

Risk assessment and risk management by police

Principle 3: Taking a gender-specific approach

Expected result: Gender-competent police officers understand the gender dynamics of violence against women and are capable of predicting lethality.

Key elements for developing gender competent risk assessment by police

In developing a gender-specific approach to risk assessment, police leadership should ensure the following.

- Risk assessment procedures and practices are based on an understanding of how gender relations and women's inequality shape women's and children's experiences of intimate partner violence.
- Police responsible for conducting risk assessment should receive regular and systematic training to develop gender equality competence (on how to implement and develop police training, see [Step 4](#)).
- Risk assessment tools to be adopted should include risk factors that reflect the gendered elements of intimate partner violence against women that are particularly important predictors of lethality, such as coercive and controlling behaviours (on identifying relevant risk factors, see [Step 3](#)).

Risk assessment practices must reflect an understanding of how gender relations and

women's inequality shape women's and children's experiences of intimate partner violence. Gender-specific approaches recognise and respond to the different and specific risks and vulnerabilities of women and girls, or seek to 'transform' unequal gender relations between men and women.

Gender-specific approaches to risk assessment begin with an understanding of intimate partner violence against women as a form of gender-based violence rooted in gender inequality and discrimination against women in society. They place risk assessment and service responses to risk within a larger framework, which acknowledges how gender inequality underpins the spectrum of behaviours that constitute gender-based violence against women and children (92).

In order to apply a gender-specific approach to risk assessment, police leadership must ensure that gender equality competence is developed among the police through training and capacity building. Gender equality competence involves the development of knowledge and awareness about gender equality and the necessary skills to apply such knowledge in risk-led policing of intimate partner violence. This competence should be acquired through systematic police training (on how to implement systematic police training and capacity development, see [Step 4](#)).

Finally, a sound understanding of the gendered dynamics of intimate partner violence and coercive control is essential for assessing risk, and risk assessment tools should be constructed to include risk factors that reflect a gendered analysis of intimate partner violence.