

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Department of Justice and Department of Health.

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

The Departments are consulting jointly on a new draft Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Draft Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2030.

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The **vision** of the draft strategy is that domestic and sexual abuse becomes unacceptable within our homes and across all our society so that everyone can live without fear.

The overall **strategic aim** is to work together as partners, agencies and communities to achieve real, sustainable progress by tackling root causes to prevent domestic and sexual abuse; ensure those affected get the right support; and hold individuals who are abusive to account. To achieve this, the strategy is designed around **four pillars**: Partnership, Prevention, Support and Justice.

The following **outcomes** have also been identified to inform the strategy's implementation:

- A co-ordinated response to domestic and sexual abuse informed by victims' voices and community engagement
- The public is informed about the different types of domestic and sexual abuse and its impact on victims including children
- An increase in the knowledge and skills of children, young people and adults about forming healthy relationships
- Domestic and sexual abuse is identified and responded to earlier
- Victims including children are supported and feel safe regardless of diversity of need
- All victims of domestic abuse including children can access accommodation-based services
- Individuals are responsible for their abusive behaviour, held to account and supported to change, with the risk of harm reduced and victim safety enhanced
- Victims feel confident to report domestic and sexual abuse and barriers to participating in the justice system are reduced and justice responses are effective

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy is a regional strategy. The expected outcomes (at section 1E) will apply to anyone affected by domestic and sexual abuse regardless of whether they are living in a rural or urban area. We anticipate that the outcomes will have a positive impact for people in rural areas. We do not consider that they will impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

N/A.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text"/>

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

To inform the drafting of the strategy, the Departments held a ten week Call for Views exercise, from 10 Jan 2022. A number of key issues were consulted on including the scope, scale and prevalence of domestic and sexual abuse; service provision and support services; prevention and early intervention; the needs of particular groups of victims; protection and justice; the proposed workstreams; and engagement with those affected by domestic and sexual abuse.

The Departments received 91 written responses and 661 surveys were also completed. Five online public events were held and 22 stakeholder engagement events, one of which focused on the needs of victims of domestic and sexual abuse living in rural areas (on 1 Mar 2022). This included representatives from: Rural Support, Ulster Farmer's Union. Vet NI, Vet Support, Western Domestic and Sexual Violence Partnership and the Women's Institute.

Research/publications were also submitted in some of the responses to the Call for Views. This included: *'Captive and Controlled -Domestic Abuse in Rural Areas'* by the National Rural Crime Network, dated 22 Jul 219: <https://www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net/news/captivecontrolled/>
The Departments have also referred to the Census data for 'All Usual Residents'. 64.2% are classified as Urban and 35.8% Rural.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

Engagement with stakeholders and research in this area has shown that there are distinct challenges faced by victims of domestic abuse in rural areas. For example, physical isolation which is often used as a weapon by abusers; heightened stigma within close-knit communities and fear of reaching out for help; risk of harm from firearms on farms; financial abuse and limited escape routes.

If the response to Section 3A was **YES** GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

N/A

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

The strategy recognises the social and economic needs listed at 3D and its implementation (which will be through a series of action plans) will consider how best to raise awareness within, and take account the needs of rural communities, which is expected to have a positive impact.

Domestic abuse occurs across the whole of Northern Ireland and is not confined to rural or urban areas. The expected outcomes (at section 1E) will therefore apply to anyone affected by domestic and sexual abuse in rural areas, as well as urban areas.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

To inform the drafting of the strategy, the Departments held a ten week Call for Views exercise, from 10 Jan 2022. The Departments received 91 written responses and 661 surveys were also completed. Five online public events were held and 22 stakeholder engagement events, one of which focused on the needs of victims of domestic and sexual abuse living in rural areas (on 1 Mar 2022). This included representatives from:

Rural Support
Ulster Farmer's Union
Northern Ireland Veterinary Association
Vet Support
Western Domestic and Sexual Violence Partnership
Women's Institute

The analysis of this engagement has influenced the content of the draft strategy, which includes a section about the needs of different groups of victims, including those living in rural areas. A key priority area of focus will also be to better understand the intersectional needs of individuals and to ensure victims get the responses and support they need. This applies to all victims regardless of whether they live in a rural or urban area.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES GO TO Section 6A.**

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

N/A

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Alison Fitzgerald
Position/Grade:	SO
Division/Branch	Victims Support Division
Signature:	<i>Alison Fitzgerald</i>
Date:	1/11/22
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Veronica Holland
Position/Grade:	G7
Division/Branch:	Victims Support Division
Signature:	<i>Veronica Holland</i>
Date:	1/11/22