

Key issues to consider in the planning of awareness-raising initiatives in line with article 13 of the Istanbul Convention

SYNERGY Network against Domestic and Gender-based Violence Meeting
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Istanbul Convention Article 13 – Awareness-raising

(1) Parties shall promote or conduct, on a regular basis and at all levels, awareness-raising campaigns or programmes, including in co-operation with national human rights institutions and equality bodies, civil society and non-governmental organisations, especially women’s organisations, where appropriate, to increase awareness and understanding among the general public of the different manifestations of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, their consequences on children and the need to prevent such violence.

(2) Parties shall ensure the wide dissemination among the general public of information on measures available to prevent acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.



A collection of papers
on the Council of Europe Convention
on preventing and combating violence
against women and domestic violence



<https://edoc.coe.int/en/violence-against-women/7142-raising-awareness-of-violence-against-women-article-13-of-the-istanbul-convention.html>

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Essentials

- Be clear and realistic regarding what awareness raising means and what awareness raising as part of prevention can and cannot achieve. (cf. *Insights from behavioural sciences to prevent and combat violence against women. Literature review* (EU, 2016) by Sara Rafael Almeida, Joana Sousa Lourenço, François J. Dessart and Emanuele Ciriolo
<http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC103975/lbna28235enn.pdf>)
- See awareness raising in the context of the overall coordinated work to end violence against women and domestic violence, involving all relevant government entities, civil society and international partners.

Essentials

- Understand awareness raising in the context of the other articles in the prevention chapter of the Istanbul Convention, acknowledge that there can be an overlap / synergies (*for example: sometimes awareness raising and education or training for specific professional groups can overlap; work with media is part of awareness raising*) and use them.
- Involve people with expertise on VAW and on communications in the planning and implementation of awareness raising initiatives.



Essentials

- Working directly with the media can have a strong leverage effect – consider its role when developing an awareness raising strategy (media to become part of the solution rather than part of the problem): for ex. training on how to report on VAW, joint/coordinated communication initiatives.
- Set clear goals and ensure a solid monitoring and evaluation framework.

Checklist

- Is the campaign based on a clear definition and a gendered and human rights understanding of violence against women and domestic violence (i.e. does it consider and address the underlying issues, such as gender inequality and discrimination, norms that tolerate violence and harmful gender stereotypes, etc.)?
- Is the campaign an integral part of a comprehensive approach to ending violence against women, such as a national action plan or programme and is it planned as a sustained, long-term initiative?
- Is the campaign based on a logic model, with clear objectives, targets, indicators to measure outcomes, and does it include a monitoring and evaluation framework?

Checklist

- Is the campaign based on research and data/knowledge on:
 - o how awareness-raising works (i.e. realistic with regard to what it can and cannot achieve);
 - o the topic;
 - o the target group;
 - o the best type of messaging to reach the target group (“What do they need to hear?”);
 - o the best way to reach the target group (“How do we get them to hear it?”)?

- In the event that data is not available, does the project to launch an awareness-raising activity envisage conducting research to identify the issues above (topic, target group, best way to reach them, etc.)?



Checklist

- Has an appropriate budget been allocated to implement the activities that are necessary to achieve the objectives of the campaign (including for monitoring and evaluation)?
- Have experts on violence against women (in particular women's organisations, including those working with victims), as well as experts on communication, been involved in the planning stage?
- Does the campaign define the specific topic or the type of violence against women it intends to address (ensuring that in the long run, all forms of violence against women, and the consequences for children, will be addressed)?
- Is the campaign tailored to the national/regional/local context?

Checklist

- Has a specific target audience been chosen: women at risk or already affected by violence, bystanders, perpetrators, different age groups, different professional groups (ensuring that in the long run, all members of society will be reached)?
- Are the chosen means and media, as well as the timing and placing, appropriate to reach the intended audience?
- Does the campaign include suggestions for concrete action/follow-up/ change for the target group?

Checklist

- Have ethical issues been considered, i.e. has attention been paid to the messages and images conveyed (such as avoiding stereotyping of women as passive victims and men as perpetrators, sending positive, empowering messages)? Have existing recommendations, guidelines, and checklists for “dos and don’ts” on communicating about violence against women been consulted?
- Have creative, innovative means been considered to convey the campaign message?
- Has the use of role models and “ambassadors” been considered, as they appear effective in addressing particular groups?
- Has it been carefully assessed how to involve the media and whether or not the awareness of media decision makers and journalists would have to be raised first?

Thank you!

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