

**WE CAN STOP THIS**

KA-MER

KILLINGS COMMITTED IN THE NAME OF "HONOR"

2006 REPORT

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# I

## GOOD NEWS from 2006

### The Office of the Prime Minister issued a circular.

From the Office of the Prime Minister:

SUBJECT: Actions to be Taken to Prevent Violence Against Children and Women, and Murders Deriving from Traditional Codes and Honor.

#### CIRCULAR

2006/17

Violence against women and children is something that is being followed with apprehension by all humanity. The most horrifying version of this kind of violence is the one consisting of murders of women, for reasons popularly ascribed to “a code of honor” and commonly referred to as “*töre cinayeti*.”<sup>1</sup> The fact that in Turkey there is violence being used against women and children makes it necessary for new and urgent measures to be taken. The duty and responsibility for solving these problems that will disappear as the level of education and consciousness rises together with economic progress and development, rests

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1- The Turkish Language Institute (TDK-Türk Dil Kurumu) defines *töre* as “the entirety of the ways of behaviour and living, rules, customs and practices, mutual habits and methods of action adopted by and established within a community,” or alternatively “the ethical attitudes and behavior of a society.” “*Töre killing*” has a separate entry that can be translated as follows: “In some regions, the killing of someone, usually a young girl or woman, by a member of her family in accordance with a verdict reached by the family council, due to the girl or woman’s failure to obey the dictates of *töre*.” (All definitions translated from the Turkish definitions found on [www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr).)

with all citizens and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as with public institutions and organizations.

Turkish Parliament felt the need to do something about this phenomenon, which is a social shame, and following its decree number 853, dated 28 June 2005, a commission to study this problem was formed. This commission has concluded its studies and has prepared a wide-ranging report defining the reasons for violence against women and children and the measures that can be adopted to prevent this kind of violence.

The proposals for measures to be taken on this matter, which have been formulated by said commission and adopted by our government, and the state bodies responsible for their application, have been indicated in the attached lists. The duty of coordinating the application of these proposals has been assigned to the General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection in the case of violence against children, and the General Directorate of the Status of Women in the case of violence against women and *töre* or honor killings.

Activities—for each of which the responsible bodies and institutions that have to operate in coordination with said bodies have been indicated, and which have the aim of applying the measures adopted—will begin immediately in cooperation with the General Directorates that have been appointed as coordinators. Detailed activity reports prepared by responsible bodies, for all matters within the scope of their responsibility, will be sent to the coordinating institution every three months.

Please be informed and act accordingly.  
Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN  
Prime Minister

### There are women’s centers in all of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia.

The women’s centers in 23 provinces of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia are active in 89 districts.

Activities are being run on the subject of murders carried out in the name of honor, in all of the women’s centers in these two areas.

## **Interest towards independent women's initiatives has increased.**

Requests by men to support women's activities and to participate in such work have increased.

## **The 73 women who have asked for KAMER's help this year are still alive.**

Seminars on the subject of violence against women are being organized at the high school and at elementary school levels.

The interest of educational institutions towards violence against women has increased. Many students have received support for their theses and other research.

A CD by Ayşegül, who is a Turkish folk music singer, made up of songs telling about cases of violence against women, has been released. She held concerts organized by the KAMER Foundation in Diyarbakır, Mardin, and Batman.

Mehtap Kızılkın  
KAMER

First of all, we tried to understand what we realized and what we did not realize. By means of self-confidence we struggled with problems that we were having at a family level and we managed to say, "Hey, we, too, are present; we, too, exist." And what is more important we questioned the existing roles attributed to males and females, tried to solve the problems arising from this distinction, and realized that if we had the will, we could overcome certain problems.

The determination of women volunteers increased our determination as well.

Gaziantep KAMER

## **Communication**

I was living such a hectic life that I'd lost count of the days spent running between work and home. At times this made me shy, nervous, and bewildered. My shop was frequented by neighborhood women. Once I overheard two customers talking.

One of them was saying to the other, "I participated in a group activity organized by KAMER and the wall between my daughter and myself began to crumble." While the other said, "I made some great friends."

I became curious. What were they talking about? I approached them, told them that I had inadvertently overheard their conversation, and asked about the details of what they had been talking about. The next day I called the number they had given me. I told the voice on the phone that I wanted to participate in group workshops. They told me that they would admit me in a newly formed group.

The appointment was for two days later, and I went. The subject was communication. What was I going to do here, what was I going to share with them, what business did I have here? I had decided to attend on the spur of the moment. Just as I was thinking that I should leave, I found we had all sat down, facing each other. I realized that everybody was curious about me. I got excited upon hearing a soft voice saying, "Could you tell us about yourself?" and so I briefly introduced myself.

Everybody was sincere, respectful, and not at all reticent in providing examples from their own lives. I was listening, but at times also blurting out the mistakes I had done. And so the day ended. I went home. My husband asked me why I had not gone to work, and I told him. He was very angry, and told me not to attend the workshop again. "God knows what they'll put in your mind." I felt obliged to say, "All right, I shan't go." What else could I do? When a week had elapsed and it was time for another meeting though, I could not keep myself from going. The subject was communication once more. This time we shared with each other the way we deprived our loved ones from hearing the word "love," which seemed to us so difficult to pronounce, as if we were going to suffocate or sound weak by saying it. I made a confession to my friends. In my 12 years as a married woman, I had never told my husband, "I love you." I told them that I was going to say it on that very day. As soon as the meeting ended, I ran home. My husband was at home and very nervous to boot. He asked me where I had been. I held his hand and told him, "I love you." I looked into his

eyes and saw that they were sparkling. “I always felt this love, but deprived you from hearing it. I am sorry for this.” He embraced me and with the delicateness of wind whispering music in my ears said, “I love you, too.” I held him close to me. He held my hands and, looking deeply into my eyes, he said, “I’m so lucky to have you with me.” He then grew serious and said, “I am sorry that I tried to prevent you from participating in your meeting. I prohibited it, but that meeting brought me your words of love. From now on you can attend with no worry. I’ll see that you are not missed at work.” I was very happy. How was this week going to pass? I had to share all of this with my friends as soon as possible. All excited, but sure of myself, I fell into a sweet slumber.

Adıyaman branch of KAMER  
Tülay Aktemir

### “GOODNESS...”

I am thinking about what “good” happened last year - I think I am someone who approaches life from a positive perspective, but at times this is difficult, even for me! Nevertheless, I can certainly name a few things: Meeting women from all corners of Turkey, within the context of the “Campaign for Tomorrow, Starting from Today,” was one such example. We had the opportunity to observe the enthusiasm, devotion, and intelligence with which women carried out their activities everywhere; it was truly magnificent... (A pessimist would immediately add: “There is one additional thing to prevent all this effort from being for naught, and that is reuniting all these women and turning their activities into a common voice, statement, and action—all of which requires a stronger organizing network...” However, a pessimist should be reminded of this: “Would you even have imagined all of this ten years ago? Isn’t it wonderful to find feminist groups, even if small, in the most unexpected places?”)

I think that another one of the “good things” that happened last year was the creation of the Amargi magazine. Because it provides women like us, who are always struggling, even though we may at times lose hope, get tired, lose our way, or feel isolated, with an important reference point. For me it is a kind of lighthouse—even though it is somewhere else, I gravitate towards it, I can find my bearings by looking at it. In the past few years many of us realized how essential and vital feminist theory was; it is difficult to progress without it. Amargi magazine does include theory; however, it does so not with an academ-

ic approach, but rather by formulating a political attitude. I hope that we shall go on, and that as we do so, we manage to grow and become enriched as individuals and as groups...

Aksu Bora

If Sevgi Soysal had been alive, we probably would have organized an enormous 70th birthday party for her in 2006. Unfortunately, she died 30 years ago, when she was only 40 years old, but before leaving the mortal world she left us with some beautiful presents: *Tante Rosa*, *YürümeK*, *Şafak*, *Barış Adlı Çocuk*, *Yıldırım Bölge Kadımlar Koğuşu*... I was once more swaying between feelings of marvel and admiration when I reread *Yıldırım Bölge Kadımlar Koğuşu* (Women’s Section of Yıldırım Bölge), with Oya Baydar’s preface, in which Sevgi describes the 8 months in 1971 that she spent at the Yıldırım Area Penitentiary. Sevgi Soysal questions on the one hand the way military authorities attribute a “soldier-prisoner” status to them, and on the other the “soldier-militant” and “soldier-woman” status attributed to them by the left itself. In other words, as a woman against all kinds of “regimentation,” Sevgi Soysal is the forerunner of the position that nowadays we call “feminist anti-militarist.” Now, I’d like to let her speak for herself, as I quote from her here and enthusiastically advise everybody to read *Yıldırım Bölge Kadımlar Koğuşu* and her other books:

“The idea of exercising collectively during our time outdoors was adopted by the ‘Dawn’ group. The prisoners form a big circle in the courtyard and exercise all together... As the members of the ‘Dawn’ group are exercising, Gülay becomes annoyed. ‘Girls, this is crass behavior, doing this in front of the soldiers—our people don’t approve of such things...’ Nina finds that this view of Gülay’s bears the remnants of feudal morality. The group puts an end to the gymnastics. The male prisoners of Yıldırım Bölge also seem to disapprove of gymnastics. They have sent word, ‘Tell the girls to drop this gymnastics nonsense.’ This was what annoyed me most. ‘Why do you have to keep following what the men are saying, don’t you have a mind of your own?’ Clearly, these views of mine are considered ‘feminist.’” (p.192)

“The cruelty that cannot reach deeply enough to oppress our thoughts and

our hearts, is constantly busying itself with the way we look. Having us stand at attention at every occasion is part of this. During roll calls ‘attention, fall into line,’ during recreation time ‘attention, fall into line,’ when we are going to get paid, ‘attention, fall into line,’ when we are going to the doctor, ‘attention, fall into line,’ when we are going to court, ‘attention, fall into line,’ when we are going to the showers, ‘attention, fall into line’; however, as it always happens when you exaggerate, these ‘attention’ commands lose their potency as times goes by. Who can make our hearts and thoughts fall into line? Who can have them stand at attention? And that’s what really matters.” (p. 206)

Sevgi Soysal, *Yıldırım Bölge Kadınlar Koğuşu*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2003.

Ayşe Gül Altınay

The Women’s Fund of the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey kicked off the year 2006 with a campaign to say “No to Violence Against Women” and decided also to support all activities in this field by calling for further related projects. By stressing during the campaign the fact that violence against women is an infringement upon women’s rights, the Women’s Fund aimed to make increase public sensitivity towards this matter, and also to materially support NGOs active in this field.

Establishing a sufficient juridical base for the prevention of violence against women, monitoring practices, and ensuring a transformation of the mentality throughout society are among the main activities of the women’s movement. In Turkey there is no statistical database to show us the scope of violence and to help plan activities for the prevention of violence.

The Circular issued by the Prime Minister’s Office on 5th July is an important development, because with this circular the measures to be taken and the participating and responsible bodies have been established. Undoubtedly this circular is an important step; however, what is not clear is the way responsible bodies will run these activities, the monitoring mechanisms of these activities, the way the General Directorate of the Status of Women, which is the coordinating body, will coordinate these activities from the point of view of human resources and the budget, and the role to be played by women’s NGOs as interested social parties. In order to ensure implementation of the circular, it is imperative that these definitions are completed and, most of all, that a

budget is determined.

In Turkey, not only is there no wide-ranging policy for women, but there is also no sex-based social budget. However, the steps taken by the government during 2006 on this matter, and the fact that these activities have become more visible by having been introduced into the agenda of the government thanks to the women’s movement, are both positive accomplishments. Yet there are serious problems both from a juridical point of view (the fact that the regulation for women’s shelters has not been issued, problems concerning the monitoring and safeguarding mechanism and the law for the safeguarding of families, the existence of a sexist view-point in the Turkish Penal Code as far as honor killings are concerned, and deficiencies concerning the law regulating the property rights of spouses and in the civil code) and from a practical point of view.

For all these problems to be solved both in the juridical and the practical field, the related political will must be sincere, and the state must be willing and eager to cooperate with NGOs.

Aysun Sayın

**For me, the best news of the year are the injunctions issued in accordance with Law 4320, and the justifications put forth for them.**

Two of the most striking examples:

“Since the parties are not bound with an official marriage, the matter should be taken up according to the provisions related to human rights of the Constitution of the Turkish Republic, the United Nations Convention on Discrimination Against Women, and the Universal Convention for Human Rights.

“When taken up within the framework of the rules set by law number 4320, it is clear that the value being protected by this law is not related to the safeguarding of family as indicated in article 41 of the Constitution of the Turkish Republic, but to the safeguarding of human rights and of the rights of women and children. The value being safeguarded is not the family, but the individual’s right to life and to be safe from all kinds of violence.

“The situation has been solved within the framework of articles 12 and 17 of the Constitution of the Turkish Republic, of article 8 of the European Human Rights Convention, and of article 1 of the United Nations Convention on Discrimination Against Women.

“The Turkish Constitution has established the fact that an individual has the right to life, to preserve and improve his/her material and spiritual existence, and the right to life and the preservation of that right should be a number one priority of the state. According to the way the European Court has interpreted article 8 of the European Convention, whenever a relation looks like a family relation, it should be considered a family, independent from its official status. As for article 1 of the United Nations Convention, all discrimination against women has been forbidden, since according to this convention, the term ‘discrimination against women’ includes all kinds of sex-based discrimination, exclusion, and limitation, preventing or aiming for the prevention of the recognition, use, and enjoyment of political, economic, social, cultural, civil, and other kinds of human rights and basic freedoms, based on the equality between genders and irrespective of the civil status of women.

“Since the plaintiff and the defendant have been living together without an official marriage, since this co-habitation has given birth to the children of the plaintiff named ....., ....., ....., ....., who at the moment are living with the defendant, and since it can be proved that the defendant has used violence against the plaintiff and their children, threatening the defendant with an infringement of her right to life, the conclusion has been reached that the plaintiff is subject to an immediate threat and danger, making it necessary for the plaintiff and her children to be protected.”

“A study of Law 4320 has shown that it includes provisions aiming to prevent violence amongst spouses, and it has also been discovered that the parties are not officially married.

“The European Human Rights Court has reinterpreted the concept of family on the basis of article 8 of the European Convention signed on 4th December 1950 with the aim of safeguarding human rights and basic freedoms, and as a result of this reinterpretation, the fact that two people should be living under the same roof and that seen from the outside, this cohabitation and joint living should be interpreted as a marriage has been established as being enough for this to be recognized as a marriage and for it to enjoy certain protections; in

addition to this it has also been stated that similarly, cohabitation and joint living with uncles or aunts etc. also comprises a family. Even though the parties are not officially married, the fact that violence against women has been prohibited by international law, that Turkey has undertaken to safeguard women and children from violence by becoming party to international conventions, and that such violence is prohibited also by national law, and in consideration of the fact that the plaintiff .... and the defendant .... have been living as man and wife, and therefore must be considered as a family, the rule of prevention of violence should be applied, without considering this an official family, with the result that it is necessary to decree the prevention of all kinds of violence aimed against the defendant.

“By means of the acceptance of preventive measures, and on the basis of article 8 of the European Convention concerning the safeguarding of human rights and basic freedoms, of article 1/a of law number 4320, and of the provisions of international conventions concerning the prevention of violence against women, it has been decreed to protect the plaintiff ..... from all actions of the defendants involving violence, insults, threats, and death threats.”

**Berçem Akkoç**

# II

## KAMER Since 2003

### “Emergency Intervention Team”

When I was asked to write a piece for the “Killings Committed in the Name of Honor Project” report for 2006, the first topics that came to mind were violence, types of violence, results of violence, and of course, the most painful of all, methods for dealing with honor killings. And so I started to write.

But the more I wrote, the more I found myself confronted with the question of what exactly it was I wanted to write. For as I wrote, I saw that the piece concentrated too much upon the phenomenon of violence from a vocational perspective, yet whenever I asked myself while acting as speaker, panelist, or moderator on this topic at various meetings, what it was I wanted to emphasize, to focus upon the most, the answer was always the same: EMERGENCY INTERVENTION TEAM.

The Emergency Intervention Team... the importance of this team, and how it serves as a model for the entire region other and countries as well when it comes to the struggle against violence. And so I decided to write my piece not on “violence,” but instead on how the “emergency intervention team” was formed within the framework of the “Permanent Methods in the Struggle Against Killings Committed in the Name of Honor Project,” and the process of how the team came into being in conjunction with that project. Because this process also included the meetings about violence in which KAMER participated, the results and consequences of those meetings, and KAMER’s relations with the media, it would be necessary to address those aspects of the project as well.

In 1997, the same year that it was founded, KAMER established the “emergency help hotline” where women who were subjected to violence could seek help. Approximately 2,000 women sought assistance from this hotline from the

time of its establishment up until the beginning of the project on 1 January 2003. 70 percent of the applicants were still in danger of being killed at the time that they applied to the hotline. Each woman who applied to the hotline, by telephone or other means, was provided with assistance in accordance with her own wishes.

News of the death of a woman who had applied by telephone to KAMER and the Legal Bar Women’s Committee but without providing details of her location, was covered in the media as an “honor killing.” This was incredibly painful. However, this devastating loss shed light on questions of what needed to be done when a woman sought help while still in danger of being killed, and what kind of solutions should be sought in such cases. In the process of seeking solutions, the “Permanent Methods in the Struggle Against Killings Committed in the Name of Honor” project was formed.

**The goals of the project, which began on 1 January 2003, are as follows:**

- To establish a project team consisting of representatives from the various provinces of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia Region
- To create social sensitivity regarding violence against women and honor killings via various relations established while rescuing potential victims by intervening in 3 incidents likely to be encountered each year
- To simultaneously acquire knowledge and information about the reasons behind and methods for struggling against such murders
- To strive to form a model in the struggle against “killings committed in the name of honor” with the knowledge acquired via initiatives carried out during the year
- To influence state policies regarding violence against women.

And so we set out with these goals as our guidelines. Periodic meetings were held with the project team, which consisted of representatives from six of the twelve provinces that we ultimately aimed to include within the project. Three of those meetings focused upon introducing the project and determining the methods to be used. In addition, the work carried out thus far was evaluated at three other periodical meetings.

Monthly discussions were also held with the project team in order to provide psychological support.

While we estimated that KAMER would reach three women whose lives were in danger within a year's time, by the end of the first year of the project, no less than 23 women had applied. Relations were established with various individuals and institutions in accordance with the particular needs of each applicant. Within this context, the project:

- Got support from the Diyarbakır Provincial Governorship.
- Collaborated with various departments of Dicle University, especially psychiatry and brain surgery.
- Received medicinal support from the Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce.
- Fostered relations with the Birth Registration Directorate so that women lacking birth certificate ID could be provided with such as swiftly as possible. The need for this arose because the births of some of the women who applied were not registered at the Directorate, while some were registered but did not have IDs, and some were unable to take their IDs with them when escaping from home. Nearly half of the applicants experienced one of these problems.
- Got support from the Diyarbakır Police Department.
- Worked in constant collaboration with the Diyarbakır Police Department's Public Order Branch.
- Received support from the Health Directorate and State Hospitals.
- Collaborated with the Diyarbakır Bar Association and the bar's women's committee to provide legal support to applicants.
- Visited various women's organizations active in Diyarbakır, and collaborated with some to help applicants.
- Met with various NGO's.
- Established contact with the Provincial Governorships of Mardin and Urfa regarding relevant applications.
- Held talks and took part in meetings with various individuals and groups, in accordance with the needs of each applicant, for it was seen once again in the course of these initiatives that an honor killing is not a spontaneous act, but the result of a 4-5 month long process leading up to the murder. If a mechanism that will have the desired effect upon the family, or that will ease social pressure upon the family to carry out the murder, can be put into action during this time, then it is possible to come up with an alternative solution to killing the woman. Therefore, during this time, the project team members met with individuals and representatives of particular groups who would be able to influence the family. On many occasions project team members even

participated in "family council" meetings where the woman in question was being "tried."

In addition to the aforementioned efforts, project members also participated in programs and held talks with various media organizations at the local, national, and international levels in an effort to promote the "Permanent Methods in the Struggle Against Killings Committed in the Name of Honor Project" and to create social sensitivity regarding this issue. They explained over and over again that this problem did not concern women's groups only, that each murder was an extrajudicial execution, and that all segments of society bore responsibility for such incidents.

Assessment of initiatives carried out in the six months following the establishment of the project on 1 January 2003 showed that it was an absolutely fundamental necessity that relations with individuals and institutions be transformed into a permanent mechanism in order to follow up on women's applications for assistance in a satisfactory manner.

A meeting entitled "Preventing Killings in the Name of Honor and Creating Social Sensitivity" was held in Diyarbakır on 23 June 2003.

The Provincial Vice-Governor, on behalf of the Diyarbakır Provincial Governorship, the Director of Birth Registration, President of the Mental Health Department of the Health Directorate, as well as representatives from the Diyarbakır Bar Association Women's Committee, Chamber of Physicians, various women's organizations and non-governmental organizations, and native and foreign authors and journalists active in the struggle to stop violence against women, all participated in this meeting. One faculty member each from Dicle University, Sabancı University, and Bilgi University, and one representative each from the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Open Society Institute were also in attendance at the meeting.

This was the first time that a meeting about honor killings with such widespread participation by nearly every segment of society had ever been held in Diyarbakır.

At the meeting, KAMER presented for discussion the example of an applicant for which KAMER, as a women's organization, was unable to generate a satisfactorily permanent solution. In the case of this example, the woman's family council had issued a verdict whereby the woman was to be killed. Thanks to the

intervention of a team that included KAMER, the woman's murder was prevented, but a permanent solution to the situation failed to be generated.

Participants worked together, discussing and generating solutions for this "example," making the meeting a first in this regard as well.

Two days after this meeting, the governor of Diyarbakır at the time came to visit KAMER together with two assistants. This, too, was a first. The governor explained that he had ordered an investigation into the sample case presented at the meeting, that all aspects of the application under discussion had been "correct," and that there in fact was "even more" to the case than what had been discussed, and that therefore the Governorship would like to collaborate with KAMER to resolve the issue. The very next day the applicant in question was issued an ID. Her husband, who did not believe the rumors about his wife and was under pressure to kill her even though he had no desire to do so, was moved from the village into Diyarbakır and the provincial governorship paid five months rent for the family.

I have gone into such great detail in explaining this meeting and its results because it was after this meeting that the idea of establishing an emergency intervention team was developed. In other words, it was at this meeting that the seeds of the Emergency Intervention Team were planted. Collaborative relationships with other institutions and organizations were strengthened and became more consistent following this meeting. Relations with individuals and institutions continued to develop during and after this period.

The British Council and KAMER collaborated to hold a three day conference entitled "Women Look to the Future" in Ankara between 29 September-1 October 2003. A significant portion of the conference and a two day workshop were dedicated to the topic of "killings committed in the name of honor." In addition to numerous women's organizations from various parts of Turkey, the Minister of Justice, Prime Ministry Human Rights Committee, women parliamentarians, a representative from the Directorate General on the Problems and Status of Women (KSSGM), representatives from the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK), and representatives from the Diyarbakır Governorship and Police Department all participated in this initiative. Members of various NGOs from Diyarbakır and faculty members from several universities also took part in the meeting. During the session entitled "Killings Committed in the Name of Honor" and led by KAMER's Nebahat Akkoç and Saima Jassem

of Pakistan, consensus was formed regarding the following matters:

- It was found that "killings committed in the name of honor" were culturally and traditionally based and that such killings were a particular type of violence fed by many different mechanisms, and that the most important thing to be done to combat them was to "increase social sensitivity."
- It was pointed out that "killings committed in the name of honor" were not unique to just the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions, but that this phenomenon was a human rights abuse experienced in other parts of Turkey as well.
- It was emphasized that many suicides committed by women may in fact have been murders and that forensic procedures in such cases needed to be conducted with the necessary fastidiousness in order to arrive at the truth.
- It was pointed out that most of the killings committed in the name of honor were carried out in accordance with fatwas issued by people who called themselves "imams" and were authoritative at the local level. The necessity to seek help from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in this regard was underscored.
- It was pointed out that the Ministry of Religious Affairs has a women's committee, but that the committee was not very active. The need to make this committee more active and effective was emphasized.
- It was found that there were problems with placing likely victims of honor killings in women's shelters in emergency cases, and that because it took time to process applications, temporary stations where women could spend a few nights while waiting for their applications to be processed needed to be established.
- It was emphasized that failure to accept girls suffering from domestic sexual abuse into the shelters was a critical problem.
- It was stated that cooperation with the police force to secure women's safety was necessary, and that it would be more effective to work with women police in this regard.
- It was pointed out that vocational groups such as the police, gendarme, health workers, and teachers needed to receive training about this issue.
- The necessity to create sensitivity and achieve a transformation in cultural practices harmful to women was emphasized.
- It was agreed that the processes of issuing women ID's from the birth registration office and official registering of marriages needed to be accelerated,

and that campaigns were necessary to ensure that all married women were officially married so that their marriages would be legally recognized by the state.

It was decided that KAMER would collaborate with the British Council in 2004 towards these ends.

KAMER spoke about “Killings Committed in the Name of Honor” at the 6th Human Rights Conference held on 13-14 November. The topics of violence against women and honor killings were addressed in the press release published after the conference.

Meanwhile, an “exercise” group from Izmir conducted two separate workshops lasting five days each with the project team, in which such topics as conflict resolution techniques, nonviolence, prejudices, and communication techniques were discussed.

In addition, the Hacettepe University Anthropology Department also provided support for evaluating work conducted within the framework of the project. Following this evaluation, a meeting was held with the entire project team at the beginning of 2004 in which the new shape of the project was introduced. The duration of the project, which had begun on 1 January 2003, was set to last through December of 2004. Dates were set for meetings and supervision and the equipment necessary to establish a communications network was identified.

In 2004, 31 likely victims applied to KAMER. All of the women who applied are still alive.

KAMER attended various national and international meetings in 2004 where they drew attention to the issue of killings committed in the name of honor, tried to increase sensitivity towards the issue, and opened up new discussions about it.

**Activities at which KAMER addressed this issue were as follows:**

- “Campaign to Put an End to Violence Against Women” organized by Amnesty International at Istanbul Bilgi University on 5 March 2004.
- The United Nations Commission on Refugees’ “Violence Against Women Meeting” in Ankara.
- A panel on the topic was held as part of the “National Psychiatry Days” in Antalya.

- KA-DER held a meeting about the issue on 13 September 2004.
- Amnesty International declared 2004 the “Year for Putting an End to Violence Against Women” and their campaign was launched with a speech by Nebahat Akkoç in the Netherlands.
- Nebahat Akkoç was presented with the 2004 Amnesty International Ginetta Suga Award. Nebahat Akkoç participated in the award ceremony held in New York, where she talked about honor killings at various meetings.
- An initiative was held on 17-20 May 2004 in Sweden with the support of the Swedish Consulate and participation by KAMER, Save the Children, and various women’s groups. Participants from Sweden and Turkey shared their experiences in a discussion about honor killings and ways of dealing with them.
- A group of 40 women went to Brussels on 12 October 2004 where Nebahat Akkoç gave a speech on KAMER’s women’s politics.
- On 25 October-9 November KAMER joined women’s groups in Germany in meetings about campaigns they planned to carry out to combat killings committed in the name of honor.
- Invited by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, KAMER participated in a meeting held on 7-8 December 2004 about the Swedish government’s plans on how to deal with women’s human rights.
- The Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Committee visited KAMER to gather information, especially about honor killings.

In addition to participating in the aforementioned activities, KAMER also met and talked with representatives of various organizations and participated in the programs of local, national, and international media organizations.

The idea to hold campaigns on “creating sensitivity and cultural practices that are harmful to women” was a result of the “Women Look to the Future” conference held together with the British Council in Ankara on 29 September-1 October 2003. Once funding was secured from the British Embassy, talks were held with the governorships of Diyarbakır, Mardin, and Batman to discuss ideas for the campaign, materials to be used, and how to ensure broad participation. Initiatives were begun with local support in the provinces of Diyarbakır and Mardin. The Batman Governorship, however, did not react positively to this initiative.

Initial meetings to further address this issue followed in Diyarbakır and Mardin on 22-24 November 2004. The objective of these meetings was to increase the sensitivity of state institutions and organizations, local government, and NGOs, and to ensure their participation in the campaign. Provincial governors, vice-governors, provincial police chiefs, representatives from the provincial gendarme headquarters, chief public prosecutors, directors of birth registration offices, provincial social services agencies, director general of social services (attended the Diyarbakır meeting only), directors of the office of education, and provincial muftis all participated in these meetings.

Other participants included the Mayor of Mardin, the President of the Federation of Muxhtars, representatives from the Chamber of Physicians, members of various women's organizations, and two faculty members of the psychiatry and sociology departments of Dicle University.

A representative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Supreme Advisory Committee also gave speeches at both meetings.

“Killings committed under the guise of honor” were discussed from various perspectives at these meetings, thereby revealing once again the importance of current and future cooperation with local individuals, institutions, and organizations.

The Emergency Intervention Team was established to provide immediate support for women who applied to any of these organizations or institutions because her life was in danger, or even to women who were said to be in such danger and unable to apply for help themselves. The Emergency Intervention Teams consisted of provincial governorships, provincial muftis, gendarme and police forces, public prosecutors, provincial directorates of the Social Services and Child Protection Agencies, and representatives from other state institutions and organizations, local administrations, and NGO's, thereby forming for the very first time a team including executive representatives from each of these institutions and organizations.

This team was established in order both to ensure the safety of the applicant and to have an impact upon the “family councils” trying her, by having people, institutions, or organizations who might influence the family take action when word is received that a woman's life may be in danger since, as stated above, a woman's execution in such situations is not the result of sudden bursts of anger or outrage, but rather such killings happen in a planned manner as part of a process that takes 4-5 months. The Emergency Intervention Teams are

able to be effective in breaking the social pressure that certain people try to impose upon the family and in creating alternative solutions. We have many examples of success in this regard in Mardin and Diyarbakır.

Another positive aspect of the Emergency Intervention Teams is their successful cooperation with so many different institutions and organizations. Whenever they receive word that a woman's life is in danger, or a woman whose life is threatened applies, the entire team goes into action in accordance with the needs of that particular woman. If necessary the police and gendarme forces intervene to first and foremost secure the threatened woman's safety. If she does not have them, the number one priorities are making sure that the woman has birth registration and an ID issued by the birth registration office. Green cards (health cards issued by the government to poor people lacking any other health coverage) are issued when necessary. The Social Services Agency takes action to ensure the woman has a safe place to stay, in accordance with the woman's own wishes and decisions. State hospitals, university clinics, and the Chamber of Physicians are there to help if medical assistance is called for. The bar association and bar association women's committee provide legal counseling and defend the women's legal rights. Teachers, muxhtars (neighborhood administrators), and imams in the villages are made to be more sensitive to this topic, thereby enabling cooperation when necessary. Every killing is carried out based upon a fatwa which is issued by a person imputed with religious authority and calls for the execution of the woman. Increasing the sensitivity of imams and religious officials when it comes to killings committed in the name of honor and collaborating with such individuals to prevent honor killings are therefore of utmost importance.

As a result of such cooperation, an emergency help hotline was established in the Municipality of Mardin.

The “Project for Creating Permanent Methods in the Prevention of and Struggle Against Honor Killings” continued in 2005 as well.

As an extension of the meetings held in November of 2004, meetings were held in Diyarbakır on 14 March 2005 and in Mardin on 15 March 2005, with the same individuals, institutions, and organizations participating in these meetings as had participated in the previous one.

Posters and media for the campaign had been prepared in accordance with decisions made at the first meeting; these were discussed by participants in the second meeting and materials were finalized in such a way to reflect the mutual understanding of all participants.

Another topic of discussion at this meeting were the results of a survey about people's perceptions of honor, carried out with 500 people in Diyarbakır and environs by Aytekin Sır of the Dicle University Department of Psychiatry.

The campaign began on 20 April 2005, bearing the slogan "Help Put an End to Killings Committed Under the Guise of Honor!" Posters were distributed to governors' offices, municipality offices, muftis, mosques, muxhtars, Provincial Directorates of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, chambers of drivers and chauffeurs, physicians' chambers, universities, small businessmen's associations, and various women's associations. Volunteers did their best to hang the posters in stores, at bus stops, and other places where they would be visible to large numbers of people. Television and radio spots were sent to all local stations in Diyarbakır and Mardin as well as 25 national television and radio programs via RTÜK (Supreme Council of Radio and Television) and Show TV. Programs to promote the campaign were also broadcast on various channels.

Theatrical plays, films, and documentaries about "killings committed under the guise of honor" were staged and filmed, and music addressing the topic was also written.

With the support of the Swedish Consulate, on 27 May 2005, a group of 15 women from Sweden working in this field, and 15 women from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia came together in Mardin to hold a three day meeting on killings committed in the name of honor and share their knowledge and experiences in dealing with this issue.

A women's shelter was opened in Diyarbakır.

A committee on violence against women was formed within the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

The New Turkish Penal Code went into effect.

When KAMER first kicked off the "Permanent Methods in the Struggle Against Killings Committed in the Name of Honor Project" in 2003, the goals it had set were as follows:

- To ensure the safety of women whose lives are endangered, by intervening in likely killings to be committed in the name of honor. (A total of 158 applications were received between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2006. KAMER received 23 applications in 2003, 31 in 2004, 31 in 2005, and 77 in 2006; all of those applicants are still alive. Distribution of applicants according to province is as follows: Mardin: 6 women [2005], 20 women [2006]; Diyarbakır: 18 women [2005], 26 women [2006]. We attribute the increase in applications in 2006 to both an increase in sensitivity towards such initiatives and the rise in awareness about and effectiveness of the Emergency Intervention Team's work.
- To use relations established within the framework of the project to create social sensitivity regarding killings committed in the name of honor, and to develop permanent methods and mechanisms to that end. With its "An Opportunity for Every Woman Project," KAMER established itself in all 23 provinces of the east and southeast and in some of the districts of these provinces as well. Women's initiatives were begun and women's centers established; relations were established with individuals, institutions, and organizations and collaborative efforts developed. Representatives of the Women's Centers began participating in the meetings of the Human Rights Committee and *Gündem 21*. The results of certain regional meetings with large-scale participation were evaluated and suggestions and new solutions generated accordingly.
- To influence state policies regarding violence against women. Following a circular issued by the Prime Ministry on 7 July 2006, the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent a circular to the provincial governorships of all 81 provinces. According to the circular, "The duties of many levels of the state have been defined. The decision has been made to form large-scale committees in order to increase the number of women's shelters in Turkey, of which there are currently 30 throughout the country, and to prevent killings. The Minister of Internal Affairs has listed the measures to be taken to prevent customary (*töre*) and honor killings as follows:

1. The necessary procedures for looking after women and children who are vic-

tims of violence are to be carried out swiftly, and when possible with the participation of female personnel.

2. Municipalities which do not have women's shelters shall have an official on duty 24 hours.
3. All necessary measures, including calling upon special security forces, will be taken to ensure the safety of women and children in the shelters to be established.
4. In order to prevent killings committed in the name of honor, committees consisting of representatives from the provincial governorship in provinces, police forces under the leadership of the kaimakams in the districts, neighborhood administrations, social services departments, vocational organizations, health directorates, national education directorates, and non-governmental organizations will be formed, and all of these bodies shall cooperate to implement measures deemed necessary to resolve the issue.

By first informing the provincial social services directorates of such situations, emergency measures will be taken immediately to protect women and children who declare that they themselves are, or who are said to be, likely victims of an honor killing or who are subjected to domestic violence. Costs associated with ensuring the victim's safety until she is settled into a shelter or other destination are to be met by the funds of the municipal and provincial offices and special district administrations, and funds for the encouragement of social assistance and solidarity. In those areas where no women's shelter exists, a woman who says she is a likely victim of a customary or honor killing or who is believed to be a likely victim of such a killing due to certain concrete events, shall immediately be taken in by social service units. The victim shall be accompanied by police force officials if necessary to the location (hotel, guesthouse, etc.) where she is to be looked after until reaching her final destination. Security forces charged with carrying out questioning in cases related to customary or honor killings or violence against women shall undergo special training about this issue."

As a result of a protocol agreement between the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the General Staff, training regarding customary and honor killings began to be provided to noncommissioned officers and privates.

In 2006, KAMER continued participating in meetings at the local, national,

and international level, just as it had been doing since the project got started in 2003. The collaborative efforts that it had initiated and developed in the struggle against honor killings continued as well.

While KAMER continued its projects "An Opportunity For Every Woman," "Women's Entrepreneurship," and "Life to Children" in 2007, it decided not to pursue a new project about killings committed in the name of honor. The reason for this decision was that it had already reached the majority of the goals it had set for itself when first starting the project. Instead of putting together a new project, KAMER decided to work towards monitoring current practices and ensuring the continuation of sensitivity and collaboration so that the measures stated on the circulars mentioned above do not remain on paper only. This is also due to KAMER's adherence to the civil society approach that may be described as raising awareness about problems, creating methods to achieve solutions, and developing sensitivity.

## “Women Look to the Future” Project

### I. Short Description of the Project

#### Project Name: “Women Look to the Future”

“Project for the Development of Permanent Methods in the Struggle Against Killings Committed Under the Guise of Honor in the Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia Regions”

#### 1- Project Objective

The project objective is twofold: 1) To provide support to likely victims of a possible killing to be committed under the guise of honor in the Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia Regions and 2) to develop permanent methods for preventing such killings via collaborative relations with other organizations and institutions.

#### 2- Justifications for the Project

- We have reached the conclusion that, although violence against women is a universal problem, it is necessary to underscore the facts that such violence varies in terms of quantity and quality according to country, region, culture, and traditions; that local characteristics must be taken into consideration when trying to generate solutions; and that local mechanisms need to be active participants in effecting solutions.
- We knew that a large number of killings were being committed under the guise of honor in Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia. These murders were considered natural and normal and most were covered up; therefore, it was

impossible to determine exact figures for such killings. We decided that it was necessary to spread awareness of the fact that each and every one of these murders is an extrajudicial killing.

- We found that killings committed under the guise of honor, each of which is a premeditated, planned murder, could be prevented by intervening in the early stages, when the decision whether to murder or not is being made. We thought that, with this project, it would be possible to provide safety to women whose lives were in danger over the 13 provinces comprising the project area.
- We thought that, with this project, it might be possible for the woman, if she so desired, to continue living her life in the social surroundings to which she belonged by establishing relevant relations with the community in question, and that the established norms harmful to women might thereby be changed.
- We thought that, with this project, it would be possible to raise awareness of killings committed under the guise of “honor” and to establish permanent structures to prevent them by forming a “Provincial Coordination Committee in the Struggle Against Killings Committed Under the Guise of Honor” for each province, which would then strive to increase sensitivity toward the issue.

The project was planned with all of the aforementioned justifications in mind.

#### 3- Project Goals

- To ensure the safety of the women whose lives are in danger by intervening in a likely killing to be committed under the guise of “honor.”
- To simultaneously provide support to those women whose lives are in danger and increase social sensitivity regarding killings committed under the guise of “honor,” via relations established with other organizations, institutions, and individuals.
- To establish permanent structures such as “provincial coordination committees” in the struggle against killings committed under the guise of “honor” in 13 provinces.
- To ensure active involvement of relevant national and international apparatuses.
- To establish the appropriate groundwork so that the rights guaranteed by international treaties to which Turkey is party can be effectively implemented.
- To impact government policies regarding violence against women and the

prevention of killings committed under the guise of honor.

#### 4- Target Group

- 30 women who are likely victims of a killing to be committed under the guise of honor.
- The families of the women who apply to KAMER for help.
- The governmental and non-governmental organizations that KAMER will collaborate with in the struggle against cultural and traditional practices that are harmful to women.

#### 5- Project Implementation Area

- Southeastern Anatolia Region:  
Diyarbakır, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Batman, Siirt, Adıyaman, Şırnak
- Eastern Anatolia Region:  
Elazığ, Van, Kars, Hakkari, Bingöl, Malatya

The following shall be achieved via this project:

1. Women who are likely victims of a killing to be committed under the guise of “honor” in the 13 provinces of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia shall be reached and efforts made to ensure their safety. Based upon each woman’s own requests and demands, either:
  - she will be helped to start a new life,
  - or conditions allowing for the woman to continue living safely in her own social environment shall be created via relations established with her close friends and family.
2. Permanent methods to prevent killings to be committed under the guise of “honor” will be developed while working with each and every woman who approaches us for help in her struggle to survive.

**What is meant by “permanent methods”:**

- the formation of a unit of at least three people each in each women’s center located in each of the 13 provinces, who will be active in preventing killings to be committed under the guise of “honor.”

- Establishing a continuous coordination committee consisting of governmental and non-governmental organizations in each province.
- Creating sensitivity towards the issue and ensuring continuous support in the struggle against it by raising the issue on all accessible local, national, and international platforms.
- Developing awareness of the possibility of implementation of those rights vested by the international treaties to which Turkey is party.
- Creating a database for facts and figures related to killings committed under the guise of “honor.”

**In conclusion:**

The Women Look to the Future project is built upon relationships established with women whose lives are threatened because they are likely victims of murders to be committed under the guise of “honor” and uses methods developed within that framework.

## II. Initiatives carried out during 2006 to prevent killings committed under the guise of honor:

(This section covers initiatives realized between 01 January 2006 and 31 December 2006.)

KAMER has defined its work plan for ensuring equal opportunity in the economic, socio-cultural, and political spheres as follows: “To establish a women’s center working for ‘Women’s Human Rights’ in each of the 23 provinces of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia, and later to open up representatives offices in the districts via these centers, thereby strengthening and configuring the women’s initiatives in all of the villages throughout the provinces and districts in question as well.”

**All of KAMER’s initiatives have been realized within the framework of this plan. Therefore:**

- Organizational efforts have been carried out in all provinces of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia and women’s centers opened in 22 provinces.

**Ongoing initiatives are as follows:**

- Initiatives aiming to raise women’s awareness of women’s human rights are

being carried out in 23 provinces and support is provided to women experiencing violence via emergency help lines.

- We continue to adhere to “policies directed at implementing local, civilian, and government apparatuses to achieve solutions.”

The “Women Look to the Future” project is only one of KAMER’s goals that it has achieved thus far.

## 1- How the project team was formed

The project team was formed out of a total of 42 women consisting of a three person administrative unit, 13 provincial directors, and 26 volunteers. The project team was formed out of women who could work either full time or as volunteers, who were conscious of violence against women in all of its facets, who had struggled against such violence, and who shared their awareness of such violence with other women.

Two consecutive meetings of the project team were held in the first and second months of the project. All activities were planned separately, in accordance with the local needs and characteristics of the different provinces, and keeping in mind the resistance likely to be met in each.

The task definitions of the different project team members were reassessed in accordance with the plan of action and a division of labor was decided upon accordingly.

### Activities for Building the Project Team’s Capacity:

The project team was supported throughout the duration of the project via two different means.

- Training to foster sharing of experience and knowledge within the project team itself.
- Training activities held with the support of outside experts.

### The objectives of these training activities are as follows:

- To introduce and define the project for all involved.
- To share experiences on techniques for accepting applications.
- To draw up forms for recording information about each applicant and getting that information uploaded onto the database.

- To foster relations with the governmental and non-governmental organizations in each province.

- A series of initiatives was carried out in order to prevent the project team from being negatively impacted while dealing with a case of violence or a possible killing.

Capacity building initiatives were carried out in all provinces, not just Diyarbakır.

In addition to all of the aforementioned, meetings revolving around agendas addressing national developments were also held. One of these was the meeting held following the publication of the Prime Ministry’s “Circular on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Customary and Honor Killings.”

## 2- Promoting the project

### a) Media promotion

A press conference to promote the project was planned for the third month of the project; however, the conference failed to be realized due to incidents which started first in Diyarbakır before spreading to other provinces as well, and which coincided with the planned date for the conference.

### Those who held interviews with KAMER during the duration of the project:

#### Foreign press and TV:

Die Zeit Agency (Germany), *Le Figaro* Newspaper, Al Jazeera News Agency, Reuters Agency, BBC, Swedish Government Radio and Newspaper, *New York Times*

#### National / local press and TV:

Project news was shared with such media organs and organizations as *Sabah* Newspaper, *Hürriyet* Newspaper, *Zaman* Newspaper, Bianet, TRT, NTV, STAR TV, Kanal 21, Kars Serhat TV, Dicle News Agency, and Anadolu Agency.

### b) National and international meetings

#### Istanbul -TESEV

Nebahat Akkoç and Name Kardaş participated in the symposium “Women in

the Extended Middle East and Africa,” held by TESEV on 6 February 2006. In her presentation, Nebahat Akkoç shared with attendees KAMER’s policies and experiences regarding violence against women and killings committed under the guise of honor.

#### **Ankara - United Nations**

On 23 February 2006, Nilgün Yıldırım participated in a meeting on “initiatives directed at displaced groups.” The meeting continued with a series of training programs and workshops in which ideas were exchanged regarding the state of displaced women in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, their ability to adapt to the places that they migrate to and back to their former surroundings should they return, and the sexist behavior that the women encounter during these processes. Training was also provided on how to activate governmental and non-governmental apparatuses to alleviate the problems experienced by groups that have migrated.

#### **Diyarbakır - Chamber of Physicians**

At the meeting “Peace, Friendship, and Democracy” held by the Diyarbakır Chamber of Physicians in March of 2006, Nebahat Akkoç took part on behalf of KAMER and provided information about the organization’s work.

#### **Istanbul - Film Mor**

On 12 March 2006, Sacide Akkaya took part in a meeting where experiences regarding domestic labor were shared and a Film Mor—produced documentary film about non-governmental organizations championing women’s rights was shown.

#### **Diyarbakır**

Nebahat Akkoç, Berçem Akkoç, Sacide Akkaya, Nilüfer Yılmaz, Naime Kardeş, Ayten Tekay, and Hayriye Aşçıoğlu participated in “The Second Women’s Meeting Against Violence,” which was held beginning on 18 March 2006 with support from the Civil Society Development Center (STGM). At the two day meeting, the women shared their experience and knowledge during workshops on nonviolence.

#### **Kars - KADER**

One leg of The Association for Supporting and Educating Women Candidates’ (KADER) “For a Better Future: Women Friendly Cities” campaign, which is part of the United Nations Joint Program to Protect and Promote the Human Rights of Women and Girls (UNJP), was held in Kars on 8-9 April 2006. Fatma Yılmaz Tücer and Arzu Orhangazi took part in campaign workshops, which were held for local governmental and non-governmental organizations and addressed the issue of “implementation of local mechanisms and encouraging women’s active participation in politics” in order to decrease problems faced by women.

#### **Istanbul- Helsinki Citizens Assembly**

KAMER supported a project carried out by the Helsinki Citizens Assembly, with the aim of informing women about their legal rights and ensuring the implementation of existing laws. Within this framework, KAMER workers shared their knowledge and experiences when it came to local characteristics and obstacles they encountered regarding women’s actual use of their legal rights in Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia. They talked about the initiatives carried out in the struggle against violence against women and killings committed under the guise of honor. Nilgün Yıldırım and Fatma Yılmaz Tücer took part in the meeting held on 21 April 2006.

#### **Istanbul - Heinrich Böll**

Nebahat Akkoç and Nilgün Yıldırım participated in an international conference on “Democracy Between Institutionalized Genders in Turkey: Possibilities - Risks” held on 18 September 2006. Nebahat Akkoç acted as moderator for a workshop entitled “Family, Religion, Society, and Democracy Between the Genders” held within the framework of the same conference. During the workshop, participants shared their ideas and experiences regarding gender roles and the constrictions women faced due to their gender.

#### **Holland**

Nilgün Yıldırım and Ayten Yakut took part in a series of meetings and panels held by HTIP in Holland between 19-28 December 2005, where representatives from social institutions concerned with women’s initiatives in Holland as well as representatives from non-governmental organizations founded by people originally from Turkey but now living in Holland, shared their knowledge and experience with each other in three different cities. The KAMER representatives

talked about KAMER's initiatives addressing violence against women and killings under the guise of honor and promoted their projects.

#### **Armenia**

Naime Kardeş took part in meetings as part of the "Working Together in the Caucasus" conference held between 01-07 March 2006. The conference included workshops about possible collaborative efforts to combat violence against women of various backgrounds, based upon their shared identity as females. At the conference, Naime Kardeş talked about KAMER's politics and work methods regarding violence and killings under the guise of honor.

#### **Germany**

On 24 March 2006, Nebahat Akkoç took part in several meetings organized by non-governmental organizations active in running women's initiatives in Germany. At the meetings, Akkoç discussed KAMER's initiatives to combat violence against women and killings under the guise of honor and the organization's politics.

#### **Sweden**

Between 10-17 October 2006, KAMER representatives took part in a series of meetings and visits with the Swedish Institute and institutions in Sweden actively working in the field of violence against women. Nilgün Yıldırım, Naime Kardeş, Julide Aral, and Melek Taylan participated in meetings and workshops, at which all participants shared their experiences with one another, and initiatives carried out in both Sweden and Turkey in the struggle against violence against women and killings committed under the guise of honor were evaluated. The documentary film, "Dialogues in the Dark," produced by Melek Taylan, was also shown.

#### **c) Visitors from both within Turkey and from abroad**

- Representatives from governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations alike from Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Finland, and Sweden visited KAMER to talk about the latter's work regarding violence against women and killings under the guise of honor.
- Talks and interviews were held by nearly 50 journalists and news agency representatives from Jordan, Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, France, America,

South Korea, Holland, and Belgium.

- 65 national and local media representatives from with Turkey visited KAMER to find out about the organization's initiatives.

#### **d) KAMER provided support for other initiatives and various efforts to combat violence against women and honor killings**

- Academics and students from Marmara University, Yüzüncü Yıl University, Dicle University, Fırat University, Anadolu University, Yıldız Teknik University, Istanbul University, Columbia University, Washington University, London University, and Bremen University were supported in their research, which in some way engaged the topic of "women," as KAMER representatives shared with them their own research and knowledge.
- Took part in programs broadcast on local and national TV channels such as NTV, CNN, TRT, TRT GAP, STAR, SERHAT TV, and KANAL 21.
- Provided support to groups making documentary films about violence against women in Spain, Turkey, and Austria by sharing with them our knowledge and experience.
- Acted as consultant for two theatrical plays.

### **3- How the Provincial Coordination Committees were established**

- In every province encompassed by the project implementation area, relations were established with governmental and non-governmental officials so that they could help meet the needs of each woman who applied. Talks were held with approximately 350 people within the framework of the project. Talks were held several times with certain officials.
- Coordination was established with women's organizations, the provincial governorship, the municipalities, the provincial directorates of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, bar associations, health institutions, muftis, police forces, and the gendarme in every province so that women experiencing violence could be provided with the necessary support in time.
- Meetings and activities were held with the purpose of putting into action official and civil society apparatuses in the quest to stop violence against women. Such meetings took place on 26 February 2006 in Elazığ, on 27 February 2006 in Adıyaman, on 01 March 2006 in Şanlıurfa, on 08 March 2006 in

Kars, on 30 March 2006 in Bingöl, on 08 March 2006 in Hakkari, on 06 May 2006 in Malatya, on 25 November 2006 in Diyarbakır, on 20 December 2006 in Mardin, on 22 December 2006 in Batman, and on 02 December 2006 in Şırnak.

#### 4- Activities directed at likely victims

- At all consciousness raising workshops, during all activities and meetings held in the provinces and districts, during fieldwork, and via local and national media, likely victims were reminded of what they could do should their lives be in danger.
- Brochures and leaflets about the issue were prepared and distributed. Posters were also hung in areas frequented by women.
- Women who took part in KAMER's activities were presented with small gifts containing the telephone number of the emergency help line.
- The women's centers made visits to neighborhoods as well as businesses (hairdressers, ateliers, etc.) where high concentrations of women are often found. The visits were successful in making women more sensitive towards the issue.

#### 5- The period beginning with the Prime Ministry's publication of the "Circular on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Customary and Honor Killings"

The Prime Ministry Circular number 2006/17 which was sent to relevant institutions and came into effect on 4 July 2006 stated the measures to be taken and the pertinent institutions' realms of authority and responsibility. The state policy as reflected in the Prime Ministry's Circular overlaps with KAMER's findings when it comes to decreasing violence against women.

The Prime Ministry's Circular encourages all governmental and non-governmental institutions to espouse the principle of gender equality. Furthermore, it charges public institutions with new responsibilities to enable women to use their rights and to get the necessary help when faced with violence. The objectives spelled out in the circular are supposed to be implemented in coordination with non-governmental organizations and public institutions. Although the circular issued by the Prime Ministry prescribes regulations intended to decrease

violence against women, these regulations are not yet fully reflected in the institutions' working methods or by-laws. The Prime Ministry circular is not a directive that can be enforced; rather, it is a "suggestion for solution" directed at institutions and organizations.

After the circular was issued, initiatives begun by the Diyarbakır Provincial Governorship and supported by KAMER continued. A meeting attended by the Provincial Governorship, kaimakam offices, directorates of public education, gendarmerie, muxhtars (neighborhood administrators), Provincial Directorates of Social Services, Dicle University, and KAMER was held in Diyarbakır on 15 November 2006. At the meeting, initiatives to be carried out in the districts and villages were planned according to the following scheme:

- District coordination committees would be formed with the participation of governmental institutions and non-governmental institutions in the districts.
- The district coordination committees would then begin initiatives in the villages as well.

As part of this plan, in order to establish a coordination committee in Diyarbakır's district of Çınar, two sessions of workshops were held with the participation of the Provincial Director of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, academics from the Dicle University Psychiatry Department and Faculty of Theology, KAMER workers, Psychologist Julide Aral, the Çınar Kaimakam, Gendarmerie, Directorate of Education, Birth Registration Office, Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation, Director of National Education, Director of Public Education, teachers, health personnel, pharmacists, prominent locals who are considered to be community leaders, muxhtars, muftis, and imams. At the conclusion of the meeting, an "Emergency Intervention Team" which would provide women experiencing violence with first and emergency aid, was formed.

Preparations for the women's centers in the other provinces to establish similar coordination committees were then begun, based upon the results obtained from this pilot initiative carried out in Diyarbakır.

#### 6- Throughout the duration of the project, initiatives were coordinated under the close supervision of the project team

- Each initiative realized in each province was monitored by the coordinator of

that province.

- The group workshops held in the women's centers and information about applications were recorded on forms prepared for each different initiative. Activities were recorded and "monthly progress reports" written for each province. The application forms and group workshops in each province not only allowed for information to be recorded in the database but also made it possible for the project team to evaluate the data in an orderly manner.
- Regional directors visited all of the provinces on a regular basis. Efforts were made to realize such visits once every ten days. Regional directors and province coordinators were in constant contact with each other via e-mail and telephone.
- The project coordinator periodically visited the provinces within the project implementation area to assess the activities undertaken. Observations and findings were then evaluated at the weekly meetings held by the project administration unit and regional directors.
- Emergency meetings were held and necessary measures taken in the face of risks and problems encountered in the region.

## 7- Results obtained in 2006

- The knowledge and experience obtained thanks to the initiatives were shared with women's centers in provinces outside of the program's implementation area (Tunceli, Erzincan, Ağrı, Gaziantep, Kilis, Muş, Ardahan, and Iğdır). Thus were the first steps taken towards forming the same structure at the women's centers in these provinces, too.
- At least one meeting each was held with approximately 350 people during visits carried out in all of the provinces for the purpose of developing sensitivity and cooperation. Over 2,500 people took part in activities and group meetings. Considering the number of individuals who reached the project via radio and TV programs, in addition to the number of people who participated in project initiatives and then told their friends, relatives, and neighbors about it, it is obvious that a large number of people were reached via this project.
- Project results were shared at meetings held in Istanbul and Ankara.
- As a result of news reports about killings under the guise of honor and initiatives carried out in the struggle against such killings in local, national, and

international newspapers and other media, messages of support were received from provinces of Turkey outside of the project implementation area as well as foreign countries, thus making other collaborative efforts possible, too.

### With respect to likely victims:

Initiatives intended to "enable women to define the violence they experience and develop methods of struggle to escape such violence" were carried out intensively throughout the duration of the project.

- Women who participated in group workshops not only created positive transformations in themselves, but they also had a positive impact upon how their individual friends and family members view "violence." After a woman adopts the principle that there is no such thing as justifiable violence and begins making efforts to stop the violence being practiced against her, the initial phases that she undergoes are, first of all, to quit practicing violence against her children, to begin expressing herself more easily, and to experience an increase in her self-esteem.
- The project goal was to reach and provide support to 30 women who were likely victims of killings to be committed under the guise of honor in the time span of one year. 497 applications were submitted to the Emergency Help Line units in 2006. 73 of those applications came from women whose lives were in danger due to a likely killing in the name of honor.
- Applications were taken not only from women living in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, but from those living in other provinces of Turkey, as well as women originally from Turkey but now living abroad, and each of those women was provided with support.

### With respect to supportive organizations and institutions:

The points of view of individuals belonging to governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations with whom KAMER was in direct contact changed, so that they cooperated with KAMER to stop violence and to support women experiencing violence.

- KAMER obtained the support of both governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations for its project activities.
- Many governorships made it possible for their funds to be used by women and

they also supported KAMER's initiatives by encouraging civil servants to facilitate and thus speed up procedures necessary for helping women experiencing violence.

- Bureaucratic obstacles and delays normally experienced at governmental institutions such as the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, birth registration offices, muxhtar offices, etc., were eliminated thanks to the personal efforts of such individuals.
- Police and gendarme stations in some provinces asked women's centers for help in taking down the applications of those women who came to them for help. In addition, they also began to behave more carefully and with greater sensitivity when it came to getting health reports, drawing up case records, and starting legal procedures.

## III

### Applicant Stories from 2006

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Applicant:

Date of application: 6 January 2006

Age: 14

Educational status:

Marital status: Single

Number of children: Pregnant

#### How she reached KAMER:

She applied to KAMER via the police station.

#### Why she was "tried":

The girl was raped by her father. Her paternal aunt and the wife of her uncle suspected that this was the case and secretly had her examined by a doctor. The examination revealed that the girl was 5 months pregnant. Upon receiving this news they became anxious and asked the doctor to abort the baby. The doctor, who knew the girl's family, said that he could not abort the baby, but instructed them to go to the police station.

After they went to the police station, a policeman and the doctor applied to KAMER asking for support for the girl.

#### What KAMER did:

- KAMER informed those acting on behalf of the applicant that they could not provide support for the abortion of the baby, but that a decision about what could be done would be made together with the girl upon her application to KAMER.

→ Workers from KAMER went to the police station to take the girl's application.

**Outcome:**

When the KAMER workers arrived at the police station, they were told that the girl's aunts had received a phone call and quickly left in a panic. Police officials told KAMER that they would inform them if contact was reestablished with the girl and her family.

\* \* \*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 11 January 2006  
**Age:** 29  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Four

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER with help from her younger brother.

**Why she was "tried":**

While still a child the woman had been forced to marry a relative much older than her. She was subjected to violence throughout the duration of the marriage. Her husband forced her to have sex with his friends for money. Later, she ran off to another province together with a man she had met at work and they began living together. Her husband and family began searching for her everywhere. The woman, who said she was very happy living with the man she had escaped with, was later found by her family and husband. The woman was brought home, where she was tried for "besmirching the family's honor," and it was decided that that she should die. Her brother, who did not want for her to be killed, helped her to go to the Bar Association and apply for help.

The Bar Association instructed the woman to apply to KAMER, which then accepted her application. The woman said that she wanted to go back to the man she'd run away with.

**What KAMER did:**

→ Provided psychological support.  
→ Got her legal counseling.

**Outcome:**

→ Contact was established with the man she had run away with. She ran away from home and moved in with him once again.  
→ KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Applicant**

**Date of application:** 12 January 2006  
**Age:** 28  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied via telephone with help from her younger brother.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman married the man that she loved, but was then subjected to violence at the hands of her husband and her husband's family throughout her marriage. Once she became pregnant, the violence continued, and as a result her children were born handicapped. The woman was forbidden to leave the house, and so had never even seen the city that she was brought to after getting married.

The woman was constantly being judged by her husband and his family, who accused her, saying "We know you have a boyfriend. Now who is the father of your children?" They threatened to kill her. One day, when her husband was not at home, she secretly called her brother, who lives in a different city, and told him about what she was going through. Her brother then called KAMER and applied for help on behalf of his sister.

The woman's application was taken by calling her at home at an hour when her husband was out of the house.

The woman requested shelter for herself and her children, saying that she could not return to her family, because her husband would find her there and kill her.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Via telephone, plans were made in accordance with the woman’s own wishes.
- Contact was established with the Social Assistance and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK) in another province, where shelter was secured for her and her family.
- The woman took her children and secretly escaped from home and went to the province where the shelter is located. The woman was met there by officials and settled into a shelter together with her children.

**Outcome:**

- She stayed at the shelter together with her children for some time.
- Later, with support from her brother, she rented an apartment in another province.
- She started working.
- She continues to live with her children.
- Her husband is still looking for her.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**4<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 13 January 2006  
**Age:** 38  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Divorced  
**Number of children:** Six

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman, who was subjected to violence at the hand of her husband, also witnessed her husband sexually molesting their daughters. After frequently witnessing such incidents of molestation, the woman decided to divorce her hus-

band.

The woman applied to KAMER, asking for support in her efforts to divorce.

The woman was instructed to apply to the Bar Association; she filed for divorce and also filed a criminal complaint against her husband. Taking her children with her, she moved out and rented an apartment.

After a while, she met another man whom she began seeing. Upon hearing about this, her family became violent towards the woman, telling her “you have soiled our name, if you meet with that man again, we’ll kill you.”

After this happened, she applied to KAMER a second time.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got her financial support to meet her children’s educational needs.

**Outcome:**

- The woman’s divorce was finalized and she got custody of her children.
- KAMER maintains contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**5<sup>th</sup> Applicant**

**Date of application:** 21 January 2006  
**Age:** 20  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:** Married by imam (not state recognized); husband’s second wife (*kuma*)  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied via the police station.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman experienced intense violence of all kinds at the hands of her husband throughout the duration of their marriage. The woman’s husband, who was involved with another woman, occasionally threatened to kill her. One night, the

woman's husband beat and raped her. Later, he began stabbing her, saying, "I'm going to kill you, tell me how you want to die." The woman managed to escape, wounded, and was taken to the hospital with help from her neighbors. The woman applied to KAMER with help from the police at the hospital.

The woman said that her family, which resided in a different province, would support her, and so she asked for help so she could go be with them.

**What KAMER did:**

- Went to the hospital to accept the woman's application.
- Got her psychological counseling.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in contact with her family, which was residing in a different province.
- Helped the woman so that she could go be with her family.

**Outcome:**

- The woman continues to live with her family.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**6<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 16 January 2006  
**Age:** 14  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER with help from a woman who had lost her daughter to a killing committed in the name of honor.

**Why she was "tried":**

The 14 year old girl was raped by her step-father's relative. She did not tell anyone about it and attempted suicide. She was taken to the hospital, where she told her family about what had happened. Her family then went to the police station and reported the rapist. Upon hearing that he had been reported to the

police, the man abducted the girl's younger brother and threatened to kill him if the girl did not withdraw her complaint.

Worried that her brother might be killed, the girl changed her complaint, saying that he wasn't the man who raped her. When she got home, she saw that the man had let her brother go. The girl's mother called up the family of the man who raped her and told them, "Come over so we can resolve this matter." When the man's family refused to comply, the girl's family filed another complaint, both for the rape of their daughter and the abduction of their son, so that the rapist was sentenced to prison.

The girl's older brother was doing his military service while all of the aforementioned happened. Afraid that he "might kill their daughter upon his return from military service," his family applied to KAMER for help.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- A criminal complaint was filed against the rapist.
- A lawyer was consulted and the seriousness of the situation explained.
- The girl and her mother were told what they could do if their lives were threatened.

**Outcome:**

- The girl's mother said that the girl would be safe for a while longer since her brother would still be doing his military service for some time, but said that should they face any danger, they would get in contact with KAMER.
- Pressures to have the girl and her family rescind the criminal complaint continued. After a while, the family withdrew their complaint.
- The rapist's family gave the girl's family money as retribution in return for "resolving the issue by rescinding their complaints and marrying the girl to the rapist."
- The girl's family convinced her to marry the rapist.

\* \* \*

### 7<sup>th</sup> Applicant

**Date of application:** 22 January 2006  
**Age:** 21  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

#### How she reached KAMER:

The woman's older brother wrote a letter to KAMER asking for help for his sister.

#### Why she was "tried":

The woman's brother wrote to KAMER, explaining that his sister had been abducted from a carpet weaving course by two people who raided the course and that, despite many efforts to find her, she remained missing. He asked for help finding his sister.

KAMER called the woman's brother to obtain more detailed information. Later, the woman's brother learned that his sister was in a village and that she had been forced to marry one of the men who abducted her.

#### What KAMER did:

- Kept in touch with the woman's brother.
- Provided the woman with the necessary support so that she could go to the province where her brother was.
- The man who abducted the woman threatened to kill the woman and her brother, saying, "She is my wife. She has sullied by honor by leaving the home."

#### Outcome:

- The woman and her brother went to another province where the woman now lives with her family.

\* \* \*

### 8<sup>th</sup> Applicant:

**Date of application:** 27 January 2006  
**Age:** 16  
**Educational status:** Completed elementary school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

#### How she reached KAMER:

The woman was instructed to apply to KAMER by a woman whose daughter had been a victim to a killing committed in the name of honor.

#### Why she was "tried":

The girl, whose father died when she was still very young, was under constant pressure from her family. Her mother saw her talking with her boyfriend and beat her. She became frightened when her mother disowned her, saying, "Go wherever you will, you, who sully our honor, are no longer our daughter," and so she sought refuge at the home of her married older sister.

When the girl's mother told the girl's brother about what had happened, her brother became angry; he went to his older sister's home where he beat the girl and threatened to kill her. The girl ran away. A woman who saw her on the street and realized that she had run away from home took her in for the night. The following day, the woman's family began researching how they could help the girl, and learned from a woman whose daughter had been the victim of a killing committed in the name of honor that they could apply to KAMER for help.

The husband and wife who had taken the girl in then brought her to KAMER. The woman's application was taken; at first, she requested shelter. Later, she said that she wanted someone to speak with her family about her situation, and that if the family responded positively, she wanted to return to her family.

#### What KAMER did:

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency and then got her settled into a shelter.
- Accompanied her while she applied to be taken into the shelter.
- Talked with the woman's family, in accordance with the woman's own wishes.

**Outcome:**

- She stayed in a shelter for a while.
- Talks with the woman’s family were positive. The woman returned to her family.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

\* \* \*

**9<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 27 January 2006  
**Age:** 32  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Six

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman and the man she ran away with came to KAMER together. The woman applied to the Emergency Help Line.

**Why she was “tried”:**

Because of the frequent violence she was subjected to at home, the woman took her children and went to stay with her family. After a while, she met and began seeing a man who was married and had children. After turning her children over to her previous husband, with whom she was still married by law, the woman ran off to another province together with the other man. They lived in that province for some time, before returning to the province from which they had run away, hiding for a while in a shanty. Meanwhile, both of their families had sentenced them to death for running away and were searching for them. After the woman, together with the man with whom she had run away, applied to KAMER, the woman was informed of the kinds of support she could receive and they were told that the man with whom she lived could file a criminal complaint with the police.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Gave a lawyer power of attorney to start divorce proceedings.

- Contact was established with the Social Service and Child Protection Agency and the woman was placed in a shelter.
- Accompanied the woman during the application process for the shelter.
- Covered her travel expenses.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in a shelter for a while.
- The woman’s divorce proceedings were finalized; she and her husband divorced.
- She later married the man with whom she had run away and they started a new life in another province.

\* \* \*

**10<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 14 February 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER’s Emergency Help Line via the police station.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman eloped and got married to a man whom her family did not approve of. She was then disowned by her family. After moving to another province together with her husband, the latter began beating her. In order to escape from her husband’s violence, the woman called her older sister, saying that she wanted to return to her family and asking for help. Her sister told her that their father was very angry at her, and that he might harm her. She slept on the streets for a while because she had no money and nowhere to go. A family realized this and took her in. The woman lived for about a year with the family that took her in. The family then married her to an elderly man that they knew.

Her second husband then told her, “If you’d been a good woman, you wouldn’t have left your first husband. You wouldn’t have been on the streets. You’re

dirty, and you make everything you touch filthy,” and he began acting violently towards her. The woman was denied food and beaten as a punishment by her second husband; when she could no longer stand it, she escaped to her sister’s home. The woman’s sister and brother-in-law hid her in their home for a while. The woman’s brother and father learned that the woman was at her sister’s house. They went to the woman’s sister’s house and beat her, her sister, and her brother-in-law nearly to death. They locked them up in a room and began making plans to kill them. Someone else in the house helped her to escape from the locked room, after which she came to Diyarbakır and took refuge in a police station. She applied to KAMER with help from the police. She requested that she be placed in a shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological help.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Collaborated with the police to ensure her safety.
- Contact was established with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency and she was settled into a shelter.
- Accompanied her during the application process for the women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**11<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 17 February 2006  
**Age:** 24  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:**  
**Where she came from:** Diyarbakır

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER’s Emergency Help Line via the police station.

Why she was “tried”:

The woman’s first marriage was at a very young age; unable to stand the marriage for long, the woman soon returned to her father’s home. Later she was married off to someone much older than her. She began to be subjected to violence in her second marriage. When she did not become pregnant, the violence increased and she was constantly derided. Several years later she became pregnant. Her husband then said, “I’m unable to have children. This is not my child. Who got you pregnant?” and beat the woman. Despite her pleas, the woman failed to convince her husband that the child was his. She had a miscarriage due to a beating she took at this time. It became clear to the woman that the man intended to kill her, and so she sought refuge at the police station.

She applied to KAMER for support via the police station. Stating that she would be killed if she were returned to her family, the woman asked to be placed in a shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Collaborated with the police station to ensure her safety.
- Got in touch with the Social Service and Child Protection Agency and settled her into a women’s shelter.
- Accompanied her throughout the application process for shelter.
- Provided money to cover her travel expenses.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women’s shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**12<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 23 February 2006  
**Age:**  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

A lawyer applied to KAMER via telephone on her behalf.

**Why she was “tried”:**

A lawyer called KAMER and provided information about the woman, who was wounded at the time. Her husband had tried to kill her by slitting her throat. She was hospitalized and treated for serious wounds. The hospital that the woman was taken to did not have the necessary capacity to treat the woman, who was constantly losing blood. The doctors stated that if she did not receive the necessary treatment within a short amount of time, she would die.

KAMER was asked to provide support in order to get the woman transferred to a hospital in another province possessing the necessary equipment for her treatment.

Highway travel between provinces was impossible at the time due to severe winter weather conditions. The woman had to be transferred to another province by helicopter.

**What KAMER did:**

→ Talked with the Provincial Governor and Gendarme Headquarters of the province where the woman was first hospitalized. As a result of these talks, the woman was then transferred to another province by means of a helicopter belonging to the Gendarme Headquarters.

**Outcome:**

→ The woman, who was transported to a better equipped hospital, is still undergoing treatment.  
 → Her condition is improving.

\* \* \*

**13<sup>th</sup> Applicant**

**Date of application:** 4 March 2006  
**Age:** 32  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One  
**Where she came from:** Diyarbakır

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself, accompanied by a female neighbor.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman, who lost her parents at a young age, was raised by her aunt. She later got a job and began living by herself. She met a man and they got married. After she got married, she was traumatized when she learned that her husband was already married with children.

Her husband told her that when they met, he was having problems with his previous wife, and that he married her to punish his previous wife, but that he and the latter had made up and gotten back together. In the meantime, the woman became pregnant, and then her husband and her husband’s first wife began subjecting her to violence. Several times they beat her so badly that she was hospitalized.

The woman gave birth. Afterwards, her husband and his family continued to beat her, so with help from a neighbor, she applied to KAMER. Upon the woman’s request, support was provided so that she could get a medical report and file a criminal complaint.

She escaped from her husband, who had taken her baby and was seeking to kill her, and applied to KAMER a second time because her life was in danger. She asked for help in getting custody of her baby and going to stay with a relative who lived in a different province.

**What KAMER did:**

→ Got her psychological support.  
 → Got her legal counseling.  
 → Helped her file a criminal complaint against her husband.  
 → Helped her start court proceedings to get custody of her child and child support.

- Helped her to get to her relative who was living in a different province.
- Made sure her baby's medical expenses were met.
- Provided financial support to meet her needs and those of her baby.

**Outcome:**

- Following her criminal complaint, her husband was taken under police custody.
- Court proceedings were finalized and she got custody of her child.
- She is living with her relative in a different province.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**14<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 7 March 2006  
**Age:**  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER via telephone with help from a security official.

**Why she was “tried”:**

A security official working for the State Railways called KAMER and told them that he was with a woman who had run away from home and was seeking help. He said that the woman's father was looking for her everywhere and that he would not be able to bring her to KAMER.

The security official was provided with information about what they could do and directed to go to the police station. Meanwhile KAMER got in touch with the police station and with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, carrying out the necessary coordination to ensure the woman's safety and get her settled into a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Collaborated with the police to ensure the woman's safety.
- Collaborated with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to get the

woman settled into a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a woman's shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**15<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 16 March 2006  
**Age:** 27  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER with help from her mother-in-law.

**Why she was “tried”:**

She experienced violence throughout the eight years of her marriage. Her husband, a drug addict, was sexually violent towards her and would “punish” her by beating and starving her.

The woman's husband had previously tried to kill his mother by throwing her off the balcony. He threatened to kill the woman, too claiming that she was letting men in the house when he wasn't at home. She was injured and hospitalized several times because her husband beat her. The woman took her children and applied to KAMER. There were bruises and wounds on her body. She said that her husband was trying to kill her and asked to be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Filed a criminal complaint against her husband.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency and got her settled into a shelter together with her children.

- Accompanied her throughout the application process for the women's shelter.
- Covered her travel expenses.

**Outcome:**

- She stayed in the women's shelter for some time.
- She sued her husband for child support and began receiving child support.
- She got a job and began working.
- She rented an apartment and started a new life for herself and her children.
- She drops her children off at a day care center run by the Social Services and Child Protection Agency in the morning when she goes to work and picks them up in the evening.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

\* \* \*

**16<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 21 March 2006  
**Age:** 44  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Second wife - Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Seven

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman's life had been threatened before, at which time she applied to KAMER and was placed in a women's shelter.

After she left the women's shelter, she remarried, began living in a different city, and had a child.

Longing to see her children from her previous marriage, she then went to the city where her children reside. When she went to her children's school, she ran into her former husband and his brother. The woman was attacked and injured in the hand. Police arrived at the crime scene and took the woman to the police station. The relatives of her former husband heard about what had happened

and began waiting outside the police station in order to kill the woman. Her life in danger, the woman applied to KAMER with help from the police. The woman said that she wanted to go be with her husband and baby.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Filed a criminal complaint.
- Got her a plane ticket.
- Accompanied her to the airport.
- Held talks with the police department in the province that the woman was going to so that they would meet the woman at the airport and accompany her to her house, just in case she was being followed.

**Outcome:**

- The necessary security measures to ensure the woman's safety were taken and she was transported to her house with her husband in a different province.
- Police met the woman upon her arrival in the other province and safely accompanied her to her home.
- Charges were pressed against her former husband, who was therefore subsequently arrested.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

\* \* \*

**17<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 22 March 2006  
**Age:** 24  
**Educational status:** High school graduate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER with the support of a close friend.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman married a relative of hers, despite her father's objections. After she got married, her husband began beating her. She left home several times and went to stay with her family because of the violence she was experiencing at home. Her father sent her back to her husband, telling her: "You did this to yourself. You didn't listen to me. Now go pay the price for your mistake." Seeing that her family did not support her in this matter, the woman's husband became even more physically violent. One day, he drugged her and made her pass out. When she woke up the following morning, she found a friend of her husband's sleeping beside her in bed. Her husband then accused the woman of doing this herself, as if he had nothing at all to do with it, and yelled at her: "I've been nourishing a viper in my bosom. If you want, I can bring you lots more men like this one." Her husband told the woman's family about what was going on. Though the woman told her family that it was nothing but slander, her family did not believe her, but decided that she should be killed because she had sullied the family's honor. Realizing that her daughter was going to be killed, the woman's mother helped her. Instead, they escape from the house. The woman, whose life was in danger after she ran away from home, applied to KAMER and asked that she be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in contact with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying at a shelter.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

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**18<sup>th</sup> Applicant**

**Date of application:** 24 April 2006  
**Age:** 21  
**Educational status:** High school graduate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Pregnant

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was "tried":**

After marrying against her family's will, the woman was disowned by her family. Her husband, a marijuana smoker and drinker, began beating her. He continued acting violently towards her even after she became pregnant. Her husband would beat her and kick her out onto the street at night, after which she would take refuge at neighbors' houses, going back home once her husband woke up. Her husband then began accusing her of cheating on him, asking "Who were you sleeping with? Where were you?" Afraid that her husband would try to kill her, the woman went to the police for help. The police then directed the man to apply to KAMER.

The woman, who was pregnant at the time she applied, said that her husband wanted to kill her and therefore asked to be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to have the woman placed in a women's shelter.
- Accompanied the woman during the application process for the women's shelter.
- Filed a criminal complaint against her husband.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in the women's shelter for some time and gave birth.
- She began looking for work.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

**19<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 28 April 2006  
**Age:** 42  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Five

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via a relative who had been in danger of losing her own life as a result of an attempted killing in the name of honor and had received support from KAMER at the time.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was living in a village with her husband when the latter committed suicide. The woman, who was trying to carry on with her life and support herself and her children, began experiencing violence at the hands of her mother- and father-in-law. Her mother- and father-in-law began slandering the woman, claiming that she was having affairs with various men. They threatened her, saying, “You’re not in your right mind. We’re going to get you an insanity report and kill you. Nobody will know that we did it.” No longer able to withstand the violence that her mother- and father-in-law were practicing against her, the woman took her children and went to stay with her married older sister.

The woman’s mother- and father-in-law then showed up at the woman’s sister’s house where they beat her and pressured her to come back to the village. They also attacked the woman’s sister and brother-in-law for taking her in. They accused the woman of “having gone there to have an affair with her brother-in-law.”

The woman applied to KAMER, saying that her husband’s relatives were going to kill her.

The woman was attacked by a relative of her husband’s when she went to the Bar Association to file a criminal complaint.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.

- Helped the woman file a lawsuit to claim the property left behind by her husband.
- Filed a criminal complaint against the husband’s relatives.

**Outcome:**

- The woman’s lawsuit was finalized and she received her inheritance from her deceased husband.
- She sold everything that she owned. She then bought a house in a province where a close relative of hers lives and settled there.
- She is living in her new house together with her children.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**20<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 2 May 2006  
**Age:** 16  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

She was directed to KAMER by two women already familiar with the organization.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The girl’s mother died when the girl was still very young. The girl’s father and step-mother acted in a violent and oppressive manner towards her. Unable to bear the violence any longer, the girl attempted suicide. She was pressured by her father into becoming engaged with a man whom she did not want to marry. The girl called off the engagement. Her father was enraged by her action and beat her and locked her up at home. The girl escaped and went to the police station, where she told the police at the Juvenile Division what happened. The Juvenile Division then returned the girl to her home, making her father promise not to hurt her anymore.

After the girl returned home, her father forced her to marry her fiancé. She was constantly raped by her husband. She was also forced to take care of her

husband's bedridden mother. Unable to stand living with her husband anymore, the girl then ran away. While wandering the streets, unsure where to go, the girl encountered two women who were familiar with KAMER and instructed her to apply to the Emergency Help Line.

When applying, the girl said that her husband and father were searching for her everywhere and would kill her if they found her.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- A counselor from the Emergency Help Line accompanied the girl to the Juvenile Division.
- Informed the police in the division that the girl's life was in danger so that the necessary precautions to ensure her safety were taken.
- Filed a criminal complaint against the girl's father.

**Outcome:**

- The Juvenile Division talked with the girl's father several times; once they felt certain that her father would no longer harm her, they took the girl back to her family.

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**21<sup>st</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 20 May 2006  
**Age:** 33  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman was constantly subjected to violence throughout the duration of her marriage. She began seeing someone whom she had met over the tele-

phone. When her husband and family learned of this, they decided to kill the woman. The woman informed the man that she was seeing that she was going to be killed and asked him for help. They made plans to meet in another province and run away together. The woman took her children and went to the meeting spot that they had agreed upon; however, the man did not show up and so the woman realized that she had been tricked. The woman was thus left out on the street with no where to go and unsure of what she should do next. KAMER volunteers advised the woman to apply to KAMER.

In her application, the woman said that she was unable to care for her children and that her life was in danger, and she therefore asked to be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Her children were temporarily placed in a Social Services and Child Protection Agency care center.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency and had the woman placed in a shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**22<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 27 May 2006  
**Age:** 40  
**Educational status:** Completed middle school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman was directed to KAMER by other women who had participated in KAMER's group workshops.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman’s husband had left her years ago and moved abroad. Left alone with her children, the woman suffered violence at the hands of her brother-in-law. Her brother-in-law sexually harassed the woman whenever he had the chance. When the woman refused to give in to her brother-in-law’s sexual advances, the latter would beat her and her children. He also threatened the woman, saying, “I’ll kill you and your children if you tell anyone about what I’ve done.” It got to the point that the woman could no longer sleep at night out of fear of what her brother-in-law might do.

No longer able to stand this situation, the woman took her children and went to KAMER.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Ensured the woman’s safety.
- Filed a criminal complaint against the woman’s brother-in-law.
- Provided the necessary support so that the woman and her children could go stay with a relative residing in a distant province.
- Used its connections in that province to get the woman a job.

**Outcome:**

- The woman moved to the distant province where her relative lived, with support from her relative.
- She began working and started a new life for her and her children.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**23<sup>rd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 4 June 2006  
**Age:** 16  
**Educational status:** Completed elementary school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The girl was sent to her older sister and brother-in-law’s house to help take care of her ill sister. While she was staying there, she was raped by her brother-in-law several times. The girl’s brother-in-law threatened her, saying, “If you tell anyone about what I did, I’ll kill you and your sister.” Scared by such threats, for a while the girl did not tell anyone about what had happened. Later she told her mother. At first, her mother did not believe her and took her to the doctor to be examined. Learning that her daughter was pregnant, the girl’s mother then called upon the girl’s brother-in-law to discuss the matter. The brother-in-law denied it at first, but then later admitted to raping the girl. The girl’s brother-in-law offered to marry the girl, taking her as his second wife. Upon hearing this, the girl’s mother had a nervous breakdown and began screaming. The rest of the family then found out what happened as well. Her family decided to “kill the girl because she is sullied, and her brother-in-law because he raped her.” The girl was locked up in a room. Her brother-in-law was then killed by her older brother.

The girl’s mother understood that the girl was going to be killed, so she secretly let the girl out of the room at night and told her to go to the police. After successfully running away, the girl took refuge at the police station. The police then directed the girl to apply to KAMER.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to get the girl placed in a children’s home.

**Outcome:**

The girl is staying at the children’s home.

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**24<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 7 June 2006  
**Age:** 23  
**Educational status:** Vocational university  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via a friend of hers who was familiar with KAMER.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman went to a different province to study at the university. In that province, she began dating a man. The man pressured her to have sex with him, and eventually, unable to deal with the pressure, she gave in. As it turned out, the boyfriend had secretly recorded them having sex together, and using this tape, he threatened and bribed the woman into doing anything he wanted. He treated the woman like his private property, making her do whatever he pleased, and carrying out sexual, emotional, and physical violence against her.

Though she wanted to break up with him, she was forced to submit to his will because of his threats.

The woman’s boyfriend forbid her from having contact with her family and kept her from visiting them during school breaks. The woman ended up having to lie to her family during breaks in order to explain to them why she was not coming home. By her second year at university, she began getting poor grades because of the trauma of her experience. Her boyfriend told her, “Tell your family that you had a car accident, that you got in debt, and that you have to pay the other party 30 billion TL, then give me the money. And if you don’t do as I say, I’ll kill you.” Frightened by her boyfriend’s threats, the woman got the 30 billion TL from her family and gave it to him.

The girl’s family became worried about her and so set off to visit her in the province where she was studying. Upon hearing this, the woman ran away and hid at the family of a friend of hers living in a different province. The woman’s family heard about what the woman had experienced and began looking for her. Meanwhile, the woman received death threats from both her boyfriend and her family.

The family with whom the woman was staying was familiar with KAMER and directed the woman to apply to the KAMER Emergency Help Line.

The woman applied to KAMER, asking for support to ensure her safety. As the woman’s life may have been in danger in the particular province where she was located at the time, the woman was transported to a KAMER office in another province. Contact was then established with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency in that province.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Accompanied her to a KAMER in another province.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that she could be placed in a women’s shelter.
- Bought her a plane ticket.
- Got her a police escort to the airport.
- Covered her travel expenses.

**Outcome:**

- She is staying in a women’s shelter.
- She has found a job and begun working.
- She has started attending a course to prepare for the university entrance exams, with financial assistance from the governorship of the province where she is residing.
- She says that she intends to further her education.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**25<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 02 July 2006  
**Age:** 30  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The husband of the woman, a mother of three, committed suicide. A relative then began helping her out so that she could look after her children. After a while, she ran off with the relative and they began living together. Her family decided to kill her and the man she was living with. A member of her family killed the man she was living with, but she managed to get away. She went to a friend’s house and asked them to take her in, but they were afraid that the woman’s family might hurt them, too, and so they told the woman to go to the police. The woman went to the police station, where she was then directed to KAMER.

The woman said that her life was in danger and she therefore asked to be placed in a women’s shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Collaborated with the police to ensure the woman’s safety.
- The woman was accompanied to the Social Services and Child Protection Agency where she was helped to apply for shelter.
- The woman was placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women’s shelter.
- She found work at the shelter where she is staying.
- She has filed a lawsuit to get custody of her children.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**26<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 2 July 2006  
**Age:** 27  
**Educational status:** Completed middle school  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman got married in accordance with her family’s wishes. The family knew that the woman’s husband was already married and had children, but they hid this fact from their daughter. Later the woman learned the truth about her husband. The woman refused to forgive her family, believing that they had betrayed her by not telling her the truth about her husband.

Throughout the duration of her marriage, the woman’s husband and her husband’s first wife abused her by beating and berating her. She had a child. When the violence towards the woman increased, she took her child and went to the police.

The police directed the woman to apply to KAMER. She said that she might be killed if she returned to stay with her family or her husband, and so she asked to be placed in a shelter. There were visible bruises and scars on the woman’s body at the time of her application.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got her a medical report.
- Filed a criminal complaint.
- Got her settled into a women’s shelter via the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.
- Accompanied her throughout the application process for placement in the women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed at a shelter for some time.
- While at the shelter she talked with her husband and later returned home.

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**27<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 7 July 2006  
**Age:** 25  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Four

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman’s neighbor applied to KAMER on the woman’s behalf.

**Why she was “tried”:**

Married and the mother of four, the woman was sold for money to a village guard. The guard was already married and had taken the woman as his second wife. When the woman failed to get along with the guard’s first wife, the guard, who was the woman’s second husband, sent her back to her first husband, the same man who had sold her to the second. Her first husband picked her up and took her home. For several days the woman spent time with her children, whom she had missed in her absence. But then, understanding that she was going to be killed, the woman told someone she knew that her life was in danger and asked for help. Shortly thereafter the woman was stabbed by her brother-in-law’s son, who told her, “You’ve been sullied; you’re dirty and you deserve to die.” The person whom the woman had beseeched for help felt guilty and applied to the bar association and KAMER, asking them to help the woman.

**What KAMER did:**

- Went to the hospital to try and help the woman, but upon arrival found out that the woman, who had been brought to the hospital by her husband, was already dead.
- Tried to make sure that the incident was publically exposed.

**28<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 18 July 2006  
**Age:** 36  
**Educational status:** High school  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER with help from her brother.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman experienced violence at the hands of her husband throughout her marriage. Her husband and brother-in-law accused her of “letting men in the house and having affairs.” They claimed that “men were coming and going” when they were not at home. The woman’s husband was trying to usurp property that legally belonged to the woman, pressuring her with threats that he would divorce her and gain custody of their children.

Meanwhile the woman came to realize that her husband and brother-in-law were planning to kill her. The woman called her younger brother and younger sister to her house, where she confronted her husband and brother-in-law, who then admitted to the lies they had been telling about her. The woman then took her children and went to stay with her brother, after which she went to KAMER to apply for help.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Wishing to pursue her rights under legislative act 4320 (i.e., the right to get a restraining order against an abusive spouse), the woman filed a criminal complaint against her husband.
- Got the woman legal counseling about her rights with regard to her property.

**Outcome:**

- The woman lived separately from her husband for some time, after which she returned to her husband when the latter expressed regret for what he had done.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

**29<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 20 July 2006  
**Age:** 28  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

Wife and mother of three, the woman was subjected to serious violence at the hands of her husband and her husband’s family. The woman was constantly insulted and berated because she “failed to give the family a son” and therefore had “put an end to the family line.” Her husband threatened to marry a second woman, and the violence against the woman increased. Unable to stand the situation any longer, the woman took her children and ran away to the home of her older sister, who resided in a different province. She stayed there for several days before returning to her own home. Her husband and her husband’s family said to her, “So you ran off and went to go sleep with your brother-in-law? Never come back to this house again,” and threw the woman out onto the street.

The woman’s family did not help the woman after she was thrown out because they had given her hand in marriage in exchange for the hand of her husband’s sister, who was then married to the woman’s brother. So, helping the woman would mean jeopardizing her brother’s marriage. Desperate for help, the woman went to the police, who then helped her apply to KAMER.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that she could be placed in a women’s shelter.
- Covered her travel expenses.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in the shelter for a while and then said that she wanted to

return home.

- Upon the woman’s request, officials from the shelter talked with the woman’s husband. When it became clear that the family was not going to harm the woman, the shelter officials helped the woman to return home.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**30<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 23 July 2006  
**Age:** 18  
**Educational status:** Completed middle school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER with help from KAMER volunteers.

**Why she was “tried”:**

While engaged to the man she loved, the woman was raped by the village shepherd. Her family then forced her to marry the rapist. The woman, who became pregnant and gave birth, was constantly beaten by her husband. She got a job and began working. Her husband frequently stopped by her place of work where he beat and berated her, claiming that he was doing so out of jealousy. Then one day her husband went to the woman’s workplace and told her, “If you come home, I’ll kill you,” and then took the woman’s child from her.

The owners of the business where the woman worked went to the public prosecutorship and reached some KAMER volunteers. The woman then applied to KAMER via telephone with help from the KAMER volunteers.

**What KAMER did:**

- Took action to ensure the woman’s safety in the province where the woman lived and to get her placed in a women’s shelter, as she requested.
- The woman was put up as a guest somewhere for some time.
- Despite all efforts, the necessary support could not be secured from the relevant institutions.

- KAMER took the woman to a province where there was a KAMER Emergency Help Line, where she was then provided with the necessary support.
- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Helped the woman file for divorce.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a woman's shelter.
- Filed a criminal complaint.
- Covered all expenses to meet the woman's needs.

**Outcome:**

- The woman preferred to stay with a family that offered to support her.
- The woman filed for divorce.
- Meanwhile, the rapist and husband of the woman raped the woman's 14 year old sister. The woman's family then began to offer their support to the woman.
- The woman filed for custody of her child and returned to live with her family.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**31<sup>st</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 23 July 2006  
**Age:** 21  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why the woman was "tried":**

Before getting married the woman and her husband had been friends for a long time. During this time, they lived in different provinces. The woman went to a friend's birthday party, where she was drugged and raped. When she woke up she didn't remember anything, but after some time she realized that she was pregnant.

She married her boyfriend, who was aware of the pregnancy and had decided to support her in this matter. The woman was taken to the hospital where she gave birth three months after their marriage. The husband's family thus came to realize that the baby's father was someone else and so they began making plans to kill her. When the husband's family members came and surrounded the hospital, armed with guns and intending to kill the woman, the hospital officials turned to the police and asked them to ensure the woman's safety as her life was in danger.

The police then called KAMER requesting support for the woman.

**What KAMER did:**

- Went to the hospital and took down her application.
- Talked with the police to discuss the likelihood of the husband's family reaching the woman and made sure the necessary precautions were taken.
- Got the hospital to cancel visiting hours and make sure nobody was allowed into the hospital.
- The police began monitoring the surroundings of, and all roads leading to the hospital.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency and initiated procedures to get the woman placed in a women's shelter.
- The woman and her baby were boarded onto a police vehicle in an area outside the hospital cordoned off by the police and transported to the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.

**Outcome:**

- The woman and her baby are staying together in a women's shelter.
- The woman's husband was scorned and disowned by his family because he did not kill his wife. He shot and killed himself as a result of the psychological pressure.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

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**32<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 31 July 2006  
**Age:** 13  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

Someone who knows the girl sent an e-mail to KAMER to apply on her behalf.

**Why she was “tried”:**

In the application sent to KAMER’s Emergency Help Line via e-mail, KAMER was informed that a man aged around 50-55 had raped a girl aged around 10-13 and that the girl was then locked up in a house and that her life was in danger. The applicant stated that the girl would likely be killed and asked for help to intervene in this situation.

**What KAMER did:**

- Tried to get in touch with the child.
- Got in touch with the police department in the province where the girl lives and provided them with information about the situation. The police chief stated that they were aware of the situation and were closely monitoring the family.

**Outcome:**

The district police department is continuing to monitor the family to ensure the girl’s safety.

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**33<sup>rd</sup> Applicant**

**Date of application:** 31 July 2006  
**Age:**  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:**  
**Number of children:** Pregnant

**How she reached KAMER:**

A university faculty member applied to KAMER on the woman’s behalf.

**Why she was “tried”:**

A university faculty member called KAMER to tell them that a pregnant woman whose life was in danger had taken refuge in the house of one of his students. He stated that the woman had said that she could get help from a relative or close friend living in a different province and had asked for help to safely get to that province.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got in touch with the women’s center in the province where the woman lived and provided information about the woman’s situation and requested support.
- Got her to apply to the women’s center where she lived.
- Took all necessary precautions to ensure her safety.
- Provided the phone number of a women’s center in the province of her destination so that she could contact them should she be in danger.

**Outcome:**

- The women went to stay with her friend.
- Contact could not be maintained.

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**34<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 31 July 2006  
**Age:** 28  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized);  
 is her husband’s second wife  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

Applied via the police station.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was married to a man against her will and became his second wife. Shortly after she got married, her husband's brother began sexually harassing her. One day when they were alone, he raped her. Her brother-in-law then told her, "You will have sex with me whenever I want. And if you tell anyone about what I've done, I'll kill you." The brother-in-law continued to practice sexual violence against the woman for a long time, threatening to use a gun against her if she did not do as he said. For some time, the woman did not tell anyone about the situation out of fear. Finally, unable to stand it any longer, the woman told her husband about what had happened. Her husband did not believe her. He said that she was slandering his brother and he proceeded to beat her. After much struggle their neighbors managed to rescue the woman from her husband. Her life in danger, the woman took her children and ran away to the police station, where she took refuge. The police then referred her to KAMER.

The woman applied to KAMER for help, asking that she and her children be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Provided financial support for the woman's and her children's needs.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so the woman could be placed in a shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman did not want to file any charges because she was afraid of her husband and her husband's family.
- She is staying in a women's shelter.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

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**35<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 9 August 2006  
**Age:** 24  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman was given in exchange as part of an arranged marriage and married to her maternal cousin. She did not bear any children and was constantly subjected to violence. She became angry and, refusing to speak with her husband, went to stay with her own family in the hopes that she might get support and be able to escape the violence she was experiencing. Her father would say to her, "So you can't give him a child but you still get angry and leave home. Even death won't get you out of this marriage." He would then beat her and send her back to her husband.

The woman's husband got a job and began working in another province. Her husband began coming home then only once every several months. He continued being violent towards the woman, telling her, "What kind of a woman are you anyway—you can't even have one single child." The woman suggested that they go to the hospital together and be examined, telling him that maybe he was the reason they could not have children. Her husband responded by saying, "I know what you're up to, next thing you know you'll get pregnant by another man and try to pass the kid off as mine." He then beat the woman so badly she had to be hospitalized. The woman secretly went to the bar association and asked to file for divorce. The woman's father heard that she had gone to the bar association and told the woman's husband. The woman's husband then proceeded to beat the woman nearly to death and lock her up at home.

Feeling that her life was in danger, the woman secretly escaped from home one night and went to the police. The police station then got in touch with KAMER in the middle of the night so that the woman could apply for help.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Collaborated with the police to ensure the woman's safety.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to get the woman settled into a women's shelter.
- Accompanied the woman while she applied to be placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in the women's shelter for some time.
- With support from KAMER, she found work in the province where the women's shelter was located.
- She rented a house and started a new life.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.
- The woman's husband and family say, "She's left home, she deserves to die," and continue to search for her.

\* \* \*

**36<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 10 August 2006  
**Age:** 24  
**Educational status:** Completed elementary school  
**Marital status:** Widow  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman divorced her husband because of domestic violence and then, together with her children, moved in with her family. After a while she met someone who lived abroad and they began having a relationship. When her family heard about this, they decided that she should be killed, saying to her, "So you divorced your husband just so you could go having affairs with other men and sully our honor." Realizing that she was going to be killed, the woman applied to the KAMER Emergency Help Line. When applying, she asked that measures be taken to ensure her safety and for support so that she could

leave the country to go and be with the man she loves.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Ensured the woman's safety.
- Informed her of the procedures she would have to go through to leave the country.
- Got support from relevant parties in order to speed up her visa application process.
- The woman was housed at a safe location until official procedures were completed.

**Outcome:**

- The woman and her children moved to another country where the woman has started a new life with the man that she loves.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

\* \* \*

**37<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 17 August 2006  
**Age:** 18  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via a lawyer.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman married at a young age as a man's second wife, in order to escape the oppressive atmosphere of her family home. She had to live with her husband's family for the duration of the marriage. She was constantly subjected to violence at the hands of her alcoholic husband and his family. Unable to stand the violence any longer, the woman took her child and ran away to stay

with a friend. After a while, the woman's husband became enraged and decided to kill her, saying "a woman who leaves the home deserves to die."

Upon hearing that her husband was looking for her everywhere and intended to kill her, the woman went to the courthouse and applied to the public prosecutorship. A lawyer then advised the woman to apply to KAMER. The woman asked to be placed in a women's shelter, and so contact was established with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Despite all efforts to convince them otherwise, officials at the Social Services and Child Protection Agency rejected the woman's appeal to be placed in a women's shelter and sent the woman back to her husband.
- Officials at the Social Services and Child Protection Agency got in touch with the woman's husband and made him promise not to harm her and had him sign a document attesting to his promise not to do so. However, the woman's life was still in danger, and the Agency nevertheless sent her back home. The woman then escaped to KAMER once again because she feared for her life.
- Informed the Provincial Governoship, the public prosecutorship, and the Social Services and Child Protection Agency that "the woman would be killed if she was not placed in a women's shelter and that the public authorities would be responsible for her death."
- Got the woman placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women's shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**38<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 31 August 2006  
**Age:** 21  
**Educational status:** High school graduate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One  
**Where she came from:** Batman

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman's family pressured her into marrying someone against her will. She was constantly subjected to violence throughout the duration of her marriage. Unable to bear the violence any longer, she decided to get a divorce. Her family and husband opposed her decision to divorce and threatened to kill her.

The woman ran away from home and applied to KAMER. She said that if she returned home, she would be killed, and she therefore asked to be placed in a shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to get the woman placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- All communication ceased once the woman had been placed in the shelter.

\* \* \*

**39<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 2 September 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Middle school  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

She was referred to KAMER by the bar association.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was married off to a man who had raped her; she experienced violence at the hands of her husband and her husband’s family throughout her marriage. The woman, who was also sexually harassed by her husband’s brother, sought refuge with her family. Her father took his anger at the woman’s husband out on the woman, beat her, and sent her back to her husband. Rejected by her family, the desperate woman then returned to stay with her husband who had raped her. This scenario was repeated. Once, when the woman was forced to go back to her husband yet again, the woman was severely beaten by her husband and his brother. No longer able to stand the violence, the woman snuck out of her home and went to the bar association, where she filed a criminal complaint and filed for divorce.

The bar association referred the woman to KAMER, where she went and asked to be placed in a shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Continues to monitor her criminal complaint and divorce proceedings.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency and got her settled into a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women’s shelter.
- Her situation continues to be monitored.
- The woman’s husband and family continue to search for her.

→ The woman’s family came to KAMER to ask about her.

\* \* \*

**40<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 10 September 2006  
**Age:** 35  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman married her husband after eloping with him. After they got married, the woman experienced frequent and intense violence at the hands of her husband, but because she had “run away and gotten married,” her family refused to support her in any way. The woman did her best to endure the situation for the sake of her children. Meanwhile, her husband was having an affair with another woman. With the violence at home increasing each passing day, the woman finally took her small child and ran away. She slept in the park for several days because she had nowhere to go. Her husband sent her messages on her mobile phone, threatening her by saying, “You’ve soiled our honor—I will kill you on the spot.” The woman went to the police, who then referred her to KAMER. Stating that her life was in danger and that she could not go back home, the woman applied to KAMER, asking to be placed in a shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Helped the woman file a criminal complaint.
- Met the woman’s basic needs.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.
- Accompanied the woman throughout the application process for the shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women’s shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**41<sup>st</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 19 September 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Middle school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:** -

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman was directed to KAMER by a relative of hers who worked at the public prosecutor’s office.

**Why she was “tried”:**

One day while home alone, the woman was raped by her paternal uncle. She became pregnant as a result of the rape. As her pregnancy progressed and her stomach grew larger, her family grew suspicious. She was afraid to answer them when they asked her if she was pregnant or not, but then after her family beat her, she told them that her uncle had raped her. Her uncle denied raping her. The woman applied to KAMER for help.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- In accordance with the woman’s request, talks were held with her family, which then decided not to follow through with its decision to kill the woman.
- Charges were pressed against the uncle. While proceedings were underway, a DNA test was carried out, proving that the child belongs to the woman’s uncle. The woman’s uncle was sentenced to 10 years 8 months in prison, but is threatening to kill the woman once he gets out.
- Got the woman psychiatric treatment because of the psychological problems induced by her situation.

**Outcome:**

- The woman was provided with telephone numbers she could use to contact KAMER in case of emergency.
- The woman gave birth and the baby was given to a care center belonging to the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.
- The woman is living with her family.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**42<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 19 September 2006  
**Age:** 21  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was raped by her maternal uncle. Her uncle threatened to kill her if she told anyone about it. Some time later the woman met another man and had sex with him and became pregnant as a result. When her stomach began to grow, her family grew suspicious and took her to the doctor. When she found out that she was pregnant, she told her maternal aunt and her mother that her uncle had raped her. They then secretly called the uncle over and questioned him. He denied raping the woman and accused her of “getting knocked up and trying to pass the child off” on him. The woman’s family decided to kill her. Understanding that she was going to be killed, the woman came to KAMER and asked to be placed in a shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Met her basic needs.

- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that she could be placed in a shelter.
- Covered her travel expenses.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a shelter.
- She gave birth to her child.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**43<sup>rd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 20 September 2006  
**Age:** 20  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized);  
 by *berdel* agreement (exchange of brides between  
 two families)  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

A man familiar with KAMER advised her to apply to the Emergency Help Line.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman’s husband, whom the woman had married as part of an arranged marriage in which she was exchanged for a girl from her husband’s family, left home frequently and neglected his children. Meanwhile, the woman was also being beaten by him and her mother-in-law. In order to escape the violence, she considered taking her children and going to stay with her older brother who lived in a different province. But then she changed her mind, worried that her brother’s wife, who was also her husband’s sister, would tell the woman’s husband where she was. No longer able to put up with the violence, the woman finally took her children and ran away from home. She ended up staying on the street because she had nowhere to go. A man who noticed her helplessly wandering the streets advised her to go to KAMER.

When applying the woman said that her life was in danger and she therefore

requested shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Met the basic needs of the woman and her children.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- Communication with the woman ceased once she had been placed in a shelter.

\* \* \*

**44<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 21 September 2006  
**Age:** 13 and 20 years old  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:**  
**Number of children:**

**How they reached KAMER:**

A journalist called KAMER to apply on their behalf.

**Why they were “tried”:**

According to the journalist, s/he was told about the situation from a woman close to the victims. The information provided was as follows:

“The woman was married but sent back home when she turned out not to be a virgin. The woman told her father-in-law that she had been raped and revealed the identity of the man who had raped her. In order to get revenge, the woman’s father-in-law then abducted the young sister of the rapist, taking her into the mountains and raping her before returning her to her village one week later.

“Afterwards, in order to avoid a blood feud, the families decided to marry the girls off to the men who had raped them. However, the father of the young girl who was taken into the mountains and raped opposed this and filed criminal charges against the rapist.”

Journalists wanted to report upon this incident.

**What KAMER did:**

- Warned the journalists wishing to report on this incident that if they did so, they would be endangering the lives of the women involved.
- Petitioned the Gendarme Provincial Headquarters for help to ensure the women's safety because their lives were in danger.

**Outcome:**

- Journalists reported upon the incident.
- The women's families are being monitored by the gendarme in order to ensure their safety.
- Each of the families pressed charges against the other.
- KAMER is still in contact with the women.

\* \* \*

**45<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 1 October 2006  
**Age:** 41  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was "tried":**

After eloping and marrying her husband, the woman was rejected by her family. After some time, the woman began to experience violence at the hands of her husband, who meanwhile had begun having an affair with another woman. The woman's husband told her, "I can't look after you anymore. If you want, you can make a good salary working at night," and then began forcing her to have sex with other men for money. Later he threw her out onto the street, telling her, "If you don't bring back some money, I'll kill you." The woman then took her two children and spent the night at a friend's house. The next day she took her children and went to another province in the hopes of finding a job. Nobody wanted to hire her because of her children. Desperate, the woman

finally went to the police. A police officer who was familiar with KAMER called the Emergency Help Line and informed them that there was no women's center that could help the woman in the province where she was located, and that they were therefore going to send her to a province where KAMER had a center so that the woman could seek help from them.

The woman reached KAMER with help from the police and requested to be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Went to the police station to take down her application.
- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to get her settled in a women's shelter.
- Accompanied the woman throughout the application process to be placed in a shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is living in a women's shelter together with her children.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**46<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 4 October 2006  
**Age:** 35  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman was advised to go to KAMER by a hotel worker.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman's family forced her to marry someone against her will. After a while, she got a divorce. Her family then forced her to marry someone 30 years

older than her. The woman could not stand being married to this man, whom she saw more as a father than a husband, and so she ran away to another city. While seeking help in the province that she escaped to, an organization directed her to its women's affairs unit. Still the woman was not provided with the help she needed, and so she was taken to a hotel and left there.

The hotel workers asked KAMER to help the woman. The woman's application was taken; the woman requested that she be placed in a shelter, saying that if she went back home, she would be killed either by her husband or her family.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that she could be placed in a women's shelter.
- Accompanied the woman throughout the application process for the women's shelter.
- Covered her traveling expenses.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is still staying at the shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**47<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 6 October 2006

**Age:**

**Educational status:**

**Marital status:**

**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

A specialist with social services called KAMER from abroad and applied to KAMER on the woman's behalf.

**Why she was "tried":**

The person from social services explained the situation as follows:

The woman's father wanted to force her into an arranged marriage, which is why the woman ran away to Europe. However, because the woman did not have a residence permit, the state wanted to deport her. The woman told authorities that if she was sent back to Turkey, she would be killed by either her father or the person that her father wanted to marry her to.

**What KAMER did:**

- Requested to speak with the woman herself in order to take her application. The woman stated that she did not want to talk.
- In talks with the woman's lawyer, the lawyer was informed that she could contact KAMER should she be deported. The lawyer was also provided with the names and telephone numbers of other women's centers in Ankara and Istanbul so that the woman could seek help from them if necessary.

**Outcome:**

- Communication could not be established with the woman.

\* \* \*

**48<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 9 October 2006

**Age:** 29

**Educational status:** Elementary

**Marital status:** Divorced

**Number of children:** Four

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via telephone.

**Why she was "tried":**

The applicant's husband, who was living with another woman, constantly acted violently towards her. Member of a prominent local family, the husband threatened the woman, pressuring her into divorce. Afraid, the woman signed the necessary documents and began receiving alimony. However, after divorce proceedings were finalized, the woman's ex-husband threatened her, saying,

“You are going to continue living in this house as a maid and an unmarried woman. Nobody will know that we’ve divorced. I am a prominent person in his district and if you play with my honor, I’ll kill you and the children.”

The woman then secretly called KAMER, telling them that she was unable to leave the house and that she wanted support so that she could go be with her family which resided in a different district.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Continued to talk with the woman over the phone, providing support by informing her about her options.

**Outcome:**

- The woman’s family was secretly informed of the woman’s situation.
- The woman took her children and went to the police; she then filed a criminal complaint against her ex-husband.
- Measures were taken to ensure the woman’s safety as she was transported to her family.
- The woman and her children are living together with the woman’s family.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**49<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 12 October 2006  
**Age:** 33  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER in person.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was subjected to violence throughout the duration of her mar-

riage. Her husband, who used drugs and was a thief, tried to pressure their son into practicing thievery as well. He would then beat the son because the latter refused to do so. The woman and the son were both sexually harassed by the husband’s younger brother. The woman tried to tell her husband about this, but the latter just did not believe her. He said, “My brother would never do a thing like that,” and proceeded to beat the woman and their son. One day when the husband’s brother came to their house, he sexually harassed the son once again; in tears, the son went to tell his father about what his uncle had done. The son took a beating from both his father and his uncle, after which he managed to escape and run away. The woman secretly took her other child with her and applied to KAMER to help her out of this situation and to help her find her runaway son. During this time, the woman’s husband was searching for her and threatening to kill her. The woman asked to go stay with her sibling in another province.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Put the woman up in a safe place for some time.
- In the meantime, her runaway son was found and legal procedures were begun.
- Criminal complaints were filed against her husband and brother-in-law.
- Helped her file for divorce.
- Escorted the woman for some time because her life was in danger.
- Provided financial support so that she could go to her sibling’s house.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is currently living with her sibling.
- She and her son have both found jobs and begun working. Her daughter has started school.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**50<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 12 October 2006  
**Age:** 38  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Six

**How she reached KAMER:**

A man who wished to remain anonymous called KAMER and asked for support for the applicant.

**Why she was “tried”:**

A man called KAMER and told them that a pregnant woman was being beaten by her step-parents because of gossip that had been spread about her, and that the step-parents had killed the baby in her womb. He said that the woman was in the hospital and that her life was in danger and asked for support for the woman.

**What KAMER did:**

- Went to the hospital where the woman was being treated to provide any support she may need.
- Talked with the woman’s doctor to find out about her condition.
- The woman was being accompanied by a relative of her husband’s who kept a close watch on her. Counsellors tried several different methods to get the man away from the woman and finally managed to spend a short amount of time alone with her.
- Gave the woman the Emergency Help Line telephone number and explained to her that she could call whenever she was in need of help.

**Outcome:**

- The woman, who looked frightened and anxious, took the card and hid it. She said that she was fine for the time being and would contact KAMER if necessary.
- The woman did not apply to KAMER herself thereafter.

\* \* \*

**51<sup>st</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 13 October 2006  
**Age:** 26  
**Educational status:**  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

Information was provided by a man who called KAMER.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The man who called KAMER said that the life of a married woman living in a village was being threatened because she wanted a divorce. He gave the woman’s telephone number and said that she was waiting for KAMER to call.

**What KAMER did:**

- Called the telephone number provided and talked with the woman. The woman said that she was married to her paternal cousin and that she was constantly subjected to severe violence. She explained that when she asked for a divorce because of the violence, her husband threatened to kill her.

**Outcome:**

- The woman said that she wanted to think the matter over and that she would get back to us later if necessary.
- The woman has not contacted KAMER again.

\* \* \*

**52<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 18 October 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

She applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was abducted by her husband. The man raped her and made her his third wife. The woman was beaten by her husband throughout the duration of their marriage and tried to commit suicide several times. The woman’s older sister is a sex worker in a brothel. The woman’s husband was pressuring her to go work there, too, saying, “Your sister makes money working at the brothel, you go and make some money, too.” The woman applied to KAMER because she was afraid of being sold to the brothel.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so she could be placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- She stayed in the women’s shelter for a while and then got in contact with her older brother. With her older brother’s support, she left the women’s shelter and began living with him.
- KAMER is still in touch with the woman.

\* \* \*

**53<sup>rd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 18 October 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized); is her husband’s second wife  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman eloped and got married to a man that her family did not approve of. After a while, her husband began acting violently towards her. Her husband’s other wife wanted her to leave and so she was constantly stirring up fights. Meanwhile, the woman’s family was threatening to kill her because she ran off and got married. One day while she was asleep, her husband’s other wife’s younger brother came to their house and secretly got in bed with the woman. The woman did not notice because she was asleep. When her husband saw this, he told her, “You’re secretly having affairs with other men when I’m not home,” and beat the woman nearly to death. The woman was finally able to escape with her neighbors’ help.

The woman applied to KAMER, asking to be placed in a shelter because her life was in danger.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in the women’s shelter for a while.
- During that time, she talked with her husband and eventually went back to him.

\* \* \*

**54<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 20 October 2006  
**Age:** 21  
**Educational status:** Middle school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman ran away to marry the man she loved. She had sex with the man the same day. Her boyfriend then told her, “My mother doesn’t want you for a daughter-in-law,” and sent the woman back to her family. When the woman got home, her father and paternal uncle beat her severely. They handed her a gun and tried to get her to commit suicide. When the woman refused to kill herself, they locked her up in the barn. The woman’s older brother killed the man she had run off with and was imprisoned. Meanwhile, the woman’s mother tried to support her and for this reason was subjected to violence.

The woman’s father was constantly trying to get her alone. When he finally did, he raped her. The woman managed to escape and took refuge in a nearby police station. The gendarme then referred the woman to KAMER. Her life in danger, the woman asked to be placed in a women’s shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a shelter.
- She is secretly in contact with her mother.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**55<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 22 October 2006  
**Age:** 33  
**Educational status:** High school  
**Marital status:** Divorced  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was constantly subjected to violence at the hands of her husband. When her husband decided that he wanted to marry another woman, he told her, “These children aren’t mine, I don’t trust you. You’re having affairs with other men.” He then pulled a knife on her and threatened to kill her. Another day he beat the woman for the same reason, then pulled a knife on her and tried to kill her. The woman then took her children and ran away to a friend’s house. Her husband searched for her, accusing her of having an affair and telling the neighborhood, “My wife’s cheating on me; she hasn’t been home since yesterday.” With help from friends, the woman applied to KAMER.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Started legal procedures so that the woman could benefit from law 4320 (i.e., get a restraining order against her abusive spouse).
- Helped the woman file for divorce.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in the shelter for a while.
- The woman was able to get a restraining order against her husband, in accordance with law 4320, and returned home.
- The woman’s divorce was finalized.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**56<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 29 October 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman was advised to apply to KAMER by people familiar with KAMER.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman got married and began living with her husband’s family in a different province. Her husband worked in a distant province and only came home once every few months. When the woman said that she wanted to go be with her husband, her husband’s siblings and her mother-in-law would beat her. She told her husband about this, but he responded by saying, “What can we do about it? They’re our family.”

Her husband returned home. When the woman asked to go to the room where her husband was, her sisters-in-law and mother-in-law wouldn’t let her and a fight broke out. Her husband emerged from his room and yelled, “I can’t take this any more, there’s no peace in this house,” and threw the woman out onto the street. The woman then went to the police and with their help, returned to her hometown to be with her family. Her relatives, however, said, “This is a family feud. We can’t be involved,” and refused to take the woman in. The woman, who was thus left out on the street, was advised to go to KAMER by some KAMER volunteers.

The woman applied to KAMER, saying that she wanted to divorce her husband and asking that she be placed in a women’s shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Helped her file for divorce.
- Helped her file for alimony.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**57<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 31 October 2006  
**Age:** 34  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER with help from a relative.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman, who was constantly subjected to violence by her husband, went to her family several times, asking for their support in her efforts to get a divorce. However, her family members convinced her not to get a divorce, and she ended up having to return to her husband. Her husband, an alcohol and marijuana abuser, beat the woman and slandered her. He was imprisoned several times for assault against various persons, and also stabbed his wife twice. The man accumulated a significant amount of debt, and while under the influence of drugs and alcohol, forced his wife to have sex with the men to whom he was indebted. When the effects of the drugs and alcohol wore off and his wife told him about what he had done, he accused her of lying, saying, “You have men in the house when I’m not at home, and these children aren’t even mine,” and beat her. He later beat her so badly that their neighbors intervened, rescuing the woman from her husband and taking her to the hospital. Once she got out of the hospital, the woman went to the police because she was afraid her husband would kill her. With help from the police, the woman went to the province where her family lived. Her husband then began to threaten the woman and her family, who were supporting her. When the threats continued, the woman applied to KAMER, as she was afraid of putting her family members’ live at risk.

In her application, the woman asked for help in getting a divorce and requested that she be placed in a women’s shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.

- Helped her file for divorce.
- Helped her file a criminal complaint against he husband.
- Met her basic needs.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that she could be placed in a shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in a shelter for some time.
- During this time, her family supported her from afar.
- The woman decided that her husband no longer posed a threat and so she decided to return to her family.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**58<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 2 November 2006  
**Age:** 42  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Widow  
**Number of children:** Five

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman’s daughter advised her to apply to KAMER.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman’s husband died many years ago and the woman raised their children on her own. Once the children had grown up and moved out of the house, the woman decided to get married again. She began developing a relationship with someone over the internet. The man gave the impression that he was well-off and had a good job; the woman fell for him and decided to get married. When she told him this, he replied by saying, “We’ve never met in person, I’ve never seen you,” and asked the woman to send him naked photographs of herself. He also asked the woman to send passport-sized snapshots so that he could start procedures for them to get married. The woman then sent to the man by post the requested snapshots as well as a photo of herself naked

with her face concealed.

After a while, the man called the woman and said, “I’m with my supervisor now. Come to the city where we are so he can see you, too. Then if he says we can get married, I’ll marry you straight away.” This made the woman suspicious of the man’s motives. She then found out that the man had uploaded her photographs onto the internet and realized that he trafficked women, and so she did not go to see him. The man then called and threatened her, saying, “If you don’t come I’ll dishonor you on the internet in front of everyone and get your family to kill you.”

The woman didn’t know what to do. She was frightened, and so she told her daughter about what had happened. Her daughter then instructed her to go to KAMER.

The woman applied and asked for help, saying that if her family found out what had happened, she could be killed.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- It was decided that the woman would not be recognizable in the nude photographs because her face was concealed; all possibilities of how the man might reach the woman were considered and precautions taken accordingly.
- The woman’s address and telephone numbers were changed so that the man who was threatening her could no longer reach her.
- The woman was directed to the bar association’s women’s commission.

**Outcome:**

- Because the woman’s address and telephone numbers were changed, the man who was threatening her was no longer able to get in touch.
- KAMER remains in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**59<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 4 November 2006  
**Age:** 16  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman's aunt applied to KAMER on her behalf.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman's mother was killed because of false accusations made by the woman's father. She witnessed the murder at a very young age. Her father later married another woman. The applicant and her younger sister did not get along with their step-mother. Her father made the applicant get engaged to a distant relative in order to get her out of the house. Her fiancé was off doing his military duty. When the woman said that she wanted to break off the engagement, her father told her fiancé's family, "Take your daughter-in-law to your house now. You can marry her to your son once he gets back from the military."

A relative of the woman became worried about the woman while the latter was living with her fiancé's family and called KAMER. The relative said that the woman wanted to talk with KAMER and gave them a number to call. KAMER called the number provided and talked with the woman. She told KAMER that her father was on his way to take her home, that her fiancé would return from his military service in two months time, and that she was going to try and convince her father not to make her marry him during this time.

In the period following this application:

The woman began seeing a more distant relative. She told him that she was going to be married off and asked him to run away with her. Her lover came to the province where she lived and they ran away. Her family reported the incident to the police and they were caught by the police while en route to another city. The police told the woman's family that she had been found, and the following morning the woman called KAMER asking for help. She said that her father was on his way to the police station to get her, and that when he arrived, he would kill both her and the man who ran off with her.

**What KAMER did:**

- Called the police station where the woman and the man she ran away with were being held and told them that if the woman was turned over to her family, she might be killed, and that the woman's mother had already been killed by her husband in the name of honor.
- Thanks to coordination with other groups, KAMER reached the mayor and discussed with him what they could do to help the woman.
- During this time, the woman was not turned over to her family, but taken care of by the Juvenile Department.
- Got permission from the public prosecutor to meet and talk with the woman. During the talk, the woman said that she wanted to marry the man she had run away with and move to another province. Because she was so young, she could only get married with her father's permission.
- Called the woman's father and talked with him. Though originally he seemed determined to kill his daughter, during the talks he began to change his mind.
- The tribe to which the family belonged had decided that the girl should be killed. A team consisting of the police chief, the public prosecutor, the mayor, and members of KAMER was then formed and meetings were held separately with the tribes to which the girl and the man with whom she ran off belonged. At the conclusion of the meetings, which lasted throughout the day, the tribes rescinded their death sentences and approved the marriage between the woman and the man she had run off with.
- Got the woman's father to provide written permission for the marriage.

**Outcome:**

- Once the necessary legal procedures had been completed, the woman married the man she loved. They settled in a different province.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**60<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 6 November 2006  
**Age:** 23  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married twice (both times by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via nurses at the hospital.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman’s family made the woman get married at a young age. During her second pregnancy, she was forced against her will to have an abortion under very poor conditions. She then left her husband and returned to her family. The woman divorced her husband and later married a man that she loved. This marriage happened against her mother-in-law’s will. The woman began to be subjected to violence by her husband and mother-in-law. In the meantime, she gave birth to two daughters. When the violence and false accusations against her increased, she returned to her father’s house, leaving her children behind. Her family rejected her, and so in desperation she went off to another province with the help of a friend in order to find work. In that province she met a woman who worked at a night club. Unable to find work elsewhere, the woman began working at the night club where her friend worked. Meanwhile, she met someone and began living with him. Later she became pregnant. The man she was living with suddenly disappeared, abandoning her. The woman then went to another city in search of a place to stay. A hotel owner told her that if she had sex with him, she could stay in his hotel. Desperate and with no place else to go, the woman accepted the man’s offer. After a while, the hotel owner forced the woman to have sex with other men, too. The woman had no choice but to submit. One night, unable to stand it any longer, the woman grew ill and had to be taken to the hospital. At the hospital, she told the nurses about what had happened. The woman was brought to KAMER by the nurses.

**What KAMER did:**

→ Got her psychological support.

- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.
- The woman stayed in a women’s shelter for a while, but then applied to KAMER a second time, saying that she was treated badly at the shelter and wanted to go stay with her maternal aunt who lived in a different district.
- Put the woman in touch with her aunt, as the woman had requested. The woman’s aunt said that she would support her niece.
- Covered her travel and other expenses.

**Outcome:**

- She is living with her aunt.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**61<sup>st</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 15 November 2006  
**Age:** 39  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Widow  
**Number of children:** Two

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

Following her husband’s death, the woman began living with her mother-in-law. During this time, her late husband’s younger brother sexually harassed her constantly. He acted violently towards the woman because she rejected his advances. The woman’s mother-in-law witnessed the woman’s brother-in-law sexually harassing her and then began pressuring her to marry her brother-in-law. Unable to bear the situation any longer, one night the woman secretly took her children and ran away from home. The woman had no place to go and so she took refuge at the police station. The police then referred the woman to KAMER.

The woman applied to KAMER, asking that she and her children be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women's shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**62<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 18 November 2006  
**Age:** 22  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman was abducted by her husband, who then raped her. He married her, making her his third wife. The woman was subjected to violence throughout the marriage and tried to commit suicide several times. The woman's older sister works at a brothel. The woman's husband pressured her to go work at the brothel, too, saying, "Your sister makes money working at the brothel, you should go and work there, too." Afraid of being sold to the brothel, the woman applied to KAMER for help.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.

- Got her legal counseling
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman stayed in the shelter for while and then got in touch with her older brother. Her older brother agreed to support her and so she began living with him.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**63<sup>rd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 20 November 2006  
**Age:** 26  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married but living separately from her husband  
**Number of children:** Five

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via a female lawyer.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman was frequently subjected to violence by her husband. The woman also believed that her husband was cheating on her, and she decided to get a divorce. She went to the bar association asking for help to start divorce proceedings. Her husband heard about this and decided to kill her. The woman escaped from her home and was referred to KAMER by the women's bar association.

The woman said that her husband was searching for her everywhere and asked to be placed in a women's shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Provincial Governoship and the Child Protection Agency so the woman could be placed in a women's shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**64<sup>th</sup> Applicant**

**Date of application:** 27 November 2006  
**Age:** 36  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** One

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER’s Emergency Help Line via the police.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was subjected to severe violence by her husband, an alcohol and drug abuser. After consuming drugs and alcohol and beating the woman so badly that she had to be hospitalized, her husband would come up with excuses, like, “I wasn’t in my right mind, that’s why I beat you.” One day, after consuming a large quantity of alcohol, the woman’s husband beat her nearly to death and threw her from the balcony. The woman had to be hospitalized, with an injured back and several broken ribs. She remained in the hospital for some time before being released. Upon her release, she went to the police, saying, “If I go home, they’ll kill me this time.” The police referred the woman to KAMER and she requested that she be placed in a women’s shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Helped her file a criminal complaint against her husband.
- The woman and her child were both placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman and her child are living in a women’s shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

**65<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 29 November 2006  
**Age:** 17  
**Educational status:** Middle school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself, after hearing about KAMER in the media.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman became pregnant by her lover. She told him about the pregnancy, but he said he wanted nothing to do with her or the baby. “You’ll have to take care of this yourself,” he said and left her. Desperate, the woman told her older sister about what had happened. Her sister told her, “If our family finds out, they’ll kill you. Find someplace to take refuge and get out of here quick.” The woman left home. She had heard about KAMER from the media and applied.

In her application the woman said that if she went back home, she would be killed, and so she requested that she be placed in a women’s shelter.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying at a shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**66<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 15 December 2006  
**Age:** 18  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:**

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via the gendarme station.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman and a distant relative of hers wanted to get married. Her family and the family of the person whom she wanted to marry both opposed the marriage. The man she loved was forced by his family to marry someone else. Still they could not part and continued seeing one another in secret. One night they met in an abandoned house in the village and had sex. Meanwhile, her mother and step-mother had noticed she was gone and had begun searching for her. They found her where she and her lover met. The woman’s lover ran away. The woman’s mother and step-mother beat the woman and took her home. When the woman’s family heard what had happened, her older brother told her, “You’ve dishonored our family. Both of you will die.” Frightened that she would be killed, the woman escaped from home late that night. She walked many kilometers despite the rain and snow, until she arrived at the intercity highway near dawn. A truck driver picked the woman up. When she told him that she was going to be killed, he took her to the gendarme station. The gendarme then brought the woman to KAMER so she could apply for help.

**What KA-MER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- The woman was taken to the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, accompanied by the gendarme and counselors from the Emergency Help Line, so that she could apply to be placed in a women’s shelter. The woman was placed in shelter.
- Met the woman’s basic needs during this time.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women’s shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**67<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 15 December 2006  
**Age:** 34  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Divorced  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER herself.

**Why she was “tried”:**

The woman grew up in a children’s home that belonged to the Social Services and Child Protection Agency. She therefore never saw her mother, and only saw her father a couple of times. After getting out of the children’s home, she got married. The woman’s husband went abroad to work. Later he called the woman to tell her that in order to stay there, he had to divorce her and marry a woman in that country. He convinced the woman that the new marriage would be a matter of formality only. Once divorce proceedings were over, people began to gossip that the woman was having affairs with other men. The woman’s ex-husband’s family, who lived in a different city, forcibly took her children from her. When the woman went to see her children, her ex-brothers-in-law threatened to kill her. She experienced violence and was wounded several times. Because all of their property was in her ex-husband’s name, the woman was left without any property of her own and so she began looking for work so she could make some money. She worked at temporary jobs. Later the woman’s ex-husband called his younger brothers and told them, “My wife cheated on me; kill her.” The woman then went and applied to KAMER.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.

- Got her legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the woman's father, who said that he would support her.
- Helped her file a lawsuit to get custody of her children.

**Outcome:**

- The woman is living with her father.
- The courts did not give the woman custody of her children because they did not deem her financially capable of looking after them.
- She has visitation rights and sees her children on a regular basis.

\* \* \*

**68<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 20 December 2006  
**Age:** 38  
**Educational status:** Literate  
**Marital status:** Married (by imam only; not state-recognized)  
 husband's second wife  
**Number of children:** Three

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via a non-governmental organization.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman's father forced her to marry a man, as the man's second wife, in return for payment of bride-price. She had three children by this marriage. The woman's husband constantly subjected her to violence. In recent years the woman's husband was making her watch as he and his first wife had sex.

The violence practiced against her became unbearable. Taking her children with her, she ran away to stay with a relative in another province. The woman, whose husband was searching for her, went to an NGO to ask for help. Officials at the NGO referred the woman to KAMER.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.

- Helped the woman find a job.
- Got the Social Services and Child Protection Agency to provide financial support for her children.

**Outcome:**

- The woman began working and has started a new life for herself and her children.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

**69<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 21 December 2006  
**Age:** 14  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:** -

**How she reached KAMER:**

The girl applied to KAMER via the public prosecutor's office.

**Why she was "tried":**

The girl was drugged and raped by her boss at work. She told her mother about what had happened. The girl's family talked with the man who raped her and asked him to marry her. The man, who was already married with children, did not agree to marry the girl. He offered the girl's father money as a way to exonerate himself. The girl's father accepted the man's money, but he did not tell this to his wife or daughter. After a while, the girl's father began forcing her to have sex with men for money. No longer able to stand it, the girl went to the public prosecutorship and asked for help. The public prosecutorship then referred the girl to KAMER. In her application, the girl said that she could not stand her life at home and that she did not want to go back.

**What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.

→ Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the girl could be placed in a children's home.

**Outcome:**

→ The girl is staying in a children's home run by the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.

\* \* \*

**70<sup>th</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 27 December 2006  
**Age:** 37  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married but separated  
**Number of children:** Four

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER's Emergency Help Line herself with the support of a relative.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman was raped by her step-son several times. Her step-son threatened to kill her if she told anyone about it. After a while, the woman had a psychological breakdown because of what was happening to her. When people asked her what was wrong with her, she could not tell them. Then one day, she could no longer stand it any more and so she told a relative about what was happening. Her relative then helped her to apply to KAMER.

In her application, the woman said that she couldn't tell her husband about what had happened, and that if they found out, her husband or her husband's younger brother would definitely kill her.

**What KAMER did:**

→ Got her psychological support.  
→ Got her legal counseling.  
→ Took her to a psychiatrist and she began receiving treatment.  
→ During this time, the woman decided to seek support from her family. In

accordance with the woman's request, talks were held with the woman's father. Her father said that he would support the woman and her children.

**Outcome:**

→ With support from her father, the woman began living with her younger brother who resides in another province.  
→ The woman's husband and step-son are still looking for her and her children.

\* \* \*

**71<sup>st</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 27 December 2006  
**Age:** 23  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Single  
**Number of children:** -

**How she reached KAMER:**

The woman was advised to go to KAMER by women who had participated in KAMER's group workshops.

**Why she was "tried":**

The woman had sex with her boyfriend and got pregnant. The woman concealed this from her family. After a while, her mother became suspicious and took her to the doctor, who told them that she was four months pregnant. The woman applied to KAMER, asking for help so she could get an abortion.

**What KAMER did:**

→ Got her psychological support.  
→ The woman was provided with information about her options.  
→ Told her that they could not help her get an abortion, because termination of pregnancy after four months is illegal, but told her about other means of support that they could provide.

**Outcome:**

→ With her mother's support, the woman got an abortion in unhygienic conditions.

- The woman is still living with her family.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

\* \* \*

### **72<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 28 December 2006  
**Age:** 42  
**Educational status:** Illiterate  
**Marital status:** Married but separated  
**Number of children:** Four

#### **How she reached KAMER:**

The woman and her daughter applied to KAMER in person after being advised to do so by the police.

#### **Why she was “tried”:**

The woman’s daughter had been raped by the woman’s husband. After this incident, the woman told her husband that she could no longer live with him and, taking her daughter, left the house. She filed a lawsuit against her husband. The husband’s brothers accused the woman and her daughter of “besmirching the family honor” and decided that the two should be killed. Their lives in danger, the woman and her daughter applied to KAMER, asking that they be placed in a women’s shelter.

#### **What KAMER did:**

- Got them psychological support.
- Got them legal counseling.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so that the woman and her daughter could be placed in a shelter.

#### **Outcome:**

- The woman and her daughter are staying in a shelter.
- They are looking for work so that they can start a new life in the province where the shelter is located.

### **73<sup>rd</sup> Applicant:**

**Date of application:** 30 December 2006  
**Age:** 45  
**Educational status:** Elementary school  
**Marital status:** Married (state-recognized)  
**Number of children:** Four

#### **How she reached KAMER:**

The woman applied to KAMER via a relative.

#### **Why she was “tried”:**

The woman was frequently subjected to violence by her husband. An alcoholic, her husband would beat her, throw her out on-to the street, and threaten to kill her. The woman eventually became paralyzed with fright. When the woman’s husband beat her and threw her out on the street yet again, the woman took her young child and sought refuge at her younger sister’s. Her husband then accused the woman, saying, “You went to your sister’s so you could be with your brother-in-law; you’re having an affair with him,” and threatened to kill her and her brother-in-law.

Desperate, the woman came to KAMER, bringing her child with her. She said that her life was in danger and asked that she be placed in a women’s shelter.

#### **What KAMER did:**

- Got her psychological support.
- Got her legal counseling.
- Provided financial support to meet the needs of the woman and her child.
- Got in touch with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency so the woman could be placed in a women’s shelter.

#### **Outcome:**

- The woman is staying in a women’s shelter.
- KAMER is still in contact with the woman.

# IV

## What are Honor Killings?

### Defining Killings Committed in the Name of Honor

This chapter contains a statistical evaluation of the information concerning women in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian provinces who asked for KAMER's help during 2003-2006 because they found themselves threatened by an honor killing.

#### Years when the women asked for help

Years	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
2003	23	14.6
21-25	22	19.6
26-30	12	19.6
31-35	14	46.2
Total	85	100.0

In 2003, when the Diyarbakır section of KAMER began working on the subject of honor killings, 23 women asked for its help because they felt threatened by an honor killing. The equivalent number in 2004 was 31 women, and again 31 in 2005. In 2006 this rose to 73. In 4 years, a total of 158 women asked for help.

There may be a variety of reasons behind the fact that while the numbers of

the first three years were close to each other, in 2006 the number of requests more than doubled. The main reason is most likely that in 2006, KAMER opened centers in 23 cities of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, thus facilitating women's requests. In addition to this, activities run since 2003 increased sensitivity towards this subject, created working models of protection from honor killing, and publicized cases when honor killings had been prevented. All these factors may have played a role in the increase of requests for help.

#### Language

Language	N	%
Turkish	49	31.0
Kurdish-Zaza	103	65.2
Other-(Arabic-Persian)	6	3.8
Total	158	100

As you can see from the table above, the mother tongue of more than half the women asking for help was Kurdish. This is a natural consequence of the fact that this project is situated in the provinces of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, where there is a high density of Kurdish population. The fact that even though Kurds predominate in this area, one third of the women asking for help should Turkish as their mother tongue, is meaningful. This situation shows that honor killings, and attempted killings for the same reason, are not particular to Kurdish culture, and that similar behavior for reasons related to honor is present also in other cultures.

### Location

City	N	%
<b>Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>91.1</b>
Diyarbakır	97	61.4
Mardin (Kızıltepe-Cizre-Midyat-Nusaybin)	20	12.7
Batman	5	3.2
Şırnak	1	0.6
Adıyaman	1	0.6
Bingöl	1	0.6
Hakkari	2	1.3
Tunceli	3	1.9
Kars	3	1.9
Muş	2	1.3
Urfa	2	1.3
Van	4	5.5
Erzincan	1	1.6
Elazığ	2	1.3
<b>Southern Anatolia</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3.2</b>
Mersin	2	1.3
Adana	1	0.6
Mersin	2	1.3
<b>Marmara Area and Foreign Countries</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5.7</b>
Istanbul	5	3.2
Foreign Countries	4	2.5
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100</b>

91% of those asking for help lived in various provinces of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia. The biggest concentration with 61% was Diyarbakır, where KAMER headquarters are located; Diyarbakır was followed by Mardin, both the city and the towns in the province, with 18%. The fact that there was such a concentration in the province of Diyarbakır may be due to the fact that KAMER's activities were especially concentrated in this city, but also to the fact that while it is difficult to hide in villages, towns, and small cities, it is easier in bigger cities, with the result that escapees tend to seek refuge in them. 3% of the requests for help happened in the three provinces of Southeastern Anatolia. Nine requests for help originated from the Marmara Area and foreign countries (5.7%). Requests from foreign countries and Istanbul were made by means of phone calls. Those requesting help were supported by means of phone and written communication.

### Did the woman immigrate to the province where she lives? If so, why?

Did she immigrate?	N	%
<b>Yes</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>36.1</b>
Reason for immigration		
Security	26	45.6
Marriage-divorce	27	47.4
Work	4	7.0
<b>No</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>63.9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>

57 of the women (36%) immigrated to the provincial center of the province where they were living. 27 women (47.4%) immigrated to a different city for marriage reasons. 26 of the women (45.6%) migrated for security reasons. Emigration for security purposes was due to expropriation or to armed conflict, with one person running away from a blood feud that threatened her life. There were four people who emigrated for work. Two of these emigrated for the sake of their husband's work, one her father's work, and one for education.

## Demographic status of those asking for help

### Age group

Age	N	%
13-17	17	10.8
18-25	68	43.0
26 and over	72	45.6
Unknown	1	0.6
Total	158	100

The youngest of the women asking for help was 13, while the oldest was 54. The average age of the total was 26. 47% of the women were over 25, while 43% were within the 18-25 age group. Those younger than 18 made up only 11% of the total.

### Educational status

Education	N	%
<b>No education</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>55.1</b>
Literate	34	21.5
Illiterate	53	33.5
<b>Elementary-junior high</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>31.0</b>
Elementary	31	19.6
Junior high	18	11.4
<b>Senior high-higher education</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13.3</b>
Senior high	17	10.8
Higher	4	2.5
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.6</b>
General Total	158	100

The great majority of women asking for help, 87 (55.1%), were uneducated and most of them were also illiterate. One third of the group (49 women; 31% of the total) had completed either elementary school or junior high. The percentage of women having completed senior high or higher education was very low: 21 women (13.3%). The fact that as the level of education rises, the number of women who seek help from the danger of honor killings decreases, is very important from the point of view of a correct interpretation of the honor killing phenomenon. We can conclude that families that let their daughters study also grant them partial freedom of movement and of making decisions for themselves. In addition to this, such families may be more supportive and accepting than others, and may at least have a greater capacity to resist social pressure.

### Work status

Does she work?	N	%
<b>Evet</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8.2</b>
Worker	12	92.31
Civil servant	1	7.69
<b>No</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>91.8</b>
Total	158	100.0

Almost all the women asking for help were unemployed. Only one of the employed, a civil servant, had a regular job, while the others were irregularly employed as shop assistants, secretaries, cotton pickers, and other blue collar work.

### Marriage status

Marriage status	N	%
Unmarried	56	35.4
Married	80	50.6
Widow	12	7.6
Married but separated	10	6.3
Total	158	100

Of the women asking for help, 56 (34.4%) were unmarried, 80 (50.6%) married, 12 (7.6%) widows, and 10 (6.3%) married but living separately from their spouses. The category of widows includes also divorcees, in addition to real widows. As for those who are married but separated, they are those who escaped from their abusive spouses and who took refuge with their families or others.

#### Marriage age

Marriage age range	N	%
13-17	41	43.6
18-25	46	48.9
26 and over	7	7.4
Total	94	100.0

The youngest age at which women married is 13, while the oldest is 39. The average marriage age is 19. As it can be observed in the table, only 7 (7.4%) women married after the age of 25, and among the married women, half or 46 women (48.9%) married between the ages of 18-25. Almost half of the women, 41 women (43.6%), married or were made to marry even though they had not yet reached legal marriage age; in other words, they married when they were in the 13-17 age range. On the basis of these results we can state that the fact that half of the women had married when older than 18 meant that by the time they had married they had reached physical and moral maturity, but on the other hand, an average marriage age of 19 is much lower than the marriage age of

#### How they married

How they married	N	%
Unknown	4	3.9
By mutual agreement of the families	50	49.0
With a relative	17	16.7
By mutual agreement of the two parties	13	12.7
By force	11	10.8
By elopement	7	6.9
Total	102	100.0

educated girls. What is more tragic is that almost half of married women had been made to marry when they were still children.

50 women who had married according to the wishes of their families made up half of the group (49%). Of the 17 women (16.7%) who married relatives, six had been exchanged for a female member of the groom's family as part of a berdel arrangement. Some of the 11 (10.8%) women who had been forced to marry had become second wives (kuma), while the total number of such second wives within the group is also 11. The percentages of women, who married of their own free will, 13 (12.7%), or who had eloped, seven (6.9%), are very low. Some of those within the group to have married in this way faced the danger of being killed for their choices.

#### Number of children

Number of children	N	%
<b>1-3</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>52.2</b>
1 child	24	20.9
2 children	20	17.4
3 "	17	14.8
<b>3 and over</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27.0</b>
4 children	10	8.7
5 "	13	11.3
6 or more	7	6.0
None	16	13.9
<b>Pregnant</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7.0</b>
Total	115	100.0

The number of children varied between one and ten. 24 (52%) of these women had one child, 20 (17.4%) two children, and 17 (14.8%) three children. There were 23 (21%) women with three to five children and seven (6 %) with more than five children. 16 (13.9%) had no children. Eight (7%) of the women were pregnant. Of the pregnant women, six were unmarried and had become pregnant as a result of rape. Of the unmarried women, six had children born out of wedlock. Some of the women who had got pregnant as a result of rape

had given birth and then ceded the child either to an orphanage or in adoption, while others had aborted their pregnancy.

**Violence to which these women were subjected in addition to the threat of being killed for reasons related to "honor"**

Perpetrators of violence	N	%
Family of the woman	60	38.0
Family of the spouse	15	9.5
Spouse	74	46.8
Other	9	5.7
Total	158	100.0

The women asking for help had suffered especially from the violence of their own spouses: 74 women (46.8%). The second biggest group was the one made up of women subject to the violence of their own family: 60 women (38%). The member of the family that was most commonly the perpetrator of violence was the father (43 individuals or 27.2%), followed by a male brother (6 individuals 3.8%) and the mother (five individuals, or 3.2%). There were 15 women (9.5%) who stated that they had been subjected to violence by members of the family of the spouse. Among these members using violence were brothers-in-law and step sons. The number of women who stated that they were the victims of violence by their rapists, boyfriends, employees of the institution where they lived, kid-nappers, people phoning them, and society was, nine (5.7%).

**Duration of violence**

Duration of violence	N	%
0-1 year	73	46.2
2-5 years	56	35.4
6 years and more	29	18.4
Total	158	100.0

As for the duration of violence, the majority, 73 women (46.2%), stated that the violence to which they were subjected varied between once and one year. 56 (35.4%) stated that the violence lasted between 2-5 years, while 29 women (18.4%) had been the victims of violence for more than five years.

**Information concerning the death sentence**

**Who issues the death sentence**

Who issues the death sentence	N	%
The family of the woman	56	35.4
The family of the spouse	15	9.5
The spouse	55	34.8
Others	8	5.1
All of them	19	12.0
The spouse and his family	5	3.2
Total	158	100.0

Among the groups issuing the death sentence, the family of the woman was in first place: the death sentence of 56 women (35.4%) was issued by her own family. Among the people influencing the decision, the father was in first place (37 individuals; 23%), followed by the brother and uncle.

The spouse occupies second place in the list of people issuing the death sentence: 55 women (34.8%). In the case of 19 women (12%), the death sentence was issued jointly by the families of both the spouse and the woman.

The others category, eight individuals (5.1%), was made up of the kidnapper, the harasser, the rapist, those convincing the family council to issue the death sentence so as to hide incidents of rape or harassment, and society.

Five women (3.2%) stated that only the spouse and his family influenced the decision. What is clear from the table is that the family of the woman took the decision and that it was frequently the father's verdict that was imposed. Once the woman marries, the spouse takes the place of the father, and also the "powers" of trying and sentencing. Perhaps most striking of all in this category is the "all of them" group, which includes families, the spouse, and society all together.

### The educational status of those issuing the death sentence

The educational status of those issuing the death sentence	N	%
Illiterate	65	41.1
Literate	42	26.6
Elementary school	31	19.6
Junior high	8	5.1
Senior high	11	7.0
Higher education	1	0.6
Total	158	100.0

The great majority of those influencing the death sentence (107 individuals; 67.7%) were uneducated. While 65 individuals (41.1%) were illiterate, 42 individuals (26.6%) were literate though uneducated.

Following the uneducated were those (39; 24.7%) who had completed their basic studies; of the latter, 31 individuals (19.6%) had completed their elementary studies and eight individuals (5.1%) junior high. 12 individuals (7.6%) had completed either high school or higher education; of these, 11 individuals (7.0%) had completed senior high, with only one individual (0.6%) having graduated from higher education.

This data tells us that as the level of education rises, the propensity to honor killings decreases. The fact that almost all members of the group should have no or little education is noteworthy; the relation between the level of education and the propensity to commit honor killings is an important piece of data that should give us pause and which calls for serious contemplation.

### The economic status of people who were influential in the death sentence

The economic status of people who were influential in the death sentence	N	%
Low	59	37.3
Middle	76	48.1
High	23	14.6
Total	158	100.0

The economic status of people who were influential in the death sentence was mostly of mid level (76 individuals, or 48.1%), followed by low level, (59 individuals, or 37.3%), and higher level, (23 individuals, or 14.6%). As can be seen from the table, there is no relation between economic status and the propensity to honor killings. People of every economic level can have such a propensity.

### Reasons for the death sentence

Reasons for the death sentence	N	%
Disobedience	37	23.4
Slander	27	17.1
Meeting-eloping with lover	23	14.6
Being raped or harassed	19	12.0
Pregnancy out of wedlock	14	8.9
Running away from home	11	7.0
Loss of virginity	9	5.7
Other	18	11.4
Total	158	100.0

The death sentence can be issued for various reasons. The top reason was disobedience, which led to the death sentences of 37 women (23.4%). Disobedience could be of various types: refusing to marry the person chosen by the family; refusing sex with a brother-in-law or father; refusal to prostitute oneself; refusal of marriage; complaining about her husband, who might have raped her daughter, or the fact that during daily life, women might disobey, protest, or answer back to their fathers, husbands, brothers, or elders.

27 (17.1%) of the women stated that a decision had been taken to kill them as a result of slander. Slander could take the shape of gossip, baseless stories, or being branded as a prostitute for going about, wearing makeup, or dressing in a different way. 23 women (14.6%) had been sentenced to death because they had an encounter with a loved one or for elopement or for a relation with another man, and 19 women (12%) because they had been raped or harassed. Rapes and harassment took the following shapes: being raped by the boss, being raped by the father, becoming pregnant as a result of rape by the father, rape by

an uncle and subsequent pregnancy, and rape by a step-son.

Some of the women who had been raped did not keep quiet about it, and this had resulted in a death sentence. 14 women (8.9%) were under the threat of death for a pregnancy outside wedlock. 11 women (7.0%) had been sentenced to death for having run away from home as a result of cruelty or violence, and nine women (5.7%) for getting pregnant.

Some women were sentenced to death because they were accused of lacking virtue, of having been a sex worker in the past, or of having worked in a night club, while others were sentenced as a result of a blood feud, for not accepting a second marriage by her husband while still married to him, or for wanting a divorce.

#### How long did it take to reach a death sentence?

Time spent in deciding	N	%
<b>1-3 months</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>89.9</b>
less than a month	88	22.2
2 months	35	12.0
3 months	19	
<b>4-11 months</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10.1</b>
Total	158	100.0

The time that elapsed between the moment that the family council began to discuss the matter or from the moment that the subject was first broached and the carrying out of the decision varied within a range of 1-3 months for 142 women (89.9%). The decision was reached within one month in the case of a majority of women: 88 (22.2%). It lasted between 4-11 months only in the case of 16 (10.1%) women.

This data proves clearly that not much time passes from the moment a decision is taken to the moment it is carried out. This shows the importance of quick action when operating in relation to such circumstances.

#### Was the woman forced to attempt suicide?

Was she forced to attempt suicide?	N	%
Yes	23	14.6
No	135	85.4
Total	158	100.0

23 of the women (14.6%) were forced to attempt suicide as a way of carrying out the death sentence. This information is important since it shows the relation between suicides in that area and honor killings.

#### Were there family members killed or forced to attempt suicide for honor reasons?

Were there family members who were killed or forced to attempt suicide?	N	%
<b>Yes</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4.4</b>
Herself	2	
Her daughter	2	
Her sister	1	
Her mother	2	
<b>No</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>95.6</b>
Total	158	100.0

In seven of the women's families there were other family members who had been sentenced to death, forced to attempt suicide, or killed for honor reasons; of the seven, two were the women themselves, two their daughters, two their mothers, and one her sister. Even if these numbers are not high, the existence of people who were previously killed shows how real this danger is.

#### The women's sources of support

The number of women being supported is very low: 43 individuals (27.2%). A great majority, or in other words, 115 individuals (72.8%), got no support whatsoever during this predicament. People who did give support were generally members of the woman's family: the mother in the case of 15 women, a sister in the

### Are there family members supporting the woman?

Is the woman being supported?	N	%
<b>Yes</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>27.2</b>
By her family	39	
By her spouse or her spouse's family	4	
<b>No</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>72.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>

case of ten, and an elder brother in the case of 4. Other family members who provided support were daughters, uncles, aunts, and cousins. In the case of one woman, a friend provided support.

There were only four women who were supported by the spouse and the spouse's family: in two cases the spouse supported the woman, in one the mother-in-law, and in another the step-son. According to the data gathered, almost all supporters are women.

These results show very clearly how little support women ultimately get in such cases. The importance of increasing the number of women's initiatives, women's

### Who is the person with the most authority in the family?

The person with the most authority in the family	N	%
Father	62	39.2
Uncle	1	0.6
Elder brother	7	4.4
Everybody	11	7.0
Father-in-law	11	7.0
Spouse	47	29.7
The family of the woman	5	3.2
Brother-in-law	5	3.2
The family of the spouse	8	5.1
The kidnapper	1	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>

centers, shelters, psychological support centers, and legal support centers active in this matter is evident.

The distribution of the family members with most authority is as follows: father (39.2%), spouse (29.7%), father-in-law (7.0%), everybody (everybody in the families of both the woman and the spouse) (7.0%), the family of the spouse (5.1%), elder brother (4.4%), the entire family of the woman (3.2%), the brother-in-law (3.2%), the uncle (0.6%), and the kidnapper (0.6 %).

### Information about how applicants reached KAMER and the aftermath of the application process

#### How KAMER was contacted

The woman applied (via)	N	%
Herself	28	17.7
A relative	17	10.8
Her lawyer	16	10.1
An official institution (police-hospital)	43	27.2
Other institutions (women's center-the press)	11	7.0
Stranger	29	18.4
Phone	14	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The following is the distribution of the means by which women applied to KAMER for help: The women applied themselves: 28 (17.7%); they were brought by a relative: 17 (10.8%); their lawyers submitted the request for help: 16 (10.1%); they were sent by official institutions like the police or a hospital 43 (27.2%). Actually there is only one woman who was sent by a hospital, while the other 42 women in the last category were sent by the police. NGOs concerned with women's affairs sent three women to KAMER, while the media referred eight women; thus in total, 11 women (7.0%) were referred by non-governmental organizations. There were also 29 women (18.4%) who were brought to KAMER by strangers who had found the women desperately wandering in the streets, and 14 women (8.9%) contacted KAMER by phone.

**The women's birth registration status at the moment when they asked for help**

Birth registration status	N	%
No registration	5	3.2
Registered, but no ID	20	12.7
Registered and has ID, but ID left at home	11	7.0
Brought ID	122	77.2
Total	158	100.0

At the moment that they asked KAMER for help, 122 women (77.2%) had their IDs on them, 20 women (12.7%) were registered but had no IDs, 11 women (7.0%) were registered and had IDs but had left them at home, and five women (3.2%) were not registered at all. KAMER helped 11 women to get IDs issued in their names. The fact that the great majority of women brought their IDs when they came to KAMER is a source of satisfaction. The reason for this might be that in that area there are frequent requests to show IDs, but also that the women had heard that it was a good idea to have their IDs on them when coming to KAMER.

**What did KAMER do?**

Action taken by KAMER	N	%
Ensure the woman's safety	132	83.5
Direct her to a place where she could get psychological support	153	96.8
Find a place in a shelter	103	65.2
Provide legal help	103	65.2
Provide medical help	25	15.8
Have an ID issued	13	8.2
Talk with the family	9	5.7
Find work	10	6.3
Provide information	4	2.5

Of the women who asked for help because they were threatened by an honor killing, KAMER sent 153 (96.8%) to a place where they could get psychological help, helped ensure the safety of 132 (83.5%), found a place in a shelter for 103 (65.2%), provided legal help for 103 (65.2%), provided medical help for 25 (15.8%), had IDs issued for 13 (8.2%), provided a job for ten, talked to the families of nine, and provided sources of information to be used when necessary to four.

All the women who requested help received the support they needed, including financial support.

From the above mentioned data it is clear that each woman received more than one kind of support.

**Result**

Result	Sayı	%
Died	3	1,9
Living with her own family	34	21,5
Made a new life for herself somewhere else	42	26,6
Contacts severed	53	33,5
Lives separately	17	10,8
Her spouse took her back	1	0,6
Lives near relatives	2	1,3
Other	6	3,8
Total	158	100,0

Of the women who asked KAMER for help, 53 (33.5%) severed contacts after receiving help. 42 (26.6%) made a new life for themselves in another city or in another country, and some married the men that they were in love with. 34 (21.5%) live of their own free will with their families or with a member of the family (sister, brother). 17 (10.8%) live separately from their spouse, and of those, one of the former spouses has received a penal sentence. Of the women who asked for KAMER's help, six (3.8%) are living in a shelter or in an orphanage or children's home or have been adopted by a family or have been made to marry their rapist. Three (1.9%), having already been attacked, contacted KAMER from the hospital but, being seriously wounded, later died. 2 (1.3%) are

living with relatives and one (0.6%) was got back together with her spouse.

**A detailed look at some of the happy endings: Cases where the women are alive, but dependent**

Following a stay at a shelter, some of the women have settled with distant relatives, some continue living with their spouse's family, while some have been taken back by their own families. Some have aborted and continue living with their family, some live with their sisters. Some stayed at a shelter, and following negotiations returned to the family. Some went to their brothers. Some stayed at a shelter and then settled with distant relatives. One has been taken in by her spouse and is living with him. Some stayed at a shelter, and then started working.

**Happier instances, where the women are both alive and independent**

Some of the women made new lives for themselves, some even going to a foreign country to get married and start a new life there. Others have divorced but are still living with their children. In other examples, meanwhile, the woman has left her parents' home, taking her daughter with her and renting a home of her own while her husband was given a prison sentence; married her lover; been allowed to marry the man she eloped with; got custody of her children while staying in a women's shelter and continues to live with them; found a job after leaving the women's shelter.

Of those living under protection, experiences are equally myriad: There are those who gave birth at the shelter, who found work, who are living at an orphanage, who are living at a women's shelter together with a daughter, who are furthering their education with support from the Social Services and Child Protection Agency while living at a shelter, or who have been adopted by a rich family.

**Those with whom all contact ceased, once they were placed in or left the women's shelter.**

**And those which sadden us so deeply:**

She was made to marry her rapist.

He killed himself so as not to have to kill his wife.

She was wounded, and later she died.

# V

## Notes from KAMER

### The Feminism of KAMER

We have noticed that in order to explain more clearly the work conducted by the Women's Center (KAMER) for women's human rights, we need to use a different language from the usual. We believe that this is the only way for us to go beyond answering questions on "what we do, where we work, how many women are subject to violence, how many women we have supported, what we have done about honor killings," etc.

All of the said work is important of course, but it should not be considered as stand-alone work. Every project is important in that it is part of the process which lets us learn from each other and helps us form our policy for work with women.

We believe that in order to explain what KAMER is about, it is important to answer questions on "how we got started, what we learned from each other, what we discovered, what we changed, where we are going" and to emphasize the process of reciprocal learning.

KAMER was officially founded in 1997. But work conducted before that date was also important. The idea of KAMER first developed in 1993-95, when regional violence was at its peak. In 1997, KAMER gained legal status. In the following years it developed new areas of work and new projects were realized.

KAMER operates in 23 provinces, but we are endeavoring to expand into the districts as well.

"We" women now number in the thousands.

There are significant differences between how we were when we started and how we are now. We were feminists then, and we are feminists now. But there is a difference between who we were then and who we are now, a difference due to

experience—the experience of ten years of work.

Most importantly, we used to whisper that we were feminists, but now we can shout it. Hundreds of us are now able to say, “We are feminists.”

We believe that feminism is a process of discovery and of change. In this article, we would like to tell you about the journey we have taken with feminism.

Initially, our first awareness was that regarding “violence.” Each one of us was subject to violence, directly or indirectly. Violence under custody, on the street, in offices, even at home...

What kind of violence was this?

Since it was so painful, why were people inflicting it upon one another in such a natural way?

We were continuously reminded that we were women. Were we the only ones who failed to notice, failed to remember this?

These questions helped us to become aware of the private sphere called home, and of our position within the home. The least talked about and the most common, the most habitual type of violence happened within homes. Talking about this aspect of violence was either frowned upon or it was considered unimportant. Other types of violence, such as the violence occurring under custody, or on the streets, were considered more important.

Our starting point was a difficult one. We were aware that we might be isolated, be marginalized and demeaned. Many of us started to consider the question of violence by looking at instances of it under custody or on the streets. Later on we understood the link between the different types of violence and we realized that what happened at home was the starting point of all other types of violence.

When we started discussing the idea of working on women’s issues, people around us started advising us on what to do, how to do it and who to work with.

Everybody acted innocent. No one even wanted to think that they themselves might have been influenced by the male-dominated society.

We thus realized to what degree sexism had become internalized, and how we needed to look at ourselves, at our acquaintances, at all organizations and all people. And that is how we came to realize that we needed to organize ourselves independently.

Although we declared that we supported women’s human rights, we knew that it would not be easy to understand the difference between independence

and neutrality. Yet, we chose to organize ourselves independently.

Although the majority of the women whom we would work with, or whom we planned to support, defined themselves as Kurdish, we did not wish to be a Center for Kurdish Women. We did not want to limit ourselves to a single identity; we believed in each and every woman and we wanted for KAMER to become a Center also for women who are not Kurdish or who do not define themselves as Kurdish.

In order to question sexism, and to develop an area independent of our other concerns, we started reflecting on our own condition and our own experiences. We questioned our role within this environment of violence and discrimination and how we were oppressed and how we oppressed others.

While undergoing this difficult period of “discovering sexism and embarking on feminism,” we suffered a strong feeling of homelessness.

We learned through experience that the only ones to offer support in this transition period were women and women’s organizations. We realized that this individual awareness process was difficult and shocking for women and that support and solidarity were of critical importance.

We realized that violence was to be found everywhere and in different forms. We decided to concentrate on domestic violence, which we considered to be an issue of essential importance. There were non-governmental organizations dealing with violence occurring under custody and on the streets, but there were no organizations dealing with domestic violence. Even talking about *domestic* angered people, for everybody played a part in this large-scale violence.

While dealing with domestic violence, we encountered the most brutal as well as the most subtle forms of violence.

We discovered that all women, regardless of their language, religion, education, and social environment, suffer violence in various ways.

We realized that declaring support for human rights meant ignoring women’s human rights and the inequality between sexes, and thus rendered service to sexism. We were distressed to discover that many people and organizations who declared they opposed sexism, actually supported the system via their approach to women’s work and to feminism, and that they defended rather than opposed sexism.

Although we underwent significant individual awareness processes, we realized that looking at the extent of the harm inflicted upon our personalities by the sexist system was not something we could deal with individually. We under-

stood that behaviors such as hierarchy, competition, discrimination, and keeping “personal” problems private recurred over and over again and that no one was capable of suddenly becoming aware of such behavior and changing it.

We thus realized the importance of collective work, from the point of view of support and solidarity, as well as mutual learning.

We realized that unless we established equal relationships, overcame our feelings of competition, perceived the more subtle forms of violence, behaved openly, delivered positive and negative criticism, and were ready to listen to what others had to say, there was always the risk of recreating sexism.

We realized that traditional values were values aiming to objectify us, and that we needed to question and transform each value completely.

We became aware that a new world could only be created if we recreated ourselves. We started to make an effort not to judge, not to despise, not to order, and not to prescribe solutions, but to develop a language and behavior based on empathy.

We were not ashamed to expose the thought and behavior patterns that had taken us captive. We were able to understand that these patterns resulted from roles in which we were cast, that we had accepted them unquestioningly, and that questioning would now be possible via feminism.

We realized that most traditional values caused resignation and submission to violence, prevented participation, transparency, and individual development, and continued to create inequality.

Feminism helped us develop curiosity during this long journey. Thank to this curiosity, we recognized our different identities. We were freed from the constriction of a single identity and started enjoying our multi-identities.

Fascinated by the enchantment of awareness and transformation, we increased in number, we developed. We understood that the more we gained strength, the more violence would weaken, the more we changed, that the more the world would change.

We started sharing our discoveries and our knowledge with men. We told them of the different types of violence to which we were subjected. We talked about how they perceived and lived their masculinity.

The more we talk, the more we realize that sexism is a vast policy dominating the whole world. We are currently seeing how militarism and sexism are intricately involved and how they feed on each other.

Sometimes we are afraid of our discoveries. Sometimes we think that what we

are doing is not enough and that we should be doing more. Every time this happens we stagger and hesitate. But every time we accept that this is our only chance, we pick ourselves up and we start all over again.

We know that feminism is indispensable for a world free of hierarchies, discrimination, and violence, a world based on sharing and solidarity, on transparency, participation, on support for what is right and what is just.

From a few women, we have now become thousands of women. Our journey with feminism is continuing. And our number is increasing.

We know that this is going to be a long and arduous journey.

We understand that all issues throughout Turkey and through-out the world are our issues, too. We know that resolving these issues is only possible with our participation. We are therefore endeavoring to see more, think more, change more, and grow in number.

5 February 2007  
Nebahat Akkoç  
KAMER

## Being a Woman

As we learned to be women, we used the inheritance of our grandmothers. We were shaped by what they had learned by heart...

When we were children, during dark nights without electricity, we used to listen to stories that sometimes lasted three nights. And I have realized that as our grandmothers told us the stories that they had learned from their own mothers, they would send subliminal messages to my soul. Nowadays I discover these messages anew each day.

“Don’t you dare!” each message would say. “You will be in trouble if you overstep certain boundaries, you’ll get hurt—you might even die!”

As these stories that were supposed to serve as an admonishment to me were told in extremely elaborate ways, the most traditional platitudes would pass through my ears and be engraved in my brain.

There is one such story that I shall never ever forget.

“Once upon a time, many many years ago, there was a family working for a rich landlord. Hazal, the eldest daughter of this family, would work as a shepherd together with her elder brother. One day, as she was watching over the animals at pasture together with her brother, Hazal felt thirsty and, filling up her jug, she drank until she was totally satisfied. She did not even notice that as she was drinking, she had swallowed a baby snake together with the water. As time went by, her belly started to swell. Everybody thought that she was pregnant. Her father said, ‘How have you managed to conceive this child? We can’t even step out of our house without feeling shame. If the agha hears about it, he will banish us from the village.’ To cleanse their soiled honor, the family entrusted her brother with the job of killing Hazal. No matter how much Hazal protested,

nobody believed her. Her brother did not want to kill his sister, but despite his sorrow, he had to do it. He had Hazal mount his horse and through the gloom of the night they set forth. Silently they left behind the village. Hazal asked her brother, ‘Brother, you are taking me where you can kill me, aren’t you?’ Her brother could not bring himself to answer. Hazal addressed her brother once more. ‘I know you are going to kill me,’ she said. ‘I have a last wish to ask you: I want to go near the stream where we always go and sleep at your knees. After that you can do what you want with me.’ Her brother accepted this, and granted Hazal’s wish. As Hazal was slept at his knees, her brother watched her, his heart heavy with sadness. It was then that the stream suddenly went wild and the waters beckoned the snake in Hazal’s belly. Hazal began to vomit. An enormous snake came out of her mouth and slithered towards the stream. Her brother, who had watched all this, returned immediately to the village and told everybody about what had happened, and thanked God that he had not killed his sister. In this way Hazal’s life was spared.”

During my childhood, I listened to many stories like this. How innocent they sound these stories, don’t they?

Everybody did everything within their power to make of me a woman as required by the sexist system.

As I was stepping into womanhood, I would greatly fancy the tattoos that the women where I lived used to apply to their hands and faces. I would have liked to have a tattoo like the one with three dots on my aunt’s hand. Once, I asked the meaning of these three dots. It seems the first meant, “I did not see,” the second, “I did not hear,” and the third, “I do not know.” My aunt told me that “if you look at this tattoo on your hand all your life, you will always remember and never forget these rules.” This was “obedience” depicted in a figurative way. You shall not see, you shall not hear, and you shall not know. In other words, you shall not even exist.

Back then, wedding ceremonies were magnificent affairs. The brides would wear beautiful dresses and have lots of gold on them. Yet they still looked so sad, as if everything was finished for them, as if life had come to an end. I, on the other hand, thought that getting married was a nice thing. I could not understand why the brides would be so sad. I found the answer to this question with my initial realizations as I took part in KAMER’s group workshops. Once a woman was married, “she would continuously serve, give birth, obey, and a completely different and much more difficult struggle would begin.” Perhaps

that was why so many tears were shed. After all, “romantic love” was the most forbidden of sentiments for women. It either did not happen, or it was experienced secretly in one’s own heart...

With the world covered in a membrane that had turned to stone, with so many rules in my life already ossified, surrounded by limits as sharp as knives... In other words, just as I had settled into a routine, I got to know KAMER. Things did not have to go on like this. I asked, questioned, and realized... The world was not as it had been taught to me.

I had been taught how to be a woman, as my very womanhood was being stolen from me. I am now taking back all the sentiments, every joy, my strength, and my dreams that had been stolen from me... And I am sharing what I have realized, with the other women at KAMER.

Each of us is multiplying by sharing with each other. We are creating our own world, as if to spite that which has been passed on to us...

**Sacide Akkaya**

## **I Am a Woman**

I am a woman. My dreams are as vast as Mesopotamia, my world is a little refuge. Even in my cradle, I was breathing in spite of my destiny. Sometimes I see lights, far away. But I can only take a few steps. If I take more, the light will become a fire and I will burn! That is why I have been living within the same circle for so many years. When I’m working in the fields, I sit on a stone, I’m lost in thoughts, I daydream. My spirit travels throughout the world, my hopes build crystal cities. I wear new shoes and a uniform... I become a doctor in a hospital, saving my dead baby, or a judge, passing sentences for all the crimes committed against me. Then I am startled, for I hear a harsh voice from within, I pull myself together and return to the field. I carry my sack on my shoulders and worry that somebody may have heard my thoughts. I walk and I sweat, my face burns in the sun, and at every heartbeat I pray that my daughter does not inherit my destiny...

I am a woman; even the grain of the bread I’m eating contains some of my labor. I don’t know why, but I eat after my husband has eaten. I wear a long skirt, but I have short tongue. I keep quiet, in accordance with our traditions. Do you know what traditions are? They are small stones, they fall from high, snow-covered mountains. The more they roll the more there are, the heavier they are and they can crush you. They are sudden. You only hear their sound at the very last moment. They are aimed at women, but they do all the negotiations with men. Their judgment is final. They feed on ignorance. There is only this thin stream running amidst all this sunlight. My greatest wish is to live there...

I am a young girl. Never mind that I am lying silent and motionless in a corner, wrapped in dirty sheets. I once wore clothes as bright and shiny as the city of Mardin on a dark night. I used to be vivacious, I used to bring happiness wherever I went. Never mind that my face has no color now, I used to be the prettiest girl in our neighborhood. One day I fell in a trap, like a poor deer. Those dirty hands touched me and destroyed my world! No one heard my voice. Only the night spilled tears for me. Then... then, they said I was black. Now I was pitch black! No amount of washing could take away all that dirt. My blood was the only remedy. The bullet was fired suddenly. I died and it went on living. I died and honor survived. My father painted the walls of our house in white and my tomb in black. The house was now clean. No one sent me a rose when I was alive. No one told me of their love. But last night a trembling hand left flowers on the ground under which I sleep. The soil listened in silence... But I never fell in love...

I was a bride. Our wedding was so great, there had never been another like it. Tents were built on the plain, people ate at banquets. Folk dancers spilled over from the squares. I was as strong as a filly, as perfect as a butterfly. I was given so much gold; I shone brighter than the sun. As soon as I stepped into my new house, my mother-in-law gave me a baby to hold, so that I may have one, too. After all, around here, being a woman means only one thing: procreation. Everybody waited for our good news. And I waited for months, just like the dead of winter waits for the sun. But to no avail. I hung my wishes on trees. I burned incense. I resorted to all kinds of remedies to break the spell; I made vows. But to no avail. They said the land is barren, it will not give forth any fruit... And one day my husband paid for a new bride and brought home a second wife. Now I lie alone and forgotten in my bed. Within my young body lives an old spirit. I never had anything of my own, but I never regretted it. Sharing my husband, however, is equal to a thousand deaths...

I was a mother. Our house, our garden was situated among mountain chains. Our village was full of thousands of fragrant flowers and waterfalls. At daybreak we would go to the orchard and we would return home at sunset. Everything belonged to us, each and every stone and blade of grass belonged to us, and so did the sun in the sky. The soil never disappointed us; it was like a mother to our children, giving back much more than it received... But dark

clouds started to gather in the sky. Up on the mountains, people started killing each other. The waterfalls turned red. Nights became nightmares, nightmares became a matter of life and death. And one night our heaven became hell. Noises hit the rocks and lodged in our hearts. This was a war with names I could not understand. It was such a fire, tears could not put it out. Birds, snakes, centipedes, sheep abandoned their little ones and ran away or were burnt that night. My baby's hands melted in mine. No prayer, no screams could bring life to that tiny heart... That morning the sun rose among the smoke. The world was covered with ashes. They told us, "Leave"... We left; mothers and fathers, and aunts, old and young. We could only take our past with us. As for our future, it no longer existed. The only path ahead took us to unknown places. Now we flutter around like blindfolded pigeons that have lost their nests and find themselves in unfamiliar places...

**Nilgün Yıldırım**

## That's the Way Things Are—But Do They Have To Be?

While still in our mothers' wombs, we get our share of the violence that our mothers are subjected to. That is how we begin life. Our mothers are hurt, they are angry, but they repress their anger. For they have been taught to RESIGN THEMSELVES and TO KEEP SILENT. Our mothers' state of mind affects us, too. Maybe that is when we start being afraid. WHO KNOWS...

Then we are born and our birth is met by silence, because "it's a girl." When we are a bit older we are told "don't talk, don't disgrace us, you are a girl."

You are continuously repressed. You ARE NOT EVEN AWARE that you have a right to talk, to think, to express your feelings. Even if you go to school, you are still under pressure. You are a girl; you must not laugh, talk, or take a walk; you cannot even go to the library or people will talk. They will say Ali's daughter was laughing or talking in the street, or taking a walk. They will find fault with you. You must be "ladylike."

Then somebody comes and asks your family for your hand. You are not asked, even if you were, you cannot—must not—say anything. You say that the elders know best and you do not think about it. You are made to marry though you are still a child. Then you continue "your life" as somebody's wife. If you listen to and obey your husband, and if everything is in accordance with his and his family's wish, then there will be no trouble.

But there is something gnawing at you, something which is not right.

You feel a conflict raging within yourself.

If you gather your courage and express your feelings, you'll be in big trouble.

They will say, "You were such an angel once, what has happened to you?"

They will become suspicious.

They will say, somebody is teaching her; she watches too much TV; her tongue has sharpened; she does not mind her steps anymore. Her tongue needs to be cut, her feet must be broken. That is how it is. We cannot have this.

To be part of this project, to feel our experiences as women and to feel other women's experiences, helps us become more aware and to question things.

But what and whom do we question?

We question what we have been taught, and what our grandmothers, grandfathers, mother, and fathers and what the society have been taught.

We question the violence that is inflicted on women.

Old fashioned practices and punishment methods dating from the age of slavery, the "judgment" and killing of women under the guise of "honor."

But the worst thing is that these murders should be considered normal!

One day I was accompanying a woman whose "death sentence" had been given. We noticed that her husband was following us. While I was trying to cover her face so that he would not see her, I felt as if I was part of some documentary film about a war.

Once again, I asked myself "Why?" and I rebelled against this situation. It was like a war, though it was not called so. Here, too, there are those who kill, and those who get killed. But it is women who are getting killed, all over the world. It is the same murder under different names, different guises. Here it is called "honor killing," in other places it is called a "passion crime."

While working in this field, we make an effort not only to help women live a more human life, but also to change and transform society.

We know that change will only be possible if we start with women, if we start by changing the situation and status of women. This problem belongs to all of humanity, not only to women. This problem can only be solved by questioning what is taught, by abolishing preconceptions, and by changing mentalities and the sexist system.

It will not be easy. It will be a long and difficult process, but seeing what we have achieved over the last ten years in spite of all the difficulties and obstacles, gives us hope.

With hope for a world free of violence...

Vildan Ayçiçek

# VI

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2005 - "Alternatif Bilinç," C.A.M, İstanbul / Türkiye

2007 - "İsimsiz Gerçek," Galeri x-ist, İstanbul / Türkiye

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2004 - "Buluşma Noktası," C.A.M, İstanbul / Türkiye

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2005 - "Genç Açılım," Kuratör: Mehmet Güleriyüz, Pera Müzesi, İstanbul / Türkiye

2005 - "Mountain Rainbow Expedition," Kazakistan, Kırgızistan

### Beni Yazmaya İten ne?

"(...)Korkularımı koymak istiyorum. Çatıları, çocukları, sözleri, özgürlükleri canlarından çalınan insanlara canım acıyor. 'Sesini kesmeli, sözünü saklamalısın...' can güvenliğinin için dendiğinde, korku ve kedere hapsedilmiş, susmaktansa; benim için değerli olan her şeyi var etmek, korumak için konuşmayalım, sormalıyım(...)"

İstanbul, 1979

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### Group Exhibitions

2004 - "Meeting Point," C.A.M, İstanbul / Turkey

2005 - "Women on their own" C.A.M, İstanbul / Turkey

2005 - "New Openings," Curator: Mehmet Güleriyüz, Pera Museum, İstanbul / Turkey

2005 - "Mountain Rainbow Expedition," Kazakistan, Kırgızistan

### What pushes me to write?

"(...) I want to chase away my fears. I suffer for those whose roofs, whose children, whose words, and whose freedom has been stolen from them. When I am told that I must 'shut up, keep quiet' for my own safety, rather than keep silent and become a prisoner of despair, I have to speak up and ask questions, in order to protect, to ensure the existence of everything that is of any value to me (...)"

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