

Gender Affairs

*Taking measures to aid victims of
partner violence*

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Forum: Gender Affairs

Issue: Taking measures to aid victims of partner violence

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Introduction

Partner violence is a pattern of abusive behavior by one partner in a relationship to control the other. It is also referred to as domestic violence or intimate partner violence. Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, or financial, among other types. In addition to physical injuries, partner violence victims frequently endure social isolation, mental health issues (such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder), and bodily injuries. They also face difficulties when it comes to leaving abusive relationships, because of financial reliance on the abuser or concern of reprisals. Ultimately, individuals, communities, and institutions must work together to avoid partner violence. A more just and secure society can be achieved with the cooperation of all countries and people of all genders, ages, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds regardless of whether they have a personal connection with a partner violence case.

Definition of Key Terms

Domestic Violence:

A pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another.

Intimate Partner Violence:

Violence or abuse that occurs between two people in an intimate relationship, including physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse.

Restraining Order:

A court order that prohibits an abuser from coming in contact with the victim or engaging in certain behaviors.

Hotline:

A telephone service staffed by trained professionals who provide crisis intervention, support, and information to victims of domestic violence or abuse.

Advocacy:

Support and assistance provided to victims of domestic violence or abuse in navigating legal, medical, and social services.

Prevention Programs:

Programs and initiatives aimed at preventing domestic violence and promoting healthy relationships.

Law Enforcement:

The police and other agencies responsible for enforcing laws related to domestic violence and protecting victims.

Trauma-Informed Care:

Care and support provided to victims of domestic violence or abuse that is sensitive to the traumatic effects of the abuse on the victim.

General Overview

The concept "domestic violence" refers to a wide range of behaviors carried out against someone else or inside a family by a current or previous intimate partner. It might appear as bodily harm, sexual abuse, economic abuse, mental or emotional abuse, or other forms of control. Threats like threatening to kill oneself or removing the victim's children from their care are some abuse examples that across the most. Domestic violence victims might range in age, racial or cultural background, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. In most cases, domestic violence is a series of incidents that frequently worsens and increases in frequency with time. In other relationships, including those at work or with friends, many batterers don't act violently. They frequently downplay the severity of the abuse, deny that it happened, or place the responsibility on the victim. Domestic abuse and abusive conduct are influenced by a variety of circumstances, including stress, inadequacy emotions, and an abusive family history. But in the end, it is motivated by the abuser's desire for dominance and control. Regardless of the underlying causes, the batterer not the victim is accountable for their conduct. The UN has prioritized preventing intimate partner abuse and is trying to put an end to this widespread type of violence worldwide. One step they have taken against preventing it is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which is a treaty that discusses several types of gender-based violence, including partner violence, and demands that nations take action to stop and confront it. One other step is the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women which calls for action to stop and end violence against women and identifies it as a violation of human rights.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Taking action to support victims of partner abuse is a complicated topic, and there are numerous parties involved with diverse opinions on how to approach the issue. These are some of the key parties and their parties:

UN Women

The UN organization devoted to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is called UN Women. In order to stop and address partner violence, it collaborates with governments, civic society, and other partners.

The World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has created policies and measures, such as the WHO's Global Plan of Action to Improve the Role of the Health System in Tackling Violence, in Particular Against Women and Girls, to prevent and respond to partner abuse.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC)

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is a humanitarian organization that works in crisis-affected countries to help those in need of immediate rescue and assistance. In refugee and displacement circumstances, the IRC maintains programs that are dedicated to preventing and addressing to partner violence.

Timeline of Events

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| 1964 | <i>In London, UK, the first domestic abuse hotline is established.</i> |
| 1974 | <i>The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, passed by the United States Congress, allocates funds for shelters and other assistance for victims of domestic violence.</i> |
| 1984 | <i>Domestic violence has been classified as a public health concern by the US Surgeon General.</i> |
| 1994 | <i>The U.S. Congress approves the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which allocates funds for shelters and victim assistance as well as federal resources to prevent domestic violence.</i> |
| 1999 | <i>The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was established by the United Nations General Assembly on November 25.</i> |

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| 2005 | <i>One in three women will encounter physical or sexual assault in their lifetime, according to a study released by the World Health Organization (WHO).</i> |
| 2011 | <i>The European legal instrument, The Istanbul Convention, was negotiated by its 47 member states and adopted by its Committee of Ministers.</i> |
| 2017 | <i>As the #MeToo movement gathers strength, a global awareness about sexual harassment and assault increases.</i> |
| 2019 | <i>New clinical management guidelines for intimate partner violence and sexual violence are published by the WHO.</i> |
| 2020 | <i>The COVID-19 epidemic increases domestic violence complaints and emphasizes the need for ongoing support for victims.</i> |

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

In many nations, laws have been passed to protect partner abuse victims and punish their abusers. These laws may call for mandatory arrests, restraining orders, and criminal charges for domestic abuse. To break the cycle of violence, however, legal action might not be sufficient on its own.

Counseling and Therapy: To address the root causes of such as substance abuse, partner violence, mental health concerns, or communication challenges, couples or individual counseling may be used. Yet, if one spouse is not open to change or if the abuse is severe, therapy may not be beneficial.

Education and Prevention Programs: In order to spread the word about intimate partner violence and encourage healthy relationships, many organizations and neighborhood associations conduct education and prevention programs. These programs may include support groups, workshops, or public awareness campaigns that focus on certain communities, such as youth, immigrants, or LGBTQ+ people.

Battered Women's Shelters: Women and their children who "escape" from intimate partner violence can seek safety at shelters. In order to assist victims in rebuilding their lives, they provide temporary homes, counseling, and other forms of support.

Multi-Agency Collaborations: To tackle partner violence effectively, law enforcement, and community government institutions, organizations may work together. These partnerships may involve resource pooling, coordinated response plans, and cooperative training.

In addition, the Istanbul Convention is the first document in Europe to establish legally enforceable standards to prevent gender-based violence, protect victims of such violence, and punish offenders. It was developed by the Council of Europe to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

In spite of these measures, domestic violence is still a major issue everywhere. It is essential to keep developing and executing innovative approaches to stop and resolve this problem.

Possible Solutions

A variety of actions targeted at assisting those experiencing partner violence comprise taking measures to assist victims of partner abuse. These actions could involve:

Offering assistance and resources: Victims of intimate partner violence often require immediate help with necessities like food, clothing, and housing. To assist victims in getting the care they require, supportive resources including helplines, counseling, shelters, and legal services could be made available.

A greater knowledge of partner violence and its repercussions can be encouraged by education and awareness-raising programs, which can also help to lessen the stigma associated with getting treatment and inspire individuals to speak up against abuse. Actions taken to stop partner violence include educating people and communities about healthy dating practices, spotting the warning signs of violent conduct, and providing victims with a secure place to seek assistance.

Accountability of abusers: Victims can be protected by using legal tools like criminal prosecution and restraining orders to hold abusers responsible for their behavior.

To support victims of partner abuse, law enforcement, healthcare, social services, and education must all collaborate in a coordinated effort. Together, building an environment that is safer and more supportive for those who have experienced intimate partner violence is possible.

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