

An Investigation into Honour-based Violence (HBV) and Honour Killings in Iraqi Kurdistan and in the Kurdish Diaspora in the UK

Project Information Sheet

'Honour'-based violence (HBV) in which violence is carried out against family members (most often women) by other family members (most often men) in the name of honour has been identified internationally as a distressing crime and an abomination of human rights.

The Kurdistan Regional Government is supporting a new study on 'honour'-based violence and 'honour' killings in Kurdish communities in Iraqi Kurdistan and the UK. The purpose of the research is to get a better understanding of the nature and consequences of this violence and abuse and work towards providing research assistance to the Kurdistan Regional Government.

This research study is a unique and pioneering one. While there has been some previous research, the study is the first of its type in the UK and across Iraqi Kurdistan. The intention is for it to lead to an Action Plan in Kurdistan on 'honour'-based violence and to policy and practice development in the UK.

The research will be carried out in the UK (mainly London) and Iraqi Kurdistan Region. Experienced researchers from the Violence against Women Research Group, University of Bristol and from Roehampton University will be conducting the research. The researchers include:

Dr Nazand Begikhani, Violence against Women Research Group, Bristol University

Dr Aisha Gill, School of Business and Social Sciences, Roehampton University

Professor Gill Hague, Violence against Women Research Group, Bristol University

We will also be working closely with the Kurdish Women's Rights Watch (KWRW), who will be assisting us with the research in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.

The research aims to:

To conduct a study to assess the nature and extent of honour-based violence (HBV) and honour killings in Iraqi Kurdistan and the UK Kurdish Diaspora, and to evaluate the impact of these practices on women's experiences in Kurdish communities.

To investigate how HBV in Kurdish communities is understood. This would include both attention to cultural and family traditions, and to the representations that appear in the media of Kurdish ideas and values in relation to gender relations and family honour.

To compare the emergence, definitions and development of honour-based violence in Iraqi-Kurdistan and the UK, and to provide data to support interventions in both countries.

What the research involves - Methodology

We want to talk to agencies and professionals in Iraqi Kurdistan, divided between women's rights activists, police/criminal justice agencies; health agencies; government officials/ministers and faith leaders. Where possible we also would like to interview individuals and family members where HBV or honour killing has occurred in Iraq and the UK. We also want to talk to policy-makers and women's rights organisations in the Kurdish community in the UK.

The research will be based on:

Interviews and focus group discussions with key professionals, including those from violence against women services, human rights group and official government ministers.

Interviews with criminal justice professionals such as the police, lawyers and judges.

Interviews with victims' families and survivors of HBV drawn from a range of settings.

Case studies of support services exemplifying good practice.

We hope you will be able to help us with this important new study.

For further information contact:

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