risks of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and forced pregnancies. Violence can also cause lasting psychological harm to women and their children who witness assaults.

FALLING THROUGH THE GAPS

What happens when systems are inadequate or non-existent? Rates of violence against women and children continue to prevail at unacceptably high levels, and interventions are delivered haphazardly or not at all. The case of Ian Huntley is a clear illustration of the consequences when women and children are failed by inadequate systems. The reports made to the police of his sexual attacks were not taken seriously - but a failure to intervene ultimately led to two murders.

Two investigations following the deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman uncovered Huntley's history of sexual abuse. During 1995-1999, he came to the attention of police and social services on nine separate occasions for allegations of rape and sex with underage girls. Even when he admitted having sex with an underage girl he was not even cautioned, let alone charged. Like many perpetrators, he targeted girls and young women who did not fit stereotypes of 'innocent victims' - several had already had sex with older men and many came from deprived backgrounds. His sexual offending was 'written off' as consensual underage sex, thus denying vulnerable young women protection and allowing Huntley to operate with virtual impunity, with tragic consequences. Unfortunately, the lessons to be learned from this case have been reduced to technical matters about information and monitoring, when in fact the key issues relate to the ways in which male sexual exploitation is tolerated and excused and women and girls' credibility is undermined and their suffering ignored.

What are the current approaches to VAW in the UK?

There have been many positive legal and policy developments with respect to various forms of VAW, although the central focus has been on DV. In spite of this, the attitudes that tolerate or justify violence are not changing, incidence rates are not

falling, conviction rates are not increasing and women and children still fall through the gaps.

There remains a glaring lack of any overall strategic direction from central governments in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For instance, in England there are three inter-ministerial groups operating in parallel – on DV, rape and trafficking – alongside entirely separate work on forced marriage and FGM. The Government recently launched the Rape Action Plan and the National Domestic Violence Action Plan. However, these are limited to one form of violence and do not include budgets, timelines or a system for monitoring.

Northern Ireland and Wales have developed strategies to tackle DV. Some real progress has been made in Scotland, where the Scottish Executive has had a domestic abuse strategy for a number of years and is currently broadening this to address all forms of VAW. However, the Scottish Parliament cannot legislate on reserved matters (such as immigration and asylum), limiting the scope of Scotland's strategy. None of the existing policies across the UK is comprehensive.

Why a strategic approach to VAW?

In 1995, the UK signed the UN Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), which requires that governments work towards ending VAW by implementing national action plans containing the following elements:

- effective **planning** across the board
- a coherent and integrated approach to **prevention**
- devising and delivering effective **protection**
- full access to and provision of **support** and **rehabilitation**
- effective mechanisms for **prosecution**
- adequate **resources**.

As the rest of this report will show, progress on these areas has been slow and halting, although more urgency and investment has been evident in the last four years. What we have missed, and still lack, is consistency in approach and ongoing investment in building capacity. For example, the last two years have witnessed the first dedicated funding from central Government for sexual violence services - £4 million was allocated from the Victims' Fund, the monies confiscated from the proceeds of crime. However, this represents just 3 per cent of the total confiscated during the period, and it is still unclear if the funding stream will continue.

We believe an integrated approach would be cost and time efficient, ensuring that vital services do not waste energy having to apply every year for new funding streams. Such an approach would

also enable the UK to be in full compliance with its international commitments and, most important, allow a commitment to prevention that would lead to a reduction in gender violence and its costly impact to victims and society as a whole. The gains from a more integrated and coordinated approach include:

- savings of billions of pounds annually;
- earlier and more effective interventions limiting the untold suffering of women and their children;
- ensuring more effective and integrated advocacy and support services ;
- recognising the crucial links between identifying and preventing VAW;
- providing a relevant and more joined-up response to women who experience multiple forms of abuse: FGM may be carried out on a young girl as a prelude to forced marriage; young women escaping abuse at home may end up in the sex industry;
- providing Government with routes to assess the effectiveness of its policies and see whether VAW is being reduced and taxpayers money spent wisely.

THE TRAUMA OF REPEATED VIOLENCE AND LIVING IN FEAR

I had a breakdown. I just wanted to hurt myself. I would cry a lot. I was scared and worried. I was bruised. The back of my neck was bleeding from being hit...they told me, 'Don't scream or we will kill you'. They would. I kept quiet.

Ellen, trafficked from Albania to the UK

Do strategic approaches work?

The Greater London Domestic Violence Strategy has led to a fall in female domestic homicides by a third since its inception in 2001. Other countries with integrated Plans of Action on VAW report many benefits including:

- better inter-agency working;
- raised awareness of the problem;
- more effective legislation and policies; and
- innovative practice¹⁶.

What would a strategy look like?

The integrated VAW strategy should be devised by the Government in consultation with all relevant bodies, including women's organisations, other service providers and state agencies. This work would involve:

- Studying the causes, consequences and nature of VAW and assessing the effectiveness of measures implemented to prevent and redress this problem by promoting research, improving data collection and compiling statistics.
- Conducting education and public information programmes that raise awareness on the causes and nature of VAW and that also lead to attitudinal change.

Department scores

Department	Score
Cabinet Office (CO)	0.5/10
Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA)	2.5/10
Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)	0/10
Department for Education and Skills (DfES)	0/10
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	0/10
Department of Health (DoH)	3.5/10
Department for International Development (DfID)	2.5/10
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	1/10
Department for Transport (DfT)	0/10
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	0/10
Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)	3/10
Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)	0/10
Home Office (HO)	3/10
Ministry of Defence (MoD)	1/10
Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)	1/10
Average total for central Government	1/10

- Ensuring that accessible, just and effective criminal remedies and civil remedies are in force against all forms of VAW.
- Training for key agencies (including the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the judiciary, social services, immigration and health services) on the causes of violence, its impact and the remedies available.
- Devising minimum standards of provision for all key agencies and ensuring that these are implemented and monitored.
- Ensuring full access to and provision of emergency, legal, support and rehabilitation services for all women, with particular regard to the needs of vulnerable or marginalised minorities (including black and ethnic minorities, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and those lacking mental capacity).
- Ensuring adequate resources to implement effectively all elements of a strategy¹⁷.

How have we assessed Government initiatives on VAW?

We wrote to all Westminster Departments asking them to tell us what they were doing to address VAW, since in our view they all have a role to play (a number of them are relevant for all of the UK most reflect work in England and Wales). Our letter included some analysis of how their individual Public Service Agreements (PSAs) linked to VAW, so the Departments knew too. However, it was clear from their responses that the work that goes on is fragmented and, in many instances, unstructured.

Their replies followed no coherent pattern in terms of strategic indicators.

Our experts, the VAW Strategy Sub-Group, developed an assessment framework based on three areas: **Integrated Coverage; Planning; and Resources**. Each Department was assessed in relation to twenty questions, and awarded a score out of 10. *Making the Grade?* reports on their responses against this framework.

What we found

The outcomes of this exercise show that most Departments only recognise responsibilities in relation to VAW in a limited way. A small number have made considerable strides but usually in a specific area, most commonly DV, and fail to see the bigger picture. The departmental responses, which are presented in full in Appendix B of the *Making the Grade?*, make clear that the Government does not adopt a consistent approach to its work on VAW in terms of planning, resourcing and measurement. Very few Departments responded to our questions about budgets so we were unable to assess how much they are spending, nor whether the investment is an effective one. Budgets are uncertain or invisible, making audit trails difficult, if not impossible, to follow. Departments were also unable to respond to the question on training, so it is impossible to say if officials are well informed.

Summary

Our first annual analysis of Government activity addressing VAW is, therefore, disappointing. It

reveals that whilst there is a lot of work going on in relation to some aspects of VAW, there is no strategic framework underpinning it.

This Government has done pioneering work on a range of areas related to VAW - much of it is detailed in the responses we have reproduced. Although there were no plans or targets at the highest level of PSAs, it was clear that in one or two cases there were plans and work programmes on some aspects of VAW: for example, the Rape Action Plan and the National Domestic Violence Action Plan, including establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and DV specialist courts, respectively. It has also legislated to protect girls being taken out of the UK for FGM and has reformed sex offences legislation. However, this work is on a narrow range of violence issues, has limited coverage and is not part of a systematic or planned approach. This represents huge lost opportunities, not just in the absence of a VAW strategy but also the failure to make connections between VAW and existing high profile Government strategies, for example, drugs and alcohol, violent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Government Departments reported on current policy initiatives - mainly addressing DV; no Department, even those doing a great deal of work on VAW, was able to give a coherent account of its strategic approach to VAW, in terms of definitions, planning, targets, training, budgets, research or evaluation, that we asked for; the DoH, FCO and DfID illustrated the most understanding of an

'integrated approach' to VAW; and Government Departments continue to conflate VAW and DV despite a very clear definition of VAW in our original letters.

Finally, all this means that work being done is not effectively mainstreamed into the Government machine. As the current projects end, there is no framework for sustainable, ongoing work. Assessing the big picture - whether all Government's efforts are making an impact or not - is impossible when there is no systematic collation of evidence. Much of the good work is dependent on the sponsorship and efforts of committed individuals at both Ministerial and Government official level. As these people move on, resources and personalities shift and the work is jeopardised.

BELIEVING YOU'RE WORTHLESS

He raped me and hit me in the head and kicked me in the leg. He raped and beat me so that I would understand that I am just the same as all the rest. No better.

Katerina, trafficked from the Ukraine to the UK

TOO MUCH BUREAUCRACY

Funding is a major issue because all projects including mine spend a lot of their time filling in forms for funds. It is a minefield and important work is not going on.

WNC, *Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors*, 2003

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Established in 1969, the Women's National Commission (WNC) is the UK's independent umbrella body representing the views of several million women and women's Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the development of Government policy. It supports a number of forums for women's organisations to come together with Government officials to discuss and influence the development of public policy. The WNC Violence Against Women Working Group is one of these forums, influencing Government policy on VAW. A Sub-group of this Working Group, the WNC VAW Strategy Sub-group, has overseen the development of this report.

The women's lobby has called for many years for the Government to adopt a more coherent and strategic approach to all forms of VAW, and to understand both that it is a key factor in perpetuating women's inequality, and that there are many connections across the different forms. With this and Government international commitments to eliminate VAW in mind, the WNC VAW Strategy Sub-group set about undertaking a detailed analysis of what is being done at a strategic level to address the issue.

International Commitments

In signing up in 1995 to the UN's Global Platform for Action on Women, the Government committed to producing a National Action Plan and developing a strategic approach to VAW. This document states that:

297 As soon as possible, preferably by the end of 1995, [signatory] Governments, in consultation with relevant institutions and non-governmental organizations, should begin to develop implementation strategies for the Platform and, preferably by the end of 1996, should have developed their strategies or plans of action. This planning process should draw upon persons at the highest level of authority in government and relevant actors in civil society. These implementation strategies should be comprehensive, have time-bound targets and benchmarks for monitoring, and include proposals for allocating or reallocating resources for implementation. Where necessary, the support of the international community could be enlisted, including resources¹⁸

and that:

298 Non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to contribute to the design and implementation of these strategies or national plans of action. They should also be encouraged to develop their own programmes to complement government efforts. Women's organizations and feminist groups, in collaboration with other non-governmental organizations, should be encouraged to organize networks, as necessary, and to advocate for and support the implementation of the Platform for Action by Governments and regional and international bodies¹⁹

Further, under the International Principle of Due Diligence, the Government must '*exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons*²⁰.'

DOMESTIC SEXUAL ABUSE: A FORGOTTEN ISSUE

I was forced to have sex morning and night every day for those three years even when I didn't feel good and right up until my children were born. If I didn't it was terrible, the rows, it was horrific. I could not go to sleep until he had been sexually satisfied.....Why is it he is allowed to get away with it? If he was a stranger, he would be put in jail for a long time.

Woman in response to research carried out by the Women's Support Project - Glasgow.

In order to meet these obligations and take effective action, the Government must:

- work to the agreed international definition of VAW;
- set targets at the highest level;
- provide proper funding and resources to meet the targets;
- monitor and evaluate the work against agreed standards; and
- set up clear lines of accountability for meeting the targets.

Although various documents have been produced, including *Living Without Fear*²¹, no coherent strategy - setting out targets, timelines, budgets, and a set of key indicators to evaluate progress -

has been produced at the UK level. Moreover, it continues to be the case that many politicians, policy-makers and state agencies continue to focus only on DV, and ignore the many wider forms of VAW. This means there is no coordinated joined-up activity at the highest level, nor any consistent overview of progress year on year. Consequently, we are unable to tell accurately whether the position for women is getting worse or better overall. Lines of funding remain uncertain and uneven.

Although a strategic framework is absent at the UK level, there are limited examples in the Devolved Administrations. For example, in October 2005, the Northern Ireland Office, in partnership with the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, published a strategy²² and Action Plan on Domestic Abuse for Northern Ireland²³. It sets out a clear definition; targets; accountability structures; makes some commitments on resources; unquantified budgets; and training. Similar work is being undertaken in Wales.

While these are positive steps, they are gender neutral and limited to a single form of violence against women. Hence, the commitment of the women's sector in Northern Ireland in campaigning for a broader VAW strategy.

Scotland is more advanced with regard to an integrated approach to VAW. It has had a gendered strategy on domestic abuse since 2000. The Scottish Executive has recently appointed a national expert group from the women's sector to advise on how to expand the strategy to include all forms of VAW. The women's sector in Scotland is committed to campaigning for a wider UK VAW strategy with respect to reserved matters, such as immigration and asylum, employment and benefits, equalities and discrimination, foreign policy, development and defence.

Spending time writing plans and developing strategies can appear unnecessarily bureaucratic, even a waste of resources, when so much needs to be done at the level of service delivery. Those working at the sharp end, however, insist that unless Government provides a strong steer from the centre and publishes proper plans to tackle VAW, they will not be able to set targets and meet them, nor identify where there are gaps. Committed and insightful individuals within institutions and at local levels find themselves blocked in attempting to develop integrated approaches, as there are no messages and agendas that can be harnessed. While it lacks the substance of some regional and Devolved Nation plans the Home Office *National Domestic Violence Action Plan*²⁴, suggests there is political will to address such serious issues in a structured way. We regret that the arguments for taking forward work on VAW²⁵ as an integrated issue, in a linked and structured way, have yet to be accepted at the highest level.

In the following pages, we analyse what the Government is doing to tackle VAW, in the first of what is to be an annual series. Our aim is to demonstrate, over time, whether the scourge of VAW is being tackled effectively by tracking changes, year on year.

CHAPTER TWO

ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

VAW defined

For the purposes of this exercise, we have used the UN definition of VAW. That is:

Violence against women refers to any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
- (b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
- (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs²⁶.

PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION

We seem to care so little about the women involved (in prostitution) even though the likelihood is that many will have suffered abuse in childhood, be under the control of a pimp, be addicted to hard drugs, and suffering from health problems. Police rarely arrest pimps or brothel owners, yet regularly pick up prostitutes on soliciting charges.

Julie Bindel cited in Poppy Project Newsletter Oct 2005

CREATING FEAR

The abuse to which I refer consists of men exposing themselves. I would class this as abuse because I think it was intended to frighten and degrade me.

Woman in response to research carried out by the Women's Support Project - Glasgow.

Setting the scene

We initiated this work in December 2004, by

writing to each Central Government Department to ask them to set out for us all the relevant work they were doing to address VAW and the resources they allocate to it. We gave them some guidance on what we were interested in, by enclosing with each letter a summary of their published targets²⁷ and illustrating their relevance to VAW. A sample copy of one of the letters, and the analysis of their targets, can be found in Appendix A.

The letters to each Department included the following request:

We are particularly interested in both the quantitative and qualitative measures you use to determine your success in tackling VAW in its widest sense (i.e. domestic and sexual violence, FGM, trafficking, honour crimes and forced marriage to name a few) and what initiatives you are currently undertaking that contribute towards the Government strategy referred to in the UK CEDAW Report and what resources have been allocated to meet these commitments.

We received responses throughout January and February (and in some cases, March and April) 2005. While a few Departments provided great detail about initiatives they were undertaking, most Departments failed entirely to explicitly address the questions we had posed to them.

The scoring framework

From these varied responses, it became apparent that on the whole, Government does not adopt a consistent approach to planning, resourcing, and measuring its work on VAW. Faced with this lack of structure, our VAW Strategy Sub-group developed its own framework, based on both international experience and good practice in public policy development²⁸, to assess the extent to which a strategic framework underpins the plethora of initiatives taken by Government. This framework consists of 20 questions, which together make up a coherent picture from the disparate lists of activities presented in the departmental responses. The questions were organised around three key themes:

Integrated Coverage: Here we looked at whether Departments had the basics right: did they work to an agreed definition of VAW? Did they recognise

that VAW is not just a crime, but also a major driver of women's inequality, reducing their lifetime earnings, limiting their opportunities economically and socially, and causing a major impact on their health²⁹ and the lives of their children?

Planning: In this section, we considered whether Departments used their planning systems to best effect, setting clear targets and measuring performance against them. We looked particularly at the objectives in their PSAs to see whether VAW had been included as a priority both for the Departments and for the public bodies they

sponsor. We were also keen to see if the work they did was evaluated to assess its effectiveness.

Resources: We tried to assess how Departments allocated budgets to their work and whether the human resources provided were sufficient. Was a senior official identified as a high-level focal point? Was training routinely provided for staff at all levels? Did the Department commission and publish relevant research and statistics on VAW?

These themes, evolved into a set of twenty questions, against which each response was assessed.

Integrated coverage

- 1 Does the Department recognise VAW as a gender equality issue?
- 2 Does the Department undertake specific work on VAW as an integrated issue?
- 3 Does the Department mainstream VAW issues into its work?
- 4 Does the Department hold its sponsored Bodies to account for work on VAW?
- 5 Does the Department require/ensure that all relevant sponsored bodies have basic awareness and specialised training on VAW – both in terms of all professional qualifications and in-service skill development?
- 6 Does the Department have an internal VAW policy for its staff?

Planning

- 7 Does the Department work in partnership with other Government Departments on VAW?
- 8 Does the Department work to a published, agreed definition of VAW?
- 9 Does the Department include VAW indicators in its PSA?
- 10 Does the Department include VAW indicators in its standards and regulatory responsibilities?
- 11 Does the Department have a published plan of action on VAW, covering provision, protection and prevention?
- 12 Does the Department have systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their work?
- 13 Does the Department have clear and published targets with timelines on VAW?

Resources

- 14 Does the Department have a clear, ring-fenced funding for its VAW work?
 - 15 Is the funding adequate?
 - 16 Does the Department have a high level lead for VAW work?
 - 17 Does the Department train policy staff on integrating VAW issues into their work?
 - 18 Does the Department work in partnership with the women's sector/voluntary organisations on VAW?
 - 19 Does the Department collate statistics on VAW that are relevant to its work?
 - 20 Does the Department commission research on VAW with respect to its relevance to their core business?
-

Taken together, these questions provide a foundation for beginning to assess the extent to which the Government works strategically to tackle VAW.

To ensure fairness Departments have been scored *only* on the information they provided to WNC (see Appendix B for a full set of these responses).

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Overall, instead of illustrating the strategic approach we had hoped for - that is Government working to take forward all its work on this key priority in a linked and structured way - we found discrete, disparate pockets of work, being carried out reactively, rather than following a proactive and planned programme. There was also a depressing failure to recognise preventative opportunities and potentials.

The outcomes of this exercise show that most Departments only recognise responsibilities in a limited way, in relation to VAW. A small number have made considerable strides but usually in a specific area, most commonly DV, and fail to see the bigger picture. Training is given to only a tiny minority; it is not routine. And budgets are uncertain and invisible, making audit trails difficult, if not impossible, to follow.

While the VAW Strategy Sub-group is aware of projects that are being administered across Government, information regarding some of these was not included in the relevant departmental response. More specifically, no Department replied to our questions on resources, nor did they attempt, other than in a piecemeal way, to describe the measures they use to determine success. It was this failure to 'join-up' both within Departments and across Departments, as well as engage - two key characteristics of an integrated approach - which is documented in this report.

We would like to take the opportunity to point out that, traditionally, certain sections of the HO, the FCO and DfID have been keen to engage with us and the sector and we know that they have found the relationship fruitful. We offered to meet with all Departments to talk through this exercise with them. Only four chose to take up this offer: MoD; the HO; the DCA; and the DoH, demonstrating a willingness to engage with the process, which is to be applauded.

A small number of Departments - coincidentally some of those noted above, the HO, DCA, FCO, DfID, DoH and the MoD, scored well in some areas. In the main, this was because they: reported working in partnership across Government or with NGOs; had developed policies on some forms

of VAW; and had an action plan for some aspects.

However, these higher scoring Departments also lost points because they provided no data on how they assessed their own success against targets. We were particularly disappointed that the DEFRA acknowledged that VAW has a particular rural dimension but quoted UK-wide figures, indicating it lacks specific data. The departmental aim of a *'better life for everyone'* does not seem to include tackling VAW, despite its widespread and devastating impact.

Responses from the lowest scoring Departments displayed no understanding of their role in tackling VAW, despite receiving an analysis of how their PSA targets linked to the issue. Several referred to their representation on Inter-Ministerial and Inter-Departmental Committees but gave no details on how this translated into the work of their own Departments. We had to conclude that 'work' in the Department was limited to representation at the occasional meeting.

No Department reported providing training for civil servants on VAW. It appears that even those who performed best offered no training to their staff on this key issue, and none reported on training in their sponsored bodies.

One of the most disappointing features of all the departmental responses was the lack of prevention initiatives. The prevention of VAW is put down to one-off training and education modules, which often are not even mandatory. If such a small emphasis on prevention is to continue, the Government cannot expect reductions in the crime statistics that measure violence against women, nor the massive costs associated with it. All Departments have a role to play in preventing VAW.

The results of our first annual look at Government activity on VAW were not wholly unexpected, and we hope that Departments will do better next year. Our partners from Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland have also indicated interest in carrying out a similar project, adapted to the different contexts.

Understanding what must be achieved - the elimination of VAW - and the complexities

involved, is the first step. Government must then identify practical milestones and targets to achieving this overall objective. This requires planning and the development of a clear set of indicators to be monitored. Measures of success must be transparent and accurate, and based on comprehensive data. At present, Government figures are often non-existent in this area, despite detailed statistics being the key to developing evidence-based policy. Research and data on the contributory factors and connections, the effectiveness of interventions, prevalence rates and trends, and the quality of services are all essential tools to inform the planning process. The absence of comprehensive, detailed data, particularly on the causes of violence and its costs of VAW in the round, also militates against the adoption of effective pre-emptive preventive measures.

Training must also be given to public servants who develop policy and design, deliver, or commission services. This training needs to address gender perspectives, and the ways in which the prevalence of violence makes it a key driver of women's inequality, impacting on their earning power, their career progression, their access to services, their role in public life, their health and safety.

Recommendations

We recommend Government sets the following priorities for the 12 months.

- That all levels of Government work to an agreed definition of VAW, and take forward their work within the framework of international human rights law, the requirements of CEDAW and the UN Global Platform for Action, as well as UK law.
- In addition to the Human Rights Act, Government should locate work on VAW within the gender duty in the Equalities Bill currently being enacted, and this should feed down to sponsored bodies and local government.
- A single Inter-Ministerial Group on Violence Against Women, set up as part of the Cabinet Committee structure, to develop and oversee a coherent set of targets, supported by a cross-departmental group of officials to ensure work is mainstreamed throughout their home Departments.
- Building on the templates provided by Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, work is put in hand to develop, fund and implement a strategy and plan of action for the UK (extended to Devolved Nations on reserved matters); including the allocation of clear departmental responsibilities for VAW, closely linked to their PSA targets;
- Integrating VAW into relevant policy initiatives, and encouraging local inter-agency work to reflect a VAW agenda.

And in the longer term, the Government should be working towards developing a full integrated VAW strategy, including:

- Studying the causes, consequences and nature of VAW and assessing the effectiveness of measures implemented to prevent and redress this problem by promoting research, improving data collection and compiling statistics.
- Conducting education and public information programmes that raise awareness on the causes and nature of VAW and that also lead to attitudinal change.
- Ensuring that accessible, just and effective criminal remedies and civil remedies are in force against all forms of VAW.
- Training for key agencies (including the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the judiciary, social services, immigration and health services) on the causes of violence, its impact and the remedies available.
- Devising minimum standards of provision for all key agencies and ensuring that these are implemented and monitored.
- Ensuring full access to and provision of emergency, legal, support and rehabilitation services for all women, with particular regard to the needs of vulnerable or marginalised minorities (including black and ethnic minorities, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and those lacking mental capacity).
- Ensuring adequate resources to implement effectively all elements of a strategy³⁰.

WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

I've been running from my ex-husband for six years and I never knew that I was entitled to help and have certain rights... I am not afraid, it's not my fault and I'm worth more than violence and abuse.

A woman participating in CWASU research, 2002

CHAPTER FOUR

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT CARDS

REPORT CARD		
Department: CABINET OFFICE		
Departmental Aim: <i>To make Government more effective by providing a strong centre</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	1/2
<p>Comments: The Department's central role in Government is to coordinate policy and operations but it has specifically excluded a joined-up Government response to VAW from this core work. We recognise the Department has rolled out to all Government Departments the DV Guidelines for Civil Service staff, based on the TUC DV Guidelines. However, these are limited to domestic violence, not all forms of VAW. The CO is in the position to enforce the mainstreaming of women's issues, including VAW, across all Government policy and give guidance on equality, evaluation and monitoring.</p>		
Planning	Score:	0
<p>Comments: The Department has no plans to address VAW.</p>		
Resources	Score:	0
<p>Comments: The Department provided no information regarding funds or resources allocated. The CO has responsibility for corporate training of the Civil Service, but its response gives no indication that VAW training is included in this provision.</p>		
		Total score: 1/2/10
<p>Overall comments: This is a classic example of a missed opportunity. The Department has great potential as a central coordinating Department, but does not currently use it. As the corporate HQ for Government machinery, the CO should be providing leadership in coordinating on key priorities for Government. It is disappointing that VAW is not one of these.</p>		

VIOLENCE IN THE WORK PLACE

Sexual harassment and tension are rife at work. I've been put off, put down, laughed at for standing up for myself and not pretending to be stupider than I really am. Naturally friendly, all men take this as sexual-come on.

Woman in response to research carried out by the Women's Support Project-Glasgow

REPORT CARD

Department: **DEPARTMENT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**

Departmental Aim: *Upholding justice, rights and democracy*

Integrated Coverage

Score: 1/2

Comments:

The Department's key aim is to uphold justice and rights. It reports significant work on some forms of violence, such as DV and sexual offences, but treats them as individual issues rather than seeing the links between forms and how they can be addressed. It has the power to take the lead on some of these issues but does not take the opportunity, for example, exploring extending specialisation in prosecution and courts to various forms of VAW.

Planning

Score: 1/2

Comments:

There is considerable work being done on individual initiatives and services, but there appears to be no coherent plan.

The Department works as part of the Home Office inter-Ministerial forums but does not take a lead.

Resources

Score: 1 1/2

Comments:

There appear to be lots of initiatives but no clear funding streams are described. The Department, which apparently spends a lot on work on VAW, unfortunately failed to respond to the question on resources.

The Department has set up a DV advisory group, which is an effective way of accessing the experience of the diverse DV sector, but again it has missed the opportunity to extend this to include all VAW issues. Its willingness to engage with the sector outside this forum is to be applauded and is a model for other Departments.

Total score: 2 1/2 / 10

Overall Comments:

Although PSA 2 for the DCA (i.e. ensuring the 'public, especially the socially excluded and vulnerable, have access to excellent services, which enable them to exercise their rights in law and understand, exercise and fulfil their responsibilities') requires the Department to build confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS), this is not linked to the low conviction rate in rape and sexual violence cases - a significant cause of women's lack of faith in the CJS.

We were delighted that the DCA was one of only four Departments that agreed to meet us to talk about its work.

FAILURES OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

I dropped it because I was too scared and the police said it was a hard case. Not many women win the case.

A woman on why she withdrew her rape complaint, participating in CWASU research 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: **DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**

Departmental Aim: *To improve the quality of life through cultural and sporting activities, to support the pursuit of excellence, and champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries*

Integrated Coverage

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department has listed some specific projects where an attempt has been made to raise girls' participation in sport. However in the main, its work is gender-neutral and its work on VAW is limited to issues of safety in museums. There is no mention of VAW in the Department's work on licensing of sex establishments; extending licensing hours for alcohol; regulating media standards; or the potential of sport, including the provision of self-defence courses for women and creating policies on abuse by coaches, in reducing VAW.

Planning

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department's PSA is gender-neutral. There is only one exception, with Sport England, including gender equality as a priority. There was little evidence provided of specific planning for women more generally, let alone for VAW.

Resources

Score:

0

Comments:

No evidence provided of specific VAW resources.

Total score:

0/10

Overall Comments:

There is no evidence that the DCMS is giving a lead to its sponsored bodies. As the major funder of the Sports Councils, this is a missed opportunity to direct resources towards prevention as research shows that women who have been involved in sport find it easier to leave a violent relationship. The Department also minimises its role with respect to issues - media and licensing - which are implicated in creating conducive contexts for VAW, and minimising its harms.

LICENSING AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN

Research on the London Borough of Camden has revealed there is inconsistency in licensing regulations - the majority of lap dancing clubs are licensed as Public Entertainment Premises with special Nudity Permission, rather than as sex establishments, which would entail higher licensing costs and more restrictions on available services. This research also suggests links between the opening of lap dancing premises and sexual assault against women.

The Liliith Project, The Liliith Report on Lap Dancing and Striptease in the Borough of Camden, 2003

CHANGING ATTITUDES

In the long term, the only answer can be the complete education of people - male and female - in their attitude to women in society. No more 'page 3 poses' but a picture of women as people, with the right to freedom of movement and the right to be protected against any form of violence and the full backing and weight of authority to enforce those rights.

Woman in response to research carried out by the Women's Support Project-Glasgow

REPORT CARD

Department: **DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

Departmental Aim: *To build a competitive economy and inclusive society by: creating opportunities for everyone to develop their learning; releasing potential in people to make the most of themselves; achieving excellence in standards of education and levels of skills*

Integrated Coverage

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department's response indicates that it does not recognise violence as a gendered issue, and when it does discuss violence, it is mainly in the context of DV. This results in other forms of VAW being missed in terms of measurement, inclusion in the curriculum and support offered to pupils.

No mention is made of the Sure Start Programme or the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, despite their potential for tackling VAW. There is no discussion of training for teachers and other relevant staff, nor of how gender and VAW could be mainstreamed into the curriculum.

Sadly, failure to grasp the scope of VAW as an integrated issue means that the Department will constantly under-perform in this area.

Planning

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department was the only one to provide the information we asked for regarding evaluation and monitoring of its PSA targets (in this case, the target to improve children's communication, social and emotional development). Disappointingly, however, these measurements did not take account of the differences between boys and girls and only appear to measure progress or change up to the age of five.

We are aware of some inter-departmental work on forced marriage, but unfortunately this was not included in the Department's response.

Resources

Score:

0

Comments:

Unfortunately, the official referred to us did not make contact to discuss our letter further, so we have no further information on this topic. The Sure Start Programme clearly indicates that the Department can work in partnership with other agencies. This suggests that, given the will, this approach could be extended across other policy areas.

Total score:

0/10

Overall Comments:

DfES is uniquely placed to lead Government's work on preventing VAW because of its involvement in the development of young people's attitudes and values. We know that one in five young men and one in 10 young women think that abuse or violence against women is acceptable³¹, and that young women have the highest reporting rates for all forms of VAW, it is disappointing to see such huge potential wasted due to the Department's inability to thoroughly understand the issues, their interconnectedness and relevance to all areas of its work. DfES needs to recognise this in all their policies and initiatives.

Based on the information DfES provided regarding future initiatives, they will no doubt perform better in next year's report.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES

[Boys] try to make you feel guilty, it's your fault for saying 'no'. They make out that you're the stupid one, that you're in the wrong.

A young woman participating in CWASU research, 2002

REPORT CARD

Department: DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS		
Departmental Aim: <i>Sustainable development, which means a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	0
Comments: The Department's response described no work at all on VAW, despite noting there is a rural dimension to the issues.		
Planning	Score:	0
Comments: The Department provided no indication of the plans it has for VAW work.		
Resources	Score:	0
Comments: The Department provided no information regarding funding for VAW work. The Department promised to provide some measurements once they have been developed. To date, we have not received these.		
		Total score: 0/10
Overall Comments: This is a very disappointing response from a Department that accepts that rural women face particular social exclusion issues, for example the limited access to rape crisis and refuge facilities - an issue identified in DEFRA's PSA objectives. But this awareness does not seem to translate in to gender sensitive policy development.		

RURAL DIMENSIONS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

There is a myth that domestic violence is something that happens in cities and not in rural areas. Yet I know women farmers who are beaten. It is hard for these women to leave home. The law should have something in it about tackling isolation - outreach is about telling women where to go for help.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

TRAPPED

In a rural area, my services are his services. Our families use the same GP.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

Departmental Aim: *To transform the health and social care system so that it produces faster, fairer services that deliver better*

Integrated Coverage

Score:

1

Comments:

The Department has a Programme on Violence and Abuse (health and mental health), which illustrates a good understanding of how violence impacts on poor health. Considering that violence is the biggest contributor to women's poor health³², it is concerning that the programme is not gendered. As a consequence, gender-specific forms of violence such as FGM are marginalised. It is also unclear where sexual harassment and stalking (forms of violence that women are more likely to suffer from) are addressed, nor how this initiative inter-relates with other mainstream DoH programmes, such as the Drug and Alcohol Strategy and the introduction of the National DV Coordinator for the NHS. There are also many other discrete projects, such as the promotion of routine screening for DV, but these are not being overseen in any strategic way and the specific needs of some minority groups, such as disabled women, appear not to be met.

However, this flagship programme has potential to provide the type of strategic approach we are looking for and other Departments could very well learn from it.

Planning

Score:

1

Comments:

There is some monitoring and evaluation for aspects of the Department's work. However, there appears to be no overall assessment of progress against an agreed overall framework of targets.

Resources

Score:

1¹/₂

Comments:

No information regarding financial resources was provided. Therefore, it is impossible to determine whether these are appropriate or adequate. In terms of human resources, we praise the appointment of a National DV Coordinator but this needs to be extended to cover all forms of VAW. The appointment of a Director to oversee the Programme on Violence and Abuse is welcome, as is her commitment to working in partnership with service users and the voluntary sector.

There appears to be good training for health professionals regarding DV but not on VAW more widely. The response does outline some research but it is not clear how widespread this is, nor how it guides the overall work programme. We are still badly in need of research on prevalence rates for FGM. Currently, the figures we rely on are estimates only, which do not reflect the true extent of the problem.

Total score: **3¹/₂/10**

Overall Comments:

We welcome work the Department is doing on the domestic violence and mental health strands - but lots more VAW platforms need to be worked in. There are obviously some programmes the Department can be proud of. However, these would be strengthened if they were mainstreamed. The DoH illustrated the best understanding of joined-up thinking.

WHAT A STRATEGIC APPROACH CAN MEAN FOR WOMEN

If a GP only has five minutes for each patient, then GPs need to have a counsellor or someone they can refer patients experiencing domestic violence to. At the moment, they are just giving tranquillisers when what women need is someone to listen to them and practical support. They need someone who knows about alcohol abuse, mental health and a range of issues. They also need a support worker to navigate through all the agencies with them.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
Departmental Aim: <i>To eliminate poverty in poorer countries in particular through achievement by 2015 of the Millennium Development Goals</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	1
<p>Comments:</p> <p>DfID has taken on the issue of VAW, using a wide definition. Although, from the material sent, there is no evidence of a comprehensive joined-up strategy, with projects tending to focus on specific forms of VAW as individual issues. Like the FCO, most of its excellent work benefits women internationally.</p>		
Planning	Score:	1
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The DfID works in partnership with other departments and has funded research and evaluation projects. However, no overarching action plan was provided, nor a systematic integrated approach across the Department described, outlining objectives, time-bound targets and dedicated budgets.</p> <p>DfID is involved in some inter-departmental working, which could be further extended.</p>		
Resources	Score:	1/2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Extensive budgets are referenced in the response but there is no way of tracking the specific amounts that are allocated to projects on VAW, nor their effectiveness.</p> <p>The Department works closely with the NGO sector. We would like to see it work more closely with other Government Departments to share learnings and work towards a more integrated and gender aware approach.</p>		
		Total score: 2 1/2 / 10
<p>Overall Comments:</p> <p>DfID does have programmes on VAW but more integration and resources are required.</p> <p>We look forward to hearing of the outcomes of the current evaluation of its gender violence work in next year's report.</p> <p>Like the FCO, DfID shows an awareness of the issues and should be particularly congratulated for their human rights and gender-awareness.</p>		

WOMEN ARE PARTICULARLY AT RISK

In many of the countries where the MDGs [Millennium Development Goals] are most off track - those affected by armed conflict - women are particularly at risk. Gender specific violence, such as rape, prostitution, trafficking and other sexual abuse, are often used as weapons during armed conflicts, and are violations of international human rights law. The international response in such times of crisis needs to take account of the unique threats posed to women.

DfID, *Gender Fact Sheet*, 2005

REPORT CARD

Department: **DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

Departmental Aim: *To deliver prosperity for all by driving up productivity and competitiveness through world-class science and innovation, successful enterprise and business, and fair, competitive markets*

Integrated Coverage

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department's response had little focus on its own work but referred more to the Minister for Women's role in inter-Ministerial groups. It did not outline the work that DTI is doing towards the aims of these groups. There was no indication that VAW work is mainstreamed throughout DTI's work programme.

Planning

Score:

1/2

Comments:

The DTI should be congratulated for setting up the first cross-Government Gender PSA. However, it has missed a huge opportunity to address all forms of VAW through this mechanism, as it focuses solely on DV. Further, the evaluation mechanisms for the PSA are unclear.

Resources

Score:

1/2

Comments:

The response does not refer to the potential leading role the Women and Equality Unit might play in addressing VAW. It mentions briefly the *Costs of Domestic Violence Report*³³. While this is extremely valuable, it only addresses DV. We would like to see the methodology extended to all forms of VAW, particularly considering the massive cost of DV (including domestic sexual violence) alone to the state and the community of £23 billion per annum. We also know that the most costly violent crime in terms of health-related costs is estimated to be rape³⁴.

The response did not provide information regarding the resources allocated to any of the work outlined.

Total score:

1/10

Overall Comments:

The DTI is well placed to tackle VAW and play a key role in developing initiatives to tackle it, through both employment policies and service provision.

The DTI could work with businesses as a champion of employment policies that address VAW. It is estimated that £3.1 billion of economic output is lost annually through domestic violence alone³⁵. This figure does not include the cost of harassment in the workplace or rape and assaults by unknown perpetrators.

The DTI must also play a role in working cross-departmentally and at regional and local levels to tackle VAW, on issues such as increasing safety on public transport and in the built-environment through initiatives such as 'Planning for Safety' that are not resource-intensive but more about changing working practices.

DISABILITY IN EQUALITIES

There are so many specifics around disability. It is not just about physical abuse; it is about male and female power in a situation where women are already isolated from the mainstream of society. They are less likely to have a network. There are factors that are not experienced by other women. They are doubly abused compared to the able-bodied. The situation is always met with disbelief.

WNC, *Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors*, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT		
Departmental Aim: <i>Transport that works for everyone</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>While there is some recognition of women's specific transport needs in relation to safety and security on public transport in the response, VAW does not seem to be mainstreamed as an issue throughout the Department's work programme.</p>		
Planning	Score:	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>No information was provided that addressed this aspect.</p>		
Resources	Score:	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Department has established the Women's Transport Network. However, the response does not outline the extent of the work, nor who is represented on the Network. Again, it is not clear whether the work of the Network is mainstreamed throughout the Department's work programme.</p>		
		Total score: 0/10
<p>Overall Comments:</p> <p>It is disappointing that in its response the Department manages to completely avoid even using the words 'violence against women'.</p> <p>It acknowledges that women are the main users of public transport, and refers to research that shows women have more concerns for their personal security, yet does not provide any detail regarding what it intends to do about the issue.</p>		

THE NEED FOR GENDER SENSITIVE POLICIES

Social and economic factors, physical differences between women and men and gender differences in power and vulnerability all have an impact on the differences in transport use between women and men. Hamilton, Hodgson, Jenkins and Turner (2005) *Promoting Gender Equality in Transport. Working Paper Series No. 34.* Equal Opportunities Commission

WOMEN AFFECTED BY GENDER-BLIND POLICIES

I cannot use many railway stations as they are un-staffed and very dark and deserted in the evenings. Woman in response to research carried out by the Women's Support Project-Glasgow

REPORT CARD

Department: **DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS**

Departmental Aim: *To promote opportunity and independence for all*

Integrated Coverage Score: 0

Comments:

The Department's response suggests that its understanding of VAW is very limited. For example, while we applaud DWP's attempt to lift women out of poverty, it is not clear from their response that these policies are informed by an understanding of VAW as a driver of women's poverty. There is no evidence that VAW issues are actively mainstreamed across the policies and benefits for which the DWP is responsible.

Planning Score: 0

Comments:

The Department focuses on providing families with opportunities to return to work, child poverty and Tax Credits but there is no evidence to suggest that they are working either internally or with other Departments, examining VAW as a cause or a consequence of social exclusion.

Resources Score: 0

Comments:

No evidence was provided to suggest there are clear budget lines, training or research on VAW. No mention was made regarding the availability of training or guidelines for frontline staff on how to deal with VAW issues, when they arise, nor how staff performance is monitored.

The DWP states that in its data keeping, it does not differentiate on the basis of gender around the needs of disabled people. Without gender-disaggregated statistics it is impossible for the Department to produce effective and efficient policies.

Total score: 0/10

Overall Comments:

DWP is uniquely placed to be at the forefront of identifying VAW as a contributory factor in women's exclusion from training, work or education. It should also be addressing the fact that sexual harassment has not faded away as women have entered the workforce, and addressing the damaging impacts of legacies of abuse, that prevent women entering the labour force, negatively affecting their ambitions and productivity.

A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

Benefits Agency staff should visit refugees regularly, to take claims for benefit from new arrivals. This would be simple to set up and would save traumatized women having to wait for hours at social security offices.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE		
Departmental Aim: <i>To work for UK interests in a safe, just and prosperous world</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	1
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The FCO response demonstrates the most extensive coverage of VAW issues, for example crimes committed in the name of honour, DV, FGM, forced marriage, women and armed conflict situations and trafficking. Of course, most of the FCO's excellent work benefits women internationally, but we hope their underpinning human rights perspective can be replicated with respect to the UK.</p> <p>There is a clear gender mainstreaming policy but it is not systematically monitored to ensure widespread implementation.</p>		
Planning	Score:	1
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The FCO is successfully involved in some inter-Departmental working, which could be further extended, such as the roll-out of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 on women in armed conflict into the UK arena. Unfortunately, the Department does not report an overall plan with time-bound targets or a dedicated budget. More extensive inter-Departmental working by the FCO in the UK, for example with DoH and DfES, could contribute to raised awareness and prevention of some forms of VAW.</p>		
Resources	Score:	1
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Department works closely, in some instances, with the NGO sector. There would be notable further gains if this could be replicated in their working with other government Departments in seeking to build a more integrated co-ordinated approach. We acknowledge the production of procedural guidance for dealing with cases of FGM.</p> <p>As the FCO has given no indication on what funds are spent on these initiatives, it is impossible to establish whether the allocation is adequate.</p>		
		Total score: 3/10
<p>Overall Comments:</p> <p>The FCO shows a good awareness of the issues, particularly in regard to the human rights and gender aspects of violence. It sets an example to other Departments. A clear plan, extending the understanding of human rights and gender-based violence across government would be a more strategic approach.</p> <p>We look forward to hearing next year, how the FCO are performing against their proposed Government Action Plan to implement SCR 1325.</p>		

TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION ARE VAW

[Legalising prostitution] is going to make it easier for the pimps though - they are going to brainwash you. If the police come they will say it is legal... You see them making all the money. If I didn't make £300, I would get beaten up. They make a lot of money. A lot of girls jeopardise their health because they need to make money to avoid beatings, do unprotected [sex]... Law must not help the pimps.

Woman trafficked into the UK, participating in CWASU research, 2004

REPORT CARD

Department: **HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY**

Departmental Aim: *To raise the rate of sustainable growth and achieve rising prosperity and a better quality of life*

Integrated Coverage

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department's response was very brief and had no focus on VAW but instead an emphasis on child poverty. The Treasury acknowledges that it maintains the PSA system across Government and so has massive potential to work centrally on this issue. For example, the Treasury aims to improve the quality of life; to expand productivity; and to improve the quality of public services. However, the response marginalises the central relevance of VAW to all these aims by referring only to DV.

Planning

Score:

0

Comments:

The response stated that it provides funding for other Departments, such as the Home Office and other criminal justice organisations. However, it does not identify the role of the Treasury in planning, setting targets or working in partnership on VAW.

Resources

Score:

0

Comments:

The response did not provide any information in order to assess whether resources are allocated for work on VAW within the Treasury. It is concerning that the Department believes the most relevant target is that on child poverty, indicating that it has little understanding of the direct cost of VAW, with DV (including domestic sexual violence) alone costing £23 billion per annum³⁶. Further, rape is estimated to be the most costly violent crime in terms of health-related costs³⁷.

We support the recognition of the link with child poverty, but note the fact that if women are lifted out of poverty, then children will be too³⁸. We hope the Department is interested to pursue understanding the many ways in which unchecked and undealt with violence contributes to social exclusion, and entraps in cycles of deprivation, depleting women's resources to care for children.

Total score: 0/10

Overall Comments:

The Treasury's response was disappointing, since it referred to other Government Departments' initiatives, limited concerns to DV, rather than outlining in detail its own work.

The Treasury is well placed to tackle the cost to the public purse of VAW and play a key role in developing this work with other Departments and so improve the quality of life for women and their children.

We regret the failure to recognise the opportunity, conferred by its control over the PSA system across Government, to address VAW centrally.

THE CUMULATIVE AND LONG TERM AFFECTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON CHILDREN

I had to cut my son down from a tree. That's the fifth time he's attempted suicide. He can't live with it, you see. He sees a psychiatrist and will be on tablets all his life. He's never worked. Never will. He couldn't do anything, you see: he froze. It was his brother who got help. His dad had strangled me unconscious. Had my other son not run out for help, he would have killed me.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: HOME OFFICE		
Departmental Aim: <i>To build a safe, just and tolerant society</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	1/2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>A clear and laudable focus on DV and sexual offences but the Department fails to pull its resources together on VAW as a whole. Three separate Inter-Ministerial committees have been set up to oversee this work and the issue of trafficking. The absence of a single line of accountability for the whole range of VAW issues and policies is a missed opportunity.</p> <p>Whilst individual initiatives and the spread of VAW work are to be commended, there is still plenty to do in terms of linking them into an integrated approach and ensuring VAW issues are mainstreamed into all departmental activities. This is vital if the HO is to make progress in this area. Inclusion of more indicators would assist.</p>		
Planning	Score:	1
<p>Comments:</p> <p>There is no evidence of an integrated, high-level planning; targets are narrow, often single issue and fail to make connections – such as attrition (the gap between reported complaints and convictions) across rape, domestic violence, child sexual abuse cases. National Domestic Violence Action Plan – a great start! But it is vital to extend this to all forms of VAW.</p> <p>Attempts at inter-departmental working and partnerships are evident, but are duplicated across DV, sexual offending, prostitution and trafficking. The Home Office could really take the lead in coordinating cross-departmental work and it is disappointing to see it is still not reaching its full potential in all areas in this regard.</p> <p>The HO is often let down by inadequate funding streams. We suggest transparent VAW targets and timelines are published along with improved systems for monitoring and evaluating performance in all its work streams to ensure that VAW issues are integrated into all planning processes from the outset and funding requirements are clear.</p>		
Resources	Score:	1 1/2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>If the HO is to improve its score in this area, it's vital that its policy staff should be trained to integrate VAW issues into all aspects of its work. Improved collation of statistics and use of research on VAW issues relevant to the Department's core work, would certainly help.</p> <p>Partnership work with the women's and voluntary sector is generally good but there is room for improvement in both consistent provision of funding and streamlining time demands on small and poorly resourced organisations.</p> <p>The implementation of an internal VAW policy for HO staff would send a clear message and provide a useful resource for the Department.</p> <p>Clear targets for the bodies the HO sponsors, for example the police, are essential to engender change on the ground.</p>		
Total score:		3/10

REPORT CARD CONTINUED

Department: **HOME OFFICE**

Overall Comments:

The HO oversees many valuable projects aiming to address some of the different forms of VAW, such as the Rape Action Plan and the National DV Action Plan. However, it has missed an opportunity in not bringing these projects together, and incorporating the other pieces of work on VAW – such as that carried out on trafficking – to establish a comprehensive VAW plan. Further, these plans do not acknowledge the importance of prevention work.

The individual HO officials responsible for these projects should be commended for their continued engagement with the women's NGO sector, and for inviting us to discuss these issues with them.

THE INTERSECTIONS OF POLICY

I was caught shoplifting. He took all my money you see. The police said they could help me if I used drugs but they didn't mention domestic violence.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

I am here with someone who has been in the UK for four years. She came from Pakistan, and got married to someone of her own choice. The marriage fell through very quickly but there were a lot of issues around her choosing her own partner, so her own family was not very supportive when she was leaving. The DV took place when she was living with her in laws. She went to seek legal advice because she did not have leave to remain in the UK. There was a lot of emotional pressure from her husband. She has a five-year-old child and social services were happy to support the child by putting her into care. But they said, 'you have to sort yourself out.' I've worked in local authorities in the Manchester area and there is no consistent approach to women who have no recourse.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE		
Departmental Aim: <i>To deliver security for people of the United Kingdom and the Overseas Territories by defending them, including against terrorism, and act as a force for good by strengthening international peace and stability</i>		
Integrated Coverage	Score:	1/2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Department has discrete policies that identify some forms of VAW (as individual issues). The small amount of training discussed in the response covers general equal opportunities and DV for specialist staff.</p>		
Planning	Score:	1/2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>While the Department has recently made an agreement with the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) on an action plan to prevent and deal effectively with sexual harassment, this only addresses one form of violence and does not extend to the MoD Civil Service. In other areas of planning, the Department needs to focus more on implementation of the policies – in partnership with others where appropriate and developing targets for monitoring this. There is no evidence of central oversight, control, or evaluation of implementation. In short, there is no evidence of the impact of these policies ‘on the ground’.</p>		
Resources	Score:	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Department’s response demonstrates that the underpinning work on VAW has begun and there is a staff lead on the issue but not at senior rank. An action plan with identified resources and given timescales should be developed to keep track of this work across the Department.</p> <p>No information on funding for this work was provided.</p>		
		Total score: 1/10
<p>Overall Comments:</p> <p>The MoD gave a very thorough response, answering all the points raised. It did not, however, illustrate that it had a VAW agenda. It focused on policy rather than delivery and results and there was no mention of monitoring and evaluation. The MoD recognises some individual aspects of VAW and would be well placed to develop an integrated approach across the Department with a clear implementation plan. We are grateful to MoD officials, in particular for their willingness to engage with us.</p> <p>The Department takes no responsibility in implementing the UN SCR 1325³⁹, to which the UK Government is formally bound, and the information provided on its stance on prostitution (and the links of prostitution to trafficking) was ambiguous.</p>		

VIOLENCE IN THE ARMED FORCES

The statistics for domestic violence are very high in the Services because of trying to be respected for being violent. It is quite a problem. There should be more things set up by men, for men who want help and support, something for men even when they go to Women’s Aid, a telephone helpline. There is nothing there for them. The Army has something set up for men, but there is nothing independent – they have to go to the rank above them! I was a soldier in the Army and know about it.

WNC, *Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors*, 2003

REPORT CARD

Department: **OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER**

Departmental Aim: *Creating sustainable communities*

Integrated Coverage

Score:

1/2

Comments:

The Department's official response does link VAW with discrimination, but it appears not to extend this understanding to implementation and practice of other departmental policies, for example, urban planning.

The response sets out a range of forms of VAW covered under the *Supporting People Programme*⁴⁰, recognising violence accentuates women's vulnerability. The limitation is that VAW is not mentioned under the broader context of housing and homelessness, nor indeed, integrated across the full range of the Department's work. The Department does not appear to rank VAW as a serious enough issue to direct its sponsored bodies to address it as a priority.

Planning

Score:

0

Comments:

The Department works as part of Home Office Inter-Ministerial forums but does not take a lead.

The Department made no mention of specific PSAs or its standards and regulatory responsibilities. It does, however, mention DV in best value performance indicators (PIs).

No reference was made to evaluation of performance management frameworks, with regard to community empowerment networks (CENs)⁴¹.

Resources

Score:

1/2

Comments:

The Department's response mentions ring-fenced funding for refuge provision, but not for broader VAW issues. Although funding for refuge provision has recently been increased, from the information provided, there is no clear indication as to whether this is adequate or ongoing. The contact name provided is a HO official, despite ODPM being represented on cross-departmental forums.

Total score:

1/10

Overall Comments:

Without comprehensive understanding of VAW and its impacts on social exclusion, the Department will fail to properly meet PSA 4 (delivering effective services to communities). Due to the way resources are allocated, local government is not encouraged to address VAW as an integrated issue. Rather, it is steered to concentrate on specific forms – DV for example – as this is what is being measured. This limits local government in implementing innovative programmes, which would assist the ODPM in achieving under PSA 4. The Social Exclusion Unit is now situated within the ODPM and affords great opportunities to work in a 'cross-cutting' way and look at the causes and effects of women's exclusion and mainstream them in to all of its work.

Further, the Department has overall responsibility for regulating urban development, yet makes no mention of it, let alone of its impact on the incidence and fear of VAW, in its official response. For example, neighbourhood anti-social behaviour is often a form of public sexual harassment, exacerbated by the poor and unsafe design of public spaces. VAW and its connections to women's heightened fear of crime and unsafe communities directly affect women's ability to use public spaces.

SPECIALIST SUPPORT FOR LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LBT) WOMEN

There can be harrowing after-effects and there needs to be specialist support services for lesbians who have experienced domestic violence. There are no support services whatsoever for transexual women, and bisexual ones are virtually invisible. Lesbians are spoken about more, but it is important to make them all visible. It is very important not to see the LBT community as 'mono'. It is diverse.

WNC, Unlocking the Secret: Women open the door on domestic violence, findings from consultations with survivors, 2003

CHAPTER FIVE: WOMEN'S REALITY, GOVERNMENT POLICY – DISCONNECTIONS

In this section a series of life trajectories are presented, based on real case studies provided by our partners who support women. They cover a range of forms of VAW, illustrate the gaps in current provision and outline some of the benefits to individual women that could accrue from an integrated approach.

Abbey: A catalogue of missed opportunities

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<i>Abbey was abused by her father, brother and other men from the age of four. She starts drinking at nine and in her words 'going out with older boys', who were men at least 10 years older than her.</i>	Whilst the local truancy scheme picked her up, the focus was on attendance rather than her safety and what the causes of her behaviour might be.	An integrated approach would mean that learnings from organised abuse, familial abuse and adult safety would not be separated out.
<i>She begins running away from home when she is nine, under-achieves and often truants from school. The school rapidly give up on her, as she is 'too difficult'.</i>	Sexual health in the school curriculum and health promotion fails to address the most fundamental issues, such as what consent means and what counts as a consensual relationship.	Making connections across all forms of VAW would provide opportunities for engagements with children and young people across services and within education.
<i>She is placed in local authority care, and by 11 is self-harming, shoplifting and assaults a security guard who tries to restrain her.</i>	The focus is on her offending rather than the underlying reasons for it. Self-harm should be an indicator alerting workers to possible abuse.	A common core training programme on violence and abuse and its links to all policy areas would build capacity for detection and early intervention.
<i>One of the men in the abuse network is making money from her 'informal' prostitution: she is 'paid' in cigarettes and alcohol. She begins selling sex herself at 14 with an older girl who is 17. She begins using crack, as it is cheaper than cigarettes. She is cautioned many times, and is 'well known' to police.</i>	Failure to identify and address sexual exploitation when it does not clearly count as prostitution. She is not treated as a child in need or as sustaining significant harm.	An integrated approach and common core training for all relevant professionals would provide greater opportunity for identifying the child protection issues in cases such as Abbey's.
<i>She is sleeping rough, and is then allocated to a secure unit by social services. Several social workers are allocated to her, but none manage to get through layers of defence and self-protection, and no referral is made to specialists, including mental health. What features most strongly is that she is 'difficult'.</i>	She is treated as an offender who is endangering herself. The issue of welfare and child safety in Safeguarding Children can lead to secure unit placement.	An integrated approach would enable recognition of links between violence against women and homelessness, social exclusion and mental health consequences

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p>By 16, she is still in care and has had 38 placements in foster care, children's homes and at least two stints in secure units. She maintains contact with her mother.</p> <p>Disclosure of abuse was finally made to a friend and caused upheaval in the family who dispute her account.</p>	<p>No one asks about the abuse, despite a number of well-documented indicators.</p> <p>No risk assessment was done for the siblings</p>	<p>An integrated approach would ensure that workers were trained to ask direct questions.</p>
<p>She is placed in rented accommodation, where she discloses to a social worker. She is drinking, behaving in a chaotic manner and the social worker knows she is engaging in prostitution to feed her drug habit.</p> <p>By this time, she is on probation for previous offences and is re-arrested for shoplifting. A custodial sentence looks likely.</p>	<p>Little skilled/aware intervention that addresses her behaviour and the causes of it.</p> <p>No joint working or advocate who links her needs and situation.</p> <p>Whilst she has attempted suicide many times, and self-harmed, she is unlikely to be assessed as having 'severe and enduring' mental health needs and thus, in her area, will not be allocated support or services.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would enable intersections to be recognised and addressed – working across and between silos.</p> <p>It could also release resources through 'spend to save' to create specialist therapeutic units designed around the needs of adolescents and young adults with histories of cumulative abuse.</p>
<p>Abbey is now living with a 34-year-old man who she regularly runs away from as he is a crack user and has physically assaulted her on a number of occasions. Her previous experiences mean she will not report this violence to the police.</p>	<p>Whilst she is technically classed as a child in need through Continuing Care until she is 21, at 17 she sits on the cusp between child and adult services, and is technically ineligible for domestic violence services.</p>	<p>A more joined-up approach would enable the creation of flexible spaces in which interventions and services can be crafted to the needs of individuals.</p>
<p>She is given a choice of either rehab or going to prison by the Youth Offending Team. By accepting the rehab she could possibly avoid prison. The rehab is a long-term programme.</p>	<p>This is a positive move, but Abbey still needs some support about the abuse before she can take up this option.</p>	
<p>Finally, a social worker offers a support service - a local rape crisis group with expertise working with young women damaged by abuse. Having heard about how difficult Abbey is from other agencies, the support worker on meeting her said: 'this girl is so fragile and tiny - she looks eight-if you held her, it's like she would break.'</p>	<p>This is the first time Abbey encounters anyone who understands the cumulative impacts of child sexual abuse, child prostitution and exploitation by adult men, alongside her need for immediate safety.</p>	

Aster: Human rights for all?

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p>Aster left Eritrea to avoid being forced into marriage with a soldier. She was 19 years old. When she arrived in the UK, Aster was charged with destroying her travel documents under s2 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 2004. A criminal lawyer told her to plead guilty, which she did.</p>	<p>The focus of s2 is on deterring foreigners from coming to the UK, not on enabling them to seek protection. The victimisation of women fleeing gender persecution results in the VAW issues being lost or minimised.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would ensure higher priority was given to VAW as gender persecution in immigration law and procedures.</p>
<p>Aster spent xxx months on remand in Holloway Prison. She could not understand why asking for protection had resulted in her being imprisoned. Her health deteriorated during this period.</p>	<p>She was not advised that she could apply for bail, and be bailed to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) accommodation under strict reporting requirements.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would make links between asylum and trafficking, and increase efforts to ensure that women who have been victimised/threatened are not treated as criminals.</p>
<p>Aster was sentenced to xxx months and served half of this in Holloway Prison. She was terrified that she might be sent back to Eritrea.</p> <p>She was then transferred to Oakington Immigration Removal Centre and her asylum claim was considered through the fast-track system there. She continued to be fearful and upset.</p>	<p>Aster's asylum claim was not considered during this time although asylum claims are supposed to be dealt with in parallel with s2 criminal charges.</p> <p>Again, she was not informed of her rights with respect to bail or access to a legal adviser. Although her asylum claim was now being considered, Aster's needs in relation to VAW were still not recognised.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would emphasise the relevance of VAW to the prison and immigration services, especially if there were an oversight body tasked with mainstreaming.</p>
<p>Aster has found it hard to settle in the UK because her first few months here were so frightening and unwelcoming.</p>	<p>The Government's integration strategy does not start until the point when an asylum seeker is granted refugee status.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would prioritise support and protection for all women, whatever their status, and seek to respect their dignity and human rights.</p>

Carrie: When fighting back has bizarre consequences

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p>Carrie has a history of sexual abuse as a child, and has been receiving counselling from a Rape Crisis Centre. Both she and her partner have mental health problems. The community mental health team recognise and respond to her high support needs.</p> <p>Her partner attacks her and she defends herself causing him a superficial wound. She is arrested by the police and charged with assault.</p>	<p>A primary perpetrator policy would ensure that positive prosecution policies are not applied inappropriately.</p>	
<p>The magistrate decides to bail her pending reports.</p> <p>There are no women-only bail hostel spaces - in fact, the allocation has been used by men. The only available safe place is deemed to be a women's prison. Not knowing that she will not be allowed home, Carrie has no personal items with her, and she has specific needs. No arrangements are made about this, leaving the women prisoners to organise access to paper pants and a change of clothes. They also provide a phone card so she can inform the Rape Crisis Centre what has happened.</p>	<p>The shift from mental health to the criminal justice system results in a lack of co-ordination and continuity.</p> <p>Failure to resource and implement policies arising from the DoH's <i>Into the Mainstream on women's mental health</i>, or address the much-documented links between abuse, mental health and offending for women.</p>	<p>An integrated approach, with a strong central steer, could promote VAW inter-agency work. It is here that gaps like these need to be addressed.</p>
<p>Rape Crisis approach a range of organisations offering safe housing for women and also ensure her personal items are taken into the prison.</p>	<p>Because she is designated the perpetrator, she is deemed to be outside refuge criteria and the mental health projects all have waiting lists.</p>	<p>An integrated approach could address the high support needs of women with multiple experiences of victimisation - some of whom may have broken laws, and even used violence themselves - who currently fall through the siloed forms of provision.</p>
<p>She spends eight weeks in prison. The women's organisation puts pressure on the mental health team to intervene. A case conference is called at which her partner, despite his violence and own mental health needs, is made her carer. She is discharged into his care and he is now receiving payments as her official carer.</p>	<p>Failure to resource the Women and Mental Health Programme has meant that mental health needs from childhood abuse and current safety needs have not been joined up. As a consequence, not only has a perpetrator not been sanctioned, but he has also been provided with further power over his partner by the Government.</p>	<p>An integrated strategy could deliver training for frontline staff on connections and intersections, as well as the more subtle ways in which control is exercised. This would result in better-informed assessments.</p>

Megan: One thing after another

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p>Megan says that she has been raped by a boy at school. Her mother, a social worker, contacts a Rape Crisis Centre for support.</p> <p>The case is reported and when Megan is about to make a formal statement, she reveals that the perpetrator is actually her stepfather - saying it was a boy at school was a way of seeking help and checking if she would be supported and believed. The mother is very supportive and has concerns for her other daughter.</p>		
<p>News of Megan's accusations get out on the local network, and when she returns to school she is subjected to a high level of bullying and harassment - including text messages, e-mails, threats about her father being a 'nonce'.</p> <p>She is moved to another school, although her sister remains. Megan hopes she can gain some anonymity, as her stepfather is well known locally. This is immediately undermined by the new class teacher announcing to the class the name of the school Megan previously attended. A boy in the school touches her breasts, she hits him, but it is Megan who is suspended.</p> <p>Despite ongoing harassment, which now includes her sister, and the impending court case Megan insists on sitting her exams, and gets extremely good results.</p>	<p>She does not qualify locally as a 'child in need' since she is deemed not to be in danger of further significant harm from a named perpetrator.</p> <p>The shift from sexual harassment to the more neutral 'bullying' means that the gendered patterns, meanings and consequences of harassment are often lost.</p> <p>Anti-bullying policies do not automatically recognise inappropriate touching as a form of bullying.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would ensure that the impact of abuse on education, and the school's role in awareness-raising and prevention was not just understood, but also addressed.</p> <p>Re-engaging with the 'gender lens' through a concerted and integrated approach to VAW would offer insights and points of intervention across a number of government policies and priorities.</p>
<p>The family seek help from Connexions (a national service for young people) with respect to the bullying but are offered a single mediation session.</p> <p>Megan's mental health deteriorates, she feels responsible for the harassment of her sister and the disruptions in the family. She suffers from flashbacks, and begins to struggle to attend school/college, and her grades suffer.</p> <p>The family have to move house three times, following threats and abuse from the stepfather's family, including things being put through their letterbox.</p> <p>He is found not guilty in court and the harassment continues.</p>	<p>Provision is insufficient to address the complex issues underlying much bullying.</p> <p>Current emphasis on league tables and academic success means that schools prioritise knowledge over social skills and personal support needs - schools are not measured on their ability to protect children's dignity.</p> <p>The vulnerable and intimidated victims policy does not protect this family.</p> <p>The costs of the high attrition rate continue to be born by survivors and their families.</p>	<p>Greater understanding of the meaning and impacts of VAW could create more joined-up care and protection packages.</p> <p>An integrated approach could engage the education sector, which has remained aloof from policy development with respect to all forms of VAW. Schools should be encouraged to create support and safety, school policies that seek to protect children's dignity and bodily integrity.</p>

Ellie: When intersections expand the gaps

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p><i>Ellie is a 23-year-old woman with a moderate learning disability and a physical disability. She has been involved with statutory services since a child.</i></p>		
<p><i>As a girl, Ellie is sexually abused by her father, and disbelieved by her mother. She begins running away at nine years old.</i></p> <p><i>She is placed in different care settings because of the running away, including some special education facilities, although she does not view herself as having special needs.</i></p>	<p>Failure to address the abuse and its consequences.</p>	<p>An integrated approach could develop minimum standards and training for all care staff who encounter troubled children.</p>
<p><i>She is sexually assaulted by a group of young men, which she reports to the front desk of a police station. She is told to come back later - which she does.</i></p> <p><i>She does give a videoed statement, and it matters hugely to her that she is believed and taken seriously.</i></p> <p><i>After several weeks with no contact she is told that no further action would be taken.</i></p>	<p>No rape victim should be told to 'come back later' - for both evidential and human rights reasons.</p> <p>There was no application of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses policies to this case.</p>	<p>Learning could take place across the CJS, the Havens and non-specialist services to ensure the additional layers of meaning of VAW for those with learning difficulties are understood and addressed.</p>
<p><i>Ellie reacts by taking overdoses, self-harming, pouring bleach on her face and shaving her hair off. She is aggressive in A&E.</i></p> <p><i>She has been moved to a 'safe house' - a flat where she knows no one. However, she is too anxious to be on her own and has to be moved into a hostel.</i></p>	<p>Provision of supported housing for women dealing with the threat and reality of violence is, apart from refuges, unavailable, especially where women are carrying considerable legacies of abuse and have needs connected to drugs, alcohol and mental health.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would make the number of women with high support needs visible; currently they are lost when the focus is on separated forms of violence.</p>
<p><i>Over her life, Ellie has had 30 key workers spanning youth work, social work, special needs, drugs, mental health, leaving care, disability and housing. Minimal communication took place between them, and Ellie was frequently treated as a 'pain'.</i></p>	<p>The Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) was not used. The issue of safety - the need to feel safe - was missed by all the services.</p> <p>Few services seem to begin from an understanding that 'being a pain' is often an indicator for pain that has not been dealt with, and that where women do not feel heard, they develop ways to get attention which often have unintended consequences.</p>	<p>Specialist services would develop and share good practice on how to respond to such challenging behaviour. Where these could be accessed at an early point, they would prevent individuals being labelled, and would undoubtedly save money in the longer term.</p>

Catherine: Paying the price for limited support

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p><i>Catherine, a professional woman, who was active in sport, was flashed at by a man who had, unbeknown to her, regularly watched and stalked her. She responded angrily to the assault. He subsequently attacked and raped her.</i></p>	<p>Limited attention is given to women's safety in sports facilities and in policy-making more generally.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would require mainstreaming VAW into policy, including planning for sports, leisure and recreational facilities.</p>
<p><i>She reports the rape. Fortunately not only the attack, but also her visible resistance was recorded on CCTV. The judge praises her efforts following a conviction.</i></p>	<p>Whilst the conviction is clearly welcome, this is a classic 'real rape' scenario with CCTV evidence actually recording the woman's resistance, making this a more likely outcome than in many other cases.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would create and use opportunities to address stereotypes about the nature and perpetration of rape.</p>
<p><i>Catherine struggles with the effects of the attack and finds it difficult to cope. When she contacts a women's support service she is having flashbacks, nightmares, is anxious when alone, fears for her daughter and worried about the eventual release of her rapist. The impacts on her also have consequences for her family and her employment. She is prescribed medication by her GP for depression.</i></p>	<p>Whilst the support service is able to offer appropriate support, the fact that it has a lengthy waiting list for face-to-face sessions means it has to limit the support Catherine gets, even though she and the support service know she should have more.</p>	<p>An integrated approach could argue – as has been done in Scotland – for the need to not just recognise, but also support, women's services through dedicated resources to secure core services.</p>
<p><i>Her marriage breaks up after 12 months and her husband leaves. He successfully applies for custody of their eight-year-old daughter, using the impacts of the sexual violence on her mental health as grounds. The support service she is in contact with fears for her future, as she feels she has lost everything.</i></p>	<p>Catherine was under pressure, and needed support so she could mother her daughter. There was minimal understanding in the Community Mental Health Team of the impacts of sexual violence, let alone how re-traumatising some outcomes might be.</p> <p>The support service is now involved again, as there is nowhere else locally that the service or Catherine feel can address her situation with the necessary sensitivity, skill and knowledge.</p>	<p>Whilst there are very few resources supporting women with respect to mothering in the aftermath of domestic violence, there is virtually no recognition that sexual assault can have implications for parenting. An integrated approach would enable these connections to be made, which could make major differences in individual lives.</p>

Maria: Nobody's responsibility

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p>Maria was trafficked into the UK from an EU country after being sold by 'friends'. She was raped, beaten, her papers removed, forced into prostitution and into recruiting other women from her own country. Alcohol was used to ensure her compliance.</p>		<p>An integrated strategy would include addressing demand for commercial sex, which is one of the drivers of trafficking.</p>
<p>The traffickers are arrested during a brothel raid. Maria is also arrested and, despite protesting her innocence, is charged as a trafficker and placed on remand. During the trial, it becomes clear that she is a victim, and the charges are dropped.</p> <p>Maria is traumatised and has, in fact, given evidence against her exploiters without any protections. She is scared not only for her own life, but also for her young children in her country of origin.</p>	<p>Poor communication and liaison between the police, immigration and specialist support services was evident throughout the operation, and Maria paid the price for this.</p> <p>Limited training on trafficking - and all VAW - means that CJS personnel are often operating with stereotypes and limited definitions of trafficking, failing to see how abuse, threats and violence are forms of duress.</p> <p>No risk assessment was undertaken with respect to Maria's safety and that of her family, despite her testimony contributing to a conviction.</p>	<p>Linking trafficking into a strong VAW policy would ensure more awareness, and better identification of, and responses to, victims.</p>
<p>On release from prison, no accommodation or further support is organised. Maria has no money, no one to contact and no passport. She is stranded in a strange country.</p>	<p>Maria was treated first as an offender, then as a witness for the prosecution; at no point was victim care considered, or the vulnerable and intimidated witness policies invoked.</p>	<p>An integrated approach could position women as victims/survivors of systematic abuse, one aspect of which may involve the breaking of laws. There could also be enhanced learning across safety and protection strategies in domestic violence, rape and trafficking.</p>
<p>Maria is found by a woman in the street, extremely distressed and under the influence of alcohol. She drives her to AGE and insists that Maria be given a mental health assessment.</p> <p>The consultant psychiatrist refuses to see Maria, as she is 'an illegal immigrant', and fails to refer her for a physical examination or ask any questions about her distressed state. Whilst a social worker is called, before they arrive nursing staff are instructed to tell Maria to leave the hospital.</p>	<p>As an EU citizen, as well as under the UN Convention on Human Rights, Article 25, Maria had the right to emergency medical care.</p> <p>She was failed further by the lack of an interpreter.</p>	<p>A coherent strategy could ensure training that increased skill and capacity to support women in distress as a result of trauma from repeated sexual and physical abuse.</p>
<p>Having nowhere to go, Maria wanders the streets, before returning to the hospital. Luckily, the social worker is available, and conducts an assessment and refers her to a supported housing project.</p> <p>Maria receives support and accommodation, but still has no access to secondary healthcare (detox, rehabilitation) as she has no recourse to public funds. She will lose all support when she leaves this project.</p>	<p>The failure of the UK to provide a reflection period, as recommended by the EU, and required under the Council of Europe Convention on Trafficking (which the UK is yet to sign) means women like Maria will fall through gaps in provision.</p>	<p>An integrated strategy would create space and possibilities to build recognition and specialised responses around the links between VAW, substance misuse, self-harm and suicide.</p>

Julia: An all too predictable tragedy

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p><i>Julia marries Alan in 1980 and endures many years of domestic violence, including threats to kill. In 2002, Julia informs Alan that she wants a divorce. Alan threatens that if she proceeds, he will kill her and commit suicide. The next morning, Julia wakes with Alan's hands around her throat. Over the following two days, Julia and her brother repeatedly call the police to report the death threats and beg for help.</i></p>	<p>The local police had not followed HO guidance and did not have a domestic violence policy in place.</p> <p>They failed to take the context of separation and threats to kill seriously.</p> <p>They also failed to take a full statement from Julia, or charge Alan with a criminal offence.</p> <p>Police told Julia about support services, but no automatic referral happened.</p>	<p>Policy at the level of HO and ACPO is often not implemented at local levels. An integrated approach, with oversight and mandatory training for police and the CPS, could address these gaps more effectively.</p> <p>An integrated multi-agency approach would mean that cases are shared and victims receive automatic support.</p>
<p><i>Following the death threats Julia goes to the police station in search of support. She is advised to get an injunction and informed by the police that they have 'flagged' her home as a high-risk address.</i></p>	<p>This response was inadequate at all levels, revealing: a failure to investigate and collect the evidence to bring a criminal case under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997; a failure of victim care; a failure to arrest for a threat to kill; and an administrative failure by the police as the property was not 'flagged' on the police record.</p>	<p>Some form of oversight could ensure that a protocol for assessing risk is implemented consistently, and that steps are taken to manage high risk. National roll-out of good practice instead of a 'postcode lottery'.</p>
<p><i>With extreme difficulty, Julia secures an injunction. At one of the hearings the judge expresses concern about Alan's mental stability.</i></p>	<p>Neither the injunction, nor the concerns raised by the judge, were shared across professionals. No safety planning or risk assessment was undertaken with and for Julia. Despite over a decade of inter-agency working and information sharing, safety planning and risk assessment approaches are barely evident.</p> <p>We have known about the dangers of separation for many years, but this is not integrated into professional practice.</p>	<p>An integrated approach could also ensure roll-out of good practice with respect to safety planning and risk assessment, with a commitment to updating this as wider implementation increases the evidence base.</p>
<p><i>Alan continues to send threatening texts, make abusive phone calls and drive past the house frequently. He also makes frequent suicide threats to Julia and their two young children, and makes calls and writes letters to members of Julia's family.</i></p> <p><i>There were at least four separate occasions when the police were contacted about the death threats and the breaking of the injunction. During each of these incidents, the police were approached repeatedly.</i></p>	<p>Whilst Alan was in violation of the injunction, still no action was taken on the criminal case, which should have been developed to prosecute Alan. This fell into civil protection procedures. The failure of the courts to enforce protection orders means they are ineffective to determined perpetrators.</p>	<p>A joined-up strategy would also mean that Alan received support from a recognised perpetrator programme.</p>
<p><i>Alan moves in with another woman mid-2003. She has two shotguns in her home. Alan stops financial support to the family. Julia is forced to draw on life savings to live.</i></p> <p><i>A couple of months later, the locks to Julia's property are glued up; this is reported to the police.</i></p>	<p>The police failed to investigate, did not collect evidence from the house or interview Alan, despite Julia alerting them to the history.</p> <p>No cross-referral of CID and DV files. The DV co-ordinator is not alerted.</p> <p>The notion of 'target hardening' associated with repeat victimisation is not occurring and is a significant failure by the police.</p>	<p>An integrated approach and oversight body could address the inadequacy of both police and CPS to fully utilise the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and the lack of training for police.</p> <p>Social services would have procedures in place to allow domestic violence victims to access benefits quickly, thereby removing the need to rely on a violent perpetrator for finance.</p>

TABLE CONTINUED

Julia: An all too predictable tragedy

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<p>In late spring, Julia's son, Will, is sent a copy of their first sworn affidavit, which contains death threats from Alan. Julia, with her brother, again go to the police, who promise to act.</p>	<p>No interview of Alan took place and the evidence was placed in the wrong case file.</p> <p>Despite Will being 16, there was no follow up with social services.</p>	
<p>During this period, Alan is being treated by his GP and a psychiatrist for depression. He is signed-off from work.</p>	<p>Neither health professional took Alan's suicide and death threats seriously, nor was he referred to a domestic violence perpetrator programme, which could have monitored the risk more effectively.</p>	<p>Core professional training, through an integrated approach, would alert professionals to key risks, such as separation, death and suicide threats.</p>
<p>The police install a panic alarm, but shortly after the magistrate reduces the injunction to an undertaking.</p> <p>Confusingly, despite the alarm, Julia is told to call 999 if Alan threatened to enter the house.</p>	<p>The CJS fails in its duty of care, as undertakings are not supposed to be issued where there has been a threat of violence. Julia has submitted affidavits about the harassment and threats.</p> <p>The CJS still underplays the seriousness of domestic violence, and fails to follow existing guidelines.</p>	<p>Most dangerous perpetrators across a form of VAW are known to the victim. An integrated approach, supported by the right training, and therefore knowledge, would mean that risks would be identified much sooner in the process.</p>
<p>Alan fails to turn up for an appointment with his psychiatrist.</p> <p>Decree nisi is issued.</p> <p>Julia receives a letter from Alan in which he gives a deadline to make contact. Disillusioned with the police response, Julia posts the letter to her solicitor.</p>	<p>Limited integration and/or communication still between CJS and health system.</p> <p>There was an accumulation of risk factors emerging, which the police should have tracked, but had lost the confidence of Julia. No one made direct contact on her behalf with a support/advocacy agency.</p>	<p>An integrated approach could promote the kinds of advocacy projects/work, which is known to be effective across a range of forms of VAW. For example, multi-disciplinary responses where communication happens across all relevant agencies.</p>
<p>Alan arrives at the family home. Julia hears gunshots and immediately calls 999. It takes 10-12 minutes for the call to be taken seriously, but she is told the police are on their way now.</p> <p>During the time Julia was on the phone to 999, Alan killed his 17 year-old son, Will, on the driveway of the house, as he fought to prevent his father from entering.</p> <p>By the time armed police arrived, about an hour or more after Julia dialled 999, Alan has also shot Julia and then himself.</p>	<p>Police failed to follow domestic violence policy and misled Julia into thinking that immediate protection was on its way.</p> <p>After arriving at the property, it took almost six hours to actually enter the house. They did not attempt to establish whether there was anyone still alive, albeit wounded and/or unconscious in the house.</p> <p>It did not appear that police firearms policy was designed to save the victim.</p>	<p>With an integrated strategy in place, all domestic violence incidents would be taken seriously by police, thereby avoiding crisis point. VAW must be integrated across all police policy areas.</p>
<p>After a hugely unsatisfactory inquest, Julia's family is still seeking recognition of the failure to protect by state agencies, with the aim to ensure measures are put in place to prevent further domestic violence homicides.</p>	<p>The coroner's lack of training meant he failed to address the key issues of domestic violence at this inquest. He missed the opportunity to adjourn and instigate an Article 2 inquest. He missed the opportunity to hold the police to account as regards their lack of commitment to domestic violence.</p> <p>Gaps and inconsistencies in practice will continue until there is a major overhaul of coronial law.</p>	<p>An integrated approach would ensure that lessons are learnt and are automatically fed into policy and practice. Investment is needed in securing minimum standards across all services and service providers.</p>

Stephanie: Failure to protect

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<i>Stephanie is placed in local authority care by her mother at five years old, after repeated physical violence to them both, by her father. She drifts between care periods with her parents, where the violence continues and escalates.</i>	Stephanie's mother has escaped, but found living in a refuge difficult. Limited pro-active work with the mother to find the right services for her and inconsistency in approach with respect to Stephanie.	An integrated strategic approach would invest in advocacy and outreach services to expand options for women and children.
<i>Stephanie has her first sexual experience at 10 years old with an older male, which she describes as 'losing her virginity'.</i>	Sexual health education does not begin from clear positions about consent and exploitation. Minimal provision to support children whose bodily integrity has been violated.	An integrated approach would make understanding consent central to sexual health and sex education, seeking to promote respect for bodily integrity and sexual autonomy.
<i>Stephanie is profoundly unhappy and lonely, and whilst in care begins to self-harm, including cutting and attempted hanging. The only intervention she gets is immediate medical care.</i>	An absence of specialised intensive therapeutic services for abused and traumatised young women. Punitive approaches to self-harm.	An integrated approach would ensure the long-term impacts of sexual abuse/violence formed a core understanding in mental health services for children, young people and adults.
<i>Stephanie begins to use drugs and alcohol as a coping strategy. At 12, she is raped in a park whilst under the influence of drugs (ecstasy). She reports to the police, but is disbelieved because of the drugs and her reputation as a 'care kid'. Stephanie is physically assaulted by her father for 'lying'.</i>	Failure to address notions of 'real' rape and stigmatisation of looked after young people, especially young women.	An integrated approach would provide opportunities to challenge stereotypes, and to address the complex connections between substance use and sexual assault.
<i>She is placed in secure accommodation under Section 25 of the Children Act 1989, as she has run away from a number of placements.</i>	The use of punitive secure accommodation, whilst offering a semblance of safety, fails to address the underlying causes of her distress. Social services failed to address her as a victim of sexual violence and exploitation, viewing her instead as merely 'sexually active'.	An integrated approach would enable the positioning of sexually exploited young women as unequivocal rather than 'undeserving' victims. It would also seek to provide alternatives to 'locking up' young women to keep them safe, such as specialist foster carers and therapeutic centres.
<i>When Stephanie leaves the secure unit at 15 years old, an appropriate placement cannot be found. She is placed in a hostel in an area known for street prostitution and within days is being pimped by older men.</i>	Inappropriate placements expose vulnerable young women to exploitation. Inadequate planning for young people leaving local authority care, leaves them ill-equipped for early independence.	Leaving Care Services for young women would be aware of the VAW agenda and concerted efforts would be made to protect them from sexual exploitation.
<i>Stephanie is taken to London against her will by pimps and forced to work on the street and in saunas. She is still 15.</i>	Despite a policy on child prostitution in the late 1990s, limited progress has been made in limiting the trade, and little attention is given to internal trafficking.	An integrated approach could address demand - for underage children and trafficked women in the sex industry, and build consensus on wider enforcement of legal sanctions against coercers and abusers of young women.
<i>Shortly after her 16th birthday, Stephanie contacts her local Social Services for help escaping from London. She is told she is no longer eligible for support, and is then moved around the country by a circle of men who exploit her. She sees one as her boyfriend and begins to use crack cocaine.</i>	Failure to recognise a child in need absence of mechanisms that track both vulnerable young people and pimps who exploit them.	An integrated approach would see links between child and adulthood, rather than a shifting of responsibilities.

TABLE CONTINUED

Stephanie: Failure to protect

Life events	Policy and practice gaps and failures	What an integrated approach would add
<i>She has a child by her 'boyfriend'/pimp and manages to move back to her home town with the child. Later the child is removed from her care. She is now 19 years old.</i>	The inadequate previous support ensures that Stephanie lacks the skills to cope with parenthood alone.	
<i>Stephanie continues in street prostitution and is using crack cocaine heavily. She is in and out of prison for minor acquisitive offences and involved in a series of abusive relationships. Assaults result in hospitalisation, as the injuries are so severe.</i>	By now Stephanie is labelled as a 'junkie prostitute' in the health service, and this ensures she is not addressed as a victim of domestic violence.	An integrated approach would enable recognition of multiple and complex needs of women like Stephanie, ensuring that drug and alcohol services can also provide refuge and respite.
<i>She seeks assistance from an outreach project, as she cannot get a refuge place since she is a drug user.</i>		
<i>At 23, Stephanie exits prostitution with support from the outreach service. She is re-housed and attends college, but is gradually drawn back, as she has no alternative networks and limited options for alternative employment.</i>	Stigmatisation and criminalisation of women involved in prostitution makes it extremely difficult for women to find alternative employment.	
<i>She is raped by a group of men while on the street. She reports to police but no further action is taken. She begins carrying a knife for her protection. When arrested, she is charged with carrying an offensive weapon, despite explaining her reasons for carrying it.</i>	The high attrition rate and a focus on women's credibility, creates a group of women who are excluded from justice, and impunity for perpetrators who assault them.	An integrated approach would provide a focus for concerted efforts to address attrition and impunity, including finding ways to deliver justice to all women.

APPENDIX A

WNC SAMPLE LETTER



WOMEN'S NATIONAL COMMISSION

Department of Trade and Industry 1st Floor 35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ TEL: 020-7276 2561 FAX: 020-7276-2563
EMAIL: WNC@DTI.GSI.GOV.UK WEBSITE: www.thewnc.org.uk

The Rt. Honourable Charles Clarke MP
Secretary of State for Education and Skills
Department for Education and Skills
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

December 2004

Dear Minister,

The Women's National Commission Violence Against Women Audit

The Women's National Commission (WNC) is the official and independent advisory body giving the views of women to Government. The WNC supports a number of forums for women's organisations and Government officials to discuss and influence the development of public policy.

The remit of the WNC's Violence Against Women (VAW) working group is to develop a cohesive, powerful and more effective voice to Government on action needed to address this crucial driver of women's inequality. The work of the group covers all the forms of violence identified within the UN Beijing Platform for Action 1995, and its membership includes academics, activists and service providers working in the field.

Whilst the WNC welcomes recent Government initiatives in the area of domestic violence and implementation of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, we remain concerned about the lack of a joined-up approach. We believe the issue can only be addressed by developing a comprehensive National Government led VAW Strategy.

Under the heading of Violence Against Women, in paragraph 365 of the 5th Periodic Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) June 2003 the Government stated:

The Government recognises that preventing and eliminating this crime requires a unified and multifaceted national approach, including active joined-up working across Government departments to deliver co-ordinated policy action on this important issue. In this context, the Government established a Ministerial Working Group, in 2001, to ensure concerted and co-ordinated action at the highest level. The group is also working to strengthen the Government's multifaceted and integrated approach to tackling violence against women, in particular domestic violence, including legal, educational, financial and social components, in particular support for victims.

We are now carrying out an audit to establish the effectiveness of this partnership.

The Child and Women's Abuse Studies Unit (CWASU) at the London Metropolitan University has identified how some of the Government's performance indicators are relevant to VAW in your Public Service Agreement (see attached Annex, and in particular the final column). We are particularly interested in both the quantitative and qualitative measures you use to determine your success in tackling VAW in its widest sense (i.e. domestic and sexual violence, FGM, trafficking, honour crimes and forced marriage to name a few) and what initiatives you are currently undertaking that contribute towards the Government strategy referred to in the UK CEDAW Report and what resources have been allocated to meet these commitments. We are also interested in how you hold local governments, and other service providers and agencies that you fund, responsible for delivering on these targets.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for us to receive details of this work so that we can begin to identify successes, and indeed gaps in policy and provision.

We propose to publish a report in Spring 2005 based on the information provided by you and other Government Departments. We plan to produce this annually in future so that we can assess how the position is improving over time. If it would be useful to discuss this in more detail, please contact Janet Veitch (WNC Director, 020 7276-2550) or Sue Green (Deputy Director, 020 7276 2551) for more information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Margaret Prosser'.

The Baroness Prosser of Battersea
Chair

Department/Ministry & Aim	Selected objectives	Selected related PSAs	Related performance indicators
<p>SKILLS, Department for (DfES)</p> <p>Aim: Help build a competitive economy and inclusive EDUCATION AND SKILLS, Department for (DfES)</p> <p>Aim: Help build a competitive economy and inclusive society by: creating opportunities for everyone to develop their learning; releasing potential in people to make the most of themselves; achieving excellence in standards of education and levels of skills</p>	<p>1. Safeguard children and young people, improve their life outcomes and general well-being, and break cycles of deprivation</p>	<p>1. Improve children's communication, social and emotional development by 2008 and reduce inequalities between the level of development achieved by children in the most disadvantaged areas and the rest of England (Sure Start Unit target, joint with Work and Pensions)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% children to reach good level of development at end of Foundation Stage <p>(Baseline: July 2005 results. Level of increase 2005-08 to be confirmed following analysis of the 2005 results)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce inequalities in level of development among children in the 20% most disadvantaged areas and rest of England
		<p>5. Narrow gap in educational achievement between looked after children and peers, and improve educational support and stability of their lives by 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of children aged 11, looked after for at least 12 months, who obtain Level 4 in Key Stage 2 English and Maths • % of young people, looked after for at least 12 months, who reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE equivalent exam • % of young people and in Year 11, looked after for at least 12 months, who achieve 5 or more GCSEs graded A-C or equivalent • By 2008 80% of children under 16 looked after for more than 2.5 years to have been in same placement for at least 2 years, or placed for adoption

Key drivers for delivery/policy initiatives & targets	Relevance and connections with Violence Against Women
<p>Sure Start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of Foundation Stage provision inspected by Ofsted rated good or better by 2006 • Increase the number of children who have their needs identified in line with early years action and early years action plus of the SEN code of practice and who have either a group or individual action plan in place • Increase the use of libraries by families with young children • All families with new born babies in Sure Start local programme and Children's Centre areas to be visited in first 2 months of their babies' life and given information about the services and support available to them <p>Quality Protects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring stable, secure, safe and effective care for all children • Protecting children from abuse and neglect • Better life chances for children in need • Good life chances for children in care • Enabling young people leaving care to live successful adult lives • Meeting the needs of disabled children and their families <p>Every Child Matters By 2008:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and more flexible offer of 12_ hours each week of free 'educare' for three and four year-olds (before they start school) for 33 weeks a year • 50% of children to reach a good level of development by the end of the Foundation Stage, and the gap between the level of development reached by children in the 20% most disadvantaged areas, and other children closing • Revised framework for the early years, including integrated inspection of education and childcare • At least 1,700 Children's Centres reaching all children in the 20% most deprived wards and being developed in other areas • At least 1,000 primary schools will be offering an 8am-6pm childcare guarantee, providing 50,000 childcare places, as part of an increase of 10% in the stock of formal childcare available • Children's Commissioner appointed and championing children's interests • Local Safeguarding Children's Boards in place and all Local Authorities to have a Director of Children's Services, a Lead Council Member for children and a Children's Trust <p>Children's National Service Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting health and well-being, identifying needs and intervening early • Supporting parenting • Child, young person and family-centred services • Growing up into adulthood • Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people • Children and young people who are ill • Children and young people in hospital • Disabled children and young people and those with complex health needs • The mental health and psychological well-being of children and young people • Medicines for children and young people • Maternity services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child abuse, sexual violence, FGM, forced marriage and living with DV all affect levels of achievement, and in the most extreme cases lead to social exclusion and other major social problems • Young people have extensive contact with violence in their own lives and those of their peers. They also seek opportunities to explore them, especially how to conduct intimate relationships on a basis of equality, and support peers who have been victimised. VAW, therefore, needs to be on the curriculum, not just through PSE, but also across subjects and topics. For example: many novels and plays have forms of violence within them; discussions of 'safe sex' ought to begin from the basis that it is chosen/consensual • In the Netherlands and parts of Germany single-sex self-defence programmes have been mainstreamed into the school curriculum • That looked after children have the possibility of high quality care outside a family context, where their challenging behaviour (often as a result of abuse) can be addressed • The need to address sexual exploitation seriously - especially targeting of looked after children by pimps/exploiters • High quality support, including group work and self-defence, for children who have been abused • More attention to the high rates of sexual abuse of children with disabilities • Integrate safety education into the curriculum, and especially within work in Children's Centres • Ensure development of group work for children living with DV and children coping with the legacies of DV and/or child abuse • Schools should be regarded as places where children and mothers might disclose violence; in some situations school may be the only place a woman is allowed to go unaccompanied • This may mean recognising the importance of woman protection. Also, the need to revisit what is happening about child sexual abuse • Investigate the use of Comprehensive Neighbourhood Mapping and move debate on from focus on fathers or paedophiles • The need to understand and work with the connections between women and child abuse • The courts through contract orders should not place the safety of women or children at risk • Investigate the extent to which children's ill-health, mental health and other problems are connected to experiencing or witnessing abuse • Issues of FGM, forced marriage and the threat of honour crime issues for BME children • Explore and support around abuse issues for unaccompanied and/or trafficked children and children of asylum seekers • Link with ODPM to ensure access to safe housing for young women (including under-16s) so they can escape abuse
<p>Choice Protects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities to have a commissioning strategy based on an assessment of population need (current and future) informed by the views of users and carers • Local Authorities to have the skills to commission and contract services effectively • Local Authorities to have available a full range of placement options designed to meet the needs of their population • Foster carers to be recognised within Local Authorities as equal partners in delivering high quality placements • Local Authorities to have available a full range of services and activities to support their foster carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling foster and adoptive parents to support children through having honest and detailed information about the scale and forms of abuse the children have suffered • Development of high-quality, and possibly even single-sex, children's homes for those children for whom a family placement is unlikely to be sustained

Department/Ministry & Aim	Selected objectives	Selected related PSAs	Related performance indicators
	<p>9. Enhance the take-up of sporting opportunities by 5 to 16 year olds so that the percentage of children in England who spend a minimum of 2 hours a week on high quality PE and school sport increases from 25% in 2002 to 75% by 2006 and to 85% by 2008, and to 75% in each School Sport Partnership by 2008 (Joint with Culture, Media and Sport)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of lessons in which the quality of teaching in PE and school sport is assessed by OFSTED as good or better • % of 16- to 19-year-olds who are active members of sports clubs 	
	<p>II. Raise standards and tackle the attainment gap in schools</p>	<p>13. Increase the number of adults with the skills required for employability and progression to higher levels of training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve basic skills of 2.25 million adults between launch of Skills for Life in 2001 and 2010 • By 2010 reduce by 40% number of adults lacking NVQ2 or equivalent qualifications
	<p>IV. Tackle the adult skills gap⁵. Narrow gap in educational achievement between looked after children and peers, and improve educational support and stability of their lives by 2008</p>	<p>14. By 2010 increase participation in higher education of those aged 18 to 30</p> <p>As part of achieving wider Government objectives on racial equality, DfES to monitor progress in narrowing race equality disparities in educational attainment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation towards 50% and make year on year progress towards fair access
	<p>V. Raise and widen participation in higher education</p>		

Key drivers for delivery/policy initiatives & targets	Relevance and connections with Violence Against Women
See Culture, Media and Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is substantial research evidence to show that experience of child abuse and witnessing domestic violence links to underachievement for a substantial proportion – there is also a smaller group for whom these experiences translate into a determination to succeed and transcend the past • For a proportion of children forced marriage/ FGM may interrupt their education and affect their focus and ability to achieve
<p>National Skills Strategy</p> <p>By 2008:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve basic skill levels of 1.5 million adults since 2001 • Increase the number of adults in the workforce with a Level 2 qualification by 3 million between 2004 and 2010, supported by free training at this level • Build the principles of the Employer Training Pilots into the way we work with all colleges and training providers, giving employers more say in the design and delivery of training • At least 400 Centres of Vocational Excellence, working in networks, with a good spread in each region • No funding of any poor provision • Establish a new single Quality Improvement Body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacies of abuse are a barrier to adults taking up educational opportunities. Current violence also interferes with education and training, and some abusive men deliberately prevent their partners from completing courses • For adult women, their potential can be blocked by current abuse and/or legacies from the past. The lack of support and advocacy means these issues remain unresolved • Women’s safety also needs to be factored into the provision of adult learning, and self-defence/personal safety classes seen as an important route to re-inclusion
<p>Higher Education Strategy</p> <p>By 2008:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation towards the target of 50% of those aged 18–30 entering higher education by 2010, mainly through the expansion of work-related, employer-led Foundation Degrees • Higher education benefiting from a new funding stream, over which institutions have control, as a result of variable fees • Noticeable results in terms of employer satisfaction with the levels of skill in the workforce with experience of higher education, especially at intermediate and higher levels • Significant progress towards fairer access • Drop-out rate will continue to be low – and fewer institutions with unacceptably high drop-out rates • Retaining and strengthening our world – class position in research with further investment and steps towards collaboration • All new teaching staff to receive training to meet professional standards and many existing teaching staff will also have taken up the offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair access will be undermined in course where a significant gender imbalance in favour of men already exists, and where sexual harassment of female students is not addressed • A core curriculum on VAW for any professional qualification where this might be an issue – e.g. social work, teacher training, law, nursing and medicine, town planning, transport • A proportion of female drop-outs relate to abuse prior to attending or that has taken place whilst attending (young people and students are the highest age and occupation categories for reported sexual crime) • The UK has the strongest research capacity on VAW in Europe but there is limited investment in the sector • Include how to respond to disclosures of VAW in training

APPENDIX B

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSES

**DEPARTMENTAL
RESPONSES SCANS ON
OWN FILE**

PAGES 49-83

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PAGE**

**INSERT FILE OF SCANS
HERE**

APPENDIX C

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AIUK	Amnesty International UK
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CAMHS	Child and Adult Mental Health Service
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CENs	Community Empowerment Networks
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CO	Cabinet Office
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CWASU	Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit
DCA	Department for Constitutional Affairs
DCMS	Department for Culture Media and Sport
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DfID	Department for International Development
DfT	Department for Transport
DoH	Department of Health
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DV	Domestic Violence
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GP	General Practitioner
HMT	Her Majesty's Treasury
HO	Home Office
HQ	Head Quarters
IMGs	Inter-Ministerial Groups
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NASS	National Asylum Support Service
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHS	National Health Service
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PIs	Performance Indicators
POVA	Protection of Vulnerable Adults
PSAs	Public Service Agreements
SARCs	Sexual Assault Referral Centres
SCR 1325	Security Council Resolution 1325
S2	Section 2
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UN	United Nations
VAW	Violence Against Women
WNC	Women's National Commission

END NOTES

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