



## Implementation of awareness raising strategies:

### Overview of local activities

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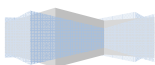
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# 1. Raising awareness about domestic violence in women-to-women intimate relationships

The LARS project aims to develop and implement awareness rising activities within LBT (lesbian, bisexual and trans) communities. All local actions are conducted to challenge the taboo of domestic abuse in women-to-women relationships in innovative ways. As one intention communities should be empowered by these actions to respond in cases of domestic violence. The development of all measurements was based on the results of precedent research activities (see national reports and the synthesised results).

## 2. Overall aims of local activities of the LARS project

As described above, the overall aim of the local actions is to address the taboo of domestic violence in women-to-women relationships. Due to the precedent research, some aspects have to be taken in consideration by developing the approaches.

As presented in the synthesis report “The European dimension: Research results on strategies of community response and LBT communities” there are some points to consider when implementing the local actions. A lot of taboo mechanisms have been disclosed in the research of the first year from which *disconnection* seem to be the most important one. As it is said there:

*Wherever this problem exists, it prevents LBT women from connecting what they learn about domestic abuse to their own particular situations, and if not tackled appropriately as part of the work, may prevent or limit the effectiveness of awareness raising activities targeted at the remaining taboo mechanisms.*

Though, all activities should be designed in terms of finding strategies to break through this disconnection. Furthermore and in respect to that taboo mechanism are quite strong, local actions have to be developed which address LBT women at a very basic level.

Of particular interest to the project team is the need to find new strategies to address the taboo of domestic violence. Because in most countries, LBT organisations do not have much money at their disposals, large campaigns that are continued over years as realised by mainstream organisation could not be financed. Instead, new tools need to be developed that could be rerun several times and reach people for example at LBT events such as Christopher Street Day, LBT film festivals, etc.

At the same time, a stronger collaboration with mainstream anti-violence organisations is needed and could be part of the local actions. As highlighted in the synthesis report, this would accomplish on the one hand the promotion of already existing services for LBT women and on the other hand ensure that these organisations develop services that better meet the needs of LBT women. Where LBT services are lacking in resources and expertise (for example in risk assessment and case management), the existing mainstream organisation could compensate under the condition that



their services deal with LBT domestic violence in an adequate way. This means for example to be informed about the peculiarities of same-sex domestic violence, to stay in close contact and collaboration with existing LBT-organisations, to have an address file with qualified institutions offering support, and to utilize specialized further education and supervision.

Another result of the analysis on European level is the need to evaluate the conducted actions. In the absence of these evaluation results it would be very difficult to decide if the approaches have been successful or not. Therefore, not only evaluation instruments have to be developed but each partner had to define success as well. An evaluation of measures aiming at different levels of prevention has not been done before in the field of domestic violence so that there are now experiences that could be picked up. The challenge to realize this offers a fantastic option to try new and innovative things, at the same time every partner accepts the risk that it might not work out sufficiently.

Because change needs sustainability for taking place, the measurements were supposed to aim for long term effects so that the taboo of domestic violence could be addressed beyond the period of the LARS-Project.

The planned actions of each partner organisation will be presented in the following.



## 3. National awareness raising activities

### 3.1 London, UK

#### 3.1.1 Description of awareness raising activity

Galop plans to undertake a campaign as its local action. The aim is to produce an animated short film that will be shown on a specially created website and at the launch event. Furthermore, educational material will be developed to provide instructions and support to group leaders about how to work with the movie. The movie could then be shown in settings that are independent of the attendance of a Galop member and group discussion could be led ensuring some degree of consistency.

Additionally, pledge cards will be developed, to encourage the project to snowball as people undertake their pledge and ask five other people to sign the pledge. These cards will refer to the website where the film and information material can be found. The pledge cards will be spread widely so that a lot of different people become aware of the topic of domestic violence.

The actions aim to reach as many different groups within the LBT community as possible, so Galop will target publicity at groups working with: older women, young women, trans women, mental health groups, and LGBT forums.

To summarize the actions of Galop, the objectives are (1) to create and show a short film on women-to-women domestic abuse, (2) to deliver a campaign for people to pledge to discuss LBT domestic abuse, and (3) to provide website for people to learn about domestic abuse.

The launch event will take place in April or May 2011. It will be open to the public but particularly targeted at community leaders who run group activities for LBT women (such as youth groups, survivors groups, discussion groups, social groups, mental health support groups). Galop will show the film and have a group discussion with invited panel members. The aim will be for participants to sign up to the pledge campaign, to discuss domestic abuse, therefore helping to combat the taboo, but also to agree to take the film to their group and lead a group discussion, therefore reaching more people.

#### 3.1.2 Specific aims of awareness raising activity

The specific aims of all these actions are to (1) increase the awareness of domestic abuse within women-to-women relationships, (2) to empower LBT women to discuss domestic abuse and understand their own contribution to ending the taboo, and (3) to encourage LBT women to commit to ending the taboo.

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#### 3.1.3 Dissemination activities and sustainability

Most press work will be web-based, however Galop will also press release the film and pledge campaign, as well as the existence of the website and the events. The press release will be sent to all LGBT press and to some mainstream press which may be interested. The events will be added to



listings in the LGBT press and also mailed via the Galop mailing list and website. Additionally, the website will include a way for people to post the film on the facebook or twitter accounts – which should also help to disseminate it widely.

To accomplish sustainability, a pledge campaign will be developed. The aim is that participants of group discussions and users of the website sign up to the pledge campaign and agree to show the film and talk about domestic violence to at least 5 people. The website will provide downloadable material for people who attend groups, encouraging them to show the film and lead a discussion. It will include information to download for group leaders with discussion points and hand outs, and also evaluation forms. Even after the launch event, the website will continue to be self-promoting as people sign the pledge – as it will include all the information people need to discuss the film in their groups or take responsibility personally to help challenge the taboo.

#### **3.1.4 Evaluation activities**

The evaluation activities will be conducted on several occasions. The records of the download from the website and website statistics will be analyzed in terms of number of people signing the pledge, number of group leaders leading discussion, and number of people showing the film. Each time after having shown the movie to an audience and the subsequent discussion the number of people stating an increased understanding, the number of people who are able to identify appropriate places to get support will be evaluated. After having watched the movie on the website each viewer will be asked to answer question assessing the change in understanding of and awareness for domestic violence. For group leaders there will be a special feedback form evaluating their view after having led the discussion.



## 3.2 Utrecht, NL

### 3.2.1 Description of awareness raising activity

Taboe<sup>2</sup> plans to organize a short story contest that will culminate in a theatre evening with an award ceremony for the best stories. The jury will consist of at least three people who are LBT authors of books and/or magazine articles. Additionally, all stories will be published on a special website that has to be developed during the project. Another website will be designed as an informative one that gives input about the topic of domestic violence in women-to-women relationships.

The launch event will be held in May. Therefore, community organizations have been invited to join in a debate to start the discussion on domestic violence.

### 3.2.2 Specific aims of awareness raising activity

The specific aims met by these actions are (1) to increase the awareness of the existence of domestic violence in the LBT community, (2) to enable LBT women to discuss the subject within their communities, and (3) to encourage women to seek for support when domestic violence is happening.

### 3.2.3 Dissemination activities and sustainability

The theatre evening including the story award distribution will be held in the context of the Midzomergracht Festival (Utrecht Pride). So, the event will be published in the festival brochure and on the festival website. For sustainability, the theatre performance is conceptualized in a way that it can be repeated on festival and conferences. As press activity, the national LBT magazine “Zij aan Zij” will be asked to publicize several articles and calls for the short story contest. Additionally, calls for submission of short stories will be sent to various internet platforms for LBT women. A specially designed homepage will serve to publish all stories that have been in the competition. The winning story will be presented here as well and is furthermore supposed to be printed in “Zij aan Zij”. Links to the story contest website will be set widely.

As another activity of dissemination and sustainability an additional websites will be designed. There, information about domestic violence can be found beyond the period of local actions in Utrecht. This website will be announced to community organisations and domestic violence support and advice organisations.

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### 3.2.4 Evaluation activities

The evaluation activities will be mainly implemented during the theatre event and the subsequent discussion. The participation in discussion and the content of statements will be analysed in terms of how much people are able to identify where to get help and feel comfortable to advice others about where to get advice and support. Additionally, it will be documented if people reflect the existence



of domestic violence in LBT relationships and demonstrate improved understanding. An indicator for increased discussion in the communities about domestic violence will be the interest to pick-up the subject into the own community organisation. Increased discussion will also be measured via the extent of expressed feelings of aplomb when discussing domestic violence.

Furthermore and as an indicator of how much the websites reached people, the web statistics will be analyzed as well as the discussion strands are planned to be broken down.



## 3.3 Vienna, Austria

### 3.3.1 Description of awareness raising activity

The Viennese partner plans to produce a booklet with 12 pages that informs about domestic violence in lesbian partnerships. The booklet will be developed in cooperation with local experts that give feedback about if it meets the aim to provide information about the definition of violence, dynamics of violence, legal situation in Austria, activities of the lesbian community and information about places where to get information, help and support. Furthermore, there will be information provided on the Wiener Antidiskriminierungsstelle (WASSt) website, and a discussion within the lesbian community will be organized.

At the launch event in May 2011, the booklet will be presented to members of the expert meeting. These will be women who work in lesbian counseling, family counseling, in intervention centers for victims of domestic abuse, and the police.

The information about the existence of the booklet are supposed to be set on the Homepage of the WASSt and be linked by other websites of community and domestic violence organizations. The public relation for the booklet will be accompanied by an article about domestic violence in women-to-women relationships in community online magazines. Finally, in the context of gay pride in Vienna (in June) there will be a discussion within the lesbian community. Speakers will be an agent from the local lesbian community and an agent from a domestic violence organization. The content of the discussion will be the taboo mechanisms about domestic violence in women-to-women partnerships and potential strategies to overcome them.

Finally, and as a possibility of dissemination and sustainability, the booklet will be presented at the Viennese network meeting of domestic violence organizations in October. Here, the outcome of both the booklet and the discussion will be presented to the audience, further information to the organizations will be provided. Given that the effort of the booklet depends on the quality of support that is offered by local anti-violence projects, the publication will be accompanied by offered possibilities of further education for professional and volunteers working there.

### 3.3.2 Specific aims of awareness raising activity

The specific aims that are chased by the planned activities are (1) to raise awareness about domestic violence within the LBT-community, (2) to enable lesbians who experience violence in their partnership to realise it and find support, and (3) to raise awareness within organisations dealing with domestic abuse that lesbians are their target group, too.

### 3.3.3 Dissemination activities and sustainability

The booklet will be sent to mainstream anti-violence organisations and lesbian community organisations. Additionally, it will be displayed at LBT restaurants, cafés, parties, the Christopher Street Day, at a gay-lesbian festival, and official events where the WASSt is invited to. At the Homepage of the WASSt will be a announcement that the booklet is available now and the possibility to load it down from there. On a discussion round with the leading anti-violence organisations the

booklet will be presented. The aim is, to inform about domestic violence and promote the responsibility of mainstream anti-violence projects for lesbian women. As an indicator of success these institutions are foreseen to ask for further education about how to deal with domestic violence in women-to-women relationships. To facilitate sustainability, the booklet and results of the discussion will be presented at a nation wide network meeting about domestic violence in October. Finally, the aim is to initiate a working team to improve the cooperation between the mainstream DV-organizations and the lesbian community organizations to offer an improved support for lesbians that are affected by domestic violence.

#### **3.3.4 Evaluation activities**

To evaluate the impact of the booklet, there will be a questionnaire that has to be filled out and sent back by every institution that received the booklet. Via these questions information will be collected about if organisations have received new information by reading the booklet and if they have been inspired to ameliorate their offers, for example. Additionally, the hits on the WAST-Homepage are recorded. So it will be possible to evaluate how many copies of the booklet as a pdf-document have been downloaded from the website. To asses if the booklet and community discussion lead to a better understanding and awareness of domestic violence, the numbers of mainstream and community counselling services about the request for support and/or further information will be compared to the amount of request in advantage of the publication of the booklet.



## 3.4 *Stockholm, Sweden*

### 3.4.1 Description of awareness raising activity

RFSL will produce a short movie about same-sex violence, which will be the first Swedish short movie about that subject. It aims to make same-sex violence and LBT women in general more visible. The film will show the same violent situation but in four different constellations of gender and sexuality. The different constellations are (perpetrator to victim): heterosexual man to bisexual women, lesbian woman to lesbian woman, queer person to transgender woman, and gay man to gay man. The idea of including other than lesbian relationships is to make it possible to discuss communalities and differences on gender and sexuality when LBT women are victims of domestic violence. The movie will be presented in LBT groups and will be completed by a subsequent discussion. The audience is expected to reflect around partner violence and around the responsibility everybody when detecting same-sex violence in its peer group. RFSL also wants to inform the audience about its helpline. To reach sustainability, copies of the movie will be spread.

The objectives are to produce a movie and to show and discuss it within the LBT community. This in turn is expected to enable the participants to initiate discussions in their everyday life. For reaching the target group in long term as well, the partner wants to make copies and spread them over the people that build the expert panel, over the key agents and local RFSL branches on whole Sweden. Furthermore, RFSL aims to inform about their crime victims helpline and other possibilities of support for victims of same-sex domestic violence.

At the launch event in May 2011 a conference will be held where all local branches of RFSL will be invited. The movie will be shown and discussed. Furthermore, the Swedish partner aims to show and discuss the movie at Cinema Rival in Stockholm.

### 3.4.2 Specific aims of awareness raising activity

The specific aims RFSL has on its agenda are to increase (1) the number of people who are aware of the existence of same-sex domestic violence, (2) the number of people who pay attention to and are motivated and able to talk about domestic violence against LBT women in their everyday life, and (3) the number of people who are informed about RFSL crime victim helpline.

### 3.4.3 Dissemination activities and sustainability

Beside the launch event RFSL is already booked to show and discuss the film at Norrköping Pride in May and the HBTQ (LGBTQ) festival in Gothenburg. The producer of the film also is an employee of the Cinema Rival in Stockholm, so they will try to hold the Stockholm premiere there. This event is supposed to be arranged in cooperation with the local LBT scene. All events will be advertised at the RFSL homepage, facebook, the RFSL "Kom Ut" magazine, and in "QX" which is the biggest gay magazine in Sweden.

To guarantee sustainability, copies of the movie will be spread over participants of the expert panel, key agents and local RFSL branches.



#### 3.4.4 Evaluation activities

After having watched and discussed the film, a questionnaire will be handed out to the participants. In this questionnaire the changing caused by having seen the movie will be assessed. Spectators have to make statements about different aspects. These are for example the knowledge about existence and peculiarities of domestic violence, the sensitisation for domestic violence in everyday life as well as will and ability to talk about it. Finally, the questionnaire will asses if people have knowledge about the RFSL crime victims help line. These data will be supplemented by the general statistics about people contacting the help line.



## 3.5 Berlin, Germany

### 3.5.1 Description of awareness raising activity

The German partner will realize two actions that work separately one from the other. First, there will be a pocket-size booklet that informs about the existence and peculiarities of domestic violence in women-to-women relationships as well as it give information about where to get support.

Additionally, there will be information that empowers friends, relatives and outsiders to react when they get in touch with domestic violence in the life of others. Further information will be provided as downloadable material at the Lesbenberatung Homepage. As a second project the Lesbenberatung Berlin will produce a short-film about domestic violence in women-to-women relationships that could be used for further education as well as be put on the Lesbenberatung Homepage and newsgroups.

The movie will be presented at public viewing in Lesbenberatung Berlin and at the closing event that is supposed to be held in the town hall of the municipality Berlin Schöneberg. Additionally, the partner is working through showing it at a famous local movie night.

The launch event will take place end of May 2011. There, the booklet will be presented to the public. At the same time, this event will be used as a discussion round for everybody that is/was affected by domestic violence in the LBT-Community.

### 3.5.2 Specific aims of awareness raising activity

The specific aims of the German partner are (1) to inform the LBT-communities and rise awareness about the existence of domestic violence in women-to-women/trans\* relationships, (2) to give information about where to get support and to encourage people to use it, and (3) to provide information material on the homepage of the Lesbenberatung about domestic violence in women-to-women/trans\* relationships helpful for members of the L(G)BT-communities as well as for anti-violence counsellors.

### 3.5.3 Dissemination activities and sustainability

The implementation of the actions will be press released to the LGBT local press, online newsgroups and anti-violence projects. The film will be provided at the Lesbenberatung Homepage, the facebook profile and via links from other anti-violence organisations (mainstream and LBT). On Lesbenberatung Homepage will also be texts available that supplement the pocket size booklet and give more information to empower LBT people to deal with domestic violence. The booklet and film are supposed to get even more attendance because an article about domestic violence will hopefully be published in the local LGBT magazine at the same time.

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To achieve sustainability, the film, booklet and supplement information will be available on the Lesbenberatung homepage beyond the implementation of local actions. Furthermore, the booklet and movie will be presented at a German wide network meeting of anti-violence projects in October.



### 3.5.4 Evaluation activities

Evaluation activities will take place two times. First, booklet and film will be evaluation while being developed. A draft of the booklet will be presented to experts working in anti-violence projects and being close to public relation to get feedback about if new and relevant information are given in appropriate way. The film as well will be presented to key holders before developing the final version.

After having shown the film to an audience, questionnaires will assess the change in knowledge about LBT domestic violence. Other important categories will be sensitization for the peculiarities of domestic violence in same-sex relationships and change in awareness and responsibility. Via web statistics the number of clicks on the film and number downloaded material will be assessed. The impact of measurements on knowledge about where to find support will be evaluated via the analysis of change in number of request for counselling.



## 4. Conclusion

The here presented local actions do all try to rise awareness in ground-breaking ways. A theatre play will be performed, a short story contest about domestic violence will be announced, two booklets and three films will be realized. Furthermore, homepages will be developed that provide information material about domestic violence. Noticeable is the examination of domestic violence via creative measurements that open multifarious levels of perception.

The local conditions differed in partner countries so that each organisation had to develop particular measures that meet the local needs. So for example, in Vienna where exists a lack of LBT organisations offering support in cases of domestic violence, it seemed necessary to provide information about same-sex domestic violence to existing mainstream organisations. Furthermore, the community was supposed to be confronted with the existence of same-sex domestic violence and possibilities about how to react and where to find support via a widely spread booklet. By contrast, in London where different networks and possibilities of support for LBT people exist already the production of an animation film, a simultaneously pledge campaign and the allocation of educational material seemed helpful to challenge the taboo of domestic violence within the communities. And to give another example, the Dutch partner decided that it will be best to use the organisational structure of Utrecht pride and national LBT-media to strengthen already existing networks.

The challenge to develop approaches that reach people at a very basic level and address the disconnection between what people know about domestic violence and their own particular situation was met for example by authoring booklets that use quotations of LBT people that experienced domestic violence. Equally, the movies offer the opportunity to illustrate the concomitants of domestic violence in a more elaborated way and make it though easier to find a connection between what spectators learn about domestic violence and their own situation. The short story contest encourages people to voice experiences of domestic violence and therefore share them with others.

The development of the local actions offered possibilities of restoring existing networks and building new ones. Though, for dissemination the contact to local and national LBT media, newsgroups, and local branches of organisations has been deepened. Furthermore, some of the partners involved already existing mainstream anti-violence organisation when implementing their actions. The precedent research activities revealed the need to collaborate with these services when LBT services are lacking in resources and expertise that could not be resolved easily. So for example, one partner is offering further information for the existing mainstream services to improve their knowledge about same sex domestic violence for lack of professional LBT services where women could get support.

All partners developed tools to evaluate if the implemented actions have been successfully in challenging the taboo at least in short time. The evaluation activity is mostly realized by analysing the web statistic about number of downloaded material and via questionnaires handed out after having performed the actions. Success mostly was defined as an improved understanding and awareness about domestic violence in LBT relationships.

The projects are meant to be pilot projects and as single incidences they may be igniting but breaking the taboo of domestic violence in intimate women-to-women relationships need continuous activities. Therefore short time effects are measurable but medium term or even long term effects are not measurable within the present LARS project. Nevertheless, all partners did pay attention in developing approaches that facilitate sustainability. For example, one partner will develop educational material to provide instructions and support to group leaders about how to work with their movie. Though, the movie could then be shown in settings that are independent of the attendance of an organization member and group discussion could be led ensuring some degree of consistency.

Even if it is very difficult to realize sustainable prevention measurements with only a small budget, each partner tried its best to reach that aim. By providing the developed films, short stories, booklets, and educational material on homepages for longer, by using online social networks for dissemination, and finally doing research and offering the results to others, the partners of the LARS-project carried out possibilities to reach a lot of LBT-people at a local and European level and guarantee that the innovative products will be available for a long time.

