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Results and impacts of the efforts of specialized services against negative social control and honour based violence





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The specialized services addressing negative social control and honour-motivated violence, including issues such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation, carries out extensive preventive efforts in Norway. These services work closely with individuals in vulnerable situations, often dealing with complex cases that require high levels of professional expertise, time, trust, and coordination across sectors. At the same time, previous research and people who work in the services have pointed out that current systems for registration and reporting only to a limited extent reflect the content of this work – and provide little information about its results.

The purpose of this report is to examine how the work carried out in these specialized services is documented, and how reporting can be further developed to provide a more realistic and meaningful picture of what the services do and achieve. The report is based on interviews and workshops with people who work in the services, combined with an extensive document study of strategic frameworks and current registration and reporting systems.

As an analytical framework, we draw on what the evaluation literature refers to as “theory of change” and “results chains”. We examined the services’ mandate and purpose, how they actually function in practice today, and how these activities may contribute to achieving their intended goals. Based on this, we develop results chains in which the different stages can be operationalized and measured in various ways.

Our analyses show that the services spend considerable time and effort reporting on their work and registering figures on the “cases” they handle. Reports are submitted regularly to the responsible authorities, and statistics on the number of cases handled by the services are currently used actively in the public sphere, including in political debates, governance dialogues, and the media. What rarely becomes visible, however, is that the data underlying these statistics are characterized by considerable uncertainty.

A key finding is that current reporting practices do not sufficiently capture what the services actually do and achieve through their work, nor how users experience the quality of the services. Employees report that they do not fully recognize their work in the figures that are published. They believe that the reporting presents an overly simplified and somewhat distorted picture of their everyday work. If employees are to be motivated to register such information, they must see meaning and purpose in the reporting. They need to see that their work is not reduced to simply “the number of cases,” and that the reporting reflects the complexity and breadth of the tasks they carry out.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the report proposes a set of indicators that can provide a more comprehensive and content-based picture of input factors, activities, and results of the specialized services. We also discuss different approaches to how these indicators can be measured.

We highlight four main recommendations:

- First, there is a need for better standardization and coordination of current measurement tools used for reporting, both with regard to work directed at

individuals and universal prevention. Several employees in our study describe the current systems as fragmented, providing limited opportunities for collaboration and exchange of experiences across the different specialized services. By coordination we refer both to the standardization of the content collected in reporting systems, clearer guidelines for how services should register information, and more consistent registration practices.

- Second, we recommend changes that clarify what the indicators actually refer to. Key categories such as “case” are currently used in different ways and often mix one-time inquiries with more extensive follow-up processes. This makes the figures difficult to interpret and contributes to variations in registration practices across services. We therefore propose indicators and registration points that distinguish more clearly between what is being registered - for example, whether it concerns an initial inquiry or follow-up - and that clarify the basis on which the information is assessed. This would give the indicators more consistent meaning and make the figures easier to understand and compare across services.
- Third, there is currently no systematic information about how situations develop from the first inquiry to conclusion, or how follow-up processes end. To say something meaningful about the results of individual follow-up, information is needed about what happens while the services are involved. We therefore recommend indicators based on registrations both at the time of the first inquiry and later during the follow-up process. This makes it possible to document duration, changes in assessments, and how inquiries are concluded - information that current systems do not capture.
- Fourth, the indicator set also includes indicators that highlight more universal preventive work, particularly capacity-building activities and collaboration with other services. Such indicators provide an overview of the scope and type of competence-building activities, which target groups participate, how collaboration with other services takes place, and how these activities are assessed by target groups. These are important parts of the mandate of the specialized services but are currently only partially documented.

With regard to how the indicators can be measured, we recommend a stepwise approach.

The first step consists of relatively simple adjustments within existing systems: registration at multiple points during a case, clearer categorization of inquiries and follow-up, and standardization of key fields across services. The report shows that such measures alone can provide a more precise and useful data foundation.

The second step consists of more extensive measures that could be considered in the longer term, for example solutions where parts of the ongoing documentation in work tools can be used directly for registration purposes. This could provide a more detailed picture of the course of events in individual inquiries and work processes, thereby offering a stronger basis for assessing the assumptions in the results chains than is possible today. Such a solution would, however, require clear legal provisions and clarifications to ensure that the processing of information complies with data protection regulations.

Many of the improvement proposals in this report involve structuring and clarifying work that is already being carried out, rather than substantially increasing the amount of registration required. For example, several employees already return to update registrations when they receive additional information, and the changes we propose can be incorporated into the same workflow. Other recommendations, such as clearer categories and better standardization, may actually make reporting easier by reducing uncertainty and unnecessary workaround solutions.

Taken together, the recommendations make it possible to describe the scope, content, and quality of the work carried out by the specialized services, and to measure results in ways that current systems do not allow. The recommendations can be implemented gradually, with clear improvements through relatively simple adjustments, and further possibilities if more comprehensive solutions are considered desirable.

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