



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF CHILDREN,
EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Action plan

Action Plans for Combating Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (2012)





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Foreword

We must strive to allow young men and women to decide all aspects of their lives and their futures, including their choice of life partner. That is why I am committed to combating the practice of forced marriage. In the same way, children and young people must be free to make decisions about their own bodies. I see it as my duty to protect girls and young women from the dire consequences of genital mutilation.

People who suffer or risk such abuse must be afforded the help they need. We cannot and will not accept attitudes that repress the individual, we must combat social control and champion the right of individuals to make decisions about their own lives. Serious abuse of children and young people cannot simply be put down to cultural differences. Actions founded on perceptions of honour, shame and women's place in society must be confronted and prosecuted if these contravene Norwegian law. At the same time, we must help ensure that families receive the help they need to deal with any challenges that arise from a meeting of different cultures and different generations. We must also strive to promote functional families that stay together – and avoid painful break-ups.

The Norwegian government is committed to reinforcing public sector involvement in initiatives to combat forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). Much has already been achieved, including in the following areas:

- increased awareness in the public sector and among the general public
- heightened expertise and collaboration in the public sector
- better help and support for victims

The measures that have been launched cover a range of important areas: individual help for young people, better healthcare opportunities for women and girls, stronger legal protection, heightened expertise in relevant services, improved information, attitude-shaping initiatives, and international collaboration. While many of the measures have been implemented or incorporated into ordinary operations, dedicated work is still required to combat forced marriage and FGM in 2012.

The action plans have been drawn up in collaboration with seven ministries, where the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion bears primary responsibility for coordinating the work.

During 2012, I will consider how initiatives to combat forced marriage and genital mutilation can most effectively be organised in the future.



Audun Lysbakken

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The Action Plans for Combating Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (2012) are a continuation of the Action Plan for combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011) and the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011).

The objective of the Norwegian government's initiatives to combat forced marriage and FGM is to prevent these kinds of abuse from taking place in the first place. The Norwegian government has long been working to combat forced marriage and FGM through a number of action plans. Public sector initiatives have been reinforced, and many of the proposed measures have now been incorporated into ordinary operations. The measures that have been introduced include the provision of individual assistance, including crisis aid for young people, and treatment services, greater legal protection, developing the expertise and co-ordination of support agencies, provision of information, attitude-shaping, and international collaboration.

The Norwegian Government has a duty to protect all members of society against abuse. Therefore, one of the principal goals of the above plans was to boost public sector initiatives and firmly embed these areas in the public sector. During the period 2008–2011, a great deal of work was performed to develop expertise and to increase awareness of forced marriage and FGM. A number of measures were intended to strengthen collaboration between public sector

bodies in order to be able to provide efficient, practical help to those in need. This work appears to be producing the desired results, which is reflected, for example, in the fact that more cases have been identified than previously.

The above represents an extensive undertaking, where some measures need to be applied over a long period. For this reason, a number of the measures will be continued in 2012. In addition, many important measures have already been incorporated into ordinary operations. Others have been implemented and concluded. Measures that have been transferred to ordinary operations or concluded are discussed in the final chapter of this document.

In order to clarify and reinforce public sector responsibility, shelters for victims, or potential victims of forced marriage have been incorporated into a national housing and support scheme. These were previously managed by Oslo Red Cross and the *Selvhjelp for innvandrere og flyktninger* (Self-Help for Immigrants and Refugees – SEIF) organisation. The Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011) attached specific importance to reinforcing the role of the schools through the minority counsellors scheme. To date, this has proved to be an effective low-threshold service that has helped to identify cases at a relatively early stage, and to develop expertise in the field. This knowledge has proved important in preventive work.

Basing integration counsellors at selected foreign service missions has not only helped to build expertise at the foreign service missions, but also to develop effective routines for identifying cases and assisting victims of forced marriage. The scheme has also helped to develop expertise relating to culture, practice and legislation (in particular marriage) in the countries of origin, as well as with regard to the issue of FGM. This work has highlighted how the immigrant population in Norway may be affected by what is happening in their countries of origin, and important knowledge has been gained about how to react to such developments. This shows the importance of taking account of migration-related issues in establishing successful preventive measures.

The national Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage is now a permanent body, and was allocated additional assignments in the previous plan period. The team has encountered a marked increase in the number of cases it handles, and has consolidated its role as the advisory body for the public sector. At the same time, expertise shortfalls have been identified in a number of agencies, necessitating further development of the team.

The Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011) led to the introduction of a number of measures to improve healthcare services for women and girls who have been victims of genital mutilation. Emphasis has also been placed on boosting preventive measures within the healthcare sector. These measures have been embedded in the healthcare sector, and have now been incorporated into ordinary operations. Changes to legislation have also been made, and guidelines and instructions have been prepared concerning the effective application of the relevant legislation. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies' (NKVTS) research programme has contributed new knowledge in the field. The centre will continue this work in 2012.

Initiatives to prevent FGM will now be reinforced by being included in the remits of the minority and integration counsellors, and through expansion of the mandate of the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage from 2012. This will bolster

individual, national and international perspectives, and boost public sector expertise on FGM.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community is viewed as a particularly vulnerable group. Grants were extended to the *Skeiv Verden* (Queer World) organisation for preventive work and attitude-shaping measures on forced marriage in the period 2008–2011. This will remain a focus area for the Norwegian LGBT organisation in 2012.

Voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations have made a major contribution to, and been a driving force behind, initiatives to combat forced marriage and FGM, and will continue to play an extremely important role in the future.

The above organisations also make an important contribution to forming opinions, and as central contact mediators between the public support agencies and relevant bodies. These organisations can disseminate knowledge about the support agencies and existing assistance available from the relevant organisations, and can refer people in need of assistance to appropriate support schemes. They will also be trusted in communities that are difficult for the public support agencies to access, and will therefore be able to help ensure that more people in the target group become aware of the services the public support agencies can offer. Voluntary organisations are important players in local communities, and, in collaboration with the local authorities, can constitute a key resource for combating social isolation and supporting people who have been forced to flee under threat of forced marriage.

Voluntary organisations also have an important role to play by highlighting challenges and problems regarding public sector services. In many situations, these organisations are best placed to monitor individuals who may slip through the net, and to help them obtain the assistance they need from the public sector.

Continuation of initiatives

It is important to register and measure the effects and results of work to combat forced marriage and FGM. For this reason, the results of the action plans have been evaluated by the Norwegian Institute for Social Research (ISF) and Oxford Research.

The initiatives to combat forced marriage have produced good results, and in its second interim report ISF concluded that the action plan has helped to reinforce both support measures and preventive work to combat forced marriage.

Nevertheless, young people are still being subjected to forced marriage in Norway or during visits to their parents' country of origin. In 2012, emphasis will be placed on the further embedding of major initiatives such as the minority and integration counsellors schemes, and on continuing measures intended to develop expertise and spread information. The plan also attaches importance to local and regional anchoring through further development of the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage.

Oxford Research has published three interim reports to date, which will form part of the basis for future work.

In the past separate action plans have been drawn up for initiatives to combat forced marriage and FGM. Since 2004 other efforts to combat violence in close relations have been based on the "Action Plan to Combat Violence in Domestic Relations (2008-2011): Turning Point". A report to the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) is to be prepared on the status of the initiatives to combat violence in close relationships. An action plan for combating violence in close relationships will be submitted together with the report.

During 2012, the Norwegian government will consider how initiatives to combat forced marriage and FGM should be organised in the future. A working group will therefore be established to assess further initiatives in this area.

Gynaecological examinations

Consultation and voluntary gynaecological examination services were not included as a measure in the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011), but were introduced in autumn 2008. These services were described in a circular from the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services, and in a guide produced by the Norwegian Directorate of Health (2009), and were phased in during the autumn 2009 and spring 2010 in selected areas of Oslo and a number of local authorities. The services were introduced nationally from the spring 2011, with the launch of a revised guide from the Norwegian Directorate of Health (2011). The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) has been commissioned to carry out a review of the scheme.

Responsible ministries

The Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD) is responsible for co-ordinating the government's work to combat forced marriage and FGM. In addition to BLD, the Norwegian Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health and Care Services (HOD), the Ministry of Justice and the Police (JD), the Ministry of Education and Research (KD), the Ministry of Culture (KUD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) are all responsible for the measures contained in the action plans. Each ministry bears primary responsibility for implementing measures within its own sphere of responsibility, and acts as a partner in the implementation of other measures. The ministry listed first as holding responsibility for a specific measure in these plans has primary responsibility for ensuring that the measure in question is implemented.

Chapter 2 – Action Plan measures in 2012



JOINT MEASURES**Pages 11–16**

1. Continue annual cross-disciplinary regional network meetings (BLD)
2. Reinforce and develop the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (BLD)
3. Continue the minority counsellors scheme (BLD)
4. Continue the scheme involving integration counsellors at foreign service missions (BLD)
5. Continue financial support for voluntary organisations' preventive and attitude-shaping work (BLD)
6. Reinforce and continue competence development in the police districts (JD)
7. Involve the religious communities in work to combat forced marriage and female genital mutilation (KUD)
8. Raise awareness among participants on Norwegian language training programmes about violence in close relationships, including forced marriage and female genital mutilation (BLD)
9. Continue the Internet-based Question and Answer service with information specially tailored to young people on ung.no (BLD)
10. Resource material about forced marriage and female genital mutilation for pupils and teachers (KD)

MEASURES TO COMBAT FORCED MARRIAGE**Pages 17–23**

11. Continue local collaboration projects in the regions (BLD)
12. Develop the website tvangsekteskap.no (BLD)
13. Maintain an overview of information material tailored to different target groups (BLD)
14. Reinforce Family Counselling Service expertise and initiatives in cases of forced marriage (BLD)
15. Continue the housing and support scheme for young people under the age of 18 (BLD)
16. Continue the housing and support scheme for young people over the age of 18 (BLD)
17. Continue support for low-threshold services for young people in crisis (BLD)
18. Strengthen expertise in the Norwegian Foreign Service (UD)
19. Develop collaboration between the authorities and organisations in Norway and in the parents' country of origin (UD)
20. Raise the issue of forced marriage in political discussions with other countries (UD)
21. Continue reinforcement of Nordic collaboration (BLD)

MEASURES TO COMBAT FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**Pages 24–26**

22. Continue the national centre of competence on FGM established at NKVTS (BLD)
23. Continue efforts to increase the competence of the municipal Child Welfare Services (BLD)
24. Continue the FGM helpline (BLD)
25. Raise the issue of FGM in political discussions with other countries (UD)
26. Communicate information about Norwegian legislation on FGM to the authorities in relevant countries (UD)
27. Communicate experience with and results of international efforts to combat FGM (UD)



Chapter 3 – Joint measures

Despite the fact that forced marriage and FGM represent different types of abuse, the same functions in the support agencies are responsible for initiatives to prevent and combat all forms of violence in close relationships. This chapter presents measures in areas where it is natural to view forced marriage and FGM in the same context.

Network meetings

Since 2008, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has been responsible for organising annual regional network meetings for those areas of the service organisation that work to combat forced marriage and FGM. The purpose of these meetings has been to develop skills and share experiences, to improve collaboration routines and develop good practice. During the plan period, effective collaboration on assignments has been established between the Regional Centres for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention (RVTS), and the County Governors.

In 2012 human resources must be developed by reference to local needs. In addition to spreading specialist knowledge on the various topics, inter-agency collaboration and specific collaboration models will represent key topics. It is desirable to ensure that the network meetings are cross-disciplinary and that both physical and psychological considerations are taken into account.

During 2012, the individual regions will also consider how human resources can be further developed and maintained after 2012. This survey must be seen in connection with the establishment of the regional competence networks.

MEASURE NO. 1:

Continue annual cross-disciplinary regional network meetings (BLD)

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs will be allocated the task of continuing cross-disciplinary regional network meetings on the subject of forced marriage and FGM in 2012.

In 2012, the regional offices of the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity will be involved in collaboration relating to the meetings.

Special focus is also to be placed on involving the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, schools, the healthcare service and voluntary organisations.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD, AD, HOD, JD and KD

The Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation

The Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage was established in 2004 and is now a permanent body. The team was strengthened and its remit expanded under the Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011). The team is an inter-agency, nationwide body comprising representatives of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir), the National Police Directorate (POD), the Directorate of Immigration (UDI) and the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), where the latter is responsible for co-ordination. The team provides advice, guidance and assistance to front-line services on specific cases involving forced marriage or other forms of honour-related violence. Since January 2010, the team has also been responsible for administering the reimbursement scheme for expenses of repatriation to Norway in cases involving forced marriage or risk of such. The scheme also covers cases of FGM. The team additionally acts as the contact point for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) in connection with cases abroad that involve repatriation to Norway, where it co-ordinates with the relevant agencies in Norway as required. Since March 2009, the team has co-ordinated and allocated places under the national housing and support schemes for people aged 18 or over who have been victims of, or who are at risk of, forced marriage.

The number of cases handled by the team rose steadily during the first few years, before climbing markedly after 2009. Since its inception in 2004 through to July 2011 the team handled 1,631 cases¹. However, the rise in the number of cases involving forced marriage reveals little about the extent of this problem, nor does it necessarily mean that forced marriages have become more common. The rise in the number of people contacting the team may simply indicate an increase in the affected individuals' awareness of their own rights and opportunities to obtain help.

Around 60 per cent of the cases handled by the Expert Team involve people aged 18 and over, who are often dependent on assistance from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (NAV). The study carried out by the Norwegian Institute for Social

Research (ISF) reveals a need to reinforce this department's expertise. A representative from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (AVdir) will also join the team to strengthen competence in this area. The Expert Team also needs to enhance its competence in the field of labour and welfare administration by recruiting a representative from AVdir.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Udir) and UD play an important role in initiatives to combat forced marriage, FGM and honour-related violence. It is therefore important that these organisations keep their specialist knowledge up to date in these areas.

MEASURE NO. 2:

Reinforce and develop the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and FGM (BLD)

The mandate for the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage will be expanded to also cover FGM, and the team's name will be changed to "The Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation". The Expert Team will be enlarged to include a representative from the Norwegian Directorate of Health, and one from AVdir. UDI's and Bufdir's representation will also be expanded, and permanent contacts will be appointed at UD and Udir.

In addition to the national team, regional co-ordinator positions will be established. These positions will come under the remit of IMDi. A mandate will be prepared for the co-ordinator positions, and the remit of the national team will be revised.

This will require regional-level collaboration with the Norwegian Police, the Department for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Labour and Welfare Administration, UDI, school owners and relevant expert bodies such as the Regional Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention Centres (RVTS), as well as with minority counsellors and County Governors. Other parties may be involved as required.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD, AD, HOD, JD, KD and UD

¹ The cases comprise the categories: fear of/subjection to forced marriage, fear of staying/being left abroad, threats/violence and extreme control.

The minority counsellors scheme

The survey performed by the Institute for Social Research (ISF) reveals that the minority counsellors scheme appears to meet young people “on their own patch” and functions as a low-threshold scheme with the capacity to identify cases at an earlier stage than other support agencies. This highlights the need for the individual-oriented section of the scheme. ISF also recommends a sharpening of the focus on upper secondary schools, with an emphasis on preventive work and collaboration with parents. There is also a significant need for expertise and routines at this stage.

At the same time, the survey makes it clear that there are still major challenges with respect to improving the work done in schools to combat forced marriages. It would appear that the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity still needs to push through initiatives in schools to combat forced marriage.

MEASURE NO. 3:

Continue the minority counsellors scheme (BLD)

The minority counsellors will provide an important low-threshold service for teenagers and upper secondary school pupils. They will work to prevent forced marriage, FGM and honour-related violence. The minority counsellors will help to develop and build competence in the school sector and among relevant cooperating agencies. They will establish and develop collaboration with appropriate partners in the public sector, and with voluntary organisations.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD and KD

Integration counsellors at foreign service missions

The integration counsellors' mandate overlaps initiatives already being implemented at the foreign service missions in connection with consular assignments. ISF's survey indicates that the integration counsellors have helped to raise the profile and increase knowledge of an existing area of activity at the foreign service missions.

Work performed on specific cases has shown that conditions in the country of origin and close family ties have a strong influence on the norms and practices regarding marriages in minority groups in Norway. Marriage arrangements are often decided and implemented in the country of origin. The integration counsellors have helped to highlight this transnational aspect and ensure this is increasingly taken into consideration in preventive work. ISF highlights increased knowledge and awareness of conditions in countries of origin, and the dynamic between the minority population in Norway and the prevailing culture in the respective home countries as making a key contribution to work on social inclusion in Norway. Cases linked to transnational marriage and other family-related cases dealt with by the foreign service missions have generally proved to be complex. It is necessary to include these cases in a more broadly defined field of activity at the foreign service missions that also covers women's, family and gender issues. In addition to dealing with referrals concerning potential or actual forced marriages, the integration counsellors have had to address other complex types of family-related issues.

MEASURE NO. 4:**Continue the scheme involving integration counsellors at foreign service missions (BLD)**

The scheme involving integration counsellors at foreign service missions will be continued. The counsellors will help to reinforce initiatives to combat forced marriage and FGM, including work on cases involving individuals who have been left behind in foreign countries. These initiatives should be viewed in the context of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' work to promote equality and human rights. Expertise relating to forced marriage, FGM and honour-related violence will continue to be strengthened in order to allow the foreign service missions to provide optimal support in such cases. Networks that have been built up at foreign service missions will be maintained and developed.

The integration counsellors will help to improve the Norwegian support agencies' expertise on transnational family life resulting from migration. They will also contribute knowledge at the foreign service missions on integration and the situation of the diaspora in Norway. The integration counsellors will, in collaboration with the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, the Directorate of Immigration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, be responsible for training foreign service mission staff before they are posted abroad.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD, UD and JD

Financial support for voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations that work to combat FGM and forced marriages fulfil an important function. They provide important channels into their own communities. In many cases they have contacts which are not available to the public sector. This includes being able to establish trust and credibility. By mobilising their members, these organisations can reach a great many people in the target group. In its

survey, ISF emphasises that the grant scheme has highlighted a potential for involving voluntary organisations in work to prevent forced marriage. This has provided access to new arenas and helped to develop new methods to be used in this work.

The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) administers a grant scheme covering voluntary organisations' work to combat forced marriage. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has administered a similar scheme for initiatives to combat FGM. Some organisations work in both the above areas, in some cases with the same target groups, and thus apply for grants from both directorates. Opportunities for standardisation and improved efficiency would be increased if the same public sector body were to administer both schemes. Combining the administration of the two grant schemes would also make it easier for the public sector to channel funds to areas where they would have the greatest benefit. Consequently, the IMDi will be responsible for administering both grant schemes from 2012.

MEASURE NO. 5:**Continue financial support for voluntary organisations' preventive and attitude-shaping work (BLD)**

Support for voluntary organisations' preventive and attitude-shaping work relating to FGM and forced marriage will be co-ordinated and continued under a single grant scheme. This scheme will be administered by the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity, which will prepare a circular outlining guidelines for the scheme.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Competence development in the police service

In 2009, the Norwegian National Police Directorate organised a national conference entitled "Violence in Close Relationships", at which the subjects of forced

marriage and FGM were accorded specific importance. The police districts were urged to launch local initiatives relating to violence in close relationships, including forced marriage and FGM. In 2009, on the basis of submitted applications, a number of police districts received grants for local initiatives intended to develop expertise in the field of “violence in close relationships”, including forced marriage and FGM. Improving competence is an ongoing process, and the police districts' initiatives in this area will be continued.

MEASURE NO. 6:

Reinforce and continue competence development in the police districts (JD)

The National Police Directorate will continue initiatives to improve the expertise of family violence co-ordinators, police commissioners, immigration departments and managers in all police districts. Routines to ensure that knowledge is updated and that new employees in relevant job categories receive the requisite training will be continued and enhanced. The National Police Directorate will assess the need to update the manual for the family violence co-ordinators on an ongoing basis. The newly established National Panel of Experts on Forced Marriage will be continued.

Responsible ministry/ministries: JD

Information for religious leaders

A guide containing information about forced marriage and female genital mutilation has been prepared for new religious leaders. The guide will be finalised before the end of 2011 and be circulated from 1 January 2012.

MEASURE NO. 7:

Involve the religious communities in work to combat forced marriage and female genital mutilation (KUD)

Forced marriage is a topic to be raised with religious communities, both in Ministry of Culture's (KUD) dialogue meetings with the Council for Religious and Life Stance Communities in Norway, and by the County Governors in connection with the registration and approval of religious communities and new religious leaders.

In meetings with the Council for Religious and Life Stance Communities in Norway, KUD will provide information about the Norwegian government's stance on FGM, and encourage the Council to pass on information about the subject in appropriate environments, in particular in connection with the launch of the new action plan.

A guide for new religious leaders, containing information about forced marriage and FGM, will be introduced on 1 January 2012.

Responsible ministry/ministries: KUD

Norwegian language training programme

Vox, the Norwegian agency for lifelong learning, has developed a booklet in Norwegian for students, as well as a booklet for teachers – the “Teachers' Copy” – that contains specialist articles about violence in close relationships, forced marriage and FGM, as well as instructions on how to use the booklet. This material has been finalised and is being issued to school teachers as they complete the relevant supplementary training course. The booklet has now been translated into 19 languages. An Internet resource (www.vox.no/vold), including all relevant translations has been developed to support teachers in their work.

MEASURE NO. 8:**Raise awareness among participants on Norwegian language training programmes about violence in close relationships, including forced marriage and female genital mutilation (BLD)**

The competence of teachers who teach 50 hours of social studies will be further developed through a new teaching plan containing targets for social studies classes, an Internet-based learning resource for teaching social studies, and new tests in the subject. The topics of violence against children and other family members, forced marriage and FGM will form part of the supplementary training scheme.

Supplementary training will be continued in 2012.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD and JD

Ung.no

The website ung.no, for which the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is responsible, plays a key role in the government's work to provide information to children and young people. The website covers a broad range of subjects and news articles of relevance to young people, and is reaching an increasing number of users. Ung.no provides information about violence in close relationships, including forced marriage and FGM. The website also offers a Question & Answer service staffed by professionals covering a variety of topics. Ung.no contacts the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation and the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) for assistance when answering questions about forced marriage and FGM.

MEASURE NO. 9:**Continue the Internet-based Question and Answer service with information specially tailored to young people on ung.no (BLD)**

The Question and Answer service relating to forced marriage and FGM will be continued on ung.no in 2102.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Resource material for pupils and teachers

In 2009, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training published a booklet entitled "Education about Sexuality – A Resource Booklet for Primary and Secondary School Teachers". This booklet covers a variety of topics related to sexuality, including the issues of forced marriage and FGM. It is aimed at teachers, health visitors, counsellors and school principals. The booklet has been issued to all primary and secondary schools and all public health centres in Norway. The booklet was revised in the spring of 2011. Its new title is "Sexuality and Gender. A Resource Booklet for Primary and Secondary School Teachers."²

MEASURE NO. 10:**Resource material about forced marriage and female genital mutilation for pupils and teachers (KD)**

A separate source of information tailored to pupils and parents will be developed and translated into relevant languages. On the basis of the material prepared, a competence development programme will be prepared for teachers, school counsellors and the school healthcare service.

Responsible ministry/ministries: KD

² The resource booklet can be downloaded from http://www.udir.no/Laringsmiljo/helse_i_skolen/Undervisning-om-seksualitet--Et-ressurshfte-for-larere-i-grunnskoleopplaringen/



Chapter 4 – Combating Forced Marriage

A forced marriage can be defined as a marriage arranged in such a way that at least one of the spouses:

- does not have a genuine opportunity to choose to remain unmarried without risking reprisals
- does not have a genuine opportunity to choose a different partner against the wishes of the family without risking reprisals
- has agreed to marriage following inappropriate pressure, threats or other forms of physical or psychological violence.

Significant emphasis must be placed on the perception of coercion experienced by the individual in question.³

The measures outlined in this chapter are a continuation of those initiated in the Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011). Measures that have been transferred to ordinary operations or which have been concluded are described in Chapter 6.

One of the aims is to ensure that women and girls, men and boys who are being or who have been subjected to abuse are identified and given access to the help to which they are entitled, regardless of which public or private service or institution they contact. This requires effective and extensive collaboration.

Continue local joint projects in the regions

The Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011) established a number of local inter-agency projects in selected local authorities. The purpose of these projects was to learn more about honour-related violence, develop clear routines for the uniform application of the legislation covering this area, and draw up internal routines for relevant services.

The projects run for three years, and one, entitled “Honour-Related Violence in Drammen”, has already been concluded: The project in Stavanger will run until the end of 2012, while the projects in Kristiansand, Trondheim and Skien will run

³ http://www.imdi.no/Documents/BrosjyreHefterHaandbok/Arbeid_mot_tvangsekteskap_nettpdf

until the end of 2014. To qualify for grants, the projects required multi-agency participation and the commitment of dedicated resources.

MEASURE NO. 11:

Continue local collaboration projects in the regions (BLD)

Support for the established three-year municipal projects will be continued. The projects will be followed up by the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD and JD

Information measures

Information and attitude-shaping initiatives play a key role in the preventive effort. Raising awareness of forced marriage and related issues in schools, in support agencies and among the general public can help to prevent it from occurring. Providing information to at-risk groups about what help is available, and where, is likely to result in more people contacting the support agencies.

One of the objectives of the Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011) was to inform the relevant groups about available help. Several measures intended to result in the publication of information material and guidelines have now been concluded, with the result that a lot of useful information has become available. New routines and better methods for raising awareness of and combating forced marriage have also been developed. This knowledge needs to be disseminated to relevant agencies, organisations and individuals in need of assistance. ISF's survey reveals that some voluntary organisations would like a better overview of what is being done in the public sector. The organisations feel they know too little about how the public sector can help in areas such as housing and practical support⁴, or the various application processes involved. They would also like a better overview of the preventive work being carried out

in the public sector and by voluntary organisations, i.e. what type of expertise is available, where it can be found and what kind of measures are being implemented. The ISF recommends that suitable methods and channels for publishing relevant information and course material be identified.

In 2011, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion commissioned the Project Forum at the University of Oslo to look into ways of improving collaboration between public sector and voluntary organisations. The forum's recommendations included developing the website tvangsekteskap.no into a useful source of information for the groups in question.

MEASURE NO. 12:

Develop the website tvangsekteskap.no (BLD)

The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity will be commissioned to examine how the website tvangsekteskap.no can be developed, and who should have responsibility for the website. The final report will also estimate costs of establishment and operation. The purpose of the website is to provide a useful tool for relevant groups, both as an information channel and for learning.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

MEASURE NO. 13:

Maintain an overview of information material tailored to different target groups (BLD)

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs will maintain an overview of information material about forced marriage, and will assess whether it should be updated, or new material developed.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

⁴ See the discussion under measures 15 and 16.

Family Counselling Service

The Family Counselling Service is a state-financed, low-threshold service that provides assistance to families, individuals and couples experiencing relationship problems. The service is free and no referral is required. There are currently 54 family counselling offices. The Family Counselling Service is a key part of the service available to young people and families experiencing conflicts over the choice of marital partner. The service adopts a family-oriented approach, something that is very important to many people in this target group. Counsellors also have extensive experience of cases involving violence in close relationships.

Through its earlier “Bridge-Builder Project”, the Family Counselling Service has built up expertise in counselling young victims of forced marriage and honour-related violence. In 2010 and 2011 a comprehensive training scheme has passed on this expertise to eleven family counselling offices from up and down the country. Experience shows that this method may also be applied to other aspects of the Family Counselling Service’s work. An awareness of violence and trauma can be useful in all cases involving abuse, irrespective of national origins, while a heightened cultural understanding is useful in all cases involving people from non-Norwegian backgrounds.

MEASURE NO. 14:

Reinforce the Family Counselling Service’s expertise and engagement in cases of forced marriage (BLD)

The Family Welfare Service must be better equipped to help young people and families in conflict due to forced marriage or other honour-related violence. This will be achieved through systematic professional development and sharing of expertise. The services provided by the family counselling offices will include advice and assistance to both young people and their families on conflict management and resolution.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Housing and support schemes for young people under the age of 18

Young people who come into conflict with their families as a result of an actual or proposed forced marriage may be forced to sever contact with them for varying periods of time. The Child Welfare Service in Norway is responsible for protecting young people under the age of 18 who are under threat of forced marriage, or who escape from a marriage they have been forced into. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has established housing and support services for this group in all regions.

MEASURE NO. 15:

Continue the housing and support scheme for young people under the age of 18 (BLD)

The housing and support scheme for young people under the age of 18 will be developed in all regions. The regions themselves are responsible for ensuring that the scheme is sufficiently embedded and aligned with other services.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Housing and support schemes for young people over the age of 18

During the previous plan period, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) established a nationwide housing and support scheme for people over the age of 18. The housing units that were previously managed by voluntary organisations have now been incorporated into the national scheme along with the *Bokollektivet* safe house at the *Oslo Krisesenter* women’s shelter. New housing schemes have also been set up in many locations in Norway, bringing the total number of places to almost 30.

This accommodation is established in collaboration with, and through the provision of direct grants to, selected local authorities. The Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation co-ordinates the scheme and allocates places. The local authorities are responsible for the provision of other support, which includes environmental therapy, necessary follow-up from the social services and security. Security issues are managed in conjunction with the police. Experience from the previous plan period shows that collaboration between the local service providers can prove challenging, in particular in cases of relocation to a new local authority.

One of the objectives is for the Family Counselling Service to be one of the support schemes available to those in need of rehousing. Consequently, a comprehensive training scheme has been implemented to raise the clinical expertise of those dealing with cases involving honour-related violence. The Family Counselling Service can support young people and their parents, and advise staff responsible for housing services.

A number of voluntary organisations that come into contact with vulnerable young people play a key role in helping those experiencing a crisis and ensuring that they are put in touch with the appropriate public support agencies. They may also contribute once the young person has settled in a new home, for example by helping them to establish networks and assisting with long-term follow-up. Such collaboration must be discussed with the individual local authority responsible for the housing and support services.

In the autumn of 2010, Bufdir administered a reimbursement scheme under which voluntary organisations that assist young people at acute risk of forced marriage could claim reimbursement of hotel accommodation expenses until such time as the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage was able to organise a place on the housing scheme. In an acute situation accommodation is primarily sought at a crisis centre, and a requirement for utilisation of the reimbursement scheme was that it should apply only in cases where it was not possible to make use of the municipal crisis centre service.

The reimbursement scheme is to be further tested in 2012.

MEASURE NO. 16:

Continue the housing and support scheme for young people over the age of 18 (BLD)

In cooperation with the relevant local authorities, Bufdir will be responsible for continuing the national housing and support scheme for young people over the age of 18. The Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation co-ordinates the scheme and allocates places. Appropriate support services for residents will also be linked to the accommodation. Bufdir may, in conjunction with individual local authorities, test various models for inter-agency collaboration.

Bufdir will also assume responsibility for administering a reimbursement scheme under which voluntary organisations that assist young people at acute risk of forced marriage can claim reimbursement for hotel expenses until such time as the Expert Team is able to offer a place in the housing scheme, or some other alternative has been found.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Continue support for low-threshold services for young people in crisis

The public authorities are responsible for ensuring that young people receive assistance if they are being pressured to marry against their will. For many years, the authorities have worked closely with voluntary organisations in order to provide assistance quickly in difficult situations. One important measure was a joint initiative with Oslo Red Cross to establish a forced-marriage helpline. The helpline provides a single point of access to help and advice for young people who are being pressured into marriage, and for others who are unsure about how to tackle the issue. This service is intended to be part of the overall effort to prevent forced marriage and a source of assistance for young people in crisis. The helpline works with and makes referrals to other public sector bodies.

MEASURE NO. 17:**Continue support for low-threshold services for young people in crisis (BLD)**

Organisations that run low-threshold services for young people who are being pressured to marry against their will can apply for funding. The service will help the young person to deal with the situation and ensure that he or she is passed on to the appropriate public support agencies. The service may also involve further contact and guidance after the young person has settled into new accommodation.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Most forced marriages involving Norwegian citizens or other people legally resident in Norway are entered into abroad. Norwegian citizens who seek help from Norwegian foreign service missions have access to consular and practical assistance. Within the framework of obligations that Norway has assumed by ratifying the refugee conventions, refugees or stateless persons resident in Norway will also be afforded assistance by Norwegian foreign service missions. The Norwegian foreign service will also be able to assist Norwegian authorities and organisations by providing information and support in specific cases. Norway strives to keep human rights, including efforts to combat forced marriage, high on the agenda in multilateral forums such as the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Women's Commission, the UN Children's Commission and the UN General Assembly. The Norwegian foreign service is also in a position to put forced marriage on the agenda in bilateral discussions and collaboration forums where relevant.

Support from foreign service missions for young people at risk of forced marriage

The Norwegian government wishes to reinforce the efforts to combat forced marriage being undertaken at foreign service missions in regions from which there is significant emigration to Norway, and in which forced marriages occur. This issue was discussed in Government Report 12 (2010-2011) "Support for Norwegians Abroad". Norwegian foreign service missions have a duty to provide assistance in cases of forced marriage, cf. Foreign Service Instructions, Chapter 8 § 18. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration has prepared a circular outlining how foreign service missions should deal with cases involving forced marriage (UDI RS 2011-21).

In order to provide assistance in specific cases it is necessary to have expertise in the field. Consequently, this topic is included as a separate module in courses designed to prepare foreign service staff for postings abroad. Staff who are due to travel to regions where these issues are particularly relevant will be offered individual training. Significant expertise is also being imparted to foreign service staff at missions abroad where integration counsellors from the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity are stationed.

MEASURE NO. 18:**Strengthen expertise in the Norwegian Foreign Service (UD)**

Staff who are due to be posted to foreign service missions in relevant locations will receive information about forced marriage, the applicable guidelines, and institutions that can provide help in Norway and the Nordic region. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will prepare and distribute a memorandum setting out the lessons learned to date, based on input from the foreign service missions with the greatest relevant competence and the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation.

Responsible ministry/ministries: UD and BLD

Collaboration with authorities in countries of origin and in Norway

Consular assistance is provided in specific cases of forced marriage in collaboration with several Norwegian agencies, primarily the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation, which is responsible for co-ordination with front-line services in Norway. Collaboration with the authorities of the countries concerned is also useful, though in some places this issue is considered a private matter of no concern to either the local or the Norwegian authorities.

The ability to provide assistance therefore often depends on cooperation with private, local agents. Experience indicates that project-oriented activities and network-building among local and international organisations strengthen the Norwegian foreign service's ability to provide assistance in specific cases.

MEASURE NO. 19:

Develop collaboration between the authorities and organisations in Norway and the parents' country of origin (UD)

The Norwegian foreign service will endeavour to strengthen its collaboration with authorities and organisations in relevant countries in order to provide assistance in specific cases, including the exchange of experts between Norway and the countries in question, to enhance expertise on both sides. Effective working relationships with public administrations and organisations in Norway will be maintained in order to facilitate the proper and efficient monitoring of cases involving the foreign service missions.

Responsible ministry/ministries: UD

Forced marriage on the international agenda

The efforts of the Norwegian government to combat forced marriage must be viewed in the context of Norway's commitment to human rights. The authorities in other countries should be left in no doubt that forced marriage constitutes a serious breach of human rights. Foreign service missions are urged to place forced marriage on the agenda and to raise the issue in appropriate discussions with authorities at various levels.

MEASURE NO. 20:

Raise the issue of forced marriage in political discussions with other countries (UD)

The question of forced marriage should be raised in an appropriate manner in contexts where it is a relevant issue in bilateral political discussions with authorities from other countries, and in connection with visits by political and professional delegations.

Responsible ministry/ministries: UD and BLD

Nordic collaboration

The Nordic countries face many of the same challenges with regard to the socialisation and inclusion of children and young people from immigrant backgrounds, and problems relating to forced marriage and honour-related violence. Since 2006, the Norwegian authorities have organised three Nordic seminars on forced marriage and honour-related violence. The 2006 seminar reported on the work being done in the Nordic region and the experience gained in the individual countries. It also resulted in recommendations for future initiatives. In 2008, the seminar focused on housing and protection. In 2010, the seminar was organised by the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), with contributors from Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The theme of this seminar was local initiatives. In 2012, the seminar will focus on further ways to reinforce Nordic collaboration.

MEASURE NO. 21:

Continue reinforcement of Nordic collaboration (BLD)

IMDi will be tasked with reinforcing Nordic collaboration on forced marriage and honour-related violence. IMDi will work with the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Education and Training, the Directorate of Immigration, the Labour and Welfare Administration and the National Police Directorate in this regard.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD, UD, AD, HOD, JD and KD



Chapter 5 – Combating female genital mutilation

WHO defines female genital mutilation as all procedures/actions that involve the partial or complete removal of the female genitalia, or which otherwise cause injury to the genital organs. Different forms of genital mutilation of women are practised. The process known as “Sunna circumcision” is also covered by the concept of genital mutilation. The practice is defined as genital mutilation regardless of whether the procedure is performed for cultural, religious or other non-therapeutic reasons. For additional information, see the WHO websites.⁵

The measures outlined in this chapter are a continuation of those initiated in the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011). Measures that have been transferred to ordinary operations or which have been concluded are described in Chapter 6.

The national centre of competence at NKVTS

In 2008, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) was allocated the role of national centre of competence on female genital mutilation. Measures taken by the centre include the establishment of a research programme, network-building, the development of a dedicated page on www.nkvts.no, the launch of the digital

guide “Female Genital Mutilation: A Guide” and the establishment of a reference group for the work.

In 2008, the Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD) set up a national advisory panel on FGM, including representatives from affected communities and the authorities. NKVTS has acted as the secretariat for the panel. From 2012, the NKVTS reference group will take over the functions of the advisory panel.

NKVTS's focus areas in 2012 will include developing and implementing joint Nordic/European research, which will also examine the situation regarding FGM internationally. It will also continue the current research programme and help to establish additional forums for the transfer of knowledge. Efforts to build networks to facilitate dialogue with affected communities will continue, and the organisation's

⁵ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/index.html>

role as consultant to the Ministry, public bodies, the Norwegian foreign service and voluntary organisations will be continued and expanded.

One of the objectives is to ensure that the organisation's ongoing role as a centre of competence is integrated into NKVTS's research activities.

MEASURE NO. 22:

Continue the national centre of competence on FGM established at NKVTS (BLD)

The role of NKVTS as a centre of competence on FGM will be continued in 2012. The organisation's remit will be to carry out research and development work, communicate available knowledge, promote competence development and cultivate networks.

NKVTS will also run and develop the digital guide "Female Genital Mutilation: A Guide".

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD, HOD and JD

Raise competence levels among employees in the Child Welfare Service

County Governors can apply for funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD) for initiatives intended to raise competence levels in municipal Child Welfare Services. These funds can be used for courses, conferences and other initiatives. The objective is to provide the Child Welfare Services with the necessary competence to handle cases of suspected FMG.

MEASURE NO. 23:

Continue efforts to increase the competence of the municipal Child Welfare Services (BLD)

The County Governors can apply for funding from BLD for measures intended to increase the Child Welfare Services' competence on FGM.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

Female genital mutilation helpline

Since 2008, Oslo Red Cross has run an FGM helpline on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD). This service has been incorporated into the helpline on forced marriage previously established by Oslo Red Cross. The service is to be put out to tender in 2012, with the intention of finding a more permanent solution from 2013.

MEASURE NO. 24:

Continue the FGM helpline (BLD)

The national female genital mutilation helpline will continue to operate in 2012.

Children and young people who need advice and guidance on FGM must have somewhere to turn. The helpline will also be available to others in need of the service.

Responsible ministry/ministries: BLD

International initiatives

The Norwegian government's Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation was adopted in 2003 and runs until 2013.⁶ The plan focuses primarily on measures to prevent female genital mutilation and mobilise public opinion against it in countries with which Norway cooperates, and on measures to increase awareness of the issue. International efforts to prevent FGM may benefit the work in Norway. There is considerable overlap between the work being done to combat FGM in Norway and abroad. The potential benefits of international cooperation are found mainly in areas such as capacity building, research and the development of methodology.

Girls' and women's rights underpin the government's International Action Plan, and are a key aspect of the efforts supported by Norway to prevent FGM in countries where it is practised. These include efforts to protect women's sexual and reproductive rights, and to prevent discrimination, oppression and violence against women.

People in exile often cling to old traditions and do not keep up with developments in their home country. Communicating to parents, children and young people living in Norway what is being done and what has been achieved with regard to FGM in their countries of origin is therefore important to stimulate debate and change attitudes. It may be helpful to use the same material as that used to combat FGM in the various countries of origin.

Efforts to change attitudes to FGM in countries where it is prevalent constitute an important part of Norway's development cooperation with other countries and voluntary organisations. Since this may also help to change attitudes to the practice among affected groups in Norway, it is important for this information to be communicated to affected target groups and to the Norwegian population in general.

MEASURE NO. 25:

Raise the issue of FGM in political discussions with other countries (UD)

The issue of FGM should be raised in an appropriate manner in contexts where it is relevant in bilateral political discussions with authorities from other countries, and in connection with visits by political and professional delegations. Support should also be given to national legislation and other initiatives to combat FGM.

Responsible ministry/ministries: UD

MEASURE NO. 26:

Communicate information about Norwegian legislation on FGM to the authorities in relevant countries (UD)

Information about Norwegian legislation on FGM will be communicated to authorities in countries from which people emigrate to Norway, and where FGM is prevalent. The issue of girls who are resident in Norway being taken to these countries for FGM will be raised in dialogue with the authorities in these countries as appropriate.

Responsible ministry/ministries: UD and HOD

MEASURE NO. 27:

Communicate experience with and results of international efforts to combat FGM (UD)

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad will inform the appropriate ministries, directorates and voluntary organisations about international efforts to combat FGM.

Responsible ministry/ministries: UD

⁶ <http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/kilde/ud/pla/2003/0002/ddd/pdfv/183589-lemlestelse.pdf>



Chapter 6 – Measures continued in ordinary operations or concluded in 2011

The Norwegian government has long been working to prevent forced marriage and FGM through a series of action plans. Public initiatives have been reinforced, and many of the proposed measures have been transferred to ordinary operations. The Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011) comprised 40 measures, while the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011) comprised 41 measures. Of the 81 measures, 47 have now been concluded or transferred to ordinary operations. This chapter presents the status of these measures.

FORCED MARRIAGE

Legislation against forced marriage must be effectively enforced

Handbook for family violence co-ordinators

The guide to how the police should deal with cases of violence in close relationships was completed in March 2009. It updates and expands on the handbook for co-ordinators whose work involves cases of family violence and sexual abuse. It also contains updated regulations as well as practical guidelines relating to cases of forced marriage and FGM. The guide can be downloaded from www.politiet.no and www.tvangsekteskap.no

The Police National Panel of Experts

The Police National Panel of Experts on Forced Marriage was established in March 2011. The group currently comprises representatives from the Sør-Trøndelag, Søndre Buskerud, Romerike and Oslo police forces, as well as a representative from the Oslo Public Prosecutor's office and the police representative from the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation. The group is chaired by the Norwegian National Police Directorate.

Forced marriage must be prevented

The School Counselling Service

In 2009, as part of the counselling being offered in schools to people with immigrant backgrounds, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research introduced minimum competence requirements and criteria for socio-educational and educational counselling and careers advice in schools. An understanding of cultural differences is crucial. Issues concerning people with immigrant backgrounds have been singled out for specific focus in supplementary vocational courses for counsellors. The service was launched in the autumn 2009. The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training have also established mechanisms for collaboration and experience-sharing in the field of minority issues.

Parents' network in schools

The Minority Language Resource Network (MiR) was launched as an initiative run by the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education (FUG) entitled "Minority Language Parents – a Resource for Teaching Pupils in Schools". MiR has since changed its name to the Multicultural Initiative and Resource Network.

In October 2009, MiR organised a conference under the heading "International Experience of Home/School Collaboration".

Help local authorities to adopt efficient routines for monitoring when pupils fail to return from holiday

Local authorities and schools have a duty to ensure that children of school age are able to complete their compulsory primary and secondary education. It is important for each individual local authority and school to follow up every pupil who fails to attend classes.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has prepared a guide intended to clarify what local authorities must do to safeguard pupils' rights to publicly funded primary and secondary education. The directorate has also drawn up proposals for specific routines that schools and local authorities can implement. The guide can be downloaded from www.udir.no/Regelverk

Information tailored to different target groups

Two pamphlets on forced marriage have been produced – one aimed at young people and one aimed at parents. The pamphlets have been published jointly by five directorates: the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Health, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, the National Police Directorate and the Directorate of Immigration.

The pamphlet – "Information for Young People about Forced Marriage"

The objective is to provide young people with information about their rights and about where they can turn to for help in resolving conflicts with their families. The pamphlet has already been published in Norwegian and will be translated into English, Urdu,

Somali, Arabic, Sorani, Farsi/Persian, Pashto and Turkish, and into other languages if necessary.

The pamphlet can be downloaded from www.imdi.no/kunnskapsbasen and www.tvangsekteskap.no

The pamphlet – "Information for Parents about Marriage"

This pamphlet is intended to have a preventive effect, and stresses parents' responsibility for maintaining a good dialogue with their children. It has already been published in Norwegian and will be translated into English, Urdu, Somali, Arabic, Sorani, Farsi/Persian, Pashto and Turkish, and into other languages if necessary.

The pamphlet can be downloaded from www.imdi.no/kunnskapsbasen and www.tvangsekteskap.no

"In Their Own Words" – a film about forced marriage

This film about forced marriage is produced by Munch Film A/S. It lasts for 40 minutes, and there is also a shorter version that runs for 10 minutes. In the film, young people talk about their own experiences of pressure, coercion and violence, and representatives from the support agencies explain what assistance is available. The purpose of the film is to highlight the background and consequences of forced marriage, and how this may be perceived by young people themselves. It is therefore particularly suitable for schools. The film is accompanied by a booklet. The film is in Norwegian only.

The film and pamphlets are available from www.bufetat.no/materiell

"Information about Forced Marriage for Asylum-Seekers in Reception Centres"

Updated information, including the above material, is distributed to asylum centres and included in their information programmes.

"Conventions and Legislation on Forced Marriage"

This booklet presents an overview of Norwegian laws and international conventions in this field. The booklet is available from www.publikasjoner.dep.no. The publication code is Q-1170 B.

The parental guidance programme

The issues of forced marriage and the use of violence in raising children are integrated in the version of the programme for parental guidance intended for minorities, which is being continued as a part of ordinary operations. The programme constitutes an important preventive measure, where staff work to shape parental attitudes by encouraging self-reflection.

Network of resource contacts

This measure was intended to make use of the experiences from the Rainbow Project at the Sentrum (Centre) Family Office in Oslo. This project was concluded in 2007. Since then, funds have not been earmarked for continued application of the experience gained from the project. However, the initiative has been continued on a smaller scale within the existing financial framework. For reasons of prioritisation, the initiative has now been concluded.

Information about forced marriage for new religious leaders

The Norwegian Ministry of Culture has prepared a guide for new religious leaders. The County Governors must use this guide as a basis when approving new religious leaders. The guide contains information about forced marriage.

Establishment of youth clubs for boys and girls

The Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion has invited a number of organisations to submit proposals for how work to combat forced marriage can be reinforced through the establishment of youth clubs for boys and girls. These clubs will be for young people with immigrant backgrounds. The objective is to encourage young people to make their own decisions.

Expertise and collaboration must be increased

Regional resource centres

The five regional resource centres for violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention (RVTS) are responsible for implementing measures to raise competence levels, and for providing advice and

guidance on violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention to the support services. The objective of the resource centres is to boost regional expertise relating to violence and trauma on a permanent basis. They will also promote better and more holistic services by developing expertise in the service organisation, and by developing appropriate models of collaboration. Forced marriage is one of the topics in which the RVTS centres can offer leading expertise, and work is integrated into the centres' core activities.

Initiatives to Combat Forced Marriage – A Guide

The guide entitled "Initiatives to Combat Forced Marriage – A Guide" was launched in February 2009.

The guide can be downloaded from www.tvangsekteskap.no or ordered by e-mail from: bestilling@imdi.no.

Forced marriage and honour-related violence – A guide for the Child Welfare Service

In 2011, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs will publish a guide to handling cases involving honour-related violence for the Child Welfare Service. Many of the cases in which the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage provides guidance involve young people under the age of 18. The Child Welfare Service plays a key role in these cases.

Follow-up of cases involving forced marriage by healthcare services

The ordinary and local healthcare services have a duty to help combat forced marriage. The Action Plan discusses the need for knowledge and expertise in the healthcare services. The healthcare authorities have established a number of resources to maintain and develop specialist expertise in the field of violence and trauma. These include national centres such as the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) and the Norwegian Centre for Minority Health Research (NAKMI). In addition, the five regional violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention centres (RVTS) have been set up to provide the services with training and guidance. They will also ensure that relevant information and networks are available. The RVTS centres will cover several areas

relating to violence and trauma, and the centres have carried out particular assignments linked to both forced marriage and FGM. In addition to these centres of competence, the County Governors provide information and guidance to the services. The County Governors have also contributed to this effort by organising conferences, courses and other training initiatives.

From 2012, work to combat forced marriage will become a permanent task in ordinary operations.

Increase the expertise of National Population Register staff

A training seminar for the National Population Register authorities was held in 2009. The Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion organised the seminar in conjunction with the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs and the Norwegian Directorate of Taxation. In addition to employees of the Norwegian Tax Administration, the seminar was open to staff from the County Governors' offices. The course was intended to raise awareness, facilitate the exchange of experiences and increase participants' understanding of the issue.

Assistance must be effective and readily available

Report on the quality of the housing and treatment service

The Institute for Social Research (ISF) has published a report on the quality of the housing services available to young people facing a forced marriage. In 2008, the institute published the report entitled "A Safe Place to Live. And Something More." The report covered emergency accommodation, crisis centres and the *Bokollektivet* safe house. ISF points out the problems arising from two voluntary organisations having responsibility for emergency accommodation. ISF believes that this could undermine the principle of equal treatment, hinder insight and result in the local authorities being unable to build up their own support systems for young people fleeing forced marriage. The report recommended that the housing and support services should be reinforced and expanded, and that day-to-day services for young people in difficult situations should be adapted to

the needs of this target group. It also recommended that the services should be tailored to meet the differing needs of different people at various stages. The challenge of providing appropriate services to women, men and couples was also highlighted. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has taken the recommendations from the report into consideration in developing its national housing and support scheme. The report can be downloaded from www.samfunnsforskning.no

International efforts and collaboration must be intensified

Routines for dealing with cases of forced marriage

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration's circular concerning the handling of cases involving forced marriage by foreign service missions has been completed (RS 2011-21, published on 26 April 2011). It replaces the previous guide issued to foreign service missions (attachment to RS 2004-001). The purpose of the circular is to establish guidelines on the way foreign service missions handle immigration cases where there is evidence or suspicion of forced marriage. The circular also lays down guidelines on the provision of consular assistance to those who have been subjected to or are at risk of a forced marriage and who wish to return to Norway. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that people who have been or who risk being subjected to forced marriage can be identified and receive the assistance they require. The guidelines on consular assistance have been drawn up in collaboration with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) and serve as supplementary guidelines to UD's own instructions to Norwegian foreign service staff (Foreign Service Instructions, § 18, Chapter 8) concerning forced marriage.

Repatriation expenses in cases of forced marriage and female genital mutilation

Girls and boys who are or who could be victims of forced marriage may be unable to pay the cost of return travel to Norway.

Since 2007, funds have been set aside to cover repatriation in such cases. These funds can also be used for cases involving FGM. The measure

has been transferred to ordinary operations. The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity administers the scheme through its own circular (IMDi circular of 09/10).

European collaboration

Collaboration on the resettlement of victims of forced marriage was raised at the meeting of senior state officials at the Nordic High Level Council for Refugee Issues (NSHF) held on 26 June 2008. The meeting concluded that bilateral enquiries must be made in each individual case where there is a need to resettle victims of forced marriage in a different Nordic country. It was not considered appropriate to enter into a more formal collaboration in the field.

The reports conclude that the action plan has helped to strengthen the assistance provided and measures to prevent forced marriage.

The reports can be downloaded from www.samfunnsforskning.no and www.tvangsekteskap.no.

Establish routines for systematic registration of cases involving forced marriage

See the section on female genital mutilation, page 33.

More knowledge and research is required

Evaluation

The Norwegian Institute for Social Research (ISF) has evaluated the results of the Action Plan for Combating Forced Marriage (2008–2011).

The following four issues were to be examined:

- Degree of embeddedness and cooperation among the public service providers
- Implementation and execution of the plan
- Effect of the plan as a whole
- Effect of individual measures

The ISF was commissioned to study seven individual measures:

- Measure No. 4: Establish a scheme involving minority counsellors at upper secondary schools
- Measure No. 17: Increase support for voluntary organisations' attitude-shaping activities
- Measure No. 19: Reinforce and continue the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage
- Measure No. 23: Establish local collaborative projects in the regions (e.g. "Honour-related Violence in Drammen")
- Measure No. 27: Establish additional housing places for young people over the age of 18
- Measure No. 28: Establish additional housing places for young people under the age of 18
- Measure No. 31: Establish integration attaché positions.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Effective enforcement of legislation

Guide to regulations, roles and responsibilities with respect to FGM

In spring 2008, the Norwegian Ministries of Health and Care Services, Education and Research, Justice and the Police, and Children and Equality published the “Guide to Regulations, Roles and Responsibilities with respect to Female Genital Mutilation” (Q-1145 B). The guide can be downloaded from www.regjeringen.no. Public sector institutions can also order the guide by e-mail from: publikasjonsbestilling@dss.dep.no.

Amendment of the statute of limitations

By Act No. 78 of 19 June 2009, the Norwegian penal code was amended to delay the starting point of the statutory limitation period in cases involving FGM to run from the date of the injured party’s 18th birthday. The law came into effect immediately for application to all future violations of the prohibition on FGM, and to violations whose limitation period had not expired when the amendment came into force.

Guidelines for confiscating passports

The Norwegian Police Directorate has prepared guidelines for the confiscation of passports/immigrant passports and travel documents, as well as guidelines for situations in which the police can refuse to issue passports/immigrant passports and travel documents on the suspicion of planned FGM in another country. The guidelines were published by the Norwegian Police Directorate on 4 May 2009 in circular 2009/007 entitled “Guidelines for Refusing to Issue or for Confiscating Passports, Immigrant Passports and Travel Documents on the Suspicion of Planned FGM in Another Country”. The guidelines can be downloaded from the Norwegian Police website at www.politiet.no and from the Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion’s FGM website at www.regjeringen.no/bld.

The Norwegian Immigration Administration

As part of the Norwegian Immigration Administration’s efforts to combat FGM (the UTMOK project), the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration has reviewed the way cases in which FGM may be a relevant issue are dealt with. The

Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police (JD) is following up the project's recommendations.

Risk of being subjected to FGM should they return to their country of origin, may entitle a person to a residence permit following an application for protection in Norway. In 2011, JD instructed UDI to assess the risk of FGM, even though the child or her parents have not raised this issue, in cases where general and individual conditions indicate that such a risk may exist should the person(s) in question return to their country of origin.

Competence enhancement and knowledge transfer

A field survey

The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) has carried out a survey of people who work on FGM cases and their competence requirements: “Wenche Jonassen and Randi Saur: Efforts to Prevent Female Genital Mutilation in Norway – a Survey. NKVTS 1/2011”. The report can be downloaded from the centre’s dedicated FGM site at www.nkvts.no.

Training programme in the Child Welfare Service

In collaboration with four university colleges,⁷ the Norwegian Ministry for Children, Equality and Social Inclusion has prepared a supplementary training course for Child Welfare Service staff. The course is entitled “Child Welfare from a Minority Perspective” and FGM is included in the curriculum. The objective is to provide course participants with a basic understanding of what culturally sensitive child welfare entails, and increase their skills in working with children, young people and families from minority backgrounds. The course is worth 15 study points and can be included in Masters’ courses at relevant educational institutions.

The supplementary training course was in 2008–2010. NTNU Social Research AS has evaluated the course and the Ministry will assess follow-up of the initiative.

⁷ Finnmark University College, Lillehammer University College, Oslo University College and Telemark University College

The parental guidance programme

The issue of genital mutilation is integrated into the version of the parental guidance programme intended for minorities, which will be continued as a part of ordinary operations. The programme constitutes an important preventive initiative, where staff work to shape parents' attitudes by encouraging self-reflection.

Examine routines for systematic registration of cases involving FGM, and establish routines for systematic registration of cases involving forced marriage

In 2009, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) was commissioned to report on routines for the systematic registration of cases involving FGM. Bufdir was later requested to include the topic of forced marriage in the same report.

In 2010, FAKTUM Nor was commissioned to report on the registration of cases involving forced marriage and FGM dealt with by the public services. The remit was to evaluate practical implementation, privacy protection and financial/administrative consequences. In the summer of 2011, a report reviewing the relevant legislation was submitted. The review reveals that health-related data is deemed to be sensitive information under the Norwegian Personal Data Act. Consequently, particularly stringent requirements, over and above licensing by the Norwegian Data Inspectorate, apply to the storage and disclosure of such information. The Norwegian Personal Health Data Filing System Act emphasises the requirement to establish a statutory basis for central registers comprising health-related information, and lays down strict requirements concerning relevant and necessary purpose. The legislation that regulates the healthcare services, the Child Welfare Service, kindergartens, schools and police records does not provide grounds for disclosing information of this kind to a national register. The establishment of a national register would require several changes to legislation, along with significant implementation and verification efforts linked to security requirements, all of which would have to be carried out with full consideration for privacy protection. Introducing uniform classification of cases and standardised codes, and

establishing effective routines that maintain data security would require a great deal of effort. The establishment of an anonymous register would additionally involve a risk of duplicate registrations.

The Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion will assess alternative approaches to collecting data about cases involving FGM and forced marriage dealt with by the support services.

Information about female genital mutilation for new religious leaders

The Norwegian Ministry of Culture has prepared a guide for new religious leaders. The County Governors must use this guide as a basis when approving new religious leaders. The guide contains information about female genital mutilation.

The School Counselling Service

See the discussion in the section on forced marriage, page 28.

Parents' network in schools

See the discussion in the section on forced marriage, page 29.

Raising the competence of healthcare personnel

The Norwegian Directorate of Health has allocated funds to the County Governors in Norway to follow up Measure 16 in the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011). Regional/county conferences and courses have been held on the subjects of FGM and forced marriage run by the County Governors and the regional violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention centres (RVTS).

See report 1/2011 (NKVTS) "Working with female genital mutilation in Norway", page 33.

Relevant professional organisations have been asked to state which aspects, if any, relating to FGM are included in existing education and supplementary training courses. The survey will be followed up with a process to map existing specialist education courses. More training and information are required, in particular for GPs, but also for chief municipal medical officers, midwives, psychologists and healthcare staff in the specialist healthcare service.

From 2012, the Norwegian Directorate of Health will commission the County Governors, the regional violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention centres (RVTS), the Norwegian Centre for Minority Health Research (NAKMI) and the regional health authorities to hold courses, seminars and other training initiatives at county level. There will be a permanent need to update knowledge and education courses relating to forced marriage, FGM and the culturally sensitive provision of services. Competence initiatives and special guidance will therefore continue as part of ordinary operations in 2012.

Prevention and shaping attitudes in affected communities

Family health clinics and the school health service

In 2009, the Norwegian Directorate of Health prepared the guide “Consultation and voluntary genital examination services, a guide for public health centres and the school healthcare service”. The guide was revised in 2011. The guide should be viewed in the context of Measures 27, 29, 30 and 31 from the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011).

In the period 2008–2010, the Norwegian Directorate of Health extended grants to local authorities and boroughs running extra initiatives at their public health centres or implementing other information initiatives/preventive measures in connection with the summer holidays. The Norwegian Directorate of Health also prepared information material for affected groups and healthcare personnel to coincide with the nationwide launch of this service in 2010. Through the County Governors, the Norwegian Directorate of Health has also encouraged local authorities with a high proportion of residents from the population groups in question to set up youth, women’s and men’s groups under the auspices of the public health centres and the school healthcare service.

Continue and intensify efforts to combat female genital mutilation in Norway’s health regions

See the discussion concerning the follow-up of cases involving forced marriage by the healthcare services, page 30, and developing the expertise of healthcare personnel, page 34.

Information material about female genital mutilation

On the basis of the revised edition of the publication entitled “We’re OK”, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) has prepared a new information leaflet entitled “Your Body is Naturally Perfect”, which is aimed at young girls. The leaflet has been translated into several languages, and can be downloaded from the centre’s dedicated FGM site at www.nkvts.no. NKVTS has also written an article that is used in the Introduction Programme.

NKVTS has developed a presentation about FGM for Islamic leaders, with references from the Koran which have been approved by the General Secretary of the Islamic Council.

In collaboration with the healthcare service at Sogn Upper Secondary School, NKVTS has helped to develop a teaching plan. This plan is now included in “Female Genital Mutilation: a Guide”; which is the title of the centre’s dedicated FGM page at www.nkvts.no.

Available healthcare services

Specialist health services’ work with regard to female genital mutilation

The measure is included in the ongoing work associated with Report no. 12 (2008-2009) to the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) entitled “A joyful event. About coherent pregnancy, childbirth and post-natal care”. Areas to be developed include knowledge-based guidelines on this topic. The Norwegian Directorate of Health has started to prepare guidelines for post-natal care. The directorate will gradually revise the guidelines for pregnancy care and then develop new guidelines for care in childbirth. The work on the guidelines will discuss how to provide healthcare assistance

for victims of FGM. The specialist healthcare services' work with women who have suffered genital mutilation, and efforts to combat genital mutilation constitute a multi-disciplinary activity. Physiotherapists, midwives and gynaecologists are all involved in this work. The guidelines will be aimed at healthcare personnel who work with the target groups.

Interaction routines

The report from the Norwegian Centre for Minority Health Research (NAKMI) published in January 2011, documents flawed internal control systems and routines for maintaining patient records. A number of the report's recommendations focus on issues that should be established routines. This should be dealt with through internal controls and, if necessary, supervision.

Mapping and evaluation of information routines in the healthcare service

In 2011, the Norwegian Centre for Minority Health Research (NAKMI) mapped the routines for the exchange of information between public health centres and hospitals with regard to FGM. NAKMI has also reviewed the information work carried out by healthcare services to prevent FGM. These reports can be downloaded from www.nakmi.no or www.helsedirektoratet.no.

Information about genital mutilation in connection with pre-natal check-ups

This measure is included in the ongoing work to follow up on Report no. 12 to the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) (2008–2009) entitled "A joyful event. About coherent pregnancy, childbirth and post-natal care". The guidelines for pre-natal care will include more detailed information about FGM.

Revised guide to healthcare services for asylum-seekers, refugees and reunited family members

The revised guide⁸ (2010) contains information about counselling and genital examination services offered up to one year after arrival in Norway to women and girls from countries where the incidence of genital mutilation is 30 per cent or higher, according to the WHO.

Report on the provision of medical documentation

In 2008, the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services (HOD) chaired a working group comprising representatives from affected communities, transit centre staff, the Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Norwegian Ministry for Children and Equality. The working group's report was completed in February 2009. The working group did not recommend establishing a separate scheme for medical documentation to prove that girls/women had not suffered genital mutilation.

However, the working group did support the proposal that the women/girls in question may, in connection with any voluntary genital examination, request a doctor's note stating that they had not suffered genital mutilation. "Circular 1-5/2009 Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation" was updated in November 2010. Circular 1-2/2010 can be downloaded from www.regjeringen.no or www.helsedirektoratet.no. The guide about consultation and voluntary genital examination services was revised in 2011.

Evaluation of the healthcare services' information activities

In January 2011, the National Competence Unit for Minority Health (NAKMI) published a report evaluating the healthcare services' information activities aimed at preventing FGM. The report highlights the work done by the public health centres and the school healthcare service to provide information to people with backgrounds from the countries in question. The Norwegian Directorate of Health is considering following up relevant recommendations from the report, including the establishment of a separate study of the information provided by GPs.

Extra effort at holiday times

Summer initiative to combat female genital mutilation

In the summer of 2007, an information stand was set up at Gardermoen airport, and later in Oslo's Grønland district, to distribute information about

⁸ http://www.helsedirektoratet.no/vp/multimedia/archive/00296/Helsetjenestetilbud_296039a.pdf

FGM. The stand was staffed by personnel from *Primærmedisinsk verksted* (Primary Medicine Workshop). It was decided not to stage further information activities of this type during the plan period.

In the period 2008–2010, the Norwegian Directorate of Health extended grants to local authorities and boroughs running extra initiatives at their public health centres or other information and preventive measures in connection with the summer holidays.

In the run-up to summer in 2010 and 2011, the Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion sent an information letter to all local authorities, county authorities and Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (NAV) offices in Norway. The letter was intended to intensify support agencies' focus on individuals at risk of being subjected to forced marriage or FGM during the summer holidays.

Intensified international efforts

Information about Norwegian legislation on FGM

By agreement with relevant embassies in Norway and the Nordic region, information about Norwegian legislation on these matters is to be made available to people applying for visas at these embassies. The Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011) has been translated into English, French, Arabic and Somali, and distributed to appropriate embassies. Norwegian legislation on FGM has also been translated into appropriate languages. This will enable Norwegian foreign service missions in countries where the practice of FGM is widespread to make important information material available.

Evaluation of the Action Plan

Oxford Research has evaluated the work on the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011). The final report will be presented in the spring of 2012.

The following four topics were specified in the assignment:

- Degree of embeddedness and cooperation among the public service providers
- Implementation and execution of the plan
- Effect of the plan as a whole
- Effect of individual measures

Oxford Research has monitored the following measures on an annual basis:

- Measure No. 5: Establish a national centre of competence on female genital mutilation
- Measure No. 20: Financial support for the preventive work undertaken by voluntary organisations
- Measure No. 23: Continue and reinforce initiatives to combat female genital mutilation in the five healthcare regions' resource groups.

The following measures have also been monitored for limited periods:

- Measure No. 13: Develop resource material on female genital mutilation for use by teachers and pupils
- Measure No. 15: Make use of the parent network in schools
- Measure No. 18: Raise awareness of genital mutilation and its consequences among newly arrived immigrants
- Measure No. 22: Public health centres and the school healthcare service will target their information activities at young people, women, men and parents in the relevant groups
- Measure No. 30: Reinforce information about FGM in connection with pre-natal check-ups

The interim reports can be downloaded from <http://noxford.tuen.dk>

Additional information

- www.tvangsekteskap.no
- www.imdi.no
- www.udi.no
- www.politiet.no
- www.landsider.no
- www.fn.no
- www.lovdatab.no

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