



## **Explanatory Note**

### **Coordinated Community Response to Violence against Women and Girls**

*A Coordinated Community Response (CCR) is a method of organizing a response to violence against women and girls (VAWG). CCR requires a partnership among system and community practitioners to further the shared goals of victim safety, autonomy and offender accountability.*

Global Rights for Women is a leading voice in the global movement to end violence against women and girls. GRW builds international partnerships that advance laws, principles and practices to create communities where all women and girls live free from violence.

#### **The Benefit of a Coordinated Community Response**

A Coordinated Community Response (CCR) is a method of organizing a response to VAWG. CCRs are common in coordinating the criminal justice response to cases of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. CCR's can also provide a method for organizing other systemic responses including service and health agencies. CCR requires a partnership among system and community practitioners to further the shared goals of victim safety, autonomy and offender accountability. It must be continually informed by the needs and experiences of victims and by the disproportionate impact that system actions have on victims and offenders from marginalized communities.

A CCR requires collaboration across and among practitioners to maximize offender accountability for violence, to intervene quickly in response to new acts of violence or intimidation and to increase the overall capacity to better protect and serve victims. An effective intervention from any community agency must account not only for the context and severity of the violence, including the degree of coercive control exercised by offenders, but also the life circumstances of both victims and offenders in individual cases. In a CCR, coordination among practitioners should make the violence *visible* to everyone else who intervenes in the case. In the context of criminal cases as they move from an initial response to final disposition, no practitioner acts independently from those who precede or follow. This is also true with other community agencies. The decisions and actions of one practitioner can be strengthened by the collaborative efforts across community systems. A CCR often includes the following practitioners:

- Community advocates
- Health care practitioners
- Emergency call-in practitioners
- First responders/dispatch
- Law enforcement
- Prosecution
- Legal advocates
- Judges and court Staff
- Probation/parole officers
- Offender education programs

A CCR is rooted in the community and is the foundation for assessing risk. CCRs can also reduce the disparate response of the criminal justice system to marginalized populations. A successful CCR is prefaced on listening to victims of domestic violence and negotiating how needed changes that reflect safety, equality and justice can be built into intervening systems.

Ideally, a victim advocacy program coordinates a CCR, but because of limited resources, communities have constructed other models through which coordination and leadership is provided from within government systems – through prosecutor’s offices or police departments for example. A lack of funding should not preclude organizers from trying to implement the following core elements of a CCR:

- A shared collective mission and strategy regarding intervention that is based on a number of core philosophical agreements.
- A shared understanding of how interventions are accountable to victim safety and offender accountability.
- Shared definitions of the three types of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, danger, risk and accountability.
- Written policies guiding each practitioner at each point of intervention that centralizes victim safety and offender accountability.
- A central role for victim advocates and victims in defining and evaluating the interagency coordination model.
- A CCR puts responsibility for victim safety on the system, not the victim.

Global Rights for Women (GRW) staff have expertise in organizing, developing and enhancing CCRs around the world. Contact [Global Rights for Women](#) staff for further information.

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