

Rape Crisis South London (RASASC)

It's like a lighthouse



is a member of

RAPECRISIS
ENGLAND AND WALES

Understanding and supporting
women and their organisations



Rape Crisis South London (RASASC)

It's like a lighthouse
November 2011

Published by the Women's Resource Centre

Women's Resource Centre

Ground Floor East, 33-41 Dallington Street, London, EC1V 0BB

Tel: 020 7324 3030 **Email:** info@wrc.org.uk **Web:** www.wrc.org.uk

Become a fan on facebook: www.facebook.com/whywomen

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/whywomen

Join the Women's Café: <http://thewomenscafe.ning.com/>

This report is available in other formats.
Contact the Women's Resource Centre on
020 7324 3030 or email info@wrc.org.uk

Contents

Page 4	1.	Introduction
Page 5	2.	Background: The prevalence and impact of sexual violence
Page 7	3.	Services provided by specialist violence against women organisations
Page 8	4.	About Rape Crisis South London (RASASC)
Page 8	4.1.	Counselling
Page 9	4.2.	Telephone helpline
Page 11	5.	Methodology
Page 11	5.1.	Data collection process
Page 12	5.2.	Impact maps
Page 12	5.3.	Outcomes for survivors
Page 14	5.4.	Wider outcomes
Page 14	5.5.	Measuring outcomes and indicators
Page 15	6.	Outcomes
Page 19	7.	Conclusion
Page 19	8.	Looking ahead
Page 20		Glossary
Page 23		Notes

1. Introduction

With the current shift from grant giving to commissioning, women's organisations are operating in the most intense period of competition for funding on record. As public spending contracts funding to women's organisations has decreased and, in the case of smaller specialist services, is increasingly not given at all. This has resulted in an environment of increased pressure to compete for the funding that is available, making it imperative that women's organisations can demonstrate their value.

Rape Crisis South London (RASASC) has worked with Women's Resource Centre (WRC) and the new economics foundation (nef) as part of a two-year project to examine the costs and long term benefits associated with the work of five frontline women's organisations based in London. Findings from the research presented in this report demonstrate the far reaching benefits of the services provided by RASASC, who support women - and the families and friends of women - affected by sexual violence.



The report outlines the important role of RASASC and draws attention to the need to fund long term and appropriate sexual violence services for women and girls and to support the financial sustainability of these organisations. The report also calls for recognition of the value of organisations addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) whose work is often life saving and has a lasting impact on the lives of women and their families by using an empowerment model to rebuild their lives.

www.rasasc.org.uk

2. Background:

The prevalence and impact of sexual violence

RASASC supports survivors of any form of sexual violence regardless of when it happened. This includes: Recent rape, historic rape, child sexual abuse, rape within relationships, incest, ritual abuse and multi-perpetrator rape. Recent data from the British Crime Survey (2009/10) suggests that in the UK each week 10,000 women are sexually assaulted and 2,000 women are raped.¹ However, the prevalence of rape or other sexual offences is difficult to estimate as many incidents go unreported with only one in seven rapes reported to the police.² A 2008 study of the state of the Rape Crisis sector found that only 10% of survivors supported by Rape Crisis reported their experience to the police.³ The reasons for not disclosing vary, but often relate to the stigma of sexual violence including fear of not being believed, and feelings of blame and embarrassment, and also to process issues, such as not knowing where to report, mistrust of the criminal justice process and not wanting to go to court.⁴

Rape and sexual violence is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women – more than 92% of those who have experienced rape are women.⁵ The issue cuts across age, social class, race, nationality and religion. However, research indicates that certain groups, such as disabled women or women with insecure immigration status, are more vulnerable to violence because of their status.⁶ Similarly, women aged between 16 and 24 are almost four times more likely to have experienced sexual assault in the last year than women aged 45–49.⁷ In the vast majority of cases the perpetrator is known to the woman, with only 11% of serious sexual assaults committed by strangers.⁸

Many of the women that RASASC supports are survivors of sexual crimes committed by family members. Rape and sexual abuse offences against children have long term impacts and much of the time these crimes are perpetrated by the people that are meant to care, nurture and protect them. In 2010/2011, there were 17,727 sexual crimes against children under the age of 16 in England and Wales, which make up 32% of all sexual crimes, and the majority of these are perpetrated against girls.⁹ It is difficult to ascertain a comprehensive overview of the prevalence of sexual abuse against children, however some estimates believe that 5-10% of girls have experienced penetrative sexual abuse and more than three times this number have experienced other forms of sexual violence.¹⁰ Other estimates believe that around one in five girls have experienced some form of child sexual abuse.¹¹ Due to the hidden nature of the crime many girls do not disclose the abuse that they are experiencing, for example 65% of women who contact Rape Crisis Centres are adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse.¹²

Research suggests that the majority of sexual crimes towards children are committed by family members. A Childline report discovered that of the 16,094 children who spoke to the charity about sexual abuse in 2008/2009, 59% of the perpetrators were family members. Of this number the majority of sexual abuse to girls was by their fathers.¹³ The stigma attached with incest and the trauma of sexual abuse can contribute to feelings of blame, shame, guilt, confusion and embarrassment, as well as a wish to protect family members, which may hinder children who are sexually abused and adult survivors to disclose their experiences and seek help. The skilled grooming process is designed to ensure the compliance and silence of children being abused.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence have a lasting impact on women's lives. Research has documented a range of consequences from immediate effects such as physical injuries, sexually transmitted infections, gynaecological problems and pregnancy as well as fear, anxiety, nightmares and numbing, to more long term issues including loss of confidence, difficulties with intimacy and trust, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, harmful coping strategies and flashbacks, as well as responses often named as ill mental health such as depression or personality disorders which impact on

women's every day lives.¹⁴ Many of the interviewees in the Women's Resource Centre's *Why Women?* research reported the breadth of mental health problems faced by women in connection with domestic or sexual violence.¹⁵ Similarly, the correlation between mental ill health and violence against women was acknowledged by a study by the Department of Health.¹⁶

As well as the effects on survivors, sexual abuse also impacts on the State. According to the Government each rape costs over £96,000,¹⁷ and in 2003-2004 alone the cost of sexual violence to society was £8.5 billion.¹⁸

Evidence has shown there is a need for specialised VAWG services as these are essential for enabling women to name their experience as violence and they provide the added value of offering a safe, supportive and empowering environment.¹⁹ The following section explores the work of women-only services in more detail.

3. Services provided by specialist violence against women organisations

The women's voluntary sector is comprised of women's organisations working across a wide variety of areas to advance and meet the needs of women. They promote gender equality and seek to provide women with comprehensive needs-led support. Women's organisations have a unique reach within communities and fill essential gaps in statutory provision. They work with some of the most vulnerable and marginalised women within society and are experts at providing programmes that serve and are sensitive to women's needs. As a result, they are successful in changing women's lives, their families' lives, wider communities and society as a whole.²⁰



VAWG organisations are a good example of the value and vital role of women-only services. Their work is often life saving and can have a long term impact on women and their families' lives. VAWG organisations play a crucial role in reducing incidences of physical, sexual and mental abuse of women and girls, and in decreasing the damage caused by violence through specialist counselling and support.²¹ For example, research on Rape Crisis Centres found a number of positive outcomes reported by survivors who had used their services ranging from improved mental well-being and a reduction in self-harming, better inter-personal relationships, ability to return to work or study and ability to reduce or stop medication.²²

Specialised VAWG services are essential safe spaces to allow women space to name their experiences as violence/abuse and explore what support they need to overcome

incidences of abuse to which they have been subjected. In this respect, they provide an added value through: Provision of women-only space; focus on empowerment and independence; high level of service user involvement; integrated one stop shop services; needs based approach and reaching 'hard to reach' women. For Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee (BAMER) women, specialised VAWG services are vital to ensure their additional and specific needs are met,²³ particularly as they are less likely to access statutory services.²⁴

Whilst VAWG organisations perform life saving essential work, many organisations experience economic uncertainty and lack sustainable funding. However, more recently there have been positive developments in funding for Rape Crisis Centres with a £10.5m fund introduced by the Ministry of Justice over a three year period and the introduction of new Rape Crisis centres in London.²⁵ Whilst these government actions have been widely welcomed, sexual violence support organisations emphasise the need to build upon this progress to ensure long term sustainable funding and continued specialist support for survivors.

4. About Rape Crisis South London (RASASC)

Rape Crisis South London (RASASC) is a Rape Crisis Centre which specialises in advocacy, counselling and helpline support for female survivors of sexual violence 14 years old and over. RASASC has been providing specialist sexual violence services in London for 25 years and are known leaders in the field of support for survivors.

The objective of the organisation is to provide survivors with impartial, professional support which empowers them to move their life in the direction they choose. RASASC seeks to equip women with practical and emotional skills and tailor their support according to each woman's needs.

Founded on an ethos of empowerment, RASASC's approach firmly centres on the individual and seeks to provide them with a toolkit of skills that they can use throughout their life. RASASC provides survivors with enduring support which promotes better mental and emotional health, and amongst many outcomes enables survivors to make positive life choices.

RASASC provides a wide range of services, not only for female survivors but also to their friends and family, other statutory agencies and short term support for male survivors. The organisation leads preventative action by providing specialist training on sexual violence to public bodies, awareness raising workshops with young people, teacher training and also offers advocacy support for women and girls who need information on or support through the criminal justice system.

The organisation seeks to tackle gender inequality as the cause and consequence of sexual violence through its preventative and campaigning work, whilst providing survivors with comprehensive support via their services. For the purposes of this report the research will focus upon two of RASASC's key services: The one to one counselling service and the telephone helpline.

4.1. Counselling

RASASC provides free face-to-face counselling for women and girls, aged 14 and above, who have been raped or sexually abused at any time in their lives and who are able to commute to their Croydon premises.

"You're making yourself vulnerable for that person and you're trusting them, you're saying OK, and every experience I've had whether it's been years ago on the telephone line or face-to-face counselling I've trusted them, there is this kind of common bond that draws you together, absolutely, so I do feel very safe here."

Survivor



RASASC's counselling is a specialist service provided by highly qualified and experienced female therapists. Every effort is made to provide a safe contained space where clients will always be

believed, they are offered respect, honesty and empathy without judgement to help them gain a better understanding of those difficult thoughts and feelings.

As part of the model of empowerment, where women are in charge of every step of their journey, women are asked to self refer. After speaking with the Counselling Coordinator, who will discuss their fears and concerns, as well as outline the service, women will be sent a self assessment form for them to complete. When this is received back, she will be invited into the centre for a consultation where she will be shown the counselling rooms and the counselling service and the process will be explained in more detail. The type of counselling/counsellor she would feel comfortable with will be discussed so that she can be 'matched' to one of RASASC's 12 counsellors, according to her specific needs.

"What you did for me was brilliant, I'm not sure you'd recognise me now! I have been described as being assertive along with confident, I have practiced so much it's become second nature! All the flashbacks have now stopped, I rarely get nightmares and I feel good!"

Survivor

If the client decides to access RASASC's counselling, her sessions are held each week for 50 minutes, for up to 12 months to work with her to overcome and recover from the sexual violence she has experienced. Counselling provides the key to recovery from sexual violence and it is important that the woman feels in control of the process. RASASC provides a safe women-only space which helps to promote women's physical and emotional security and develop the feeling of safety. This is crucial to speaking about experiences of sexual violence and the ways women have both responded and coped. Group Therapy with other survivors following face-to-face counselling is offered for six months to help the client embed her new found confidence and self esteem.

RASASC offers a strictly confidential service, and emphasises that if it is too difficult the first time, women accessing counselling can always come back at a later date when they feel more ready. The organisation also offers trauma counselling and grounding sessions for clients going through the criminal justice system as it is still not recommended for women to access full counselling before a trial.

4.2. Telephone helpline

RASASC runs the Rape Crisis National Helpline for survivors of sexual violence. The helpline is accessible 365 days a year, between 12-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm. The helpline offers highly specialised professional, emotional help to female survivors of rape and sexual abuse, and provides immediate support, information and referrals to longer term support for families, partners or friends of survivors and male survivors of sexual violence.

The helpline is staffed by a fully trained team of female workers who have successfully completed RASASC's three month in house

"It's like a lighthouse, a safe haven. You know you're in a safe place and not going to be judged"

Survivor



accredited sexual violence training. To encourage survivors to access support, and ensure their safety, calls from landline telephones and the major UK mobile phone networks are free and will not appear on telephone bills.

RASASC works with survivors using a therapeutic model of empowerment through goal setting, giving information, support and recognition with the belief in every individual's power to make their own choices. Fifty per cent of callers to the helpline are disclosing their experience of sexual violence for the first time and helpline staff do not instruct women on what to do, but instead seek to empower them, by providing impartial information, to make their own informed choices and decisions about their lives.

Helpline staff offer informative literature on issues related to sexual violence to anyone requiring it (e.g. other agencies, friends, family, supporters of survivors) free of charge. By doing so RASASC help to educate and enable them to support survivors in the best possible way.

Helpline staff provide referral information for survivors and their supporters to relevant agencies and sexual violence support services in their areas and offer access to RASASC's other services such as counselling, advocacy, support groups and workshops.

5. Methodology

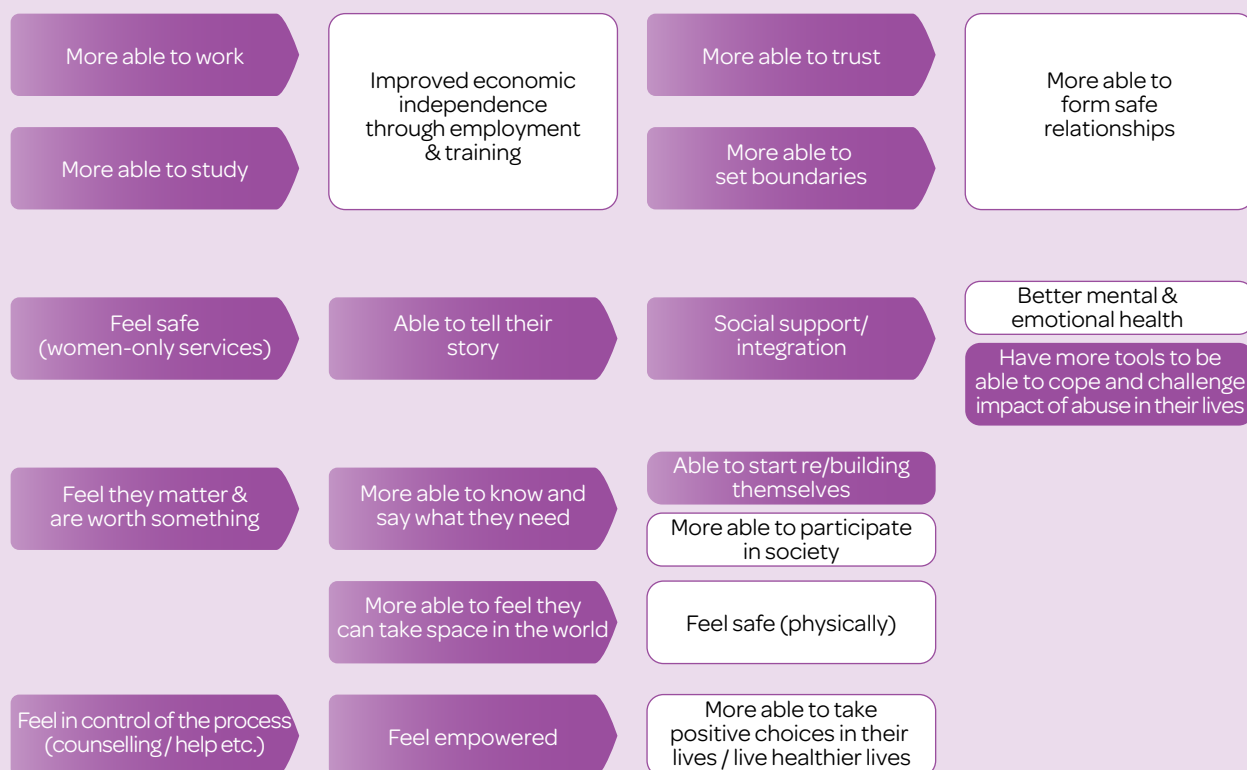
The Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach has been used to determine the contributions of, and the social value created by RASASC. The SROI approach is a form of cost-benefit analysis that seeks to understand and value the key changes, or outcomes, created by a programme or activity. It looks not only at the economic or financial value created, but also includes social and environmental value, offering a truer reflection of the total value created.

This research used the standardised methodology developed by nef and the Office for Civil Society (then the Office for the Third Sector).²⁶ This involved following specific processes used in SROI evaluation, including creating an impact map to show positive and negative effects, collecting data to show the investment in activities and their outcomes, and the calculation of outcomes in monetary terms.

5.1. Data collection process

As part of the data collection process RASASC and WRC staff were particularly cautious about assuming women’s experiences and the nuances of their personal journeys. Whilst SROI provides a monetary figure which represents social value, participants felt that it was important to capture the detail and the complexity of RASASC’s services and consciously reflect the experiences of women. Staff consulted extensively with service users to verify the research findings and as the first step of the data collection process participants conducted stakeholder interviews with staff, service users and trustees to capture the outcomes created for women as a result of accessing the service. Each group of stakeholders were selected to provide a different perspective on the impact of the service and offer a holistic view of any change it may create.

Figure 1 - Impact map reflecting the outcomes for survivors created by the RASASC telephone helpline and face-to-face counselling services



The recurring theme that arose from the initial research was the principle of ‘rebuilding the self’. This concept was integral to the principles of RASASC’s work, and was different for women who were adult survivors of incest/other kinds of child sexual abuse, than it was for women experiencing an attack as an adult. This provided the central theme for RASASC’s impact map or ‘theory of change’.

Following stakeholder interviews, RASASC and WRC staff met to identify and brainstorm the other multiple key outcomes identified within the interview process. As part of this process they examined how the outcomes flowed and interlinked with one another and identified a range of indicators which illustrated instances of change.

To ensure that the outcomes identified were correct RASASC additionally conducted a focus group with the RASASC Advisory Group, a group of women service users, to confirm that they were measuring the right outcomes. The advisory group confirmed that the outcomes identified were correct and staff used these to reflect and communicate women’s experiences in the impact map (see figure 1).

5.2. Impact maps

The purple arrows illustrated in figure 1 signify indicators, which show change created by RASASC’s services. The series of arrows show the sequences of change which contribute towards each final outcome (white boxes).

As part of the data collection process participants identified six key outcomes created by the service:

- Improved economic independence through employment and training
- More able to form safe relationships
- Better mental and emotional health
- More able to participate in society
- Feel safe (physically)
- More able to make positive choices in their lives and lead healthier lives.

These outcomes illustrate the extensive impact of RASASC’s services on multiple aspects of women’s lives: their personal well-being, self esteem, assertiveness and relationships with others, social interaction, financial independence and sense of personal safety.

In instances where two arrows point to the same outcome, this shows where multiple factors contribute to an outcome. For example, being more able to trust people and set boundaries helps to develop better relationships.

“When I come out of it [counselling session] I always feel like a phoenix, when I go really right down I think, “well no, up you go girl, go to the top”, because... it’s the journey and you’re learning lessons as you go along.”

Survivor

5.3. Outcomes for survivors (figure 1)

Outcome 1 - Improved economic independence through employment and training

As outlined above, one of the common impacts of sexual violence is that survivors face difficulties performing functions in their daily lives and some experience difficulty in maintaining their jobs. The indicators ‘more able to work and study’ illustrate improvements in women’s well-being as a result of counselling which enhances their ability to effectively participate in paid employment or education. The combined outcome of these improvements mean that women are better placed to financially support themselves and their families.

Outcome 2 - More able to form safe relationships

The indicator 'more able to trust' illustrates reduced isolation and willingness to connect and invest in others. The indicator 'more able to set boundaries' captures increased assertiveness as survivors are increasingly able to decide and dictate how they are willing to be treated by others. The combined impact of this improved confidence creates the outcome 'more able to form safe relationships' whereby survivors are in control of relationships and can connect with others.

Outcome 3 - Better mental and emotional health

Outcome three features a chain of arrows which illustrate the empowerment of a survivor throughout the counselling process:

1. feeling that a women-only setting is a safe space where they can speak about their experiences
2. finding their own voice and communicating that experience ('able to tell their story')
3. feeling both listened to and believed.

This third step is particularly crucial for survivors as instances of sexual violence are often unspoken due to a fear that survivors will not be believed. Survivors may feel responsible and isolated as result of sexual violence. However this step signifies that they feel that their experiences have been recognised by others and they no longer have to deal with them alone.

"I think it has definitely given me the tools to get through those difficult moments. I kind of describe it as having the Tsunami just hit you, you see the water coming in and you try to run, you know it's going to take over but [then] not letting it"

Survivor

The impact map (figure 1) illustrates what is often a slow and complex process for each woman. All stages are not automatic and in some instances stages are repeated before reaching their final outcome. For example a survivor may tell their story several times before feeling believed, or call the telephone helpline multiple times before they feel ready to tell their story.

The purple box 'have more tools to be able to cope and challenge impact of abuse in their lives', indicates the emotional tools that RASASC equips survivors with to deal with their experience. As described by survivors RASASC provides service users with an emotional toolkit which enables them to address and overcome their experiences.

The overall outcome of 'better mental and emotional health' reflects the impact of a survivor sharing their experiences with others and having their feelings valued and recognised. It captures a sense of reduced isolation and personal optimism as well as increased confidence in dealing with the impact of abuse.

Outcome 4 - More able to participate in society

The indicators which lead to outcome four illustrate improvements in the self esteem and assertiveness of a survivor. The indicator 'more able to know and say what they need' specifically highlights survivors' increased autonomy and ability to articulate their needs and desires.

The purple box at the end of the impact map 'able to start re/building themselves' indicates the process of a survivor overcoming and addressing their experience as a result of improved self worth and self assurance. The outcome below 'more able to participate in society' encapsulates the resulting outcome of improved self esteem and an enhanced ability to interact with others.

Outcome 5 - Feel safe (physically)

Outcome number five reflects the impact of improved self esteem in helping to develop survivors' sense of physical safety. An improved sense of self worth leads to not only improved confidence but develops a sense of positive entitlement. The indicator 'more able to feel they can take space in the

world’ describes the feeling that a survivor has a right to be listened to and respected and has a place in wider society. This enhances their ability to interact in society and feel physically safe.

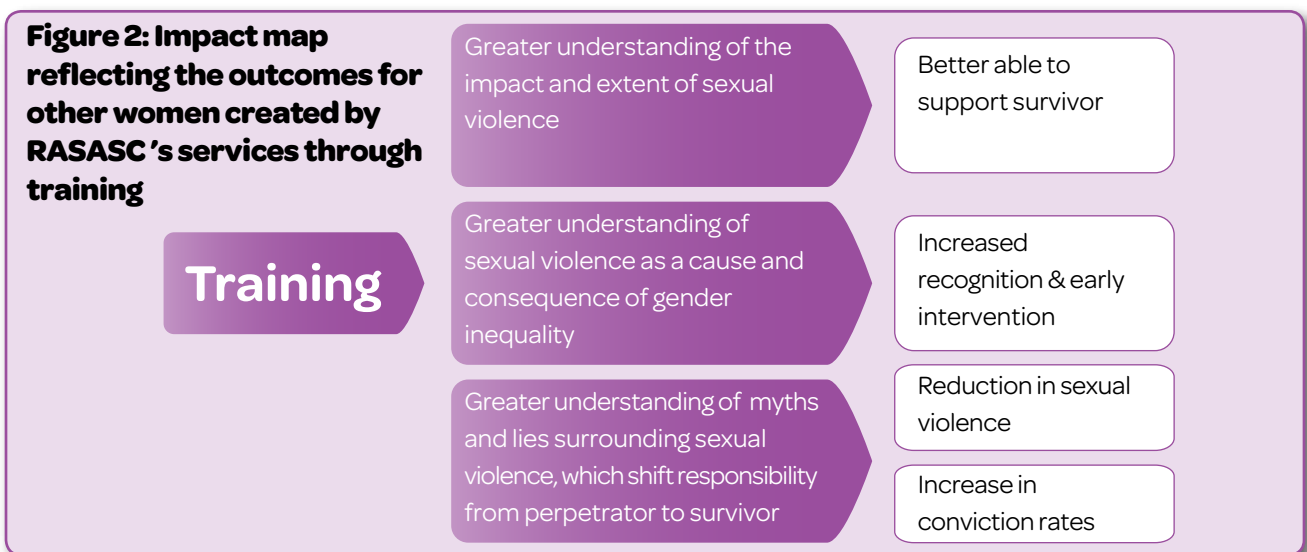
Outcome 6 - More able to make positive choices in their lives / live healthier lives

Outcome number six captures a sense of increased confidence and change in outlook in survivors as a result of the counselling. Indicator one, ‘feel in control of the process’, describes survivors being offered choice in their recovery and shaping the support they receive according to their needs. This in turn develops a sense of empowerment whereby survivors feel more confident to assert control over situations and articulate their wants and needs. The final outcome of this process is that women are more able to make positive choices in their lives as they are aware of their needs and what supports their personal well-being.

5.4. Wider outcomes (figure 2)

An impact map was also created to show the impact that RASASC’s services have on women and others more widely (see figure 2). This demonstrates how the training and the information that the helpline provides has a much wider effect in terms of a greater understanding and awareness of sexual violence through dispelling myths and linking VAWG to gender inequality.

This leads to three main outcomes which in turn have their own wider implications. This includes other women and wider society having a greater awareness of what constitutes sexual violence and what services are available and so will be able to support others to access the support they need more quickly. In the long term this increase in awareness and understanding should also lead to actually reducing the prevalence and incidence of sexual violence as more people are informed and able to speak out about this and will not tolerate it, as well as an increase in conviction rates for sexual offences.

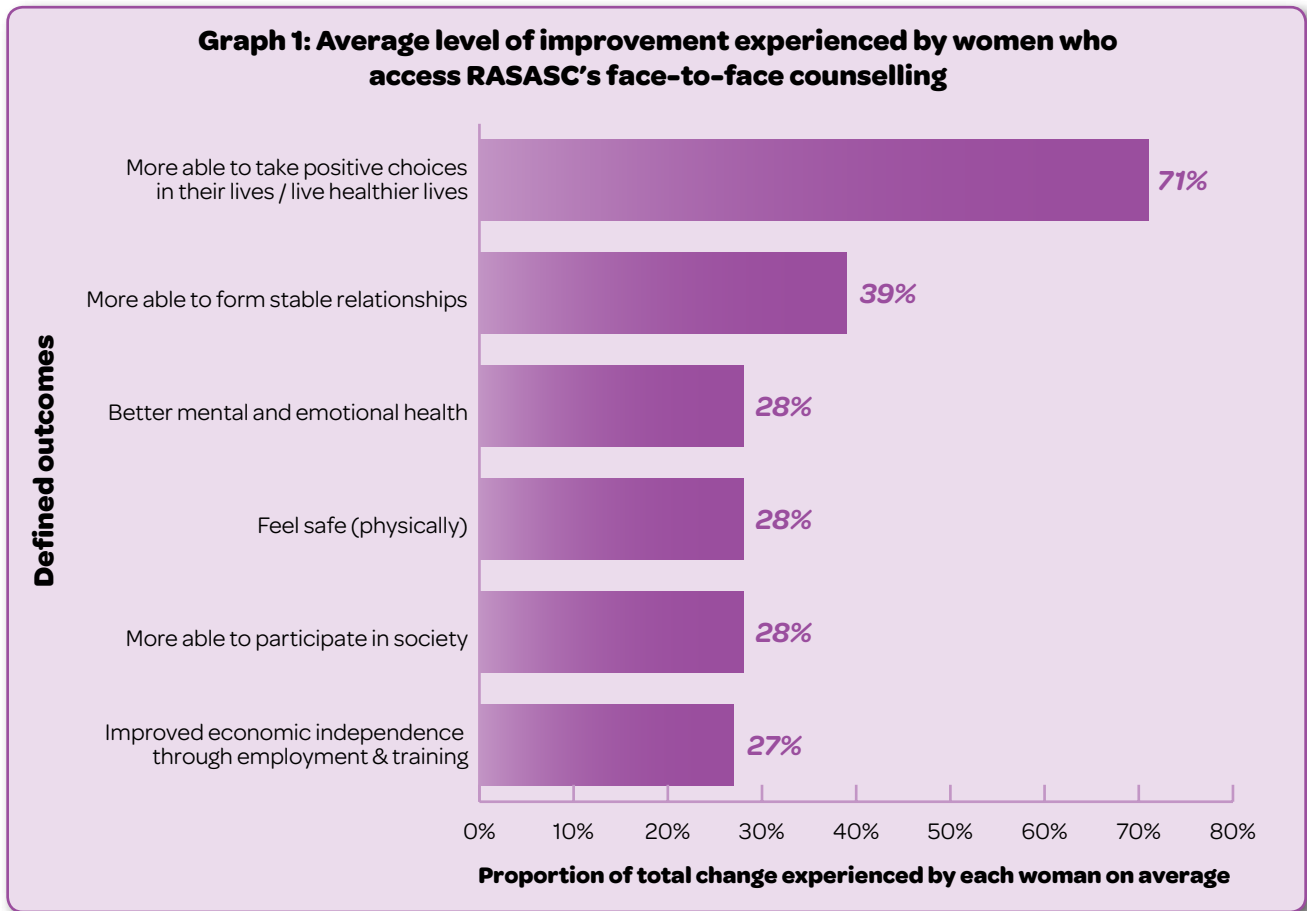


5.5. Measuring outcomes and indicators

Research participants looked at general feedback forms to identify the outcomes and indicators. A sample of 70 counselling feedback forms and 62 telephone line feedback forms were scrutinised to calculate the average improvements in women’s well-being as a result of accessing RASASC’s services. Participants matched the key indicators they were measuring with indicators listed on feedback forms and calculated the level of change created by examining changes in women’s reported well-being both before and after receiving support.

In addition, participants also analysed data from CORE forms, therapy assessment and end of therapy forms which grade a survivor’s mental health and well-being and ‘distance travelled’. This information also provided data regarding change measurement for three specific outcomes: emotional health, physical safety and levels of social interaction.

6. Outcomes



Graph 1 shows the average level of improvement for individuals who access RASASC's face-to-face counselling. Calculated using primary data collected from counselling service feedback forms, research findings show that face-to-face counselling creates a broad range of positive outcomes for women. Rated using a sliding scale reflecting improvements, with 100% representing full recovery and 0% representing no change at all, findings show that even 'small changes' in areas such as safety, represent significant changes for women in practice.

The above findings reflect improved personal relationships as an outcome of accessing the service, as well as an increased sense of autonomy and personal control. This interlinks with RASASC's ethos of empowering individuals to support their own recovery and shape the direction of their lives. An additional outcome linked with RASASC's unique counselling services are reports of improved physical and emotional safety. This is indicative of broader research regarding the outcomes of women-only settings and adds to the evidence base of the value of specialist sexual violence organisations.²⁷

On average, 71% of women who received face-to-face counselling reported feeling 'more in control', and therefore more able to make positive choices and live healthier lives. Furthermore, 39% of survivors felt more positive about forming relationships and therefore more

"I do feel empowered, strengthened, it's difficult to deal with the past."

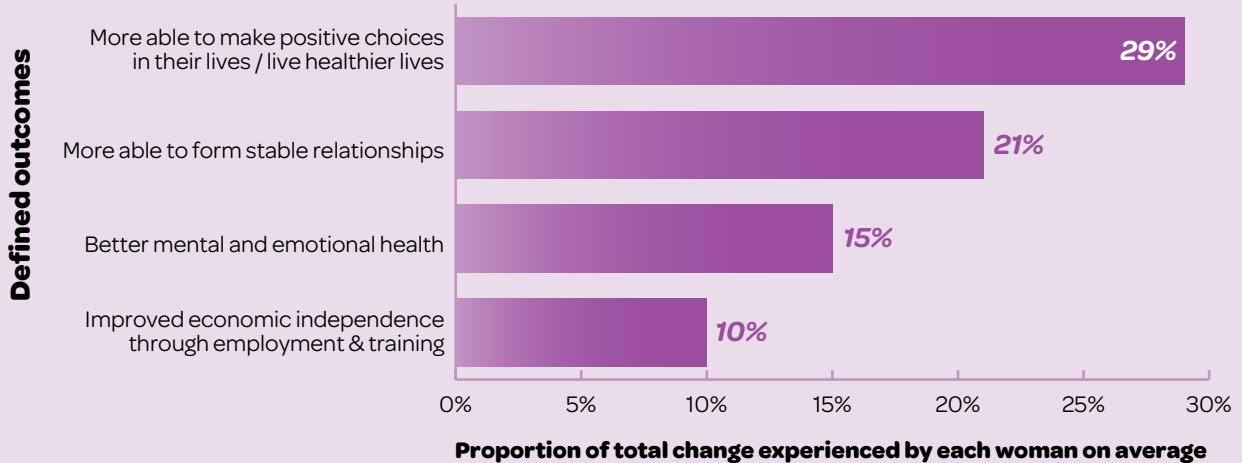
Survivor

"It's a shelter ... that's how I feel here. It's a nurturing point, you know and somewhere that you can feed from"

Survivor

able to form stable relationships. RASASC also uses the CORE monitoring system, which uses a range of indicators to determine changes in mental and emotional health and well-being. This showed that the average magnitude of improvement for all women using the face-to-face counselling was 28% by the end of their counselling course. The stakeholder engagement showed that this was reflected in three distinct outcomes; feeling safe, more able to participate in society, and better overall mental and emotional health.

Graph 2: Average level of improvement experienced by women who access RASASC's telephone helpline



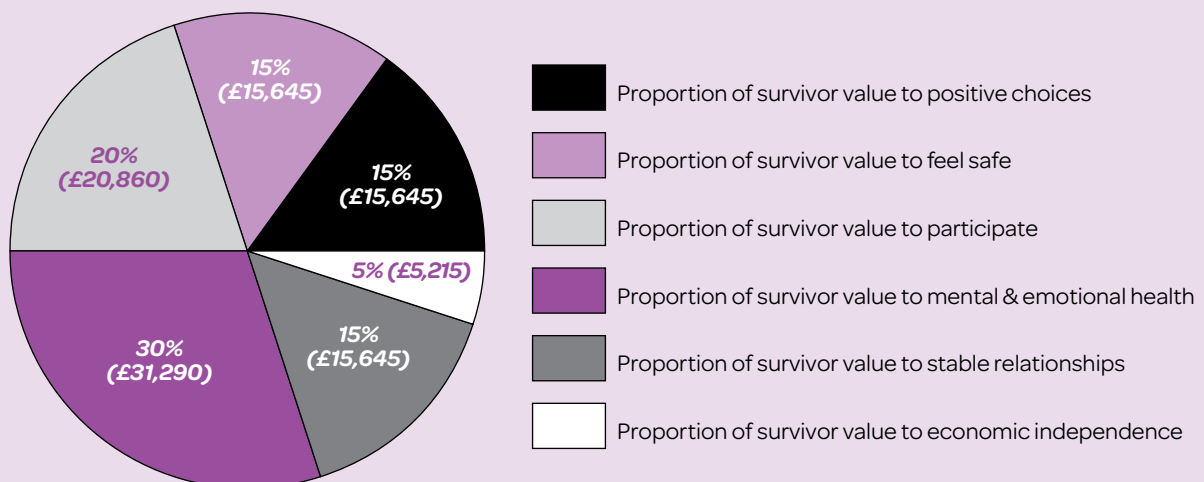
Graph 2 shows that 29% of women felt more able to make positive life choices after accessing the telephone helpline service and 21% felt more able to form stable relationships. Fifteen per cent of women reported better mental and emotional health, whilst 10% felt that accessing the service had improved their economic independence as accessing support enabled them to continue in or re-enter employment and training.

“It’s almost like you can feel the panic coming in and you have to kind of be able to have the tools to shut it down and not let it take over”

Survivor

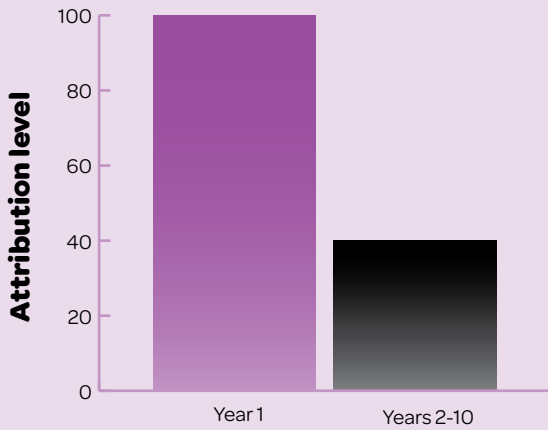
Improved economic independence is an important outcome which illustrates the broad impact of RASASC’s services and its contribution to women’s economic activity, as

Graph 3: The impact of sexual abuse & incest illustrated according to outcomes for survivors



well as supporting women’s well-being. The impact of rape and sexual abuse pervades all aspects of women’s lives and can impact on women’s ability to remain in paid employment or perform daily activities.

Graph 4: RASASC's attribution over a ten year period

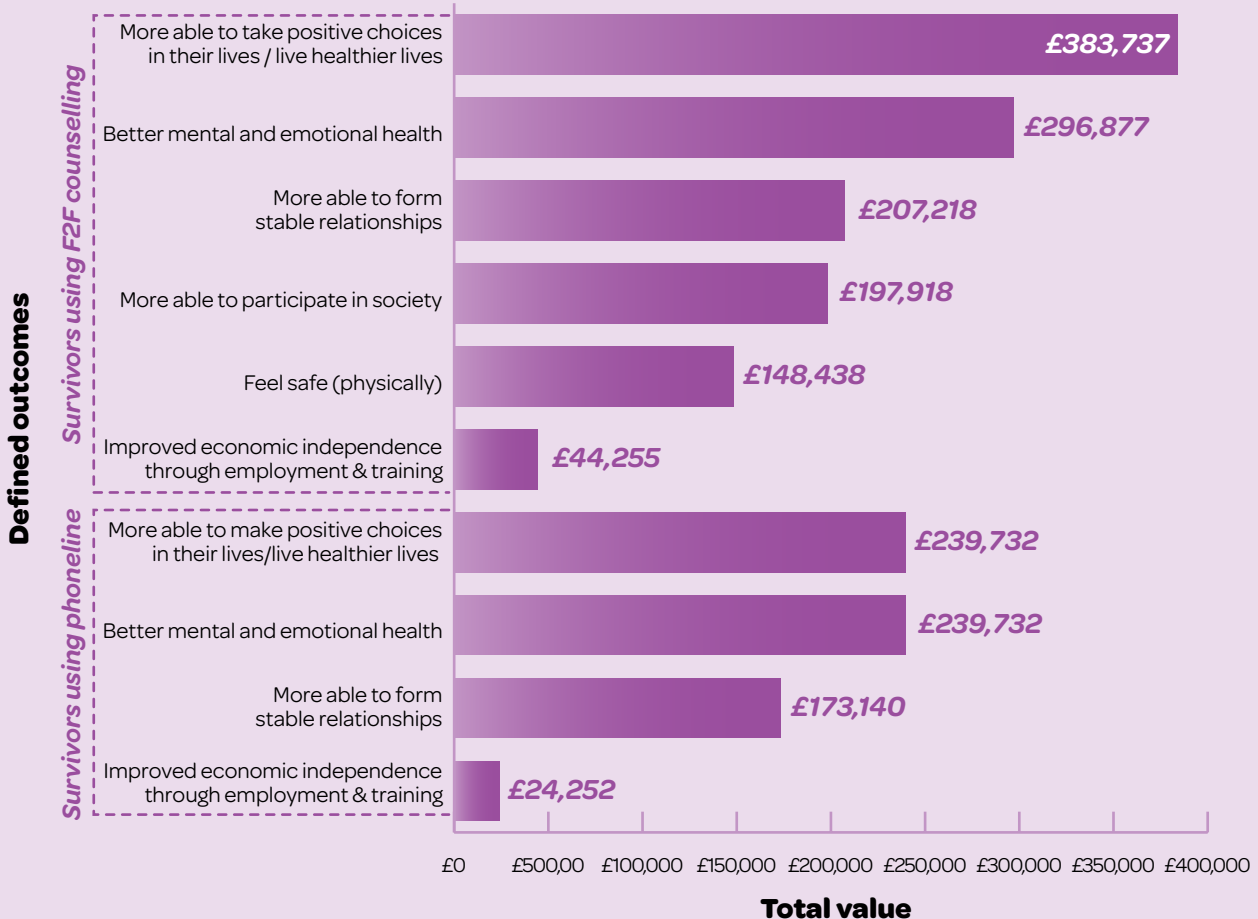


Graph 3 illustrates the financial and social impact of childhood sexual abuse and the impact of RASASC’s services on overcoming this. Divided according to six key outcomes, the graph shows how the personal and financial costs of abuse are spread across different aspects of women’s lives. Calculated using the overall proxy for the human and emotional cost of sexual abuse, graph 3 divides the impact of violence across multiple outcomes based on data from RASASC’s staff and service users.

Graph 4 highlights the level of attribution awarded to RASASC for creating outcomes for service users over a ten year period. Based upon the feedback of survivors and RASASC staff, 100% of the outcomes illustrated in

year one in the graph have been attributed to RASASC, as during this period women will receive ongoing face-to-face counselling or telephone support. The level of attribution is then estimated to significantly reduce in years two to ten, as women take the lead in their personal recovery and

Graph 5: Total value created to survivors from face-to-face counselling service and telephone line support



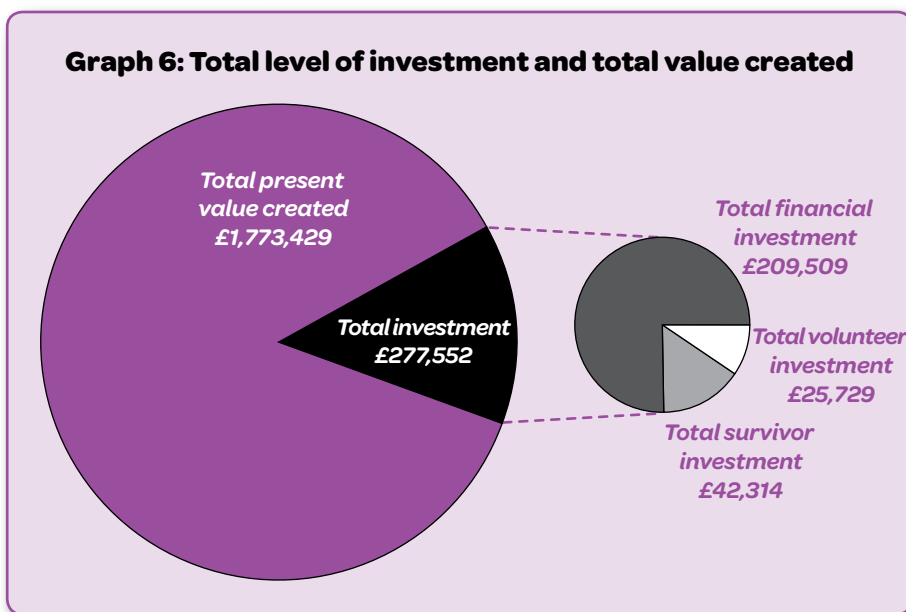
“RASASC gave me tools and tips and skills to deal with the future, you store that information up and you pull on it for a lifetime afterwards, you keep drinking from that well.”

Survivor

apply the practical and emotional tools they have learnt. The 40% attribution level shown in year’s two to ten is reflective of the feminist ethos of the organisation and the principle that sustainable recovery is centred upon the survivor.

Graph 5 shows the total value of the outcomes to survivors created by face-to-face counselling and telephone support. These calculations were made using a proxy for sexual abuse, which was then divided across specific outcomes for survivors and multiplied by attribution levels over

a ten year period. Graph 5 again shows survivors’ ability to make positive choices as a result of the service but also places financial value upon improvements in women’s social relationships, personal and emotional safety and improved economic activity. Most importantly it highlights the superior outcomes and high level of financial value as a result of long term face-to-face counselling. For example, the outcome ‘better mental and emotional health’ highlights the differentials between long term counselling and telephone support received over a shorter period.



Graph 6 illustrates the high social return on investment ratio created by RASASC’s services as a comparatively small level of investment yields significant results. Investment in RASASC’s counselling and helpline services creates significant benefits for survivors which can mitigate the significant financial, physical and emotional costs to the State and to individuals of rape and sexual abuse. For every pound invested in face-to-face counselling and telephone support services, six pounds worth of social value is created for survivors, their families, wider society and the state.

7. Conclusion

The total value created by RASASC's telephone helpline and face-to-face counselling services has been calculated as £1,773,429. The total investment into these services has been calculated as £277,552. Therefore the final SROI ratio shows that for every £1 invested into RASASC £6 of social value is generated to survivors, their families, wider society and the State over ten years.

Key outcomes include:

- More able to make positive choices and live healthier lives
- More able to form safe relationships
- Improved economic independence through employment and training
- Increased recognition and early intervention to reduce sexual violence.

This report has clearly highlighted the immense benefit of RASASC to the women who access the services provided as well as to a much wider group of stakeholders. Funding services such as RASASC has been shown to be cost effective, creates long term outcomes and has wide reaching impacts.

Key messages:

1. RASASC is a specialist sexual violence support organisation which offers high quality support for survivors. Women who access their services report significant benefits, particularly those who receive long term counselling support (for up to 12 months).
2. RASASC is a Feminist organisation which uses an empowerment model to support women to address and overcome experiences of sexual violence. The organisation assists women to 'rebuild the self' by providing them with practical and emotional tools and highlighting their pathway to recovery.
3. Women-only spaces produce unique outcomes and support women's physical and emotional recovery from experiences of sexual violence. Women who access RASASC's services strongly benefit from attending a women-only, Feminist, specialist sexual violence organisation.
4. Rape and childhood sexual abuse has a devastating impact and presents significant financial and social costs both to an individual woman's life and to society.

8. Looking ahead

RASASC plans to build upon the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) analysis conducted as part of the SROI and explore ways to enhance and improve its M&E systems. They intend to share their learnings with other Rape Crisis Centres in the Rape Crisis (England and Wales) network and build upon best practice in demonstrating impact.

RASASC plan to use this report to highlight and explain the essential nature of their work. They hope it will enable them to raise awareness about the services they provide and inform potential funders and other stakeholders about why they are needed.

Glossary

Attribution

When a benefit is assigned to a particular cause or source.

BAMER

The term refers to Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee groups and communities.

CORE forms

CORE forms are therapy assessment and end of therapy forms which indicate a survivor's mental health and well-being and 'distance travelled' while engaging with the service.

Cost-benefit analysis

A method of reaching economic decisions by comparing the cost of doing something with its benefits. The concept is relatively simple, but difficulty often arises in decisions about which costs and which benefits to include in the analysis. This is especially so when relevant costs and benefits do not have a price. Cost-benefit analysis usually looks at returns to one stakeholder – the State.

Disabled

Refers to a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes people with: HIV, multiple sclerosis, who are blind, as well as those with mental health and learning difficulties.

'Distance travelled'

'Distance travelled' is a measurement term that refers to the progress that a person makes towards harder outcomes like employment or ceasing reoffending. This can include differences in feelings, attitudes, perceptions or skills over time, using self-reporting and observation methods.

Domestic violence (DV)

Domestic violence is defined as physical, sexual, psychological or financial violence that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. This can include forced marriage and so called 'honour crimes'. Domestic violence may include a range of abusive behaviours, not all of which are in themselves inherently 'violent'.²⁸

Focus groups

A qualitative research method where a group of identified participants are encouraged by a researcher to present their views on a certain issue. These views are then analysed as research data.

Forced marriage

The Home Office defines forced marriage as "a marriage conducted without the valid consent of two parties, where duress is a factor".²⁹ Duress is considered to be where "the mind of the [victim] has in fact been overborne, howsoever that was caused,"³⁰ which can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

Impact map

A tool that can be used to illustrate the work that a person or organisation does and help them to think about how these activities bring about social, economic or environmental change.

Incest

In England and Wales (the definition is slightly different in Scotland), incest is an act of sexual relations, whether heterosexual or homosexual, between a person and their adoptive, biological, foster or step-parent, grandparent, sibling, half-sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece, as well as those who have lived in the same household or acted as a carer to that person.³¹

Indicators

An indicator is a piece of information that helps to determine whether or not change has taken place. Indicators matter because they are a way of knowing if an outcome has taken place. There can be indicators of outcomes and outputs but only outcomes indicators are appropriate to measure change.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

A process of systematically collecting data that is relevant to a project or activity, then analysing this data to make judgements on the success of the project and make changes or improvements.

Outcomes

The change that results from an organisation's activity – for people, communities, the economy, or aspects of the natural or built environment. They come either wholly or in part as a result of the organisation's actions. Outcomes can be negative as well as positive and measuring them is the only way that you can be certain that the change has taken place.

Outputs

A policy intervention that usually results in something demonstrable or countable right afterwards. Outputs are usually finite; items created (such as jobs) or people trained. While outputs are often the first step in creating the longer term change at which policy is aimed, they are not enough by themselves to create that change.

Proxies

In selecting indicators there is a trade-off between data availability and accuracy. When data is unavailable or difficult to obtain, proxies can be used. A proxy is a value that is deemed to be close to the desired indicator. For example, the overall regional unemployment rate may be used as a proxy for the local unemployment rate if the required data is unavailable.

Public body

An organisation that carries out an area of Government policy. Public bodies can include local authorities and primary care trusts in the NHS.

'Rebuilding the self'

This term describes RASASC's empowering approach which supported women to improve their mental and emotional health and take steps to address and recover from their experiences.

So called 'honour'-based violence

So called 'honour' - based violence is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of the family and/or community.

Social Return on Investment (SROI)

A method which measures the social, environmental and economic value created by an activity or intervention. This measurement is made in relation to the resources invested into the activity or organisation.

Stakeholders

Those people or groups who are either affected by or who can affect policy. This can include customers, service users, trustees, community groups, employees, funders/ investors, statutory bodies, suppliers, staff, or volunteers.

Statutory provision

Support services provided by public bodies, such as counsellors provided by the NHS.

'Theory of change'

Defines all building blocks required to bring about a given long term goal. This set of connected building blocks interchangeably referred to as outcomes, results, accomplishments, or preconditions – is depicted on a map sometimes referred to as an impact map. This is a graphic representation of the journey of change, and the model has been developed by the Aspen Institute.³²

Trauma therapy

Using therapeutic methods to address the after-effects of a traumatic experience.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The term violence against women and girls describes: *"any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"*.³³

Voluntary and community organisation (VCOs)

A voluntary and community organisation is one whose main focus is to deliver social benefit in a variety of forms to the community, rather than to generate profit for distribution to its members. It will usually be independent of Government.

Well-being

A positive state of existence characterised by happiness, satisfaction, personal development, fulfilment and engagement with the 'community'.³⁴

Notes

- ¹ George Alberti (2010) *Responding to violence against women and children - The role of the NHS: The report on the taskforce on the health aspects of violence against women and children*. Department of Health: London. p9
- ² Justine Järvinen et al. (2008) *Hard Knock Life: Violence against women, a guide for donors and funders*. New Philanthropy Capital: London.
- ³ Women's Resource Centre and Rape Crisis (England and Wales) (2008) *The Crisis in Rape Crisis: A survey of Rape Crisis (England and Wales) Centres*. WRC: London.
- ⁴ See for example RASASC (2011) *Reporting sex offences, RASASC Research and Policy Bulletin* 7/08/11: <http://www.london-councils.gov.uk/London%20Councils/RASASCResearch2011CarolMcNaughtonNicholls.pdf>
- ⁵ HM Government (2007) *Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse*. Home Office: London.
- ⁶ *ibid.*
- ⁷ Andrea Finney (2006) *Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking: Findings from the 2004-2005 British Crime Survey*. Home Office: London.
- ⁸ HM Government (2007) *Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse*. Home Office: London.
- ⁹ *Statistics on sexual abuse*. Taken from NSPCC 27/09/2011: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/sexual_abuse_statistics_wda80204.html
- ¹⁰ Gilbert et al. (2008) in Jeevi Mariathasan (2009) *Children Talking to Childline about Sexual Abuse*. NSPCC: London.
- ¹¹ HM Government (2007) *Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse*. Home Office: London.
- ¹² Rape Crisis England and Wales (2011) *Childhood Sexual Abuse*: <http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/childsexualabuse2.php>
- ¹³ Jeevi Mariathasan (2009) *Children Talking to Childline about Sexual Abuse*. NSPCC: London.
- ¹⁴ Maddy Coy et al. (2007) *Map of Gaps: The postcode lottery of violence against women services*. End Violence Against Women in partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission: London.
- ¹⁵ Women's Resource Centre (2006). *Why Women? The women's voluntary and community sector: Changing lives, changing communities, changing society*. WRC: London.
- ¹⁶ Department of Health (2002) *Women's Mental Health: Into the Mainstream: Strategic Development of Mental Health Care for Women*. Department of Health: London.
- ¹⁷ Home Office, 2005. *The economic and social costs of crime against individuals and households 2003/04*. Figures from this report were up-rated to 2009 prices in the Government Response to the Stern Review (2011) as follows: The physical and emotional cost component of this estimate was up-rated to account for growth in nominal income – this reflects changes in prices and evidence that health quality is a normal good and hence the costs of negative health impacts rise with real income. Other costs were up-rated for inflation only using the GDP deflator series published by HMT. See: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-endviolence-women-girls/government-stern-review?view=Binary>
- ¹⁸ HM Government (2007) *Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse*. Home Office: London.
- ¹⁹ Women's Resource Centre (2007) *Why Women-Only? The value and benefit of by women for women services*. WRC: London.
- ²⁰ *ibid.*
- ²¹ *ibid.*
- ²² Women's Resource Centre and Rape Crisis (England and Wales) (2008) *The Crisis in Rape Crisis: A survey of Rape Crisis (England and Wales) Centres*. WRC: London. p.36-37
- ²³ See for example Aisha Gill and Gulshun Rehman (2004) "Empowerment through activism: responding to domestic violence in the South Asian Community in London". *Gender and Development*. 12:1, 75-82; Alpar Parmar et al. (2005) *Tackling Domestic Violence: Providing Advocacy and Support to Survivors from Black and Other Minority Ethnic Communities*. Home Office: London.
- ²⁴ Home Office (2005) *Tackling domestic violence: Providing Advocacy and Support to Survivors from Black and Other Minority Ethnic Communities. Development and Practice Report No.35*. Home Office: London.
- ²⁵ See <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/newsrelease280111a.htm>
- ²⁶ Office of the Third Sector (2009) *A Guide to Social Return on Investment*. Cabinet Office: London.
- ²⁷ See for example Women's Resource Centre (2007) *Why Women-Only? The value and benefit of by women for women services*. WRC: London.
- ²⁸ *Women's Aid definition* available online at: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-articles.asp?section=00010001002200410001&itemid=1272>
- ²⁹ Home Office (2000) *A Choice by Right: The Report of the Working Group on Forced Marriage in Refuge (2010) Forced Marriage in the UK: A scoping study on the experience of women from Middle Eastern and North East African communities*. Refuge: London.
- ³⁰ *ibid.*
- ³¹ *Sexual Offences Act 2003*. Taken from Legislation.gov.uk: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/part/1/crossheading/familial-child-sex-offences>
- ³² www.theoryofchange.org
- ³³ *UN Declaration on Violence Against Women (1993)*. Taken from United Nations. 27/09/2011: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>
- ³⁴ For more on well-being see: <http://www.neweconomics.org/programmes/well-being>



The Women's Resource Centre (WRC) is a charity which supports women's organisations to be more effective and sustainable. We provide training, information, resources and one-to-one support on a range of organisational development issues. We also lobby decision-makers on behalf of the women's not-for-profit sector for improved representation and funding.

Our members work in a wide range of fields including violence against women, employment, education, rights and equality, the criminal justice system and the environment. They deliver services to and campaign on behalf of some of the most marginalised communities of women.

There are over ten thousand people working or volunteering for our members who support almost half a million individuals each year

This project was supported by Trust for London



Trust for London

Tackling poverty and inequality