Arctic women against men's violence

– Arctic women conference in Luleå, Sweden

Arctic women against men's violence

Arctic women conference in Luleå, Sweden

TemaNord 2009:534

© Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen 2009

ISBN 978-92-893-1870-9

Print: Kailow Express ApS

Copies: 100

Printed on environmentally friendly paper

This publication can be ordered on www.norden.org/order. Other Nordic publications are available at www.norden.org/publications

Printed in Denmark

Nordic Council of Ministers

Store Strandstræde 18
DK-1255 Copenhagen K
Phone (+45) 3396 0200
Fax (+45) 3396 0202

Nordic Council

Store Strandstræde 18
DK-1255 Copenhagen K
Phone (+45) 3396 0400
Fax (+45) 3311 1870

www.norden.org

Nordic co-operation

Nordic cooperation is one of the world's most extensive forms of regional collaboration, involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and three autonomous areas: the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland.

Nordic cooperation has firm traditions in politics, the economy, and culture. It plays an important role in European and international collaboration, and aims at creating a strong Nordic community in a strong Europe.

Nordic cooperation seeks to safeguard Nordic and regional interests and principles in the global community. Common Nordic values help the region solidify its position as one of the world's most innovative and competitive.

Content

Foreword	7
Summary	9
1. Introduction	11
2. Aims and targets	13
3. Implementation.....	15
3.1 Planning meeting in Tromsø, Norway.....	15
3.2 Preparation	15
3.3 The conference	16
4. Media.....	31
5. Results and experiences	33
6. The future	35
7. Conclusion.....	37
Appendix 1 Programme.....	39
Appendix 2 <i>Nyamko Sabuni</i>	43
Appendix 3 <i>Gunilla Westny</i>	49
Appendix 4 <i>Eva Engman</i>	51
Appendix 5 <i>Eva Lundgren</i>	53
Appendix 6 <i>Olga Lyapunova</i>	61
1.Types of crisis centres	63
2.Years of creation of crisis centres.....	64
3.Ideology of crisis centres.....	66
4. The main directions of crisis centres activity.	67
5.Clients of crisis centres.....	69
6.Resources of crisis centres.....	70
Appendix 7 <i>Gunn Tove Minde</i>	75
Appendix 8 <i>Guðrún Jónsdóttir</i>	83
Appendix 9 Resolution taken at the Arctic Women Conference in Luleå February 1, 2009.....	93

Foreword

“Arctic women against men’s violence” was an arctic women conference, which was included in a project implemented by the county organization Women’s Shelters in Norrbotten. The conference was held in Luleå, Sweden, in January 30–February 1, 2009. It was an eagerly awaited effort to gather women from shelters and crises centres within the Arctic area in order to develop continuous networking and cooperation. Women in the Arctic need each other for exchanging of knowledge and experiences on men’s violence against women. The conference was carried out successfully and it was a valuable start for continuing the cooperation.

Great thanks to The Nordic Council of Ministers for the financial support, which made it possible to realize this valuable and important women conference.

We will also give great thanks to the co-financers The County Council of Norrbotten, The County Administrative Board of Norrbotten and The City Twinning Committee of Luleå Municipality, and our own organization Women’s Shelters in Norrbotten. The Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes, Norway gave financial support for the Norwegian participants’ travels to Sweden, and we are very grateful for this contribution.

We wish to thank the well engaging and flexible project team, for planning and realizing the conference in a positive and responsible way.

At last but not at least, great thanks to all the participants and lectures, who shared their knowledge and experiences during the conference.

We are very hopeful for the future, for continuous cooperation, and to meet again in a new conference.

Luleå in June 2009

Eva Engman
Project Manager
Women’s Shelter in Norrbotten

Mildred Hedberg
Project Manager
Women’s Shelter Iris, Luleå

Summary

This report presents a project which has been carried out by the County Organization Women's Shelters in Norrbotten (Kvinnojourer i Norrbotten). The aim was to make active and develop the network between shelters and crises centres within the Barents region and also involve shelters and crises centres in Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland. To realize this, an Arctic women conference was arranged in Luleå, Sweden, in January 30 – February 1, 2009. The name of the conference was "*Arctic women against men's violence*".

The participants were from shelters and crises centres in

- the counties of Norrbotten and Västerbotten, Sweden
- the counties of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark, Norway
- Oulu, Finland
- the Russian Barents region
- Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland

The conference focused on the situation for women and children who are subjected to men's violence, in the different countries, and also the work in shelters and crises centres. The lectures showed on research and attitudes on men's violence in different aspects, in general and against groups of marginalized women. The lectures gave the participants new knowledge to use in their work. In workshops the participants shared knowledge and experiences from their work in shelters and crises centres. The topics were e.g. working with children, women in rural areas, working with young women, and the work with women who are exposed to honour related violence.

Another aim was to develop a continuous cooperation between the shelters and crises centres in the Barents region and Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland. The question concerning future networking and cooperation was discussed during the conference. All the participants were agreed with the importance of continuing the cooperation between the shelters and crises centres in the Arctic area.

The conference was ended with a resolution with the headline "*Arctic women demand that the Arctic will be a zone free from violence*". The resolution paid attention to difficulties for shelters and crises centres in their work, and also to their great knowledge to be used for lobbying and raising public awareness on men's violence against women.

The conference had high status, because of the acknowledged and well-reputed lecturers, and also because of the prominent opening speakers, especially the Swedish Minister of Equality and Integration.

The Arctic women conference gathered women from shelters and crises centres in the Arctic area. Everybody has the work against men's violence against women in common. There is a need to meet and cooperate in this field, to strengthen and empower the women in their work in the shelters and crises centres. The conference gave an expression for continuous future networking and cooperation, and a new Arctic women conference was set out to be held in 2011.

The project team who was responsible for planning and arranging the conference were the following

Eva Engman, Women's Shelters in Norrbotten, Sweden

Mildred Hedberg, Women's Shelter Iris in Luleå, Sweden

Gudrun Jonsdottir, Stigamot, Iceland

Evelyn Bentzen, Tromsø Crises Centre, Norway

Olga Lyapunova, Bridges of Mercy in Archangelsk, Russia

1. Introduction

Women's Shelters in Norrbotten, is a non governmental organization, a NGO, with eleven shelters in the County of Norrbotten in Sweden. There is a network between the shelters in Norrbotten with cooperation and trainings. Within the Barents region there have been some contacts with crises centres for women in Norway, Finland and Russia. In 1997 The Women's Shelter Iris in Luleå started up crises centres in Murmansk region, in Apatity and Polyarnye Zori. During 1998–2003 the project NCRB, Network for Centres in the Russian Barents region (and in the Barents region as a whole) was working, with the University of Oulu, Finland, the Pomor State University in Archangelsk, Russia and the Women's University in Steigen, Norway as coordinators. The shelters in Luleå and Umeå, Sweden were included in the project.

Since the NCRB project was finished there haven't been any organized contacts between shelters and crises centres in the Barents region. There has been a need to continue and further develop contacts and cooperation, and also involve the crises centres in Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland in an arctic network.

The shelters and crises centres for women within the Nordic countries and north west Russia are working with support and help to women and young women who are subjected to men's violence. There is an evident recognition from the governments in these countries, that violence against women is a big and serious problem in the society, which has to be combat. Therefore it is important with network, cooperation and exchanging of experiences between actors in these countries who are working with the same question. A conference with participants from shelters and crises centres from the countries above mentioned, would therefore be a forum for continuous cooperation concerning men's violence against women.

2. Aims and targets

The aims of the project have been to make active and develop the network between shelters and crises centres within the Barents region and Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland, and to develop a continuous cooperation.

The targets were to arrange an arctic women conference with participants from shelters and crises centres within the Barents region, Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland, and to create an action plan for continuous cooperation.

The target groups for the conference were

- Shelters in the counties of Norrbotten and Västerbotten, Sweden
- Crises centres in the counties of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark, Norway
- Crises centres in Oulu and the county of Lapland, Finland
- Crises centres in the Russian Barents region
- Crises centres in Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland

3. Implementation

3.1 Planning meeting in Tromsø, Norway

A project team has been working for planning the conference. The participants of the team were

Eva Engman, Women's Shelters in Norrbotten, Sweden

Mildred Hedberg, Women's Shelter Iris in Luleå, Sweden

Gudrun Jonsdottir, Stigamot, Iceland

Evelyn Bentzen, Tromsø Crises Centre, Norway

Olga Lyapunova, Bridges of Mercy in Archangelsk, Russia

The project team met in Tromsø in the beginning of June 2008 for planning the conference. It was decided, that the women conference would be held in Luleå in January 30–31 and February 1, 2009.

It was important to put the light on the situation for women and children who are subjected to men's violence, in the different countries, and also the work in shelters and crises centres. Therefore the conference should content lectures, which reflect on the view of men's violence in the different countries, and the work to support women and children who are victims of men's violence. Another important part of the conference would be to engage the participants themselves in workshops to share experiences from their work in shelters and crises centres.

To make the network active between shelters and crises centres and discuss further cooperation, it would be interesting to know the opinions of the participants. Questions to be discussed could be, e.g. what will unite women from shelters and crises centres in the Arctic area, what kind of cooperation is needed, how to use the network, how to cooperate without money, where and when to meet at a next conference.

The conference should also have big attention in media, and be finished with a resolution which should be sent e.g. to governments, decision makers and media in all the participating countries.

The project team was looking forward to arrange an engaging, creative and developing women conference.

3.2 Preparation

During the autumn 2008 the planning of the conference proceeded. Through contacts by the Internet the project team carried out invitations and conference programme. Appendix 1

A big question for the team was how to organize the travels for the Russian participants, because of the far distances and the high costs for travels. The best logistic way was to gather all the Russian participants in Murmansk and from there go by bus to Luleå in Sweden.

The conference should be held in English language, and be interpreted into Russian and Swedish. The project team worked hard to find interpreters both simultaneous interpreters and interpreters for workshops.

The invitations were distributed by the Internet to shelters and crises centres according to the target groups above mentioned.

3.3 The conference

The conference “*Arctic women against men’s violence*” was held in Luleå January 30–February 1, 2009 at Nordkalotten Hotell & Konferens.

The participants were 70, and came from all the invited countries in the Arctic area. The Russian participants were 18 and went by bus from Murmansk the day before the conference. They came from Syktyvkar, Archangelsk, Murmansk, Severomorsk, Apatity, Polyarnye Zori, Petrozavodsk and Sortavala. The participants from Norway were from Tromsø, Karasjok, Vesterålen and Mosjoen. From Finland came participants from Oulu.

The most far away participants were from Greenland, Iceland and Faeroe Islands. As the conference was held in Sweden, most of the participants came from the local shelters in the County of Norrbotten, and also from Skellefteå in the County of Västerbotten.

The conference started with an opening ceremony in the evening on Friday January 30. The programme of Saturday January 31 was divided into two parts, interesting lectures before lunch and in the afternoon workshops with presentations from the participants themselves. The last conference day Sunday February 1, was mainly meant for discussions on continuous networking and cooperation. The conference language was English, and was interpreted into Russian and Swedish.

Nice entertainment gave the conference a nice frame. A group of young women, named For Fun, played music at the opening ceremony, and Silver Hair Blues Ladies gave a much appreciated performance during the dinner on Saturday evening.

3.3.1 Opening ceremony

The speakers at the opening ceremony were specially invited, because of their positions and connection to the issue of the conference.

- *Nyamko Sabuni*, the Swedish Minister of Equality and Integration

Nyamko Sabuni mentioned in her speech statistics concerning men's violence against women, that almost 50 per cent of all women in Sweden after the age of 15 have been subjected to violence or threat of violence by a man. She told about the Swedish national action plan to combat this problem, with the main focus on men's violence against women, honour related violence and violence in same sex relationships. She also pointed out that the women's shelter movement in Sweden has played an important role, to raise men's violence against women on the political agenda and made the public awareness of the problem. Appendix 2

- *Margareta Eriksson*, the chairperson of Luleå Municipal Council.

Margareta Eriksson welcomed from the City of Luleå. She showed a nice movie about the city, both in summer and winter time. She pointed out the Women's Shelter Iris in Luleå, as a good example for giving help and support to women and children who are exposed to men's violence. As responsible for the City Twinning Committee of Luleå she was glad to see participants from Murmansk and Tromsø in the conference. She wished good luck with the conference.

- *Gunilla Westny*, the chairperson of the National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden, Roks

Gunilla Westny talked about the great work the Swedish shelters are making for support and help to women who are exposed to male violence. She was very proud and pleased that the Swedish Government prioritizes the matter of male violence against women and has respect for the shelter's work. She also mentioned that thanks to the women's movement the problem of male violence against women has been set up on the political agenda. Appendix 3

- *Eva Engman*, the chairperson of the county organisation Women's Shelters in Norrbotten

Eva Engman made a presentation of the background for arranging the Arctic women conference. There was a wish to bring back to life the network and cooperation, which has been working several years ago among the shelters and crises centres in the Barents Region, but also add shelters and crises centres in Greenland, Iceland and Faeroe Islands in the network. She hoped that the conference should be a start for continuous cooperation. Appendix 4

The opening ceremony was finished by short presentations of the participants from shelters and crises centres from the participating countries.

3.3.2 Lecturers

The lectures were presentations of interesting and actual topics, which focused on women's situation concerning exposure of men's violence.

- *Eva Lundgren*, professor in sociology, Uppsala University, Sweden. "The Same violence – or absent violence?"

Eva Lundgren talked about how violence, which is a widespread reality according to all European prevalence studies, is absent, or made absent, or at best, presented as a small, marginal problem. This is done in different ways, e.g. the way we talk about violence, allows for interpretations that make the violence absent. But these reinterpretations also make women's reality absent, a reality in which too many women live.

To illustrate this, she showed a video from the website YouTube with young Norwegian women from skier elite, dressed up like Russian women as whores. The video was referred to, as "the whore video".

Her conclusion was, "Let us focus on violence when we try to fight violence, let us discuss violence as violence and not as anything else, let us establish that men's violence is never about powerlessness, but about exercising a power that humiliates and destroys women. When violence is used, there is always a perpetrator; fight him, and fight the conditions that let him continue using violence". Appendix 5

- *Olga Lyapunova*, Pomor State University, Archangelsk, Russia.
“Crises Centres for women in Russia today – problems and prospects”

Olga Lyapunova made an interesting presentation of a survey made in the autumn 2008, and the pre-history of the research, which included the survey. The survey showed that there are many problems for the shelters and crises centres, e.g. financing problems, and several shelters had to be closed. She pointed out that the main prospect for Russian shelters and crises centres are in cooperation within Russia and internationally. Together we can solve common problems connected to violence against women. Appendix 6

- *Gunn Tove Minde*, researcher on Sámi women, Harstad University College, Norway. “Sámi women’s exposure of men’s violence”

The presentation was from her study “To live their soul”, which put the focus on elderly Sámi women and their living conditions, including exposure of men’s violence. The conclusion was that the fight against men’s violence also must be a fight against men’s violence among the minorities. Appendix 7

- *Marianne Eriksson*, former member of the European Parliament. .
“To buy – or not to buy, that is the question”

All through the history the one to name, blame and shame has been the woman in prostitution. The buyer, the John, has almost been totally invisible. He, as a man, has been excused by arguments such as “men need sex more than women”. Today we know better. Despite gender each and every person has its own sexuality.

But the myth of the man as uncontrollable beast continues. Why is that?

In 1999, Sweden turned the question “upside down” and adopted a new law. From the 1st of July 1999 it is forbidden to buy, even try to buy, so called sexual service.

In the beginning the police and other juridical instances were very skeptical, but when it showed that the law had good impact on trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, the critic silenced. Pimps found out that it was too less money to earn in the country. Sweden became more a transit country than a destination country.

In the European Union the debate in the prostitution field is going on. Five countries have legalized and regulated prostitution. In those countries the pimp is no longer a pimp. He is an entrepreneur.

As a prostitute, or sex-worker as they prefer to be named, you have to register, pay tax, secure and prove that you don't have any transmitted illness, such as HIV/Aids. In the discussions you can now find voluntary prostitution, forced prostitution and victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

A woman in prostitution in Sweden is first of all a human being. Trafficking, pimping and buying are forbidden by law. We demand men to be responsible in their sexual life and actions. We no longer live in the antique Greece, where women were taken as slaves to please the man and "his honorable wife" was police-checked, so she wouldn't give birth to any child that was not her husband's.

Waiting for the equal society with free and fair sex, we must punish the one who buys and forces someone else!

- *Gudrun Jonsdottir*, spokeswoman Stigamot, Iceland.
"Growth, power and fun"

"We better stick together", was the opening of her presentation. Many things unit women all over the world. In the Arctic, the darkness and cold unit us, somewhere also difficult and expensive transports and somewhere many rural areas, which can be isolated from the rest of the community. The women's movement has brought gender violence into daylight in 1970–80, after ages of silence. There has been much energy into political work, making the violence visible. We have proceeded from anger and frustration to action, from victimization to empowerment.

The empowerment at Stigamot has developed as creative work, self-help groups together with counselling and political work, and lots of growth, power and fun. An interesting and developing work at Stigamot is to go out into rural areas to meet women for counselling. A funny action to make attention to the bad economical situation at Stigamot was the Bag Ladies' action. Empowerment is to change frustration, anger and worries into action. Appendix 8

3.3.3 Workshops

The topics in the workshops were presentations of the work in the shelters and crises centres in the different countries, in order to share experiences and give new knowledge in supporting and helping women and children. There were totally eight workshops.

- *Maria Sundvall Taavo and Veronica Männikkö, Women's Shelter Iris, Luleå, Sweden. "The work in shelters for young women"*

The presentation was about the young women's shelters in Sweden, the organisation and the special work for young women and girls. The shelters are based on volunteer work. The main tools for their work are hotlines and the Internet. Another important part is the preventive work, such as lectures at schools, trainings in feminist self defence and taking part in different

events to get in contact with young women and girls. The lecturers can be about sexualised violence, rape, sexual harassments, young women's sexuality and body, internet and young women, equality and gender roles.

The Young Women's Shelter in Luleå has made a school project MEOS with a survey with interesting results. 727 girls and 556 boys answered a questionnaire. One question was "Do you know anyone who has been raped?" 44 per cent of the girls and 20 per cent of the boys answered that they knew someone. 15 per cent of the girls answered that they had been raped.

The national cooperation between the young women's shelters in Sweden is well developed. There is cooperation in different projects and on the Internet website Lunarstorm.

- *Tuija Korhonen, Oulu's Mother and Child Home and Shelters, Finland. "Baby in the shelter"*

The Federation of Mother and Child home and Shelters is a central organisation for the member associations assisting families by means of institutional and community services and projects.

The aim of the Federation is to safeguard the child's right to favourable growing conditions and safe development, to provide support for parenthood and families, and to prevent violence in the family. There are 17 Mother and Child Homes and 14 Shelters all over Finland, of which Oulu has one of each category.

Oulu's Mother and Child Home and Shelter has started to work with babies in the shelter. Every year there are approximately 140 children, and among them 30–40 babies, receiving support.

The child is affected of violence in the family both during pregnancy and as new born and baby. The baby suffers a lot from insomnia, restlessness, nightly horrors and fears. The baby shows often different stress- and trauma symptoms, and also physical injuries caused by violence, e.g. shaken baby syndrome. The resolution is that women with babies require and deserve extra support, and help with parenting at this early point to get things on the right track early in a child's life.

- *Olga Lund*, Crises Centre Sikkerzoq, Greenland. “Work in crises centres in Greenland”

The living conditions in Greenland are very tough. The Greenlandic population is not big, it is a small one, if you compare with European population. The country can be very cold and frozen and at the same time beautiful in the tough conditions.

As in other countries, violence also occurs in Greenland. The first shelter in Greenland was established in Nuuk in 1983, and was followed by eight shelters in the whole of Greenland. The shelters were established by volunteer women, and exist with financial support from municipality and the home rule.

The aim for starting up shelters was that women saw the problem with men’s violence against women and children, and they just couldn’t close their eyes any more for the problem.

The work in the shelters is counselling and woman to woman talk, for help to self-help. The women who come to the shelter are anonymous, and they are not registered. Many women visit the shelter, and some of them can also get safety housing for a shorter or longer period.

Today there are lots of attentions for children who are in the shelters with their mothers. The leaders of the shelters use much energy to help these children, by approaching the authorities who service children, to give them the support and help they need.

In 1989 all the shelters made a national association. The volunteer members of the board live in different places in Greenland. The national association arranges annual meetings, and also courses for the staff every second year.

In 2008 the national association achieved to get a consultant in the national politics. In the next coming years the national association has the following goals

- Start up shelters in the towns, which have no shelter
- Give more information about the shelters among the population
- Increase cooperation against violence with other countries
- Pass on information to the arctic cooperation

- *Carina Diaz*, Roks, Sweden. “Honour related violence – definition and methods”

Honour is found in all languages in the world. How to define the word depends on various factors. One definition of honour related violence is that the role of the individual is less than the whole community and she or he has to respond to the whole group and their value of the definition inside the community. The group is responsible of all kinds of behaviour inside the community and has also the right to make the judgement of acceptance of every individual in the group.

Any form of mental or physical violence, committed by a woman or a man as a violation of the honour, is therefore a violation of his or her family inside the community, of which the outside world is aware of or may become aware of.

This type of violence takes place in a specific social and patriarchal context, usually within ethnic minority groups, and it is not based on religion. Strong patriarchal, traditional structures are the base of honour related violence.

This kind of violence against individuals inside these communities can take a variety of forms, not all of the violence can be related to criminal offence, such as very strong control of the individuals' way of clothing, what kind of friends she or he has, or who she or he is talking with at school. The controlling of the individuals increase with age, and girls are more often controlled than boys. When the honour related violence turns into criminal act is, when the individual is taken of its human rights by isolation, being locked in, and more excessive violence such as battering, forced into marriage and even murder or manslaughter.

- *Marianne Karlsson*, Women's Shelter Iris, Luleå, Sweden. “Support for children who witness and experience violence in their homes”

The Women's Shelter Iris in Luleå is the largest shelter in the northern region of Sweden. It provides crises accommodation and support to six women and their children at the same time, and also crises counselling for women and children, who reside in their homes. The women and children accessing the shelter are from all ethnic backgrounds.

A special work in the shelter is to provide support to children who witness and experience violence, both to children staying in the shelter, and also to children residing with their mother in their own residence. It can be individual crisis counselling sessions as well as group programmes for children as well as fun activities and care.

Children of all ages are affected by witnessing or growing up in an environment, where there is violence between their legal guardians, their parents. Even very young children and babies show strong reactions living in a home where violence, threats and worry underlies the everyday happenings of the house. Children who experience violence in their homes lose their sense of trust, and that their home is a safe place.

Children experience the violence differently, but research has shown that 90 per cent of the children are in the same room or close by when their father hits their mother. Children try to understand what is occurring but are rarely given the opportunity to talk about what happens. Children stop asking and bottle it all inside. They take the blame and responsibility on their shoulders. Children develop survival strategies and belief that violence is normal and happens in all families. The important thing for the whole family though is to keep the violence secret. In order to preserve the family secret children develop different roles, such as hero, rebel, wall-flower and clown. If children do not receive support in terms of making sense of what is going on in the family, they are at risk of problems in the future. To witness violence against mum is to be exposed by a traumatic event and is to be seen as emotional and psychological abuse of the child. Too many children are forced to experience their mother being killed by their father.

In Sweden statistics show that every 10th child will witness or experience violence in their homes during their childhood.

The Women's Shelter Iris has developed a child support programme for children who witness and experience violence in their homes. The framework for working with children is very important. The environment in the shelter is child friendly, play and fun are seen as important and the shelter is a place free from all forms of violence. It is important that the services are child focused, and also to develop relationship with the children in the shelter. The workers at the shelter must be aware of their own values, experiences and culture, and how these may impinge on the children.

When working with children, the worker's role is not to impose a process or task to be achieved, but to help children to make sense of their experiences and to be responsive to their needs as they arise. There are different processes in the work, such as engaging children, the intake, support planning. The strategies for supporting children can be group work, individual time for each child, play therapy, fun activities, nurturing the mother in child relationship, encouraging children to identify and express their feelings. Also the mothers are supported in their role as mothers, providing information on the effects of violence on children and assisting them to understand their child's behaviour. Respecting children's rights form the foundation of child support work.

It is necessary to work for children's safety. Women's Shelter Iris has decided to follow the Swedish child protection act, and reports to the child protection agency, if a child is at risk and not being safety.

- *Natalia Potapova*, Crises Centre Bridges of Mercy, Archangelsk, Russia. "Special experiences in working with sexual violence (rape, incest)"

The Crises Centre Bridges of Mercy has experience of about 10 years work. There have been many cases of sexual violence during these years, such as many calls dealing with rape for counselling and support to victims.

There is no reliable statistics in Russia of the amount of children and teenagers subjected to sexual violence every year.

The problem of not reporting the assault to police, not seeking medical help or psychological support has several reasons, but the main cause is the fact that talks about sex and sexual violence are still considered to be shameful, uncomfortable and forbidden in the Russian society. Sexual education in schools that were started in the early 90s is unfortunately no longer held, because sexual education was claimed to be depraving for children. Avoiding talking about sexuality makes this topic forbidden for discussion between generations.

When working with women who have experienced sexual violence, it is important to know that victims avoid talking about the emotions caused by the assault. They suffer from feelings of fear, shame and guilt, and they are often not willing to discuss their problems with others.

Working with an assaulted child becomes more difficult as the age of the child decreases. There are several difficulties in counselling children and teenagers, such as hard to establish contacts with the victims, because of the relatives who are involved, the long time it takes to come to the first counselling, and inadequate reactions from parents and unwillingness of the victim to discuss the assault.

Counselling of victims of sexual violence is held one-to-one, but can also be held in so called closed support groups. A very effective method to use, when counselling victims of sexual violence, is art therapy including drawing/painting, sculpture, collage, sand therapy, symbol-drama and method of directed imagination. During art therapy the victim can express and accept their own feelings caused by the trauma, and also express feelings to the assaulter.

If a victim of sexual violence is provided with help and support in time, the traumatic event can be integrated into her life experience and the development of posttraumatic stress disorder can be prevented.

- *Gudrun Jonsdottir*, Stigamot, Iceland. “When the women don’t come to the shelter, the shelter comes to them – How to support women in rural areas”

The situation in Iceland, Greenland and maybe other places in the arctic countries is isolation, expensive transports, rural areas where everybody knows one another, and small communities.

Stigamot is not a shelter, but a centre for counselling, self-help groups and political activity. The centre has secret address and appointments are made by phone to Stigamot. Stigamot has a small house for the work, but the dream is to get a bigger one.

In rural areas, with long distances from Stigamot, it is difficulties to reach women, and also to come in contact with elderly, disabled, or women in institutions. Stigamot has for years tried to start groups, but with little luck until now. Now counsellors will be sent out from the centre around the country to listen to women’s stories. The counsellors visit women in psychiatric- and other institutions, women in prison, disabled and elderly women in their homes.

Stigamot has produced a film about their work in the rural areas. It will be interesting to discuss other ways of working, and maybe this model can be used in other countries.

- *Tove Smaadahl*, Secretariat of the Shelter Movement in Norway. “The work in crises centres in Norway”

The life without violence is a human right. Men’s violence against women is thus a violation of women’s human rights.

The Secretariat of the Shelter Movement is an organization of 34 shelters. It was established in 1994 and is financed by a membership fee that is based on a small part of the shelters total budgets.

It works to address the problems of men’s violence against women and place them on the agenda. The secretariat is the connecting link between the shelters and the public authorities, researchers, women’s organizations both in Norway and abroad and the society at large.

The first shelter was established in Oslo in 1978, with public funding. Soon local women's groups in different parts of the country started opening shelters. These women's groups constituted the unique and historic shelter movement of Norway. Since 1980, the movement grew with more shelters being started up in different parts of the country.

All the shelters in Norway are based on public funding, 20 per cent of the total budget comes from the local authorities and the remaining 80 per

cent comes from the Government, through the Ministry for Children and Equality, in 2008 194 million NOK.

There are 51 women's shelters in Norway. The shelters are safe places of refuge for women and their children who have been exposed to men's violence. They provide support and counselling, support in meeting the social services, doctors, lawyers, housing authorities, and other services. The shelter provides services for women and their children who have been exposed to all kinds of men's violence.

They work in the society for all women's rights, in groups and on individual levels.

Every fourth woman in Norway has experienced different kinds of violence or threats of violence. One of ten women over the age of 15 has experienced rape. Between 50 and 60 per cent of the women living in a shelter have developed anxiety and depressions as a cause of men's violence. 31 per cent of Norwegian teenagers claim to have been forced to sex against their will. In 50 per cent of the cases the abusers are boys at the same age as the girls. Most of the assaults take place at a party.

From 2000 until January 2009, 80 women were murdered by their partner or ex-partner in Norway. 58 per cent of the women who stayed in the shelters in 2007 had immigrant background. 31 per cent of these were married to a Norwegian man.

There are special needs of victims of men's violence against women, such as preventing and stopping all forms of men's violence against women and children. It is important that all services are seen from the users' point of view, in ensuring that services are available, flexible, meet quality standards, well coordinated and not bureaucratic. Women and children have the right to a life free from men's violence.

3.3.4 Networking and cooperation

One of the aims of the conference was to develop a continuous cooperation between the shelters and crises centres in the Barents region and Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland. To discuss this, the participants gathered in groups with questions concerning future networking and cooperation. The following questions were discussed:

- What kind of cooperation?
- What is realistic?
- What unite us?
- How to use the network?
- How to cooperate without funding?
- Are there some funding, and where?
- Another conference, where and when?
- Do we need a project team?

In the Arctic area there are lots of similarities which unite women, such as women's situation, the work against men's violence in the shelters and crises centres, similar experiences and big areas with small communities.

All the participants were agreed with the importance of continuing the cooperation between the shelters and crises centres in the Arctic area, such as conferences, study visits in the different countries, cooperation in projects, informal contacts by the Internet, sister shelters in another country. The simplest way to cooperate is to have contact with each other by the Internet. Some participants thought that difficulties in speaking and understanding were a problem for contacts. The network between the shelters and crises centres can be used for joint projects, sharing of experiences and information, personal contacts, and also in helping and supporting women.

For cooperation funding is needed. The only way for cooperation without money, is to use the Internet. It is necessary to have money for arranging joint activities and projects. Foundations can be different EU programmes, the Barents Secretariat, Governments in the different countries, Sámi Parliaments in Norway, Finland and Sweden and County Administrations in the different countries.

All the participants were agreed with arranging a new conference in 2011. Most of them preferred a conference in Murmansk, Russia. A project team with representatives from different countries will be responsible for arranging the conference. One important opinion was that it is more fruitful to participate in Arctic conferences than in other Nordic conferences.

3.3.5 Resolution

The conference was ended with a resolution with the headline "*Arctic women demand that the Arctic will be a zone free from violence*". In the resolution it was pointed out that Norway has adopted a new law with criminalizing buying women, both in Norway and abroad. The goal is that buying of women in prostitution will not be accepted in any of the countries in the arctic zone.

The participants were agreed that the responsibility of the perpetrators has to be brought into daylight. They should be reported, prosecuted and sentenced.

A very important question to pay attention to was the difficult situation for the Russian shelters and crises centres. Many of them had to be closed down because of lack of funding.

The first arctic networking conference raised more questions than it answered. Even though there are long distances between the shelters, the participants are all neighbours of the North Pole and live in marginalized communities. There was a strong will from the optimistic women to meet again and continue the cooperation.

The resolution was sent to governments, decision makers and media in all the participating countries. Appendix 9

4. Media

Before the conference a press release was sent to all media in Norrbotten with invitation to a press conference.

There was an interview about the conference at the local TV24 some days before. The two local newspapers, NSD and Norrbottens-Kuriren, visited the conference and made reports with interviews with participants and the project team. The conference was also announced in the local radio news. A journalist from the County Council of Norrbotten made a report of the conference in their information magazine, which can be found on the following website <http://www.nll.se/webb/Kultur--och-utbildning/Stab/artiklar/Ratten-till-ett-liv-utan-vald/>

5. Results and experiences

The aim of the project was to make active the network between shelters and crises centres within the Barents Region and also involve shelters and crises centres in Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland. Through the conference this aim has been achieved.

The participants were from all these countries. The invitation was very positively received and it was of great interest to take part in the conference, in spite of the long distances within the Arctic region. This shows the importance for women to meet and develop network in order to cooperate and share experiences concerning the work against men's violence against women and children.

The conference focused on the situation for women, who are subjected to men's violence. The lectures showed on research and attitudes on men's violence in different aspects, in general and against groups of marginalized women. The lectures gave the participants new knowledge to use in their work.

A very important part of the conference was to engage the participants themselves in workshops to share experiences from their work in shelters and crises centres in the different countries. The topics showed a broad competence among the participants and their work, e.g. work with children, women in rural areas, work with young women, and work with women who are exposed to honour related violence. The workshops were much appreciated and gave enriched input to the participants' future work.

The conference raised many urgent questions about the situation for shelters and crises centres in the different countries, such as financing problems, increased control from municipalities and states, and the support to women and children who suffer from men's violence will not be a prioritized task from the authorities. These common problems make it necessary to fight against in a future cooperation.

The conference had high status, because of the acknowledged and well-reputed lecturers, and also because of the prominent opening speakers, especially the Swedish Minister of Equality and Integration.

One of the targets was to create an action plan for continuous cooperation. The question concerning strategies for future cooperation was discussed during the last conference day, but more time should have been needed to result in a concrete action plan. However the group discussions among the participants concerning continuous cooperation were fruitful, it was a good start for continuing the discussions on next meeting. All the participants were agreed with the importance of continuous cooperation

between the shelters and crises centres in the Arctic area. And next meeting was also set out to be in 2011.

A difficult logistic task was to organize the travels for participants within Russia in order to go by the chartered bus from Murmansk to Luleå in Sweden. The most far away participants in Russia came from Syktyvkar in Komi region, they went by flight from Syktyvkar through Moscow to Murmansk. The participants from Petrozavodsk and Sortavala in Karelia had to go by train for 24 hours one way, and the same for participants from Archangelsk. Thanks to the Russian coordinator in the project team, everything went on smoothly.

As a whole the conference was well organized and professionally carried out. Both the aims and the targets were achieved, even if a concrete action plan wasn't fulfilled, but it was a good start for continuous network and cooperation.

6. The future

The Arctic women conference gathered women from shelters and crises centres in the Arctic area. Everybody has the work against men's violence against women in common. There is a need to meet and cooperate in this field, to strengthen and empower the women in their work in the shelters and crises centres.

The conference gave an expression for continuous future networking and cooperation, and a next meeting was proposed to be held in 2011 in Russia. Until then networking has to be done on the Internet.

To realize a new conference, it is important to start the planning as soon as possible. A project team is needed for coordination and making applications for funding. The expectations from all the participants were to see each other again for continuing exchanging of knowledge and experiences concerning men's violence against women and children.

7. Conclusion

The experience of this project, to gather women from shelters and crises centres within the Arctic area, shows that there is great interest and need to come together for exchanging knowledge and experiences on the issue men's violence against women. Together women in the Arctic have lots to learn from each other. The life conditions for women are quite the same in all countries. Women are also strong together to influence in the society on inequality and injustices against women. Networking and co-operation is therefore an important tool to keep up contacts and share information and knowledge, and it has to continue in the future.

The first Arctic women conference was held, and it was a valuable start to work further in the Arctic network between shelters and crises centres. Certainly there will be a new Arctic women conference in a few years

Appendix 1

Programme

Arctic women against men's violence

Welcome to the Arctic Women Conference in Luleå.
January 30 – February 1, 2009, Nordkalotten Hotell & Konferens.

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 30 JANUARY

15.30 Registration
Refreshments,
music entertainment

17.00 Opening ceremony
Welcome from organizers
Nyamko Sabuni,
Minister of Equality, Sweden
Margareta Eriksson, *Chair-
person of Luleå Municipal Council*
Gunilla Westny,
Chairperson of Roks
Eva Engman, *Chairperson of
"Kvinnojourer i Norrbotten"*
Presentation of the
participating countries
Music entertainment

19.00 Dinner
Music entertainment

SATURDAY 31 JANUARY

09.30 Same violence
– or absent violence
Eva Lundgren, *Professor in
Sociologi, Uppsala University*

10.15 Crises centres in Russia today
– problems and prospects
Olga Lyapunova, *Pomor State
University, Archangelsk, Russia*

10.45 Coffee break

11.15 Sami women's exposure
of men's violence
Gunn Tove Minde,
*Researcher on Sami Women,
Harstad University College.*

11.45 To buy or not to buy
– that's the question
Marianne Eriksson, *former
Member of European Parliament*

12.15 Lunch

13.30 - 15.00 Workshops

1. The work in shelters for
young women,
Maria Sundvall Taavo,
Women's Shelter Iris, Luleå, Sweden
2. Baby in the shelter, Tuija
Korhonen, *Oulu's Mother and
Child Home and Shelter, Finland*
3. Work in crises centres in
Greenland, Olga Lund,
Crises Centre Sikkersoaq, Greenland
4. Honour related violence
– definition and methods,
Carina Diaz, *Roks Sweden*

15.00 Coffee break

15.30 - 17.00 Workshops

1. Support for children who
witness and experience
violence in their homes,
Marianne Karlsson,
Women's Shelter Iris, Luleå, Sweden

2. Special experiences in wor-
king with sexual violence
(rape, incest), Natalia
Potapova, *Crises Centre Bridges of
Mercy, Archangelsk, Russia*

3. When the women don't
come to the shelter, the
shelter comes to them
– How to support women
in rural areas, Gudrun Jons-
dottir, *Stigamot, Iceland*

4. The work in crises centres
in Norway, Tove Smaadahl,
Krisentersektariatet, Oslo, Norway

17.30 Sightseeing with bus

19.00 Dinner
Entertainment

SUNDAY 1 FEBRUARY

09.00 Growth, power and fun
Gudrun Jonsdottir,
Spokeswoman of Stigamot, Iceland

09.30 Networking
and cooperation
– working groups
– reporting

11.30 Resolution

12.00 End of the conference

12.15 Lunch

Женщины Арктики против мужского насилия

Приглашаем принять участие в конференции женщин Арктики в г. Лулео
30 января – 1 февраля 2009 года. Нордкалоттен, Лулео, Швеция

www.kvinnjourer.se

Программа конференции

Пятница 30 января

15.30 Регистрация участников
Легкие закуски
Музыка

17.00 Открытие конференции.
Приветственное слово
организаторов конферен-
ции Nyamko Sabuni, министр
гендерного равноправия
Швеции

Margareta Eriksson, предсе-
датель муниципального
совета г. Лулео
Gunilla Westny, председа-
тель Рокс (ассоциации
приютов для женщин
Швеции)
Eva Engman, председатель
ассоциации приютов для
женщин Норботтена

Презентации всех участву-
ющих стран

Музыкальный концерт

19.00 Ужин
Музыкальный концерт

Суббота 31 января

9.30 То же самое насилие или
отсутствующее насилие.
Eva Lundgren, профессор
социологии университета
Упсала

10.15 Кризисные центры России
сегодня – проблемы и пер-
спективы, Olga Lyapunova,
Поморский государствен-
ный университет, Архан-
гельск, Россия

10.45 Кофе-брейк

11.15 Женщины саами, под-
вергшиеся насилию со сто-
роны мужчин. Gunn Tove
Minde, исследователь
женщин саами, универси-
тетский колледж Харстада

11.45 Покупать или не покупать
– вот в чем вопрос
Marianne Eriksson, бывший
член Европарламента

12.15 Обед

13.30–15.00 Секционные заседания

1. Работа в приюте для
молодых женщин
Maria Sundvall Taavo, приют
для женщин Ирис, Лулео,
Швеция

2. Ребенок в приюте
Tuja Korhonen, Приют для
матери и ребенка, Оулу,
Финляндия

3. Работа в кризисных
центрах Гренландии
Olga Lund, кризисный центр
Сиккерсог, Гренландия

4. Насилие, связанное с
честью. Carina Diaz, Рокс,
Швеция

15.00 Кофе-брейк

15.30–17.00 Секционные заседания

1. Помощь детям – жертвам
и свидетелям домашнего
насилия. Marianne Karlsson,
приют для женщин Ирис,
Лулео, Швеция

2. Опыт работы с сексуаль-
ным насилием (изнасилова-
ния, incest). Наталья По-
тапова, кризисный центр
«Мосты милосердия»,
Архангельск, Россия

3. Когда женщины не могут
прийти в приют – приют
приходит к ним. Как по-
мочь женщинам из уда-
ленных мест. Gudrun Jons-
dottir, Стигамот, Исландия

4. Работа в кризисных
центрах Норвегии.
Tove Smaadahl, Кризисный
центр, секретариат, Осло,
Норвегия

17.30 Осмотр достопримечатель-
ностей (автобусная экскурсия)

19.00 Ужин.
Культурная программа

Воскресенье 1 февраля

9.00 Рост, власть и шутки
Gudrun Jonsdottir, предста-
вительница Стигамот,
Исландия

9.30 Рабочие группы по созданию
сетей, сотрудничеству и
резолюции конференции

11.30 Принятие резолюции
конференции

12.00 Закрытие конференции

12.15 Обед

Appendix 2

Nyamko Sabuni

Speech at Arctic women conference

Ladies and Gentlemen, (/Dear friends),
Дамы и господа / дорогие друзья

Last year the United Nations celebrated its 60th anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights. However, these goals and values remain unfulfilled for millions of women and men around the world.

When I was appointed minister, I got the question; what is the single most important gender equality issue? My answer was that there are many important gender equality issues, but the most urgent is putting an end to the violence against women.

The right to control one's body and not to suffer violence is a fundamental human right. The state is obligated to ensure each and every individual their human rights and the right of not being exposed to violence. Human rights are about the responsibility of the state to create a legal framework that supports the victims of violence and punishes the perpetrators.

Swedes sometimes boast that women and men are more equal in Sweden than anywhere else. However, there is no country, including Sweden, which has fully eliminated gender based violence. The Swedish Government's goal is that Sweden will be able to serve as a good example for other countries when it comes to combating men's violence against women. That way we can live up to our reputation as the world's most gender equal country.

Last winter, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the president of Liberia, visited Sweden. Liberia's minister for gender equality was also in the delegation and I had the privilege to meet her. Starting-point for our policy making couldn't be further apart;

Sweden – “one of the richest and most gender equal country in the world”.

Liberia heavily destroyed from civil war, a country in the bottom of the gender equality index. Poorest in the world. A nation where many people – not least women – are tortured and abused to an extent that is hard to grasp.

Despite these vast differences between our countries, we soon discovered that the fight against men's violence against women is a common struggle.

We found a unity in the vision that this violence can be conquered. And the conclusion is crystal-clear: Men's violence against women is unacceptable!

Let me shed some light on the situation in Sweden with statistics.

Last year, more than 26 000 cases of abuse against women were reported to the police. And still, that is only 20–25 per cent of all violence that is committed against women. An average of 17 women is murdered every year by a man with whom they have or have had a close relationship.

Almost 50 per cent of all women in Sweden have, after the age of 15, been subjected to violence or threat of violence by a man.

Historically, men's violence against women has been regarded as a private issue and not as a public matter in Sweden. Domestic violence did not become a crime under public prosecution until 1982 and when it comes to rape it did not become a crime under public prosecution until 1984.

Over the years the focus was put on women's guilt by association and why women don't leave a violent man. Now we have better knowledge, and a greater focus is put on the responsibility of violent men and programmes to make them stop hitting.

Men's violence against women has been on the political agenda since the 1990's.

The women's shelter movement, which started in the early 1980's, has played an important role. They have raised domestic violence on the political agenda and the public awareness.

The reason for using the concept "*men's violence against women*" is to place a focus *also* on the perpetrator, not only on the abused woman. This pinpoints the root cause of the violence. By working with violent men improves our chances of reducing and eventually ending the abuse.

In recent years, we have recognized the problem of honour-related violence.

The problem came to the public attention when a young woman with immigrant background (Turkish/Kurdish) was brutally murdered by her father in 2002.

The motive was that she had stained the honour of her family through the relationship with a man. Different gender norms and family patterns added to the difficulties of grasping the mechanisms and driving forces of the violence and control of these young women. The murder was the start of an awareness process in Swedish society and a sensitive challenge for the authorities.

Another perspective acknowledged is violence in same-sex relationships.

There are many similarities between violence in same-sex relationships and men's violence against women. The gradual change from love

and consideration to jealousy, restriction and control, finally turns into violence and abuse are the same.

But there are also differences. One is that it demands at least some degree of openness and acceptance about one's sexual orientation.

There is a need for more knowledge at responsible authorities in order to see, understand and deal with the violence in those relations.

The Swedish Government has made the fight against domestic violence a top priority.

Last year we adopted an action plan to combat these issues. The action plan has three main focus areas: men's violence against women, honour-related violence and finally, violence in same-sex relationships.

This is the most comprehensive action plan on violence against women ever presented in Sweden. It contains 56 measures in a range of policy areas. The aim is to raise the level of ambition at national, regional and local level in fighting domestic violence. The Government is allocating more than 90 million euro for the years 2007 to 2010.

Measures are grouped in six key areas that we have identified to be in need of improvement.

First of all:

The victims of violence need better protection and support.

All victims of crime must be treated in a professional manner, regardless of who they are or which part of the country they live in. The local authorities have a responsibility to ensure that victims receive the help and support they need. Support and protection must be given throughout the entire process, from the first point of contact, through legal proceedings, and afterwards.

Secondly:

We need to improve the preventive work.

Preventive work should be broad in scope and directed at both women and men, also those who are not directly affected in their everyday lives. Children and young people are important target groups. And that is why it is important to introduce early measures in schools and other places where girls and boys spend their time.

Third:

We must ensure enhanced competence, quality and efficiency in the legal system.

The justice and law enforcement chain must function efficiently so that crimes are investigated and perpetrators prosecuted in a timely manner. Society must react and punish these violations in a serious manner.

Fourth:

We need to develop the measures directed at the perpetrators of violence.

If we are to put an end to violence against women, the men who use violence must stop this behavior. All men convicted of this type of crime must be requested to take part in an appropriate treatment programme. The measures must be evaluated, developed and hold a high level of quality

Fifth:

We must have increased cooperation between various agencies and authorities.

Increased cooperation within and between agencies and other actors is of vital importance if we are to ensure that women get the help they need. Regulations and routines must not hinder increased cooperation.

And Sixth:

We need more knowledge and research.

Funding for research will be allocated. Research will help to increase and deepen our knowledge in this area. And through awareness-raising measures and training we will develop skills at agencies and NGOs that comes in contact with both victims and perpetrators.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me mention some of the concrete measures that have been taken and implemented.

- For many years, the women's shelter movement has been arguing that abused women do not always get the help they are entitled for. In 2007 the Social Services Act was modified. The responsibility of the local authorities was clarified and sharpened. In order to support the implementation of the new legislation funds were allocated to local authorities.
- Young people do not always have an adult to talk to. At the same time we know that teenagers have questions they need answers to. Questions about delicate issues. We know that many young people spend a lot of time on internet. To make it easier for youngsters to get in contact with professional adults a virtual youth clinic has been created. The aim is to support young people in their development and to create a forum where difficult questions, such as violence against women and sexual abuse, can be discussed and answered by professionals.
- The police, prosecutors and prisons have been commissioned to intensify their efforts to combat violence against women. Treatment

programmes targeting convicted perpetrators will be expanded and enhanced.

- Women's shelters will be evaluated and developed. We need to ensure that the methods that are used are reliable and actually work.
- A phone-line free of charge and where the phone call is not registered has opened for abused women.
- And as I mentioned the Government provides extra funding for research on men's violence against women, including violence in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

All measures in the action plan will be followed up and evaluated.

The focus of this conference is (partly) on Sámi women. The Sámi people are an indigenous people in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia as well as one of the five national minorities in Sweden.

Men's violence against women exists everywhere - independent of education, ethnicity or religion. It exists also among the Sámi people.

The Government has commissioned The National Institute of Public Health to look into the situation of national minority women exposed to violence. The objective is to map the knowledge and competence at concerned agencies, to map the experience and need of support of minority women. Based on the results of the mapping study the agency will leave suggestions for measures on how the work can be developed and enhanced.

As for the position of women in general, there is also a need to strengthen the position of women belonging to national minorities. Important parts of the Swedish policy on national minorities are the measures aimed at strengthening, practicing and developing the languages and cultures of the national minorities. Within the minority policy the Government has announced that the empowerment and participation in society of women belonging to national minorities is prioritized.

The Government has initiated special measures in order to strengthen the position of Sámi women and other minority women in the Swedish society. The objective is to increase the participation of minority women in the democratic process and in other important parts of society. This way the empowerment of minority women improves their possibilities to promote their rights and demands.

The Sámi Parliament has been commissioned to promote a more equal distribution of sex among Parliament members. And Uppsala University has been commissioned to investigate if there is a need for special education aimed at women belonging to national minorities. The special education could concern education about democratic rights, rights for national minorities or the use of information technological aid.

The National Board for Youth Affairs has been commissioned to allocate financial support to gender equality projects among the national minorities. One of these projects will establish a forum where Sámi women

and other minority women can exchange experiences and strengthen their identity.

Finally, I would like to highlight the importance of cooperation, inspiration and exchange of good practice at the international level. It has been, and still is, a vital driving force for the Swedish Government and its authorities in developing policies and methods. Sweden has a lot to learn from other countries and also good examples to share.

If we are ever going to put an end to the global problem of men's violence against women it will require comprehensive, systematic and long-term work. Our action plan is an important step on the long path towards ensuring women's and girls' safety, security and freedom from violence.

Thank you for your attention!

Appendix 3

Gunilla Westny

Speech at Arctic women conference

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

My name is Gunilla Westny and I am the chairwoman of Roks. Roks is the national organisation for women's shelters and young women's shelters in Sweden.

The organisation's main task is to take care of the common interests of women's and young women's shelters in their work against male violence against women. Each shelter is its' own association and have their own emergency helpline where women and young women can call if they need support. The shelters shall function as a sanctuary for women who are victims of male violence. Therefore, only women work at the shelters.

I am very happy to have been invited to speak at this conference, arranged by two very competent and energetic women, Mildred Hedberg and Eva Engman.

As chairwoman of Roks I am proud and pleased that the Swedish Government prioritizes the matter of male violence against women and has respect for the work that the women's shelters perform. However there is still a lot to be done.

During the last thirty years many positive things have been achieved for battered women and children. To a great extent this is thanks to the women's movement that have advocated and fought for changes in legislation concerning male violence against women. Together we have worked to put the problem of male violence on the political agenda.

In 1864 it became illegal for husbands to batter their wives. But it was not until 1982 that all assault and battery against women became subject to public prosecution, even if committed on private property.

The same year 1982, a ban on pornographic "live shows" in places open to public, was introduced.

In 1988 the Restraining Order Act was introduced, which gave women further protection against harassments from ex-partners. Big improvements were also made thanks to a government bill on violence against women. In the late 1990's new laws concerning violence against women and female genital mutilation was passed, as well as a law prohibiting the

purchase of sexual services. In recent years Sweden has also improved the legislation on sexual crimes.

The first women shelters in Sweden were founded in 1978, in Stockholm and Gothenburg. Roks was established in 1984. Since then we have been working against male violence against women, young women and children (including sexual assaults and harassment, pornography, prostitution, rape, trafficking, honour-related violence and female genital mutilation).

Apart from the women's shelters efforts to influence the political agenda and shape public opinion, we also work directly with abused and battered women. The women's shelters can offer support in many different ways. In dialogue with the woman we work to rebuild her life. Often this involves contact with different authorities, such as social services and the police.

Being subjected to violence by a partner gradually breaks the woman down. It often takes a lot of time and support for her to regain her self-confidence and self-esteem. It's also important to relieve the woman from guilt and shame, in order for her to be able to move on with her life.

I myself have worked at a women's shelter for more than ten years, and I would say that the greatest obstacle is still myths and prejudices.

Sweden is the best country in the world when it comes to legislation concerning male violence against women. But as long as there are myths and prejudices, legislation will not be enough.

For example, if a police officer feels that a woman who reports being battered by her husband is to blame, because she seems temperamental or confused, it will reflect on the investigation.

The same problem applies when it comes to rape. We have improved the legislation, but still few of the rapes reported to the police leads to indictments. I am convinced that education and increased knowledge can help to change this.

More education within the judicial system as well as awareness-raising efforts throughout the society are necessary to fight old myths and prejudices. It is also important that we evaluate the application and results of new legislation.

Furthermore, we must be aware of what message different laws send. The message should be that the society takes seriously the problem of male violence against women. That physical or mental abuse of women or children is a crime, regardless of the circumstances, the woman's personality or background, if the victim and/or the perpetrator had been drinking etcetera.

Despite the challenges that we face in our future work, I feel confident that the power within the women's movement will help us reach our goal – to eradicate male violence against women.

Thank you!

Appendix 4

Eva Engman

Speech at the Arctic women conference

It's fantastic, the Arctic Women Conference has been realized. I'm very happy to see all of you here during this weekend, from shelters and crises centres from all the invited countries.

The county organization Kvinnojourer i Norrbotten, Women's Shelters in Norrbotten, will welcome you to this conference on a very important item, men's violence against women, a very serious problem all over the world.

The idea for this conference was raised in Copenhagen, when I and Gudrun Jonsdottir from Iceland met in a seminar in a Nordic Baltic project. We came to talk about gathering women from the arctic countries, who are working against men's violence.

We wanted to bring back to life, the network and cooperation, which have been working several years ago.

There has been a network, named NCRB, Network for Crises Centres in the Russian Barents Region, and in the Barents region as a whole. Women from shelters and crises centres in north west Russia, northern Finland, Norway and Sweden, met in the different countries to share knowledge and experiences from their work against men's violence against women, and the work to support and help women who suffer from this violence.

About 20 years ago, there has also been another network working, women from shelters and crises centres in the north of Sweden and Norway, and also from Iceland, met to share experiences from their work.

We now want to gather women from these shelters and crises centres for discussing how to go further with continuous network and cooperation, and also invite women from Greenland and Faeroe Islands to take part.

I will mention some interesting projects, which I and Mildred have been working in, which have contributed to the development of the work against violence against women in the Barents region.

In 1997 we started up two crises centres for women in Murmansk region, in Apatity and Polyarnye Zori, and these centres are still working. We are very happy for that. Participants from these crises centres are here today in the conference.

In 2003 we worked with an information- and media campaign in Murmansk Region, against prostitution and trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. The crises centres in Murmansk Region took part in the campaign.

Some years ago, I was in Sortavala in Russian Karelia, and met women who were going to start up a crises centre for abused women, and now I see that a crises centre has started. I am very glad for that.

I have never been in Iceland, Faeroe Islands and Greenland. I have met women from Iceland, but nobody from Greenland and Faeroe Islands. It will be very interesting to hear about your work, and to see you in a future cooperation.

This is the start for this women conference. I think that it's very important to come together, women from shelters and crises centres within this Arctic area, to develop a strong Arctic cooperation, and also to make joint actions in this important question, men's violence against women, which is present in all countries.

I hope that this conference will be a start for continuous cooperation. We need each other.

For planning this conference we have been a project group, Evelyn Bentzen from Tromsø crises centre, Gudrun Jonsdottir from Stigamot in Iceland, Olga Lyapunova from Crises Centre Bridges of Mercy in Archangelsk, Mildred Hedberg from Women's Shelter Iris in Luleå, and myself from the organizing organization Women's Shelters in Norrbotten.

Thank you so much! Without you, the conference had not been realized.

Once again, I and my organization Women's Shelters in Norrbotten are very happy to see you all here, and we hope that the conference will be very fruitful for all of you.

Thank you!

Appendix 5

Eva Lundgren

Speech at the Arctic women conference

The same violence – or absent violence

Introduction

Just before Christmas I attended a conference in Tromsø, and happened to see a strange thing on Norwegian television. It was a video from the website YouTube with women who called themselves the *Skippagurra girls*. As you might know, Skippagurra in the municipality of Tana in Finnmark, Norway, is known as a place where men buy sex from Russian women. But the Skippagurra girls of this video were not Russian women. Neither were they just any anonymous women. They were young women from the Norwegian skier elite, young world class ski stars. Dancing, twisting and turning, with little clothes and much make up, they said that they were playing Russian whores. The video was referred to as the “whore video”.

At first, the only ones who reacted to this were the secretariat of the Norwegian shelter movement, and one shelter. I have understood that a small debate then developed, in which loud male sport journalists hushed up any other attempts to speak about the matter: This was just for fun! they said. Finally there are some young girls with humour, who are not as insignificant and dull as always, just saying “I did my best”. Finally these girls are playful and funny! Hurray!

I ask: Which is the funny part of this? To “dress oneself up as a whore”? Those men from the north of Norway buy Russian women? Or to be reminded of how great it is that women are sexually available to men? I guess that the funny and playful part is *not* that buying women’s bodies reminds us of the “market”, that is, men’s interest in and possibility to buy women? I guess that the humorous aspect is *not* that men’s power on the arena of prostitution is connected to violence – as it is on other arenas? None of these questions were presented; instead, the issues of power and violence were totally absent from the debate.

This is the topic of my speech today – how violence, which is a widespread reality according to all European prevalence studies – is absent, or made absent, or, at best, presented as a small, marginal problem. This is

done in different ways. For instance, the way we talk about violence, allows for interpretations that make the violence absent. But these reinterpretations also make women's reality absent, a reality in which too many women live. 46 per cent of women in Sweden report experiences of violence, according to the study *Captured Queen* (2001/2002).

In this speech, first I will present some extracts from men's reasoning, as expressed in my own model of interpretation about the process normalising violence, and show you how men make their violence "disappear". After that, I will discuss how the same happens at a municipal level, using other tricks, here I will present some examples from Sweden. Finally, I will return to the Skippagurra girls of the video, and conclude with an urgent request to you to see violence *as violence*, and not as something else.

Why do I raise these issues today? Because the Swedish experience – of the condemnation of feminist knowledge about violence that began with the television program *Könskriget* (The gender war) – tells me that a struggle about the reality of violence awaits us. This struggle will be about how we interpret reality. Different interpretations may stress the wide range and complexity of violence, or instead, may marginalise and minimize violence, make the violence disappear through reinterpretations of reality. (There are many feminist oriented researchers at Swedish universities who try to obtain funding for studying the perpetrators of violence, but it seems that the funding wallet is closed to our initiatives.)

The process of normalising violence: controlling women's life space

When I first set out to interview violent men, I had already interviewed their female partners. Through these women's experiences, I had already acquired some basic knowledge about the process of violence. It was clear to me that violence is an ongoing process in which limits are erased and displaced.

The man who batters his female partner – and we know that many men also batter their children – preferably batter at home, often when the two of them are alone, and he carefully controls where, how, and how much he hits. Hence, the violence is not blind, it is a controlled act, directed against the woman. The man who batters controls the person, place, time and way. In other words, he is in control 'in' and 'outside' the moment of the act. He is in power. This gives us reason to examine what he might achieve through this carefully directed and highly controlled action. For instance by looking at emotional control; is he emotionally controlled and – if so – what does he gain from that?

Throughout, the men stress that they have such control, even when they are angry and furious:

"I've never got so provoked that I've lost control, far from it. But I can get terribly angry, I get totally upset when she enters into her crazy

projects. And then I hit, of course. But I do it to set limits. I have to set limits.”

This is a typical statement, and its core is: to set limits. The men say that they hit – yes, they admit it – to mark a limit to the woman’s actions. This is efficient as she (in this case a woman called Randi) immediately understands where the line is drawn. The man who was quoted above (Randi’s husband), thinks that when Randi entrusts her friends with family matters, or come to agreements that include him without asking him, it is highly efficient to set limits in a controlled, “cold” emotional condition. Then he manages to show where the limit runs. Emotional control is combined with battering, but the violence is toned down, the point is to mark limits, being emotionally controlled.

While this first man thinks that he must set limits to his woman’s social space, other men emphasise other aspects of the woman’s life space to be restricted. The aspects men consider so negative that a limit must be set, differ, and also vary with time and situation. The pattern in the men’s statements is the emphasis on emotional control in the moment of the act – a high degree of control, or total control – since the most efficient is to mark a limit in a condition of emotional control. So, we must understand the emotional control in the moment as related to controlling the woman’s life space. The violence? It becomes secondary! It is just a tool, in line with other acceptable methods.

In the moment, *in the short term*, when the man hits her – he achieves to mark a limit and thereby to control those parts of the woman’s life space that he wishes to control. But the way he talks about it, the violence almost becomes absent.

What does he achieve *in the long term*? Let us (move from emotional control to) examine another control mechanism: isolation.

Generally, men isolate their partners in the process of normalisation. As we know from studying the normalisation of violence from women’s point of view, the women may also take an interest in the isolation. Possibly, the only part that remains of her self-respect is the hope that no others know about it – know that she is ‘like that’, that she is a person who needs to be brought up, who does not know the limits – which this is all she is worth. From the women’s point of view, the consequences of isolation are fatal and highly dangerous.

As mentioned, generally men isolate their partners in the process of normalisation, either physically – the woman might not be allowed to see other people than those approved by him, or she is more or less denied a social life outside their home. Alternatively, he may isolate her mentally – she is not allowed to give other people insight into their domestic life, at least not the private family matters of their close relationship, like love – or violence.

The man I quoted does not want his partner to entrust other people with family matters, and he has tried to stop her from doing so. He has

been using the necessary tool: he has isolated her. First he locked up her telephone, after a while he brought the telephone to work, and later he simply locked her up:

“Then she becomes aware of ... of... the total dependence. You can’t express everything with words. What I want when I keep her away from others is to have her to myself, so that I can explain to her in different ways the meaning of her life.”

In this example, the woman was first denied to see women friends as often as she wanted, then she was denied to see them at all, and after a while she was isolated from her family, and so on. As time goes by, the extent and form of the isolation changes unnoticeably, and the isolation grows to become really extreme. Her partner is in control of who she should see, what she can say, even what she should think and feel.

This is a substantial – but gradual – reduction of her life space: The men achieve *in the long term* both social, intellectual and emotional control, and the limits of what is allowed change gradually. So, emotionally controlled battering, combined with isolation, is efficient. And both battering and isolation change during the process of normalisation, gradually, getting more brutal and “extreme”.

Just like other men who batter systematically, when Randi’s husband talks about isolation, he talks about what he achieve – rather than talking about violence as a way of drastically controlling the life space of women. As mentioned, the physical violence becomes secondary, just one of many acceptable tools to reach his goal. The violence fades away.

Now, let us turn to another tool. It is well known that the effect of torture is increased when pain alternates with care. When the pain fails to appear, the victim will feel devotion, and the torturer provides for his or her needs of rest, comfort and understanding – or food and drink. The dynamics of torture, which is often called the hostage syndrome or the Stockholm syndrome (with reference to the hostage drama at a bank at Norrmalmstorg in Stockholm) is also valid for relationships in a process of normalisation; the effects of violence and other control tools increase through the alternation between violence, warmth and care.

According to women, this alternation is incredibly efficient as a long-term strategy. To exemplify this from the men’s point of view: One of the men in my material, Hans, is a brutal abuser. His battering has become serious and dangerous. He often brings his wife to the borderland between life and death. In a terrible concrete way, his wife experiences that he is the one to decide whether she is supposed to live or die, this time, every time. Then – when he feels that her life depends on him and that her possible death is at his mercy – he again becomes kind and affectionate; he wipes her face, tenderly looks after her, then there are no limits to his attention. He tells me that afterwards, he will get her a napkin or a towel from the bathroom, and “...I look after her, take care of her”. Afterwards, he never leaves her, “when she needs me, when she is weak and in pain”. The fact

that he is the one who makes her blood stream, who beats her unconscious, until she cannot get up – this fact disappears when he changes and becomes her rescuer and saviour. In his reality. And in hers. And also in his words; when he talks about violence, he uses other terms: “I did what was right”, “I put her into place”, and I brought her up”.

For the women, this alternation is confusing at first. But gradually she sees herself with her partners’ eyes: as a worthless woman in need of his love. His words. Gradually she sees/experiences love. His words. And she chooses to stay with him.

So, the man who beats her achieves control of her (inner) life space, also because he is sometimes kind and affectionate. His reality becomes hers: His “violence” – “I did what was right”, “I put her into place”, I brought her up” – actually expresses love. Through this, the violence disappears. This is not only because her devotion grows stronger if he occasionally shows concern and love. There is something else: He is the one to decide when, where and how to hit; when, where and how to stop; and how close to the limit of death he will bring her, before – when, where and how – he changes, switches: to tenderly stroke and love her. This alternation and his deciding when, where, how – is the very efficient (“more”).

To sum up, from the men’s point of view: They seem to achieve a short-term control of their woman through emotional control in the moment of violence, that is, control of the (or those) part(s) of her life space that he wishes to control, and how much he wishes to reduce it (them). In the moment, he marks the limit for what she can do, say, think, feel. Choosing person, time, place and way of violence, calling it something else, and combining it with other strategies like isolation and alternation between violence and care, he also achieves a long-term control of the woman. In this way, he can control all parts of her life, even her inner life (the process of internalisation). He can reduce each of these parts so that the space left for her becomes extremely small, so small that she can hardly turn around without being hit by the violence, which goes by a different name. This way, the man achieves total control of the life of his woman. Both the quantitative and the qualitative reduction – where his reality becomes hers and she comes to experience his care as love – are gradual, sliding and almost unnoticeable.

I have the process of normalising violence as an example to show – that violence is always combined with other control mechanisms. They are all tools of power, and combined with each other they become very efficient, but they are seldom talked about in terms of power. Even the violence is transformed to something else – and this way, the violence is minimized and even appears as an expression of love. During the normalisation process the cruel reality is hidden and disappears.

At the arena of violence, power is exercised in many ways – all of them linked to masculinity – and to what kind of woman you and I are

reduced to. As I see it from my perspective – violence is a strategy to become a man. What kind of men do they create themselves as, during the process of violence? And what kinds of women are allowed in this process: a no-thing?

Now – let us move to a different perspective:

How is violence presented/talked about in the municipalities?

I will now go from a micro level – not to a macro level – but to what is often called a middle level, and briefly discuss the example of the Swedish municipalities. The researchers Carin Holmberg & Christine Bender, in their research about the local political discourse on violence in so-called close relationships, made a survey among the directors of social services and also interviewed politicians at a municipal level (2001, 2003). They established that the matter of men's violence is *present* within the municipalities.

First of all, men's violence is talked about in a *general* sense, and is presented as a general political and humanistic matter of everybody's concern. Sometimes the politically correct message from Kvinnofrid (Women's Peace) is repeated: Violence is the most extreme expression of men's power, and gender and power are interconnected.

Secondly, violence is talked about in a *concrete* sense within the own municipality, and then men's violence is presented as a matter of health care. Concrete violence is talked about as a matter of individual men's powerlessness, despair, inferiority complex; men who use violence are failures and mentally ill. Also, those who are exposed to men's violence are presented as particular and different; particularly exposed to begin with, and particularly noticeable afterwards. Abused women should look battered, knocked about, injured and bleeding. In this way, women that none would want to be identified with to begin with, are beaten by men that this survey chooses not to identify with. Moreover, none of those who were interviewed in this survey knew of any women exposed to violence, nor any men who use violence.

This individualising and psychologising frame of interpretation focuses on the character of the violent perpetrator, how he "is" – and his partner, or on how they "are doing", rather than focusing on the violence that he uses. This lack of focus on the violence makes it easier for the violence to disappear. (By way of parenthesis: This individual "deviance" perspective on violence has a long tradition in Sweden, according to the doctoral dissertation of political scientist Maria Wendt Höjer (2002), and it is still popular today. One example is the location of the recently founded NKC, National Centre of Knowledge on Violence, at an institute of medicine.)

(Another parenthesis: The politicians and employees of the municipalities are consistent, though; they even individualise and psychologise

those who work with violence at the shelters; they are viewed as extremely radical, they are talked about as man-haters, militant feminists and extreme women. End of parenthesis.)

Hence, the concrete violence in “our” municipality is a problem within limits, it really only exists “over there”, for instance in Stockholm, among people that are particularly exposed – people of lower classes, with special problems – and from other ethnic groups. It is visible from a long distance: splatter movie.

Men’s violence is hence something that can be discussed at a general level, as a humanistic matter, and sometimes as a lesson from Kvinnofrid (Women’s Peace) (in general terms of gender and power). To bring the matter to a head: The violence is always somewhere else, our municipality is a peaceful exception in an elsewhere violent Sweden. The frames of interpretation used by local politicians and employees make the reality disappear. The lesson from Kvinnofrid (Women’s Peace) on gender and power is not relevant in “our” municipality, gender and power are forgotten when it comes to the concrete violence of “our” municipality. So, at a concrete level, violence hasn’t got anything to do with gender and power.

This means that men’s violence has no violent actors in “our” municipality, there are no concrete men that use violence, at least no normal men, and no normal women are exposed to violence. The extensive reality of violence that we know of, that 46 per cent of women in Sweden has experiences of violence, is reinterpreted and appears unreal. Is this a high price to be able to sleep in peace and quiet?

In my interpretation, this survey confirms the experiences of many of us who work with men’s violence in one way or another. Myths and prejudice block the view for politicians and employees at a municipal level, among others/the public discourse: an ingrained, but incorrect picture – of what the violence looks like, and who are involved. This makes it almost impossible to see violence as an extensive problem, or to see its consequences for women’s living conditions – and in the own municipality (as among the involved/micro level) violence practically disappears altogether, as there are no violent perpetrators.

By way of conclusion

So far, I have discussed men’s violence at a micro level, and also at a middle level. I have discussed how the violence disappears through how we talk about violence – the question is how we can talk about violence to ensure that it *does not* disappear. Now I will return to the Skippagurra girls, the funny and playful ones. Is it possible that the strong resistance against feminist knowledge about violence, which deals with how we talk about violence, is connected to prostitution? The resistance against feminist knowledge about violence is based on a wish to preserve the separation between “us” (normal, common) and “them” (special, different).

This is also the case when it comes to women in prostitution, it is necessary and important that “they” appear as different from you and me; either they are particularly exposed, which without doubt many of them are, or they are “strange” in the sense that they choose this job, which is called sex-work with the new terminology.

Jenny Westerstrand, in her doctoral dissertation about prostitution and trafficking called “Between the hands of men” (2008), claims that when it comes to men’s violence, it appears almost impossible to speak of *sexual violence, violence used by strange men outside of close relationships, and violence at a public arena outside of the home* – she refers to our experience from the reception of the prevalence survey Captured Queen. Still today, violence should exclusively refer to physical violence, violence in close relationships, domestic violence – end of story. All the other aspects of violence – sexual violence, violence used by strange men outside of close relationships, and violence at a public arena outside of the home – are connected to the arena of prostitution. If these aspects of violence represent a large extent of violence against women in Sweden – which it does according to Captured Queen – this suggests that there is a connection between women in prostitution – “them” – and women outside of prostitution – “us”. And it is dangerous to hint at this link, to suggest that there is a connection between us.

Because this would make it impossible to hide the connection between men’s concrete use of violence, and sexuality and women’s gender. I wonder if the humour of the Skippagurra girls may be located here. I don’t think so. But maybe the Skippagurra girls unintentionally suggest this when they say that: “We became closer friends with the whore video.” Sure. There is a connection, a way of belonging, we are the same kind in this respect. We are called women. Culturally, women signal sexual availability, and are surrounded by a heavy social reality: violence.

Let us focus on violence when we try to fight violence, let us discuss violence *as* violence and not as anything else, let us establish that men’s violence is never about powerlessness, but about exercising a power that humiliates and destroys women. When violence is used, there is always a perpetrator; fight him, and fight the conditions that let him continue using violence.

Appendix 6

Olga Lyapunova

Speech at the Arctic women conference

Crisis Centres for women in Russia today - problems and prospects

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my report I would like to tell you about the situation of crisis centres in Russia today. The information I am presenting to you is based on the survey conducted in summer and autumn 2008.

But first of all, I would like to tell you about the pre-history of this research and this project.

I have been studying crisis centres in Russia since 1999, when I began to work as a manager of the project “A Network of Women Crisis Centres in the Barents Region” (NCRB).

The main organiser and leader of this project has been Aino Saarinen from Finland. The hostesses of the present conference Eva Engman and Mildred Hedberg from Luleå have also taken active part in work of the NCRB project and organised training courses and seminars for crisis centres within its framework.

The NCRB project has united women crisis centres in the northern regions of Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia, which belong to the so called Barents region. Many of these centres participate in the conference today.

Within the framework of this project a comparative cross-cultural research of crisis centres in the Northern countries was conducted in 2000. Besides, there were described different types of crisis centres, which exist in the Barents region. The NCRB project has ended its work in 2005.

In spring 2008 I became a participant of the new research project “The crisis centres for women in Russia today: a national survey study” at the Aleksanteri Institute in Helsinki.

The research group includes Aino Saarinen from Aleksanteri Institute at Helsinki University, Janet Elise Johnson from City University of New York, Irina Dracheva and me from Pomor State University in Archangelsk.

Within the framework of this new project we worked out a questionnaire to study crisis centres in Russia. The questionnaire was aimed at

investigating various aspects of crisis centres activity (legal status of the organisations, financing, ideology and concrete forms of work with clients, contacts with authorities and other organisations, etc.) The survey was sent electronically to more than 100 units. At present we received 25 questionnaires filled in by Russian crisis centres. Geographically they present a vast territory of Russia from its north western boundaries to Siberia and Far East. Such big cities as Moscow and St Petersburg are presented in our investigation. A lot of questionnaires we got from north western part of Russia, from those centres, with which there had been established good contacts during the time of the NCRB project. I take the opportunity and thank once again those Russian centres, which are present here now, for participation in our survey.

Organisations which filled in the forms and allowed us to mention them in our publication are located in such cities as: Moscow and St Petersburg; Murmansk, Apatity and Severomorsk (in Murmansk region); Petrozavodsk and Sortavala (in Republic of Karelia); Archangelsk, Syktyvkar (in Komi Republic); Rybinsk (in Yaroslavl region); Pskov, Smolensk, Rostov-on-Don, Toliatti, Ulan-Ude; Sayansk (in Irkutsk region); Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk and Blagoveschensk. You can see them in the map.

Of course, we didn't manage to get information about all crisis centres in Russia, but what we have learnt already allows us to make some conclusions about the state of crisis centres in the country.

I would like to present some preliminary results of the research in my presentation.

So, what is the present day situation of crisis centres in Russia? In order to understand it, we should start with the history of this problem, first.

The idea to create crisis institutions for women came to Russia from the west. Of course, the problem of domestic violence existed in Russia like in many other countries. But there were no any special organisations dealing with this problem up to 1990s.

First crisis centres for women in Russia started to appear at the beginning of 1990s within the framework of women's movement and they were connected with the ideology of feminism. At first, such centres were established in the largest cities of the country – Moscow and St Petersburg in 1992 – 1994. Then they started spreading to other cities of Russia.

First crisis centres in Russia were autonomous non-profit organisations by their status. (Hereinafter we call them NGOs). The establishment of such institutions itself became possible due to the change of the Russian legislation during the time of reconstruction (Perestroika). In the first years of their formation crisis centres got financial support from international foundations and programmes. Ideologically they were connected with the movement of feminism. Crisis centres began to help women in the situation of domestic and sexual violence. Besides, they did a lot to

raise awareness of the society about the problem of domestic violence, and they were first who spoke openly about this in the media.

Later crisis centres of another type appeared in the country: they were municipal and state organisations (state agencies). The fact of establishment of such units tells about a new attitude to the problem of domestic violence in the society. Some of such centres were created under the pressure of activists of the women's movement and with their direct participation. Very often such state and municipal crisis centres were formed not as autonomous organisations, but as crisis departments at existed already centres of social services. As a rule, these were Complex centres of social services for population or Centres of social assistance to families and children.

Thus, at present there are two types of crisis centres in Russia: both NGOs and state organisations, which differ from each other in many respects: ideology, working practice and financial resources.

Let's turn to the results of our research, in which 25 units from different regions of Russia took part.

1.Types of crisis centres

Among the forms we have received there are present organisations of both types that exist in Russia (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Types of the crisis centres, participated in the research

Blue represents NGOs and red represents state centres in the figure.

All in all, 4 state and 4 municipal organisations took part in the survey, further we call them state organisations for brevity, because they belong to the state system of social services for population and don't differ from each other in principle (not taking into account the sources of financing). Among them only one unit is autonomous – it is “Crisis centre

of assistance to women” in St Petersburg. The rest centres are departments of broad social services for population.

Also, there were 17 NGOs that participated in our research. From them only one crisis centre from Pskov is a department of another organisation. The other centres are autonomous organisations.

2. Years of creation of crisis centres

Figure 2. Years of creation of crisis centres.

Blue represents NGOs and red represents state centres in the figure.

As we can see in the Figure 2, these were NGOs that first appeared in Russia (1992, 1993), and state units were established later.

It is important that among our respondents there are the oldest and the most well-known crisis centres in Moscow and St Petersburg, therefore the data we have obtained in the survey show well the real dynamics of appearance of new crisis centres in Russia.

So, the first stage of crisis centres' formation in Russia (1992–1995) is represented by creation of NGOs connected with the movement of crisis centres abroad and the feminist ideology. Crisis organisations receive financial support from abroad.

The period of 1999–2001 represents the highest peak of new crisis centres' formation in Russia, mainly NGOs. By 1999 about 30 crisis centres had been founded in 20 regions of Russia, but already in 2001 more than 100 units declared about their existence. In some big cities (Moscow and St Petersburg.) there were active 2 or 3 different crisis organisations.

In 1999 there was also established the Russian association of crisis centres, which did a lot for creation of new centres and for personnel training in newly created organisations all over Russia.

At this stage international foundations (American and European) continue to play a great role in establishment and support of Russian crisis

units. What about North West of Russia, crisis centres of the Northern countries and the NCRB project made a great contribution to strengthening of crisis organisations there and to improvement of their work.

Later new crisis centres go on to appear in Russia, both NGOs and state (as we can see in the Figure 2, at least, up to 2006). However their creation is not of mass character. Besides, in the recent years there begins a process of closing of existed crisis organisations and changing of their activity profile.

The present-day period can be called the most hard and complicated for Russian crisis centres. It is characterised by financial problems, as well as by sharp decrease of the number of crisis centres in Russia, first of all – NGOs. The reason of this is not only the world financial crisis of 2008, but also changes in Russian legislation of 2006.

Three years ago there were changes in the existed legislation about NGOs, and in connection with them the character of NGOs' registration has changed and state control over using of foreign financial sources by nongovernmental organisations has increased. International support has essentially decreased, that has brought many NGO units, which depended on foreign sources, to the verge of closing.

In reply to our inquiry a number of crisis centres wrote to us about the end of their activity for lack of financing. For instance, in 2006–2007 there were closed NGO crisis centres in Naberezhnye Chelny, Nizhniy Tagil, Maikop (in Republic of Adygeia) and others. In May 2008 the NGO centre “Scanna” was closed in Murmansk.

Some state organisations are also closed. For instance, in 2005 a municipal crisis department for women was closed in Archangelsk, now it deals with children from marginal families.

It's difficult to say how many crisis centres are left in Russia at all by the present moment. But it cannot be even doubted that their number has essentially decreased for the recent years.

A number of organisations have changed the direction of their activity. For example, the NGO centre “Maja” from Petrozavodsk continues to work as a women's organisation, but doesn't deal with problems connected with domestic and sexual violence any more. The same situation we can see in Kostamuksha in Karelia Republic. Such a tendency is observed first of all in those cities, where besides NGOs there are municipal organisations, which are able to provide help to women in situation of violence.

By the end of 2004 NCRB project united 16 crisis centres in North West Russia (both NGO and municipal). Out of 16 crisis centres only 11 ones continue working as crisis organisations in 2008 (i.e. two thirds of units).

3. Ideology of crisis centres.

Crisis centres adhere to different ideological positions. Figure 3 represents replies of 25 organisations.

Figure 3. The ideological starting points

As we can see from the diagram all the centres consider it important advocating women's rights in general. It is the only point that doesn't cause disagreement between them. But the question about the attitude to feminism divides the centres most of all.

Only 9 organisations out of 25 consider the ideology of feminism important to them. These 9 organisations comprise 2 state units and 7 NGOs.

At the same time only 5 crisis centres identify themselves as feminist organizations. All of them are NGOs, created in the period from 1992 till 1998, i.e. during the first wave of Russian crisis centres establishment. All of them are located in big cities (Moscow, St Petersburg, Murmansk, Pskov, Ulan-Ude) and at least 3 of them maintain regular close contacts with other feminist organizations both in our country and abroad.

56 per cent of crisis centres don't agree with the ideology of feminism. This can be explained by the fact that in Russia feminism isn't still popular as an ideology or as a political trend. Therefore many employees of crisis centres aren't clear in their mind what views of feminism are, and they try to keep away from it. It is especially typical for state crisis centres.

88 per cent of our respondents consider it is important to protect family and child welfare, as well as to solve social problems. It refers to all the state crisis units replied to us. The most popular wording of the basic goal of such centres is "help to women in various difficult situations".

And these are some feminist organizations first of all, which don't agree that their main goal should be protection of family and child welfare.

4. The main directions of crisis centres activity.

Figure 4. The main directions of work

What are the main directions of crisis centres activity in the last few years?

These are:

- domestic violence – for 100 per cent of units;
- sexual violence – for only 56 per cent of crisis centres (Half of state units and 40 per cent of NGOs don't consider this as a main direction);
- trafficking in women or forced prostitution is an important direction for 48 per cent (noteworthy that 11 out of 12 organizations, who mentioned it, were NGOs);
- help to women in difficult life situations is important for 100 per cent of state and 80 per cent of NGO units;
- finally, work with men is considered important for only a third of all centres (3 state and 5 NGO organizations).

Among various forms of work with clients in crisis centres the most spread are psychological and social counselling (all organizations provide these kinds of help to women). Health-related counselling is much more seldom, almost a third of centres don't conduct it at all. Legal counselling is not provided in the only one centre (a state unit). Group training for clients is organized in 60 per cent of crisis centres and self help groups – in a little more than a half (the difference between NGO and state organizations is insignificant).

Hotline is a typical activity in a majority of crisis centres, however there is no hotline in four units out of all the respondents (all of them are NGOs). This is most likely connected with financing difficulties in these organizations.

Figure 5. Different services in the crisis centres

It is also noteworthy that only 5 crisis centres (3 of them are state units) have managed to organize around-the-clock work of hotline. In some organizations hotline is available during just 2–3 hours a day, and in 60 per cent of centres it is not operative at weekends. Of course, such hotline schedule is insufficient for rendering full value help to women in crisis situations in most of the cities.

The most complicated issue for crisis centres is opening and maintenance of a shelter for victims of domestic violence. It is these features that sharply distinguish Russian crisis centres from western organizations. At present only a third of units have a shelter for women. 6 out of 7 shelters are state, and only 1 is nongovernmental. This shelter is located in Pskov, and it has been opened just in 2008. Among the rest respondents 3 more NGOs used to have a shelter (they were opened in 1997, 2000 and 2006), but all of them have been very recently closed for lack of financing (in December 2007, in March and May 2008). Under present day conditions it is possible to maintain a shelter for only state agencies.

For lack of a possibility to provide shelter to women exposed to family violence, crisis centres turn out to be mainly consultative organizations, which are shown in Figure 5. This fact undoubtedly limits resources to help women in situation of domestic violence.

Figure 6. Activities in the crisis centres

Besides the mentioned above, important directions of crisis centres' activity are also campaigning, lobbying political decision-makers, as well as awareness raising on the problems of violence to women. As we can see in Figure 6, NGOs are more active in these fields of activity.

96 per cent of all the respondents carry out awareness raising on the problems of violence to women through the media (except for 1 state unit).

28 per cent of centres don't take part in campaigning against violence, among state organizations it's a half which don't participate in campaigns.

More than a half of all crisis centres don't lobby political decision-makers to improve the existing legislation on the problem of violence, among them 87 per cent of all state units (all but one). Such activity is hardly expected from agencies which belong to the state system of social services for population. Nevertheless, far from all NGO crisis centres conduct this work. In this respect the most active are NGOs, located in central cities – Moscow and St Petersburg.

5. Clients of crisis centres.

Clients of crisis centres first of all consist women exposed to different kinds of violence. However, many centres also help women in difficult life situations (all state units and 76 per cent of NGOs). 80 per cent of all our respondent centres consider immediate help to victims of violence as their priority task.

Some centres also work with men. This issue divides the centres greatly, and a number of organizations are strongly against such work. For instance, 28 per cent of the centres, replied to us, believe that crisis centres shouldn't conduct preventive work with male perpetrators and 36

per cent of centres are against the idea to organize work with perpetrators in crisis centres directly.

Practically preventive work with men is conducted by 10 centres, 9 units work with male perpetrators and 13 of all the replied organizations, i.e. 52 per cent work with men with their normal personal problems. State crisis centres work with men more actively, but only few NGOs carry out such activity.

Crisis centres also provide help to children (including witnesses of domestic violence and victims of sexual violence and incest). Among state organizations there are three thirds of such centres, among NGOs – less than a half (41 per cent).

The number of clients in crisis centres vary widely, in some state organizations it runs up to 2–3 thousands people / a year (the data refer to 2007). In this case clients include all women in various difficult life situations, as well as men and children. As a rule, NGOs have much less clients. The overwhelming majority of all clients in crisis centres are adult women.

6.Resources of crisis centres

Figure 7. Main sources for funding

Financial sources in crisis centres depend most of all on the type of organization. For state units the main source (up to 100 per cent of the budget) is municipal, regional or federal financing, as a rule. Very few NGOs can use this source. For example, in 2007 only 2 NGOs received 50–65 per cent of financing from the regional means and 3 units – from the federal one (1 per cent, 29 per cent and 30 per cent of the annual budget correspondingly).

For NGOs the main source of financing is grants. Out of 17 nongovernmental centres, that replied to us, 11 got international grants (which composed from 64 per cent to 100 per cent of budget), 5–national (from

10–20 per cent to 95 per cent of budget) and 4–municipal and regional grants (from one-fifth to the whole volume of annual budget). Thus, 65 per cent of NGOs are still dependent on foreign sources of financing. All 17 surveyed NGOs and one state agency applied for a grant in 2007; two-thirds of NGOs were successful.

2 state centres and 3 NGOs also used individual donations as a very small part of their budget in 2007.

Real budgets and resources of organizations also differ to a very great extent. Only 9 centres (all of which were NGOs) replied to the question about their annual budget. The figures about 2007 varied from \$ 400 up to about \$ 150 000, which equalled to \$ 33 500 on average. This demonstrates what small resources NGO centres have and how difficult it is to survive to them.

What about facilities available at crisis centres, about one-third of them (8 out of 25 centres, 7 of which were NGOs) didn't even have premises, as well as a fax machine, but most had phones, computers, and internet (not surprisingly since we conducted the survey mostly via email).

Replies about funding changes for the last 2–3 years varied from centre to centre irrespective of their type. But in spite of this scattering, the survey has outlined a picture of relative stability – for most state agencies funding increased and for NGOs it stayed about the same (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Evaluate approximately, how has the total budget amount of your crisis centre changed for the last 2–3 years?

However, if we look at concrete sources of financing in crisis centres, big changes for the last 2–3 years are observed in individual donations and foreign funding. 7 organizations (including 2 state agencies) mentioned about increasing of individual donations (unlike 1 centre that mentioned about their decreasing). Though the amount of these donations stays quite small compared to the whole budget of centres.

9 organizations (8 of them were NGOs) indicated a decrease or even a substantial decrease of foreign grants, whereas only 2 NGOs replied that foreign financing increased and for 5 NGOs it stayed at the same level.

However, those NGOs which had already closed by 2008 because of lack of financing, couldn't reply to our question.

On the whole, financial life and resources of majority of state centres are much more favourable in contrast to NGOs. When asked if they viewed their centres as stable, most state agencies said yes, most NGO crisis centres said no.

Conclusion

In conclusion let us remind that only 25 crisis centres of Russia took part in our research.

A more complete and exhaustive picture of Russian crisis centres' plight and prospects of their development can be drawn only after analysing of the situation in all regions of the country.

To summarise the aforesaid, we would like to review the problems and prospects of Russian crisis centres.

The most urgent are the following three problems:

1. Small and evidently insufficient number of shelters for women.
2. Imperfectness of Russian legislation in questions of violence against women.
3. Financing problems of nongovernmental crisis centres.

At the same time some prospects of further improvement and development of Russian crisis centres are noteworthy. One of such prospects consists in broadening and strengthening of the network of state crisis centres for women. To all appearances, position of state crisis centres (in contrast to NGOs) is quite stable and safe. It is connected with stable federal, regional or municipal financing of organisations' activities. Such centres are multi direction and, as a rule, are oriented to provision of help to women in difficult life situations. Broadening of the network of these centres all over Russia will allow many women to get support in situation of domestic and sexual violence.

One of problematic issues is connected with durability of state centres' activity. They are not independent in choice of their work directions, but depend on parent organisations. The character of these crisis centres' activity is dependent now and will be dependent in future on the state social politics and on priority development lines of the state system of social services for population.

The known to us, cases of not only opening, but also closing of municipal crisis centres for women or changing of their work direction of the will of city administration exemplify that.

What about positive practices, it's worth to mention establishing of interaction by state crisis centres with nongovernmental women's organisa-

tions, as well as their active participation in awareness raising on the problems of violence through the media.

What about NGOs, under conditions of the world financial crisis and difficult economic situation for non-profit sector of Russia as a whole, it is more complicated to build prospects of their work in future for such centres.

The last few years became hard times for NGO crisis centres. As we have already mentioned above, because of essential decreasing of foreign financing some NGOs had to be closed, some are at the edge of closing and a majority of units are not sure in their future. Nevertheless, even during the recent years new crisis centres have appeared and some organisations are being successfully developed and even find resources to open shelters.

How do NGOs manage to survive and work under present-day conditions? Let's remember that a number of units continue to work with very little budget and sometimes even without their own premises. For a half of our 17 NGO respondents a strategy of surviving has turned out to be connected with establishment of partner relations with other organisations in the city, which help in different ways: rent premises free of charge (9 NGOs), pay for telephone (11 NGOs) and the Internet (8 NGOs). Without this significant help some of our NGO respondents would be closed since most of grants (even if they are given) don't suppose these expense items by crisis centres. It is obvious that such interaction couldn't be organised without recognition of NGOs activity importance.

Another essential resource for NGOs is unpaid work of volunteers, which is used by almost all organisations.

Today the most successful NGOs are those centres, which have managed to build a strategy of collaboration with local authorities and to receive financing from regional and even federal money. Some NGOs have also proven to be successful to get national, regional and municipal grants.

It's worth mentioning that such practice of financing is typical for many countries of Europe and the USA, but in Russia it is a rather new phenomenon.

During the recent years a number of regions in the country have been quite successful in introducing the practice to finance NGOs from municipal and regional budgets. For instance, in 2007 nongovernmental crisis centres in Krasnoyarsk and Novosibirsk were financed from the regional budget up to 65 per cent and 50 per cent correspondingly. On the whole, development of such practice within the whole country is the most promising strategy to finance Russian NGOs.

Our research has shown that present-day crisis centres in Russia vary in ideology, working practices, strategies to help women, as well as in peculiarities of financing and management. The question about which of them are most effective in their work needs to be studied yet. However,

it's possible to assert that Russian crisis centres are different in many aspects from their western "sisters", whose experience was taken as a basis to create such first organisations.

At the same time, at present one of the main prospects for development of Russian crisis centres we see in broadening of interaction between various types of crisis centres (both state and NGO) within Russia, as well as in consolidation of cooperation with foreign crisis centres and women's organisations. Together we can solve many common problems, connected with violence against women. I think, that is why we all have come here to the conference of women in the Arctic.

Thank you for your attention!

Appendix 7

Gunn Tove Minde

Sámi women's exposure of men's violence

A study of Sámi women in Northern Troms, Norway. A life-span perspective

"Læstadianism"

- Preserve the Sámi culture i.e. succeeded in establishing an alternative value system with functioned as a negation or reversal of perceived Norwegian national values
- "A double-morale attitude" positive and negative
- Lifestyle: humble and undemanding

The Study

"To live their soul"

- The Region of Northern Troms, Norway
- The Myth about the Sámi women
- Mental violence
- The Impact of the Social and Health conditions
- The healing power of the congregation

The Study

- The selected area: The County of Troms
- The Sample: 15 women interviewed. 9 women presented in the book
- Age Group: 60-85
- Maternal status: widows, divorced, married, unmarried
- Religion: Læstadianism. A religious movement in the later half of the 19th century
- Methods: field work, interviewed and dialogues

The Region

- Exist of 7 municipalities; Lyngen, Karlsøy, Storfjord, Kåfjord, Nordreisa, Skjervøy and Kvenangen
- 3 ethnic groups; Kven, Sámi, Norwegian
- The religion Læstadianism
- Rural areas
- Close family ties

Studies on elderly abuse

- Among Elderly are mental violence in Nordic countries (40%)
- My results: many has being abused from their spouse
- Devaluation, comments, threatened badly

The Myth about the Sámi women

- Equal with Sámi men?
- Diligent and clever planning
- Not suppressed nor victimized
- Boss at home

Social consequences by living in abused relationship

- through his action has fully control over his partner
- The children: witness the violence
- Some of the children suffer from relations problems, insecurity, mental problems and drinking problems

Health

- Bodily and emotional symptoms
- The norm – to be strong i.e. means not to talk about the difficulties
- Sanctions from the local community – if you talk

The negative part

- Closed communities
- In these communities we find all kind of men – ethnic and religious
- "The No-religious are almost worse than the true Christian" (quotation Niemi 2001)

The healing power of the Læstadianism

- The congregations – helps the Sámi to be collectively strong
- "Liikusat" – a ritual where people beg for their sins collectively
- The relation to God – strengthened
- A coping strategy for the Christian people – i.e. the elderly women

Are there differences?

- Research from USA shows that minorities women are exposed for more brutal violence within min. communities
- Sámi women are more exposed for violence from men, because of their experiences
- ...because they want to protect both their men and their communities
- In addition - Sámi women are exposed for structural violence, racism and discrimination

Conclusion

- To fight violence against women in general, we also must fight the violence among the minorities (Sámi)
- Violence leads to more violence
- In the future – more focus on structures which lead and maintain the violence
-stronger focus on the good-natured, the beauty and life in general

Appendix 8

Gudrun Jonsdottir

Growth, Power and Fun!

Arctic women against male violence Luleå, Sverige

The art of staying fresh

- *The women's movement brought Gender violence into daylight in 1970-80 after ages of silence*
- *A growing knowledge and consciousness-raising*
- *Much energy into political work, making the violence visible, realizing the scope, the serious consequences, PTSD, the cost, the perpetrators and their responsibility. The useless system of Justice. And we will continue to do that.*
- *Important improvements have been made both to the justice and legal system. Financing is easier, services have improved, but there are still huge challenges ahead.*
- *To maintain credibility and enthusiasm, to prevent burn-out and to make sure to keep violence on the agenda we can't keep on repeating our selves. We become board and unconvincing and we won't be heard.*
- *We have to be creative, all the time, change focus, look for new aspects and strategies to the old topics and surprise!*

We better stick together.....

- *Tomorrow 15 years since Nordic women founded the Shelter network "Nordic Women against violence" respecting differences, and picking up the best from each other – maybe the first Shelter network between countries?*
- *WAVE in Europe 1996-1997*
- *Last autumn 2008 The first World conference in Canada*
- *Soon no place on earth where women don't unite against male violence in spite of our differences*
- *To react and succeed gives the reward we have to get to maintain the enthusiasm and joy*
- *In the arctic the darkness and cold unites us, somewhere also difficult and expensive transport and somewhere many rural areas that can be isolated from the rest of the community.*

From anger and frustration to action!

A creative way of thinking:

- Gay movement an inspiration, ages of oppression, disgust and shame, raids in NY 1968 then Gay Pride
- The Gender pay gap Women's day in Iceland
- The women don't come
- The house is too small
- The economic crisis and Stigamot
- From victimization, to empowerment

The consequences of rape and incest according to the people at Stigamot PTSD

Superhuman strength and trauma

- Suffering trauma is an ordeal. If it can be overcome it leads to growth and strength. If not, it leads to deteriorated quality of life.
- We are well aware of the serious consequences of sexual violence: PTSD, shame, low self esteem, suicidal thoughts, depression, numbness.....
- People with fatal diseases who survive the ordeal can gain almost superhuman strength (20%), (children).
- Women who are subject to sexual violence are in a similar extremely unfair position and it is crucial that they deal with it. It is hard and almost impossible to do it alone.
- Women's shelters and Stigamót enjoy the unique position of creating the right circumstances for growth and strengthening. Creating a kind of greenhouse and positive greenhouse effect at the "Shelters"
- For victims of violence, it is not enough to survive but to thrive.
- Those possibilities have to be explored and utilized to empower our people

Individual work:

From victimization to empowerment.....

An example from art therapy at Stigamót

Empowerment at Stígamót

All are depressive, anxious, have low self esteem, have difficult relationships with men and others. Qualitative interviews with 3 women at Stígamót
(Ingibjörg Þórðardóttir social worker 2007)

- All have the power and will to increase their quality of life inspite of serious sexual violence
- All have educated themselves and lived abroad
- All have managed to block bad feelings, and then coped with it when convenient.
- Two mentioned God or a higher spirit as a rescue
- All have learned to understand own feelings and look at it as a necessary ground for coping with the consequences of sexual violence
- All have asked for help from family, friends and professionals. All have made use of Stigamots' services
- All used inner strength to cope with the consequences of violence

Self-help groups are the core of our work..... together with counselling and political work

- The belief in the potential of our people, The specialists are the women themselves in the group
- Many themes; the story, the child, anger, forgiveness? shame, guilt, connection to others, playing with colours, the perpetrator, the parents, sex, hurting oneself, from victim to empowerment, suicidal thoughts.....
- The power of the Group process
- "Alone is the person less then half - together with others more than oneself"

Self-help groups.....

- The group process: 6 women, 35 years with 210 years of life experience, and 6 different stories of development
- 15 times, the systematic progress.....
- To see the connection - PTSD
- To cope with the problems – explore the old ways and find new ones
- The company, from being different to being ok
- To put the responsibility where it belongs (by seeing the connection from the others)
- To brake the silence (which is the strongest weapon of the perpetrator)
- To go in and out of ones feelings, and get the control
- Connection – brake the isolation
- Coping in other conditions
- From being a victim to becoming empowered

Growth, power and fun at Stigamot

Quality measures amongst our people

- Improved self- esteem
- Improved communication skills
- Improved skills to set boundaries
- Better understanding of oneself
- Better sex life
- Improved understanding of own and others feelings
- Better contact with own body
- Better quality of life

When the women cant come to Stigamot, Stigamot comes to them

- In rural areas, with long distances from Stigamot, we are of little use
- Tried for years to start groups, with little luck
- Now we have started to send counsellors to listen to the secrets, and then fly away

Joy, empowerment, quality of life, laughter, happiness, fun..

if the women can't come to Stigamot, Stigamot goes to them.....

- Is it acceptable to go from being a victim to become a survivor ?
- Is that all we demand for our women?
- Or should they/we have the same joy and happiness as everyone else
- Lets go from survive to thrive!
- The bus tour and the decorations

Nothing stops Stigamot

The counsellors fly away with the secrets.....

The bag ladies

Empowerment is to change frustration, anger and worries into action

- In October, we lost funding and money in a bank when the banks collapsed
- Should have dismissed almost half of the staff and cut down the services
- Furious and worried – a good sign! Should we give up, or could we react???
- No cleaning, no overtime paid
- Decided to raise money; where there are no money but how?
- Not flee market – too much space, and work and too little money
- Bags! take little space, can be used regardless of weight or size, can last long, most of us have more bags than we use, politically right to buy second hand
- Every bag with a lap stating that it was bought for the support of Stigamot
- Decided to play and have fun and work voluntarily together with our people
- Women gathered bags at workplaces, schools and from friends and relatives, the media supported us, every TV, radio and News papers, the old crippled men, women offered to take part in voluntary work
- Auction
 - Björk, the first lady, famous pop star, artists with unpublished poems, I put a note in one of the bags that I gave – committing myself to bake a birthday cake for the new owner, in one bag an invitation to dance three belly dances for the new owner at a party of her own choice, an unpublished poem from a famous writer, a letter with an exciting journey of the bag, a perfume.....a lipstick.....my rich brother got us shelves in every room

From the bag market

Not always easy to find ways to react, powerlessness:

Amnesty for perpetrators in Iceland?

2002 -2006 in Iceland

714 rapes at Stígamt.

617 at ERU = 1331 cases

(definitions)

- 156 to the prosecutor
- 105 dropped
- 51 prosecutions
- 24 convictions in County court
- The tip 8 a year (2006)
- 14 convictions in Supreme court
- Highest 3 per year

The magic of a holistic view.....

- We have only just started our work and have to have a holistic view
- Gunn Tove Minde; – “in the congregation we are collectively strong”
- Sami women feel strong – so do Icelandic women, and hopefully all of us.
- The dark and cold arctic zone fosters strong and powerful women
- Be upset, worried and furious my sisters in the Arctic shelters, but turn your anger into action, that is empowerment. And remember to be creative and find ways to play. Play sisters, play!

Appendix 9

Resolution taken at the Arctic Women Conference in Luleå February 1, 2009

Arctic women demand that the arctic will be a zone free from violence

Women from some of the coldest and darkest places on the earth had a networking conference in Luleå, Sweden in the weekend 30.1–1.2, 2009. The eighty participants were representatives from 32 women's shelters in eight countries, gathered with the Swedish Minister of Gender and Integration Ms. Nyamko Sabuni, and some respected researchers and politicians as professor Eva Lundgren, researcher Gunn Tove Minde and politician Marianne Eriksson.

Gender based violence takes many forms. The shelters are fighting against male violence from partners, such as rape, incest, sexual harassment, prostitution and trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. The new Norwegian law that criminalize buyers of women, both in Norway and abroad, was welcomed. Our goal is that buying of women in prostitution will not be accepted in any of the countries in the Arctic zone.

The shelter workers are well aware that their real employers are the perpetrators. Their responsibility has to be brought into daylight. They should be reported, prosecuted and sentenced.

The pattern of violence is in many ways similar in Greenland, Iceland, Faeroe Islands, in the Sami society, in Northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. The presentations were on normalization of violence, violence in the culture of small and closed societies, how to support violated women in rural areas, the buying and selling of women and the importance of empowerment of women.

The women's shelters are none governmental organisations and in some of the eight countries, there are signs that the states are increasing their control over the shelters. The women in the Arctic remind their authorities that men's violence against women is a violation of human rights. It is not a private issue and it is of vital importance that the women's movement, municipalities and governments join forces to eliminate it. There are some examples from Russia that shelters and crises centres are closing down because of lack of funding. In the world wide economic crisis prioritizing is more and more challenging. Fundamental human rights have to be protected, and preventive and protective work against violence has to be strengthened.

The women's shelters gather information, knowledge and experience from the grassroots that no other instances have access to. The shelters should use their knowledge to lobby for improvements in legislation, in

research, in improved services and in raising public awareness, and that the representatives will be heard.

The first Arctic networking conference raised more questions than it answered. Even though there are long distances between the shelters, the participants are all neighbours of the North Pole and live in marginalized communities. There was a strong will from the optimistic women to meet again and continue the cooperation, not in the darkness of winter, but in the light of the Arctic summer.

Luleå February 1, 2009