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Preventing domestic violence with Men and Boys: Challenges and Opportunities

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Risk Management of Domestic Violence

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1. Introduction

Prevention of domestic violence, here defined as male-to-female perpetrated intimate partner violence (IPV), and stalking represents a significant societal challenge. This form of violence is a pervasive global public health problem, where every third woman worldwide reports being victimised (Devries et al., 2013). The lifetime prevalence in Sweden of IPV, as defined by the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) as 'physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.', have been estimated to be 23%. Thus, every fourth woman in Sweden is estimated to have been the victim of IPV sometime during her life (BRÅ, 2014; EIGE; European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019). The prevalence of IPV can also vary within a country based on population density, where rates in rural communities have been found to be similar to, or greater than, those in urban communities (Breiding, Ziembroski, & Black, 2009; Edwards, 2015; Peek-Asa et al., 2011; Strand & Storey, 2019). If the relationship ends and the perpetrator continues to harass the victim it can turn into stalking. Therefore, stalking crimes need to be addressed within the scope of men's and boys' violence towards a former partner. These prevalence rates indicate that society as a consequence of such violence has to invest a large amount of resources in terms of police, social services, health care facilities, protective actions and criminal justice legal work. The annual cost of IPV in Sweden is estimated to be 3.3 billion SEK (National Board of Health and Welfare, 2006), and 13.5 billion Euros in Europe (EIGE, 2019). IPV places a major strain on both victims and society, where resources provided to reduce violence show low preventive effect since rates of recidivism in Sweden are as high as 42% for IPV perpetrators in urban as well as rural areas (Belfrage & Strand 2012; Petersson & Strand, 2017; Svalin et al., 2018). Victims of IPV or stalking report lower quality of life and increased risk for mental health problems (Hansen, Sawyer, Begle, & Hubel, 2010; Korkodeilou, 2017), which is important to bear in mind when estimating related costs for combating IPV and its consequences.

In addressing men's violence against women, policies and interventions must focus on both victims and perpetrators. To this end, however, interventions directed specifically toward men who perpetrate partner violent men have generally been neglected. As such, the current policy in Sweden emphasises the responsibility of the violent perpetrator.

2. Description of the policy

The current policy in Sweden on the prevention of IPV came into effect on 1 January 2017. A central sub-goal of the gender equality policy is that 'Men's violence against women must stop' and that 'Women and men, girls and boys are to have the same rights and opportunities in terms of bodily integrity'. The sub-goal covers all forms of violence in line with the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Overall, the policy focuses specifically on the importance of protective measures and men's participation and responsibility in the work against violence (Skr. 2016/17; SOU 2015:55). The background to this policy stems from the revision of the Swedish gender equality policy (Prop. 2005/6:155; SOU, 2005:66). Although progress was made in several areas of combatting violence against women, an evaluation of such efforts also demonstrated major flaws (SOU 2014:71). One such flaw concerned the regional and local differences between authorities such as police, social services and health care, in their work to prevent IPV. Based on these findings, the Swedish government adopted the policy in the form of a 10-year national strategy for preventing domestic violence (Skr. 2016/17:10). It consists of four overarching objectives, however only two of these objectives have an explicit focus on the violent men and will therefore be described below.

The **first objective**, which is also the main focus for the overall policy of ending men's violence against women, concerns working more broadly and efficiently with violence prevention than before. More specifically, this includes preventing violence from occurring in the first place as well as preventing such violence among those who are in the risk zone of using, or previously have used, such violence. Regarding the former, preventive measures should address and challenge men and boy's notions and conceptions about power, masculinity, and gender roles, at an early stage in life (e.g. in elementary school). The latter concerns treatment and support services to violent men, both within and outside of correctional facilities. In sum, the focus for the first objective is consistently on those men who use (or are at risk of using) violence, and on those capable of preventing such violence from happening.

The **second objective** includes improving the ability of the criminal justice system to intervene against violent men. An efficient crime preventive work by the criminal justice system could result in deterring the violent men from recidivating, as such work could result in a higher likelihood of arresting men who perpetrated serious forms of violence. Moreover, another aspect of an efficient crime preventive work by the criminal justice system includes encouraging violent men to participate in treatment and thereby change their violent behaviour. In order to do so, any interventions directed towards violent men should focus on changeable (i.e. dynamic) risk factors (e.g. substance abuse or attitudes), which, for example, can be identified using structured violence risk assessments. Overall, the strategy clearly states that interventions directed towards violent men are a neglected area as few such interventions are available. Furthermore, the responsibilities of different agencies in terms of providing such interventions are unclear.

In order to realise the objectives set out for the national strategy several different actors in society are, or should be, involved. Such actors mainly include agencies within the criminal justice system such as police, attorneys, courts and correctional facilities, but also social services, the health care sector, and non-governmental organisations (NGO). It is also important to involve regional county boards and local municipalities, to a greater extent, in order to overcome the previously mentioned regional and local differences. More importantly, a greater focus on efficient collaboration both within and between such agencies are considered key in striving for IPV prevention. Therefore, the Government has allocated 1.4 billion SEK (approx.130 million Euro) to specific measures under the national strategy for the years 2017–2020 including work by the Gender Equality Agency, the County Administrative Boards, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish Association for Local and Regional Authorities. In addition, funding is also provided for the judicial, health care and education system. Although the initial costs might seem high, the intention was that it would be cost-efficient over time. This requires evaluations over time as the policy focuses on long-term effects on a macro-level (e.g. in terms of educational interventions for social services and police, as well as public campaigns). Moreover, on a micro-level, preventive actions such as restraining orders have been shown to be cost-effective, where the use of civil protective orders in the US showed that for every dollar spent they saved 30.75 dollars in avoided costs related to IPV (Logan, Walter & Hoyt, 2012). In sum, the Swedish government prioritises gender equality, and, therefore, it is important to convert the policy in to effective practical interventions.

3. Opportunities and Challenges

In accordance with the Swedish policy and national strategy, the opportunities and challenges with preventing men and boy's violence can be discussed in three stages; (1) primary prevention, (2) formal responses from the criminal justice system, and (3) violence prevention post-criminal justice system process.

3.1 Primary prevention

According to the policy's first objective, this involves challenging men and boys' notions and conceptions about power, masculinity, and gender roles in society. In general, primary prevention has been conducted as either community-based educational interventions or large-scale public health campaigns. There are, however, several challenges related to the community-based prevention of men and boys' violence against women and girls. To this end, few evaluations of primary IPV prevention strategies have been carried out (e.g. Whitaker et al. 2013). Such evaluations also generally lack methodological rigor, for example, using non-experimental evaluation designs. Another challenge with previous evaluations of primary prevention strategies concerns the measurement of the outcomes. As such, primary prevention often targets and strives to alter attitudes, beliefs and knowledge of IPV. However, the relevancy of such outcomes for later IPV perpetration is yet to

be established on an individual level (Whitaker et al. 2013). Furthermore, such previous preventive strategies have been based on feminist theory emphasising the explanatory role of power and control as the main cause for men's IPV (Whitaker et al. 2013). Problematically, there is little empirical support for this theory and therefore it might not be a correct description of reality, more theories need to be investigated (e.g. Cantos & O'Leary, 2014; Corvo & Johnson, 2013; Graham-Kevan, 2007).

Since 2011, the Government has commissioned government agencies to promote programmes of violence prevention among the youth, targeting particularly young men and boys in schools. In this context, Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP), a universal (as opposed to selective or indicated) prevention programme aiming at challenging norms of dominant masculinities and encouraging bystander intervention, is playing a key role. Originally developed in the US, MVP was translated, adapted and disseminated by the NGO Män (Men, formerly Men for gender equality). Based on group discussions/ exercises and the premise that behaviour is largely governed by norms and peer pressure, MVP intends to counteract violence among young men in general. It is assumed that critical reflection on masculinity may also prevent violence by participants in more secluded settings, such as IPV and sexual abuse. Work with MVP in six Swedish schools 2015–2017 was evaluated by the National Agency for Education (2018). Although the study pointed to partly flawed implementation by the schools involved and a need for further research on MVP, it also found that the programme does seem to have a capacity for positive developments. The Government is supporting further evaluations of MVP in schools across the country through an agreement with the Swedish Association for Regional and Local Authorities (SALAR) 2018–2020.

Since 2018, the newly established national Agency for Gender Equality has been commissioned by the Government to support the development of methods for violence prevention with children and youth, including young men and boys in honour-related contexts and violence in young people's intimate relationships. The County Administrative Boards are commissioned to perform a similar function at the regional level. So far, however, there is no elaborated national structure for supporting the municipalities, regions and other actors in training staff and implementing evidence-based methods of violence prevention. Previously reported positive effects of universal violence prevention efforts in schools include lower levels of violence and bullying, an improved work environment as well as better student performances, especially by boys (for instance in SOU 2014:6).

3.1.1 Recommendations

- Primary prevention programmes should be evidence-based
- Implementation of primary prevention programmes should be followed by a rigorous methodological evaluation design
- Establishing a European knowledge centre for sharing successful examples of primary prevention programmes among member states within the EU.

3.2 Criminal justice system

The second key focus in the Swedish policy concerns improving the criminal justice system's work on preventing men's IPV.

Sweden has a long history of addressing men's violence against women, dating back to the law enacted by King Magnus III during the 11th century aiming to protect women from violence, rape and abduction (Hassan Jansson, 2002). More recently, the law of severe violation of a woman's integrity was enacted in 1998. As such, men who are found guilty of repeated harassments and aimed at violating their intimate female partner's integrity (e.g. through assault, sexual violence, or threats) can be charged with this offence. The purpose of this law was to enforce the legal protection for women who have been victims of systematic violence in an intimate relationship, as well as to enable the courts to impose longer prison sentences for such violence. Having specific laws targeting IPV, such as the law of "gross violation of a woman's integrity" in Sweden and the law on "coercive control" in the UK, is important since that shows that society takes a stand against IPV. The law of "gross violation of a woman's integrity" addresses the problem of prolonged victimisation and how, according to the law, less severe actions such as harassment, threats and psychological violence will normalise the violence. Such laws enable the criminal justice system to enforce IPV treatment among perpetrators convicted for IPV crimes, whether perpetrators acknowledge their violent behaviour as a problem or not.

However, only approximately 30% of victims of IPV, even less for stalking victims, report the crimes to the police, of which only a few perpetrators will be charged, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced to prison (BRÅ 2014; 2015b; Logan & Walker, 2017), specifically in rural areas (Maran & Varetto, 2017). Problematically, a police report is a necessity for the criminal justice system to be able to act upon IPV perpetrators. Only those perpetrators who are reported can be targeted for sanctions as well as mandatory treatment, if convicted. It is a challenge for all societies to increase reporting rates in order to more fully be able to work with all men who commit IPV and not only the one third who are reported. In Sweden, conviction rates of IPV are generally low and the sentences are lenient. For example, those convicted for severe forms of IPV are rarely sentenced to prison for more than a year, even though such crimes carry a maximum of six to eight years imprisonment. The low conviction rates for IPV can partly be explained by the lack of evidence, implicating that the criminal justice system needs to improve the investigative work (National Council for Crime Prevention, 2019). Consequently, IPV recidivism rates are high, emphasising the need to identify those perpetrators with a high risk for recidivism (Belfrage & Strand, 2012; Petersson & Strand, 2017).

3.2.1 Risk Assessment

The Swedish police is responsible for both investigating the crimes committed as well as managing the risk for future crimes, in particular recidivism of violent crimes. In Sweden, it is mandatory for police to use structured risk assessment methods when

assessing risk for IPV and stalking in order to give the victim the most effective risk management. Risk assessments are conducted with the instruments The Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER: Kropp, Hart & Belfrage, 2010) and Guidelines for stalking assessment and management (SAM: Kropp, Hart & Lyon, 2008), both which are based on the structured professional judgement (SPJ) model. They consist of a checklist of the most common risk factors for the assessed risk, such as prior violence, attitude problems, substance abuse, general criminality and mental health problems. Both methods have been shown to work well in aiding the decision-making regarding adequate risk management for the perpetrator, as well as regarding adequate support and protective actions for the victim (Belfrage & Strand, 2008; 2009; 2012; McEwan, Bateson & Strand, 2018; Storey et al., 2014; Strand, 2015; Strand et al., 2016). Beside the police, also the social services as well as the Swedish Prison and Probation Service conduct risk assessments for domestic violence, where results have been shown to be similar.

Implementing risk assessments as part of the police work has been done in close collaboration with researchers, making evaluation possible to some extent (McEwan, Bateson & Strand, 2018; Strand, 2015). It is important to have transparency in this process and having objective evaluators in order to improve the work on best practices and evidence-based methods for the police, but also within other organisations such as the social services and NGOs, to work with. It helps the police to identify both strengths and limitations in their work. In order to implement the national policy and put an end to men's violence towards a partner the police as well as the social service and other organisations needs to gain more knowledge by open up for researchers to be able to investigate possible gaps in their system in order to make them more efficient.

3.2.2 Risk Management

Conducting valid risk assessments are important since they are the foundation of risk management. Police perform structured violence risk assessments with mixed valid results (Belfrage & Strand 2008; 2012; Svalin et al, 2018), meaning they know how to assess risk for violence, but they have difficulties to translate the results into risk management. The link between risk assessment and risk management is somewhat unclear. Viljoen and colleagues (2018) found in their review that risk assessment tools only to some extent helps to guide risk management and that it might vary due to profession. The subsequent risk management, which is an absolute necessity for preventing future IPV, therefore becomes unstructured and thus varies between police districts as well as social services, specifically across rurality. As such, risk management relies upon the police officers' subjective experiences of working with IPV and stalking, rather than on evidenced-based methods. Furthermore, the subsequent risk management is unstructured, which includes lack of routines for collaboration and documentation. These shortcomings make it difficult to evaluate the preventive effect since risk management often is done separately rather than in collaboration, sometimes leading to fatal outcomes such as femicide (National Board

of Health and Welfare 2018). Problems also arise when police and other agencies assess the risk from different perspectives, which leads to different levels of case prioritisation. To this end, most agencies that work with IPV perform some kind of risk assessments, although different ones and separately from each other.

Moreover, in order to prevent IPV and stalking the police need to have access to effective protective actions. Nevertheless, both access and effect differ due to rurality, where there is less access in rural areas. However, research on the effectiveness of risk management for IPV is limited (Williams & Stansfield, 2017). Results from a Swedish project (Strand, et al., 2016) showed that several risk management strategies were initiated, namely; contacting social services or a crime victim support centres, providing a victim advocate, issuing a restraining order, performing a safety talk, providing a safety phone, or an alarm package, and/or providing shelter. Despite this, approximately two out of five perpetrators recidivated, with the majority of the recidivism occurring within 12 months of reporting the crime (Belfrage & Strand, 2012; Petersson & Strand, 2017). Thus, risk management should be implemented as soon as possible since the criminal justice system can be seen as a protective action if the perpetrator is convicted. Furthermore, the preventive strategies that were initiated were not always implemented, and the practice of risk management was difficult to investigate due to a lack of structure and proper documentation (Strand et al., 2016). As showed by Svalin and her colleagues (2018) measures to protect the victim were taken in only 23% of all IPV cases within a police district in Sweden. On a positive note, there is some evidence that individual protective actions can be effective and prevent crimes under special conditions, such as restraining orders (Benites, McNeil & Binder, 2010; Strand, 2012) as well as alarm packages and protected living in shelters (Prenzler & Fardell, 2017), but why and when they work have not yet been established.

3.2.3 Treatment in the Swedish correctional settings (Prison and Probation Service)

Since 2004, the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) has been available for partner violent men who have been incarcerated or sentenced to probation in Sweden. Like many other IPV treatment programmes, IDAP is based on the Duluth model's power and control theory, as well as on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Participation in IDAP is voluntary. In line with international evaluations of Duluth-based IPV treatment programmes, IDAP was not found to be more effective in reducing IPV when compared to a control group of non-treated perpetrating men. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service has recently developed a new treatment programme for men who perpetrate partner violence. This new programme, called Predov (Preventing Domestic Violence), differs from Duluth-based programmes in acknowledging that these men are a heterogeneous group with different needs (The Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2019). One of the core ideas behind Predov is that men who perpetrate partner violence can begin treatment for their violent behaviour while incarcerated, but also continue the programme upon release back

into society. Predov is based on CBT and the Risk-Need-Responsivity model, in order to tailor the treatment according to needs of the specific individual and focuses on changing maladaptive cognitive strategies resulting in violence. To facilitate programme adherence for men who continue the programme after their release from prison, Predov will be available in digital form. A pilot study of the efficacy of Predov will begin in the fall of 2019 and evaluation will take place during 2020 (The Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2019).

3.2.4 Recommendations

- Increase report rates for IPV. This is complicated and needs to be addressed on several levels, for instance the police need to have specific routines for how to handle a report of domestic violence that all police officers, and not only specialists, should be trained to follow. Also social services and health care facilities need to have routines on how to both ask the questions and how to follow-up the answer. Ultimately, the victim needs to report the crime and also to cooperate throughout the criminal justice system in order to improve the probability to get a conviction. Therefore, the whole criminal justice system needs to take a grip on this matter, in order to increase credibility for the criminal justice system.
- Police should have a specific crime code for IPV when registering perpetrators who are reported for such crimes. If society more clearly identifies IPV within the criminal justice system then more targeted treatments can be used, as well as sentencing perpetrators to specific IPV treatments as part of the legal sanctions.
- Implementation of risk assessment and risk management methods should be followed by a rigorous methodological evaluation design and methodology.
- Collaboration between academics and practitioners is necessary in order to evaluate IPV risk management.
- Treatment programmes need to incorporate the heterogeneity of perpetrators for more effective risk management, i.e. different problems and needs will be present for different perpetrators and therefore the programme must be flexible enough to target the specific needs for each perpetrator.

3.3 Post criminal justice system

Available treatment options for men who perpetrate partner violence outside of the correctional facilities are limited in Sweden. Besides the fact that interventions for such men is a neglected area, there is also an uncertainty about whose responsibility it is to provide such treatment (SOU 2018:37). This issue can be solved in part as men who initially start the Predov treatment programme within the correctional facilities also can continue this upon release from prison. Moreover, the current development of the Predov programme is done together with the Swedish social services in order to examine the programme's potential usefulness for men who

perpetrate partner violence who are not imprisoned. Treatment programmes should also be available for those who did not receive such treatment while imprisoned (e.g. due to short prison sentences). Results from a project in Norway showed that for male perpetrators with low, or no, general criminality any treatment programme will work if the perpetrator is motivated to take part of it (St Olav Hospital, 2019). In this study, they compared different treatment programmes, which were all successful when the perpetrator was motivated and had insight. This meant that they took responsibility for, and had insight into, their violent behaviour.

Regardless of whether violent men are being reported to the police or not, those who are prepared to take responsibility for their violent behaviour need access to someone who will listen to them since this may be the first step towards voluntary treatment. In Sweden, a male phone-line, 'Choose to stop' (Välj att sluta), was initiated in 2019 to encourage men who are either victims or perpetrators of IPV to seek help. The aim is to provide "a confidential and anonymous helpline offering advice, information and support to help you stop being violent and abusive to your partner or ex-partner" (valjattsluta.se). However, such perpetrator-oriented initiatives are few and although the helpline is serving two of Sweden's three most populated regions, face-to-face opportunities for advice and support are only available in some municipalities.

3.3.1 Recommendations

- Increase the availability of treatment programmes that will accept male participants on a voluntary basis. It is important to offer a possibility for men to take responsibility for their violent behaviour.
- Male helplines and other such initiatives need to be implemented and available to a greater extent across the country.

3.4 Theoretical considerations

There are several important aspects to consider when performing risk assessment and risk management of IPV, as well as conducting primary preventions, where theoretical frameworks can provide useful assistance.

3.4.1 Risk-Need-Response Theory

The Risk, Need and Responsivity theory (RNR; Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2006; 2011), can be used to understand the link between risk assessment and risk management. As such, **Risk** means that a higher risk for violence implies a higher case priority, **Need** means that risk management must target the identified risk, vulnerability, and protective factors in order to decrease the risk for recidivism, and **Responsivity** means that the risk management have to consider how responsive the victim and perpetrator are to the planned protective actions. Research shows that the risk principle is correct - the higher the assessed risk the more protective actions were taken by the police (Belfrage & Strand, 2012; Storey et al., 2014; Williams &

Stansfield, 2017), and there is some support that no-contact orders reduce recidivism if need and responsivity are taken into consideration (BRÅ, 2015a; Strand, 2012).

Moreover, besides the individual level, this theory can also be applied on primary prevention. The identified risk can be said to be high since domestic violence still have high prevalence rates in society, the need can be identified as the attitudes towards domestic violence in the society, and the responsivity is how well society can adapt the primary prevention programmes in order to change the attitudes. This means that the primary prevention campaigns might need to be more structured regarding what needs they intend to focus on in order to be more efficient.

3.4.2 IPV typology

Arguably, the biggest flaw with both previous and current policies aiming to reduce men's violence against women is the inclination to view such men as a homogeneous group. This 'one size fits all' approach fails to acknowledge the large body of research that consistently demonstrates that men who are violent with their partner is a heterogeneous group (e.g. Cantos & O'Leary, 2014; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Petersson & Strand, 2018). The implication of such findings means that risk management for men who perpetrate partner violence needs to be tailored according to the specific needs of the individual (Cavanaugh & Gelles, 2005). Drawing on the previous studies within the field of male IPV perpetrator subtypes, the two most consistently identified subtypes are the Partner Only (PO) violent perpetrator and the Generally Violent (GV) perpetrator (Cantos & O'Leary, 2014; Petersson & Strand, 2018 for a review). In relation to risk management and prevention of IPV, studies have found that the PO violent and the GV violent subtypes respond differently to various interventions. For example, PO violent men are more likely to attend and complete treatment, as well as being less likely to recidivate, compared to GV men (Cantos, Goldstein, Brenner, O'Leary, & Verborg, 2015; Huss & Ralston, 2008; Stalans & Seng, 2007; Stoops, Bennett, & Vincent, 2010). These results are in stark contrast to the conclusions of previous meta-analyses of IPV treatment efficacy, which generally show that such treatment is ineffective when analysing violent men as a homogeneous group (Babcock, Green, & Robie, 2004; Feder & Wilson, 2005).

3.4.3 Rurality

Definitions of what constitutes rural, remote and urban communities vary by country. Rurality in Sweden is defined according to the definitions of the Swedish Board of Agriculture (Swedish Board of Agriculture, 2017). Approximately 34% (3.3 million) of the Swedish population lives in areas considered to be rural or remote, by comparison; 19% in the U.S., 11% in Australia, 19% in Canada and 17% in England lived in rural or remote areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016; ABS, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2016; UK statistics, 2016). Policing IPV and stalking is a difficult task per se. In urban areas this is due to heavy workload with many cases, and in rural areas due to long distances, with few police officers on duty, and having fewer resources in

general to rely upon (i.e. health care and social service institutions). In rural and remote areas this is a huge challenge for the police, since they most often lack police officers specialised on IPV and stalking, and rely on other agencies that also have limited resources. Other problems that occur in rural areas that interfere with effective police work are that victims do not report crimes to the same extent as in urban areas (Felson et al., 2015) and when they do report the violence, this is more severe than in urban areas (Strand & Storey, 2019). Furthermore, since only three out of five victims cooperate in the recommended safety planning, we do not know if the risk management in itself actually works at all, or if there are other factors that interfere with the safety planning (Logan & Walker, 2018). On the other hand, in urban areas the caseload is much higher and even if there are more police officers and protective actions available, the police have to prioritise and then only have resources to help those at highest risk, leaving cases of moderate risk with little or no risk management (Belfrage & Strand, 2008).

3.4.4 Recommendations

- Each case is unique in the sense that there is a combination of risk for violence, the need for risk management, and the response of both the perpetrator and the victim to the risk management. The RNR theory is a sound theory to bear in mind when managing risk and needs of IPV.
- Heterogeneity needs to be addressed when targeting men's violence towards women where both the typology of perpetrators as well as rurality plays a major role.

3.5 Collaboration

A central part of the policy is to improve the ability of the criminal justice system to work efficiently in preventing men's violence against women. As such, the focus of the multi-agency collaboration (SOU 2018:37) is on the individual perpetrators and their victims. Collaboration both within and between the police and other agencies like the social services is most often required to prevent further recidivism, but there is no framework to promote routines for collaboration on risk management in place. There is reliance on the police officers and social workers on duty and their collaborative network. The subsequent risk management, which is an absolute necessity for preventing future violence, becomes unstructured and thus varies between regional districts, specifically across rurality. This means that victims' safety planning relies upon the police officers' experiences of working with IPV and stalking risk management, rather than on evidenced-based methods. The same holds true for other agencies assessing risk for IPV and stalking. In England and Wales Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) have been used to coordinate risk assessments, however the actual link between the assessed risk and how to manage it does not have a structure besides the form of the meeting (Stanley & Humphreys, 2014). There is thus a need to convert the assessed risk into a management plan. The RISKSAM (Strand & Petersson, 2019) is a model developed in Sweden that facilitates this conversion. This model allows agencies to work in a similar way where

the type of protective actions in the risk management plan can differ due to the conditions in different cases. This will decrease the large gap between how rural and urban police and social services work with risk management, since they are currently working with the same protective actions regardless of effect in their area and are thereby not anchored in the risk assessment but more in what resources they have available. RISKSAM will also improve communication between police and social services since it helps them to formulate the perceived risk for recidivism. It will contribute to the work by providing an evidenced-based model to use as the basis for a MARAC, since the MARACs are perfect platforms for collaboration and could provide the structure that facilitates the work with risk management.

3.5.1 Recommendations

- To work with structured evidence-based models for risk management.
- Facilitate risk management collaboration by formalising collaboration meetings such as MARACs, as well as family justice centres.

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