KWDI Issue Paper

Integrated Support for Preventing Recurrence of Domestic Violence and Protecting Victims

Abstract

◆ When a household member(s) is/are victimized by another household member, there is a need for integrated support and information linkages in order to protect themselves as well as protect other household members.

◆ This study comprehensively examines the necessity and challenges of integrated support and information linkage through a literature review, examination of international policy cases, surveys targeting the general public, and focus group interviews with practitioners. As a result, it emphasizes the need to utilize a unified hotline and build a national crisis household information system, presenting a conceptual model for these measures.

Research background and purpose

◉ When violence occurs within a household, there can be multiple victims, not just one, with varying characteristics such as children, disabled individuals, the eldery, and women. Furthermore, one victim could potentially be the perpetrator against another household member. Because of these multiple victim-perpetrator relationships within a domestic violence incident, establishing an integrated support system for victims of domestic violence is crucial. This system should focus on linking various resources for a single victim as well as coordinating between support systems for multiple victims and collaboration between different departments.

◉ Within the household, which should be the safest place and a source of support, the impact of experiencing harm from a family member is significant and similar for all victims, and the type of assistance needed for recovery is largely the same. Nevertheless, due to the different legal bases for support depending on the target, the current domestic violence counseling and protection facilities overseen by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family predominantly support victims of spousal abuse, while victims of child, disability, and elderly abuse receive support through support facilities run by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, resulting in a division of services and support entities depending on the target, even for the same domestic violence.

Table 1

<Table 1> Legal basis for supporting victims of domestic violence

Category	Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims	Child Welfare Act	Welfare of Senior Citizens Act	Act on Welfare of Persons With Disabilities
Definitions	[Domestic Violence] Actions inflicting physical or psychological harm or damage to the property of family members (Article 2 of the Act On Special Cases Concerning The Punishment Of Crimes Of Domestic Violence	[Child abuse] Any adult, including a child's protector, does harm to the child's health or welfare or commits physical, mental, or sexual violence, or cruel acts that are likely to impede the child's normal growth, and the child's protector abandons or neglects the child	[Elder abuse] Act of physical, mental, emotional, and sexual violence, and economic exploitation of, or atrocities against, or desertion or neglect of, senior citizens	[Abuse of persons with disabilities] physical, mental, emotional, verbal or sexual violence, acts of cruelty, economic exploitation, abandonment or negligence towards persons with disabilities
Targets for Assistance	Those directly affected by domestic violence	Persons under 18 years of age	Persons aged 65 or older	A person with a physical or mental disability that meets the types and criteria for disability prescribed by Presidential Decree
Operating Entities	Ministry of Gender Equality and Family	Ministry of Health and Welfare	Ministry of Health and Welfare	Ministry of Health and Welfare
Delivery Systems	Emergency hotline centers, counseling centers related to domestic violence, shelters for victims of domestic violence	National Center for the Rights of the Child	Agencies for senior citizens	Disability advocacy organizations

◉ Therefore, this study was conducted to provide the basis for policies that can support the establishment of an integrated support system for victims of domestic violence by suggesting the direction of a victim-centered support system for the prevention of re-victimization and victim recovery that fits the Korean context.

Survey analysis

◉ Perception of domestic violence

◉ Upon examining the perception of domestic violence, it was found that 12.3% of respondents recognized only "violence by a husband towards his wife" as domestic violence. 11.5% of the respondents agreed that all nine types of violence listed constitute domestic violence, and 0.7% agreed that all types of violence in categories ① through ⑦, except for "violence among non-relatives or non-immediate family members living together" constitute domestic violence, indicating that only 0.7% of the respondents have an accurate understanding of the legal definition of domestic violence.

<Table 2> Types of violence associated with domestic violence

Q1. When you hear the word "domestic violence," what type of violence comes to mind?
Please select all the types of violence that come to mind.
(Multiple responses allowed)

① Violence by a husband towards his wife
② Violence by a wife towards her husband
③ Violence among siblings who are minors
④ Violence among siblings who are adults
⑤ Violence by parents or grandparents towards (grand)children
⑥ Violence by (grand)children towards parents or grandparents
⑦ Violence among non-direct relatives living together
⑧ Violence among non-relatives or non-immediate family members living together
⑨ Violence between cohabiting partners
⑩ Other

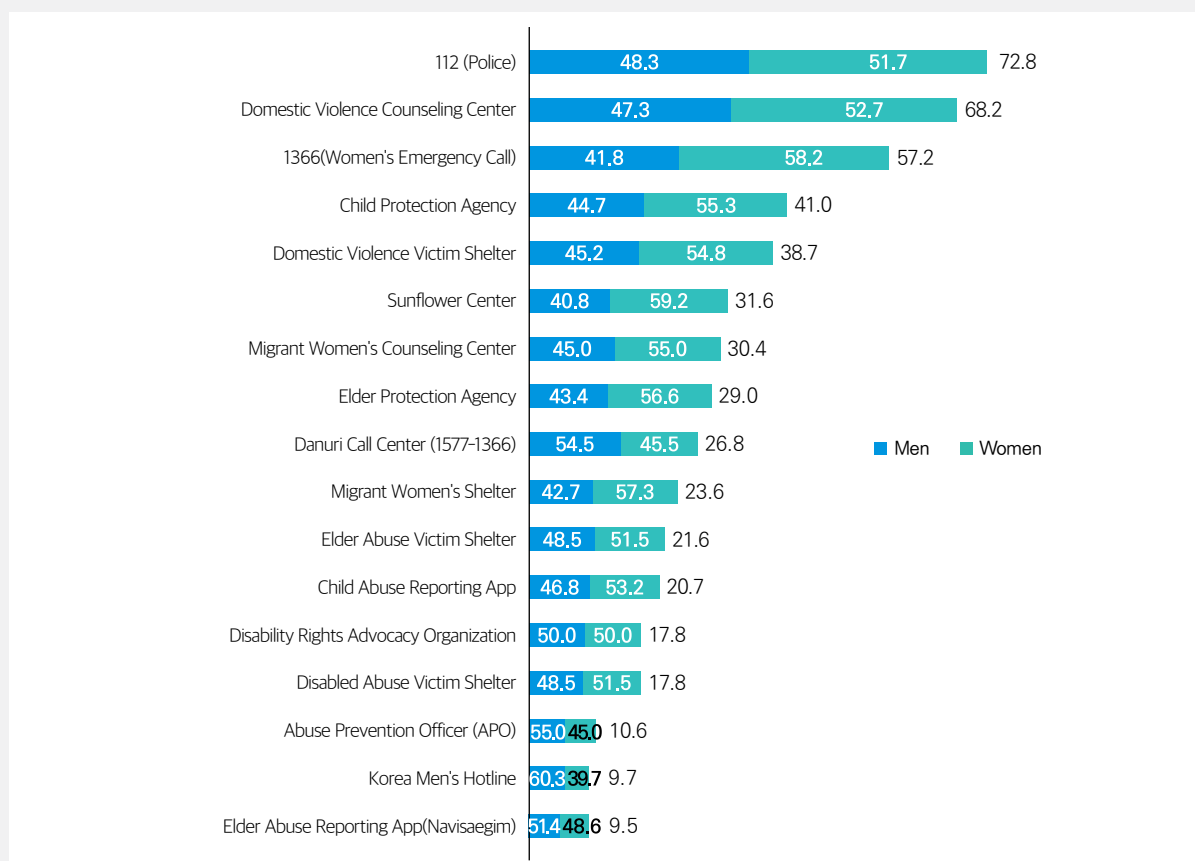## ◉ Awareness of domestic violence support organizations

◉ When respondents were asked about whom the "domestic violence support organizations" assist, the results were compared based on the respondents' experience of perpetrating or being a victim of domestic violence within their household. It was observed that respondents with experience of being victims and no experience of perpetrating violence had the highest awareness rate across the board.

<Table 3> Perceptions of whom the domestic violence support organizations assist

Category	All	Gender		Experience of perpetrating or being a victim			
		Men	Women	Experience of being a victim: Yes Experience of perpetrating: No	Experience of being a victim: No Experience of perpetrating: Yes	Experience of being a victim, Experience of perpetrating: Yes	Experience of being a victim, Experience of perpetrating: No
Number of cases	754	376	378	214	41	284	215
Wives who were victims of violence by their husbands	87.9	83.8	92.1	88.8	90.2	87.0	87.9
(Grand)children who were victims of violence by a parent/grandparent	71.6	67.6	75.7	78.0	63.4	71.1	67.4
Husbands who were victims of violence by their wives	59.5	58.8	60.3	66.4	51.2	59.2	54.9
Parents/grandparents who were victims of violence by (grand)children	56.2	51.3	61.1	59.3	56.1	58.8	49.8
Minors who were victims of violence by their siblings	55.3	50.8	59.8	59.3	51.2	58.1	48.4
Victims of violence by cohabiting partners	45.4	41.5	49.2	46.3	46.3	43.7	46.5
Victims of violence by non-direct relative cohabitants	43.0	39.9	46.0	43.9	46.3	45.1	38.6
Adults who were victims of violence by their siblings	42.7	38.0	47.4	46.3	31.7	47.2	35.3
Victims of violence by non-relatives or non-immediate family cohabitants	40.2	36.7	43.7	42.1	39.0	40.1	38.6

⦿ When asked to select multiple answers to which domestic violence organizations they were aware of, 112(police) was the highest at 72.8%, followed by domestic violence counseling centers at 68.7%, and 1366 at 57.2%. For other facilities, it was found that more than half of the respondents were unaware of them.

<Figure1> Domestic violence support organizations/facilities recognized by respondents

Organization	Men	Women	Total
112 (Police)	48.3	51.7	72.8
Domestic Violence Counseling Center	47.3	52.7	68.2
1366(Women's Emergency Call)	41.8	58.2	57.2
Child Protection Agency	44.7	55.3	41.0
Domestic Violence Victim Shelter	45.2	54.8	38.7
Sunflower Center	40.8	59.2	31.6
Migrant Women's Counseling Center	45.0	55.0	30.4
Elder Protection Agency	43.4	56.6	29.0
Danuri Call Center (1577-1366)	54.5	45.5	26.8
Migrant Women's Shelter	42.7	57.3	23.6
Elder Abuse Victim Shelter	48.5	51.5	21.6
Child Abuse Reporting App	46.8	53.2	20.7
Disability Rights Advocacy Organization	50.0	50.0	17.8
Disabled Abuse Victim Shelter	48.5	51.5	17.8
Abuse Prevention Officer (APO)	55.0	45.0	10.6
Korea Men's Hotline	60.3	39.7	9.7
Elder Abuse Reporting App(Navisaegim)	51.4	48.6	9.5

■ Men   ■ Women

※ The percentage for each item represents the response rate out of the total 754 respondents. The male and female percentages indicate the gender ratio within the respondents for each item.

⦿ **Priorities of domestic violence prevention policies**

⦿ Survey results show that ensuring the safety of victims of all types of violence was considered more important than punishing perpetrators or protecting their families. "Protecting their families" was the least frequent response across all violence types, with a frequency of 5.6-8.2%.

⦿ The policy deemed most necessary to prevent the recurrence and harm of child and disability abuse was "Ensuring the safety of children and disabled individuals is the top priority when deciding whether a victimized child or disabled individual should return to their homes," selected by 18.3% of respondents.

<Figure 2> Policy priorities for preventing recurrence of domestic abuse against children and disabled individuals

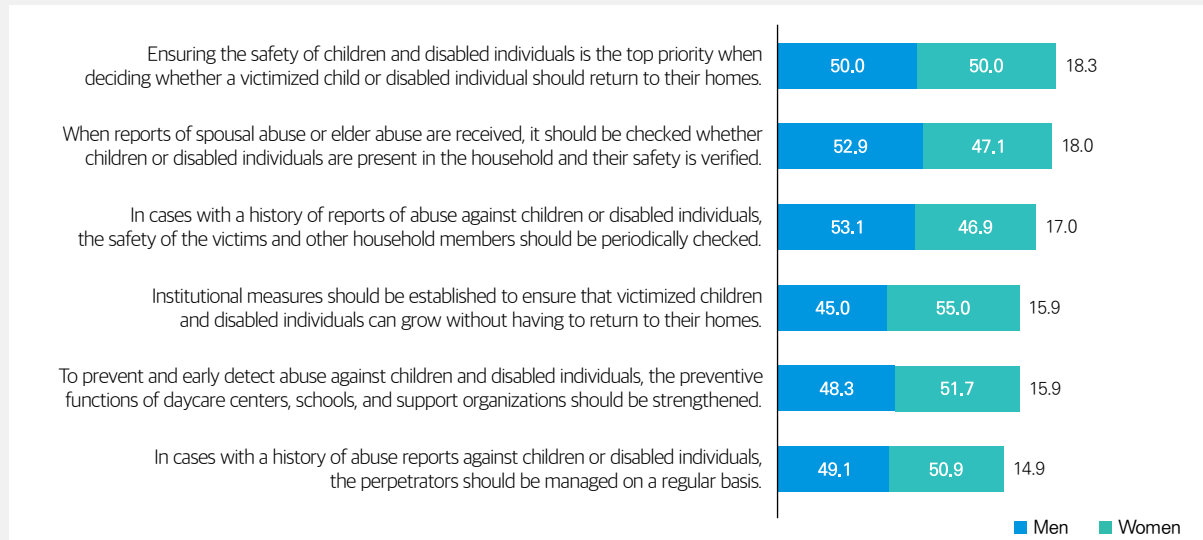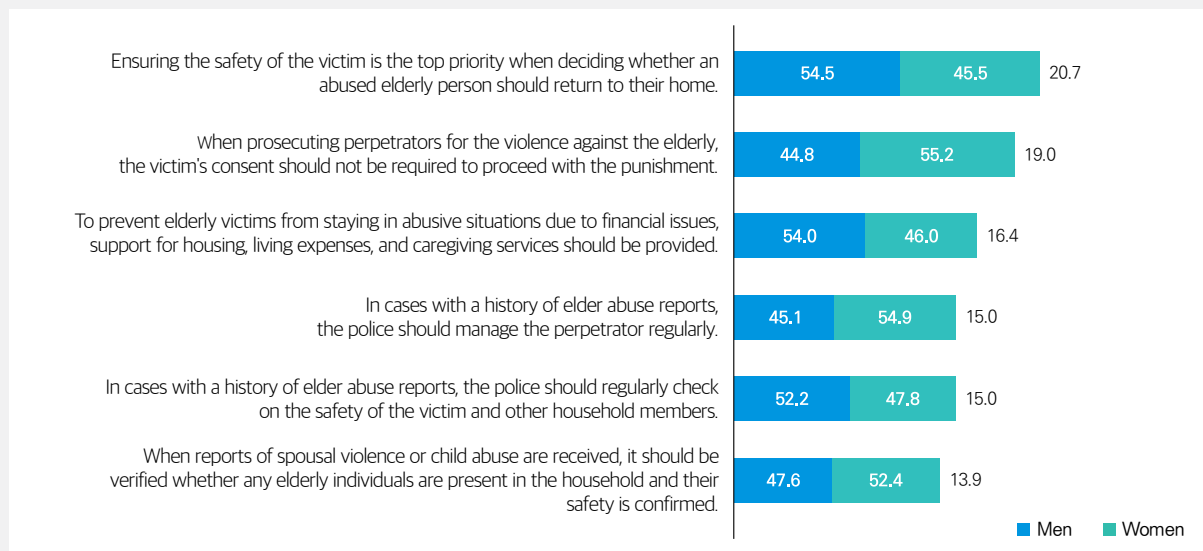| Item	Men	Women	Total
Ensuring the safety of children and disabled individuals is the top priority when deciding whether a victimized child or disabled individual should return to their homes.	50.0	50.0	18.3
When reports of spousal abuse or elder abuse are received, it should be checked whether children or disabled individuals are present in the household and their safety is verified.	52.9	47.1	18.0
In cases with a history of reports of abuse against children or disabled individuals, the safety of the victims and other household members should be periodically checked.	53.1	46.9	17.0
Institutional measures should be established to ensure that victimized children and disabled individuals can grow without having to return to their homes.	45.0	55.0	15.9
To prevent and early detect abuse against children and disabled individuals, the preventive functions of daycare centers, schools, and support organizations should be strengthened.	48.3	51.7	15.9
In cases with a history of abuse reports against children or disabled individuals, the perpetrators should be managed on a regular basis.	49.1	50.9	14.9

■ Men ■ Women

※ The percentage for each item represents the response rate out of the total 754 respondents. The male and female percentages indicate the gender ratio within the respondents for each item.

◉ When examining the policy demand regarding elder abuse, "Ensuring the safety of the victim is the top priority when deciding whether an abused elderly person should return to their homes." received the highest response rate at 20.7%.
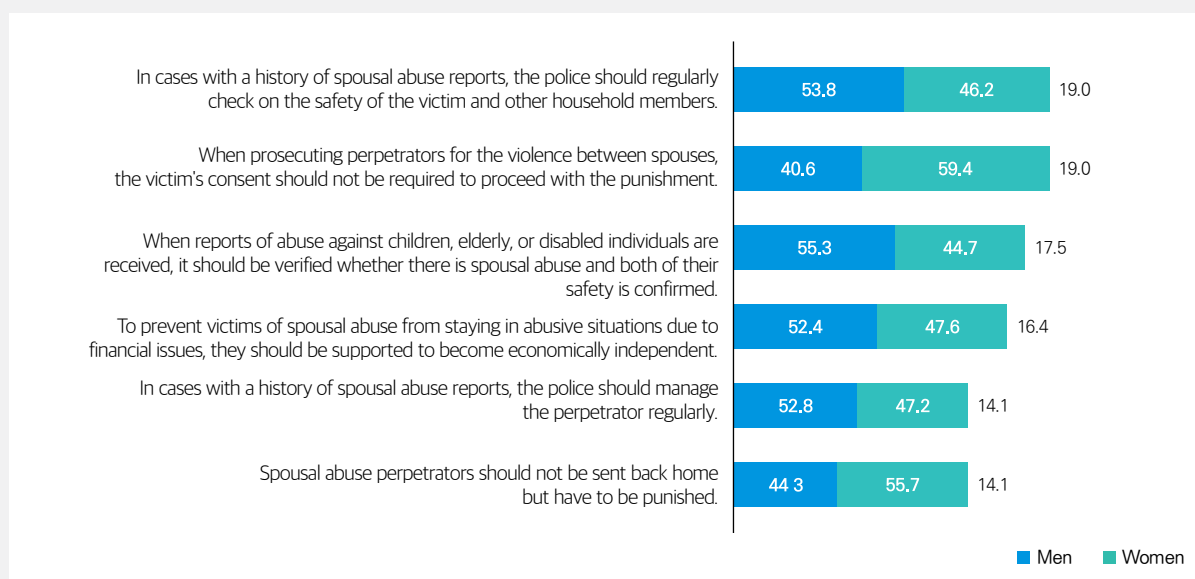
<Figure 3> Policy priorities for preventing recurrence of domestic violence against the elderly

Item	Men	Women	Total
Ensuring the safety of the victim is the top priority when deciding whether an abused elderly person should return to their home.	54.5	45.5	20.7
When prosecuting perpetrators for the violence against the elderly, the victim's consent should not be required to proceed with the punishment.	44.8	55.2	19.0
To prevent elderly victims from staying in abusive situations due to financial issues, support for housing, living expenses, and caregiving services should be provided.	54.0	46.0	16.4
In cases with a history of elder abuse reports, the police should manage the perpetrator regularly.	45.1	54.9	15.0
In cases with a history of elder abuse reports, the police should regularly check on the safety of the victim and other household members.	52.2	47.8	15.0
When reports of spousal violence or child abuse are received, it should be verified whether any elderly individuals are present in the household and their safety is confirmed.	47.6	52.4	13.9

■ Men ■ Women

※ The percentage for each item represents the response rate out of the total 754 respondents. The male and female percentages indicate the gender ratio within the respondents for each item.

◉ The policies deemed most necessary for preventing the recurrence and harm of domestic violence between spouses were "In cases with a history of spousal abuse reports, the police should regularly check on the safety of the victim and other household members" and "Spousal abuse perpetrators should not be sent back home but have to be punished", receiving the highest response rate at 19.0%.
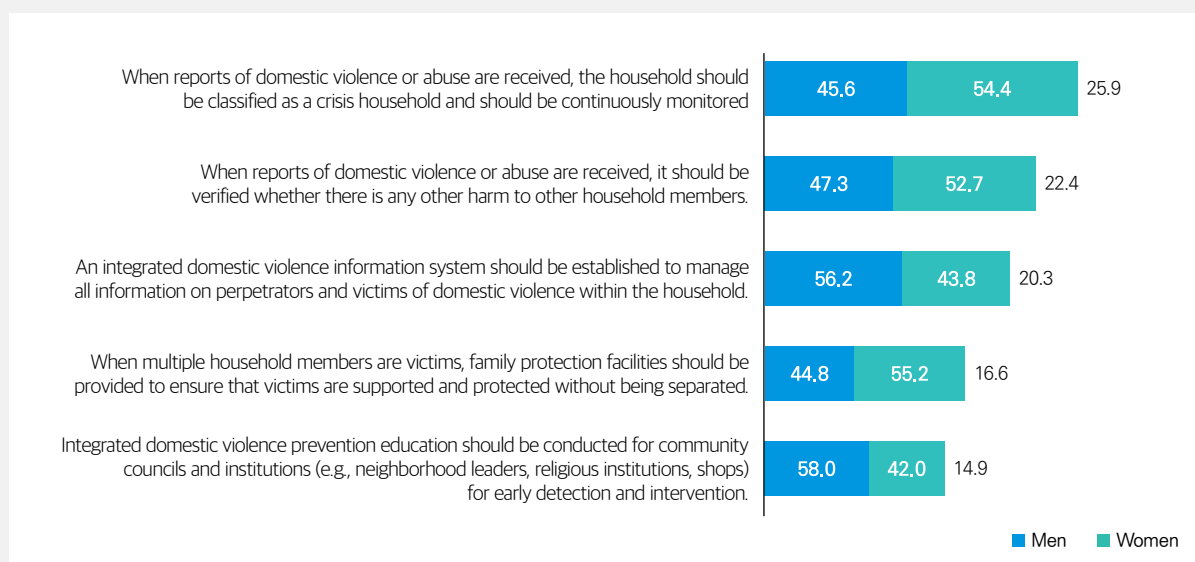
<Figure 4> Policy priorities for preventing the recurrence and harm of domestic violence between spouses

Item	Men	Women	Total
In cases with a history of spousal abuse reports, the police should regularly check on the safety of the victim and other household members.	53.8	46.2	19.0
When prosecuting perpetrators for the violence between spouses, the victim's consent should not be required to proceed with the punishment.	40.6	59.4	19.0
When reports of abuse against children, elderly, or disabled individuals are received, it should be verified whether there is spousal abuse and both of their safety is confirmed.	55.3	44.7	17.5
To prevent victims of spousal abuse from staying in abusive situations due to financial issues, they should be supported to become economically independent.	52.4	47.6	16.4
In cases with a history of spousal abuse reports, the police should manage the perpetrator regularly.	52.8	47.2	14.1
Spousal abuse perpetrators should not be sent back home but have to be punished.	44.3	55.7	14.1

■ Men ■ Women

※ The percentage for each item represents the response rate out of the total 754 respondents. The male and female percentages indicate the gender ratio within the respondents for each item.

◉ The survey identified the need for integrated support policies to prevent the recurrence of domestic violence and protect family members from violence. Overall, the item with the highest response rate was "When reports of domestic violence or abuse are received, the household should be classified as a crisis household and should be continuously monitored" with 25.9% of respondents selecting it.

<Figure 5> Policy priorities for preventing recurrence and harm of domestic violence
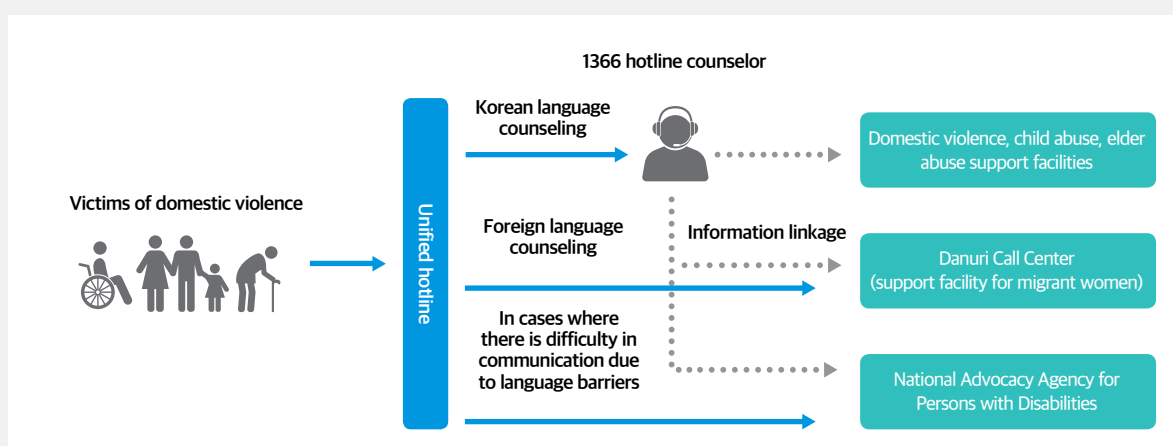
Item	Men	Women	Total
When reports of domestic violence or abuse are received, the household should be classified as a crisis household and should be continuously monitored	45.6	54.4	25.9
When reports of domestic violence or abuse are received, it should be verified whether there is any other harm to other household members.	47.3	52.7	22.4
An integrated domestic violence information system should be established to manage all information on perpetrators and victims of domestic violence within the household.	56.2	43.8	20.3
When multiple household members are victims, family protection facilities should be provided to ensure that victims are supported and protected without being separated.	44.8	55.2	16.6
Integrated domestic violence prevention education should be conducted for community councils and institutions (e.g., neighborhood leaders, religious institutions, shops) for early detection and intervention.	58.0	42.0	14.9

■ Men ■ Women

※ When reports of domestic violence or abuse are received, the household should be classified as a crisis household and should be continuously monitored

Policy suggestions

◉ In the field of social welfare, the integration of support services focuses on concepts such as "integration," "coordination," "linkage," "case management," and "consortiums." However, the specific meanings and methods of linkage or integration are not discussed enough.

◉ In the context of integrated support for domestic violence victims, "integrated support" is understood as providing universal and standardized services and avoiding duplication or omission of case-specific services, meaning it aims for integrated or connected support at an individual level.

◉ A notable example of an integrated support system operated by local governments for actual victims of domestic violence is Seoul's Crisis Family Support Center(Pine Tree Center). This center focuses on crisis support and welfare linkage for victims of domestic violence, defining crisis families as households reported to 112(police) due to domestic violence and abuse.

◉ The current support system for victims of domestic violence mainly operates around victims of spousal violence and is separate from the support systems for victims of child abuse and elder abuse. Therefore, there are inevitable discrepancies between institutions, and a limitation exists in that support is focused on the victim rather than the affected household.

◉ In order to provide comprehensive support to victims of domestic violence, a unified hotline needs to be established first. It should be actively promoted so that all people - elderly, women, men, people with disabilities, and children - can call one hotline number for counseling or support after experiencing domestic violence without having to check which facility they can receive support from.

◉ It is suggested to maintain the existing support facilities' telephone consultation services while providing a unified domestic violence consultation phone number for victims unsure where to seek support or consultation. This would allow counselors to understand the victims' needs and connect them to the appropriate support facility.

<Figure 6> Unified hotline plan for victims of domestic violence

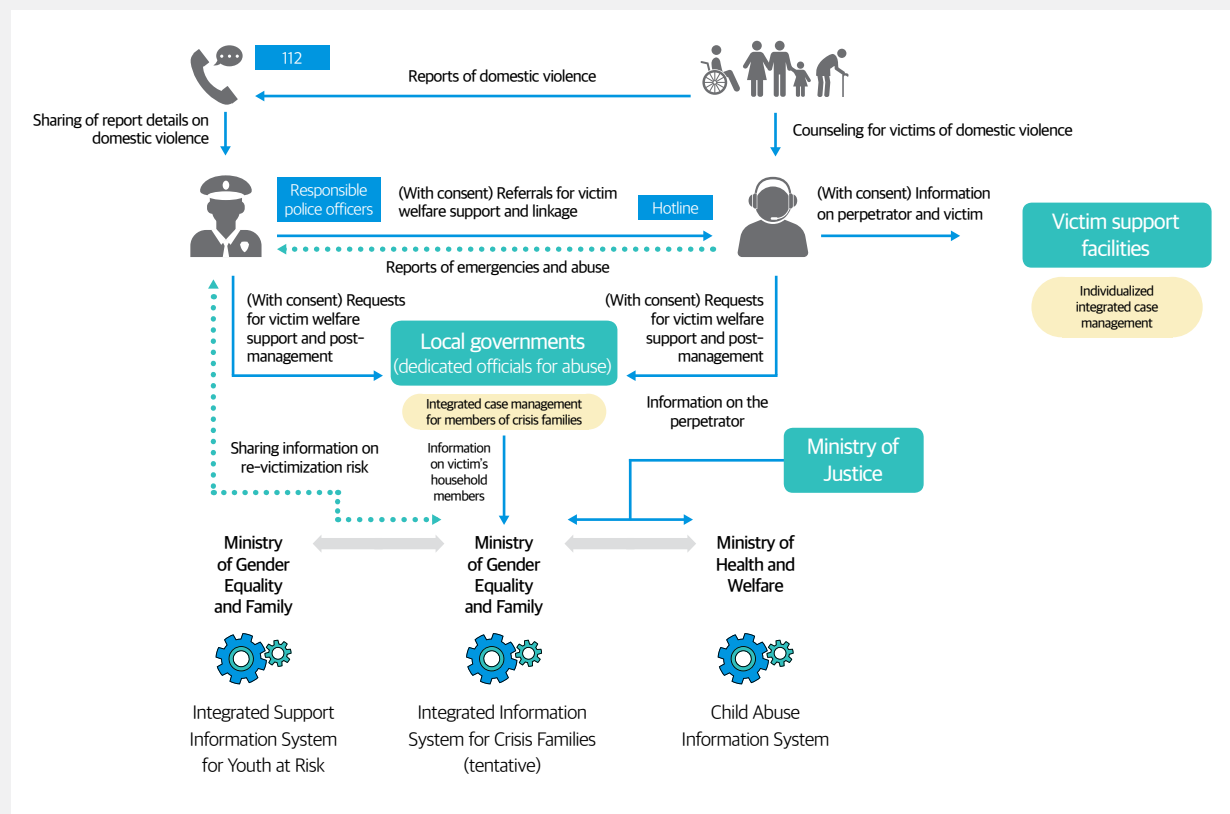◉ **Adequate support is necessary to enable local governments to act as control towers.**

▷ Heads of local governments are responsible for overseeing support organizations not only for domestic violence but also for child abuse, elder abuse, and disability abuse. Since the primary responsibility for managing and supervising each support organization lies with the local governments, they can share situations more closely.

▷ Local governments should establish departments in charge of crisis families to manage the information of both perpetrators and victims in an integrated manner, preventing any gaps in support. The central government departments should grant authority to local governments and establish a foundation that enables them to effectively act as control towers in coordinating resources among local support organizations.

◉ **A national-level information linkage system is needed to provide a foundation for information linkage and integrated support.**

▷ The Ministry of Health and Welfare's e-Child Happiness System faces challenges in acquiring information from the Ministry of Justice or the National Police Agency and sharing it with support organizations, leading to under-utilization.

▷ The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family plans to establish an integrated support information system for youth at risk by 2024. However, collecting information on individual youths without understanding their family context is anticipated to have limitations.

▷ Information from the Child Abuse Information System and the Integrated Support Information System for Youth at Risk needs to be shared within the context of crisis families. To prevent abused children from becoming youth at risk, a National Crisis Family Information System should be established to classify such families and provide thorough post-management.

<Figure 7> Proposal for the construction of an Integrated National Crisis Family Information System

Responsible Ministry ： Ministry of Gender Equality and Family	

Responsible Ministry ： Ministry of Gender Equality and Family

Related Ministries ： Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Justice

Responsible Department ： Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (Domestic Violence and Stalking Prevention Division)