



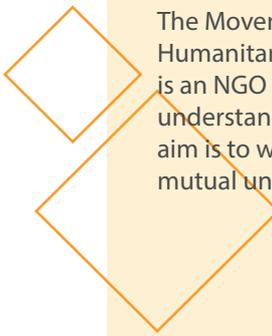
CASE STUDY



Point of information and advice for women victims of gender violence and at risk of social exclusion

The Movement for Peace has carried out a programme of comprehensive intervention for women since 2005. This programme is mainly targeted at women victims of gender violence or at risk of social exclusion. They need services that promote equal opportunities and social and labour integration, improve social well-being and quality of life through advice, guidance, accompaniment, socio-cultural promotion, training, social awareness, etc.

The project's work with women takes a holistic approach, looking not only at the single perspective of a path for the beneficiaries to follow, but also at providing them with the independence necessary to create a new life plan. This is achieved thanks to multidisciplinary intervention by different professionals acting in a coordinated manner to respond to situations deriving from gender-based violence and social exclusion.



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SHORT SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

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DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ORGANISATION

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The MPDL was born in the heat of the enthusiasm shared in a pacifist demonstration celebrated in Madrid on 15 November 1981 by a group of people that decide to form an Association, in accordance with the prevailing 1964 law.

The MPDL is an independent, secular and progressive nongovernmental organisation. MPDL pursues a dual objective in its actions:

- To promote, spread, encourage and protect the universal principles of peace, disarmament and freedom and the coexistence of men and women and peoples, in the framework of internationally recognised Human Rights.
- To act against inequality and injustice through development cooperation and social action.

The Movement for Peace (MPDL) works to promote a new international order that would eliminate inequality, exclusion and poverty, in an increasingly globalised world, where violence is incompatible with peace, both internally and internationally.



PROJECT

The objectives of the **Point of Information and Advice for Women** (PIAW) project are:

- To enhance the skills and strategies of women to increase their ability to respond to inequality and violence.
- To foster the autonomy of women to improve their life project.
- Sensitise society in general to the need for equal opportunities and the prevention of gender-based violence.





This is the reason why the project is carried out across different areas: social, legal, psychosocial and labour integration.

The programme is implemented at three levels of intervention: at an individual level focusing on women victims of gender violence and at risk of social exclusion, at the group level with women and men through workshops with the objective of sensitising society in general to the need for equal opportunities and the prevention of gender-based violence, and at the community level by participating in different round tables and working groups together with other institutions and stakeholders (Commemorating International Women's Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, an analysis of interventions with women victims of gender violence, trafficking for sexual exploitation analysis).

What are the local social realities?

The decision to run the PIAW programme was based on needs in the areas where the Movement for Peace had a presence, providing support for immigrant women, alone or with dependent family members who were unaware of the social resources of their environment. Most of them had difficulties integrating in their community of residence, lacked training, and had limited economic resources, especially the victims of gender-based violence.

In 2005 the foreign population in Spain accounted for 8.5% of the total population (with women accounting for 46.6 %). Since then the numbers have steadily risen.

From work carried out in the framework of other programmes it was noted that when the victim of gender violence was an immigrant woman resident in Spain there were factors that triggered a greater precariousness and vulnerability as well

as a lack of information, of strategies for action and defence. These women suffered from triple discrimination, as females, as immigrants and as victims of gender violence.

The special vulnerability of women migrants against gender violence resulted from the following circumstances:

1. Psycho-social reality: the majority of women have undergone a process of strong uprooting, leaving their vital and emotional places of origin. This hope for a better life is frustrated on many occasions and, if there is a situation of domestic violence, this frustration is twofold. Faced with reality, the frustration of expectations, precarious employment and housing create a breeding ground for women to continue to be victims of gender-based violence.
2. Migration process and cultural differences.
3. Administrative situation: the high percentage of women whose administrative situation was irregular meant they faced restrictive measures which had an impact on their decisions. These women submitted a complaint to the State authorities and security forces showing that their irregular administrative status caused insecurity and fears.
4. Socio-economic reality: in most cases the women were in precarious employment, in jobs without a contract and an unstable situation, and did not have the financial means to lead an independent life away from their partner, a prerequisite to being able to break the circle of violence
5. Lack of a social support network.

The implementation of PIAW developed by Movement for Peace aims to tackle these circumstances, contributing to the fight against





the vulnerability of immigrant women, and a comprehensive and multidisciplinary methodology was developed for the programme. Law 1/2004, 28 December, on integral protection against gender-based violence, was a step forward in the protection of women against violence. It allows the professionals of the Movement for Peace to inform, advise and support the women, helping them gain access to and the recognition of the rights covered under this law. When the MPDL started to receive numerous claims from undocumented women immigrants who did not come under the scope of the law, the programme started working directly with them.

In response to the systematic practice of sanctioning undocumented foreign women who complained of gender-based violence with expulsion, civil society organisations began to demand the adoption of measures by the Government for the protection of this group. There was a need to develop specific actions for the protection of foreign victims in an irregular situation. On 29 July 2005, the Ministry of the Interior issued order no. 14/2005, which enables the women to file a complaint. Professionals assessed the need for individual escorts for the women to ensure the implementation of this instruction.

Following an assessment by MPDL at the end of 2011 of the evolution of the PIAW, it was decided to expand the project to all women (foreign and Spanish) and not only victims of violence, but also women at risk of social exclusion. The economic crisis and the evolution of migration in Spain had changed the needs of this population and created new situations of social vulnerability that required specialised intervention from public resources. Although the MPDL now also turns its attention to women at risk of social exclusion, victims of gender-based violence remains a priority, since there are still women who do not have access to official protection resources.

The filing of a complaint activates the protection mechanism but to take that step women must be given advice and assistance to decide how and when. Since the consequences of initiating this procedure can be very serious if it is subsequently deemed that there was no crime, these women are extremely vulnerable. The results of the survey on violence against women in 2015 highlighted that 44.6% of victims had chosen not to report because it “had very little importance/ was not serious enough», and 26.6% did not do so «out of fear of retaliation». 52% of women who have suffered sexual violence, physical violence, or threats from their partner or ex-partner have gone to the police, a court or some form of service (doctor, lawyer, NGOs,...), while the other 48% have not gone to any service, and therefore had no professional intervention.

Given this reality and the inadequacy of public coverage, it is important to continue to maintain comprehensive care mechanisms that can respond from a global perspective of social change to the different situations that arise, especially for those women who are victims of gender violence and at risk of social exclusion who do not access the system of official protection because they do not file a complaint.

The impact of the budget cuts in Spain, which causes a setback in the achievement of equality between women and men, was the reason for the inclusion of educating society through community actions as one of the main objectives of the programme. One of the latest actions developed is the video «Women’s great ally: Feminism».





What are the specific innovative elements in your project/service?

The main innovative feature of the programme is its comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach, at the point of information and advice for women PIAW in which the professional team offers a specific answer to each specific situation facing women, ensuring interdisciplinary coverage of all cases. Intervention includes social, legal, psychological and labour support:

- Social help: informing women about their rights as citizens, the benefits and social resources for those who are eligible, etc. There is social support and monitoring throughout the intervention process and continuous coordination with centres for social services centres and other forms of social support.
- Psychological support: working with women by addressing the consequences of their social exclusion or the aggression against them, trying to return to a standard routine as soon as possible.
- Legal advice: informing and advising women of everything related to their rights as women: issues of civil rights (family law), criminal (violation of fundamental rights, violence, etc.), immigration, social, and any process related to discrimination and violation of their rights on grounds of gender.

If necessary requests for legal aid for filing legal actions, facilitating participation in the processes listed through our coordination and collaboration with the ex officio lawyers.

- Labour advice: working with women on their employment possibilities, both in relation to the active search for employment and their training for selection processes, as well as looking at what is best suited to their abilities and skills guidance.

What are the key characteristics of the project/service?

Target groups

The systemic approach understands the woman as a system within a system. It cannot intervene in isolation without taking into account that it is part of a whole in which the elements that compose it interact among themselves. For this reason, although it is addressed to women, all factors and elements that are part of the problem are taken into account, including if necessary other people who are part of their environment (such as, for example, family).

Principles

To promote, spread, encourage and protect the universal principles that uphold peace and disarmament, freedom and the coexistence of men and women and peoples, in the framework of internationally recognised Human Rights. To act against inequality and injustice through development cooperation and social action.

Drivers

The work will take place in permanent coordination with the network of social services and other agents involved in the cases.

Outcome

The result of the project is a resource of comprehensive support for women to strengthen their knowledge, skills, and strategies for the defence of their rights and for the prevention of violence.





Can this project be transferred to a larger context (a bigger region, the whole country, EU-wide)? If so, what is necessary to transfer it (special structures, finances, common definition of standards...)? If not, why not?

Currently this project is implemented at national level and adapted to the characteristics of each territory. The same objectives and the same methodology could be transferred to the European level by defining some common parameters. To strengthen networks with European associations that develop intervention programmes with women, it is important to share best practices, exchange experiences, analyse and propose innovative alternatives for intervention that respond to social changes taking place in Europe and especially where these affect the defence of the rights of European citizenship and the guarantee of the principle of equality between women and men, one of the founding values of the European Union.

CONTACT

www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWONuyZVrVM





solidar

Rue de Pascale 4-6
1040 Brussels
Belgium
T +32 2 500 10 20
F +32 2 500 10 30

Twitter: @SOLIDAR_EU
Facebook: SOLIDAR
www.solidar.org
solidar@solidar.org



SOLIDAR, together with our national members and partners, has developed 17 case studies in 2016, presenting innovative, effective, sustainable and tailor made models to promote social inclusion, the social economy and quality job creation by adapting a social investment approach. In their daily work, SOLIDAR members and partners anticipate new or unmet needs of socio-economically vulnerable people and empower them to actively participate in society and to access the labour market.

These case studies gather strong evidence of the social impact of the activities undertaken by our members and partners to help Member States making progress towards the achievement of the social and employment objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the implementation of the Social Investment Package.

SOLIDAR is a European network of membership based Civil Society Organisations who gather several millions of citizens throughout Europe and worldwide. SOLIDAR voices the values of its member organisations to the EU and international institutions across the three main policy sectors; social affairs, lifelong learning and international cooperation.



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