

Risk assessment and risk management by police

Principle 2: Adopting a victim-centred approach

Expected result: Trained police officers are capable of developing more accurate estimates of danger and more targeted, tailor-made and efficient interventions, responding to the needs of the victim in a respectful, professional and gender-sensitive manner.

Key elements for adopting a victim-centred approach to risk assessment

In adopting a victim-centred approach to risk assessment, police leadership should ensure the following

- Risk prevention (addressing specific safety risks and responding to the needs of victims of intimate partner violence) is prioritised over risk prediction.
- Victims who are in contact with the police are recognised and treated in a respectful, sensitive, professional and non-discriminatory manner.
- All potential risks and vulnerabilities of the victim are identified and inform any preventive actions to be taken (on identifying the most relevant risk factors for police risk assessment, see [Step 3](#)).
- The police consider the individual characteristics of each case and ensure that referrals are made to specialist support services as appropriate and where available, within a multiagency framework (on embedding risk assessment processes and practices within a multiagency framework, see [Step 5](#)).

A victim-centred approach to intimate partner violence places the rights, needs and concerns of female victims at the centre of any interventions to manage risk.

A victim-centred approach ensures that risk assessment leads to the identification of a victim's specific needs. In turn, this informs appropriate risk management strategies by the police that are tailored to the needs and situation of the victim and the perpetrator. In this way, the police, in cooperation with other agencies and services as appropriate, will improve the effectiveness of their work and reduce the risk of secondary and repeated victimisation. Such an approach may also facilitate victims' collaboration with law-enforcement and diminish their fear of reporting or disclosing violence and asking for help.

The principle of non-discrimination should be applied in responding to intimate partner violence and in implementing measures to protect victims from further harm. This means that the rights of victims to all available protection measures should be secured without discrimination on any ground (91), and that such measures should be tailored to their specific needs. The police should also ensure that victims are not exposed to secondary victimisation due to the manner in which institutions and other individuals deal with the victim. This requires appropriate and specific training for all police, to a level appropriate to their contact with victims (on implementing systematic police training and capacity development, see [Step 4](#)).