

What Islam Really Says About Domestic Abuse

Shaykh Amer Jamil

In association with Amina –
The Muslim Women's Resource Centre



MWRC



MWRC

Amina – the Muslim Women’s Resource Centre Publication 2007

Network House, 311 Calder Street, Glasgow G42 7NQ

Tel: 0141 585 8026

Fax: 0141 423 7700

Email: info@mwrc.org.uk

Website: www.mwrc.org.uk

Amina – the Muslim Women’s Resource Centre wishes to thank the Scottish Executive and the Strathclyde Police for the financial support for the production of this booklet and the associated cost of the Amina PPP Violence against Women project

Shaykh Amer Jamil would like to thank everyone who helped in producing this booklet

Glossary

Allah The one God who has no partners or children.

Hadith A saying or tradition of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Islam Submission to Allah’s will.

Muslim Somebody who has accepted Islam and follows it.

Quran Holy book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Sunnah The actual practice of the Prophet ﷺ, this includes his sayings, actions, those matters he approved of silently. It is used as secondary source of Islamic law to provide guidance.



Peace and blessings be upon him

Contents

Introduction	2
1. Domestic abuse	3
2. The concept of harm in Islam	3
3. The example of the Prophet	4
3.1. The Prophet's married life	4
3.2. Physical abuse	5
3.3. Emotional abuse	6
3.4. Sexual abuse	6
4. The misunderstood verse	7
4.1. Hitting is not allowed	9
5. Conclusion	9
6. Related issues	10
7. Endnotes	11
8. Further reading	12
9. A brief outline of legal rights of women in Scotland in relation to domestic abuse	13
10. Some useful contacts	15

Introduction

It is a sad fact that domestic abuse and violence occurs against women in all societies and at all levels. This booklet has been produced not because muslim women are more likely to be subjected to violence than non-muslim women, but because the way it impacts on them can be different.

Our aim is to overcome the myth which mistakenly justifies such behaviour in the name of Islam and to clarify the protection that Islam gives women against abuse. This booklet will be useful for muslim women who are subjected to such abuse; to those who are providing support to them; to muslim men and to the wider community in its work to stamp out such behaviour.

The reader should bear in mind that the Quran is not the only source of Islamic law. Indeed the Sunnah is regarded as the second source although its authority is after that of the Quran. One of the important functions of the Sunnah is to clarify what is obscure in the Quran, for example the Quran tells muslims to establish the prayer¹ but it is the Sunnah which has clarified how the prayer is performed². Thus, a literal reading of the Quran is not sufficient in understanding Islam. It is for this reason chapters two and three are essential before we discuss chapter four.

1. Domestic Abuse

“Domestic abuse is any form of physical, non-physical, or sexual abuse which takes place within the context of a close relationship, committed either in the home or elsewhere. This relationship will be between partners (married, co-habiting or otherwise) or ex-partners”.³

Although women can perpetrate domestic abuse against men, statistics show that domestic abuse is mostly carried out by men against women. In 2005–2006, incidents with a female victim and male perpetrator represented 87% of all incidents of domestic abuse.⁴

Domestic abuse has many forms. It can be physical, emotional/psychological, sexual and financial in nature. In extended family situations, abuse may also be from other family members towards the incoming spouse, with or even without, the consent of the other partner.

2. The Concept of Harm in Islam

“Harm should not be inflicted nor should it be avenged with harm”⁵

This is a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and forms one of the most important established principles in Islamic law. It is also related to another principle that “harm should be eliminated”⁶. This is due to the fact that harming is oppression and oppression is unlawful not only in Islam but in all faiths. The Quran states that Allah’s curse is upon the oppressors⁷. Both these principles are mentioned in a number of verses in the Quran⁸ such as:

“When ye divorce women, and they are about to fulfil the term of their waiting period, Either retain them or let them go with kindness; but do not retain them to harm them to transgress”⁹

Furthermore, another hadith states “do not oppress one another”.¹⁰

Not only does Islam forbid harming people it also forbids harming animals or the environment. The Quran states:

“And when he comes to power he tries his utmost to spread mischief in the land and to destroy crops and human lives; and verily Allah by no means approves mischief”¹¹

This is further emphasised by the Prophet ﷺ when he said, “Do not cut a fruit-bearing tree, nor kill an animal without need and abstain from harming other muslims”.¹²

In conclusion, harm in Islam is taken very seriously whatever its form and whoever it is aimed at. Needless to say that where harm is unlawful against animals then the sin is greater where the victim is human, the Quran states:

*“And verily we have honoured the children of Adam”*¹³

The sin increases where that human is in a vulnerable position such as women and children.

3. The Example of the Prophet

The Quran states:

*“Surely you have an excellent example for your guidance in (the life of) the messenger of Allah”*¹⁴

*“Say to them (Oh Muhammed ﷺ) If you love Allah then follow me and Allah shall love you and forgive you your sins.”*¹⁵

The Quran teaches all muslims to try to follow the Prophet ﷺ in every aspect of their lives. Allah (The All-Mighty) sent the Prophet ﷺ as the best interpreter of the Quran. His life was a practical demonstration of how the divine guidance was to be applied. When the Prophet’s wife (may Allah be pleased with her) was asked about her husband’s character she stated “His character was the Quran”¹⁶. In other words his life was the practical expression of the guidance contained within the Quran. Therefore it is vital to take a closer look at how the Prophet ﷺ behaved with his spouses.

3.1. The Prophet’s Married Life

The Quran states:

*“And among his signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may live in tranquillity with them and He has put love and mercy between you, verily in that are signs for people who reflect.”*¹⁷

The Prophet’s marital life was an embodiment of this verse.

The Prophet ﷺ was affectionate towards his wives. Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) narrates “when I used to offer the Prophet ﷺ something to drink after drinking – and I was menstruating – he would drink from the place I had put my lips. Similarly, after I ate part of the meat on a bone – and I was menstruating – I used to hand it to the Prophet ﷺ, who would place his lips from the place where I had bitten from”.¹⁸ He ﷺ was also known to be very helpful to his wives around the house.¹⁹

The Prophet ﷺ was well aware of the nature of some men to resort to abusing their spouses therefore he stressed good behaviour towards women and emphasised this on numerous occasions. The Prophet ﷺ has said “The best people from among you are those who are best to their wives”.²⁰ He ﷺ also dedicated a substantial portion of his last sermon to explain and emphasise the obligations of a man towards his wife.²¹

The Quran also instructs the husbands in the following words:

*“And live with them (wives) in fairness”*²²

3.2. Physical Abuse

The Prophet ﷺ has also taught muslims patience with their spouses. The Prophet’s household was not without marital disagreements. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that once his wife expressed surprise at him for not allowing her to argue with him. She added that his daughter Hafsa (one of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ) argued with the Prophet ﷺ to the extent he would be annoyed the whole day.²³

The Prophet ﷺ never hit any of his wives. Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates the Messenger of Allah ﷺ never hit any of his wives nor any of his servants.²⁴ The one instance in the life of the Prophet ﷺ where there was serious marital disagreement he moved away from them for a period of one month and offered them the choice to accept his manner of living and remain his wives or to release them from the marriage and to separate gracefully.²⁵

Such was the Prophet’s ﷺ hatred of violence against women that when he heard that some of his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) had beaten their wives, he ﷺ said to them in a scolding manner “How can one of you beat his wife like the beating of a slave, and then lie with her in the evening?”²⁶

3.3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can often be very damaging and sustained, because unlike physical abuse it cannot be seen. Therefore, it can take longer to detect.

Due to the devastating effects of emotional abuse the Quran addresses it directly:

“Oh you who believe! Let not one party of men laugh at the other party – may be they are better than those who laugh at them, and let not some of women laugh at other women – may be they are better than those who laugh at them. And do not defame one another nor call one another by nicknames...O you who believe! Avoid most suspicion, surely suspicion in some certain cases is a sin and spy not on one another nor backbite one another.”²⁷

The Prophet ﷺ did not only address physical abuse he also dealt with non-physical abuse. The Prophet ﷺ said “Insulting another muslim is a grave sin”²⁸ and He also said “A believer does not curse others.”²⁹

He ﷺ also said “Keep to my advice about women, that you should treat them fairly.”³⁰

3.4. Sexual Abuse

The Quran states:

“Women shall have rights similar to the rights upon them according to what is equitable and just”³¹

Both husband and wife should fulfil each other’s sexual needs. As Islam does not allow sexual relations outside marriage if one spouse denies the other sexually this can lead to adultery which inevitably destroys marriages. However, due to the established principle of ‘harm should not be done’³² spouses must not harm one another in enjoying their sexual rights. Therefore, if a woman has a valid excuse such as illness etc then the husband would have to refrain or enjoy her company in a way that would not harm her. As always the Prophet ﷺ was the perfect example of the good husband and as such he would ensure that his wives were fully satisfied with him.³³

4. The Misunderstood Verse

Verse 34 of the 4th chapter of the Quran has often been misunderstood.

There is no doubt that this verse does not justify domestic violence against woman. To fully understand this verse a separate paper needs to be written to eliminate all misunderstandings. Due to the length of this work I can only touch on the main points which need to be addressed to provide a better understanding, and in particular to clarify that the verse does not support domestic abuse.

According to recent translator of the Quran Abdel Haleem, this misunderstanding is due to reading the verse out of context, a disregard of the Prophet's understanding and a number of other reasons. He also believes that English translations through mistranslation and misunderstanding of the Quran have contributed to the idea that Islam treats women in a negative way.³⁴ We can clearly see some problems by examining how this verse is translated from the Arabic language:³⁵

“Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband’s) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, Admonish them (first), (next) refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance) for Allah is most High, Great (above you all)”³⁶

The verse begins by describing the obedient wife as the one who is obedient to Allah by guarding her chastity. Then we are informed of the disobedient one, she is the one whose ‘disloyalty and ill-conduct’ is feared. This translation of the Arabic word *nushuz* is misleading. *Nushuz* is in fact a severe act of disobedience to Allah (the All-Mighty) which threatens the future of the marriage³⁷, such as an act of infidelity. **Thus, this verse could not be applied if the cooking, cleaning, general housework was not done** as it is only in the case of *nushuz* that the husband is recommended to take the following steps:

STAGE 1

To remind her of Allah (the All-Mighty) and his teachings, and not “admonish” as has been translated here.

STAGE 2

If he remains unsuccessful and the *nushuz* continues he leaves her bed and refuses to sleep with her, not as some translations mislead us to believe that the women are being asked to leave the bed

What we must remember is that in many cases the issue would be resolved at either the first or second stage so that the number of cases which would reach the third stage would be very small. We must not forget that the order of the verse *must* be followed.

STAGE 3

Then if he still remains unsuccessful and the *nushuz* still continues he is allowed and not obliged to “hit” her lightly and not “beat” as is often translated.³⁸

The term “hit (lightly)” has been misunderstood. A large number of scholars have adopted the interpretation of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) a well-known companion of the Prophet ﷺ. Significantly Ibn Abbas was known for his deep understanding of the Quran³⁹. It is narrated that he said that the type of hitting implied in the verse was the like which is done with a *miswak* (a tooth cleansing stick normally the size of a small drinking straw)⁴⁰. In other words the hit/tap would be symbolic and not intended to cause harm or injury. The purpose of it would be to express the husband’s feelings of despair. Such an expression is the opposite of normal intimacy between the spouses.

In an attempt to put limits as to what type of hit/tap would be permissible the scholars set down certain guidelines based on evidence. The hit/tap would have to be done in such a way in that no harm and no injury was caused. It should not leave any impression/mark on the skin. Furthermore, sensitive parts of the body must be avoided and it would be forbidden to be done on the face.⁴¹

It should always be kept in mind that this light hit/tap is not obligatory and is only allowed for a specific extreme situation.⁴² Rather, from the prophetic example we understand his hatred of hitting⁴³. It has only been permitted as a last desperate measure to save the marriage because divorce is highly disliked due to its harmful effects on society. Furthermore, it should be noted that “hitting lightly” is only mentioned once even though the Quran talks about

difficulties in marriage in several places, in which husbands are instructed to forgive, overlook, not to harass and to be kind⁴⁴.

Importantly, the verse ends with “Allah is Most High, Great”. This is a warning to husbands that if they are abusive Allah (The High) will know of it and deal with them because muslims are accountable for their actions in this world and in the hereafter.

4.1. Hitting is not Allowed

Having gone some way to understanding this verse more correctly, the case for arguing that any type of hit/tap even if only symbolic being forbidden can equally be made.

Firstly, scholars maintain that in order for any hit/tap to be deemed allowed the husband must be convinced that it will lead to the desired result of reconciliation⁴⁵. If however, it will result in more harm and more damage to the marriage it will not be allowed⁴⁶. Thus, in our western culture where it is commonly accepted that any type of hit will not save a marriage and on the contrary it will cause more damage to the relationship, even if it were only symbolic or light, it would be unlawful.

Secondly, **Islam requires that muslims abide by the law of the land**⁴⁷. As common law in Scotland can view even a light hit as an assault, muslims must ensure their actions do not break the law. In fact this law agrees completely with the spirit of Islam, as we have already established that the Prophet ﷺ never hit his spouses and he is the example that all muslims should aspire to. Moreover, to refrain from light hitting/tapping does not compromise one’s Islam as it is not obligatory.

5. Conclusion

Clearly Islam does not condone domestic abuse or violence against women or anyone else. Islamic law takes abuse and violence very seriously and does not tolerate it, rather the offenders would be punished in an appropriate manner⁴⁸. Those who abuse others do so not because Islam justifies it, but rather due to their own lack of Islam.

As we have already discussed harm should be eliminated.⁴⁹ It is the Islamic duty of everyone who knows of abuse taking place to prevent it if they are able to do so⁵⁰. Therefore, family, relatives, friends and the community as a whole

must take this very important responsibility very seriously, if they fail to do so they will be sinful in the sight of Allah (the All-Mighty) and will be accountable in the hereafter.

6. Related Issues

Forced Marriage⁵¹

In Islam a woman should not be married against her will as is clearly shown in a hadith in which a virgin came to the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned that her father had married her against her will, so the Prophet ﷺ allowed her to choose”.⁵²

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation

Female circumcision takes place in many cultures across the world. In fact it was practised long before the rise of Islam. The majority of muslims countries do not practise FGM and in those muslim countries in which it is practised like Egypt, it is common among muslims and non-muslims.⁵³

* * * * *

Anything useful I have written is by the grace of Allah (the All-Mighty) and all mistakes are my own and Allah (the All-Mighty) knows best.

7. Endnotes

- 1 Chapter 2 verse 43
- 2 See Zaydan, Abdul-Kareem (1999) *Al-Madkil Le Derasaatish Shaariatil Islameeyah: Ar-Resalah* publishers: Beirut p163
- 3 Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2000
- 4 Recorded by police in Scotland – Scottish Executive, 2006
- 5 Narrated in Al-Mustadrak, Al-Hakim says the Hadith is sound
- 6 Some scholars e.g. Ibn Najar are of the opinion that this established principle is so significant that it encompasses half of all jurisprudence. See An-Nadawee, Ali (2000) *Al-Qawa'idul Fiqheyah: Darul-Qalam: Damascus* p287
- 7 Chapter 11 verse 18
- 8 Chapter 65 verse 6 and Chapter 2 verse 233
- 9 Chapter 2 verse 231
- 10 Narrated in Muslim
- 11 Chapter 2 verse 205
- 12 Narrated in Maraseel Abee Dawud
- 13 Chapter 17 verse 70
- 14 Chapter 33 verse 21
- 15 Chapter 3 verse 31
- 16 Narrated in Muslim
- 17 Chapter 30 verse 21
- 18 Narrated in Muslim
- 19 Narrated in Bukhari
- 20 Narrated by Tirmizi
- 21 Narrated in Muslim
- 22 Narrated in Muslim
- 23 Narrated in Bukhari
- 24 Narrated by Muslim
- 25 Quran chapter 33 verse 28–29, for commentary of the verse see Ali, Yusuf (2001) “The meaning of the Holy Quran”: Amana publications: Maryland
- 26 Narrated in Bukhari
- 27 Chapter 49 verses 11–12
- 28 Narrated in Muslim and Bukhari
- 29 Narrated in Tirmizi
- 30 Narrated in Tirmizi
- 31 Chapter 2 verse 228
- 32 See chapter 2 in this booklet entitled “The concept of harm in Islam”
- 33 Narrated in Abee Dawud
- 34 See Abdel Haleem, Muhammad (2001) *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style: I.B Tauris publishers: London* p46
- 35 It is one of the most commonly used translations, originally printed more than fifty years ago, see introduction of Ali, Yusuf (2001) “The meaning of the Holy Quran”: Amana publications: Maryland
- 36 see Ali, Yusuf (2001) “The meaning of the holy Quran”: Amana publications: Maryland, Chapter 4 verse 34
- 37 This meaning is understood from a Hadith narrated in Tirmizi, “. My last recommendation to you is that you should treat women well. Truly, they are your helpmates, and you have no right over them beyond that except if they commit a manifest indecency ... you have a right over your women and they have a right over you. Your right over your women is that they not allow whom you hate to enter your bed nor your house. While their right over you is that you treat them excellently in their clothing and food”
- 38 See Abdel Haleem, Muhammad (2001) *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style: I.B Tauris publisher: London* p53–54
- 39 See De Slane, Mac Guckin (1970) *Translation of Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary: Librairie Du Liban: Beirut* volume 1, p89
- 40 See Qurtabi, Abu Abdillah (2000) *Tafsir Qurtabi: Darul-kitab Al-Arabee: Beirut* volume 5, p166
- 41 See Qurtabi, Abu Abdillah (2000) *Tafsir Qurtabi: Darul-kitab Al-Arabee: Beirut* volume 5, p165 and Abu Shuqah, Abdul Haleem (1999) *Tahreer-Al-Mar'a: Darul-Qalam: Kuwait* volume 5, p247
- 42 Nushooz from the wife (which inevitably endangers the marriage) and both stage one (reminding her Of Allah's laws and teachings) and two (refusing to sleep with her) have failed
- 43 See subheading “Physical Abuse” in chapter 3 in this booklet entitled “The

- example of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him)
- 44 Chapter 64 verse 14, Chapter 65 verse 6, Chapter 4 verse 19, Chapter 2 verse 229
- 45 After all the whole point of the husband going through the three stages in the verse is to achieve reconciliation, not to make the situation worse and end in divorce
- 46 See Ibn Allan, Muhammad (1999) Daleelul Falaheen: Darul-Ma'rifa: Beirut volume3, p102
- 47 The European Council For Fatwa And Research (1999) "European Council For Fatwa And Research, First Collection Of Fatwas": Islamic INC.: Cairo: Egypt – p21–23
- 48 Some scholars regard abuse as grounds for divorce, others disagree as a woman could raise her case to the Judge who would have the power to stop the husband's behaviour through a number of punishments available to him. See Abdul-Hamid, Muhideen (1984) Al-Ahwaalush shaqeya: Darul-kitab:Beirut. Obviously we don't live in an Islamic system therefore, a victim of abuse would have to use whatever means to prevent it e.g. through family, friends, religious leaders, the police etc.
- 49 See Chapter 2 in this booklet entitled "The concept of harm in Islam"
- 50 A Hadith narrated in Muslim supports this: "Whoever amongst you sees an evil, he must change it with his hand; if he is unable to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is unable to do so, then with his heart; and that is the weakest form of faith"
- 51 "Forced Marriage is marriage that has taken place without the consent of one or both parties or where consent is extracted under duress". Home Office
- 52 Narrated in Abu Dawud. It should be noted that this is the understanding of the hanafi school of jurisprudence which the majority of Muslims in the UK adhere to. See Margayanee (1990) Al-Hidyaah: Dar ul-kutub al-ilmyah: Beirut volume 1, p59
- 53 The only form of female circumcision which jurists have ever permitted is a very slight 'trimming' of the tip of the clitoral hood – prepuce. All other forms of female circumcision have never been permitted. See Zuhuli, Wahba (1997) Fiqh al-Islamee: Dar ul-fikr: Damascus volume 4, p2572. Recently, Egypt's Al-Azhar Supreme Council of Islamic Research (the highest religious authority in the Egypt) issued a statement saying that FGM and cutting are harmful and should not be practiced. Egypt's state-appointed Grand Mufti Ali Juma said "The harmful tradition of circumcision that is practised in Egypt in our era is forbidden". Egypt has enforced a complete ban on female circumcision across the country.

8. Further Reading

Abdel Haleem, Muhammad (2001) Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style: I.B Tauris publishers: London

Maqsood, Ruqayyah (1999) The Muslim Marriage Guide: Quilliam press: London

Darsh, Syed (1997) Questions And Answers About Islam: Ta Ha publishers: London

Abusulayman, Abdul Hamid (2003) Marital Discord: Recapturing the Full Islamic spirit of Human Dignity: The International Institute Of Islamic Thought: Washington

9. A Brief Outline of Legal Rights of Women in Scotland in Relation to Domestic Abuse

Right to court order to keep the abuser away from the home

If the woman is the tenant or joint tenant or if she is the owner or joint owner of the family home, she has an automatic right to stay in the home. She needs to apply to the Sheriff Court with the help of a lawyer to get an order called Exclusion Order to keep the abuser out of the home.

If the woman is married but not the tenant or joint tenant, nor does she own or jointly own the family home, she has an automatic right to stay in the family home. If she wants to get the abuser excluded, she needs to apply for an Exclusion Order.

Right to court order for protection from an abuser

Any woman who is being assaulted, threatened or harassed can apply through a lawyer for a court order called an interdict with a power of arrest or a non harassment order to protect herself from the abuser. An order can be granted even if the woman is living apart from the abuser. An interdict is a court order preventing behaviour by the person the interdict is granted against. Some examples of this behaviour are: approaching a person in a particular area; approaching an address; telephoning; texting. If there is a power of arrest attached to an order then the police can arrest the abuser if they have reasonable suspicion that the interdict has been broken.

It is advisable to speak with a lawyer who has experience in family law to seek advice on applying for a court order.

Right to a Divorce

If you have been resident in Scotland for at least a year and your marriage has broken down you can apply for a civil divorce. You will need a lawyer to help you with this also.

Financial Help

For UK citizens and those with leave to remain, assistance may be available to help with cost of basic needs (depending on your income and savings) through e.g. Income Support/Job Seekers Allowance. Help is applied to through the JobCentre Plus Network. Advice can also be obtained from Citizen's Advice Bureaux, Women's Aid groups, Social Work and a range of advice agencies including Amina – the MWRC.

Homelessness

If a woman has to leave her home because of domestic abuse then she will be classified as homeless. Local councils have a responsibility to provide housing and free advice for homeless people. If a woman is assessed as homeless she will be entitled to temporary accommodation and can apply for permanent rehousing. A woman is homeless even if she has accommodation and:

- She cannot secure entry into the house
- Or there is a threat of domestic abuse if she continued living there

Contact 'Response' for further advice and information on housing 0808 202 1162. Help may be available for housing costs via Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. A woman can also apply for emergency safe accommodation to a Women's Aid Group.

Women subject to Immigration conditions

Asylum seekers receiving NASS support must apply to NASS for help with accommodation and support costs. If their circumstances change due to domestic abuse NASS will be able to assist with support in the changed circumstances.

Women in UK on a "spouse visa" will be subject to a 2 year probationary period during which they cannot access public funds for support. However a variation to visa conditions can be applied for if domestic violence can be proved. Specialist advice will be needed for this. Women should seek advice from a specialist lawyer or advice agency as soon as possible.

Forced Marriage

There is currently no specific criminal offence of "forcing someone to marry" in the UK. However, perpetrators can be prosecuted under a range of legislation for offences associated with forcing someone into marriage, including: kidnapping; false imprisonment; assault; harassment; child cruelty; sexual offences; failing to ensure attendance at school; blackmail; child abduction; trafficking; or murder.

Beyond the criminal law, the civil courts can step in to protect people at risk. For example they can give a local authority parental responsibility for a child and prohibit them from being married or being taken abroad.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

This practice is illegal in Scotland under the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005. It is a criminal offence for a person in Scotland to aid, abet, counsel or procure another person to carry out FGM in Scotland. It is also an offence to take the female child out of the UK for that purpose. Any of these prohibited acts undertaken outside the UK by a UK national, or permanent UK resident, will be an offence under Scottish law and can be prosecuted in the Scottish courts. If someone is proven to be guilty, he or she can face between 5 and 14 years in prison.

Also visit www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk for more information.

10. Useful Contacts – organisations who offer support/advice

Helplines

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 027 1234

Free & Confidential Helpline: 24 hours, 7 days per week. Free, confidential service providing information and support to women who have experienced, or are experiencing domestic abuse. The helpline can access on line interpreting for non-English speaking callers.

Amina Muslim Womens Helpline: 0808 801 0301 (Scotland wide)

Mon–Fri 9.30–5.00

Help email: helpline@mwrc.org.uk

Free confidential service. 20 languages spoken and interpreters used when a language is not available.

Women’s Organisations

Amina – the Muslim Women’s Resource Centre

Contact details:

Network House, 311 Calder Street,
Glasgow G42 7NQ

Tel: 0141 585 8026

Fax: 0141 423 7700

Email: info@mwrc.org.uk

Website: www.mwrc.org.uk

Drop In times: Mon & Wed 10–12.30,
Thurs 1–3 or by appointment

Services: Provides information, advice and support for Muslim women including for those who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse.

Languages: 20 languages are spoken and interpreters used when a language is not available.

The Centre has a library where women can get information on family issues from an Islamic perspective.

ASSIST

Telephone: 0141 847 0306

Services: Support and advocacy for survivors of domestic abuse in South Glasgow – “G” Division.

Breakthrough for Women

Telephone: 0141 552 5483

Services: Counselling, support and information service for women over 16-years-old who live in Glasgow and have been affected by sexual violence.

Rape Crisis Centre (Glasgow)

Support line: 0141 552 3200

Minicom: 0141 552 4244

Service: Support women and girls who have been raped, sexually assaulted and/or sexually abused.

Say Women

Telephone: 0141 552 5803

Services: Provide safe accommodation for young women aged 16–25 years who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse, rape or sexual assault.

Women’s Support Project

Telephone: 0141 552 2221

0141 552 9979 (Textphone)

Services: Telephone information and support for women and the family and friends supporting them.

Women’s Aid organisations

If you are subject to domestic abuse and want to leave home, contact any of the following organisations:

Glasgow Women’s Aid

Telephone: 0141 553 2022

Address: 4th Floor, 30 Bell Street,
Glasgow G1 1LG

Services: Confidential information, support & refuge accommodation to women, children & young people who have experienced domestic abuse

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid**Telephone: 0141 353 0859**

Address: Flat 0/1, 24 Willow Bank Street, Glasgow G3 6LZ

Services: Advice, support and temporary accommodation for women and their children from black and minority ethnic communities who have or are experiencing domestic abuse.

Shakti Women's Aid Helpline: 0131 475 2399**Telephone: 0131 475 2399**

Address: Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY

Services: Support and information and advice on legal rights, welfare, or immigration and nationality issues to all black minority ethnic women (over 16 years) and their children experiencing and/or fleeing domestic abuse

Strathclyde Police Family Protection Units

Domestic abuse is a crime. If your partner physically or sexually assaults you, you can report them to the police, who may charge them with an offence. You may also be able to claim for compensation.

Family Protection Units are based in each of the City's four police divisions.

All Police officers working within the units are specialised in dealing with domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault and child protection matters.

Opening Hours: 8am–2am, 7 days a week.

Languages Spoken: English. Interpreters available if required.

Telephone numbers for the family protection units**Aikenhead Road Police Station:****0141 532 4914****Baird Street Police Station:****0141 532 4214****Stewart Street Police Station:****0141 532 3014****Saracen Police Station: 0141 532 3714****Glasgow City Council Social Work Services – Homeless Services**

Councils have a legal obligation to provide advice and some support to homeless people. In Glasgow this is undertaken by Glasgow City Council Social Work Services. In other areas it may be the responsibility of the local Housing Department

Community Casework Teams:

Glasgow City Council delivers a homelessness casework service to anyone who is homeless, threatened with homelessness, or is in need of advice about homelessness issues. There are nine Community Casework Teams operating within the local Social Work office boundaries.

Contact Numbers for Community Casework Teams:

West Community Casework Team:

0141 287 3158

North Community Casework Team:

0141 276 6169

North East Community Casework Team:

0141 276 6153

South East Community Casework Team:

0141 276 8201

South Community Casework Team:

0141 276 8201

Greater Pollok Community Casework Team:

0141 287 1588

South West Community Casework Team:

0141 880 9936Refugee Support Team: **0141 276 8201****Glasgow City Council Out of hours emergency service: 0800 811 505****Hamish Allan Centre: 0800 838 502 (Freephone)**Address: The Hamish Allan Centre
180 Centre St, Glasgow G5 8EE

A 24 hrs, 365 days a year, homelessness services run by Glasgow City Council.

Response: 0808 202 1162 (Freephone)

The RESPONSE Domestic Abuse Link Pilot project is a 24-hour homelessness service for women experiencing domestic abuse who are also at risk of homelessness.

The service prioritises access to Temporary Furnished Flats for women with or without children if they meet the referral criteria. Women can contact the pilot directly or be referred by another agency.

Specialist legal services

Ethnic Minority Law Centre:

0141 204 2888 (Glasgow)

Address: 41 St Vincent Place, 2nd Floor, Glasgow, G1 2ER

0131 229 2038 (Edinburgh)

Address: 103 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8BX

LSA (Legal Services Agency Ltd): 0141 353 3354

Address: Fleming House, 134 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, G3 6ST

Home Office Forced Marriage Unit

Telephone: 020 7008 0151

Service: The Forced Marriage Unit is a single point of confidential advice and assistance for those at risk of being forced into marriage. This unit is responsible for taking all appropriate measures to prevent British nationals undergoing forced marriage. The sooner they know about the case, the more they can do to help. All calls are dealt with on a totally confidential basis by skilled caseworkers fully aware of the cultural, social and emotional issues surrounding this abuse.

Amina – The Muslim Women’s Resource Centre is a registered charity and is committed to promoting the welfare of Muslim women through providing faith and culturally sensitive services and working with mainstream organisations to ensure the inclusion of Muslim women. Our PPP (Prevention, Protection and Provision) Violence Against Women Project will run from 2006–2008 to help women who are subject to abuse or have fled from abuse. The Centre also provides a confidential counselling service, advice and information on different issues, group work and a range of other issues.

This booklet discusses the myth that Islam allows domestic abuse and violence against women. It is hoped that this work will help eradicate the sad reality of abuse against women. This work has been researched and compiled by Shaykh Amer Jamil, in association with Amina – the Muslim Women’s Resource Centre.

Shaykh Amer Jamil is a freelance Consultant and researcher. After graduating from Strathclyde University with an LLB (Bachelor in Law), he spent eight years studying the Arabic language and Islamic Sciences. During this period he obtained a BA (Hons) in Islamic studies from the University of Wales and spent four years studying in the Middle East. Shaykh Amer’s field of interest is primarily Islamic family law and he is currently laying the ground work for a PhD in the subject.

Funded by:



&



Amina – The Muslim Women’s Resource Centre

SCOTTISH CHARITY NUMBER SCO27690