



**IS ANYONE LISTENING?**

Accountability and women  
survivors of domestic violence

Gill Hague, Audrey Mullender  
and Rosemary Aris

**Also available as a printed book  
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# Is Anyone Listening?

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Domestic violence is in the public eye as never before, but how often are abused women consulted or involved in the new services and policies? This book investigates and reveals that the voices of survivors of domestic violence are often simply not heard; silenced, the women themselves become invisible.

*Is Anyone Listening?* draws on the experiences of other service user movements to provide a strong conceptual framework for thinking about abused women's participation in policy and service development. It discusses empowerment issues and the women's movement against gender violence, exploring how far refuge organisations and other women's movement services have influenced statutory services and vice versa. It includes many practical ideas for involving abused women in the improvement of both policy and practice, and gives examples of inspiring and innovatory projects.

Based on a study carried out as part of the Economic and Social Research Council's Violence Research Programme, *Is Anyone Listening?* offers a unique analysis of the sensitive and complex issues involved in developing service user participation within the domestic violence field. The insights it provides will enable policy-makers, activists, students, practitioners and women who have experienced domestic violence to move forward together.

**Gill Hague** is Senior Research Fellow in the School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol and a founder and the joint Co-ordinator of the Domestic Violence Research Group in the University. **Audrey Mullender** is Professor of Social Work and Director of the Centre for the Study of Safety and Wellbeing at the University of Warwick. **Rosemary Aris**, formerly a Research Fellow at the University of Warwick, is now Senior Research and Evaluation Officer at NACRO.



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To Dorothy

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How do they know what to do if they don't ask women in the situation? It doesn't make sense, does it? It's stupid if they go and set up things without women knowing about it and without asking women what they need, doesn't make any sense to me.

If they listen to us it is just so good. It makes the services better, just much better. No one has ever listened to us before. And then suddenly these posh organisations are. It brings tears to my eyes just thinking about it.

They are beginning to listen, they are beginning to try. That is the really big thing, isn't it, the fact that they are finally willing to at least *try*.

(Women survivors of domestic violence)

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