

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES:

A TOOLKIT FOR ADVANCING WOMEN'S AND GIRLS'
EMPOWERMENT IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8
LIST OF ACRONYMS	10
INTRODUCTION	11
THE POWERFUL POTENTIAL OF SPACES TO TRANSFORM INEQUALITY	11
WHAT ARE THE GOALS AND AIM OF THE WGSS TOOLKIT?	15
WHO IS THE TOOLKIT FOR? IN WHICH SETTINGS CAN IT BE USED?	15
WHICH WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE INTENDED TO BENEFIT FROM USE OF THIS TOOLKIT?	16
HOW DOES THE TOOLKIT LINK WITH OTHER GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS?	16
HOW DID WE DEVELOP THE TOOLKIT?	17
STRUCTURE AND HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT	19
DATA COLLECTION FLOW	22
1: CORE CONCEPTS	25
1.1 WHAT ARE WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES (WGSS)?	26
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF A WGSS	26
1.3 THE WGSS APPROACH	30
• Empowerment	30
• Guiding Principles	32
• Key Strategies	34
1.4 WHY DO WE NEED TO ‘HOLD THE SPACE’ FOR WOMEN AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS?	35
1.5 PUTTING WGSS CORE CONCEPTS INTO PRACTICE THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT CYCLE	37
2: ASSESSMENT	39
2.1 INTRODUCTION	41
2.2 WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TAILOR THE WGSS ASSESSMENT TO YOUR CONTEXT?	43
2.3 WHY SHOULD WGSS ASSESSMENTS CONSULT WITH THE COMMUNITY?	46
2: TOOLS	49
TOOL 1: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE	50
TOOL 2: SERVICE MAPPING QUESTIONNAIRE	65
TOOL 3: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TEMPLATE	76

TOOL 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR WOMEN & GIRLS	77
TOOL 5: SAFETY MAPPING	93
TOOL 6: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE WITH COMMUNITIES	97
TOOL 7: COMMUNITY MAPPING	114

2: DATABASE **116**

DATABASE A: QUALITATIVE WGSS ASSESSMENT	117
DATABASE B: WGSS MAPPING ASSESSMENT	118

3: STARTUP **119**

3.1 A LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN'S & GIRLS' SAFETY & EMPOWERMENT	121
• Selecting relevant pathways and indicators	123
• Factors affecting selection of relevant indicators	124
3.2 MODULAR DESIGN: SELECTING IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES	125
• Enabling access to the WGSS through static and mobile models	125
• Programming Towards Objectives Through Stand-alone and Integrated Approaches	130
• Programming Delivered Through Direct Implementation or in Partnership	132
3.3 NAMING THE WGSS AND DIFFERENTIATION FROM OTHER TYPES OF SPACES	134
3.4 INITIAL STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY	136
• Enabling Access by Reducing Barriers	136
• Context-Specific Women and Girl-Informed Strategies	137
3.5 SELECTING THE WGSS LOCATION	140
• Characteristics of a 'Safer' Location	140
• Narrowing Down the Choice of Location	141
3.6 WGSS PHYSICAL LAYOUT AND CONFIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES	145
• Minimum and Standard Structural Requirements	145
• Quality Standards for WGSS Privacy and Confidentiality	147
3.7 SECURING BUY-IN FOR THE WGSS IN THE START UP PHASE	148
• What is Buy-in?	149
• Using Clear Communication to Introduce the WGSS	150
3.8 SELECTION AND DESIGN OF FEEDBACK CHANNELS	152
• Mapping WGSS Members and Stakeholders the Program Wants Feedback From	152
• Identifying What Feedback the Program Wants to Collect From Different Groups	154
• Selecting the Channels to Collect Feedback	155
• Developing a Plan for Feedback Collection	156

3: FURTHER GUIDANCE	157
ANNEX 3.1. KEY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR MUTUALLY -EMPOWERING PARTNERSHIPS	158
ANNEX 3.2. WGSS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SAMPLE IEC TOOL	164
3: TOOLS	167
TOOL 8: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK	168
TOOL 9A: WGSS INDICATOR MATRIX	169
TOOL 9B: DATA SOURCE, DATABASES AND INDICATORS	170
TOOL 10: SELECTING WGSS LOCATION-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST	176
TOOL 11: WGSS CATCHMENT AREA ASSESSMENT	181
TOOL 12: START-UP PHASE SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR FEEDBACK PREFERENCES	189
TOOL 13: PROACTIVE & REACTIVE FEEDBACK CHANNELS FEASIBILITY MAPPING	192
TOOL 14: TEMPLATE FOR DESIGNING FEEDBACK CHANNELS	204
4: STAFFING	206
4.1 KEY WGSS POSITIONS	208
• Staffing Considerations for Mobile and Static Implementation Approaches	208
• WGSS Team Composition	210
• Minimum Staffing Considerations	213
• Volunteers	214
• Male Staff	215
4.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	217
• WGSS Roles and Responsibilities	217
• Adapting WGSS Roles and Responsibilities Based on the Context	219
4.3 RECRUITMENT	221
• Key WGSS Recruitment Considerations	221
• Prioritizing Competencies	222
4.4 STAFF AND SELF CARE	224
• Stress	224
• Staff Care	225
• Self-care	227
4: FURTHER GUIDANCE	228
ANNEX 4.1. INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT	229

4: TOOLS	233
TOOL 15: JOB DESCRIPTIONS (JDS)	234
TOOL 16: CANDIDATE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS SURVEY - FOR RECRUITMENT	250
TOOL 17: WGSS SAMPLE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES IN PARTNERSHIPS	254
TOOL 18: IDENTIFY SIGNS OF STRESS AND NEGATIVE COPING MECHANISMS	256
TOOL 19: TEAM WELLNESS MANDALA	259
TOOL 20: STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES	263
5: CAPACITY BUILDING	267
5.1 INTRODUCTION TO SUPPORTING CAPACITY OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, PARTNERS AND MEMBERS	270
5.2 ASSESSING STAFF CAPACITY	276
• Capacity-Development Meetings to Assess Baseline and Continued Capacity	276
• Using Capacity Assessment Tools	277
5.3 DEVELOPING A TAILORED CAPACITY-BUILDING PLAN	278
5.4 CAPACITY-DEVELOPMENT PACKAGES BASED ON STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	279
5.5 ON-THE-JOB CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	281
• Group Learning	281
• Peer Learning	282
5.6 SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION	285
• Individual-Level Supervision	287
• Team-Level Supervision	287
5: FURTHER GUIDANCE	288
ANNEX 5.1. BUILDING MEMBERS' OWNERSHIP THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES	289
ANNEX 5.2. LIST OF HELPFUL RESOURCES AND WHERE TO ACCESS THEM	292
ANNEX 5.3. TIP SHEET FOR PEER LEARNING TECHNIQUES	300
ANNEX 5.4. TIP SHEET FOR INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SUPERVISION	304
5: TOOLS	308
TOOL 21: INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT	309
TOOL 22: WGSS STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS SURVEY	334
TOOL 23A: TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE	340
TOOL 23B: TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET	345
TOOL 24: CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN	356
TOOL 25: SHADOWING OBSERVATION TEMPLATE	357

TOOL 26: GROUP SUPERVISION MEETING TEMPLATE	363
TOOL 27: FACILITATION OBSERVATION CHECKLIST	367
TOOL 28: PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OPENING & EXPECTED SUPPORT INITIAL MEETING OUTLINE	372
TOOL 29:WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION MONITORING TOOL	377
5: DATABASE	386
DATABASE C: CAPACITY BUILDING TRACKER	386
6: IMPLEMENTATION	387
6.1 INTRODUCTION	390
6.2 KEY STRATEGIES FOR WGSS IMPLEMENTATION	390
• Context-tailored	392
• Women and girl-led:	395
• Community Informed	396
6.3 CREATING SPACE FOR OPPORTUNITY ACROSS MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF EMPOWERMENT	397
• Dimensions of Empowerment Supported by WGSS Activities	397
• Connecting Activities, Objectives and Types of Empowerment	398
6.4 CREATING SPACE FOR WOMEN AND GIRL-CENTERED AND -LED ACTIVITIES	401
• Promoting Opportunities for Women and Girls to Lead	401
• Group Facilitation	403
6: FURTHER GUIDANCE	407
ANNEX 6.1. HOW TO BUILD CONSENSUS	408
ANNEX 6.2. FACILITATOR DOS	410
ANNEX 6.3. OUTREACH STRATEGIES	414
ANNEX 6.4. INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION MATERIAL TO RAISE COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF WGSS PROGRAMMING	420
ANNEX 6.5. AVAILABLE TECHNICAL RESOURCES TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT WGSS ACTIVITIES	424
ANNEX 6.6. SAFELY INTEGRATING SURVIVORS IN WGSS ACTIVITIES	431
6: TOOLS	433
TOOL 30A: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY (BASELINE)	434
TOOL 30B: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY (FOLLOW-UP)	445
TOOL 30C: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY PARTICIPANT LIST	464
TOOL 31: WGSS ORIENTATION PACKAGE FOR NEW MEMBERS	466
TOOL 32: COMMUNITY SURVEY	467

TOOL 33: WGSS MEMBER INPUT FORM	470
TOOL 34: WGSS DAILY ATTENDANCE RATE FORM	474
TOOL 35: WGSS GROUP ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE FORM	476
TOOL 36: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ATTENDANCE FORM	482

6: DATABASE **484**

DATABASE D1: WGSS ATTENDANCE TRACKER	484
DATABASE D2: WGSS ATTENDANCE TRACKER	485
DATABASE E: WGSS MEMBERS' INPUT TRACKER	486
DATABASE F: WGSS MEMBER ACTIVE ROLE REGISTRATION BOOK	487
DATABASE G: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY DATABASE	488
DATABASE H: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DATABASE	489

7: EMPOWERING EXITS **490**

7.1 SETTING THE FRAME FOR WGSS EXIT STRATEGIES	492
7.2 BUILDING THE EXIT STRATEGY INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WGSS PROGRAM	495
7.3 COMMON PROGRAMMING CHALLENGES TO EXIT STRATEGIES	499
7.4 DUTY OF STAFF CARE	500
7.5 TRANSPARENTLY COMMUNICATING EXITS TO WGSS STAKEHOLDERS	501
7.6 MONITORING & EVALUATION OF EXIT STRATEGIES	502
7.7 PRIORITIZING EXIT STRATEGIES IN SOLIDARITY WITH LOCAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS	503

7: TOOLS **507**

TOOL 37: EXIT STRATEGY TOOLS	508
TOOL 38:WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT CLOSURE MEETING	517

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“The story of women’s struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist nor to any one organization but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights.”

Feminist, journalist and activist - Gloria Steinem

Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A Toolkit for Advancing Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in Humanitarian Settings was co-created by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and International Medical Corps (IMC) and the creative energy of co-authors Melanie Megevand (IRC) and Laura Marchesini (IMC).

The development of this global toolkit would not be possible without the collaborative spirit, support, trust and engagement of a large and diverse network of individuals, teams and organizations. We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all those who contributed their experience, expertise and time to the toolkit’s development and review. Particularly, we thank you for the following:

Thought-provoking and technical leadership

A project team composed of Betsy Laird, Meghan O’Connor and Sarah Mosley from IRC’s violence prevention and response technical unit and IMC GBV senior advisor Micah Williams provided specific input and technical guidance as well as a final review. We are grateful for your trust and the thought-provoking space you held allowing us to learn, test ourselves and be inspired. Betsy, we particularly thank you for your co-authorship of the logical framework and the monitoring and evaluation tools in this toolkit which demonstrate the impact of WGSS in the lives of women and girls entangled in displacement, conflicts and natural disasters.

Rich contribution of best practices and key gaps in practice, guidance and tools

The content of the toolkit is based on formative research findings voiced by IRC and IMC GBV field staff in Cameroon and Ethiopia (IMC), Lebanon and Thailand (IRC) as well as partner staff from the Lebanese Red Cross (Lebanon) and Karen National Women Organization (Thailand). In the field UNFPA, UNICEF and UNHCR field staff coordinating GBV and protection responses also contributed to the research. At the global level, the complete team of IRC Women’s Protection & Empowerment technical advisors and IMC GBV technical advisors helped us ensure the global relevance of the toolkit.

Importantly, to ensure a women and girl-led and community-informed toolkit women and older adolescent girls accessing eighteen WGSS across Cameroon, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Thailand, as well as leaders from those communities, equally shaped the focus of the guidance and approaches in the toolkit, sharing with us how safe spaces have affected their lives individually and collectively, various perspectives for why these spaces must be women and girls-only spaces, and recommendations for how we can better engage them in the co-creation and implementation of WGSS and to sustain the positive effects of WGSS in their communities.

We hope you find the toolkit reflects your voices as it allowed us to visualize the toolkit and guided our decisions throughout its development.

Inspiration and collaborative contribution to guidance and tools

A special thank you goes to the IRC teams in Lebanon and Thailand and IMC teams in Cameroon and Ethiopia. We are immensely grateful for the time and effort you dedicated to the development of this toolkit in addition to your full-time responsibilities in delivering services to women and girls. We were truly inspired by your committed support to women's and girls' empowerment through how you implement WGSS and the authenticity of partnerships you create in solidarity with local organizations. We highly value your consistent engagement throughout the project ensuring the toolkit reflects the reality of field work.

External coordination and peer review

We particularly thank UNFPA and GBV in Emergencies Minimum Standards task team of the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR) who reached out to us and engaged us throughout the revision of the minimum standard related to safe spaces to ensure alignment across the two technical resources. We also want to thank the members of the Learning Reference Group of the GBV AoR who provided feedback for the external peer review of the toolkit.

French translation of the toolkit

Language can be an important barrier to the equal acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies among humanitarian field staff. While we acknowledge being unable to address this barrier entirely in the scope of this initial project, we would like to extend a special thank you to Marie-Michele Lapointe Cloutier and her team of translators who translated the toolkit into French to ensure both Francophone and Anglophone colleagues equal access and use of the toolkit's French content.

Designing, editing and user-friendliness of the toolkit

A special thank you to the Affari team led by Daman Stancill and Drew Webb for their creative passion and support. We thank you for taking the time to understand how important the raw content was to our field of practice and for helping us convey our work into an actual user-friendly toolkit. We would also like to extend our gratitude to Leah Pasqual for the great effort dedicated to editing the toolkit and for her patience and support.

Generous financial support

Finally but certainly not least, we would also like to thank the United States Government for its generous financial support which made the production of this toolkit possible.



Funding provided By the
United States Government

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AOR	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
CO ^C	CODE OF CONDUCT
DFID	DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FGD	FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION
GBV	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
GBVIMS	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
HR	HUMAN RESOURCES
IASC	INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE
IDP	INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON
IEC	INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION
IGA	INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITY
IMC	INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS
INGO	INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
IRC	INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
KII	KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW
LBTQ	LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUEER
M&E	MONITORING AND EVALUATION
MHPSS	MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
PFA	PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID
PSEA	PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE
GBV	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
SOGI	SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY
SOPs	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
SRH	SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
SWG	SUB-WORKING GROUP
UNHCR	UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
UNICEF	UNITED NATIONS CHILDRENS FUND
UNFPA	UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
VAWG	VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS
WGSS	WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES
WHO	WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WPE	WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

INTRODUCTION

THE POWERFUL POTENTIAL OF SPACES TO TRANSFORM INEQUALITY

Throughout history, oppressive power has been challenged by the strength of the oppressed unifying as one collective power creating the necessary space to resist and shift the stigma, discrimination and exclusion they face. Understanding the dimensions of power, in terms of the different ways power is expressed to control and influence, the different spaces where power occurs, and how power structures are created and survive, is necessary to create effective social change strategies.¹ The specific understanding of the dimensions of power that produce, reinforce and perpetuate gender inequality and violence against women and girls is the ‘feminist perspective’ which feminist movements and organizations, as well as women’s right movements and organizations, rely on to transform unequal systems of power. Gender-based violence (GBV) programming is feminism in practice within humanitarian settings.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROCESS ²	GBV DEFINED
<p>Empowerment is a process although the results of the process may also be termed empowerment. More specifically, though, the outcome of empowerment should manifest itself as a redistribution of power between individuals, genders, groups, classes, castes, races, ethnic groups or nations.</p> <p>Empowerment means the transformation of structures of subordination, through radical changes in law, property rights, control over women's labor and bodies, and the institutions which reinforce and perpetuate male domination.</p>	<p>Gender-based Violence was first defined by the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) as being due to “historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.”</p>

¹ Institute of Development Studies (IDS), 2002. New Weave: Power and Empowerment.” Understanding Power for Social Change: the Powercube. Accessed August 24, 2019. https://www.powercube.net/other-forms-of-power/other-forms-of-power-resources/newweave_chapter3/.

² Ibid.

Gender inequality remains the greatest structural barrier to women's and girls' participation in humanitarian settings.³ GBV practitioners, in solidarity with feminist and women's rights movements of the Global South, seek to transform gender hierarchies reinforced by institutions and systems which legitimize and perpetuate violence against women and girls entangled in conflicts, disasters and displacement. This includes humanitarian institutions and systems which inadequately fund GBV programs and maintain an unequal participation of feminist and women's rights organizations and movements in the humanitarian space. GBV experts, feminist scholars and women's movements identify growing trends of subtle expressions of power, which undermine the transformative agenda of GBV and women's rights work.⁴ Tactics include the de-linking and reframing of GBV programming from its feminist origin and purposes. This reduces the focus on women and girls, and prevents programs from achieving results, which further reduces funding of such programs by donors.⁵

SOCIAL POWER ⁶	INVISIBLE POWER	HIDDEN POWER ⁷
Social power is the capacity of different individuals or groups to determine who gets what, who does what, who decides what, and who sets the agenda.	Invisible power is in many ways the most problematic of all the faces of power – precisely because it is invisible – until we know how to look for it and where to find it! And because of this, it is often the most difficult form of power to challenge and confront. Invisible power is the power to shape the way people think and feel about themselves (people's self-image, self esteem). It is the force that creates social attitudes and biases, and the way our desires and needs are influenced.	Hidden or indirect power, sometimes called agenda-setting power, is about who influences decisions or sets the agenda behind the scenes, whose voices are heard or who is consulted on a particular issue. Hidden power is also evident in how money is allocated, in that it is the capacity to influence people's opportunities, access to resources and rights indirectly, without giving direct orders or having any formal right to do so, and without being visible. Hidden or agenda-setting power operates in both the private and public realms.

3 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019. Tearing Down the Walls: Confronting the Barriers to Internally Displaced Women & Girls' Participation in Humanitarian Settings. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5cd17b2d4.html>.

4 Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM), 2018. Why does GBV programming focus on women and girls? Feminist Pocketbook Tip Sheet 2. <https://cofemsocialchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/TS2-Why-does-GBV-programming-focus-on-women-and-girls.pdf>.

5 COFEM, 2017. "Funding: Whose priorities?", Feminist Perspectives on Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls Series, Paper No. 4. <https://www.igwg.org/resources/the-coalition-of-feminists-for-social-change-paper-series/>.

6 Srilatha Batliwal, S., 2019. All About Power: Understanding Social Power & Power Structures, Primer 1 in CREA's Feminist Leadership for Social Transformation series. CREA, New Delhi, India. <https://namati.org/resources/all-about-power-understanding-social-power-power-structures/>.

7 ibid.

Historically, because men's power over women denied them the right to participate in the public space, the cultivation of safe, women-only spaces has been a vital counterspace created for women to network and for feminist movements to organize.⁸ These spaces and the activists working within them facilitated women to recognize their own agency and power for change (power within), their power to organize themselves to articulate the changes they wanted to make (power to), and collectively transform the systems that oppressed them (power with).⁹ The term 'empowerment' was claimed by feminists to define the challenging task of shifting gender and social power relations in favor of women.¹⁰ Women and Girls Safe Spaces are the first, if not only, space co-created with women and adolescent girls entangled in conflict, disasters and displacement which supports their empowerment and participation in humanitarian settings. The Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies highlights WGSS as one of the ten core standards of GBV programming.¹¹ Yet the transformative potential of these spaces in humanitarian settings has been diffused, compounded by the absence of global guidance specific to WGSS in humanitarian settings. With each new generation of GBV practitioners, the feminist origin, processes and transformational purpose of WGSS is further reduced, along with the conceptual clarity of WGSS design and implementation, which ultimately prevents programming from achieving results. While not exhaustive, the following examples illustrate how the invisible and ideological dimensions of unequal humanitarian structures can neutralize the transformative potential of WGSS:

- **Definition of safe space reframed:** Context-specific resources available in humanitarian settings first and foremost define WGSS as both the concrete and abstract space which ensures the physical and emotional safety of women and girls. A definition related to safety over empowerment relates back to greater emphasis placed on GBV response service in humanitarian settings.
- **Priority purpose obscured:** An overwhelming majority of GBV practitioners identify the primary purpose of WGSS within the GBV program as the key entry point for survivors to disclose experiences of violence, and seek access case management and psychosocial support services hosted in the WGSS. While this is certainly one of the key objectives of a WGSS, in fact, the main purpose of safe spaces is transformational change, serving as a counterspace created within a larger unequal space, such as humanitarian settings.
- **Value in beneficiary numbers over value in degree of women's and girls' empowerment:** Overwhelmingly, field staff interviewed during the formative research of this program identified as a challenge, responding to donors or key decision-makers and peers' "derisive" remarks towards WGSS, such as 'expensive knitting clubs', or 'GBV programs help increase their beneficiary numbers'. They also felt like less valued members of the team than their GBV response/case management peers because their work was perceived to be 'nonspecialized'.

8 Clark-Parsons, Rosemary, 2017. "Building a digital Girl Army: The cultivation of feminist safe spaces online," in New Media & Society 20, no. 6, 2125-2144. doi:10.1177/1461444817731919.

9 Lewis, R., et al, 2015. "Safe Spaces? Experiences of Feminist Women-Only Space," in-
Sciological Research Online 20(4) · November 2015. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285322154_Safe_Spaces'_Experiences_of_Feminist_Women-Only_Space.

10 Batliwala, S., 2015. "3. Defining Empowerment," in Engaging with Empowerment: An Intellectual and Experiential Journey, 52. New Delhi: Women Unlimited.

11 Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AOR), 2019. Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to GBV in Emergencies.

In fact, equipping women and girls with knowledge, skills and resources, and providing them with the opportunity to put these into practice, as well as exercise leadership and ownership of WGSS, is anything but easy and measurable in impact. This is made more difficult by the general absence of common tools and indicators, which prevent WGSS from harnessing their power for transformational change.

Where gender hierarchies continue to discriminate against women and girls, they are unable to participate or voice their needs, unable to access services, and are at increased risk of exploitation and abuse. At the same time, feminist and women's rights organizations and movements from the Global South are kept from key decision-making circles of humanitarian aid and discriminated from funding despite evidence that they are leading achievements towards gender equality.¹² In the context of shrinking space for women and girls and an erosion of feminist and women-centered GBV approaches in humanitarian settings, the IRC and IMC saw a collaborative opportunity and a shared responsibility to co-create, amplify and share a global blueprint for WGSS in humanitarian settings.

CORE FEMINIST ETHICS AND PRINCIPLES¹³

While varying in different parts of the world, there are some common core principles and distinctly feminist ways of working:

- Creating less hierarchical structures of leadership and participation towards a more horizontal, participatory and equal collaboration;
- Definition of gender as socially-constructed not biologically-determined; gender-based inequality is 'man made' and can be changed.
- Ensuring a voice and role for all key stakeholders, internal and external;
- Understanding that patriarchal society has been divided into public and private, with the private sphere associated with the devalued, and exploited role of women in the family and in reproduction, and the public with respected and remunerated roles of men in leadership and productive labor.
- The personal is political - feminist consciousness and women's liberation starts with freeing the self, analyzing your own oppression and taking action to transform it.
- Agency - Every woman has the capacity to challenge oppression. Women are not just victims of patriarchy but can be active agents of change.

12 S. Laurel Weldon, S. L., & Htun, M., 2013. "Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women," in *Gender & Development*, 21:2, 231-247. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263382605_Feminist_Mobilisation_and_Progressive_Policy_Change_Why_Governments_Take_Action_to_Combat_Violence_Against_Women.

13 Horn, J, and Akiiki Consulting, 2011. Movement Building Boot Camp for East African Sexual Rights Activists. A collaborative initiative of Fahamu and UHAI-EASHRI. http://www.fahamu.org/mbbc/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/MBBCFullCurriculumFINAL_revApril2011.pdf.

- Choice - As part of an expression of agency, every woman has the right to make decisions regarding her life, sexuality and reproduction. This choice is made real through social, political and economic enabling conditions, and through creating flexible, gender-sensitive internal policies and practices based on respect for different capacities.
- Sisterhood and solidarity - Change requires collective power; women must stand in solidarity with other women (including women with different identities from them) in order to transform patriarchal power relations.
- Greater transparency and openness about internal and external processes and finances.
- Strong sense of accountability to members and to the larger movements they are linked to.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS AND AIM OF THE WGSS TOOLKIT?

The overarching aim in developing this toolkit was to fill a critical gap in existing global guidance for WGSS in humanitarian settings, harmonizing the approach while accounting for contextual differences.

The toolkit aims to authentically support women's and girls' sense of self and empowerment by providing a global blueprint for WGSS programming. It offers field staff 38 tools and 9 databases with step-by-step instructions and guidance on how to apply feminist principles, approaches and strategies in practice, within an accountable, women and girl-led process.

Staff who supported the development of the toolkit reported that the toolkit supported them to conceptualize the meaning of and find great pride in their work. We hope others will feel the same.

WHO IS THE TOOLKIT FOR? IN WHICH SETTINGS CAN IT BE USED?

We welcome the broad range of international, national, local and community-based organizations as well as national institutions implementing WGSS in humanitarian settings to use the toolkit. The content is applicable to both static and mobile models of WGSS and valid for WGSS implemented through either standalone or integrated approaches, as well as through direct implementation or in partnership approaches.

This toolkit can be implemented for WGSS in humanitarian settings brought on by natural disasters or conflict at the onset of an emergency, throughout the relief and recovery phases of humanitarian responses, as well as in development settings with large populations of internally displaced or refugee women and girls. The content is applicable to WGSS implemented in camps, informal tented settlements, rural and urban environments, or border areas.

The toolkit also supports the work of staff with different WGSS frontline, support or supervision roles. The guidance provided seeks to ensure that all those implementing WGSS in humanitarian settings, regardless of experience, staff strength and size or available technical support, equally have access to the knowledge, competencies and skills necessary to implement the tools.

WHICH WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE INTENDED TO BENEFIT FROM USE OF THIS TOOLKIT?

We use the term women and girls throughout the toolkit, as shorthand to mean all women and older adolescent girls age 15 -19 in humanitarian settings, who may be internally displaced persons, refugees or part of the community hosting refugees or IDPs.

Importantly, when we use the term women and girls it includes older women, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls with diverse ethnic and religious affiliations and women and girls with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities. However, this list is not meant to be exhaustive and can also include, for example, women and girls living with HIV/ AIDS, women and girls engaged in sex work and any other group of women and girls relevant to your context at heightened risk of unequally participating in humanitarian services and who face greater barriers to accessing services including WGSS because of exclusion and discrimination.

Inclusion does not require WGSS to provide specialist services or for staff to have specialist skills. It requires WGSS to address barriers which prevent women and girls from diverse backgrounds from equal access to the WGSS, while providing a space that ensures their physical and emotional safety, and supports them through a process of empowerment equally.

HOW DOES THE TOOLKIT LINK WITH OTHER GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS?

Supporting women and girls through a process of empowerment, led by women and girls, in humanitarian settings, multiplies the importance of WGSS programming which must at once be fluid and able to unfold as it is implemented while guided by common processes which allow for consistent quality. In this sense, the global relevance of the WGSS Toolkit is based on quality standards of practice outlining the feminist informed principles, approaches and strategies necessary to cultivate empowering safe spaces for women and girls.

Throughout the toolkit, links are made with international best practice and integrate existing global technical standards, including the Sphere Project and its Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response,¹⁴ the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Emergencies developed by the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG),¹⁵ Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) GBV Guidelines¹⁶ and UNFPA's Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.¹⁷

-
- 14 Sphere Association, 2018. Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response. <https://sphere-standards.org/wp-content/uploads/Sphere-Handbook-2018-EN.pdf>.
 - 15 Child Protection Working Group, 2012. Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. <https://www.alliancecpcha.org/en/cpmis>
 - 16 Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2015. Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action – Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience and Aiding Recovery. <https://gbvguidelines.org/en/>.
 - 17 UNFPA, 2015. Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence in Emergencies. <https://www.unfpa.org/featured-publication/gbvie-standards>.

The revision of the 2019 Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE) occurred in the same timeframe as the development of this toolkit and we closely coordinated with UNFPA to ensure the WGSS standard for core programming's alignment with the guidance of this toolkit, and likewise to ensure this toolkit promotes practices in line with the GBViE updated standards.

A WGSS is one of several components which together make a comprehensive GBV program. The toolkit is informed by and intended for use alongside existing tools and guidance related to the wider scope of GBV programming which for instance may be hosted within the WGSS such as Girl Shine,¹⁸ GBV case management,¹⁹ risk mitigation, or primary prevention interventions.²⁰ This means that the toolkit fully acknowledges that, in practice, GBV staff are often dedicated to implementing WGSS-related tasks, as well as tasks related to other components of the GBV program (e.g. an outreach officer spending part of their time informing community members about the WGSS services available and part of their time on other components of the GBV program including GBV risk mitigation awareness sessions).

It also means that the toolkit acknowledges the importance of reducing duplicated efforts by using tools which can serve more than one component of the GBV program (e.g. a project log frame would include indicators related to the WGSS component as well as case management component of the program; an assessment questionnaire would look at questions related to GBV response programming as well as questions to support the setup of the WGSS). As the toolkit may come across at times (e.g. such as in the assessment and staffing chapters) as implying that WGSS programming is distinct from the GBV program, it is important to keep in mind that any isolation is artificial and meant to better focus the scope of guidance and tools on the WGSS-related components not covered by existing resources. This avoids creating confusion or duplication of existing guidance and tools related to other program components and allows you to better tailor and incorporate the WGSS tools and guidance in the most relevant way to your program.

HOW DID WE DEVELOP THE TOOLKIT?

We developed this toolkit following the same feminist-informed principles and approaches we promote in the toolkit by genuinely considering the field staff, women, adolescent girls and community members across 18 WGSS operated in Cameroon and Ethiopia by IMC and in Lebanon and Thailand by IRC as co-producers of the toolkit rather than simply pilot countries validating it.

In the spring of 2018, the IRC and IMC jointly carried out formative research to answer the questions: (1) what are the requirements for effective delivery of a WGSS (i.e., infrastructure, staffing, and supervision) both via direct services as well as partnership-based approaches? (2) What are the minimum standards for safely establishing effective WGSS?

18 IRC, 2018. Girl Shine Program Model and Resource Package. <https://gbvresponders.org/adolescent-girls/girl-shine/>.

19 IMC, IRC, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNHCR, 2017. Interagency Gender-based Violence Case Management Guidelines: Providing Care and Case Management Services to Gender-based Violence Survivors in Humanitarian Settings. <https://gbvresponders.org/response/gbv-case-management/>.

20 GBV primary prevention resources include: Raising Voices, 2008. Sasa! Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV. <http://raisingvoices.org/sasa/>; IRC, 2014. Engaging Men through Accountable Practice Resource Package (EMAP). <https://gbvresponders.org/prevention/emap-evidence/>.

Using these questions as overall frames, we introduced eight thematic areas of inquiry: (1) Gaining buy-in from communities; (2) Recruitment and staffing practices for WGSS; (3) Engaging women and girls in designing WGSS and activities; (4) Approaches to ensure access to WGSS by at-risk vulnerable women and girls; (5) Integrating survivors of GBV into WGSS; (6) Key considerations for monitoring WGSS activities; (7) Existing best practices on engaging men and boys in outreach; and (8) Increasing local ownership of WGSS. In total we conducted:

- 22 qualitative focus group discussions (FGD) with community members and frontline staff.
- 27 mixed-methods key informant interviews (KII), with senior staff, M&E staff, staff working with local partners, and GBV working groups co-leads.
- 7 in-depth observational checks of WGSS.

The findings from the formative research highlighted the lack of available tools to assess, design, implement, monitor and demonstrate the value of WGSS as a catalyst for transformational change towards women's and girl's empowerment and gender equality. Within these overarching gaps, formative research participants specifically requested guidance on: practical measures to engage community stakeholders and to secure and maintain community buy-in; how to design women and girl-led WGSS and put in place inclusion strategies; staffing and recruitment guidance to effectively support WGSS objectives; capacity-building approaches to promote the empowerment of women and girls; and measurement guidance and tools to demonstrate the outcomes WGSS have on women's and girls' safety and empowerment.

Based on the findings from this research, we jointly developed the draft toolkit which was then tested by a total of 18 WGSS operated in Cameroon and Ethiopia by IMC and in Lebanon and Thailand by IRC from December 2018 to April 2019. Throughout this time, we looked for issues or unintended consequences that might arise from the process of piloting and collected feedback on the challenges and relevance of the tools and guidance.

Following this pilot period, an assessment was conducted with IRC and IMC staff, women and older adolescent girls from the pilot WGSS, and community members from the areas of implementation. The aim of the assessment was to understand the feasibility and acceptability of the newly developed WGSS toolkit from the perspective of these key stakeholders. This assessment used mixed methods approaches which included structured surveys with staff, women and girls attending the pilot WGSS and community members. In total we conducted:

- 23 focus group discussions and 116 in-depth surveys with adult women and older adolescent girls attending pilot WGSS.
- 114 community members surveys.
- 7 FGD with frontline staff, 7 KII with supervisory level staff, and received 46 written surveys from staff engaged in the piloting of the toolkit.

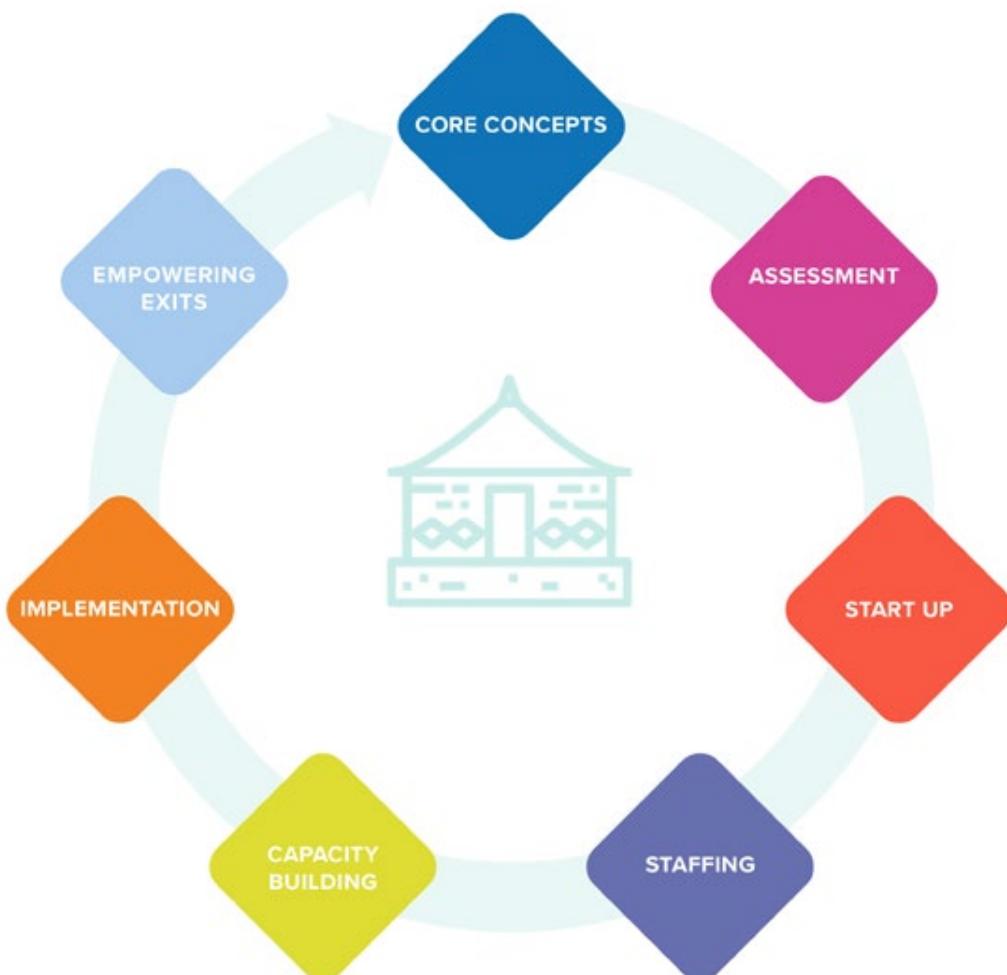
The findings informed the revision of the toolkit and led to the version available to you today.

STRUCTURE AND HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

The intention of the toolkit is to provide all the tools needed to set up, implement and monitor a WGSS program without overturning existing approaches and methodologies.

A total of 38 tools and 9 databases with step-by-step instructions and guidance on how to use each is provided. By no means does this resource aim at duplicating efforts or well-functioning tools. We encourage you to select the ones most relevant to you. The toolkit guides staff through a highly relational, fluid and constantly unfolding program approach covering the core concepts to WGSS programming, and key phases of a WGSS project cycle divided into 6 parts:

1. WGSS Core Concepts
2. Assessment
3. Start up
4. Staffing
5. Capacity-building
6. Implementation
7. Empowering Exits



Each Part of the toolkit is composed by a combination of tools and guidance as detailed below. For easy reference, icons have been placed throughout the toolkit to flag and distinguish them.

Icons for components:



Associated With This Guidance: Serves as a summary of content for each part indicating the tools, further guidance and databases

Further Guidance: Thirteen themes throughout the toolkit were identified as requiring additional guidance than the one provided in the main guidance note in order to support putting them into practice. Additional guidance has been provided as an annex to the main guidance note.



Guidance Note: Explains the rationale for the feminist principles, approaches and strategies relevant to the project phase which must guide how staff should carry out key actions to ensure empowering and accountable practice towards women and girls.



Lesson Learned: Reality check from the field - this icon refers to 'common practices' versus 'recommendations'.



Tool Instruction: For each tool, step-by-step instruction explains why, when and how to use the template provided, and helps to determine whether the tool is relevant for the program, and/or if it needs to be tailored further before use. For some of the tools, an annotated version is provided, to further support tailoring the tool, and to illustrate how to analyze the information collected through the tool.



Tool's Template: This icon will be placed at the top of each tool's template. A blank template of the tool is provided for use. This includes sample scripts to introduce the tool to stakeholders you will interact with to use it.



Databases: The toolkit provides an excel database template and instructions for use (only in Part three, five and six). Recognizing the large volume of data and information a single WGSS compiles and the fact that GBV staff in support or supervision roles can have information from many WGSS to compile, several databases have been created. The databases allow staff, women and girls, partners and community members to directly visualize, analyze and inform programming decisions in real-time (as often as databases are populated). They support the safe and ethical collection and storage of program information as well as reduce the margin of error and time associated with compilation through paper format.

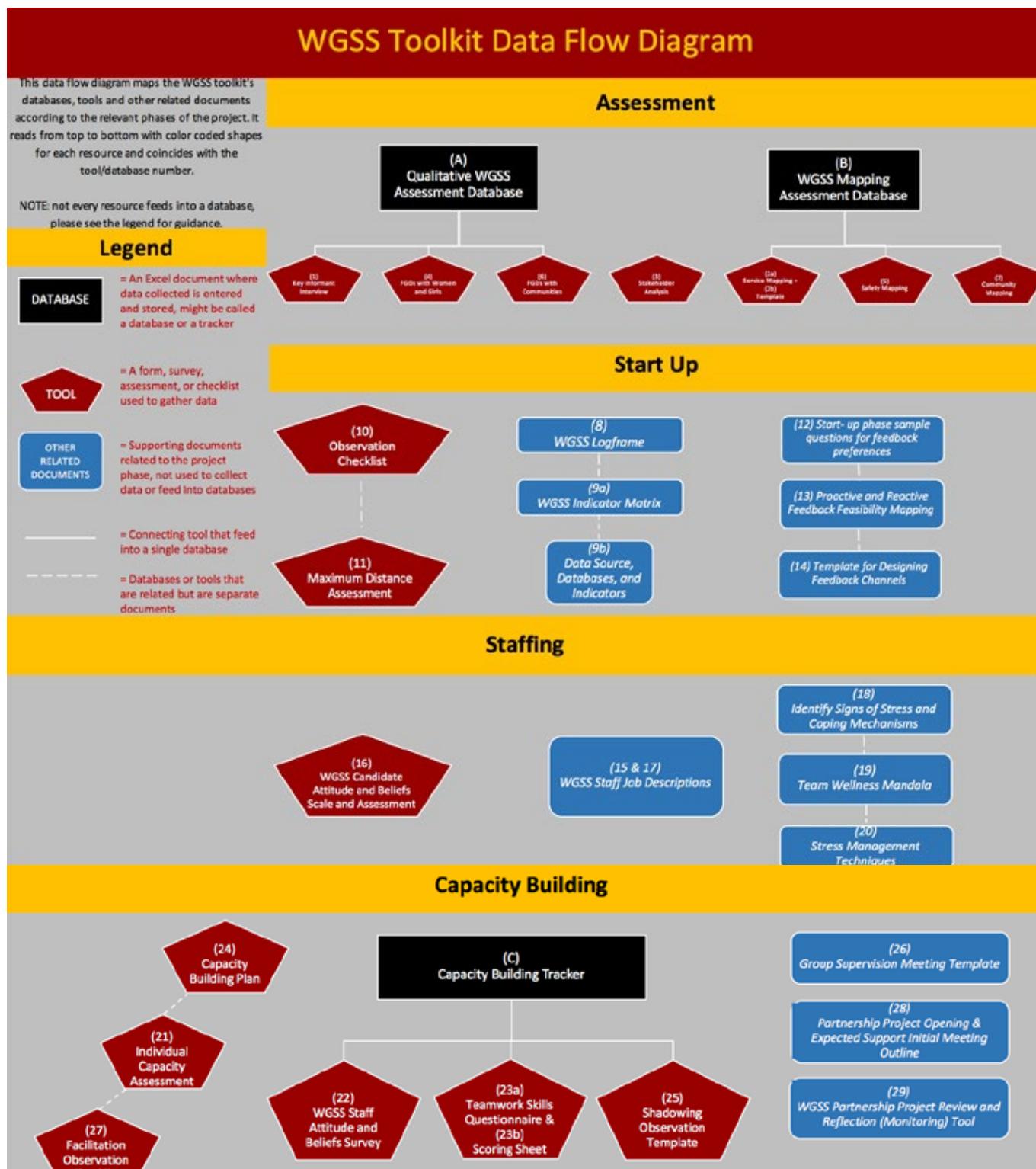


Monitoring and Evaluation: This icon refers to tools, databases and instructions that support the measurement of indicators associated with the WGSS logical framework.

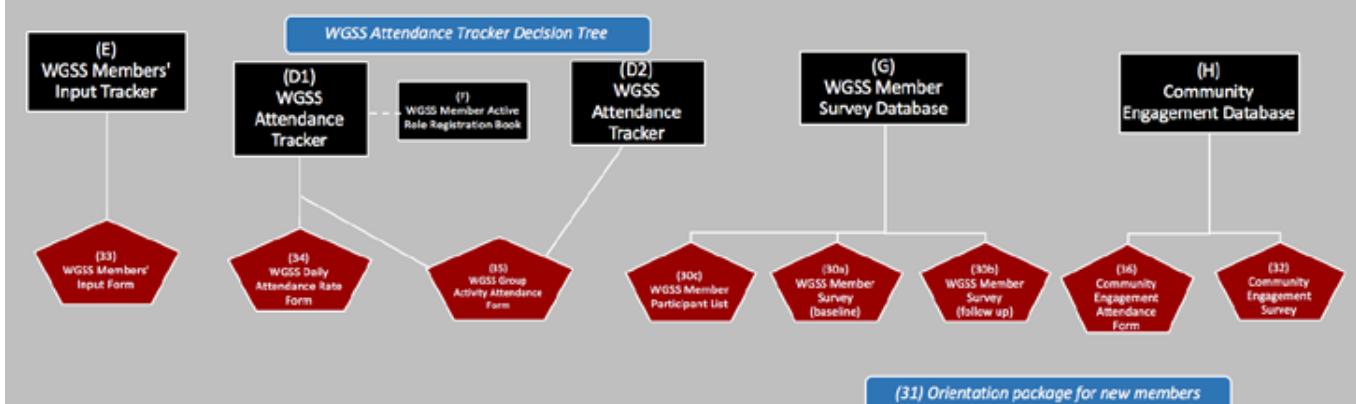


Excel: this icon indicates the tool or database is in an excel format and the link you must follow to access it.

DATA COLLECTION FLOW



Implementation



Empowering Exit

(31) Orientation package for new members

(37) Exit strategy tools

(38) WGSS Partnership Project Closure Meeting Guidance Note

A woman with a warm smile is the central figure. She is wearing a dark blue headwrap with silver sequins and a patterned top. She is holding a tray with several clear plastic cups. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a market or shop environment.

1: CORE CONCEPTS

1.1 WHAT ARE WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES (WGSS)?

In too many countries and communities worldwide, too few spaces are considered safe for women and adolescent girls. The systematic discrimination women and adolescent girls face in the context of global patriarchal systems increases their risk of harassment and violence in their households, schools, workplaces, and communities-at-large. Caught between a rock and a hard place as a result of gender-based inequality, not only are they more likely to experience certain types of violence but they are also less likely to have the options, resources, and power to leave an unsafe or violent situation.

Diverse women and girls¹ do not experience inequality, oppression and violence in the same way. Many face compounded risks and experiences of violence based on intersecting systems of oppression and discrimination, that cut across race, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, class, ethnicity and religion. Intersecting inequalities serve to further reduce women's and adolescent girls' already muted power, choice and protection from gender-based violence (GBV) and increases barriers to their accessing services. In humanitarian settings, risks and barriers exacerbated—where community structures that protect women and adolescent girls break down, their access to services and resources is sharply reduced, and they are often specifically targeted with violence.

For women and adolescent girls in all their diversity to be safer, they must have control over strategic life choices including key actions to ensure their safety and to pursue opportunities of their choosing. In humanitarian settings, it is critical that all women and adolescent girls have safe access to services and that they participate meaningfully in inclusive GBV programming that recognizes and addresses their needs, concerns and perspectives. Women and adolescent girls who have been harmed or otherwise exposed to violence must have the opportunity to recover and immediately be connected to the services that can protect them, support their healing and help reduce their vulnerability to harm in the future.

Women and Girls Safe Spaces have been used for decades by GBV actors in humanitarian programming as an entry point for women and adolescent girls to report protection concerns and voice their needs. At the most basic level, WGSS are physical spaces where women and adolescent girls can be free from harm and harassment. They are also places where women and adolescent girls can gain knowledge and skills; access GBV response services or other available services; and foster opportunities for mutual support and collective action in their community.

In this toolkit, a WGSS is defined as: “a structured place where women’s and adolescent girls’ physical and emotional safety is respected and where women and adolescent girls are supported through processes of empowerment to seek, share, and obtain information, access services, express themselves, enhance psychosocial well-being, and more fully realize their rights.”

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF A WGSS

The overarching goal of a WGSS is: “to be a safe place where women and girls are supported through processes of empowerment.”

¹ Diverse women and girls include older women, adolescent girls, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls with diverse ethnic and religious affiliations, and women and girls with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities.

The objectives of a WGSS are:

1. To facilitate access for all women and adolescent girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services.
2. To support women's and adolescent girls' psychosocial well-being and creation of social networks.
3. To serve as a place where women and adolescent girls can organize and access information and resources to reduce risk of violence.
4. To serve as a key entry point for specialized services for GBV survivors.
5. To provide a place where women and adolescent girls are safe and encouraged to use their voice and collectively raise attention to their rights and needs.

These objectives should be used as standards that guide the **design** and **implementation** of every WGSS. Recognizing that every context is different and fluid, the extent of the programming under each objective will vary depending on the environment, resources and women's and adolescent girls' specific needs.

A fuller description of each objective is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Description of WGSS Objectives

OBJECTIVES OF WGSS	DESCRIPTION
1. <i>To facilitate access for all women and adolescent girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services</i>	<p>Women and adolescent girls face a range of physical, social, financial, or other barriers in accessing opportunities and services due to gender inequality, which is further compounded in humanitarian settings for diverse women and girls. WGSS are a critical part of GBV programming, and for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes for all women and adolescent girls in humanitarian settings.</p> <p>This objective focuses on offering women and adolescent girls the opportunity to access information, gain or strengthen skills, as well as receive support through access to a referral network of safe and tailored services. Emphasis is placed on ensuring the inclusion of diverse women and girls. Activities include information sessions on a range of topics (sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, etc.), as well as a variety of specific skills-building such as vocational training (soapmaking, information technology, plumbing, tailoring, etc.).</p>

<p>2. To support women's and adolescent girls' psychosocial well-being and creation of social networks.</p>	<p>In humanitarian settings, psychosocial support activities implemented in WGSS seek to address the impact of displacement, chronic stress, and the associated lack of control experienced by all women and adolescent girls, survivors and non-survivors alike.</p> <p>Activities under this objective range from informal recreational activities (e.g. sewing groups, coffee or tea sessions) to more structured group psychosocial or life skills interventions.² These activities provide shared space for women and adolescent girls to relieve stress, be in the company of other women and adolescent girls in a safe environment, while developing and strengthening their own social networks, building life-skills and increasing their own empowerment and ability to challenge social norms in their communities.</p>
<p>3. To serve as a place where women and adolescent girls can organize and access information and resources to reduce risk of violence.</p>	<p>Women and adolescent girls face a trade-off between pursuing opportunities and preserving their safety. For example, adolescent girls who seek an education are often exposed to the threat of violence on the way to school; women who seek to mobilize for women's rights often face retribution from their communities for speaking out; survivors of violence who come forward face increased risks of violence, blame or stigma. Recognizing this, in order for women and adolescent girls to be empowered to reduce their own risk of violence, they must have the right support, resources, and information.</p> <p>WGSS establish the conditions necessary for women and adolescent girls to pursue opportunities safely and to organize in order to reduce their risk of violence. Activities include community mobilization to increase understanding of violence against women and girls provide information about women's and adolescent girls' rights. WGSS encourage women and adolescent girl-led safety audits and support them in their advocacy targeting service providers and community stakeholders, based on prioritized risks and recommendations.</p>

	<p>Activities can also include specific programming to reduce risks of violence (including exploitation), such as specifically designed economic empowerment programming that increases their access and control over money or goods while reducing their exposure to violence.</p>
<p>4. To serve as a key entry point for specialized services for GBV survivors.</p>	<p>Women and adolescent girls face specific barriers when deciding whether to seek care for all forms of GBV, often experiencing stigma, rejection and further exposure to violence due to social norms that normalize GBV. WGSS ensure, at a minimum, that rapport and trust with women and adolescent girls is built, allowing survivors to feel comfortable in disclosing experiences, and providing them with a safe and confidential space to heal.</p> <p>When violence is disclosed, survivors are, first and foremost, listened to, provided information on the range of service options available, and empowered to make choices based on which referrals are made. WGSS may also host case management and individual psychosocial support services specific to GBV survivors (whether implemented by the same organization or in collaboration with another service provider). In this case, WGSS ensure confidential access to these services and the safety of survivors and staff.</p>
<p>5. To provide a place where women and adolescent girls are safe and encouraged to use their voice and collectively raise attention to their rights and needs.</p>	<p>This objective is about women's and adolescent girls' role and influence in decision-making and is aimed at supporting and empowering them to use their collective power and influence over how their communities and societies are managed and led.</p> <p>At a minimum, WGSS support women's and adolescent girls' ability to have a meaningful influence on WGSS programming through safely informing, participating and leading on decision-making within the space. Foundational activities include women and adolescent girls knowing their rights, how to express their needs, and understanding decision-makers' interests and limitations. This can be achieved in partnership with women's rights civil society groups and coalitions that represent and advance the interests of women and adolescent girls.</p>

1.3 THE WGSS APPROACH

Empowerment

The approach to designing, implementing and monitoring a WGSS as a space for change is centered on the concept of empowerment and consists of specific guiding principles and several key strategies described below.

Empowerment

A process whereby individuals and communities' ability to assume control over their lives and their environment is fostered. It is a core process for the establishment and running of any women and girls safe space and it demands identifying and addressing unequal power relationships, granting equal access to information and services while also actively promoting the capacity of individuals and groups to claim their rights and take actions to achieve goals. An empowering environment should always promote a sense of ownership and belonging, while remaining an inclusive space which is also part of the wider community life.³

As described in the definition above, empowerment is fundamentally linked to the concept of power. In GBV programming, preventing violence against women requires eliminating the power imbalance between women and men. Power is therefore discussed, understood and analyzed according to the different ways it is expressed using common language distinguishing: power over, power within, power with, power to (see Figure 1).⁴ This framework recognizes that while the use of power is often defined in negative terms as a form of domination, it can also be a positive force for individual and collective capacity to act for change.^{5,6} By role modelling and discussing the use of positive power and respect for the power of others, WGSS provide a safe space for women and girls to individually and collectively question, discover and transform power.

Figure 1. Types of Power



3 HealthNet TPO and UNICEF, 2016. Promoting Positive Environments for Women and Girls: Guidelines for Women and Girls Friendly Spaces in South Sudan.

4 The GBV Prevention Network / Raising Voices, 2012. Get Moving! Facilitator's Guide. 2nd Edition. <http://raisingvoices.org/innovation/creating-methodologies/get-moving/>.

5 IDS, 2009. Power, Participation and Social Change Group. Power Cube: Power Analysis in Practice.

6 Rowlands, Jo, 1997. Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras. Oxfam. <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/questioning-empowerment-working-with-women-in-honduras-121185>.

'Power over' involves using our words or actions to make it difficult, frightening or even dangerous for others to use their own power. This expression of power is framed as a 'win-lose' relationship. Those who control resources and decision-making have power over those without. When people are denied access to important resources, 'power over' perpetuates inequality and injustice, and the resulting imbalance of power often leads to violence. WGSS staff are mindful of their power as service providers (e.g. through control of resources and decision-making in the safe space) over women and girls seeking WGSS services but do not express their power this way.

WGSS Members

With empowerment at the center of our work, women and girls are not recipients of assistance only, they direct their own healing process, decision-making, and management of the space.

Therefore, we will use the term "WGSS member" when referring to women and girls who access, attend and participate in WGSS activities.

'Power within' is the positive feeling we experience when we believe we are valuable and deserving of all our human rights. Power within affirms the common human search for dignity and pursuit of opportunities, recognizing individuals' differences and respecting their choices. In this sense, 'power within' is considered the foundation for all other positive forms of power. WGSS believe all women and girls matter and should have control over strategic life choices but systematic oppression, the impact of displacement and violence denies them their rights. Creating space where women can cultivate their 'power within' is a critical function of WGSS and its programming.

'Power to' is when we take action to positively influence our own and others' lives. This is another expression of positive power based on the belief that individuals and groups can use their power to create positive change. WGSS consider that power is not in limited supply and therefore both women and men can have power and use it positively. Recognizing the fewer opportunities that women and girls have in comparison to men and boys, WGSS provide opportunities for women and adolescent girls to develop their leadership skills, socio-civic engagement, and ability to engage in social change efforts.

'Power with' is unity arising from common experiences, interests and beliefs between individuals and groups demonstrated by collective support and action. Based on solidarity, trust, mutual respect and cohesion, 'power with' forges collective efforts for social change and multiplies the power of individuals and their networks. WGSS provide a space for women and girls to establish meaningful relations, mutual support and (re)establish support networks, while also forming strategic relationships with local women's community-based organizations and women's movements based on shared values and a commitment to support existing efforts. 'Power with' is a transformational shift in how power is used in opposition to 'power over'.

By discussing expressions of power, WGSS create a space for women and adolescent girls to question power imbalances and offer [opportunities for women and adolescent girls to explore, express and celebrate their own power.](#)

Guiding Principles

WGSS have specific guiding principles that support organizations to design, implement and monitor WGSS in an empowering, safe and inclusive manner. These five principles⁷ should underpin programmatic and operational planning, decision-making, implementation and monitoring and serve as norms for everyone associated with the WGSS.

The concept of empowerment is fundamental to a WGSS. In fact, it is not only the overarching objective the WGSS seeks to achieve with and for women and adolescent girls, but also a guiding principle.

- 1. Empowerment:** A WGSS offers an empowering space for women and adolescent girls in all their diversity. In addition to being one of the main outcomes the WGSS seeks to achieve, empowerment should inform decisions and actions across all phases of WGSS programming. Rather than considering a WGSS as being run by an external source,⁸ women and adolescent girls are included in its planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, thus transforming them from beneficiaries into active agents of change.⁹
- 2. Solidarity:** WGSS provide a space for diverse networks of women and adolescent girls who support and inspire one another to come together in contexts where conflict and displacement have eroded social trust, and where gender inequality and intersecting systems of oppression and discrimination - including race, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, class, ethnicity and religion - further compound women's and adolescent girls' isolation. Supportive relationships foster trust and positive coping mechanisms, while also strengthening social assets¹⁰ that are central to the healing of survivors, and to the emotional safety and empowerment of all women and adolescent girls. Grounded in feminist theory and practice, WGSS offer a different environment providing women and adolescent girls with the opportunity to combine their power by encouraging sharing, mentoring and cooperation. They might be encouraged to connect with others, for example, by facilitating or participating in WGSS activities (e.g. tea and coffee sessions, information dissemination sessions, or taking part in life skills sessions); by committing to uphold a non-stigmatizing environment for survivors; or by taking part in social change efforts (e.g. local women's movement building activities, 16 Days of Activism Campaign, women-led safety audits and advocacy, etc.).

7 The five guiding principles represent those which were ranked by GBV field practitioners and global experts as the most important and representative of WGSS programming. Surveyed individuals were asked to select principles from a compiled list of identified publicly available WGSS resources.

8 UNFPA, 2015. Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian Crisis. <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/women-girls-safe-spaces-guidance-note-based-lessons-learned-syrian-crisis>.

9 Inspired by World YWCA, 2014. Safe Spaces for Women and Girls Guidelines. <https://www.worldywca.org/ywca-safe-spaces-for-women-and-girls-guidelines/>; and UNFPA, 2015. Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian Crisis. <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/women-girls-safe-spaces-guidance-note-based-lessons-learned-syrian-crisis>.

10 Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injuries, 2011. Best Practices Identified for Peer Support Programs. https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/sites/default/files/Best_Practices_Identified_for_Peer_Support_Programs_Jan_2011.pdf.

3. Accountability: In WGSS, accountability has multiple meanings and is ensured through various mechanisms. Each of the following components of accountability are fundamental to ensuring the integrity and transparency of WGSS:

- The structure of the WGSS and the services and activities hosted within it should be designed to guarantee the safety and confidentiality of all women and girl members.
- Women and adolescent girls must be able to openly share their experiences and concerns and be assured of confidentiality and compassionate support from WGSS staff, volunteers and associated service providers.
- Women and adolescent girls must have the opportunity to inform key decisions about the design and implementation of the WGSS, including location, operating hours, services and activities. The decision-making process should be communicated to members and the rationale for decisions should be transparent.
- Women's and adolescent girls' feedback on the space, services, activities and staff should inform program and operational decisions. When feedback cannot be accommodated, reasons should be explained to members.
- Safeguarding¹¹ (including PSEA) policies and practices must be in place, activated or redesigned in the WGSS when women and adolescent girls flag concerns.

4. Inclusion: WGSS are committed to celebrating diversity and improving how women and adolescent girls access, participate and shape WGSS services. Equally diverse WGSS staff and volunteers should demonstrate impartial and inclusive attitudes, beliefs and practices which avoid dividing between 'us and them' ("othering"), so as to ensure that diverse women and adolescent girls are:

- Represented and engaged through assessments and preferred feedback channels as equal informers and decision-makers as it relates to the WGSS design.
- Safely engaged through tailored strategies which increase their access and consistent participation based on an understanding of the intersecting systems of oppression and discrimination they face.
- Able to benefit from the available range of services and activities delivered in the WGSS, as well as pursue opportunities as staff or other active roles as relevant to the WGSS.
- Valued as equal members, who equally contribute to supportive relationships and the emotional safety and empowerment of all women and adolescent girls.

5. Collaboration: This concept underpins WGSS service providers' feminist perspective to collaborative relationships. To bring women and adolescent girls from the margins of humanitarian aid to the center of the response and their communities, WGSS strategically foster and leverage relationships which expand women's and adolescent girls' ability to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable individuals and institutions that affect their lives.

¹¹ Safeguarding is the protection of individuals who could be easily hurt emotionally or physically. For most humanitarian agencies, important safeguarding issues include: Harassment-Free Workplace, Beneficiary Protection from Exploitation and Abuse, Combating Trafficking in Persons, Child Safeguarding, Global Reporting Guidelines.

Particularly linked to the WGSS principle of solidarity, as an authentic ally, national and international WGSS service providers should go beyond a relationship with local Community-Based Organizations (CBO) partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their own intervention. Instead, they should use influence and power to create an inclusive space for local civil society more broadly, that tangibly empowers them in humanitarian responses and acknowledges them as catalysts and drivers of change.

Key Strategies

Three key strategies drive the design and implementation of a WGSS in order to ensure that they are safe, accessible and responsive to a range of women's and adolescent girls' needs.

- 1. Context-tailored:** While all WGSS work toward the same objectives and share a common programming framework, each must be designed in response to contextual variables such as humanitarian access, the geographical area to be covered, the stage of an emergency, the assessment finding, as well as the experience, capacities and resources of the organization implementing the WGSS program.
- 2. Women and girl-led:** Women and adolescent girls from the community where the WGSS is to be located must be consulted, and their input included from the outset in decisions related to the design, implementation and monitoring of the WGSS. An incremental increase in women's and girl's sense of ownership and influence over the program is assumed as WGSS programming establishes its presence in a community and as women and adolescent girls are supported to build their sense of empowerment. In certain operational contexts, the scope of input and decision-making could be limited, particularly when most women and adolescent girls find it difficult to provide input or inform decisions, because they are likely unaccustomed to expressing their needs and choices and are unfamiliar with WGSS programming. Regardless, they must be proactively engaged from the beginning, as this initial step serves as a catalyst not only to support them through a process of empowerment, but to ensure that WGSS are always responsive and accountable to the needs of its members.
- 3. Community-informed:** Key stakeholders in the community, particularly community leaders and male community members, must be engaged from the outset of WGSS planning. Doing so will help secure support for the WGSS, and in turn facilitate greater and safer access for women and adolescent girls.

1.4 WHY DO WE NEED TO ‘HOLD THE SPACE’ FOR WOMEN AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS?

There is a significant amount of evidence that underscores the importance and benefit of female-only spaces for women and adolescent girls in humanitarian settings.^{12 13 14} And yet, in humanitarian responses, questions are still raised often by humanitarian actors about the need for a space that is only for women and adolescent girls. The rationale for having female-only safe spaces is simple - “the establishment of women- and/or girl-only spaces helps to reduce risks and prevent further harm during acute emergency responses. These spaces provide women and adolescent girls with a safe entry point for services and a place to access information. Safe gathering points also offer them an opportunity to engage with each other, exchange information, and rebuild community networks and support. In this way, safe spaces can be a key way of building women’s and girls’ social assets.”¹⁵

Inclusive female-only spaces ensure all women’s and adolescent girls’ physical and emotional safety

To fulfill the rationale mentioned above, safe spaces must be places where women and girls with diverse ethnic and religious affiliations, older women, adolescent girls, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls with different sexual orientations and gender identities, and survivors and non-survivors alike feel physically and emotionally safe, and comfortable to participate in services and activities. This means a space where they do not feel at risk of violence or harassment. In most contexts, given women’s socially-imposed subordinate status to men, the presence of any male in the space can significantly alter women’s and girls’ participation. They may mute themselves to avoid being accused of indecency which could further compromise their safety at home and in the community.

By upholding survivor-centered approaches and ensuring spaces remain female-only, they can help create the necessary environment to support the safety and healing of survivors. Women and adolescent girls often first disclose their experiences and seek support in WGSS, and often receive case management services for GBV which are confidentially hosted in the WGSS.¹⁶

-
- 12 See UNHCR, (no date). Tearing Down the Walls: Confronting the Barriers to Internally Displaced Women and Girls’ Participation in Humanitarian Settings. <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5cd17b2d4.pdf>; DFID, 2013. Violence against Women and Girls in Humanitarian Emergencies. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271932/VAWG-humanitarian-emergencies.pdf; and IRC, Columbia University and The Population Council, 2017. A Safe Place to Shine: Creating Opportunities and Raising Voices of Adolescent Girls in Humanitarian Settings. <https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/2248/irccompassglobalreport.pdf>.
- 13 DFID, 2013. Violence against Women and Girls in Humanitarian Emergencies. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271932/VAWG-humanitarian-emergencies.pdf.
- 14 IRC, Columbia University and The Population Council, 2017. A Safe place to Shine: Creating Opportunities and Raising Voices of Adolescent Girls in Humanitarian Settings. <https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/2248/irccompassglobalreport.pdf>.
- 15 DFID, 2013. Violence against Women and Girls in Humanitarian Emergencies. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271932/VAWG-humanitarian-emergencies.pdf.
- 16 Boys until 12 years of age are usually welcome in the WGSS because they are considered children and either attend alongside other siblings to allow mothers to participate in WGSS activities or as survivors to receive support in case of sexual abuse. GBV caseworkers are trained in Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse, and are typically hosted in WGSS to provide support to male and female children who experience this type of violence.

In addition to being a place where women's and adolescent girls' physical and emotional safety is respected, WGSS must be places where they do not fear judgment, discrimination or "othering" by staff or peer members. Instead, WGSS should provide opportunities for women and adolescent girls to share their own knowledge and personal experiences of privilege, discrimination and diversity.

Female-only spaces allow women and adolescent girls to be themselves

While the extent and degree will vary, globally in communities where WGSS operate, it is not considered safe for women and adolescent girls to spend time in spaces largely dominated by men and boys. Furthermore, patriarchal social norms do not allow women and adolescent girls to express themselves or participate freely and equally in the presence of men.

Mixed-gender spaces therefore affect women's and adolescent girls' participation, the quality of their engagement, and their interactions with each other. In such spaces, they may cautiously navigate what they think, say, wear or how they behave to avoid being judged as defying social norms, which might increase their exposure to violence. It is important to recognize that even though some women and adolescent girls do not feel threatened or restrained by the presence of men and boys, there are others who may feel completely differently.

WGSS must be female-only as the discomfort of even a small number of women and adolescent girls would prevent a WGSS from being a space where every woman and girl can feel safe and able to express themselves free of judgment.

Female-only spaces create conditions for women and adolescent girls to support each other and create female-only social networks

By engaging in an empowerment process with other women and adolescent girls and by creating support networks, women and adolescent girls can feel a sense of belonging, safety, equality and solidarity that contributes to increasing their self-esteem and positive coping mechanisms, and to strengthening the social assets that are central to the healing of survivors, and that contribute to the positive well-being of the wider community.

As a female-only space, WGSS relieve women and adolescent girls from the pressure and prejudice that patriarchal societies place on them on a daily basis, giving them opportunities to safely and freely express themselves; explore their potential; make decisions affecting their lives; and learn and practice skills.

Men's and older adolescent boys' role in "holding the space" for women and adolescent girls

While the space itself and the services and activities of the WGSS are intended for women and adolescent girls, men and older adolescent boys can play an important support role. Given their privileged position in patriarchal societies, men and older adolescent boys typically have authority over female family members and the power to influence other community members. Therefore, engaging men and boys as key stakeholders through targeted WGSS outreach is pivotal to galvanize their support for the WGSS and to leverage their influence to secure and increase community buy-in for the WGSS.

Importantly, while WGSS programming usually engages men and older adolescent boys specifically to ensure access and increase participation of women and adolescent girls in WGSS activities, they might also be engaged through risk mitigation (e.g. one-off participation in community-based risk mitigation sessions) or primary prevention interventions (e.g. one-off participation in a series of transformative individual behavior change curriculum sessions) implemented by broader GBV programming in the same area.

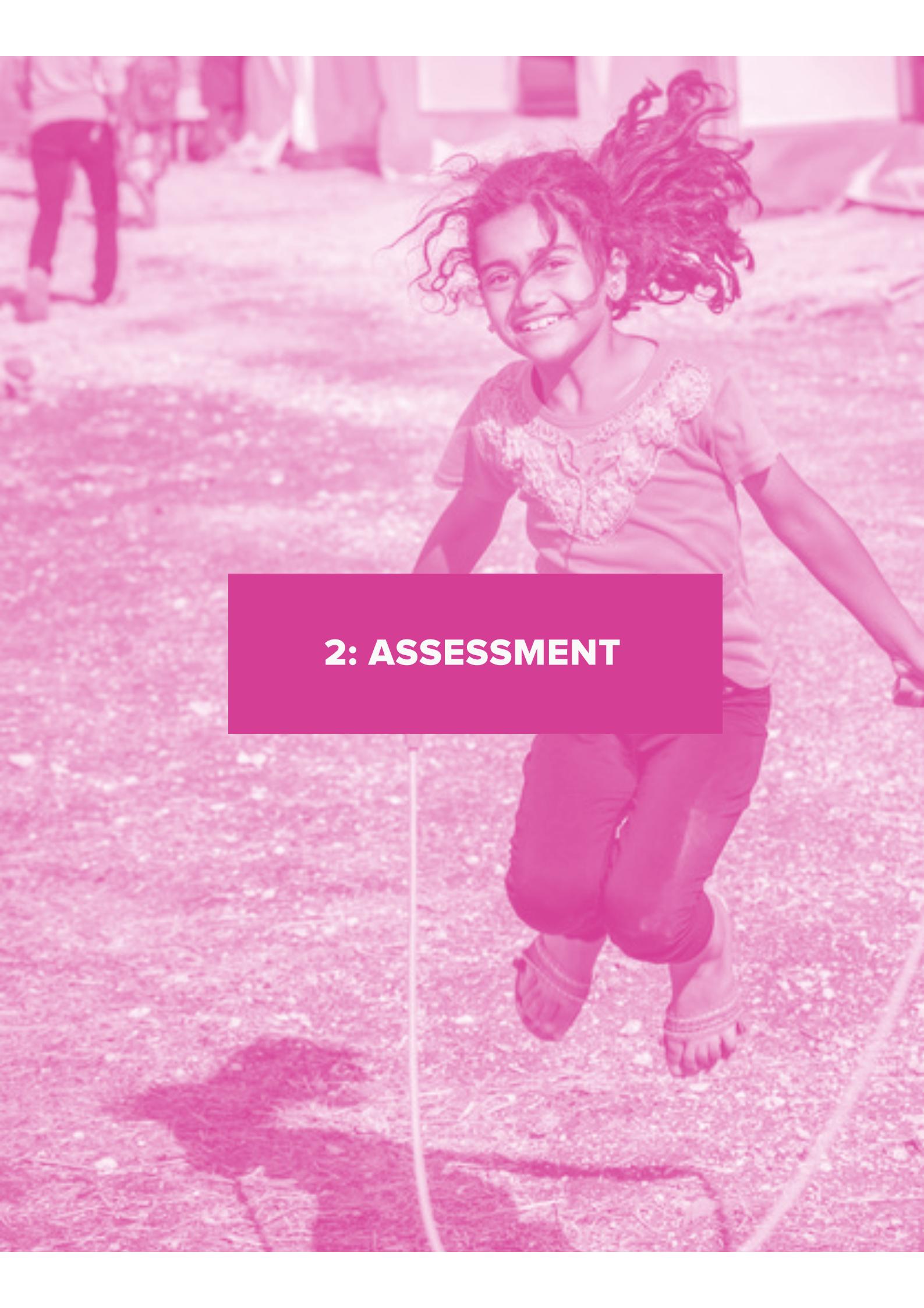
1.5 PUTTING WGSS CORE CONCEPTS INTO PRACTICE THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT CYCLE

Figure 2 below illustrates the WGSS program model. At the center of the figure is an origami representation of a WGSS made up of its **5 key guiding principles** (i.e. empowerment, solidarity, accountability, inclusion, collaboration) and further held up by a triangular base representing the **3 key strategies** (i.e. context-tailored, women and girl-led, community-informed). Each principle and strategy must translate into a concrete process guiding the way in which WGSS staff assess, design, implement, monitor and close the program.

The surrounding circle and seven boxes represent the chapters (parts) of the toolkit (i.e. core concepts, assessment, start up, staffing, capacity-building etc.). Other than this Part 1: Core Concepts, they each represent a critical step in the WGSS project cycle. While each Part is presented in a sequential order, it is expected that each WGSS program will realistically begin to use the toolkit according to the current step in their programming (which might be well underway). Likewise, unexpected changes to the context might require moving back and forth between several steps. The toolkit is meant to support not dictate your program.

Figure 2: WGSS Program Model





2: ASSESSMENT



ASSOCIATED WITH THIS **GUIDANCE**



TOOLS:

[Tool 1: Key Informant Interview Guide](#)

[Tool 2: Service Mapping Questionnaire](#)



[Tool 3: Stakeholder Analysis Template](#)



[Tool 4: Focus Group Discussion Guide With Women and Girls](#)

[Tool 5: Safety Mapping](#)

[Tool 6: Focus Group Discussion Guide with Communities](#)

[Tool 7: Community Mapping](#)



DATABASES:



[Database A: Qualitative WGSS Assessment](#)



[Database B: WGSS Mapping Assessment Database](#)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Assessment activities should be conducted prior to establishing the WGSS. In humanitarian settings, affected communities are often recipients or beneficiaries of services and aid. It is important to keep in mind however, that women and adolescent girls should neither be considered just informants nor potential beneficiaries of the WGSS, but decision-makers who are integral to guiding the starting up of WGSS, and ensuring the space is established according to the [WGSS Core Concepts](#). To genuinely create a pathway for inclusive women and girl-led and owned spaces, WGSS interventions [should move away from the limiting concept of women and girls just as beneficiaries and clients of the WGSS](#) right from the very first steps of the start up phase.

For WGSS interventions [to be tailored to their context, women and girl-informed, inclusive and engaging of community members and key stakeholders](#), the right information must be gathered and analyzed as part of assessment activities. This analysis is key to define critical strategies to develop and plan for as part of programming design.



Lessons Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Challenges with establishing an equal, transparent exchange of information prior to establishing presence and trust with women and girls in a community or at the onset of an emergency are something all WGSS service providers face. It is difficult for women and girls to provide information and take decisions about a service and space they are not familiar with. Furthermore, ensuring women and adolescent girls are key decision-makers who guide the design of the WGSS is further complicated because of existing unequal gender norms. They may not be easily reached, encouraged, used to or comfortable with making decisions and providing feedback. Nevertheless, given that the empowerment of women and girls is at the core of WGSS programming, the WGSS service provider is responsible for and accountable to intentionally create opportunities for women's and girls' engagement from the outset. These opportunities should be determined relative to the context, and be safe for women and adolescent girls to engage in. Regardless of how narrow or small these opportunities may seem, the intention is as pivotal as the execution, and should be set, as mentioned, from the very beginning.

Three Key Questions

Overall, assessment activities should address three essential questions:

- 1. Is it plausible to establish some type of WGSS?** The decision to establish a WGSS should be taken based on information collected first by speaking with the GBV sub-cluster / working group, other humanitarian organizations, national and local women's or GBV organizations, and government or local authorities to find out as much as possible about services – including existing WGSS services, whether [mobile or static](#). Other information that should be gathered includes approximate disaggregated population figures, context dynamics and relevant contacts.

1. If the situational information gathered determines that an intervention is likely neither possible nor warranted, the engagement of women and adolescent girls, stakeholders and community members can be minimized to ensure no harm is done. Information gathering is also critical as an efficiency and coordination measure, so that for example, resources and efforts can be redirected if necessary, to another location which might be in need and/or under-serviced.
2. **How might WGSS be established and supported in this context? Operational information?** When the WGSS intervention is considered plausible, operational information should then be gathered to contextualize the needs of women and girls, identify key stakeholders in the community relevant to the WGSS intervention, as well as gaps in services and opportunities for collaboration with service providers. The analysis of this type of information collected will guide the choice of WGSS implementation approaches, modalities for delivery and other components which need to be articulated in design activities.
3. **Are women and girls informing and driving the process from the earliest stages?** Through a multitude of consultations throughout the design phase, women and adolescent girls, first and foremost, must be engaged in figuring out the “who, what, where, when, why, how and with whom” of the WGSS, in order to uniquely tailor, ensure access and foster local ownership for the space at the onset of its design. Community members should also be engaged to gauge gender and community dynamics as well as other potential access influencers and barriers to women’s and girls’ participation. If any women, adolescent girls or other community members share concerns with the potential WGSS intervention, it is important to analyze these concerns as they will be important starting points to then design appropriate outreach, information dissemination and community buy-in strategies.

Analysis and interpretation of the data must occur as it is being collected to inform real-time decisions, such as for example: whether assessment or consultations remain relevant; whether tools need to be adjusted to remain context-appropriate; whether any key informants or stakeholders were missed in earlier stages and now need to be included to ensure that women and girls are safely engaged in a beneficial way.

Key questions to be asked during group or individual interviews should be tailored accordingly in order to be safe and appropriate for every specific context, and for every specific target audience. Managers, coordinators or WGSS focal points have a final responsibility to plan and review the details of these assessment tools.

During the development of the toolkit, WGSS staff enquired about how to fund an assessment before securing funds. Each organization has different strategies to secure funds for assessments such as using private funds or asking for logistical support from other organizations already established in the area. Typically, if an assessment is to take place in an area where the organization is already operating through GBV programming, the existing staff are requested to lead and support the assessment. Just like for logistics support, this is usually the easiest way to proceed. In the case of a new emergency, donors are usually flexible and welcome the idea of funding assessments.

The following sections outline how WGSS assessments should be conducted using the three key strategies of the WGSS approach described in [Part 1: Core Concepts](#).

The three strategies require that the design and implementation of WGSS, are context-tailored; women and girl-led; and community-informed, in order to ensure that WGSS are safe, accessible and responsive to a range of women's and girls' needs. In the folder [Tools: seven tools are provided for you to consider using when planning and carrying out assessments](#) and in the folder [Databases: two databases are available to enter the data collected and ease the interpretation and analysis of data collected](#). [These tools are relevant for all assessment phases of emergency and humanitarian programming, relevant to all GBV service providers \(irrespective of the type of agency or organization\) and can be used across urban, rural or camp-based settings.](#)

2.2 WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TAILOR THE WGSS ASSESSMENT TO YOUR CONTEXT?

Key community stakeholders, community power dynamics, local and community governance structures, as well as social, gender, service delivery and environmental factors shape women's and girls' daily experiences and lives. They can also enable or hinder effective WGSS programming. For example, influential stakeholders can support or block an organization from securing a safe and accessible location for the WGSS. Community governance structures and the power dynamics among them might get in the way of an organization's ability to recruit WGSS staff representative of the diversity of women and girls in the community. Unequal gender norms might affect an organization's ability to ensure both adequate outreach to women and girls and their access to the WGSS. All of these can have a profound impact on the ability to establish a WGSS and deliver quality services to women and girls.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In contexts where community dynamics are tense, strictly hierarchical and not inclusive due to conflict or otherwise, discriminatory power dynamics within the WGSS are likely to happen. While the WGSS may not be best placed nor able to address wider issues within the community, it must identify sensitive strategies that neither replicate nor endorse discriminatory dynamics and abuse of power within the WGSS. Regardless of whether they are based on gender or other characteristics, the WGSS must be proactive in identifying risks and mitigating them.

During the formative research associated with this toolkit's development, WGSS practitioners shared examples of such challenges, as the one below:

"In the refugee camp there are clear differentiations among social classes. Women from the lower social class sometimes interpret the WGSS as a space for rich and educated women, not for them."

Community dynamics must be identified before establishing a WGSS, recruiting staff and determining which activities to implement. This type of information should help you to identify the safest inclusion strategy, and to mitigate the risk of seclusion and discrimination.

Establishing trust and credibility

When setting up a WGSS, the assessment step is the organization's first opportunity to establish trust with women and girls and establish the WGSS' credibility. Ensuring that women and girls are engaged and consulted from the start of this process is therefore critical. Similarly, the assessment step is also the first opportunity to start supporting and promoting the empowerment and leadership of women and girls, which are both fundamental **objectives** and **approaches** in WGSS programming. The following are useful considerations:

- Establishing transparent and accountable relationships is crucial to encourage engagement and empowerment. Transparent conversations at this stage should not necessarily be conducted with the expectation that women and girls will entirely lead on decisions, but they are nevertheless important to demonstrate genuine intent to create pathways towards women's and girls' ownership of the WGSS.
- Consultations with women and adolescent girls should consist of a mutual flow of information. Assessment findings should not only be shared back with women and girls but the programmatic decisions deriving from the findings should be clearly explained so they understand how decisions are made and how their voices are being considered.

Inclusive of diverse women and girls

Neither women nor adolescent girls are a homogeneous group. Many women and girls experience increased risk based on intersecting systems of oppression and discrimination, including race, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, class, ethnicity and religion.¹ The intersecting inequalities faced by diverse women and girls further reduce their power, choice and protection from GBV, and increases their barriers to accessing services. Diverse women and girls are present in every humanitarian context. GBV actors should always assume diverse women and girls are present and exposed to GBV and take action to ensure GBV programming is inclusive and addresses their needs, barriers and risks. This includes consulting with diverse groups of women and girls during the assessment phase. Doing so supports the setup of a genuinely inclusive WGSS whereas considering it "extra or special effort" inevitably leads related actions to be understood as optional, and in turn, could lead to the exclusion of certain women and girls.

Minimizing safety risks

All safety considerations must be carefully examined before engaging women and girls. In some contexts, women speaking individually or in groups to outsiders may put them at risk. Diverse women and girls may fear participating in consultations alongside women and girls from dominant groups, while others may fear being openly identified as part of an identity group (e.g. LGBTI; sex workers). If benefits to participating outweigh risks, assessment teams should move forward with engaging these women and girls. However, if the opposite is true, then women's and girl's safety should be prioritized over their engagement in assessment activities.

¹ This guide is not exhaustive, and, in every location, there will be numerous women and girls facing increased discrimination based on intersecting inequalities which are not adequately covered in this resource. The principles and practices however can be applied to reach diverse women and girls in your specific context.

Mainstreaming Inclusion and Diversity

Understanding the diverse needs and experiences of women and adolescent girls will require having separate consultations with different groups of women and girls. Barriers and enablers relative to specific consulted groups' access to services, as well as factors increasing their vulnerability to risks in the assessment step will be critical to inform strategies and actions the WGSS programming must take to ensure it is inclusive, accessible and safe for diverse women and girls. The following should be considered during the assessment step:

- Adolescent girls have different needs and interests and WGSS staff should see the diversity of adolescent girls based on: their age, marital status, unaccompanied or separated status, HIV status, ethnicity, in/out of school and not working, pregnant or lactating, disability, mother or primary caregiver, sexual orientation, gender identity and experience of sexual exploitation.^{2 3}
- Many older women experience one or more types of physical, sexual, financial and psychological violence, abuse and neglect. For older women survivors of sexual assault, the health consequences and resulting injuries are often more severe.⁴ Deeply-rooted prejudices about older women fuel ageism and perpetuate prevailing social norms that tolerate or even condone violence, abuse and neglect of them.⁵ Disability can be an added risk factor for older women, who may acquire an age-related disability; many of them associated with sight or hearing loss.⁶
- Women and girls living with disabilities due to physical, mental, intellectual, vision and hearing impairments are not more vulnerable to violence because of their impairment, but rather because they are perceived as different, and/or have less power and status. They may be directly targeted because of this. Women and girls with disabilities of all ages are subjected to violence and abuse at rates as high as 80% over the course of their lifetimes.⁷
- Women and girls with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities face a complex range of risks and barriers based on patriarchal, homophobic and transphobic social norms, systemic inequality and violence. Lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and girls face increased risks of GBV, high levels of rejection by their family and community, and reduced social support networks and educational and economic opportunities.

2 Women's Refugee Commission (WRC), 2012. Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Program in Humanitarian Settings: An In-depth Look at Family Planning Services, p. 24. <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/document/901-adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health-programs-in-humanitarian-settings-an-in-depth-look-at-familly-planning-services%20>.

3 WRC, 2014. I'm Here: Adolescent Girls in Emergencies, p. 17. <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/document/1078-i-m-here-report-final-pdf>.

4 HelpAge International, 2017. Violence against Older Women Discussion Paper, p. 1. <https://www.helpage.org/what-we-do/rights/violence-against-older-women/>.

5 HelpAge International. ADCAP Training, p. 18. <https://www.helpage.org/what-we-do/emergencies/adcap-age-and-disability-capacity-building-programme/>.

6 Ibid.

7 IRC/WRC, 2015. Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in Gender-Based Violence Programming in Humanitarian Settings: A Toolkit for GBV Practitioners, p. 5. <https://gbvresponders.org/response/disability-inclusion-2/>.

- Unless WGSS are openly welcoming and inclusive, they will face similar barriers when accessing response services and may fear they are not welcome in such safe spaces.
- 25% of the women interviewed for a GBV rapid assessment conducted for a 2016 regional study, indicated that their religious affiliation (and nationalities) negatively affected their access to services.⁸ WGSS activities may not be implemented in diverse languages and when one ethnicity or religious group dominates activities, other ethnic or religious groups may not feel welcome. Some safe space or GBV programming activities which incorporate religious or ethnic cultural activities or music, may exclude wider participation by diverse women and girls.

2.3 WHY SHOULD WGSS ASSESSMENTS CONSULT WITH THE COMMUNITY?

Community-based WGSS consultations can foster support for the WGSS intervention and its sustainability. Engaging in a process of direct consultation and dialogue with community members can help promote understanding and buy-in of the purpose of WGSS programming.

Consulting men and community leaders from the outset allows WGSS service providers and women and girls from the community to frame the WGSS intervention, and not the other way around. Across the board, a fair share of WGSS have been the target of rumours, and vulnerable to erroneous speculation about what happens inside the spaces or what women and girls learn to do there (e.g. how to disobey their husbands). Such messages when delivered by community members with power and influence (such as men and community leaders), while misinformed, can quickly spread and challenge the WGSS ability to provide services and safe access to women and girls.

“We understood it is best to present community members everything to make them understand that we don’t want to generate any rebellion, but we only want to help their society to be better.”

WGSS Frontline Workers, Cameroon

Women and girls should guide how WGSS service providers engage with men according to community gender dynamics and inform how the WGSS can support women and girls accordingly. Community engagement strategies can then be developed in the Start Up phase to ensure women and girls can safely participate in and access WGSS activities and services. While changing community norms may not be part of WGSS specific interventions, men and community members will receive regular messages about the importance of the WGSS and the scope of the WGSS services – this can be helpful to promote safe participation in the WGSS for women and girls.

⁸ World Council of Churches and Norwegian Church Aid, 2016. The protection needs of minorities from Syria and Iraq, p.14. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/international-affairs/the-protection-needs-of-minorities-from-syria-and-iraq>.

DOs and DON'Ts to consider during the WGSS assessment step:⁹

WGSS ASSESSMENT DOS	WGSS ASSESSMENT DON'TS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do consult GBV, gender and diversity specialists throughout the planning, design, analysis and interpretation of WGSS assessment information. 2. Make sure that managers, coordinators or any other program focal point is involved in identifying key stakeholders and other informants, as well as in reviewing and identifying key questions and suitable phrasing for each questionnaire or tools. Each assessment tool (and questions) should be tailored or rephrased to be suitable and relevant for the context. 3. Do plan for an ‘analysis of findings’ phase and plan next steps accordingly. 4. Do involve local expertise where possible, particularly women’s and GBV national, local or community-based organizations as key informants, as well as GBV coordination mechanisms if available. When appropriate and there are no security risks, consider including government officials, line ministries and sub-ministries in WGSS assessment activities. 5. Do conduct all WGSS assessments in a participatory way by consulting with women and adolescent girls of all backgrounds. The unique needs of at-risk groups should be fairly represented in assessments to tailor the WGSS. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don’t share assessment data that may be linked back to a specific group or an individual, including GBV survivors. 2. Don’t ask questions and do not gather data that are not useful or not needed. 3. Don’t probe too deeply into types of GBV or risks unless the WGSS assessment is combined with a larger GBV program assessment and relevant experienced staff are part of the assessment team. 4. Don’t single out GBV survivors or women and girls during WGSS assessment consultations. Speak with women, girls and marginalized women’s and girls’ groups in general and not explicitly about their individual experiences. 5. Don’t consult with at-risk women and adolescent girls if the risks of their participation in WGSS assessment consultations outweigh the benefits. 6. Don’t conduct unnecessary or duplicate assessments. If the assessment’s scope is limited to the WGSS and not combined with a broader GBV program assessment don’t ask questions which might be relevant to GBV response, risk mitigation or prevention interventions.

9

Adapted from the Inter Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, 2015. https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf; and Health NetTPO and UNICEF, 2016. Guidelines for Women and Girls Friendly Spaces in South Sudan. https://www.healthnetppo.org/en/project/10/guidelines_for_women_and_girls_friendly_spaces.html.

WGSS ASSESSMENT DOS	WGSS ASSESSMENT DON'TS
<p>6. Do conduct consultations in a secure setting where all women and girls feel safe to contribute to discussions. Conduct separate women's groups and men's groups, or individual consultations when appropriate, to counter exclusion, prejudice and stigma that may impede participation in WGSS assessments.</p> <p>7. Do provide training for WGSS assessment team members on ethical and safety issues. Include information in the training about appropriate systems of care (i.e. referral pathways) that are available for GBV survivors, if necessary.</p> <p>8. Do provide information during consultations with women and girls about how to report risk and/or where to access care—especially at health facilities—for anyone who may report risk of or exposure to GBV during</p>	<p>7. Don't consult with more men and community stakeholders than women and girls for WGSS assessments. WGSS are meant for women and girls and they should primarily inform WGSS assessments.</p> <p>8. Don't ignore the perspectives of men and the community. While women and girls should drive the design of the WGSS, engaging men and community members during the assessment step helps secure buy-in for the WGSS to facilitate women's and girls' access.</p>



2: TOOLS



TOOL 1: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

WHY USE THE WGSS KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE?

Key informant interviews (KIs) provide a qualitative understanding of the issue or themes being assessed. Key informants may include individual's information relevant to the design of the WGSS. This sample tool was specifically designed for the following key informants: GBV sub-cluster / sector co-lead; local authorities; camp management; representative of Civil Society Organization (CSO) / Local Non-Governmental Organization (LNGO) and the lead humanitarian coordination agency.

KI can be done quickly and with few resources and are particularly valuable in understanding a situation in remote or hard-to-reach communities. They are also useful to avoid involving affected community members at an early stage of the assessment who may not benefit from being engaged (for example, if the organization is reluctant or cautious to implement WGSS programming in that specific area, or if the security situation is too volatile and the access to humanitarian agencies is not consistently granted).

KIs are typically used to:

- **Refine data collection efforts.** For example, key informants from the GBV sub-cluster / sector can tell you which type of information already exists for a given location and support your access to it or support you in framing sensitive questions intended for women and girls in a context-appropriate way.
- **Clarify the findings of quantitative research.** For example, suppose a current survey revealed a sharp increase in women and girls reporting they feel unsafe in a specific sector of the camp where you plan to establish the WGSS as compared to the previous month's survey. KIs with camp management could reveal that this increase is the result of inter-tribal clashes in the sector that are more difficult to mitigate given the nascent camp representation structures, and something your program did not anticipate and was not designed to affect.
- **Tailor programming.** For example, interviews with a women's civil society organization might help you understand the gaps in their services, and help you design your WGSS to be complementary to existing services already accessible to women and adolescent girls.
- **Mobilize stakeholders.** Service providers, institutions, local authorities and community leaders directly involved in the WGSS assessment step may more likely be invested in supporting and influencing other key stakeholders to support the WGSS over time.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE?

While KIs can be used throughout the program cycle, they are fundamental for setting up WGSS programming as they offer the greatest opportunity to incorporate findings into a robust intervention model. More specifically, KIs are particularly useful early on to inform whether a WGSS intervention is appropriate and if so, which [delivery and implementation approaches](#) might be most suitable. Given that inter-agency coordination mechanisms, peer organizations, partner organizations or other

entities may have already carried out assessments with information relevant to WGSS design, or because of their prior experience in the targeted location, they can be useful informants. When quality data is available, efforts should not be duplicated; in this case, data collection should focus on themes/areas where information is insufficient to establish the WGSS. Whether data is provided by a third entity or gathered directly, it is crucial to consider that data gathering should always be followed by a careful analysis to understand the information collected and to then shape the intervention accordingly.

Often, in case of a sudden emergency, the time to analyze information is limited. If there is no capacity in terms of time or resources to analyze a larger amount of information, a careful selection of relevant questions should be performed before using any assessment tool. In this template we provide a possible selection of questions that should be asked even in the event of a sudden emergency. Managers should be always involved in tailoring assessment tools. The selection for sudden emergencies includes all questions in bold.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE?

One of the challenges of KIIs is balancing between allowing respondents enough space to provide information according to their special knowledge and perspectives, while also keeping the interview focused on programmatic needs to establish the WGSS. While KIIs can be flexibly designed, following a scripted guide is important both to take full advantage of the respondent's experience and expertise, as well as learn the specific information you need to establish the WGSS.

The sample KII guide was developed to support the identification of conditions necessary to establish a WGSS, possible collaborations with other service providers, and the preferred WGSS delivery model.

Step 1: Establish the parameters of the KII

Defining the following parameters for the KII is crucial to determining whether the preconditions are in place to establish a WGSS, as well as identify the relevant operational information necessary to do so:

- Decide on the geographic area within which the WGSS intervention may take place and determine who the appropriate key informants are.
- When deciding on key informants think about the types of information and perspectives each can provide. Don't ask people for information they don't have and don't expect them to know what you need. Review and rephrase questions and their relevance for each key informant. Not all questions should be asked to every key informant. Before the interview, managers should select which questions will be asked and to whom. (For example, if the informant is the representative of a women's association you may decide to ask or to skip the question "Are there CBOs/ Local non-governmental organizations specifically working with women and girls? If yes can you tell me the scope of their work?" This depends on how familiar you are with the context and whether you know if women's associations exist or not. These kind of considerations must be tailored to the context, and made prior to the interview.
- It is highly recommended to ask at least one question per each category.
- In the case of translation, sensitive words should be prior to the KII with WGSS colleagues to identify how to translate difficult or sensitive concepts into the local language. How to translate sensitive terms and concepts should not be an individual decision.

✓ **Civil Society Organizations (CSO) / Local Non-governmental Organizations (LNGO)**

“Civil society is composed of autonomous associations which develop a dense, diverse and pluralistic network.”¹ CSOs comprise the full range of formal and informal organizations, groups, networks and associations within civil society. Their common and defining trait is to unite people to advance shared goals and interests.² Among them, LNGOs are formally registered non-profit organizations, groups or institutions that operate independently from a government and have humanitarian or development objectives.³ By virtue of their longstanding presence in communities, local and women’s organizations benefit from a level of trust, and their long history of working with local government officials, community leaders, and other organizations provides them with a unique understanding – often from a first-hand perspective – of the needs of women, girls and GBV survivors before, during and after a crisis. While often marginalized and challenged in delivering aid to women and girls in emergencies, they are the very definition of key informants and can provide GBV service providers seeking to establish WGSS with invaluable support and vital information to determine the relevance and scope of the WGSS intervention.

✓ **Protection or GBV Sub-cluster / Sector / Co-lead**

At the onset of an emergency or before starting program implementation, agencies and actors carry out some form of research or assessment. Findings may only be shared with working group members and sector leads. The GBV sub-cluster/ sector working group’s core function is to coordinate and oversee inter-agency assessments for the sector and promote the use of findings to inform programming.⁴ GBV coordination mechanisms can provide a sense of the level of safety for women and girls to access public spaces as well as provide information on the level of acceptance and support of local authorities and the local population. Additionally, making the coordination structure and its members aware of intentions to potentially establish a WGSS will enhance the overall coordination of services and avoid duplication of efforts.

✓ **Camp Management**

Because camps are a closed and highly regulated environment, camp management is often distinct from local authorities. While the other key informants listed are relevant for both camp and non-camp settings, camp management is only a relevant key informant if the establishment of the WGSS is planned for a camp-based setting. Camp management’s core responsibility is to ensure that standards in the camp are upheld whilst striving for durable solutions, thereby leading the coordination of protection and assistance programming.⁵ Therefore, camp management is an essential key informant for information related to safety and security, existing services and gaps, opportunities for partnership and the community’s profile, gender dynamics and community leadership. Making camp managers aware of intentions to potentially establish a WGSS in a specific camp is a necessary first step and KIIs can serve as a means of establishing rapport.

1 Ghaus-Pasha, A., 2005. The role of Civil Society Organization in Governance. p.3. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan019594.pdf>.

2 UNDP, 2006. UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A Toolkit for Strengthening Partnerships. p. 3. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2141UNDP%20and%20Civil%20Society%20Organizations%20a%20Toolkit%20for%20Strengthening%20Partnerships.pdf>.

3 Ibid, 14.

4 Gender Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), 2010. Handbook for Coordinating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings. https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/GBV_Handbook_Long_Version.pdf.

5 The International Organization for Migration (IOM), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), 2015. Camp Management Toolkit. p.14. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cmt_2015_portfolio_compressed.pdf.

✓ **Lead Humanitarian Coordination Agency**

Coordinating with the lead humanitarian coordination agency can be particularly relevant for contexts in which the sector coordination mechanisms are not yet established, or where local authorities are not available, accessible or willing to be part of the initial assessment. The lead humanitarian coordination agency may have valuable information about the context and conflict dynamics and may be able to share helpful information with regards to the humanitarian response strategy, programming gaps, and guidance for engaging with local authorities and civil society organizations. When local authorities, the GBV coordination mechanism or camp management are available, engaging the lead humanitarian coordination agency may not be necessary for the level of information needed for the design phase of the WGSS intervention.

✓ **Local authorities**

A local authority is an entity officially responsible for all the public services and facilities in a defined area. Local authorities may represent a source of support throughout different phases of the WGSS program. For example, they can provide information about context and policies, or be a partner or an advisor for strategic collaborations. Moreover, countries may have established protocols for the response to violence against women and girls which local authorities lead, or humanitarian agencies may support local authorities in developing systems and guidelines for GBV prevention and response of which WGSS may be part of the pathways identified.

Hence, when engaging with local authorities during the assessment step, it is important to understand and/or decide on the level of information-sharing organizations are requested to comply with; are willing to provide; and the protocols for engaging with local authorities whether internal to the organization, customary, or guided by the inter-agency humanitarian response.

Step 2: Establish a structure for facilitation

Key informant interviews require a structure to be effective. Respondents are more likely to provide high quality information if the conversation has direction and the facilitator is prepared. Some useful considerations:

- After receiving the respondent's consent, record the interview as this allows you to capture all the qualitative elements which can be transcribed after the interview. While a note taker is not necessary for a KII, a translator may be needed, in which case the key informant must be previously informed of the translator's presence.
It is advisable to meet with the translator beforehand and explain the format of the interview and review the tools.
- Ask the most important questions first. You might run out of time. This is especially important when interviewing people whose job might require them to end the interview early.
- Ask the same (or parallel) questions of several key informants. Answers from several different key informants will support the analysis of data allowing you to triangulate information and reveal trends such as barriers to establishing the WGSS or indicate locations where a WGSS might be of great need.
- Ask one question at a time and don't get trapped on a specific question. The flexibility of the KII allows you to decide the pace and number of questions. Consider that you may get more useful information by discussing one subject fully.

Be prepared to ask the same question in another way. However, it is equally important to acknowledge that sometimes you simply may not get the information you need from a respondent. To maintain the flow of the conversation and neither frustrate yourself nor antagonize the respondent by trying to elicit information that he or she does not have, cannot articulate, or isn't willing to share, it is important to know when to move on.

- Some questions are sensitive; you should review ethical considerations prior to the interview, particularly considering the security of both parties.

For a Fruitful Meeting with Local Authorities

- Request a meeting in advance (at least three days or otherwise indicated by custom) sharing the objective and a suggested agenda of the meeting to adequately prepare and identify the most relevant representative to attend.
- Consider a local staff's presence at the meeting. Their understanding of the context, policies, practices and structures will help to navigate the meeting and any unforeseen discussion in a successful way to better grasp nuances and inferred information.

Step 3: Analyze the findings

The information collected should be entered into [**Database A: WGSS Qualitative Assessment**](#) to ease the analysis of information and inform programming decisions.

To illustrate how using the WGSS KII Guide will directly inform your analysis of findings and support you we have annotated the tool below. On the left are the same questions in template above. On the right, we show why these questions might be important to ask, and how to analyze the answers so they can inform the design of the WGSS program.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

INTRODUCTION SCRIPT:

(Remember to tailor before you use this script)

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to join me for this discussion today. My name is _____, and I'm here on behalf of _____ (organization), as _____ (position).

My organization and I are assessing needs and analyzing the opportunity for programming in_____ (specific location). I am conducting a series of interviews to learn from different stakeholders and service providers about community dynamics, services available, safety and security concerns and/or different types of barriers and violence affecting the community with a focus on women and girls' experiences. Your answers will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

A safe space _____ (add the local name for your WGSS or the term used in general in the setting) is "a structured place where women and girls' physical and emotional safety is respected and where women and girls are supported through processes of empowerment to seek, share, and obtain information, access services, express themselves, enhance psychosocial wellbeing, and more fully realize their rights". In this sense, safe spaces can be a key means of building women's and girls' social assets.

INFORMED CONSENT SCRIPT:

(Remember to tailor before you use this script)

If you agree to participate, the interview will last possibly no more than 60/ 90 minutes. If you do not want to continue for any reason, we can stop the interview at any time. Participation in the discussion is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. I will not ask you why you do not want to participate. No negative consequences will occur if you choose not to participate or withdraw at any point.

I will take precautions to keep any information you provide during the interview confidential. The discussion will take place in a private space so that no one can overhear us talking. If someone approaches us, we will stop the conversation until we can continue in private. I will not present any identifying information in anything that we produce based on this conversation.

I will treat everything that you say today with respect and will only share the answers you give as general answers combined with those from all the people who speak to us. I ask that you keep everything confidential, too.

With your permission, (select one of the two options listed below) :

1. I will take notes to make sure that I do not miss what you have to say but will not capture any identifying information. Do you agree with me taking notes during our discussion?

Yes No

OR

2. **(Optional)** I would like to audio-record the interview so that I don't miss anything. I will record your responses using audio software on a tablet / phone. The information in the tablet / phone will be downloaded to a secure computer. At no time will the information from the tablet be linked to your name or other identifying information. The tablet/phone, which records your voice, will be taken to a secure room, which will be locked and only accessible to the research team. All the recordings will be transcribed and saved as computer files and then the audio files with your voice will be destroyed. Do you agree with me recording your responses?

Yes No

Interview date: _____

Translation necessary for the interview: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language) to
_____ (language)

Sex of key informant: Male Female

CONTEXT & CONFLICT DYNAMICS: NOT ALL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED, RATHER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REPRESENT OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM.

- Is humanitarian access to the area granted, consistent and safe?
- Follow up: If not, what is the challenge with humanitarian agencies?
- Are humanitarian service providers welcome and accepted by the community and its leaders?
- Follow up: which services are not welcome or who in the community does not accept service providers?

In case an area was pre-identified for a WGSS:

- Is it safe for women and girls to access that specific area?
- Is displacement / resettlement currently ongoing or is the affected population settled in this area?
- Do you foresee the settlement (i.e. formal camp or informal settlement) remaining 12 to 18 months from now?
- Do female humanitarian staff face specific access restrictions or challenges in movements?

Record Answers

COMMUNITY DYNAMICS: NOT ALL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED, RATHER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REPRESENT OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM.

- What are the main identity groups (including any diversity, minority and coexisting heterogeneous groups) of women and girls in this community?
- Which of these are considered vulnerable or marginalized in this community?
- How would you describe the relationship between different population groups in this community?
- Is there any hidden or visible tension I should be aware of in the community amongst members?

In case tensions within the community are identified.

- What are the mitigation measures in place?
- Who should I talk to, to know more about existing mitigation/social cohesion strategies?

Record Answers:

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION & LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS: NOT ALL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED, RATHER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REPRESENT OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM.

- Can you please describe the structure and roles of the community (traditional and religious) leaders?
- Can you please describe the relationship between NGOs and different community leaders?
- Do you think that by talking with community leaders, I will get a good representation of women's voices? What about adolescent girls' voices?
- Do you have general information on women's and girls' participation in decision-making structures?
- What are the key communication channels between service providers and formal or informal leadership?
- How would you recommend engaging community leadership throughout the WGSS program?

Record Answers:

SERVICE PROVIDERS & KEY STAKEHOLDERS: NOT ALL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED, RATHER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REPRESENT OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM.

- What are the main identity groups (including any diversity, minority and coexisting heterogeneous groups) of women and girls in this community?
- Which of these are considered vulnerable or marginalized in this community?
- How would you describe the relationship between different population groups in this community?
- Is there any hidden or visible tension I should be aware of in the community amongst members?

In case tensions within the community are identified.

- What are the mitigation measures in place?
- Who should I talk to, to know more about existing mitigation/social cohesion strategies?

Record Answers:

EXISTING REFERRALS & FEEDBACK MECHANISMS: NOT ALL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED, RATHER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REPRESENT OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM.

- Does the community have access to feedback mechanisms? What about women? What about adolescent girls?
- Has an inter-agency feedback mechanism been established? Does it include the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse?
- Is there a GBV reporting mechanism, channel, mandatory reporting I should know about?
- Where do WGSS interventions fit within the SOPs on prevention and response to GBV?
- Is there any other protocol or guidance that regulates the implementation of WGSS or GBV programming I should be aware about?

Record Answers:

KEY INFORMANT'S BUY-IN FOR THE WGSS: NOT ALL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED, RATHER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REPRESENT OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM.

- Would you consider this location a priority implementation location?
- Is any other WGSS operating in the same area?
- If yes, how many? Is/are the WGSS able to cover the reach of the total affected female population of the area? Are you aware about what type of services and activities are implemented in that/those spaces?
- If not, is there any other service or infrastructure we should consider for a potential integration?
- Would you be supportive of establishing the WGSS in this area?

Record Answers:

CONCLUDING SCRIPT:

Those were all the questions I had for you. Before we conclude, do you have anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions for me?

As I shared in the beginning, your answers, combined with those of others, will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

As agreed, I will take precautions to keep any information you provide during the interview confidential. Please, remember that you agreed to keep this discussion to yourself as well. If anyone has questions or would like more information with regards to the assessment, I am happy for you to direct them to me.

THANK YOU

Analysis: Annotated Tool

KII QUESTIONNAIRE	HOW YOUR KEY INFORMANTS ANSWERS WILL INFORM THE DESIGN OF THE WGSS
<p>Context & Conflict Dynamics: Not all questions need to be asked, rather the following questions represent options to choose from.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is humanitarian access to the area granted, consistent and safe? Follow up: If not, what is the challenge with humanitarian agencies?• Are humanitarian service providers welcome and accepted by the community and its leaders? Follow up: Which services are not welcome or who in the community does not accept service providers?	<p>The answers to these questions may allow you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the overall feasibility of establishing a WGSS in a specific area.• Identify access concerns which may support you in deciding whether a certain geographic location should be considered for the WGSS.

<p>In case an area was pre-identified for a WGSS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it safe for women and girls to access that specific area? • Is displacement / resettlement currently ongoing or is the affected population settled in this area? • Do you foresee the settlement (i.e. formal camp or informal settlement) remaining 12 to 18 months from now? • Do female humanitarian staff face specific access restrictions or challenges in moving around the area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand whether the population of women and girls you are seeking to reach though the WGSS are on the move or more sedentary, which will help you understand whether a static or mobile service delivery model is more appropriate. • Have a sense whether certain settlements will exist for a given amount of time. This will allow you to equally determine whether a static or mobile service delivery model and whether a direct implementation or a partnership approach might be most appropriate. • Assess risks or opportunities for a mobile service delivery model depending on the likelihood that female staff will be able to move around without restrictions.
--	--

Community Dynamics: Not all questions need to be asked, rather the following questions represent options to choose from.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main identity groups (including any diverse, minority and co-existing heterogeneous groups) of women and girls in this community? • Which of these are considered vulnerable or marginalized in this community? • How would you describe the relationship between different population groups in this community? • Is there any hidden or visible tension to be aware of in the community amongst members? <p>In case tensions within the community are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the mitigation measures in place? • Who should you talk to, to know more about existing mitigation/social cohesion strategies? 	<p>The answer to these questions may allow you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify various context-appropriate identity markers including isolated women and girls, and those marginalized and stigmatized by the community including by women and girls (e.g. women and girls with intellectual or mental disabilities, LGBTQ, sex workers). • Identify women and adolescent girls likely to be more challenging to reach, which you will need to bear in mind when designing strategies on how they may safely be engaged and how to effectively reduce barriers which may prevent them from accessing the WGSS once established.
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the need for multiple safe spaces to ensure safety, inclusivity and impartiality. • Determine the diversity of staff required in the WGSS to demonstrate inclusivity, and conflict-sensitivity. • Define additional assessment target groups to speak with and / or adaptations required to the assessment tools. • Establish the languages which the WGSS communication tools will need to prioritize.
--	---

Community Representation & Leadership Dynamics: Not all questions need to be asked, rather the following questions represent options to choose from.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you please describe the structure and roles of the community (traditional and religious) leaders? • Can you please describe the relationship between NGOs and different community leaders? • Do you think that by talking with community leaders, I will get a realistic representation of women's voices? What about adolescent girls' voices? • Do you have general information on women's and girls' participation in decision-making structures? • What are the key communication channels between service providers and formal or informal leadership? • How would you recommend engaging community leadership throughout the WGSS program? 	<p>The answers to these questions may allow you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how the WGSS should develop and maintain its relationship with community leaders. • Determine the order of importance in which leaders may need to be prioritized for outreach in order to secure buy- in for the WGSS. • Gain initial understanding on how much women and girls are actually represented by the local leadership. • Identify female leadership structures which the WGSS can engage and support, or encourage local ownership of the WGSS. • Gain a basic understanding of women's and girls' participation in decision-making, and which leaders might be most representative of their voices. • Identify the key stakeholders to be included in the stakeholder analysis. • Identify potential additional key informants not previously identified.
---	--

Service Providers & Key Stakeholders: Not all questions need to be asked, rather the following questions represent options to choose from.

- Are there existing women's associations or any type of women's networks active in this community?

Follow up: If yes, are they currently active in responding to current humanitarian needs?

- Are there CBOs/ Local NGOs specifically working with women and girls? If yes, can you tell me the scope of their work?
- Are there particular dynamics between local organizations or networks we should be mindful of? And any particular dynamic between local and international organizations?
- Do you have an updated mapping of local organizations delivering services in the area?
- Who are the main stakeholders who should be involved in the assessment phase for the WGSS?

The answers to these questions may allow you to:

- Provide initial insight as to whether a partnership approach might be appropriate to implement the WGSS.
- Identify the key stakeholders to be included in the stakeholder analysis.
- Identify the key service providers to be included in the service provider mapping.
- Identify potential additional key informants not previously identified.

Existing Referrals & Feedback Mechanisms: Not all questions need to be asked, rather the following questions represent options to choose from.

- Does the community have access to feedback mechanisms? What about women? What about adolescent girls?
- Has an inter-agency feedback mechanism been established? Does it include the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)?
- Is there a GBV reporting mechanism, channel, or mandatory reporting I should know about?

Answers to these questions may help inform about:

- Mechanisms the WGSS should be a part of once the space is established.
- Mechanisms to consider establishing specifically for the WGSS to ensure women and girls can provide feedback on the services provided.
- Existing mechanisms for PSEA the WGSS would need to consider as part of the humanitarian coordination system.

- Where do WGSS interventions fit within the SOPs on prevention and response to GBV?
- Is there any other protocol or guidance that regulates the implementation of WGSS or GBV programming I should be aware about?

- How the WGSS can fit within broader GBV frameworks.
- Potential referral pathway partners the WGSS should consider reaching out to, to ensure survivors' access to the WGSS.

Key Informant's Buy-In For the WGSS: Not all questions need to be asked, rather the following questions represent options to choose from.

- Would you consider this location a priority implementation location?
- Is any other WGSS operating in the same area?

Follow up: If yes, how many? Is/are the WGSS able to cover the reach of the total affected female population of the area? Are you aware about what type of services and activities are implemented in that/those spaces?

If not, is there any other service or infrastructure we should consider for potential integration?

- Would you be supportive of establishing the WGSS in this area?

The answers to these questions may allow you to:

- Determine the relevance of establishing a WGSS in the location.
- Identify possible collaboration.
- Identify if the key informant is supportive of your WGSS plans in a selected area.



TOOL 2: SERVICE MAPPING QUESTIONNAIRE

This tool includes the questionnaire (Tool 2) and the template. The template is available in [Database B:WGSS Mapping Assessment](#), second sheet.

WHY USE THE WGSS SERVICE MAPPING QUESTIONNAIRE?

When interagency cluster or sector working groups are established, each sector produces and makes available the ‘3 Ws’ (Who, What, Where) mapping identifying actors, their programs and their geographic coverage. These are regularly updated. When WGSS operate in an area covered by operational coordination mechanisms, available 3 Ws can be a useful first point of reference to identify service providers to engage in the mapping of services. However, it will most likely not contain the detailed or standardized information needed specifically to support the design of a WGSS. Hence, while it is encouraged to use available information to identify service providers and pre-populate some of the data points of the service mapping, using this tool is not likely to be a duplication of effort. If service mapping is available, it is highly recommended that existing information be used, and this questionnaire be used only to gather missing or out-of-date information. Once finalized, the mapping’s findings should be shared with the coordination structure (however, only if service providers engaged gave consent) and with camp management if relevant.

The WGSS Service mapping questionnaire provides contextualized information on opportunities and gaps in broad service provision (as opposed to specific response services for survivors of GBV typical within GBV assessments) that are available and accessible to women, adolescent girls and GBV survivors to help in WGSS intervention planning. The tool was specifically designed to:

- ✓ Provide insight on the level of services and programs available and accessible to women, adolescent girls and GBV survivors in a targeted community;
- ✓ Identify the links between these services and opportunities for holistic multisectoral service provision for women, adolescent girls and GBV survivors;
- ✓ Inform partnerships or network service collaborations for the WGSS intervention;
- ✓ Understand the services and programs future WGSS members might use and need;
- ✓ Compare and contrast responses from different respondents and verify information from other sources; and
- ✓ Identify service-related gaps, risks or problems for women, adolescent girls and survivors of GBV which may need to be filled.

The WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire focuses on questions in relation to the service provided and collects information on how such services cater to women and adolescent girls at-large. The questions should be asked across all sectors providing services in the location intended for the WGSS. Importantly, while the questions assess whether services are provided to GBV survivors as well as persons prioritized because of their heightened barriers to access, this is different than a service mapping focused on GBV response referral pathway services (i.e. focused on health, legal and psychosocial survivor-centered service delivery and capacity).

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS SERVICE MAPPING QUESTIONNAIRE?

Service mappings can and should be used on a regular basis throughout the program cycle. However, the assessment step is likely the best opportunity to identify possible findings that can be used for WGSS projects. The mapping may, for example, provide solid justification for a WGSS intervention given a lack of services. It may justify the WGSS as a catalyst to place women and girls at the center of coordinated, safe and accessible multisectoral services. The mapping may inform the WGSS delivery model on whether to use a static or mobile approach to service delivery – for example, the mapping may show that women and girls living in surrounding areas of a static WGSS will not be able to access it. The mapping can also inform the implementation approach. For example, a partnership implementation model that upholds a woman-led and sustainable programming approach, might be based on mapping findings that highlighted strong, existing women’s networks providing similar services to a WGSS on the ground but in a less structured way.

When the WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire is used during the assessment step it is linked to the [Tool 1: WGSS Key Informant Interview Guide](#). In fact, the KIIs and the service mapping can be simultaneously conducted as the mapping may indicate key informants important to consider or prioritize and vice versa. The service mapping can equally be done after conducting initial KII to verify information related to opportunities, gaps, risks or problems with services identified through key informants.

Importantly, service mapping should be done regularly throughout the WGSS project process to confirm or update information collected in the previous version. This is important to reflect changing realities on the ground as well as accuracy of key information. When used in the implementation phase for example, the service mapping can help identify new services available that might not have been determined as accessible in a previous analysis, or that were not present earlier. In addition, regular service mapping can be useful to inform opportunities for collaboration with other services.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS SERVICE MAPPING QUESTIONNAIRE?

The WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire provides an interview introduction, and informed consent and conclusion scripts, while the questionnaire is comprised of 24 questions covering 5 categories of information:

- ✓ Organization information
 - ✓ Service(s) reaching women and adolescent girls
 - ✓ Service(s) delivery location, modality, approach and duration
 - ✓ Profile of women and adolescent girls served and criteria for service(s) delivery
- Referrals and outreach

Interviews should include not only international humanitarian service providers but also relevant government actors, civil society groups and community-based organizations (CBOs); this is particularly important when planning to operate in a non-camp-based setting.

While the WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire is the means to collect the information necessary for the mapping, the WGSS Service Mapping Template (available in the [Database B: WGSS Mapping Assessment](#)) produces the actual analysis and mapping of services.

Step 1: Establish the parameters of the mapping

Many of the key informants listed in [Tool 1: WGSS Key Informant Interview Guide](#) may support the identification of service providers in the same area. If, due to resource and time constraints, it is not feasible to interview all the service providers, the service mapping can be phased, prioritizing a core group of services to interview first to support the set-up of the WGSS. While there is no specific way to make such a decision, below are some potential strategies to consider:

- Conduct [KIs](#) prior to the service mapping and ask key informants who should be prioritized for the service mapping.
- Conduct a [safety assessment](#) with women and girls prior to the service mapping. Based on this assessment, service providers can be prioritized according to those which women and girls have considered safe and accessible.
- GBV case management services, if being planned to be hosted within the WGSS standard referral pathway, might be prioritized for the mapping to inform both WGSS and GBV interventions.
- If a partnership or integrated approach to service delivery is prioritized, the type of service providers or sectors considered for such an arrangement might inform the prioritization for the mapping.

Step 2: Establish a structure for facilitation

Service mappings collect standardized data points in a systematic way to coherently map, compare and analyze the information. This makes the interview questionnaire less flexible than the one provided in the [Tool 1: WGSS Key Informant Interview Guide](#). Consider the following to structure the facilitation:

- The rigidity of the guide is vital to accurately map and support the analysis of aggregable and comparable data points which will be entered in the [Database B: WGSS Mapping Assessment](#). Ask the questions in the order they are provided and across the 5 categories of information as this will allow you to map services relevant to your WGSS design.
- Most questions have predetermined answers which should be selected. These allow for answers which are expected to be unique, highly contextual or require qualitative elements to also be captured.
- The WGSS Service Mapping questionnaire is the same tool and methodology used throughout the program cycle for new service providers not previously interviewed. For services already mapped, while acknowledging the high rate of staff turnover in humanitarian settings, you should still aim to interview the same respondent as in the previous iteration as this will allow you to more quickly confirm or adjust responses using the previous interview answers as the source for the current interview.

Step 3: Analyze the findings:

While the [WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire](#) is the means to collect the information necessary for the mapping, by entering the information collected into the [Database B. WGSS Mapping Assessment](#) produces the actual analysis and mapping of services.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

INTRODUCTION SCRIPT:

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to join me for this discussion today. My name is _____, and I'm here on behalf of _____ (organization), as _____ (position).

I am conducting a service(s) mapping to learn directly from service(s) providers about the service(s)s they provide which reach women and or adolescent girls and or GBV survivors.

Your answers will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space in_____ (specific location). A safe space _____ (add the local name for your WGSS or the term used in general in the setting) is a structured place where women's and girls' physical and emotional safety is respected and where women and girls are supported through processes of empowerment to seek, share, and obtain information, access services, express themselves, enhance psychosocial well-being, and more fully realize their rights. In this sense, safe spaces can be a key means of building women's and girls' social assets.

INFORMED CONSENT SCRIPT:

If you agree to participate, the interview will last about 60 to 90 minutes. The information you share will be used with discretion and respect and it will be shared on a "need to know basis".

If you do not want to continue participation for any reason, at any time you can decide to do so. Participation in the discussion is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

I will not ask you why you do not want to answer them or wish to stop the interview. With your permission, (select applicable mechanism among the two options below)

1. I will take notes to make sure that I do not miss what you have to say but will not capture any identifying information. Do you agree with me taking notes from our discussion?

OR

2. I would like to audio-record the interview so that I don't miss anything. I will record your responses using survey software on a tablet / phone. The information in the tablet / phone will be downloaded to a secure computer. At no time will the information from the tablet be linked to your name or other identifying information. The audio recorder, which records your voice, will be taken to a secure room, which will be locked and only accessible to the research team. All the recordings will be transcribed and saved as computer files and then the audio files with your voice will be destroyed. Do you agree with me recording your responses?

Interview date: _____

Name/Title:

Interviewer: _____

Translation necessary for the interview: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language) to
_____ (language)

Sex of key informant: Yes No

Focal point to contact email: _____

Telephone: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE

Organization Information (informant)

1. Organization Name: _____

2. Organization Type: _____

- Community Based Organization (CBO)
- International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO)
- Local Non-Governmental Organization (LNGO)
- Government / Public Service(s)
- UN Agency
- Private sector

3. Sector / Sub – Sector: _____

- Camp Coordination & Camp Management
- Child Protection
- Education
- Gender Based Violence
- Food Security & Agriculture
- Health
- Housing, Land & Property
- Humanitarian Mine Action
- Livelihoods
- Nutrition
- Shelter, Settlement & Recovery
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Service(s) reaching women & adolescent girls

4. What service(s) do you currently provide reaching women and or adolescent girls?

Example: for this question you can refer to distribution that targets women, girls, men and boys BUT NOT activities that reaches or target only men and boys.

If the answer to Q4 is “NONE” or “we don’t work with women and girls” - the interview should stop.

5. For the service(s) mentioned, who is it specifically tailored for? Mark all that apply.
(If service provider delivers multiple services make sure that information relevant to each service identified is captured) Note: by “tailored” you are looking for indications that either the service(s) or the way it is provided was intentionally designed to ensure women and or adolescent girls and or GBV survivors can access it or meet a specific need.

Women Yes No Adolescent Girls Yes No

GBV Survivors Yes No

6. How is the organization supporting safe access to services for women and girls?

7. For the service(s) you just listed do you have available female staff during operating hours?

Yes, for all services during full operating hours
 Yes, but not during full operating hours
 Yes, but not for all services
 No

8. For the service(s) you mentioned do you have a dedicated space you use with women and girls?

Yes
 No

9. For the service(s) you mentioned do you face any challenges in reaching women and adolescent girls?

Yes (Specify) _____
 No

10. Do you turn away women and girls due to lack of financial resources?

Yes (Specify) _____
 No

11. Do you have a GBV or Gender focal point?

GBV focal point Yes No Gender focal point Yes No

12. For the service(s) you mentioned have staff and/or volunteers received training on gender-based violence referrals?

Yes No

Service(s) Delivery Location, Modality, Approach & Duration

13. For the service(s) mentioned what is the specific geographic location(s)?

(If service provider delivers multiple services make sure that information relevant to each service identified is captured)

Governorate / State / Region (Larger Location unit): _____

District / Village / Town (Smaller Location unit): _____

Camp: _____

14. For the service(s) mentioned what delivery model do you use? Mark all that apply.

(If service provider delivers multiple services make sure that information relevant to each service identified is captured)

Mobile Dual Mobile & Static
 Static Temporary / Ad Hoc

Integrated in static facility with other service(s) specify which sector _____

Integrated in mobile with other service(s) specify which sector _____

15. For the service(s) mentioned what delivery approach do you use? Mark all that apply.

(If service provider delivers multiple services make sure that information relevant to each service identified is captured)

Direct implementation
 In Partnership; supporting name of partner entity _____
 In Partnership; supported by (name of partner entity) _____
 In Partnership; Integrated with (name of partner entity) _____

16. For the service(s) mentioned, until when are they guaranteed to be provided / funded?
(If service provider delivers multiple services make sure that information relevant to each service identified is captured)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 13-17 months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7-11 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 or more months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 months | |

Profile of Women & Adolescent Girls Served & Criteria for Service(s) Delivery

17. What specific age groups of women and adolescent girls do your activities serve? Mark all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infant girls (0-4) | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adolescent girls (15 -17) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children girls (5 -9) | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult women (18 -55) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young adolescent girls (10- 14) | <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly women (56 and more) |

18. Do you provide service(s) for? Mark all that apply.

- Local community women and girls
- Refugee women and girls
- IDP women and girls

19. Do you provide service(s) to women and girls with specific needs or prioritized due to heightened needs? Mark all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adolescent girls | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic religious or another minority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Older women | <input type="checkbox"/> LBTQ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female heads of household | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated or unaccompanied girls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Survivors of GBV | <input type="checkbox"/> Women and girls living with disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female survivors of violence (non-GBV) | <input type="checkbox"/> Women and girls in detention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women and girls living with HIV / AIDS | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women and girls associated with armed forces | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | |

Referrals & Outreach

20. Do you provide service(s) based on? Mark all that apply.
(If service provider delivers multiple services make sure that information relevant to each service identified is captured)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria - established by the sector | <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria – registration status-based |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria – established internally | <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria – proof of documentation-based |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria – vulnerability-based | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open access – no selection of beneficiary | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | |

21. What is the process to refer a client to your service(s)?

22. Are individuals able to refer themselves to your services?

- Yes No

If yes, what information / contact details may be provided to individuals to enable this?

Service delivery branches/locations: _____

Hours and days of operation: _____

Hotline or service line: _____

Focal point contact: _____

other information: _____

23. Are there any specific processes for GBV cases?

- Yes No

If yes what is the process? _____

24. Does the organization provide information and awareness sessions for the community?
Mark all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, through home to home visits | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, through technology-based solutions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, through community meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, through campaigns and events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, through facilitated sessions | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, other (specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, through radio | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

CONCLUDING SCRIPT:

Those were all the questions I had for you. Before we conclude, do you have anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions for me?

As I shared in the beginning, your answers combined with those of others will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!



TOOL 3: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

This tool is best used in an excel format. you can access the instructions and template [here](#).



TOOL 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR WOMEN & GIRLS

WHY USE THE WGSS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS?

This tool is meant to be used with women and adolescent girls ages 15 – 19 from diverse identity groups. It is critical to recognize that all women and adolescent girls have skills, capacities as well as needs that may differ between individuals and between identity groups, and they should be equally engaged in the assessment and design steps related to the WGSS. The instructions and the FGD guide provide examples for women and adolescent girls living with disabilities. However, it is important to stress that like all other identity group markers, disability is only one of many characteristics which can make up diverse women's and adolescent girls' identities.

Women and girls with the following different types of disabilities should be included (this list is not exhaustive):

- those with difficulty moving and walking (since birth or due to an impairment acquired later in life);
- those with difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses;
- those with difficulty hearing, even when using hearing aids;
- those with intellectual disabilities who may have difficulty understanding, learning and remembering new things;
- those with mental disabilities and mental health conditions;
- those with multiple disabilities, who are often confined to their homes and who may need assistance with personal care.

Consulting women and adolescent girls during the assessment step, prior to establishing the WGSS, ensures an inclusive and tailored women and girl-led design of the WGSS.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS?

Step 1: Before carrying out the FGD⁶

- Identify and mitigate risks that may arise from your consultations with women and girls living with disabilities or other at-risk groups. Before identifying potential participants, meet with community leaders and/or local authorities, leaders of local women's groups and leaders of groups for persons

⁶ Adapted from Women's Refugee Commission and International Rescue Committee, 2015. Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in Gender-Based Violence Programming in Humanitarian Settings. <https://gbvresponders.org/response/disability-inclusion-2/>.

with disabilities – both formal and informal – to explain the purpose of the assessment and the engagement you are seeking from women and girls. These key informants may be able to suggest practical and safe ways to engage them as well as support their mobilization to participate in the FGD.

- Be flexible about when and where consultations take place. The assessment step should as much as possible accommodate women and girls with disabilities by holding consultations as near to their homes as possible — always prioritizing their safety.
- Be clear and upfront with participants about the purpose of the consultation and what the WGSS will be able and unable to provide.
- The basic approaches of speech, writing, gestures, pictures and posters, and activities to convey and understand information used with women and girls in general also work with women and girls with disabilities, but it is important to find the approach that works best for different groups with disabilities. Before conducting the FGD ask women and girls with disabilities, or their caregivers, for their preferred communication method. Based on this, the FGD Guide can be adapted, although always be prepared to try an alternative approach if one method does not work. Consider involving specialized service providers who may be able to help with communication during the FGD or support your preparation.
- It is important to remember that it may take time for all women and girls to share their perspectives. They may have never participated in an activity like this before and may not be used to people asking for their opinions. It may take time for them to feel comfortable, and even more so for some women and girls with disabilities. If this is the case, try talking with them through a series of meetings, using different approaches, such as participatory activities, group discussions or more private interviews.

Step 2: Establish the parameters of the FGD

FGD should not include more than 10 participants; the ideal number is 6-8 individuals to ensure everyone can contribute to the conversation. The activity should not last longer than 60 minutes, especially for older women, adolescent girls and women and adolescent girls with intellectual and mental disabilities.

Keeping this in mind, the FGD guide is divided into 3 parts (A,B,C) which allows for greater flexibility in how FGDs can be conducted. For instance, Part A and B and C can be conducted within the same day with a break in between each part or over several days if participants are willing and able to return. Alternatively, Part A and B can be conducted within the same day for the same participants with a break in between, and Part C can be conducted with different individual women / adolescent girls but representative of the same consulted identity groups.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Needs identified across communities are often linked to lacking job opportunities and financial means. Often, WGSS want to offer income-generating activities (IGA) or frame loosely associated activities as IGA opportunities as a pull factor to encourage participation.

Doing so actually creates significant flaws in the design of the WGSS, where either the purpose of the WGSS can be lost or the lack of transparency can misinform and mislead women and adolescent girls.

Participants should be placed in groups where they are all from the same age group, have the same status (i.e. host community members, refugees, internally displaced persons), etc. Persons with different types of disabilities can participate in the same group discussion, according to their communication skills and abilities. Separate and/or specific groups may be necessary to facilitate effective participation of:

- Women or girls who are deaf and use sign language to communicate as well as women or girls with intellectual disabilities who might prefer to use drawings, stories or photos to stimulate discussion. In such cases, smaller groups (4-6 participants) may be necessary.
- In some settings, it might be most effective to have a separate group for women and girls with new disabilities (e.g., acquired through war injuries) to explore their specific concerns.
- It may also be helpful to run separate, parallel discussions or activities with female caregivers of women and girls with disabilities, in the same or a nearby venue. This can create a safe space for each group to explore their different concerns, may decrease the demands on caregivers who now would not need to come on multiple days, and increase the participation of people who are not used to being separated from their caregivers.

To fully moderate the conversation:

- The facilitator should not take notes, instead a note taker should be present.
- Both the facilitator and note taker should be female. While in certain contexts it may be possible to have a male facilitator, their gender will automatically change the candidness, or the level of information shared in the group, and hence affect the quality of data collected, necessary to inform the intervention. While we do not recommend engaging a male facilitator, if you decide to do so, at a minimum, you must ensure that you have informed women and girls, so they can decide whether to participate in the FGD. They must also review the questions – any questions which may make women and girls uncomfortable to share responses to should be removed.
- If Sign Language interpreters support facilitation, the FGD guide should be shared in advance so they are familiar with the questions that will be asked.

- If translation is needed, translation of sensitive or technical concepts and words should be previously discussed, identified and agreed.
- The facilitator should describe any image or slide they may use to facilitate the conversation slowly and give enough time to captioners and interpreters present in the room.

Before conducting an FGD, it is important always to get the consent of participants. It does not need to be written, in many contexts verbal consent is enough. Before starting an FGD, the facilitator should reassure participants that the interview will be anonymous and only non-identifiable information will be captured. All participants should agree that no information shared in the discussion will be divulged outside the group.

This questionnaire may be easily used at the onset of an emergency. We provide a possible selection of questions that should be absolutely asked even in the event of a sudden emergency. Managers should be involved in tailoring the tool to the specific context. The selection for sudden emergencies includes all questions in **bold**.

Step 3: Decide how best to link WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide for Women and Girls with other assessment tools

Information collected through other assessment tools can be used as a starting point for the FGD, providing you an opportunity to triangulate or delve more in-depth on certain questions or approaches.

For example, when looking at [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#) and the FGD tool:

- ✓ Consider using the same group formations of participants for both activities.
- ✓ Even though the FGD tool briefly touches on safety, it is still recommended to deliver both activities within a short period of time, to ensure that information gathered through both tools can be combined and analyzed as complementary.
- ✓ The FGD tool and WGSS Safety Mapping may be simultaneously conducted. In this case, a careful selection of questions should be made, and the whole activity should not last more than 90 minutes. After question 2-3 of the FGD guide, it is possible to incorporate the [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#).
- ✓ Alternatively, you can choose to conduct the WGSS Safety Mapping first and use the findings to tailor your questions for the FGD - for example, related to vulnerable women and girls, access barriers and restrictions in movement, modalities and approaches.
- ✓ If there is time and possibility, it is advisable to conduct the FGD and safety mapping separately to avoid overwhelming the informant/participant, and so you need not drastically shorten the questionnaires.
- ✓ You can use the findings from the [Tool 2: WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire](#) to tailor your questions for the FGD related to locations considered safe and acceptable for women and girls to access.

Step 4: Analyze the findings of the WGSS FGD Guide with Women and Girls

The FGD Guide should be used in parallel to and the findings of Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping both should be analyzed together. For further analysis, both the FGD Guide with Women and Girls can also be analyzed jointly with Tool 6: WGSS FGD Guide with Communities to see whether information provided by women and girls is like the information shared by community members. The information collected should be entered into Database A: WGSS Qualitative Assessment to ease the analysis of information and inform programming decisions.

- [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#)
- [Tool 6: WGSS FGD Guide with Communities](#)
- [Database A: WGSS Qualitative Assessment](#)



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Note to Facilitator: This tool is to be used to guide focus group discussions with women and girls as part of the WGSS startup phase. Before using the tool, it is important to read the [Part 2: Assessment](#) for this tool. If translation is needed, sensitive words should be discussed prior the FGD with WGSS colleagues to identify how to translate difficult or sensitive concepts into the local language.

Focus Group Discussion date: _____

Name of moderator: _____ Name of note taker: _____

Translation necessary for the FGD: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language) to
_____ (language)

Characteristic of the group (age; status, etc.): _____

Age range of respondents: _____

INTRODUCTION SCRIPT:

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to join me for this discussion today. My name is _____, and I'm here on behalf of _____ (organization), as _____ (position). I will be the moderator for this discussion. My colleague _____ will be the note taker.

My organization and I are assessing needs and analyzing the opportunity for programming in_____ (specific location). I am conducting a series of group discussions to learn from different community members about community dynamics, services available, safety and security concerns and/or different types of barriers and violence affecting the community with a focus on women's and girls' experiences. Your answers will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

A safe space _____ (add the local name for your WGSS or the term used in general in the setting) is “a structured place where women’s and girls’ physical and emotional safety is respected and where women and girls are supported through processes of empowerment to seek, share, and obtain information, access services, express themselves, enhance psychosocial well-being, and more fully realize their rights. In this sense, safe spaces can be a key means of building women’s and girls’ social assets.

INFORMED CONSENT SCRIPT:

If you agree to participate, you will participate in a discussion lasting about 60 minutes. If you do not want to continue participation for any reason, you can leave at any time. Participation in the discussion is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. I will not ask you why you do not want to participate. No negative consequences will occur if you choose not to participate or withdraw at any point.

I will take precautions to keep any information you provide during the discussion confidential. The discussion will take place in a private space so that no one can overhear us talking. If someone approaches us, we will stop the conversation until we can continue in private. I will not present any other identifying information in anything that we produce based on this conversation. I will treat everything that you say today with respect and will only share the answers you give as general answers combined with those from all the people who speak to us. I ask that you keep everything confidential, too and that you avoid using each other's name throughout the conversation, so we can maintain that confidentiality.

With your permission, (select one of the two options listed below):

1. I will take notes to make sure that I do not miss what you have to say but will not capture any identifying information. Do you agree with me taking notes from our discussion?

OR

2. (facultative) I would like to audio-record the interview so that I don't miss anything. I will record your responses using survey software on a tablet / phone. The information in the tablet / phone will be downloaded to a secure computer. At no time will the information from the tablet be linked to your name or other identifying information. The audio recorder, which records your voice, will be taken to a secure room, which will be locked and only accessible to the research team. All the recordings will be transcribed and saved as computer files and then the audio files with your voice will be destroyed. Do you agree with me recording your responses?

Part A: Diversity

GUIDING QUESTION #1

First, we would like to start by asking you what are the different identity groups (including any diversity, minority and coexisting heterogeneous groups) of women / adolescent girls in this community?

Are there women / adolescent girls who might be isolated in their homes, or women and girls with more “hidden” identities?

Do women / adolescent girls have identities that are different from men / adolescent boys?

Suggestion for Inclusive Facilitation:

1. Ask the group how the community interacts with women and girls with disabilities (breaking down per impairment) and women and girls with “hidden” identities?
2. Ask the group: In thinking about all the different identities we just spoke about, are they the same or different than those men and boys have? If they are different, why is that? If they are the same identities for women and men, does the community interact similarly or differently to women and men with these identities?

Record of Discussion:

Part B: Safety

GUIDING QUESTION #2

In this community, which are the places women / adolescent girls feel safe and acceptable to go to? Are there restrictions on the time of the day, types of services or places a woman or adolescent girl may go to?

Optional: Use the safety mapping exercise for this question

Record of Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION #3

In thinking about all the different identities of women and girls, where might be the area that would allow women / adolescent girls across identities to meet each other and feel safe?

What could be done in this community to create a safe environment for women / adolescent girls?

Optional: if you conducted the safety mapping, ask about possible ways to make specific places safer and more inclusive for different groups of women / adolescent girls.

Record of Discussion:

Part C: Tailored WGSS

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #4

In considering spaces and services that are considered safe and acceptable for women / adolescent girls to go to, how important is it for the space, service to be female-only (meaning for women and girls only, and with only female staff)?

Probes:

- Would you find it concerning if men from the community entered the space?
- Would you find it concerning if male staff entered the space?
- What might be the advantages of a female-only space?

Record of Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION #5

Now we would like to ask you questions about establishing the space for women and girls. While many services support women and girls in different ways, the WGSS provides the essential space where women and girls can recover from violence and have enough safety, support and space to shape their strengths and skills to contribute to their community. Help us map the time commitment of women and girls in your community from night to day.

Suggestion for Inclusive Facilitation:

1. Replicate this table on a large flipchart paper or project on the wall for FGD participants to see it. Activities and times can be adjusted for overall context-appropriateness, and to reflect key tasks / activities relevant to age. While the facilitator guides the conversation the note taker will visually represent the answers provided by participants.
2. Ask FGD participants to focus their answers from the perspective of women / adolescent girls in the community like them. Walk them through one task at a time. Allow them to reflect individually and collectively on the time(s) when women / adolescent girls like them are most likely engaged in this task. Record specific timeframes which they may further narrow down (as a group) for specific tasks. When there is a lack of consensus have them explain their answers and record key factors which may explain the difference. Ask other participants what they think as well.

Record of Discussion:

For _____ (Group)* note taker to specify based on the group taking part in the discussion:

	7pm - 5am	5am - 9am	10am - 1pm	1pm - 4pm	4pm - 7pm
Activites					
In-school Activites					
Homework					
Personal Care					
Domestic Duties Outside					
Employment					
Socialization					
Sleep and Rest					

Below are possible discussion points (to plan activities in the WGSS and to fill the tab above if relevant):

1. Ask women / adolescent girls whether it is expected that women / adolescent girls with disabilities (listing out each) also undertake the tasks expected of women / adolescent girls without disabilities?
2. Ask women / adolescent girls whether it is expected that women / adolescent girls with other vulnerabilities also undertake the tasks expected of other women / adolescent girls?
3. Ask women/adolescent girls, for each activity/task, how might their spouse or family members react, if they are unable to undertake these tasks?
4. Ask women / adolescent girls how they enjoy spending time when they are free of tasks and responsibilities.
5. Ask women / adolescent girls when might be the most suitable time for the WGSS to provide services and space for women / adolescent girls to meet based on the timetable?
6. **Ask women/ adolescent girls what types of skills women / adolescent girls in this community possess which they can teach each other? What types of information would support women in your community to help them make the important choices they are responsible for? What types of activities and services could support women and girls to have enough strength, assets and control so that they cannot just contribute to but transform the world around them?**

CONCLUDING SCRIPT:

Those were all the questions I had for you. Before we conclude, do you have anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions for me?

As I shared in the beginning, your answers combined with those of others will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

As agreed I will take precautions to keep any information you provide during the interview confidential. Please remember that you agreed to keep this discussion to yourself. If anyone has questions or would like more information with regards to the assessment, I am happy for you to direct them to me.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Step 5: Analyse findings of the WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide for Women and Girls

To illustrate how to use the WGSS FGD Guide to inform your analysis of findings, we have annotated the tool below. On the left are the same questions in Step 4 above. On the right, we show why these questions might be important to ask, and how to analyze the answers so they can inform the design of the WGSS program.

Part A: Diversity Annotated Tool

GUIDING QUESTION #1	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>First, we would like to start by asking you what are the diverse groups of women and girls in this community? Are there any who might be isolated in their homes, or any with more “hidden” identities? Do women / adolescent girls have identities that are different from men / adolescent boys?</p> <p>Suggestion for Inclusive Facilitation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask the group how the community interacts with women and girls with disabilities (breaking down per impairment) and women and girls with “hidden” identities?2. Ask the group: In thinking about all the diverse women and girls we just spoke about, are they the same or different than those men and boys have? If they are different, why is that? If they are the same identities for women and men, does the community interact similarly or differently with women and men with these identities?	<p>This question will help gather information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diverse groups of women and girls as defined by women and girls including isolated women and girls as well as those marginalized and discriminated against by the community, including by women and girls (e.g. women and girls with intellectual or mental disabilities, diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, sex workers, etc).• Groups of women and girls which might have been omitted from initial assessment plans. Their participation in consultations at this stage should be considered.• Women and adolescent girls who might be more challenging to reach, which you will need to keep in mind when designing strategies to consider how they may safely be engaged and how to effectively reduce barriers which may prevent them from accessing the WGSS once established.• Power dynamics and perceptions amongst women and girls about other groups of women and girls.• Gendered differences between men and women and how it might affect the roles, responsibilities and opportunities of women and girls.

Part B: Safety Annotated Tool

GUIDING QUESTION #2	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>In this community, which are the places women / adolescent girls feel safe and acceptable to go to? Are there restrictions on the time of day, types of services or places a woman or adolescent girl may go to?</p> <p><i>Optional: Use the safety mapping exercise for this question</i></p>	<p>This question will help gather information related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women's / adolescent girls' perceptions of places and times considered safe.• Areas that present high risks to women / adolescent girls (e.g. public or remote areas where sexual assaults or harassment are likely to take place).• Restrictions to women's / adolescent girls' mobility which can significantly reduce their access to the WGSS.• Identifying the most suitable location within a community to set up a WGSS and areas which cannot be considered as options.• Identifying specific actions or considerations you may need to take to reduce barriers and enable access to the WGSS.

GUIDING QUESTION #3	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>In thinking about all the diverse groups of women and girls, where might be the area that would allow women / adolescent girls across identities to meet each other and feel safe? What could be done in this community to create a safe environment for women / adolescent girls (refer back to the safety mapping to ask about ways to make specific places safer and more inclusive for different groups of women / adolescent girls).</p> <p><i>Optional: Use the safety mapping exercise for this question</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This question further builds on the information gathered in the previous one and assesses whether a location can be narrowed down which might be suitable to a broad range of women and girls. It also informs specific actions which may be needed to ensure diverse and inclusive participation of women and girls from the community.

Part C: Tailored WGSS Annotated Tool

GUIDING QUESTION & FOLLOW UP #4	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>In considering spaces and services that are considered safe and acceptable for women/adolescent girls to go to, how important is it for the space, service to be female-only (meaning for women and girls only, and with only female staff)?</p> <p>Follow up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would you find it concerning if men from the community entered the space?• Would you find it concerning if male staff entered the space?• What might be the advantages of a female-only space?	<p>Being female-only is a defining element of WGSS, which distinguishes them from other spaces and helps ensure that all women and girls feel safe and comfortable.</p> <p>This question examines how important the female-only factor is for women and girls in considering the space safe and suitable for them to access.</p> <p>The information gathered from this question will then support key messages that can be used in information dissemination to secure community buy-in for the WGSS as well as to inform staffing and operational considerations.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION #5	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>Now we would like to ask you questions about establishing the space for women and girls. While many services support women and girls in different ways, the WGSS provides the essential space where women and girls can recover from violence and have enough safety, support and space to shape their strengths and skills to contribute to their community. Help us map the time commitment of women and girls in your community from day to night .</p> <p>Suggestion for Inclusive Facilitation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replicate this table on a large flipchart paper or project it on the wall for FGD participants to see it clearly. Activities and times can be adjusted on the one hand for overall context-appropriateness, to reflect key tasks / activities relevant to age. While the facilitator guides the conversation, the note taker will visually represent the answers provided by participants. 2. Ask participants to focus their answers from the perspective of women / adolescent girls in the community just like them. Walk them through one task at a time. Allow them to reflect individually and collectively on the time(s) when women / adolescent girls like them are most likely engaged in this task. Record specific timeframes which they may further narrow down (as a group) for specific tasks. When there is a lack of consensus, have them explain their answers and record key factors, which may explain the difference. Ask other participants what they think as well. 	<p>By mapping the time commitments of women and girls, not only does it provide insight into their daily realities but it also provides a sense of when different groups of women and adolescent girls may be most likely to attend the WGSS. This will support decision-making on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical layout the space might require (e.g. the number of activity rooms which might be necessary to accommodate multiple groups of women / adolescent girls who might only be able to come to the WGSS during the same time). • Staffing required (e.g. the minimum number of staff likely required during peak hours of operation to ensure quality facilitation of activities). • Scheduling of activities and referral services (e.g. to ensure the availability of tailored and age- appropriate sessions and activities according to when adolescent girls, or adult women, or older women are most likely to attend, or to ensure that child care services are available specifically during hours when mothers are most likely to attend with their infants and young children). Likewise, it may also be key to know how else women / adolescent girls spend their time to avoid creating pull factors which might for example deter girls from going to school which might, for example, attend the WGSS instead.



TOOL 5: SAFETY MAPPING

In some contexts, the [location of WGSS is pre-identified and decided by local authorities or camp management.](#)

Nonetheless, it is still crucial to engage women and girls in a safety mapping exercise, as well as community members in a community mapping exercise using [Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping](#) to know if the location proposed by local authorities is safe and acceptable to open a WGSS. If the location is not safe, you can use the information received from women and girls to advocate for a different location.

This tool includes the exercise [\(tool 5\)](#) and the template. The template is available in [Database B: WGSS Mapping Assessment](#), third sheet.

WHY USE THE WGSS SAFETY MAPPING TOOL?

A safety mapping is an excellent tool for collecting qualitative data through a strong visual representation. This assessment tool serves to determine when and where women and girls feel the safest in each location. As an output, you will have concrete information of women's and girls' perceptions of times of day and places considered safe, and areas that present high risks to them (e.g. public or remote areas where sexual assault or harassment are likely to take place). The mapping can also help to better assess women's and girls' knowledge of services available to them (e.g. number of services and location of medical care) and challenges they may face in accessing services (e.g. privacy, distance, safety). Through this mapping exercise, you may identify the most suitable location within a community to start up a WGSS.

In a camp setting, if the site was pre-identified (e.g. by camp management, site planning or community leaders) the activity can provide information on the actual safety and security of the selected location. If the planned location of the WGSS is identified as unsafe by women and girls, the program team needs to reconsider options since maintaining the planned location may jeopardize the safety of women and girls and the viability of the program.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS SAFETY MAPPING TOOL?

Safety mappings should at a minimum be implemented in the assessment phase to establish the WGSS. However, the activity can be replicated all throughout the program cycle to identify and analyze changes in women's and adolescent girls' sense of safety and security near the WGSS, as well as monitor for potential access barriers to the WGSS. In case of shortage of time and access, the [mapping tool](#) can be combined with [Part B \(guiding questions 2-3\)](#).

HOW TO USE THE WGSS SAFETY MAPPING TOOL?

Step 1: Establish participants' groups

Keeping in mind age and diversity factors detailed in [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls](#) consider conducting different safety mappings with women or adolescent girls from similar identity groups.

Step 2: Use the Safety Mapping tool

Use the template provided below. Remember that not all questions need to be asked, rather select the questions most relevant to your assessment. The decision of what questions will be asked should be taken either by the manager or it should be a WGSS team decision.

Step 3: Analyze the findings of the Safety Mapping

It is recommended to deliver the safety mapping activity and WGSS FGD Guide with Women and Girls [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls](#) in parallel or within a short period of time of each other, to ensure that information gathered through both tools can be combined and analyzed as complementary.

For further analysis, the findings from the [Tool 2: WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire](#) and the WGSS Safety Mapping can be analyzed jointly to see whether certain services which might not have been mentioned by women and girls are in places they consider safe or not. Such an analysis might influence referrals and collaborations the WGSS can readily make, and those that might require further consideration. Moreover, the findings of the WGSS safety mapping, can be compared to the findings of the [Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping](#) to further examine and triangulate similarities and discrepancies in perceptions between women, girls, men and community members overall. The information collected should be entered into [Database A: WGSS Qualitative Assessment](#) to ease the analysis of information and inform programming decisions.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Note to facilitator:

Step 1: Establish participant groups and introduce the activity purpose

Keeping in mind age and diversity factors the instructions of [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls](#) consider conducting safety mappings with women or adolescent girls from similar identity groups.

At the start of the activity explain how this activity will inform the [selection of the WGSS' location](#). Further divide participants into groups of 4–5 each. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker.

Step 2: Give them 15 minutes to draw a map of their community

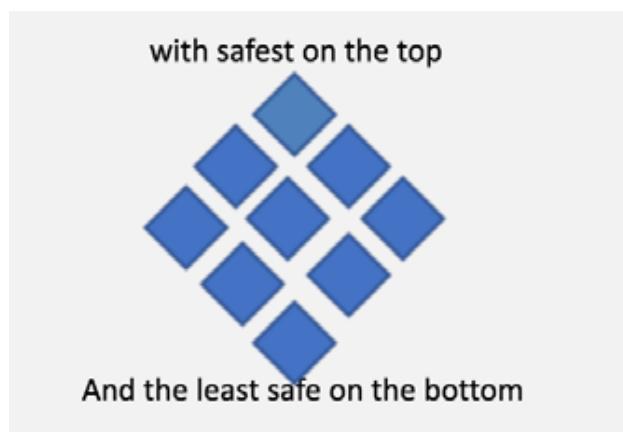
1. Ask participants to start by drawing the outline of their community.
2. Then to fill in the space with all the major landmarks (schools, churches, mosques, markets, clinics, bus stops, railroad tracks, roads, etc.). Alternatively, pictures of places in the community can be used.
3. Finally, have them mark in a different color the places where women / adolescent girls like to go to meet each other. These can be common places where they spend time throughout the day or gather for social reasons (e.g. home, school, market, or community spaces).

Step 3: Have each group identify 9 locations in their community

1. Give each group nine note cards.
2. Ask them to draw a symbol representing or write the name of ONE location in the community PER EACH note card. These can be services, public institutions and facilities, streets, parks, neighborhoods/ camp sections etc. The point at this stage is to give them total freedom on the locations they choose to identify.

Step 4: Ask them to prioritize the 9 locations according to safety

Ask the groups to prioritize each place they identified in the community according to safety for women and adolescent girls like themselves. They should put the cards in a diamond shape as illustrated:



Step 5: Plenary presentation and reflection



Have each group present their map by:

- ✓ Describing the locations in the community they mapped out, and those specifically marked as where women / adolescent girls like them go to meet each other or spend time.
- ✓ Listing the 9 locations they identified, ranked least safe to safest.
- ✓ Sharing their safety-ranking diamond.

Consider the following questions for discussion:

1. What places in the community do you as women / you as adolescent girls feel safe and acceptable to go to? Where do women and girls in the community feel unsafe and avoid going?
 - What about the location makes it safe and accessible for women and girls?
 - What about the location makes it harder for some women and girls to reach or may make them feel unsafe? (e.g. distance, structure, location)
 - What about the characteristics or responsibilities of certain women and girls that may make them feel unsafe or unlikely to meet in this location?
 - Do women / adolescent girls with disabilities also go to these places where their peers are going? What might be the enabling factors or barriers?
 - What actions could reduce those barriers?
2. Who within the family or community decides whether, when and where women / adolescent girls can go to certain places?
 - Do all or some women and girls need to be accompanied to these places? Which ones? By whom?
3. How do women / adolescent girls move around the community? Do they need to be accompanied to go to these places?
 - Do all women / adolescent girls move around the same way in the community? Why or why not?
 - Who decides when women and girls can move around in the community?
4. Are there restrictions on the time of the day a woman or adolescent girl may go to certain places?
 - If yes, is it all women and girls or some
 - If yes, who within the family decides whether, when, and where women and girls may go
5. If we were to establish a WGSS who should we engage in the community to ensure that women and girls like you can come to the space?
6. If groups had different safety rankings for the same places, ask them to further explain their positions.



TOOL 6: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE WITH COMMUNITIES

WHY USE THE WGSS FGD GUIDE WITH COMMUNITIES?

The WGSS FGD Guide with Communities is to be used for discussions with male members from the community, as well as community leaders (both male and female). The Guide includes questions that provide information on key decision-makers who can influence women's and girls' access to the WGSS, and factors which they determine as enablers or barriers to such access. Answers to these questions will guide the design of [outreach strategies](#) and information sessions necessary to secure and maintain the [buy-in](#) of men and community leaders.

KII and FGDs are assessment methodologies that can be used for various type of consultations. The tools provided in [Part 2: Assessment](#) are useful for the assessment phase because they help gather information needed to establish a new safe space or to renew an existing program.

Managers should be involved in reviewing the questions of the KII and FGD questionnaire prior to the activity to ensure it targets gathering relevant information and will not create a sense of frustration among participants.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS FGD GUIDE WITH COMMUNITIES?

Step 1: Establish the parameters of the FGD

- Men from the community who are not considered leaders should be interviewed in separate groups from those who are community leaders. Female and male community leaders should also be interviewed separately.
- FGD should not include more than 10 participants; the ideal number is 6-8 individuals to ensure everyone can contribute to the conversation. The activity should not last longer than 60 minutes, especially for older participants and people with intellectual and physical disabilities.
- Before mobilizing participants, meet with community leaders and/or local government to explain the purpose of the assessment activity – i.e. to potentially establish a WGSS. They might be helpful in reaching out to the various community leaders you should specifically be consulting with through this FGD. Also consider asking women and girls which community leaders should be involved in this discussion.
- Both community leaders as well as women and girls consulted in other assessment steps can support the identification of male community members who can participate in this FGD.
- Some questions may be considered probing by respondents (e.g. when the respondent cannot think of a response after some time) and should only be asked if necessary. It is not necessary to use each probing question – they are meant merely as examples to stimulate a more detailed response.

- Remember accountability – you will need to share the assessment findings with the FGD participants. It is important therefore to think of three-to-five points that would be worth feeding back to the groups you spoke with. Ask them during the FGD how they would like the information to be shared back with them acknowledging their time concerns, and that the conversation might be short.
- Remember that some community leaders may have a strong reaction to the idea of a program targeting women and girls. Prior to using the WGSS FGD Guide with Communities, make sure you have identified what can potentially be critical issues and sensitive topics and be prepared to address them, while maintaining a positive and constructive environment. This preparation should be supervised by managers or should be a team effort. Remember that ultimately, one of the objectives of engaging community leaders is to encourage their acceptance of the WGSS.

Step 2: Facilitate the WGSS FGD Guide with Communities

Remember that not all questions need to be asked, rather select the questions most relevant to your assessment. The decision of what questions will be asked should be taken either by the manager or it should be a WGSS team decision.

To fully moderate the conversation:

- The facilitator should not take notes; instead, a note taker should be present.
- The sex of the facilitator will depend on the sex of the participants. If the FGD takes place in a traditional society and participants are male community leaders, a male facilitator may be necessary.
- If the FGD is conducted with female community leaders, a female facilitator is required.
- If Sign Language interpreters support facilitation, the FGD guide should be shared in advance so they are familiar with the questions that will be asked.
- If translation is needed, translation of sensitive or technical concepts and words should be previously discussed, identified and agreed.

Before conducting an FGD, it is important always to get the consent of participants. It does not need to be written, in many contexts verbal consent is enough. Before starting an FGD, the facilitator should reassure participants that the interview will be anonymous and only non-identifiable information will be captured. All participants should agree that no information shared in the discussion will be divulged outside the group.

Step 3: Decide how best to link the WGSS FGD Guide with communities with other assessment tools

Information collected through other assessment tools can be used as a starting point for the FGD, providing you an opportunity to triangulate or delve more in-depth on certain questions or approaches.

For example, when looking at the [**Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping**](#) you can:

- ✓ Consider using the same group formations of participants for both activities.
- ✓ It is recommended to conduct the WGSS FGD Guide with Communities and WGSS Community Mapping in a short period of time, to ensure that information gathered through both tools can be combined and analyzed as complementary.

- ✓ The WGSS FGD Guide with Communities and WGSS Community Mapping may be simultaneously conducted. In this case, a careful selection of questions should be made, and the whole activity should not last more than 90 minutes.
- ✓ In the WGSS FGD Guide with Communities questions 2, 3 and 6 there is the option of incorporating [Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping](#).
- ✓ If there is time and possibility, it is advisable to conduct the WGSS FGD Guide with Communities and WGSS Community Mapping separately to avoid overwhelming the informant/participant, and so you need not drastically shorten the questionnaires. In that case, WGSS community mapping should be done after conducting initial WGSS FGD Guide with Communities.
- ✓ The information provided by community members could be triangulated with those provided by women and girls. For example, men and women may have a different perception of spaces available for women, or the freedom of movement of women and girls. The facilitator should select probing questions based on the type of triangulation that might be needed.

Step 4: Analyze the findings of the FGD with Communities.

The FGD Guide should be used in parallel to [Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping](#) with men and community leaders and the findings of both should be analyzed together. For further analysis, both the FGD Guide with Communities can also be analyzed jointly with [Tool 4: WGSS FGD Guide with Women and Girls](#) to see whether information provided by women and girls is like the information shared by community members. The information collected should be entered into [Database A: WGSS Qualitative Assessment](#) to ease the analysis of information and inform programming decisions.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Note to Facilitator: This tool is for use during Focus Group Discussions to inform the assessment for the design of the WGSS. Before using the tool, it is important to read [Part 2: Assessment](#). To analyze the information gathered through the FGD, please refer to the annotated version of the FGD guide provided after the blank template in this document.

This sample tool was specifically designed for the following women, men, community leaders and local authorities. Participants in an FGD should not include more than 10 to 12 participants; the ideal number is 8-9 to ensure each can fully share their experiences and contribute to the conversation.

Participants should be placed in identity groups such as the same gender, same status (i.e. host community members, refugees, internally displaced persons), and same role (community members, community leader, etc.)

Remember that not all questions need to be asked, rather select the questions most relevant to your assessment. The decision of what questions will be asked should be taken either by the manager or it should be a WGSS team decision.

During the FGD, probes will be chosen based on the information gathered. (for example: question 4: “Are there restrictions on the time of day, or other requirements for when and how women / adolescent girls can go to these places?” If the answer to this question is “No, there is no restriction. Women can freely and independently move and walk anywhere at anytime” the facilitator will decide not to probe further or may drastically reduce the number of follow-up questions.

To fully moderate the conversation, the facilitator should not take notes- a note taker should be present (unless the conversation is recorded). If the FGD targets specifically women and girls, the facilitator, note taker and translation support should be female. If the participants are male, it is ok to have male personnel involved in the facilitation, in some traditional societies it can be convenient.

Remember, you must always get consent prior to involving someone in information collection.

Group interviews take time; especially at the beginning WGSS may be not understood (or misunderstood). Some of these questions are sensitive; you should review ethical considerations prior to the interview, particularly considering the security of both parties.

If translation is needed, sensitive words and concepts should be discussed prior to the FGD with WGSS colleagues to identify how to translate them into the local language. Finding proper translation of sensitive concepts or terms should always be a result of a group effort.

Focus Group Discussion date: _____

Name of moderator: _____ Name of note taker: _____

Translation necessary for the FGD: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language) to
_____ (language)

Identity marker used for grouping: _____

Age range of respondents: _____

Sex of FGD participants: Male Female

Role in the community: Community leaders Community Members

INTRODUCTION SCRIPT:

Welcome and Thank you for taking the time to join me for this discussion today. My name is _____, and I'm here on behalf of _____ (organization), as _____ (position). I will be the moderator for this discussion. My colleague _____ will be the note taker.

My organization and I are assessing needs and analyzing the opportunity for programming in_____ (specific location). I am conducting a series of group discussions to learn from different community members about community dynamics, services available, safety and security concerns and/or different types of barriers and violence affecting the community with a focus on women's and girls' experiences. Your answers will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

A safe space _____ (add the local name for your WGSS or the term used in general in the setting) is "a structured place where women and girls' physical and emotional safety is respected and where women and girls are supported through processes of empowerment to seek, share, and obtain information, access services, express themselves, enhance psychosocial well-being, and more fully realize their rights. In this sense, safe spaces can be a key means of building women's and girls' social assets.

INFORMED CONSENT SCRIPT:

If you agree to participate, you will participate in a discussion lasting about 60 minutes. If you do not want to continue participation for any reason, you can leave at any time. Participation in the discussion is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. I will not ask you why you do not want to participate. No negative consequences will occur if you choose not to participate or withdraw at any point.

I will take precautions to keep any information you provide during the discussion confidential. The discussion will take place in a private space so that no one can overhear us talking. If someone approaches us, we will stop the conversation until we can continue in private. I will not present any other identifying information in anything that we produce based on this conversation. I will treat everything that you say today with respect and will only share the answers you give as general answers combined with those from all the people who speak to us. I ask that you keep everything confidential, too and that you avoid using each other's name throughout the conversation, so we can maintain that confidentiality.

With your permission, (select applicable mechanism)

1. I will take notes to make sure that I do not miss what you have to say but will not capture any identifying information. Do you agree with me taking notes from our discussion?

Yes No

2. I would like to audio-record the interview so that I don't miss anything. I will record your responses using survey software on a tablet / phone. The information in the tablet / phone will be downloaded to a secure computer. At no time will the information from the tablet be linked to your name or other identifying information. The audio recorder, which records your voice, will be taken to a secure room, which will be locked and only accessible to the research team. All the recordings will be transcribed and saved as computer files and then the audio files with your voice will be destroyed. Do you agree with me recording your responses?

Yes No

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #1

First, we would like to start by asking you what are the different identity groups (including any diversity, minority and coexisting heterogeneous groups) of women / adolescent girls in this community?

Are there women / adolescent girls who might be isolated in their homes, or women and girls with more "hidden" identities? Do women / adolescent girls have identities that are different from men / adolescent boys?

Probes:

- In thinking about all the different identities we just spoke about, are they the same or different than those men and boys have?
- If they are different, why is that? If they are the same identities for women and men, does the community interact similarly or differently with women and men with these identities?

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #2

In this community, where do women go to meet other women? Where do adolescent girls go to meet other adolescent girls?

Probes:

- Are these places only for women / adolescent girls?
- Are these places for all women / adolescent girls?
- What about these places makes it suitable for women / adolescent girls to meet?

Optional: use the community mapping tool

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #3

What places in this community are considered safe for women and acceptable for them to go to?
What places are considered unsafe which women should avoid? (same question to be then asked specific to adolescent girls)

Probes:

- What about the place makes it safe and accessible for women / adolescent girls (e.g. do they need to be accompanied, it depends on how the space is physically structured, depends on the time of day, etc)?
- What about the place makes it harder for some women / adolescent girls to reach or may make them feel unsafe? (e.g. distance, structure, location)
- What about the characteristics or responsibilities of certain women / adolescent girls that make different places safe and acceptable for different women / adolescent girls?
- Would these places be considered safe / acceptable for women / adolescent girls with different disabilities to go to?

Optional: use the community mapping tool

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #4

Are there restrictions on the time of day, or other requirements for when and how women / adolescent girls can go to these places?

Probes:

- Do women / adolescent girls need to be accompanied during certain times of the day to go to these places? Why? Who decides this?
- Do women / adolescent girls need to be accompanied depending on certain areas in the community where they are going or need to cross through? Why? Who decides this?
- Who should accompany women / adolescent girls?
- Are there women / adolescent girls that are not restricted?
- How does the community react to women and girls who do not follow these restrictions?
- What other strategies can be put in place to facilitate access to places for women and girls?

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #5

In considering spaces and services that are considered safe and acceptable for women / adolescent girls to go to, how important is it for the space, service to be female-only (meaning for women and girls, only with female staff)?

Probes:

- Would you find it concerning if men from the community entered the space?
- Would you find it concerning if male staff entered the space?
- What might be the advantages of a female-only space?

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #6

As we mentioned we are looking to establish a WGSS. According to women's and girls' responsibilities where would it be most suitable to locate the WGSS and when might be the most suitable time for the WGSS to provide services and space for women / adolescent girls to meet?

Probes:

- Are these locations for all women/ adolescent girls? In thinking about the identity groups of women we discussed in the beginning would they be different? (e.g. female heads of household, elderly)
- Are these times for all women? In thinking about the identity groups of women we discussed in the beginning would they be different? (e.g. female heads of household, elderly)
- Are these times for all adolescent girls? In thinking about the identity groups of girls we discussed in the beginning would they be different? (e.g. married girls, girls not in school)

Optional: use the community mapping tool

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #7

In thinking about the decision-makers in the community, what information should a WGSS provide to secure their buy-in for the WGSS? How should a WGSS engage them to provide information about the WGSS?

Probes:

- What type of information should be shared?
- Who should approach the different decision-makers to discuss the new service?
- What processes are helpful to secure community buy-in?
- Do these vary according to the decision-makers?
- Are there certain community leaders who can support this?

Record of the Discussion:

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #8

Finally, before we conclude, based on what you know of WGSS, if you were to talk about the WGSS to another community member to encourage them to allow female family members to attend, what would be your key messages?

Probes:

- What more information about WGSS would you want to have in order to recommended it to another community member?

Record of the Discussion:

CONCLUDING SCRIPT:

Those were all the questions I had for you. Before we conclude, do you have anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions for me?

As I shared in the beginning, your answers combined with those of others will help me to understand whether and how to establish (or renew) a Women and Girls Safe Space.

As agreed I will take precautions to keep any information you provide during the interview confidential. Please remember that you agreed to keep this discussion to yourself. If anyone has questions or would like more information with regards to the assessment, I am happy for you to direct them to me.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!



ANALYSIS: ANNOTATED TOOL

Use the annotated guide below to analyze the findings from your FGD with community members and leaders.

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #1	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>First, we would like to start by asking you what are the different identity groups (including any diversity, minority and coexisting heterogeneous groups) that women / adolescent girls belong to in this community?</p> <p>Are there women / adolescent girls who might be isolated in their homes, or with more “hidden” identities? Do women / adolescent girls have identities that are different from men / adolescent boys?</p> <p>Follow up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In thinking about all the different identities, we just spoke about, are they the same or different than those that men and boys have?• If they are different, why is that? If they are the same identities for women and men, does the community interact similarly or differently to women and men with these identities?	<p>This question will help identify context-appropriate identity markers (identity includes any minority, diversity, and coexisting diverse groups) as defined by male community members and community leaders, including isolated women and girls, as well as those marginalized and stigmatized by the community (e.g. women and girls with intellectual or mental disabilities, LGBTQ, sex workers, etc).</p> <p>Because this question is also asked to women / adolescent girls the answers can be triangulated. If women and girls mentioned groups not mentioned by men or community members, the facilitator can probe participants on the relevance of these groups.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #2	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>In this community, where do women go to meet other women? Where do adolescent girls go to meet other adolescent girls?</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these places only for women / adolescent girls? • Are these places for all women / adolescent girls? • What about these places makes it suitable for women / adolescent girls to meet? <p><i>Optional: use the community mapping tool</i></p>	<p>Because men and community leaders uphold gender norms, they are likely those in the community who influence where women and girls can meet other women and girls outside of their homes.</p> <p>Therefore, norms underpinning where the community considers it appropriate for women and girls to meet will surface in answers asked in a group format to men and community leaders.</p> <p>Answers to this question help inform patterns or trends in key locations which men and community leaders find acceptable for women and adolescent girls to meet at. The answers to this question should be triangulated with the answers women and adolescent girls gave as well. Answers will help inform key considerations for the selection of a location for the WGSS which will receive community buy-in.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #3	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>What places in this community are considered safe for women and acceptable for them to go to? What places are considered unsafe, which women should avoid? (same question to be then asked to adolescent girls)</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about the place makes it safe and accessible for women / adolescent girls (e.g. do they need to be accompanied, depends on how the space is physically structured, depends on the time of day, etc.) • What about the place makes it harder for some women / adolescent girls to reach or may make them feel unsafe? (e.g. distance, structure, location) • What about the characteristics or responsibilities of certain women / adolescent girls, that might make different places safe and acceptable for different women / adolescent girls? • Would these places be considered safe / acceptable for women / adolescent girls with different disabilities to go to? <p><i>Optional: use the community mapping tool</i></p>	<p>This question informs trends and patterns in what determines a place as safe and accessible from men's and community leaders' perspectives. Answers to these questions help inform the key considerations the WGSS should keep in mind during the selection of the WGSS, as well as in the design of key messages for the community for information dissemination about the WGSS.</p> <p>The question also probes men and community leaders on distinctions relative to specific categories of women or adolescent girls to further refine access-related strategies for inclusion and diversity.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #4	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>Are there restrictions on the time of day, or other requirements for when and how women / adolescent girls can go to these places?</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do women / adolescent girls need to be accompanied during certain times of the day to go to these places? Why? Who decides this? • Do women / adolescent girls need to be accompanied in certain areas in the community depending on where they are going or need to cross through? Why? Who decides this? • Who should accompany women / adolescent girls? • Are there women / adolescent girls that are not restricted? • How does the community react to women and girls who do not follow these restrictions? • What other strategies can be put in place to facilitate access to places for women and girls? 	<p>This question seeks to understand enablers and barriers to women's and girls' mobility. Because some barriers might be imposed by unequal gender norms upheld by men and community leaders, it is important to understand restrictions to women's and girls' mobility which can affect their access to the WGSS, and how male community members and community leaders frame these restrictions.</p> <p>Answers to these questions can help inform strategies to reduce barriers and restrictions on women's and adolescent girls' access to the WGSS. Answers can also help to inform key messages the WGSS program should consider for outreach to those who restrict women's and girls' access.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #5	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>In assessing spaces and services that are considered safe and acceptable for women / adolescent girls to go to, how important is it for the space, service to be female-only (meaning for women and girls only, and with only female staff)?</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you find it concerning if men from the community entered the space? • Would you find it concerning if male staff entered the space? • What might be the advantages of a female-only space? 	<p>Being female-only is a defining element of WGSS, which distinguishes them from other spaces and helps ensure that all women and girls feel safe and comfortable. In many communities, particularly those with strict gender-based norms, the fact that WGSS are female-only increases buy-in from the community for the space and enables women's and girls' access.</p> <p>This question examines how important of a factor this is for male community members and community leaders in considering the space as safe and suitable for women and girls to access. This will then support key messages that can be used in information dissemination to secure buy-in for the WGSS as well as inform staffing and operational considerations.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #6	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>As we mentioned, we are looking to establish a WGSS. According to women's and girls' responsibilities, where would it be most suitable to locate the WGSS and when might be the most suitable time for the WGSS to provide services and space for women / adolescent girls to meet?</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these locations for all women/ adolescent girls? In thinking about the identity groups of women we discussed in the beginning would they be different? (e.g. female heads of household, older women) 	<p>Unequal gender norms place many responsibilities on women's and girls' shoulders affording them little free time. In the FGD with women and girls (Tool 4), they are asked to map out in detail their daily activities and responsibilities as well as identify the most suitable time for them to participate in WGSS programming.</p> <p>Here, the question seeks to understand the perspective of male community members and community leaders who place expectations on women's and girls' responsibilities, to get a sense of when women and girls can be 'released' from those responsibilities and access activities and services dedicated to them.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these times for all women? In thinking about the identity groups of women we discussed in the beginning would they be different? (e.g. female heads of household, older women) • Are these times for all adolescent girls? In thinking about the identity groups of girls we discussed in the beginning would they be different? (e.g. married girls, girls not in school) <p><i>Optional: use the community mapping tool</i></p>	<p>Answers to these questions will reveal not only community perceptions on women's and girls' availability but also indicate if there are discrepancies between times indicated by different participants consulted which can inform further conversations required for the design of the WGSS.</p> <p>This question will also indicate, from the community's perspective, where it might be best to place the WGSS.</p>
--	---

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #7	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>In thinking about the decision-makers in the community, what information should a WGSS provide to secure their buy-in for the WGSS? How should a WGSS engage them to provide information about the WGSS?</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of information should be shared? • Who should approach the different decision-makers to discuss the new service? • What processes are helpful to secure community buy-in? • Do these vary according to the decision-makers? • Are there certain community leaders who can support this? 	<p>This question seeks information related to designing outreach strategies for key decision-makers to enable support for the WGSS and women's and girls' access. The question is carefully framed – specifically on information and how to disseminate this information – to avoid it turning into a list of services that the WGSS needs to provide men and other community members, which is outside of the scope of the WGSS intervention.</p> <p>Answers to this question should inform the key messages to be framed and created for Information Education Communication materials with key decision-makers identified, as well as how best to disseminate the information.</p>

GUIDING QUESTION & PROBES #8	PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT & DESIGN
<p>Finally, before we conclude, based on what you know of WGSS, if you were to talk about the WGSS to another community member to encourage them to allow female family members to attend, what would be your key messages?</p> <p>Probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What more information about WGSS would you want to have in order to recommend it to another community member? 	<p>Like the question above, this question is framed slightly differently to help flesh out more suggestions to inform the key messages to be created for IEC materials with key decision-makers identified, as well as how best to disseminate the information.</p>



TOOL 7: COMMUNITY MAPPING

In some contexts, [the location of WGSS](#) is pre-identified and decided by local authorities or camp management.

However, it is nonetheless crucial to engage women and girls through [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#) and community members through this community mapping exercise to know if the location proposed by local authorities is safe and acceptable to open a WGSS. If the location is not safe, you can use the information received from women and girls to advocate for a different location.

This tool includes the exercise [\(tool 7\)](#) and the template. The template is available in [Database B: WGSS Mapping Assessment](#), fourth sheet.

WHY USE THE WGSS COMMUNITY MAPPING TOOL?

The WGSS community mapping is an excellent tool for collecting qualitative data through a strong visual representation. It serves to determine where male community members as well as community leaders consider services to be accessible and safe for women and girls. Through this mapping exercise, in combination with the safety mapping conducted with women and girls, you may identify the most suitable location within a community to start up a WGSS.

In a camp setting, if the site was pre-identified (e.g. by camp management, site planning or community leaders) the activity can provide information on the actual safety and security of the selected location. If the planned location of the WGSS is identified as unsafe by women and girls, the program team needs to reconsider options since maintaining the planned location may jeopardize the safety of women and girls and the viability of the program.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS COMMUNITY MAPPING TOOL?

The WGSS community mapping should be implemented in the assessment phase of the WGSS project cycle. If the WGSS FGD Guide with communities [Tool 6: WGSS FGD Guide with communities](#) was implemented, the WGSS community mapping should be delivered with the same participants. The WGSS community mapping can also be conducted during the WGSS FGD Guide with communities when asking questions 2, 4 or 6.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS COMMUNITY MAPPING TOOL?

Step 1: Establish participant groups

- Men from the community who are not considered leaders should be interviewed in separate groups from those who are community leaders. Female and male community leaders should also be interviewed separately.
- The mapping should not include more than 10 participants; the ideal number is 6-8 individuals to ensure everyone can contribute to the conversation. The activity should not last longer than 60 minutes, especially for older participants and people with intellectual and physical disabilities.
- Some questions may be considered probing by respondents (e.g. when the respondent cannot think of a response after some time) and should only be asked if necessary. It is not necessary to use each probing question – they are meant merely as examples to stimulate a more detailed response.
- Remember that some community leaders may have a strong reaction to the idea of a program targeting women and girls. Prior to using [Tool 6: WGSS FGD Guide with Communities](#) make sure you have identified what can potentially be critical issues and sensitive topics and be prepared to address them, while maintaining a positive and constructive environment. This preparation should be supervised by managers or should be a team effort. Remember that ultimately, one of the objectives of engaging community leaders is to encourage their acceptance of the WGSS.

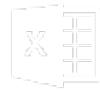
At the start of the activity, explain how it will inform an understanding of places and services that are safe for women and girls, which will then inform the selection of the WGSS' location. Further, divide participants into groups of 4–5 each. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker.

Step 2: Use the WGSS Community Mapping tool

Remember that not all questions need to be asked, rather select the questions most relevant to your assessment. The decision of what questions will be asked should be taken either by the manager or it should be a WGSS team decision.

Step 3: Analyse the findings of the WGSS Community Mapping

The WGSS community mapping should be used parallel to [Tool 6: WGSS FGD Guide with Communities](#) in parallel to the WGSS FGD Guide with Communities (Tool 6) with men and community leaders and the findings of both should be analyzed together. For further analysis, both the WGSS community mapping and [Tool 5: WGSS safety mapping](#) can also be analyzed jointly to see whether locations mentioned by women and girls, and location mentioned by community members are the same. The information collected should be entered into [Database B: WGSS Mapping Assessment](#) to ease the analysis of information and inform programming decisions.



WGSS COMMUNITY MAPPING

Step 1: Establish participant groups and introduce the activity purpose

At the start of the activity explain how this activity will inform an understanding of places and services that are safe for women and girls, which in turn, will inform the selection of the WGSS' location. Further divide participants into groups of 4–5 each. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker.

Step 2: Give them 15 minutes to draw a map of their community

1. Ask participants to start by drawing the outline of their community.
2. Then fill in the space with all the major landmarks (schools, churches, mosques, markets, clinics, bus stops, railroad tracks, roads, etc.). Alternatively, pictures of places in the community can be used.

Step 3: Have them mark on the map the locations they identify using the 4 questions

Wait until participants have completely finished before you begin asking questions. Then use the below questions to help you understand risk factors and services for women and girls. After each question, give participants time to consider and indicate their responses on the map.

1. Is there a place where women can go to discuss problems together?
2. Are there places on the map that are not safe for women and girls during the day?
3. Are there places on the map that are not safe for women and girls during the night?
4. Where might be the best location to establish a WGSS?

Step 4: Plenary presentation and reflection

Have each group present their map by describing the locations in the community they mapped out, and those specifically marked as where women / adolescent girls go to meet each other or spend time and where they believe might be the best place to locate a WGSS.

If groups had different safety rankings for the same places, ask them to further explain their positions.



DATABASE A: QUALITATIVE WGSS ASSESSMENT

This is a database and therefore is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



DATABASE B: WGSS MAPPING ASSESSMENT

This is a database and therefore is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).

ASSOCIATED WITH THIS

A photograph of two women, likely of Middle Eastern descent, smiling warmly at the camera. They are both wearing traditional headscarves and are engaged in embroidery work. The woman on the left is wearing a white headscarf and a light-colored dress, while the woman on the right is wearing a patterned headscarf and a dark dress. They are holding embroidery hoops with floral designs. A red rectangular overlay contains the text "3: STARTUP".

3: STARTUP



GUIDANCE



FURTHER GUIDANCE

[Annex 3.1. Key Design Considerations for Mutually Empowering Partnerships](#)

[Annex 3.2. WGSS Frequently Asked Questions Sample IEC Tool](#)



TOOLS



[Tool 8: Logical Framework](#)



[Tool 9a: WGSS indicator matrix](#)



[Tool 9b: Data source, databases and indicators](#)

[Tool 10: Selecting WGSS location -Observation Checklist](#)

[Tool 11: WGSS Catchment Area Assessment](#)

[Tool 12: Start up phase sample questions for feedback preferences](#)

[Tool 13: Proactive and Reactive Feedback Feasibility Mapping](#)

[Tool 14: Template for Designing Feedback Channels](#)

Women and girls safe spaces (WGSS) are a critical part of GBV programming, and advancing women's

and girls' safety, participation and empowerment in humanitarian settings. Highly context-driven, a WGSS can sustain the availability, relevance and effectiveness of its services by adapting its implementation approaches (e.g. transitioning from direct implementation to partnership to local ownership). Similarly, service providers can scale women's and girls' access to WGSS by adapting to or pairing different delivery models (e.g. mobile and/or static).

How each WGSS will best support women and girls through a process of empowerment and self-reliance is defined by a set of key programming design choices. Yet, designing a WGSS program is not a science for which a formula can be provided; it is not a 'one-size-fits-all' process. Different factors influence design decisions such as humanitarian access, the geographical area to be covered, stage of an emergency, assessment results, as well as the experience, capacities and resources of the implementing organization.

This Part outlines key design components necessary to establish the WGSS, the rationale underpinning the different choices available, as well as strategies for incorporating assessment findings to reach a design decision. Before deciding on the location, physical design and the WGSS' workplan it is highly recommended to read and implement [**Part 2: Assessment**](#). The choices outlined should be contextualized and analyzed based on results and findings gained from the assessment step.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

During the development of this toolkit, of the 101 community members participating in WGSS locations who completed the "perceived WGSS purpose scale" ([**Tool 32: Community Survey**](#)), an average of 66% understood the purpose of women's and girls' centers (Cameroon: 81%; Ethiopia: 83%; Lebanon: 75%; Thailand: 11%). Community members felt the WGSS supports women and girls through strengthening social relationships and stress management skills, and that it is a place where women and girls can voice their needs.

3.1 A LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN'S & GIRLS' SAFETY & EMPOWERMENT

WGSS in humanitarian settings share a common conceptual framework, underpinned by standard objectives, guiding principles and approaches used in responding to and preventing violence against women and girls. The framework found in [**Tool 8: WGSS Logical Framework**](#) outlines the benchmarks for quality programming by establishing linkages between the five WGSS standard objectives and measurable outcomes, resulting from activities and services provided by the WGSS. For most of the indicators provided in the logical framework, the toolkit provides its corresponding data collection tool and relevant database to facilitate monitoring and evaluating the progress of the WGSS towards its objectives.

A minority of indicators must be tailored or rely on existing or interagency tools. The [**indicators**](#) that have

to be tailored are highlighted in red, while those that rely on interagency tools are highlighted in blue.

- **Indicator 1.1a:** This must be developed at field level as it depends on the type of curriculum-based activity the WGSS implements. For example, if a WGSS implements the EASE approach, the indicator should be taken from an indicator provided in the resource package.
- **Indicator 2.1b:** “Diverse women and girls” is a context-specific concept. Which diverse groups of women and girls the WGSS will specifically aim to include needs to be determined by each WGSS team alongside those women and girls to make sure it is safe and acceptable. An example of how to customize this indicator is: number of women and girls with disabilities participating in group activities (disaggregated by age group). This information will be collected only in WGSS where attendance is tracked at the individual level and not at the group level. For individual-level attendance tracking, this toolkit suggests the D2 database. However, to properly capture individuals from diverse groups of women and girls reached through the WGSS, field staff should add a column specifying the characteristics of a specific group (e.g. women and girls with disabilities, married adolescent girls, etc.)
- **Indicator 4.2.a:** This should be customized by inserting the specific name of the training that the WGSS received.
- **Indicator 5.1.a:** This should be customized specifying the timeframe (monthly, quarterly...).
- **Indicator 5.2.a:** This should be customized specifying the timeframe (monthly, quarterly...).
- **Outcome 4:** Indicators related to this outcome should be tailored to the context. The tools are not provided in this toolkit as they refer to GBV response services and are therefore outside its scope.
- **Indicator 5.2:** This can be measured by collecting data through different meeting attendance tracker tools. To report against this indicator, field staff should sum up meetings attended by staff, including interagency coordination meetings, meetings with local stakeholders and providers, etc.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Of the 116 women and girls attending WGSS who supported the piloting of this toolkit, some of the most useful topics they reported gaining information about included early marriage, confidence, negotiation and problem-solving skills.

Through WGSS activities and participation (using [Tool 30a: Member Survey](#) (baseline) and [Tool 30b: Member Survey](#) (follow-up)).

- 53.9% of women and girl members reported an increase in their perceived decision-making skills (Cameroon: 62.9%; Ethiopia: 31.0%; Lebanon: 65.2%; Thailand: 56.6%).
- Additionally, 65% reported an increase in their sense of empowerment (Cameroon: 62.9%; Ethiopia: 62.0%; Lebanon: 65.2%; Thailand: 70.0%).

WGSS also provide vital knowledge, resources and services for women and girls who experience or know of someone experiencing violence, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

WGSS also provide vital knowledge, resources and services for women and girls who experience or know of someone experiencing violence, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Of members surveyed, 93.5% reported knowing where someone can get support if they're experiencing violence, and 87.0% were able to identify safe methods of reporting SEA. Members across all 4 pilot countries listed WGSS as an essential service provider in their area for survivors.

Possibly most importantly, WGSS have provided opportunities for women and girls to meet and build relationships with 96.8% of surveyed members reporting an increase in social support networks they can turn to due to the WGSS (Cameroon: 96%; Ethiopia: 100%; Lebanon: 91%; Thailand: 100%).

Selecting relevant pathways and indicators

While all WGSS share a common log frame, implementation is intentionally dynamic and modular in design to ensure responsive, effective, accountable and sustainable programming. Each WGSS is expected to uniquely reflect the women and girls in the community it is in, according to women's and girls' experiences, capacities, priorities, needs and interests. By supporting women and girls through a process of empowerment, WGSS are expected to evolve over time as these women and girls increasingly gain in knowledge, confidence and skills. To remain highly flexible and adaptable, different implementation approaches and delivery models support the relevance and responsiveness of WGSS across humanitarian settings and along the continuum of humanitarian phases. Therefore, in practice, a WGSS will not commit to the entire log frame at once. Rather, during the design phase of the WGSS project, pathways and indicators most representative of the implementation should be selected.

To support the selection of pathways and indicators:

- Each indicator provided in the log frame must include its means of verification. For this purpose, specific tools and databases have been developed and included within this toolkit either in [Part 5: Capacity-building](#) or [Part 6: Implementation](#) (noting the exceptions highlighted above).
- [Tool 9a: WGSS Indicator Matrix](#) provides comprehensive information on all the indicators, including indicator definitions, types, targets/milestones and measurement methods.
- [Tool 9b: Data source, Database and Indicators](#) provides the list of tools and databases which support the measurement of indicators.
- For each outcome, the log frame provides multiple indicators. It is the responsibility of managers or coordinators to select only those indicators that are relevant, and not to double count participants. It is important to consider that, in most cases, it is enough to select only one indicator per each outcome area.
- Whether directly implemented or through partnerships, capacity to measure indicators should be considered when selecting indicators.

Factors affecting selection of relevant indicators

The following scenarios are not exhaustive but aim to illustrate how various factors can influence the selection of the most appropriate indicators from the log frame:

New WGSS: When a WGSS is newly established, regardless of the humanitarian setting and implementation approach, some outcomes will be prioritized over others (e.g. activities needed to achieve outcomes 3.3 or 5.2 may require some time to be implemented and for outcomes to be achieved). Therefore, while the WGSS may eventually work towards each outcome of the log frame, it may wish to prioritize and to initially measure only some of them. Alternatively, the program might decide to commit to all the standard objectives from the beginning of the intervention, but keep it simple and select only 1 or 2 outcomes per standard objective. Eventually, other outcomes will be introduced over the course of the implementation (e.g. in the second year).

Unpredictable context: WGSS established either as part of the response to sudden emergencies, or in contexts where the population is on the move, or where humanitarian access is inconsistent, can be vital for women and girls. However, the unpredictability of the context highly influences the program in both design and execution.

For example, while WGSS in these settings might be conducting activities with the aim of achieving impact-level indicators, it might not want to commit to defining success through their measurement. This is because measuring these indicators requires a baseline value, and reassessing the same women and girls after at least 3 months as follow-up. This might be challenging to do in unpredictable settings. This constraint also applies to indicator 3.3, which requires at least 3 months to measure progress.

WGSS operating only on specific days or times: In some contexts, WGSS programming might be delivered using other service providers' infrastructure, whether as part of the organizational strategy (e.g. a medical organization that incorporates WGSS in their clinics) or due to a lack of resources (e.g. Child-friendly Spaces and WGSS share the same space on different days and/or times). In this scenario, special attention should be given to the timeframe needed to measure a given outcome, and the frequency of monitoring the indicators. For example, for indicator 3.3, the monitoring tool should typically be used on a quarterly basis (decision-making subscale) - in this case, however, the frequency might be changed to bi-annual.

WGSS-hosted services: WGSS can host a range of services operated by specialized staff. Such examples include, but are not limited to, specialized psychosocial support, health, legal or livelihood services. In such cases, the program may decide it is relevant for the WGSS to deliver GBV case management services and to report against the three indicators of standard objective 4. In other situations, WGSS may not have a multisectoral response to survivors in place and may be able to provide only basic GBV response (e.g.: active listening, information on rights, risks and services, and safe referrals).

3.2 MODULAR DESIGN: SELECTING IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES

The overarching design of a WGSS is guided by three main implementation decisions:

- A.** Static or mobile delivery models;
- B.** Stand-alone or integrated approaches;
- C.** Direct implementation or in partnership.

To determine which combination of implementation approaches will ensure effective programming, the guidance below provides the rationale underpinning each implementation approach; examples of contexts where they have been determined appropriate and effective; and the pros and cons of each.

These approaches should be analyzed alongside the findings from the assessment phase. While from a technical perspective there is no specific order to follow when selecting approaches across the three decision elements, because these decisions are highly contextual, the program may already have certain parameters which impose a choice related to one or more approaches. For example, a donor or context may require that implementation be done in partnership rather than directly. In this case, the choice between either a static or a mobile approach, and the choice between a stand-alone or an integrated approach is made based on the already-identified partnership model.

Enabling access to the WGSS through static and mobile models

In humanitarian settings, the distinguishing factor between a static or mobile service delivery model is that, in a static approach, women and girls travel to the WGSS to access programming, whereas in the mobile approach, the WGSS team travels to women and girls to provide a temporary safe space and programming. Both are equally valuable approaches, and both possess risks and benefits that may play out differently from one context to another. Importantly, both approaches must be safe, adequate and beneficial to their female members.

The following are useful broad considerations when deciding between a static or mobile model:

- **Distance from services** (e.g. if we choose a mobile approach can we reach pockets of dispersed women and girls in need who are currently unable to access the static WGSS?)
- **Access barriers and restrictions of movement** (e.g. if we place the static WGSS in this location, can women and girls from elsewhere travel to it or are there checkpoints or other barriers to access which make it unsafe?)
- **Scale of need and geographic coverage area** (e.g. are we the only WGSS service provider in the area?)
- **Conflict-sensitivity** (e.g. if we choose a static approach can we reach women and girls from both displaced and host communities?)
- **Security** (e.g. if we choose a mobile approach, will our female staff face challenges in travelling to the different mobile sites?)



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In 2018, an analysis of IRC and IMC WGSS implemented in humanitarian settings worldwide showed that the majority of WGSS are directly implemented, and delivered through a static WGSS model as a standalone GBV program intervention. However, mobile delivery models and partnership implementation approaches are on the rise.

The static delivery model

A static WGSS delivery model means that women and girls can easily and safely reach a fixed-site space established in a centralized location, that is open to women and girls during standard service hours each day during the work week. The static approach has been the primary implementation model used over the last few decades in humanitarian settings. The rationale for a static WGSS model is that the service is centrally located where displaced women and girls live and is easily and safely accessible to them. The fixed nature of the site as well as the consistency of service provision promotes buy-in from the community, trust from women and girls, and fruitful collaboration with service providers.

This model is also underpinned by its capacity to adapt to the evolving needs of women and girls in a defined area over time. A static WGSS can be established in the early phases of an emergency to respond to immediate needs, while also serving as a catalyst for a range of other longer-term interventions, such as primary prevention interventions that tackle the deep-rooted causes of gender inequality in the community; opportunities for meaningful partnerships; and fostering of local ownership and the sustainability of the space in the community.

The static WGSS delivery model has been appropriate and effective in most humanitarian contexts. This includes acute and protracted displacement contexts with geographically concentrated and grouped distribution displacement patterns such as:

- **In formal camps or informal settlements**, where the area of coverage for service provision is clearly delineated, the number of displaced women and girls residing in the location is generally available, and all are considered in need. The closed environment offers parameters for programming which, despite being variable, still enable fixed and consistent service delivery because the amount of staff required can be forecasted, and the physical placement and layout of the WGSS is controlled based on a set number of women and girls to reach. Furthermore, while the approach pre-supposes that women and girls will access the WGSS, the closed environment allows for targeted outreach with coverage capability over the entire geographic reach of the service, as well as the capacity to identify and reduce access barriers.
- **In urban or rural settings**, where the environment is relatively defined, even though the area of coverage may not be closed. Similarly, while the population in the area is comprised of both displaced and non-displaced community members, affected women and girls are fairly grouped together and a central safely-accessible location can be determined to establish the WGSS. While the environment is much more fluid, a WGSS static delivery model can adapt its outreach strategies to facilitate access for women and girls.

Table 1 below outlines the common potential benefits and constraints related to static WGSS implementation models.

TABLE 1: STATIC DELIVERY MODEL	
Potential Benefits	Potential Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and design of the space can be chosen according to WGSS-defined standards and with the consent of women and girls. • Static model can scale reach of women and girls in a defined community. • The fixed location of the WGSS may facilitate recruitment of female staff from the community who may otherwise face mobility issues. • The stable nature of service provision and presence over time in the same location offers the WGSS program the possibility to work in-depth on longer-term empowerment objectives for women and girls. • Consistency of service provision and static space may more readily accommodate collaboration and coordination with other services. • The defined area of service enables targeted outreach strategies to engage the community or reduce access barriers for women and girls. • The defined area of service and fixed nature of the WGSS is favorable for engaging and securing community buy-in. • As the space endures over time, it could become a well-known landmark for women and girls in the community hence offering, on the one hand, stability for those regularly attending, but also on the other, increasing the number of new self-referred women and girls. • The WGSS can readily be transitioned to a partnership approach and sustained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the space is secured through a rental agreement, its sustainability might be reduced if the landlord decides to discontinue the agreement or if rental costs become prohibitive. • If displacement trends shift or if the location needs to be returned, it may be more difficult to move the WGSS without losing participation from women and girls. • Outreach strategies can be less effective or more challenging if the static WGSS is located outside of a formal camp or informal settlement.

The mobile model

A mobile WGSS approach consists of WGSS teams moving on a rotational basis to target women and girls displaced, in transit, or residing far from and not reached by centralized services. The rationale for the mobile model is that it responds to problems of consistent access to services for displaced women and girls which the static model cannot address. For example, in the context of mobile service delivery for survivors of GBV, mobile WGSS are extremely important as they function both as the means by which case management staff can establish trust with women and girls--thus allowing survivors to feel comfortable in disclosing their experiences--as well as the means of ensuring confidentiality for the case management service and the safety of survivors.



As with all actions and decisions related to GBV programming, the decision to use a mobile model should be based on a careful analysis of the needs, capacities, risks and benefits. Mobile WGSS should be considered only when the likely benefits of the intervention outweigh the risks, and the organization's presence will not endanger staff, WGSS members or others.

To safely implement WGSS through the mobile model, WGSS programming should include a solid community engagement intervention. In fact, community acceptance is pivotal for the safety and consistency of mobile interventions.

To establish a mobile WGSS, we recommend pairing the use this toolkit with the [Guidelines for Mobile and Remote Gender-Based Violence Service Delivery](#).

Mobile WGSS models have been appropriate and effective in the following contexts:

In acute displacement contexts a mobile team can be deployed as part of a GBV rapid response team to respond to new displacements within 72 hours. In this context, the scope of the WGSS should focus on its core definition as [a structured place where women's and girls' physical and emotional safety is respected, and where women and girls are supported through processes of empowerment](#). As there are likely not many options, the space can be established in a tent, a mosque or church, a community space etc., so long as women and girls identify it as a safe space. The space is considered temporary with a lighter range of activities given its constraints.

In protracted displacement contexts the following factors have typically indicated mobile WGSS models as appropriate and effective:

- **In besieged and hard-to-reach locations** both humanitarian access to those locations, and women's and girls' ability to leave their location is usually irregular. In these situations, on the one hand, sustained programming through a static model could be compromised by frequent interruptions of services or lack of adequate oversight and supervision and deemed cost inefficient. On the other hand, assessment findings will likely indicate the high relevance of a WGSS intervention because women and girls are extremely isolated and their needs compounded due to the lack of services in these locations (let alone any specifically tailored for them), as well as movement restrictions beyond their immediate location. While access may be irregular, it may be deemed safe, and the security within the besieged or hard-to-reach location may allow for programming to take place.

With these conditions, the benefits of a mobile WGSS model outweigh the risks and can be an appropriate and effective model to consider.

- **Humanitarian responses with a geographically dispersed and random distribution displacement pattern** are challenging for service providers who are balancing ensuring responsive and efficient programming, with finite human and financial resources to do so. On the one hand, women and girls they should be reaching with humanitarian services are too dispersed for a static delivery model to ensure scale and reach of the intervention. On the other hand, the random distribution of displaced women and girls with similar needs and vulnerabilities makes it hard to justify one location over another for the WGSS. While a mobile approach to programming may mean that services are somewhat reduced in availability as teams rotate to different locations (e.g. offered only a few days a week versus five days a week through a static WGSS), the tradeoff in this context is that more women and girls across a larger geographical area can be reached by the same service provider. Depending on the overall phase of the humanitarian response and broader objectives of the WGSS service provider, a mobile approach, or a combination of mobile and static approaches, may be deemed the most suitable delivery model.

Table 2 below outlines the common potential benefits and constraints related to mobile WGSS implementation models.

TABLE 2: MOBILE MODEL

Potential Benefits	Potential Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mobile model can greatly complement a static approach by engaging women and girls who would not be able to access static WGSS. • The mobile model might allow for wider reach of women and girls, including in hard-to-reach areas. • The mobile model can more readily adapt to meet changing needs in contexts where displacement or access trends may shift. • As the success of the approach is contingent on community buy-in, community engagement is generally very developed and of high quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be more difficult to recruit female staff in contexts where movement restrictions may be a higher concern for women. • Supervision of WGSS staff may be more challenging given the need to cover more locations. • Women and girls get less WGSS support and are exposed to less empowering opportunities due to the rotational nature of the mobile approach. • Identifying the space can be more challenging, requiring close monitoring to ensure it remains safe and inclusive. • Coordination with other actors may be more challenging particularly if one of the aims for the mobile approach is to reach isolated, underserved areas. • Exiting may be complex, requiring coordination to ensure WGSS members continue to receive support.

Programming Towards Objectives Through Stand-alone and Integrated Approaches

A stand-alone approach to programming is entirely overseen and implemented by GBV actors and GBV program staff, whereas, in the integrated approach, programming is overseen by the GBV sector but implemented by GBV program staff as well as staff from one or more other sectors (e.g. health or livelihoods). Both are equally valuable approaches, with different implementation benefits and constraints.

Stand-alone implementation approach

The rationale for a stand-alone implementation approach is that since WGSS programming is a GBV intervention specifically designed to support the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls, it therefore can be fully implemented by a GBV program. Globally, the majority of WGSS are implemented through stand-alone approaches.

See Table 3 below for a comparison of common benefits and constraints related to stand-alone approaches.

TABLE 3: STAND-ALONE IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Potential Benefits	Potential Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A stand-alone approach ensures that all programming components such as the location of the space, the allocation of space for activities, and the quality of services are in line with WGSS objectives. When combined with a mobile implementation model, the GBV program has greater control over the communities prioritized for reach based entirely on GBV program objectives and the related needs of women and girls.• Within a stand-alone approach, the GBV program emphasizes the WGSS role in ensuring linkages between the different GBV response and prevention interventions being implemented.• Since operational and implementation oversight is entirely led by the GBV program in a stand-alone approach, programming might be more flexible and adapt more readily--based on feedback received by women and girls and results from monitoring efforts--than when more than one sector is involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A stand-alone approach might not meet the needs of women and girls as comprehensively as an integrated approach where women and girls can equally benefit from the expertise of other sectors.• In certain contexts, a stand-alone approach might limit the scope of GBV programming carried out in the WGSS for the safety of women, adolescent girls and staff.• While coordination and collaboration with other sectors happens within stand-alone approaches, the WGSS program cannot ensure the achievement of multi-sectoral outcomes for women and girls as consistently than through an integrated approach.• Depending on the degree to which the WGSS program seeks to achieve some of its objectives, a stand-alone approach might not allow the breadth and depth of technical expertise that women and girls could benefit from compared to an integrated approach.

Integrated implementation approaches

Integration is a spectrum and while it can include operational strategies such as sharing material and financial resources, and joint management of teams, it is not defined by “how you collaborate” but “why you collaborate”. In the scope of this toolkit, integration is defined as one or more humanitarian stakeholders or service providers deliberately linked with the WGSS intervention under the lead of the GBV sector to jointly achieve objectives for women and girls. The rationale for an integrated approach is that interdependent implementation by both the GBV and other sector program teams can be beneficial to achieve both GBV sector and other sector outcomes for women and girls. This means that because other sectors support the GBV sector in achieving overall **WGSS objectives**, they are able to ensure other sector-specific outcomes that benefit women and girls.

Based on how integration is defined here, an integrated implementation approach is decided first and foremost by the women and girls consulted during the assessment phase, and based on how other sectors can specifically support the achievement of WGSS objectives. For example, if the integration is between the GBV and health sector, this might have been decided based on women and girls identifying access to healthcare as critical but with barriers. An integrated implementation approach could therefore be pivotal to achieving two or more of the WGSS objectives (such as 1. To facilitate access for all women and girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services; and 4. To serve as a key entry point for specialized services for GBV survivors).

See Table 4 below for a comparison of common benefits and constraints related to integrated approaches.

TABLE 4: INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Potential Benefits	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated approaches have the potential to amplify both GBV sector-related and other sector-specific outcomes to benefit women and girls, while also increasing the overall effectiveness of the WGSS intervention by more holistically meeting the needs of women and girls.• Integrated approaches support the WGSS intervention’s ability to remain relevant and adapt to women’s and girls’ needs over time, since it can offer a wider scope of opportunities and quality access to services, along with an in-depth acquisition of knowledge, skills and assets specific to other sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater programming and management processes are required to ensure a genuinely integrated approach that is considered balanced by both program staff as well as women and girls.• Decisions such as where the WGSS should be located, which communities to prioritize, the frequency of the teams’ rotation across sites in the case of a mobile WGSS model, as well as the overall administration of the space, may require negotiations between the GBV program and other sector teams.• Additional effort may be needed to build the capacities of non-GBV staff to ensure they uphold GBV/WGSS values and attitudes fundamental to the WGSS.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In contexts where GBV programming might be considered sensitive, poorly understood or not supported by the community, an integrated approach with different sectors and services benefiting from greater community acceptance and buy-in can leverage this to allow the GBV program to safely deliver services and ensure access for women and girls, while progressively gaining community buy-in itself for the WGSS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The integrated nature of services may reduce already-limited resources for the WGSS (e.g. constraints on the availability of space in the WGSS to deliver the full range of services intended by each sector, limited seats in the vehicle related to a mobile WGSS model, etc.) The integration and alignment of service provision (same location, same hours, same day) may force women and girls to have to choose between the services they need. |
|---|--|

Programming Delivered Through Direct Implementation or in Partnership

Whether WGSS interventions are delivered through static and mobile models, and whether WGSS program objectives are achieved through integrated or stand-alone approaches, the third consideration key to the design of WGSS programming is related to direct or in-partnership implementation.

Direct implementation approach

Direct implementation in this toolkit refers to situations where the organization that is responsible for the frontline implementation of WGSS programming is also the organization leading the funding agreement with the donor supporting the project. The rationale for direct implementation is largely informed by the humanitarian context, operational factors as well as organizational capacities. For example, if WGSS programming is designed as part of an acute emergency response, the rationale for direct implementation might be based on the fact that the frontline organization has expertise and experience in setting up WGSS within 72 hours of an acute emergency; that it has a GBV program already on the ground with the capacity to respond; and/or that the transfer of risk to a national or local civil society organization was deemed too great a risk given the conflict sensitivities.

Table 5 below outlines the common potential benefits and constraints related to direct implementation of WGSS programming.

TABLE 5: DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Potential Benefits	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WGSS programming can be entirely designed in line with the organization's mandate and capacities. In emergency response, WGSS services can potentially be up and running more quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct implementation might take away from local capacities rather than building on or supporting them. Direct implementation by an international humanitarian organization reduces the sustainability of the intervention.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In certain contexts, direct implementation may be the most cost-efficient approach. • A static model and direct implementation may better enable the use of an integrated approach. • The organization has greater control over the technical quality and oversight of staff, and the stable environment allows it to invest in staff capacities. • Frontline staff have greater job stability, so there is potential for less turnover. • Direct implementation using a static model supports community acceptance and builds the organization's reputation through its stable and consistent presence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct implementation might take away from local capacities rather than building on or supporting them. • Direct implementation by an international humanitarian organization reduces the sustainability of the intervention. • Depending on community dynamics, a static model with direct implementation by either a local or international organization may reduce community acceptance for the WGSS, or place staff at risk due to conflict sensitivities. |
|--|--|

In-partnership implementation approach

For the purpose of this toolkit, in-partnership implementation, is strictly defined as an agreement between an international GBV non-governmental organization (INGO) partnering with a women's national or local civil society organization (LNGO) or community-based organization (CBO). The rationale for an in-partnership implementation approach defined as such, is to recognize international GBV actors' privileges, as well as influence within humanitarian settings (in accessing funds, decision-making circles, visibility, advocacy agenda-setting capacity), over feminist and women's rights organizations and movements from the Global South, and therefore emphasize the accountable use of their 'power with' in solidarity. However, the scope of the partnership should not be limited to a sub-award implementation of WGSS. Rather it should be inclusive of broader technical implementation, as well as technical and institutional capacity-strengthening, as mutually agreed on and relative to the complementarity between partners.

An in-partnership implementation approach also reflects the feminist-informed [**WGSS guiding principle of collaboration**](#) strategically established to support the overarching women's empowerment goal of WGSS programs across two dimensions of humanitarian aid. First, the partnership supports increased women's leadership in humanitarian responses. At the same time, through partnerships established early on with local feminist and women's rights organizations and movements, women and girl members of the WGSS (operated by the international GBV organization at the onset of a response) not only benefit from a wider range of services in the short term, but also a bridged access to services capable of sustaining their empowerment long after [international aid exits](#).

Partnership opportunities should be assessed and planned for at the outset of WGSS program design. Beyond rigorous screening of partners' capacities, the context and security risks associated with potential partners should also carefully be assessed. For example, partnering with highly politicized or religiously-affiliated organizations may affect certain women's and girls' ability to access the WGSS.

Table 6 below outlines the common potential benefits and constraints related to in-partnership implementation of WGSS programming.

TABLE 6: IN-PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	
Potential Benefits	Potential Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership approach can leverage the strengths of each partner to raise both quality and effectiveness of WGSS programming for women and girls. Depending on the partnership, community buy-in, local ownership and sustainability for the WGSS program may increase. Partnerships with civil society organizations, groups and networks might increase the WGSS' ability to reach isolated, stigmatized or marginalized women and girls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships can be considered cost-heavy by certain donors or during certain phases of a humanitarian response. While valuable and sustainable, partnerships which integrate phased handover approaches or capacity-building components, require ample time to be implemented. In order to be successful, partnerships may require additional staff with specific skill sets in both organizations to ensure the overall success of the partnership and the WGSS program.

For more guidance WGSS in-partnership approaches refer to [Annex 3.1. Key Design Considerations for Mutually-Empowering Partnerships](#)

3.3 NAMING THE WGSS AND DIFFERENTIATION FROM OTHER TYPES OF SPACES

Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) have many different names within and across humanitarian contexts. The name neither reflects the type of activities conducted in it, nor is it related to the availability of case management services. It is usually decided based on women's feedback or the contexts' sensitivities and dynamics. Some of the most common names are "Women Centers", "Women and Girl-Friendly Spaces", "Women-friendly centers", "Women's protection centers" "Women's listening center" "Safe spaces for women and girls". In some contexts, words such as "safe" or "protection" may be perceived differently. The name must be inclusive and not prescriptive. It is crucial, therefore, to find a name that does not sound ambiguous, suspicious or disrespectful to the community. In fact, any name is acceptable if it was decided with women and girls, it is inclusive, and contextually-tailored.

It is equally important to ensure that the WGSS' name (and visibility) does not reference "GBV survivors", "GBV prevention and GBV response", "GBV services" or "Violence against women and girls". One of the objectives of WGSS is to serve as a key entry point for confidential services. Therefore, maintaining confidentiality is an essential principle for the WGSS, which can be compromised by choosing a name that mentions either violence, the violence-related service and/or the survivor. Finding a neutral name

will help ensure that the space is perceived and understood as a place for all women and girls rather than potentially singled out (or stigmatized) as only for GBV survivors. Additionally, choosing a safe and inclusive name may increase and encourage participation and acceptance from the community at-large.

The variety of names for the WGSS and the range of facilities dedicated to the protection sector and its sub-sectors may create confusion about the nature, objectives and services of different spaces available in emergency settings. This section aims to clarify what these different spaces are by highlighting their distinctive characteristics and purpose.

Safe House / Shelters: Women's and girls' safe spaces fulfill a very different objective than safe houses or shelters. Safe shelters are places that provide immediate security, temporary refuge, and support to survivors escaping violent or abusive situations. They constitute a formal response service as part of GBV case management. This service is through the referral process, made available to women and girl survivors of violence who are in imminent danger. Safe shelters are professionally staffed and/or accredited. Both admission to and exit from the safe shelter is contingent on specific criteria and strict standard operating procedures of confidentiality. Safe shelters deliver specialized services and provide beneficiaries with personal security.

Child-friendly Spaces (CFS): These are widely used in emergency situations as a first response to the needs of girls and boys, and as a forum for working with affected communities. They are established in response to children's immediate rights to protection, psychosocial well-being, and non-formal education. This response is carried out through activities directed at caring for and protecting children, such as the setting up of support groups, peer activities, life skills workshops, and more. CFS typically cater to children, both boys and girls, under 18 years of age. In some contexts, however, they may also engage and benefit young people aged above 18 years.

WGSS and CFS do share some common elements. At times, they may also cater to similar populations. This is particularly true with regards to adolescent girls. In this respect, it is important to appreciate that the purposes of CFS and of safe spaces do not overlap but are seen as complementary.

Women-only spaces in reception areas: Women and girls-only safe spaces in reception areas of refugee camps differ from WGSS. The former is a specific sex-segregated section of the reception area which is the first entry point into the refugee camp. The primary objective of such areas is to minimize the risks of violence and harassment for single, separated or unaccompanied women and girls while undergoing the camp admission processes of being assigned shelters, receiving initial assistance packages, and formal registration in the camp. These areas can also be used to provide information regarding the services available to women and girls, and ensure a connection is made to other services when specific vulnerabilities are identified.

One-stop centers (OSC): These provide integrated services for survivors of GBV, so they are not required to travel to multiple sites or re-tell their experience multiple times. These spaces may be attached to a hospital or other larger service locations, and provide a range of services including psychosocial, health and legal services. The OSC is one approach toward establishing WGSS in an emergency and provides useful, timely access to health services, especially when based in a health center or hospital.

Protection desks (also called protection integrated centers, community development centers, community centers): Community centers are safe and public places where women, men, boys and girls of diverse backgrounds can meet for social events, recreation, education and livelihood programs, information exchange, and other purposes. They are established with the main objective of empowering refugee and host communities, and providing them with a forum to promote their participation in decisions that affect their lives.

3.4 INITIAL STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Diversity refers to different values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, health, social status, skill and other specific personal characteristics. While the age and gender dimensions are present in everyone, other characteristics vary from person to person. These differences must be recognized, understood and valued by humanitarian actors in each emergency in order to ensure protection for all affected people. (definition of Global protection Cluster)

Inclusion is defined as the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights. (definition of "Leaving no one behind. The imperative for an inclusive development". Report on the world social situation 2016 Department of Economic and Social affair of United Nation)

As women and girls differ in various ways, a range of activities and approaches needs to be included within a single WGSS so that it is (and it is perceived as) accessible to all girls and women living in the surrounding community.

Enabling Access by Reducing Barriers

Whether you are planning for a new WGSS, or for a new phase of a WGSS project, your assessment findings should have included discussions with various groups of diverse women and girls to help you understand how oppression based on age, race, ethnicity, disability, class, sexual orientation and gender identity compounds the risks and discrimination faced by diverse women and girls. During the start up phase, information gathered through the assessment step, should be analyzed to inform, the development of an inclusion strategy that prevents or mitigates:¹

Attitudinal/Social barriers: Patriarchal or sexist attitudes are one of the major barriers to full and equal participation of women and girls in humanitarian settings. This is exacerbated for diverse women and girls who also experience ageism, homophobia, transphobia, racism, and prejudice based on disability, class, HIV status, religion and ethnicity from family, community members, and humanitarian actors. If WGSS staff do not make it clear that diverse women and girls are equally welcome in WGSS, then some women and girls may fear they will face the same harmful attitudes present in the wider community and not attend.

¹ Interagency GBV Case Management Guidelines, p. 139. <https://gbvresponders.org/response/gbv-case-management/>

Informational barriers: These occur when information is not made accessible to everyone. This type of barrier can be invisible, but it is no less present and it excludes diverse women and girls, particularly those with visual or hearing disabilities. This can be common in refugee settings where refugee women and girls do not speak the same language as the host country they have sought refuge in.

Lack of confidentiality: WGSS are recognized as important entry points for survivors to disclose their experiences of violence and seek support. While the women and girl-only space and the structure of the safe space provides a buffer of confidentiality for survivors from others knowing about their experiences, it is likely that some members and WGSS staff inside the WGSS are aware of a number of survivors' experiences, particularly for adolescent girls, women and girls with disabilities, or older women, who may need to disclose to others in order to access services. The WGSS therefore, must create an environment where both staff and members of the WGSS actively uphold the confidentiality of survivors.

Stigma and social isolation: Diverse women and girls, already ostracized or neglected in their communities, may fear spending time in a WGSS will replicate the same dynamics as in the community. This applies particularly to women and girls who may be hidden or isolated by their families (based on age or disability), or who may hide their identities when their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity puts them at risk of discrimination and violence.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Access to WGSS is dependent on several factors--most importantly, it must be a space for women and girls only.

"The WGSS place is safe and we can freely chat as men and boys are not allowed to come to the center." - WGSS Participant, Ethiopia

Context-Specific Women and Girl-Informed Strategies

Developing inclusion strategies requires context-specific information and the insight of diverse women and girls. In the same way that a survivor-centered approach recognizes the survivor as the expert of her experiences, diverse women and girls should be recognized as experts with the knowledge of how to best support their inclusion in the WGSS. While throughout the toolkit we refer to groups of women and girls known to be discriminated against globally, as well as present barriers commonly faced by these groups, participation and access barriers to the WGSS and solutions for inclusion will differ from one context to another. WGSS strategies must not only make the space accessible to all women and girls, but also guarantee that each feels welcomed and valued. Strategies therefore, need to be implemented and adjusted throughout the entire WGSS project cycle.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In consultations with field staff during the development of this toolkit, it was noted that WGSS staff are often aware of diverse groups of women and girls who are discriminated against. Nevertheless, the process of identifying them with women and girls themselves, is important to begin discussions about inclusion. Assessment tools like [**Tool 4: WGSS FGD Guide with women and girls**](#) can be valuable to begin those discussions.

Ideally, strategies should be developed prior to the start of a funded project cycle to adequately resource inclusion strategies within the overall design of the WGSS program, rather than as an additional component.

- For new WGSS, it is important to balance between overburdening women and girls, especially diverse women and girls, with consultations if you are not sure how to establish presence in a community. For ethical reasons, if you are uncertain, design strategies as much as you can based on consultations with local or national women's organizations who likely have expert knowledge. They will likely be able to provide you with enough information to plan for a range of strategies which can be further tailored with women and girls once funding is secured.
- For programs that already exist, staff with a supervisory role should lead efforts in collaboration with WGSS staff, as well as women and girls, to identify what actions are safe and useful to promote inclusion (e.g. design of materials or adaptation of facilitation methods; rearrangement of the activity room to better accommodate diverse needs; reflecting diversity in the staffing structure; assessing and supporting inclusive attitudes through capacity-building; identification of a partnership opportunity with a local organization).

Some practical considerations based on experiences from the field:

- Inclusion strategies should be developed according to assessment findings. If in the community there is tension between one or more groups, possibilities for social cohesion should be carefully assessed and WGSS should work in line with the strategies proposed by the humanitarian coordination organization to ensure conflict-sensitive strategies.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In a context where humanitarian services are responding to the consequences of conflict between two ethnic groups, a WGSS forcing or being perceived as forcing social cohesion between women and girls from these two groups can be risky.

In this case, WGSS should consider conflict-sensitive measures already in place prior to developing the inclusion strategy for the WGSS. Although rare, in some circumstances, the WGSS cannot serve both groups of women and girls in the same space as the risks to women, girls and staff, as well as the risks to achieving the program objectives outweigh the benefits.

The alternative options include either establishing two spaces to remain neutral and impartial, or not establishing services at all. While the latter is one of the hardest choices to accept as humanitarian service providers, it might be necessary. In such polarized ‘all or nothing’ conflict dynamics, neither ethnic group will accept a service provider’s rationale to “at least support one group” or “at least support the most at-risk”. Setting up services for one group over another would more likely than not cause greater harm to staff, women and girls than not providing WGSS services at all.

- Women and girls with severe mental or physical disabilities are amongst the most invisible groups of women and girls. To make the space accessible to them, some structural adjustments (e.g. physical accessibility in the space), and adjustments to outreach strategies and facilitation of activities (e.g. first targeting female caregivers, working with other service providers such as health and mental health service providers who might be main points of access) may be required.
- While WGSS programming does not usually require a specialized set of capacities to cater for women and girls with disabilities, or older women, it does require staff capacity and sensitivity to regularly check-in with members and ensure they feel comfortable with the way activities are delivered, and to be open to learn new methods and techniques from older women, women and girls with disabilities, as well as their caregivers.
- It should not be assumed that WGSS will be free from discriminatory and exclusionary dynamics as women and girls from the community are likely to hold and replicate discriminatory beliefs and attitudes based on age, race, ethnicity, disability, class, sexual orientation and gender identity, (e.g. against women and girls with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity) so it is fundamental to constantly be sensitive to whether there are groups that are being discriminated against or left out. To ensure compliance with the WGSS guiding principles of accountability, inclusion and solidarity, WGSS staff should prioritize practices and activities that emphasize equal opportunity and inclusion of every woman and girl (e.g. ensuring voices are equally weighted during a decision-making session; engaging diverse women and girls in co-facilitating activities, avoid “othering” approaches by ensuring mixed activity groups, etc.).

3.5 SELECTING THE WGSS LOCATION

Selecting the WGSS location is critical to the design of the intervention. WGSS exist in a variety of structures—including, but not limited to, schools, churches and mosques, community halls, hair salons and residence compounds. The space could be a general public space, in which case it is important to form an agreement to secure the availability of the space for women and girls only. In other settings it may be necessary to rent the space. In still other settings (especially in rural areas), the space can be a contribution from the community.

Key characteristics of a location combined with contextualized and analyzed information gathered in the assessment step will influence design choices. These can be further shaped by women's and girls' input during consultations, and WGSS service providers' resources and capacities to select the location.

Characteristics of a 'Safer' Location

While it may seem obvious, one of the key factors of the space is that women and girls can meet regularly, as often as the program meets, in the same place. This should be a place that is considered safe and appropriate by women and girls as supported through the assessment tools [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion with women and girls](#) and [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#). This means the space should be located in an area that is easy and safe for them to get to.

While it may also seem obvious, it is nearly impossible to guarantee the selection of a location that is safe for all women and girls. However, it is possible to identify the 'safer' location for the WGSS.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

If it is almost unavoidable that women and girls need to pass through (certain streets, camp blocks etc.) to get to the WGSS, help them develop a plan for how to get there.

Some successful strategies used include, but are not limited to, the following:

- organizing group transportation,
- organizing a buddy system for walking in pairs, or
- making sure the activities end before dark so they can walk home safely.

Importantly, strategies also include tracking absences and dropouts to understand if this is related to access becoming unsafe or the need for alternative measures to ensure safe access.

Before narrowing down a safer location for the WGSS, consider ensuring you collected information through the assessment phase using [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion with women and girls](#) and [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#), based on the following the situations below. If you feel like you are missing some critical information, consider engaging women and girls by scanning what safety means to them in terms of:

- **Safety by time of day:** Identify where they are throughout the day and in which of those places, they face potentially unsafe situations.
- **Safety by day:** Analyze safety over the different days of the week(e.g. days with no Non- Food Items distributions).
- **Safety by season:** Identify particularly unsafe times during the year. You might want to then adjust your programming to help protect access during unsafe seasons. (e.g. during monsoon season; during election period, etc.).
- **Safety accessing services and opportunities:** Identify common situations they find themselves in, and allow them to identify which are unsafe. (e.g. while waiting for public transportation to the center of town to access services).
- **Safety by situation:** Identify certain situations (e.g. stopped at a checkpoint) that makes them feel safe or unsafe (e.g. develop safety plan for what to do if this cannot be avoided).

Narrowing Down the Choice of Location

To support decision-making with the selection of where the WGSS will be located, at least two or more staff should review and analyze the assessment findings by scoping out the information first and foremost that women and girls provided through [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion with women and girls](#) and [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#), and then using the information gained through others (e.g. key informants, service providers, community members) to triangulate or narrow down further. The voice of women and girls must always be prioritized.

The following considerations illustrate the dynamic interplay of factors that should be discussed to inform the selection of the location:

1. Safe and meaningful access of the location and surrounding services:

In the assessment step you will have gathered through:

- [Tool 1: WGSS KII Guide](#) - the feasibility of establishing a WGSS in several locations, whether these are prioritized for WGSS interventions, whether access for female staff would be safe, and whether there is a need to directly implement or capacity to partner.
- [Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion with women and girls](#) and [Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#) - information from diverse women and girls as well as community members about specific locations in the community where the WGSS would be considered safe and accessible, under which conditions, and the barriers and enablers which might prevent specific groups of women and girls or all women and girls from accessing these locations.
- [Tool 6: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with communities](#) and [Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping](#) - in addition, you will have men's and community leaders' perceptions on acceptable and safe locations for women and girls to access, and an understanding of their influence over women's and girls' overall access and mobility.

While ideally the WGSS should be in a place all women and girls can safely and freely access, the reality of programming will likely mean the selected location will still prevent some women and girls from safe and meaningful access. Clearly identifying, for each potential location, which groups of women and girls will have access, and which will face barriers can help in deciding on the eventual location of the WGSS. Design strategies should then focus on how to reduce the barriers identified to ensure access for the women and girls affected.

2. Proximity to or availability of other services

In the assessment step you will have gathered through [**Tool 2: WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire**](#) the availability of services in specific locations and how accessible they are to women and girls.

- Locating a WGSS where there are no services available for women and girls can strengthen the justification for:
 - A mobile WGSS delivery model.
 - Direct and standalone implementation approaches.
- Locating the WGSS in proximity to other service providers could support and inform:
 - A static service delivery model.
 - The opportunity to explore integrated implementation approaches.
 - Delivery of frontline services in partnership with a local community-based organization.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Based on consultations with global experts for the development of this toolkit we were asked to consider whether a global standard related to the maximum distance a WGSS should be located from where affected women and girls live could be established.

Women and girl members of IRC and IMC WGSS along with staff in Cameroun, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Thailand helped us carry out several experiments to see whether it was possible. What we learned is that distance is a concept both highly contextual and individually defined.

For example, a woman may consider walking 30 minutes to access a water point far, but she might consider it fine for her to walk 30 minutes to get to the WGSS. An adolescent girl might calculate distance in terms of houses she needs to pass between hers and the WGSS, instead of the amount of time she needs to walk, and what she might consider far might be considered close for another adolescent girl.

While no absolute value or global standard could be created, one of the experiments allowed us to develop a simple tool to determine the WGSS catchment area--in other words, the geographic area where the WGSS service attracts women and girls that come to the WGSS--which staff felt was useful for outreach interventions as well as coordination with other WGSS service providers to avoid duplicating service areas. This is now [**Tool 11: WGSS Catchment Area Assessment**](#).

3. Availability of land, infrastructure and regulations enforced by third parties:

In the assessment step you will have gathered through:

- **Tool 1: WGSS KII Guide** - whether locations to set up WGSS are deemed relevant and feasible by local authorities, camp management, the GBV coordination body or other entities.
- **Tool 1: WGSS KII Guide** - related information on administrative requirements, formal and customary regulations, key stakeholders to involve during the location identification process, challenges and mitigation strategies.
- **Tool 1: WGSS KII Guide** - whether the WGSS location is influenced by practical or political issues such as availability of land plots, defined areas for service provision and willing landlords, etc.

In weighing the benefits and risks consider the following:

- Is the location safely accessible to all women, girls and WGSS staff throughout the week?
- Is the location safe for all women and girls several hours per day?
- Is the location accessible all through the year (e.g. including during the rainy season for monsoon areas)?
- Is the land plot big enough to set up a private and comfortable WGSS? (More information on the minimum standards of the physical layout and structure are discussed in 3.6 below).
- Does any group of women and girls need to cross check points to access the WGSS?
- Is the location in an area usually frequented by women and girls or only by men and boys?
- Is it an isolated area?

Red flags - the location should be flagged as too high risk to consider if associated conditions and regulations:

- Increase access barriers for specific groups of women and girls.
- Reduce the scope of the potential WGSS intervention.
- Prevent the WGSS service provider from reasonably ensuring that the space maintains its definition as a safe space where all women and girls feel comfortable and welcome.

Tool 10: Selecting WGSS Location - Observation Checklist is a useful tool to document hazards as well as safety recommendations to ensure a WGSS location (e.g. neighborhood, camp block) and structure (e.g. compound, building, tent) meets safety standards. It is a comprehensive report that includes detailed descriptions of key safety observations from inspecting in person the location and structure. During the Start Up phase the Observation Checklist can help in vetting the locations to support the choice of a final location for the WGSS including in cases where:

- More than one suitable location is identified - to choose the safest among various options.
- Local authorities assign the WGSS location without prior consultation – to decide whether the space can be validated or advocacy for an alternative space will be required.
- Only one potential location is available – to decide whether the space can be validated (or not) to establish the WGSS.

If more than one suitable location was identified for establishing the WGSS, the following guiding questions may help further refine decision-making:

- Among the options, which one is safer for women, girls and WGSS staff to travel to and from their houses?
- Among the options, which one will be safer for women and girls to spend various hours per day (or hours/days per week)?
- Among the options, which one has a place for private (one-on-one) conversations?
- Among the options, which one would be accessible by older women or those with different abilities?
- Among the options, how close are other services – particularly CFS, schools and health services?
- Among the options, which one is a space solely dedicated to WGSS? If it is a shared space with another program/entity is it for women and girls only? If yes, is there physical space to create two separate groups if needed?
- Among the options, which one has a space for children to play or be taken care of while women and adolescent girls participate in activities?

WGSS Catchment Area

Once the location is identified, WGSS members will travel a range of different distances depending on multiple factors which may include the time available, time of the day, weather, presence of friends and family members in the WGSS, etc. In some cases, distance is calculated in terms of time, in others, in feet or meters, while in still others, in terms of the number of houses that separate the WGSS and the place where members live.

Knowing from how far women and girls are travelling to the WGSS from their homes will provide you with a sense of the WGSS catchment area. This is useful for:

1. planning outreach interventions;
2. exploring the need for a mobile intervention;
3. identifying a possible geographical area for an additional static WGSS.

You can calculate your WGSS catchment area using [**Tool 11: WGSS Catchment Area Assessment.**](#)



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In some contexts, the choice of the site for the WGSS is pre-identified and determined by Local Authorities or the camp management agency.

Despite this, it is crucial to engage both women and girls in a safety mapping exercise, as well as community members in a community mapping, to know whether the location determined by local authorities and camp management is safe and acceptable to women and girls.

If the location is not safe, you can use the information received from women and girls and community members to advocate for a different location grounded in the findings from the assessment tools. This is a common example of ‘structural violence’ that women and girls face caused by patriarchal structures of power failing to consider women and girls’ needs. In humanitarian situations, often with some advocacy, you can secure an alternative location. If no other option is provided or made available by local authorities, take the discussion back to women, girls and community members to decide what the implications are for establishing a WGSS or not, and decide based on benefits outweighing the risk.

IRC and IMC teams have shared that in their experience, this has sometimes meant a decision to not implement a WGSS in that community at that point in time, as the risks outweighed the benefits. However, they note the critical lesson in this experience is the shared ownership for this decision taken by the IRC or IMC with women, girls and community members (as opposed to by the IRC or IMC only). Because the decision was taken with the community, IRC and IMC teams did not face backlash from the community; on the contrary they secured their trust. As the opportunity to work in that community remained possible, teams continued to conduct advocacy to influence the right space for programming.

3.6 WGSS PHYSICAL LAYOUT AND CONFIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The physical layout and design of the WGSS will vary from one to the other as structures should reflect culturally-appropriate norms, and account for the differences related to available resources, programming environment and selected implementation approaches. For example, in an urban setting the WGSS may be established in an apartment building, while in remote and rural areas a WGSS may be built from scratch. In Northern Thailand, a WGSS could be rectangular in shape and constructed from bamboo, while in specific areas of Cameroon, WGSS will be circular shaped and constructed with mud blocks.

Minimum and Standard Structural Requirements

Despite variances, all WGSS should ensure accessibility to all women and girls (including those with physical disabilities) and the structure should also be able to withstand all expected weather conditions (e.g. not located in potential flood zones, and accessible during monsoon season).

Additionally, the following structural requirements outlined below represent the minimum all WGSS globally should follow:

TABLE 7: WGSS STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS

1 activity room

This is a minimum requirement - The space cannot be considered a WGSS without at least one dedicated room for group activities.

1 private conversation room

This is a minimum requirement - The space cannot be considered a WGSS without at least one room dedicated to private conversations, regardless of whether GBV case management services are hosted in the safe space. This is to ensure confidentiality for any conversation which women, adolescent girls and staff may need privacy for.

1 toilet + access to water

This is a minimum requirement - The space cannot be considered a WGSS without meeting basic sanitary and hygiene standards such as a toilet, a hand washing area and access to clean water).

1 additional activity room to ensure adolescent girl-only space within the WGSS

Strongly recommended for quality programming – Meeting this standard ensures equal but distinct space and programming for both adult women and adolescent girls which can occur concurrently. Without this additional activity room, you are reducing the time and space for either women or adolescent girls.

1 childcare space

Strongly recommended for quality programming – Meeting this standard has been equally identified by WGSS frontline staff, women and girls as well as community members as the most significant enabler to women and adolescent girls' access and participation in WGSS activities, particularly in locations where there are no alternative childcare options nor child protection services with whom the WGSS can coordinate with. (Staffing requirements as per the Minimum Standards for Child Protection are provided in Part 4: Staffing).

1 storage space for materials and assets

Strongly recommended for quality programming – Meeting this standard has been identified as necessary to ensure the safe management of program resources and assets within the WGSS.

While the requirements above outline the minimum requirements all WGSS should follow, there are additional structural components which would be considered ideal such as: office space for staff, a reception area to orient women and girls, a kitchen space, and an outdoor space for activities. All or some of these are commonly found across WGSS globally and should, where possible be considered as part of WGSS design if resources allow.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

While WGSS are entirely female-only spaces, when safe spaces must be built from scratch, men typically view the construction of the safe space in their community as an opportunity for temporary employment. While construction processes must be compliant with local laws as well as organizational and donor regulations, when possible, having men from the community take part in the construction of the safe space significantly supports male buy-in for the female-only space.

Quality Standards for WGSS Privacy and Confidentiality

The privacy of women and girls and confidentiality of violence survivors must be guaranteed by the WGSS and factored into the design and layout of the space from the outset. WGSS should carefully decide which activities require a higher level of privacy, as these should take place indoors and during hours where only participants involved can see or hear the activity taking place.

Women, adolescent girls and staff sharing the space daily may be aware of the presence of survivors within WGSS activities. Confidentiality must be emphasized not only through structural and service provider measures, but equally through women's and girls' understanding of the important role they have in maintaining confidentiality and ensuring a welcoming, non-stigmatizing space for survivors. While each WGSS will need to consider how to best ensure this based on their actual space, the following measures for privacy and confidentiality represent quality standards all WGSS globally should follow:

TABLE 8: QUALITY STANDARDS FOR WGSS PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Privacy from being seen and heard by the community

While WGSS can have visible open-air spaces, which are used for activities, it should always guarantee at least one activity room/space for activities or conversations for women and girls who don't want to be seen or heard. The room should not be visible to the public and sounds in the room should not be heard from outside the WGSS. When the WGSS is constructed, consider building windows higher (for example starting at 1.5 meters high) to allow for ventilation and natural light while preventing people from seeing into the WGSS. At a minimum, curtains and blinds should be used to ensure privacy.

Non-specific name and visibility

The name of the WGSS, as well as visibility materials, should refrain from using terms that clearly refer to case management services so as not to stigmatize the safe space as only for survivors of GBV. Similarly, private conversation rooms are often called the “counseling room”, or “case management room”. Often, these rooms are perceived as reserved only for case management, and therefore women and girls seen entering or exiting them can be easily identified as survivors by other WGSS members and staff. It is recommended to choose a more neutral room such as “private conversation room” to avoid the space being only for survivors. In this way, the room can serve different purposes, for example: evaluation of staff, space to provide and receive feedback, space to disclose personal problems or share an important experience with a staff member. It is in fact, a best practice to open the room to every woman and girl who wishes to discuss any matter privately. This practice will help allow disclosures to happen. Encouraging women and girls to access the private area for any type of consultation will also help de-stigmatize the room as only for survivors.

Confidentiality agreements with integrated or co-located services

When a WGSS uses an integrated implementation approach with other sectors, strong confidentiality agreements must be in place with staff from integrated services to ensure they adhere to guiding principles. If the WGSS is co-located with other services not necessarily integrated in terms of programming, a physical separation between WGSS and those services needs to be established.

At a minimum, each WGSS should identify and put in place measures to ensure that women and girls entering the conversation room are not seen by other members

For example, installing a privacy screen between spaces for activities and the private conversation room improves access and confidentiality within the WGSS without women and girls having to walk through the activity room or clearly be seen entering and exiting. Where possible, having two entrances for the private conversation room can help in case women and girls are standing in front of one of the doors.

3.7 SECURING BUY-IN FOR THE WGSS IN THE START UP PHASE

A WGSS community engagement strategy is dependent on the [community groups and stakeholders](#) who have impact on the lives of the women and girls in the program. These groups and stakeholders will vary by country, program, and location within a country. For example, in religiously devout communities, religious leaders are very important stakeholders who often have a vested interest in monitoring the role of women and girls in their community and can bring a WGSS program to a halt. Another important stakeholder group is parents and caregivers (e.g. of adolescent girls, of women and girls with disabilities) whose support is essential to girls’ participation, and that of some older women, and women and girls with disabilities.

Oftentimes, community members have different motivations for keeping women and girls out of WGSS or different reasons why they might support their participation. It is essential to understand these motivations and reasons before creating an approach, avoiding a ‘one size fits all’ approach.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

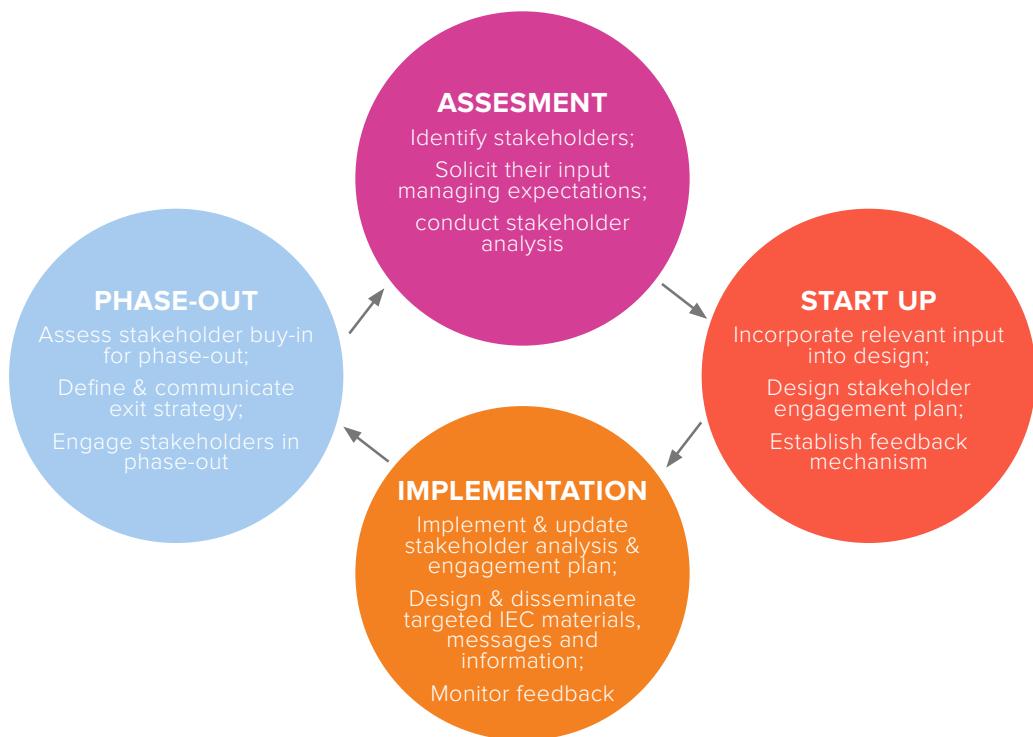
If part of your strategy is to involve community stakeholders in planning and implementation, then it is important that you be clear about what they can and cannot influence, respect their input, and make changes where necessary. Otherwise they will feel that you have only involved them as a token gesture, and it is not true involvement.

This alone can rapidly put the program in a difficult situation and halt a WGSS altogether.

What is Buy-in?

The scope of this toolkit considers “buy-in” as the balance achieved by leveraging stakeholders’ interest and influence to support the WGSS in achieving its objectives (to empower women and girls), while at the same time, remaining accountable to women and girls by ensuring that stakeholders’ buy-in neither changes the WGSS’ objectives nor hinders achievement of them. Buy-in is neither secured through a single activity nor achieved during a specific phase in the project cycle; it is a living process which must be gained and sustained throughout the lifespan of the WGSS.

The diagram below highlights stakeholder buy-in efforts undertaken throughout core phases of the WGSS:



There are many ways to involve the various stakeholders in a community in order to gain their support for a WGSS. However, community entry is often first established through the assessment phase using [Tool 6: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with communities](#) and [Tool 7: WGSS Community Mapping](#). We have suggested using during the assessment phase [Tool 3: WGSS Stakeholder Analysis Template](#) so that in the implementation phase you can work further to develop your stakeholder engagement strategy for fuller community outreach, leading to the continuous [engagement of key stakeholders during the implementation phase](#). However, it is the time in between, during the start up phase, that is a critical starting point to best ensure both trust and acceptance building in the community, before a WGSS program is completely up and running.

There are often tensions between different members of a community, which makes it a complex process to involve the entire community in the building and support of a WGSS. Different stakeholders in women's and girls' lives have different ideas of what the role of women and girls should be in the community. These tensions are particularly prevalent when it comes to women's and girl's empowerment. This is an absolutely critical moment in the process to contribute towards building trust, acceptance, and demonstrate that we take action when we say we will, that we are transparent about what we can and cannot do and that we seek community input for advice and input on ensuring a space for women's and girls' empowered participation and safety in humanitarian settings.

Using Clear Communication to Introduce the WGSS

While the details of the WGSS intervention may still be under design, community leaders and members may be wondering and speculating about the input they provided during the assessment phase (e.g. during KIIs or FGDs with community members) and how it will be incorporated into the design. Proactively disseminating information that frames the overarching elements of the WGSS before individuals (who may not be in support of the intervention, but influential in the community) can disseminate their own may avoid misrepresentations and misunderstandings which can affect buy-in.

Four key steps can support you in using clear communication to introduce the WGSS.

- 1. Define Your Audience:** Not all stakeholders can be approached the same way. Each group requires a different approach in order to get their support. Make sure that you clearly understand the different groups and their needs and desires.
- 2. Brainstorm Actions:** For each group, brainstorm ideas for how to approach or engage them in this design period between the assessment phase you have just completed and the start up phase you hope to launch.
- 3. Create a Timeline:** Plot your actions for each group on a timeline between the assessment phase and when you know or estimate you will likely begin programming, and prioritize the groups that are most important for the program first.
- 4. Delegate Roles:** Assign roles and tasks within the GBV assessment team or the existing WGSS team regarding actions. If each group of stakeholders feels like they have a point person or contact person within the organization, they will be more likely to stay engaged.

Information Education Communication (IEC) dissemination is the process of making available specifically developed messages which provide information people need to make decisions. This means that the content of the IEC messages and the dissemination approach should be specifically tailored to different stakeholders. Messages should be based on carefully understanding the information each stakeholder needs to motivate their interest and commit to supporting the WGSS by lending their influence. It is always important to keep in mind the following DOs and DON'Ts (see Table 9):

Table 9: Using IEC Effectively

DO	DON'T
<p>Find a participative and engaging way to communicate key messages leaving space for stakeholders to ask questions, share their opinion and contribute to the conversation.</p> <p>Adapt the content and deliver messages based on the audience. All or only a few messages can be used according to each stakeholder. Key messages should be further adapted to each stakeholder based on the factors identified in the stakeholder analysis as motivating their interest or underpinning their influence.</p>	<p>Avoid using technical language, or service provider terms. Don't use language reinforcing harmful gender norms (e.g. "women will be more respectful toward men after attending the WGSS").</p>
<p>When designing key messages, best practice suggests focusing on the positive benefits (e.g. when explaining that WGSS are female-only spaces, the focus should be on why this is beneficial rather than limiting its definition to the exclusion of men and boys).</p>	<p>Avoid raising expectations (e.g. "through the skill-building activities, women will be able to earn money and provide for household members' needs").</p>
<p>When delivering multiple messages, best practice suggests starting with the least sensitive messages and then progressing towards the more sensitive ones.</p>	<p>Do not overemphasize the purpose of the WGSS as a key entry point for survivors of violence to access GBV response services. While it is crucial to be transparent, the purpose of the WGSS should be explained holistically rather than limiting focus to just GBV programming.</p>

Each WGSS will need to come up with its own communication which will look very different and be expressed very differently depending on context. [Annex 3.2. WGSS Frequently Asked Questions](#) [Sample IEC Tool](#) provides an example of key messaging, structured in a question and answer format, representing frequently asked questions which stakeholders across humanitarian settings consistently ask about WGSS. You are welcome to use it but remember the language and framing should be adapted to your context before use.

Noteworthy Further Reflection

[Get Moving!](#) Is a resource package from Raising Voices² meant to strengthen organizations', teams' and individuals' sense of their work on prevention of VAWG.

Chapter 8 on “Championing Women’s Strength” has useful language on how the stereotypes of feminism can cause others to negatively judge our work and offers, in everyday language, very useful ways to separate fact from myth which often come up from communities.

3.8 SELECTION AND DESIGN OF FEEDBACK CHANNELS

The selection of feedback channels is determined through consultations and based on women’s and girls’, as well as other clients’ needs and preferences. This helps ensure accountability, and that the mechanisms established are accessible, appropriate and safe as determined by women and girls. The following tools will help you identify and design the channels through which you will collect feedback from your WGSS clients related to the project.

[Tool 12: Start-Up Phase Sample Questions for Feed- Back Preferences](#)

[Tool 13: Proactive and Reactive Feedback Feasibility Mapping](#)

[Tool 14: Template for Designing Feedback Channels](#)

Feedback channels should be identified, defined or redefined:

- at the start of a new funding cycle for an existing WGSS (if no feedback channel has been selected and designed in a previous funding cycle);
- during the start up phase of a new WGSS program in a new location; or
- when the WGSS includes new groups of women and girls.

Mapping WGSS Members and Stakeholders the Program Wants Feedback From

In the context of this toolkit, “client” is a person or institution for whom the WGSS provides or intends to provide services, or with whom the WGSS engages in activities. A distinction is made between intended clients, direct clients and indirect clients:

- **Intended Client:** Women and adolescent girls living in the community where the WGSS is located, targeted by planned or existing WGSS activities and services, or potential partner organizations.
- **Direct Client:** Women and adolescent girl members of the WGSS. These are women and girls currently attending the WGSS and engaging in activities and services.

2 Raising Voices, Get Moving! Facilitator’s Guide and Participant’s Workbook. Accessed August 28, 2019. <http://raisingvoices.org/innovation/creating-methodologies/get-moving/>

- **Indirect Client:** People who are not directly accessing or receiving assistance from the WGSS, but who are connected to people or institutions which are (e.g. parents of adolescent girls attending the WGSS, male community members targeted by outreach and community buy-in activities).

Even among the same group of direct clients, like women living in a settlement, you should be able to identify different sub-groups (e.g. grouped based on age, nationality, ethnicity, language, and so on). At a minimum, you should at least be able to identify for age, to facilitate disaggregation of data and ensure that these sub-categories are included in questionnaires. This will also help you to identify the specific barriers (language, literacy, access to technology, etc.) that some of those sub-groups may face in accessing information from the WGSS, or in providing feedback via reactive feedback channels. Even within the main client groups you identify, think about whether you can break these groups down even further. This would allow you to:

- Select the most appropriate channel to communicate with that sub-group and collect their feedback.
- Consider the social constraints in the context and provide suitable channels to ensure that diverse women and adolescent girls within the community can communicate their feedback.
- Disaggregate data to provide you with more representative information on the WGSS clients' perspectives (i.e. data disaggregated by age, ethnic/social background, etc.).

Beyond your clients, consider whether there are other people in the community your project serves who are not intended to directly or indirectly benefit, but who you may wish to consult and whose views you may wish to collect (e.g. male and female elders, local authorities, other organizations' representatives, etc.). Consult with other service providers which are offering services to ensure proper coordination.

Identifying What Feedback the Program Wants to Collect From Different Groups

Think about either the feedback you are currently collecting from members or the feedback you plan to collect based on your choice of indicators in [Tool 8: Logical Framework](#). The main feedback themes during key project phases include:

TABLE 10: CORE FEEDBACK THEMES PER PROJECT PHASE

Project Phase	Feedback Theme	Description
Startup	<i>Engagement Preferences</i>	Members' preferences about how they would like to communicate with the WGSS program team and or partners, and participate in decision-making during the upcoming project.
	<i>Relevance</i>	Whether members think that the service is relevant to their priority needs.
	<i>Quality</i>	Whether members think that the quality of the service meets their expectations.
	<i>Impact</i>	Whether clients think that the service will have the impact that they want to see upon their lives.
Implementation	<i>Access, Safety and Fair Treatment</i>	Whether members think that they can access the service without barriers, whether they feel safe when accessing the service and / or think that the aid is provided fairly (based on need and without discrimination).
	<i>Respectful and Dignified Treatment</i>	Whether members think that the service is being delivered by WGSS staff in a respectful and dignified way.
	<i>Voice and Empowerment</i>	Whether members think that they have an ability to influence relevant programming decisions made by the WGSS service provider organization (and / or partners, if applicable) and whether they are being empowered to meet their own needs.

	<i>Relevance</i>	Whether members thought that the service was relevant to their priority needs and what type of services they would want to receive in the future.
	<i>Quality</i>	Whether members thought that the quality of the service met their expectations.
	<i>Impact</i>	Whether members thought that the service had the impact that they wanted to see upon their lives and whether they need any additional aid to achieve this.
Close - out	<i>Access, Safety and Fair Treatment</i>	Whether clients thought that they were able to access the service without barriers, whether they felt safe when accessing the service and / or thought that the aid was provided fairly (based on need and without discrimination).
	<i>Respectful and Dignified Treatment</i>	Whether clients thought that the service was being delivered by WGSS staff (and / or partners, if applicable) in a respectful and dignified way.
	<i>Voice and Empowerment</i>	Whether clients thought that they had an ability to influence relevant programming decisions made by WGSS staff (and / or partners, if applicable) and whether they have been empowered to meet their own needs.

Selecting the Channels to Collect Feedback

Think about the feedback you are currently collecting from your clients. Some questions to ask yourself about the data include:

- Is it actually “feedback” data (i.e. does the data reflect the perceptions, preferences, aspirations and expectations of clients) or is the data more factual (i.e. does it give you information on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of clients)?
- Is the data up-to-date?
- Does the data reflect feedback from all the groups you identified?

- Does the data give you a comprehensive picture of everything that you want to know from clients?
Is the data useful to you and are you able to act upon it?
- Do you have both qualitative information and quantitative information?
- If you have more than one “no”, this might suggest that you have gaps in your existing data.

Developing a Plan for Feedback Collection

Proactive Feedback Channels are mechanisms through which the WGSS is actively soliciting feedback from clients -- for example: a survey, a focus group discussion, an individual interview, etc. This means that the WGSS program chooses the clients and stakeholders it wants to ask questions of, and controls the questions asked, as well as the timing of when the information is collected.

Reactive Feedback Channels are mechanisms that the WGSS provides to its clients and other stakeholders to communicate with them – at the time and on the subject they choose. For example: suggestion boxes, hotlines, email addresses, feedback sessions with WGSS members’ committees or women’s forums, etc.

You should ask women and adolescent girls how they would like to provide you with feedback, as this will be the best way to ensure that the feedback channel is used. Note that different sub-groups may have different preferences, and you should try and accommodate the preferences of as many people as possible. Ensure that women and adolescent girls who may be timider have access to a feedback channel that they feel comfortable with. Women with more power / dominant voices will be better able to find ways to share their feedback, so it is important to think about channels which others will also be comfortable with.

The Tab 3 available in [**Tool 13: Proactive and Reactive Feedback Channels Feasibility Mapping**](#) highlights the strengths, weaknesses and best practices of various reactive and proactive feedback channels.

A photograph of a woman with short blonde hair, smiling broadly. She is wearing a large, floppy, light-colored hat with a subtle plaid or checkered pattern. Her top is also plaid and has a small tag with the word "Lime" on it. She is holding a large bouquet of pink roses and hydrangeas. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a garden or outdoor setting.

3: FURTHER GUIDANCE



ANNEX 3.1. KEY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR MUTUALLY - EMPOWERING PARTNERSHIPS

For the purpose of this toolkit, “in-partnership” implementation, is strictly defined as an agreement between an international GBV non-governmental organization (INGO) partnering with a women’s national or local civil society organization (LNGO) or community-based organizations (CBO).

The rationale for an **in-partnership implementation** approach defined as such is to underscore international GBV actors’ privilege as well as influence (in accessing funds, decision-making circles, visibility, advocacy agenda setting capacity) within humanitarian settings over feminist and women’s rights organizations and movements from the Global South, and therefore to emphasize the accountable use of their ‘power with’ in solidarity as allies.

While the type and number of partnerships is expected to vary from one WGSS to another and to evolve as each relationship develops over time, all WGSS partnerships are:

- based on approaches which promote transparency, equality and seek complementarity;
- intended to multiply the benefits for women and girls whether in scope, scale, reach or durability; and
- intended to support women and girls through the process of empowerment efficiently, effectively and sustainably.

International GBV actors’ feminist perspective to collaborative relationships means they prioritize strategic partnerships with feminist and women’s rights organizations and movements whether small grassroots community organizations or large national organizations. As an authentic ally, international GBV actors build relationships with local partners, not to increase the effectiveness of interventions, or transfer risk on to local partners, but rather based on their shared feminist principles and approaches, and the complementarity of their knowledge, which can promote mutual learning between the two organizations. This collectively increases the beneficial outcomes for women and girls, as well as their sustainability over time. International GBV actors can meaningfully use their influence and power to promote inclusive space for local civil society to counterbalance both the inadequate representation of organizations from the Global South and the inadequate representation of female leadership within humanitarian structures. Afterall, if we believe in empowering women and girls to equally lead the WGSS with us rather than just participate as beneficiaries, what if, instead of waiting on a humanitarian leader to guide the transformational shift of humanitarian systems and institutions entrenched in male hierarchies, we decided to begin transforming them ourselves?



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Why are there no specific tools related to this area in the toolkit? Partially because each organization and their donors will have their own set of policies and tools for the establishment and management of partnerships.

Mainly, we chose not to over-emphasize the form of partnerships based on contractual and transactional components of the relationship, because international GBV actors unanimously recognize that partnerships to achieve women's safety and empowerment objectives are more accountable and sustainable when the agreement is based on partners':

- pre-existing relationship, which has been cultivated through shared values, mutual respect and solidarity independently from any formal agreement;
- equally and actively creating a partnership agreement to achieve a specific shared objective based on the complementarity of each other's strength.

We do however, provide tools specific to supporting partnerships in later sections of the toolkit, and reference tools from IRC's Partnership Excellence for Equality and Results (PEER) System Handbook as a reference in this annex.

Selecting an In-Partnership Approach

The starting point for using a WGSS partnership approach to implementation is the assumption that it will deliver the best outcomes for the women and girls accessing the WGSS.

Important questions to consider during the analysis of whether or not to use an in-partnership implementation approach:

Effectiveness: Can partnerships improve effectiveness, considering local actors' understanding of the context, network of local relationships, and/or relevant technical capacity?

Best Use of Resources: Will working in partnership enable the WGSS program to ensure better value-for-money by building on existing capacities and resources, rather than duplicating and undermining those capacities and resources? Will investing in local capacity promote sustainability? Can we (as an INGO) support the operational independence of local actors and exit in a timely manner?

Scale and Reach: Will working in partnership enable the WGSS program to expand its reach, considering the reach, access and community acceptance of local actors?

Speed and Timeliness: Will working in partnership enable a quicker response, and enable the WGSS program to be more adaptable to changes in the context and needs, by focusing on supporting local actors already present and ready to respond?

Responsiveness: Do local actors have deeper connections with and understanding of the women and girls, or specific subsets of women and girls, in the community we serve / are seeking to serve, so that the interventions will better respond to their needs and priorities?

The WGSS program should utilize the mapping produced by the [Tool 3: Stakeholder Analysis](#) to identify organizations and agencies that it may invest time in engaging with. Following the stakeholder analysis workshop, participants should analyze whether the WGSS program will be able to deliver better outcomes by partnering with the actors identified, considering the five [WGSS objectives](#). The GBV program technical leads and the organizations' partnership leads must then make a recommendation based on that stakeholder analysis to either:

- Focus exclusively on working in partnership with national, local and community-based civil society organizations, and/ or government institutions;
- Pursue a mixed modality approach, working in partnership as well as implementing services directly, potentially with a plan to transition direct service delivery to partnerships in the future; or
- Focus exclusively on [delivering services directly](#) in the immediate term, while preparing for partnerships in the near term.

Other Useful Considerations

- The international GBV actor should be open to a range of partnership possibilities and engage in all its relationships from the principle of collaboration, to ensure it is fully exemplifying empowerment and avoiding the replication of injustice and inequality.
- The international GBV actor should not limit its engagement to only service providers that are well-established organizations, or stakeholders that have the most interest in or influence on supporting women's and girl's empowerment, nor limit its definition of partnership to a formal sub-award agreement. The fact that an organization is well-established does not in itself indicate that it is best placed to contribute to WGSS strategic or program objectives. Women grassroots civil society structures may be more innovative, and smaller organizations may be more motivated to invest in the partnership.
- It may be strategic to establish a mixed group of complementary partnerships. In identifying which stakeholders to prioritize to build relationships with, the international GBV actor should strategically consider the following:
 - The role the stakeholder plays or could play in the network of actors operating in the relevant context, and the assessment of the actual or potential ability to influence the objectives prioritized;
 - Understanding how the context and funding landscape are changing or are expected to change, and the impact that these shifts may have on the role or potential role of the stakeholder;
 - The organization's vision and mission, values and culture, and priorities;
 - The strategic fit of the organization with the WGSS program, meaning the ability of the international GBV actor and the organization to both add value to the relationship. In other words, the potential for the international GBV actor and potential partner to better support women and girls by working together than they could working separately;
 - The way in which the partnership may complement any other partnerships the WGSS program has already established; and

- In situations where the WGSS service provider is an international organization, the role a partnership with the organization may play in eventually establishing the conditions where the WGSS service provider may “withdraw from contexts at an appropriate time”.

Introducing the WGSS and Getting to Know Partners

The first steps in the development of a relationship are critical in setting the tone for WGSS partnerships. Although WGSS are a core element of programming in humanitarian responses which are project based, WGSS strategic relationships must remain rooted in a feminist perspective. This means that while some relationships might be limited in scope or duration because they are project or donor-based, strategic relationships are instead developed through regular engagement over time around the common goal of transforming social relations of power that oppress women and girls, where commitment to the relationship drives the identification of projects and donors. This is particularly important in order to work towards a vision in which [community buy-in](#) and [women's and girls' sense of ownership](#) of the WGSS will enable the [WGSS to be handed over and sustained](#) by local civil society networks or organizations.

As the relationship with the organization evolves, the WGSS team may gain confidence in the potential to partner with the organization and may decide to initiate more structured engagement. In doing so the WGSS service provider should:

- Prioritize open, respectful communication; prompt open dialogue with the partner about shared objectives and priorities for the partnership, and how each organization would like the partnership to work, in terms of attitudes and behaviors as well as practicalities.
- Discuss the principles of partnership, and how they apply to the relationship; begin the discussion of governance and accountability in the partnership while being aware of the need to mitigate the power imbalance that can be inherent in the relationship, particularly if funding is involved;
- Approach the partnership as an opportunity in which the sum is greater than its parts; discuss the program design and development process, to ensure the process is efficient and respectful of the partner's time and constraints.
- Promote collaborative analysis and decision-making from the outset; identify key staff counterparts for strategic engagement, relationship management, and functional engagement, and start to get to know those focal points.

[Sample IRC Organizational Snapshot Tool](#) guides a structured, introductory conversation with representatives of an organization with which the WGSS service provider may seek to partner with and helps assess mutual compatibility.

Consider sharing the [Sample IRC Partner Welcome Pack](#) as a tool for communicating about the WGSS and how it can work in partnership. The Partner Welcome Pack could be tailored to:

- Communicate the core principles that the WGSS has committed to in all its partnerships;
- Share the principles that guide the work of the WGSS; and
- Promote open communication and mutual feedback throughout the partnership.

Considerations for Vetting WGSS Partners

Regardless of the agreement type, the vetting process and selection of any partner requires judgment and discretion to ensure that information is gathered in a way that is consistent with partnership principles, respects the partner's dignity, is aligned with [**GBV sector principles and approaches**](#), and is appropriately analyzed and used to guide subsequent action.

Organizations and donors will vet partners according to their own processes as well as according to the agreement type framing the partnership. As sophisticated as these may be, vetting processes will often produce results that are not black and white, requiring judgment to decide whether and how to proceed. From the perspective of the WGSS program, any issue of concern must be reviewed against the following questions:

- Is there a significant risk that the proposed partnership could cause harm to women and girls in the targeted community?
- Is there a significant risk that the proposed partnership could exclude some women and girls from feeling comfortable in attending the WGSS as a result of the partnership?
- Is there a significant risk that the proposed partnership could cause financial and/ or operational harm to the WGSS, WGSS service provider or donor?
- Is there a significant risk that the proposed partnership could cause reputational harm to the WGSS, WGSS service provider or donor?

Any risk identified must be weighed against the international GBV actor's ability to mitigate the risk and the consequences of not proceeding with the proposed partnership.

As an example, [**IRC Partner's Project Capacity Review tool**](#) guides an assessment in a reasonable, transparent, responsible and proportionate manner. The primary purpose of the assessment is to guide the international GBV actor's review and analysis of the proposed partner's organizational, programmatic, financial, and operational capacity to implement the proposed project, in accordance with the proposed scope of work and budget. This enables the international GBV actor and the partner to identify risks associated with the project that may undermine project outcomes, and then determine the measures that they should take to mitigate and monitor those risks in the development and management of the partnership agreement.

When managed well, the assessment can serve as an important foundational conversation with the partner, contributing to the development of mutual understanding and respect, and helping to identify strengths and a broader range of collaboration opportunities beyond the proposed project. The assessment is used to assign a risk rating for the partner organization with respect to that project—the rating subsequently guides the international GBV actor on appropriate management of the partnership agreement, for example, in terms of monitoring and reporting frequency. The results of the assessment determine which partnership agreement is appropriate, whether standard agreement terms should be modified, and whether special conditions should be included to address specific deficiencies or risks. In addition, the assessment results guide the design of support that the international GBV actor will provide to the partner to mitigate the risks identified ('partner project support').

Complementarity and Collaborative Design

Complementarity reflects the opportunity in a collaborative relationship for leveraging each partner's comparative advantages and each other's contributions. A collaborative design process:

- Enables partners to maximize this complementarity, to develop more effective, responsive and efficient programs that deliver better outcomes;
- Establishes a strong foundation for collaboration throughout the project, and the partnership more broadly; and
- Enables partners to identify opportunities to collaborate beyond the parameters of the specific project.

The international GBV actor must maximize the extent to which it collaborates with women and girls and other strategic partners in program design. The timing, sequencing and nature of collaboration in design varies according to context. In some cases, the partner may lead and drive the design process, with the international GBV actor playing a supporting role. In other cases, the international GBV actor may drive the design process. Regardless of the context, it is almost always possible to ensure collaboration in design. For example:

- When WGSS in-partnership implementation approaches are identified prior to submitting the donor proposal, including in the context of large competitive submissions, the international GBV actor may collaborate with partners in the development of the overarching WGSS program design;
- Where the international GBV actor identifies partners after the start of the award based on a WGSS in-partnership implementation, the international GBV actor may consult with potential partners in the development of the overall project design;
- There may also be opportunities for the international GBV actor to work with a partner to develop a project design outside the framework of a specific funding opportunity, potentially as a platform for pro-active joint fundraising.



ANNEX 3.2. WGSS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SAMPLE IEC TOOL

The following sample messaging, structured in a question and answer format, responds to frequently asked questions which stakeholders across humanitarian settings consistently have about WGSS. The language and framing should be adapted to your context before use.

1. What are Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS)?

- A safe space (add the local term used for WGSS if relevant) is a place where all women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe and are supported to believe in themselves and each other.
- It is a space made just for women and girls, where they can feel comfortable and enjoy the freedom to express themselves without fear or judgement or harm.
- Women and adolescent girls decide how they engage and support each other, through exchanging skills, information, and support networks.
- These spaces provide women and girls with a safe central location to access information about the services which are available and safe for them.
- It is also a space where the most vulnerable women and adolescent girls including those who have experienced violence are welcomed and supported.

2. What is the purpose of the WGSS?

- This community, including women and girls, has gone through a lot recently. The overall purpose of the WGSS is to support women and girls to make decisions about their safety and well-being. It does so by:
 - providing information, activities and services specifically made for women and girls based on what they told us was needed.
 - empowering women and girls with knowledge and skills to be active members in the community.
 - ensuring the community supports women's and girls' access to the safe space.
- The WGSS engages women and adolescent girls, community members and service providers to work together so that women and girls, both as individuals and together, can support the community to reach its potential just like other members of this community.

3. Why a space only for women and girls?

- Violence and the current situation affect women, girls, men and boys differently. The WGSS is a service that focuses specifically on women and girls.
- We cannot truly support women and girls if we don't address the violence and inequality that prevents them from equally contributing to this community.

- Violence against women and girls is made possible because we live in an unequal world in which women and girls are valued less than men and boys, and in which women and girls have less access to resources and opportunities. Violence prevents women and girls from being well and healthy, from going to school, and from being productive members of their community.
- Women and girls also do not have the same access to services, information and programs which prevent and respond to the violence perpetrated against them.
- Additionally, women and girls provide care for others in their families or communities which can expose them to additional violence, as well as contribute to a further reduction in their access to opportunities. Women have limited space to meet, as public spaces are predominantly occupied by men and boys, and women and girls do not feel safe and comfortable spending time in these spaces.
- It is, in fact, internationally recognized that women and girls feel safer and more comfortable when they are amongst females only.
- This is what makes the WGSS unique. While many services support women and girls in different ways, the WGSS provides a space where only women and girls can meet with other women and girls.
 - While the female-only space supports women and girls in feeling safer, it also reduces their isolation by offering them a collective space to socialize.
 - Women and adolescent girls from the community lead the facilitation of many activities in the WGSS, and they also select the activities they wish to take part in and choose the level of social support they receive and provide each other.

4. Does the WGSS intervention work with men and boys?

- The WGSS recognizes that for violence against women and girls to be addressed, it must be something that communities address together with women and girls.
- We also recognize that men and boys hold the most power and control over resources in the communities where we work and that we must work in partnership with them to change negative attitudes and practices.
- Therefore, the WGSS continually engages men in the assessment, design, and implementation of the WGSS. Activities with men and boys are conducted outside of the female-only space, and we work with men and boys to improve the circumstances of women and girls. (Type of activities with men and boys will be described according to the specific programming).

5. What are the benefits of WGSS for the community?

- Women's roles are often invisible, but they have a huge impact on community members' lives as most of the actions that women take during their lives do not aim at their own well-being but to the development of a healthy family and community. WGSS supports this, for example through the following:

- Women have a tremendous amount of responsibility in caring for family members, and given the situation, they need special support and a social network to do this well. Through the WGSS, women can share and consult other women about their daily experiences to support their ability to navigate with ease and fully support their family members.
- Through the WGSS, women and girls gain knowledge about practical subjects and acquire skills that can be helpful for themselves, for the family or other community members. In fact, women usually share their knowledge with family members, neighbors or other community members.
- WGSS will raise awareness in the community to promote a supportive society in which men and boys will also take an active role in caring for their households and families. The methodology and the type of support will be discussed with community members to ensure it is in line with customs and traditions. Having a supportive relationship between male and females will contribute to a healthier community.

6. How can community members support the implementation of WGSS?

- Men and boys play a crucial role and have a big influence in women's and girls' lives. If the male members of the family (and of the community) are supportive and encourage women and girls to attend activities in the WGSS, it will be easier for women to access, feel safe and be committed.
- Women and girls often work for the well-being of other family or community members. In WGSS they can work on their own skills, capacities, knowledge, social networks and self-esteem. To make this process possible and sustainable, it is critical that they feel their efforts are valued and their achievements recognized.
- Men and boys can be allies of women and girls and become WGSS supporters. That will make access to WGSS safer and easier for women and girls. Being a WGSS supporter may entail publicly supporting the WGSS during conversations with other family members, friends or at other events, as well as encouraging community stakeholders to become WGSS supporters.

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a light-colored t-shirt, holding a young child in her arms. They are standing in front of a wooden building with a thatched roof. The woman is smiling at the camera. The child is looking towards the left.

3: TOOLS





TOOL 8: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



TOOL 9A: WGSS INDICATOR MATRIX

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



TOOL 9B: DATA SOURCE, DATABASES AND INDICATORS

List of available data collection tools to measure indicators listed in Tool 8: WGSS Logical framework:

Note: Not all tools need to be used by all programs. It is important that project teams choose only what will be most useful to carry out quality programming.

- Tool 4. WGSS FGD Guide with Women and Girls
- Tool 22. WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey
- Tool 23. Teamwork Skills Assessment
- Tool 27. Facilitation observation checklist
- Tool 30. WGSS member survey (baseline, follow up and participant list)
- Tool 32. Community survey
- Tool 33. WGSS Members' Input Form
- Tool 34. WGSS Daily Attendance Rate Form
- Tool 35. WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form
- Tool 36. Community Engagement Tracking Form
- Database F - WGSS Member Active Role Registration Book
- Database D2- 'Attendance Registration' tab (3rd tab)

Table of available databases

Note: Not all databases, or sheets within databases, need to be used by all programs. It is important that project teams choose only what will be most useful to carrying out quality programming.

DATABASE	RELATED TOOL (S)
A. WGSS Qualitative Assessment Database	1. WGSS Key Informant Interview Guide
	4. WGSS FGD Guide with Women and Girls
	6. WGSS FGD Guide with Communities
B. WGSS Mapping Assessment Database	2 WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire
	5. WGSS Safety Mapping
	7. WGSS Community Mapping

C. Capacity-building tracker	22. WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey 23a. + 23b. Teamwork Skills Assessment 27. Facilitation Observation Checklist
D1. WGSS Attendance Tracker	34. WGSS Daily Attendance Rate Form 35. WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form
D2. WGSS Attendance Tracker (higher tech alternative to D2)	'Attendance Registration' tab (3rd tab in D2 – excel only) 35. WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form
E. WGSS Members' Input Tracker	33. WGSS Members' Input Form
F. WGSS Member active role registration book (alternative to D2, to be used in conjunction with D1)	WGSS Member Active Role Registration Book – excel only
G. WGSS surveys database	30a. WGSS Member Survey (Baseline) + 30b. WGSS Member Survey (Follow up) + 30c. WGSS member survey participant list
H. Community engagement database	32. Community Survey 36. Community Engagement Tracking Form

List of available indicators

Note: Not all indicators need to be used by all programs. It is important that project teams choose only what will be most useful to monitoring the quality of programming and the outcomes for beneficiaries.

Indicators or language in red is intended to be tailored by teams at the start of the project
sources in blue are not part of this toolkit but come from other available resources.

Implementation quality measurement

Note: The following indicators are meant to monitor outputs and quality of the WGSS project implementation.

A. Qualitative WGSS Assessment Database

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
1.3.c.	# of FGDs with WGSS members within [the period]	4. FGD with Women and Girls

C. Capacity-building Tracker

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
1.3.a.	% of trained WGSS staff whose teamwork skill assessment score is at least 70%	23. Teamwork Skills Assessment
1.3.b.	% of WGSS staff whose gender-equitable attitudes score is at least 80%	22. WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude survey
1.3.c.	% of WGSS staff who meet quality criteria for facilitation skills	27. Facilitation observation checklist

WGSS Attendance Tracker (D1 or D2)

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
1.1.b	# of women and girls participating in knowledge and skill-building activities	35. WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form
2.1.a.	# of women and girls who participate in group activities	

WGSS Attendance Tracker (D2 only)

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
2.1.b.	# of [diverse women and girls] attending the WGSS	Attendance Registration' tab (3rd tab in D2)

E. WGSS Members' Input Tracker

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
5.1.a.	% of recorded feedback from women and girls that has been addressed within [the period]	33. WGSS Members' Input Form

H. Community Engagement Database

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
6.1.a.	# of community members reached through outreach activities related to the WGSS	36. Community Engagement Tracking Form

Outcome Measurement

Note: The following indicators are meant to monitor outcomes related to various dimensions of the WGSS.

C. Capacity-building Tracker or Other Relevant Database

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
1.1.a.	This indicator should be specific to the knowledge or skill increased through the specific to the curriculum	Knowledge and/or skills assessment which accompanies the curriculum being used

WGSS Attendance Tracker (D1 or D2)

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
5.1.c.	% of WGSS activities led by women and girls from the community	35. WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form

F. WGSS Member Active Role Registration Book or D2. WGSS Attendance Tracker

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
5.1.b.	# of member women and girls who have an active role in the WGSS	WGSS Member Active Role Registration Book (F) or 'Attendance Registration' tab (3rd tab in D2)

G. WGSS Member Survey Database

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
1.2.a.	% of surveyed WGSS members who can name at least one service in their community that they learned about in the WGSS (other than GBV response services)	
2.2.a.	% of surveyed WGSS members who confirm that they met women and girls in the WGSS that they can turn to for support	
3.2.a.	% of surveyed WGSS members who report knowing where someone can get support if they experience violence	30. WGSS member survey (baseline, follow up and participant list)
3.2.b.	% of surveyed WGSS members who report knowing where someone can get support if they experience SEA	
3.3.a.	3.3.a. % of surveyed WGSS members whose score increases on the decision making subscale after 3 months of attendance	

H. Community Engagement Database

#	INDICATOR	SOURCE
6.2.a.	% of surveyed community members whose score on the "perceived WGSS purpose scale" is at least 70%	32. Community survey



TOOL 10: SELECTING WGSS LOCATION-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

WHY USE SELECTING WGSS LOCATION – OBSERVATION CHECKLIST?

An Observation Checklist is a useful tool to document hazards as well as safety recommendations to ensure a WGSS location (e.g. neighborhood, camp block) and structure (e.g. compound, building, tent) meets safety standards. It is a comprehensive report that includes detailed descriptions of key safety observations through in-person inspection of the location and structure.

An Observation Checklist helps ensure that WGSS are in a safe area and that the physical structure of the space is safe.

WHEN TO USE SELECTING WGSS LOCATION – OBSERVATION CHECKLIST?

During the start up phase, the Observation Checklist helps to vet locations to support the choice of a final location for the WGSS including in cases where:

- more than one suitable location is identified – to choose the safest among various options;
- local authorities assign the WGSS location without prior consultation – to decide whether the space can be validated or advocacy for an alternative space will be required;
- only one potential location is available – to decide whether the space can be validated or not to establish the WGSS.

During the implementation phase, carrying out regular audits helps to verify if there have been any noticeable changes from previous observations. For example, changes might signal access barriers for women and girls, possibly requiring consideration of an alternative space.

The tool should be completed after visiting the setting being considered for the WGSS.

HOW TO USE SELECTING WGSS LOCATION – OBSERVATION CHECKLIST?

1. Before accessing the setting, review the checklist and make sure you know what you should look for.
2. Ask if it is possible to have someone accompany you, or if you can walk around freely.
3. Begin your safety observation by critically examining key areas of your workplace
4. Complete the checklist based on observation during site visit and indicate if information is not available

IMPORTANT:

Risk areas – If you identify areas which pose risk of injury or harm to women and girls as well as staff, these items should be addressed immediately and communicated directly to the relevant supervisor.

Do not take pictures of people. Take pictures of layout or structure only if it is significant to the assessment and always with consent of camp management (or other local authorities)

Respect the privacy and dignity of individuals at all times.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name of observer: _____ Date Completed: _____

Country: _____ Location: _____

Camp/setting: _____ Are you visiting the site alone? Yes No

Are you escorted by someone who could have an influence on your perspective?

- Yes
 No

If yes, explain: _____

Provide general information on the location/settlement:

- Walk around the camp / transit site/ neighborhood/village/informal settlement and visit/report on availability and conditions of service facilities;
- Be observant about how women and girls move around in the community or access services (are they alone, escorted by men, only in groups, there are/no women in the surroundings of a specific service provider, etc.)
- Be observant about general living and safety conditions of the community with special attention to women and girls;
- Do you observe interactions between men and women?
- Do women and girls engage in committees, groups, cooperatives etc?
- Among local, traditional or religious authorities is there relevant female representation?

SETTING INFORMATION	
Question	Answer
1. Is there any other WGSS available in this setting?	If more than one, is it redundant or are the extra spaces needed? Please, explain.
ACCESS	
2. Can the location selected be accessed by women and girls with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
3. What are the road conditions to get to the WGSS?	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Bad Please describe:
4. If in a camp, is the walking distance to the WGSS less than 20 minutes* from everywhere in the camp?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A – not in a camp Comments:
<i>*the distance can be adjusted according to the context</i>	
SAFETY	
5. Have military/armed groups been observed in or around the location selected for WGSS?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
6. Do women and girls have to cross checkpoints to access the location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

7. Is any of the following true about the condition of the selected structure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Flooded <input type="checkbox"/> Showing structural damage <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
8. Location will allow for...?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Activity room (s) <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Private room (s) <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Toliet (s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other rooms, please describe: _____ Comments:
9. Is the surrounding area safe?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

FOR HOSTING GBV SERVICES (IF RELEVANT)

10. The potential private room could be accessed easily and discretely?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
11. The potential private room could have a separate, lockable entrance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

REFERRAL AND COLLABORATION

12. Is childcare available in the surroundings of the selected location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How close <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
13. Are SRH services available in the surroundings of the selected location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How close <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
14. Is any other service for women and girls available in the surroundings of the selected location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How close and which one <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
15. Are there any reasons why women and girls might NOT feel comfortable accessing the space?	



TOOL 11: WGSS CATCHMENT AREA ASSESSMENT

WHY USE THE WGSS CATCHMENT AREA ASSESSMENT?

This tool is a short FGD guide and questionnaire which takes approximately 20 minutes to assess the WGSS catchment area. A catchment area is the area from which a service attracts a population that uses its services – in other words, the geographic coverage of the WGSS in the community. By using this simple tool, it allows the WGSS program to first understand the unit measures of distance relevant to women and girls, understand how they perceive whether a service is close or far, and then to assess the distance women and girls travel from their homes to the WGSS.

While there are always some outliers (i.e. a few women and girls who live very close and a few who travel from very far) there is a clear average distance that can be identified through this tool. Having a sense of the actual catchment area is important for the WGSS because:

- It allows the outreach team to focus their geographic community reach within the catchment area, instead of spreading efforts too far out where women and girls would be unlikely to attend the WGSS in any case due to the distance being too great.
- It allows for context-tailored coordination between WGSS service providers. Based on the actual maximum distance women and girls travel to reach one WGSS, another static WGSS or mobile team can be established to reach women and girls in another catchment area.

WHEN TO USE THE CATCHMENT AREA ASSESSMENT?

Once the location for the WGSS has been selected, whether you use a static or mobile WGSS delivery model, women and girls will be coming to the WGSS from various distances. Because it will take some time for women and girls to get used to coming to the WGSS, and for them to regularly attend and see value in attending, we recommend waiting 3 – 6 months from the moment you establish your WGSS to conduct the Maximum Distance Assessment, only because you will have a more representative catchment area.

If you conduct the assessment within the WGSS' first three months, keep in mind the catchment area may likely expand further over time.

If you want to estimate the approximate catchment area during the assessment/start up phase, the finding of this activity should be cross-checked with maximum distance information gathered by neighbor WGSS (run by the same or different organization) as this will help you average the distance.

HOW TO USE THE CATCHMENT AREA ASSESSMENT?

This FGD aims at gathering information on the distance that women and girls are willing or able to travel to reach the WGSS from the place where they live.

Before engaging women and girls in the activity, read the questionnaire thoroughly to identify if there are any concepts or content that should be adjusted to suit your context. If translation is needed, a team of WGSS staff members should identify the appropriate translation – translation of sensitive concepts should always be the result of a group consultation.

Each question is for a specific target group as indicated (whether intended for adult women or adolescent girls or asked to both age groups). The last question offers two options to the facilitator who should consider beforehand, which one is most suitable for the group taking part in the discussion.

The facilitator should ask the questions to participants while the note taker should capture the answers in the column for notes - sticking as much as possible to the phrasing used by participants.

The facilitator should avoid suggesting answers, or rushing for answers, regardless of how obvious they may seem.

The activity is expected to last between 10 and 20 minutes and it should be implemented at least once, ideally 3-6 months from the beginning of WGSS implementation.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

FGD WITH WOMEN AND GIRLS

Identification of distance between places where women live and WGSS

Focus Group Discussion date: _____

Name and role of facilitator: _____

Name and role of note taker: _____

Translation necessary for the FGD: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language) to _____ (language)

Number of FGD participants: _____

Age, gender and diversity of participants: _____

Note for the facilitator:

Before engaging women and girls in the activity, read the questionnaire thoroughly to identify if there are any concepts or content that should be adjusted to suit your context.

If translation is needed, a team of WGSS staff members should identify the appropriate translation – translation of sensitive concepts should always be the result of a group consultation.

Each question is for a specific target group as indicated (whether intended for adult women or adolescent girls or asked to both age groups). The last question offers two options to the facilitator who should consider beforehand, which one is most suitable for the group taking part in the discussion.

The facilitator should ask the questions to participants while the note taker should capture the answers in the column for notes - sticking as much as possible to the phrasing used by participants.

The facilitator should avoid suggesting answers, or rushing for answers, regardless of how obvious they may seem.

The activity is expected to last between 10 and 20 minutes and it should be implemented at least once, ideally 3-6 months from the beginning of WGSS implementation.

How to conduct the activity:

The activity takes place in the WGSS and is facilitated by female WGSS staff members (1 facilitator and 1 note taker).

Participant groups of women (above 18) and groups of adolescent girls (15 – 18 years old, with further break down between younger and older adolescent girls) should be interviewed separately. To engage with girls below 18, ensure that their caretakers agree to them answering these questions.

Ideally, informants should be regular or proactive participants of the WGSS. Given the short set of questions, you may consider asking them at the start or the end of a regular WGSS activity session.

Informed consent:

To be read aloud by the facilitator at the start of the focus group discussion

My name is _____ and I work with the(organization's name)...as.....

We would like to ask you a few questions on the distance that you travel from the place where you live to the WGSS. That will help us to better understand the geographical area (catchment area) that WGSS programming is covering, and to plan our outreach activities accordingly.

Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will participate in an interview lasting 10-20 minutes.

Confidentiality

Your name or other identifying information will not appear on any files or reports. The discussion is anonymous, we will not collect your name or contact information, and you will not be identifiable in any publications or presentations resulting from this study. If someone approaches us, we will stop the interview until we can continue in private.

Benefits

We cannot promise any direct benefits to you from your taking part in this discussion. However, some people enjoy the process of answering questions and providing feedback about the topics we will cover today. The results from this discussion will help us in defining and planning outreach interventions that we are doing in this community.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You can choose not to answer a question or to stop your participation in the discussion at any time. If you decide that you do not want to continue participation for any reason, we will respect your decision. We will not ask you why you do not want to participate. No negative consequences will occur if you choose not to participate or withdraw at any point. Choosing or declining to participate will have no effect on your participation in the WGSS.

Consent

Do you agree to participate in the interview? Yes No

For adolescent girls, in addition to them agreeing to take part in the activity, have their caretakers provided consent?

Yes No

QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>1. Ask both women and girls:</p> <p>We first want to ask you what is the common measure used for distance in your community</p> <p>Guidance for facilitator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If participants struggle with what you are asking, consider phrasing this question as: In other words, if you were to say I live xxx away from the WGSS what is the xxx-measure used? (e.g. km, minutes) 	
<p>2. Ask women:</p> <p>Now we would like to ask you: what determines if a WGSS is far or close to where you live?</p> <p>Guidance for facilitator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants explain what might be considered close or far and why. From their examples, pick out the measure or conditions and reconfirm them with the group. For example, one respondent might say “If it is mid-day when the sun is at its hottest, walking more than 10 minutes is far”. You might follow up by saying “So what I hear is that time of day and temperature might influence how close or far something is, is that correct?” • Consider asking participants if other family members influence and determine if a service is far for them to access. • Consider asking if their answers are the same for all groups of women? If no, for which women is it different and why? 	

3. Ask adolescent girls

Now we would like to ask you: what determines if a service is far or close to where you live?

Guidance for facilitator:

- Have participants explain what might be considered close or far and why. From their examples, pick out the measure or conditions and reconfirm them with the group.

For example, one respondent might say “If it is mid-day when the sun is at its hottest walking more than 10 minutes is far”. You might follow up by saying “So what I hear is that time of day and temperature might influence how close or far something is, is that correct?”

- Consider asking participants if other family members influence and determine if a service is far for them to access.
- Consider asking if their answers are the same for all groups of adolescent and girls? If no, for which girl is it different and why?

4. Ask both women and girls

Finally, we would like to ask you what is the average distance it takes you to come to the WGSS?

Note for the facilitator: choose one of the 2 option below.

Gather information: Option 1

Please ask each participant to say how long it takes and record below. (For example, for participant 1 it takes 10 minutes to reach the WGSS from their house. For participants 2 it takes half morning). Make sure to acknowledge the different measures women and girls are using.

PARTICIPANT	DISTANCE
Participant 1	
Participant 2	
Participant 3	
Participant 4	
Participant 5	
Participant 6	
Participant 7	
Participant 8	
Participant 9	
Participant 10	
Participant 11	
Participant 12	

Gather infor: Option 2

Please fill in the measure of distance in the first column (make sure to acknowledge all different measure used by participants like meters, miles, time...) and then ask participants to raise their hands when they hear the distance that applies to them. Record the number of hands in the second column.

DISTANCE: <i>insert measure in brackets below - use the measure that women have provided answering the question 1 of this questionnaire. If different measures were identified, make sure they are all acknowledged.</i>	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Less than 10 [_____]	
11 - 20 [_____]	
21 - 30 [_____]	
31 - 40 [_____]	
41 - 50 [_____]	
51 - 60 [_____]	
More than 60 [_____]	



TOOL 12: START-UP PHASE SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR FEEDBACK PREFERENCES

WHY USE THIS TOOL?

The Start Up Phase Sample Questions for Feedback Preferences tool will help WGSS staff to better understand how people prefer to receive information, provide recommendations and receive answers to questions. It helps identify common and preferred communication and feedback channels that may inform decisions about WGSS feedback mechanisms.

WHEN TO USE THIS TOOL?

Conducting individual interviews with leaders from different communities/ religions/ representatives from women's organizations, etc. could prove to be useful at the start up phase of a project to understand the barriers that certain groups may have to access information or to communicate with WGSS staff.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL?

The questions can be asked both during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and during individual interviews.

List as possible responses only the channels that are appropriate to your context and that you know you have the resources to implement.

FGDs are very useful to collect feedback from specific groups. You should separate groups as necessary in your context to ensure honest and open feedback.

Individual Interviews are generally a useful channel to collect feedback from Key Informants. They could be your direct or indirect clients, or other people or institutions' representatives, both male and female (local authorities, religious leaders, other public institutions or NGOs).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

CHANNEL	CORE FEEDBACK THEME	QUESTION AND ANSWER
Survey	<i>Engagement Preferences</i>	<p>How (through which channel) would you prefer to receive information on this project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community meetings• Local radio• Billboards• Leaflet and brochures• SMS• Email• Social media• Through WGSS staff• Through community volunteers• Through local leaders• Other (please specify)
		<p>If you wanted to make a suggestion or to provide feedback to the WGSS service provider, how would you like to do this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personally, at the WGSS service providers' office• Personally, with WGSS staff• Calling WGSS phone line• Via SMS or WhatsApp• Through Social media• Through email• Through a suggestion box• Through community leaders• Other (please specify)

CHANNEL	CORE FEED-BACK THEME	QUESTION AND ANSWER
<i>Focus Group Discussion or Individual Interviews</i>	<i>Engagement Preferences</i>	<p>Will everybody in your community be able to access the information provided by the WGSS through [list the communication channels identified]?</p> <p>If not, which specific groups would not be able to access this information?</p> <p>What can be done to facilitate access to information for this group of people?</p>
<i>Focus Group Discussion or Individual Interviews</i>	<i>Engagement Preferences</i>	<p>Will everybody in your community be able to provide feedback to the WGSS through [list the feedback channels identified]?</p> <p>If not, what specific groups are likely not to be able to lodge feedback?</p> <p>What can be done to help this specific group to provide feedback to the WGSS?</p>
		<p>Will everybody in your community be able to report a sensitive complaint to the WGSS using the [list the different channels identified]?</p> <p>If not, what specific groups are likely not to be able to lodge a sensitive complaint?</p> <p>What can be done to help this specific group to provide sensitive feedback to the WGSS?</p>



TOOL 13: PROACTIVE & REACTIVE FEEDBACK CHANNELS FEASIBILITY MAPPING

WHY USE THIS TOOL?

This tool will help you to identify the feedback mechanisms that are the best fit for your context. It helps to identify the resource requirement for each feedback mechanism, and then to assess whether or not the resources needed are in place.

WHEN TO USE THIS TOOL?

This tool should be used when establishing a feedback mechanism, or when a feedback mechanism has to be replaced by or combined with others.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL?

This tool should be used internally, by staff members involved in the identification of feedback mechanisms.

Directions and notes for use:

Table 1 highlights the feasibility of implementing different proactive channels depending on your context and operational environment (e.g. the fact that you have a lot or very little time, amount of resources available, level of access to your clients, etc.). Similarly, Table 2 highlights the feasibility of implementing different reactive channels depending on your context and operational environment.

1. Use Table 1 to assess the feasibility of implementing each PROACTIVE Feedback Channel.

- Please circle the cells that correspond to the availability of each of the required resources you have at your disposal for each of the feedback channels listed in the table (see examples of possible resources in the first column).
- To analyze the feasibility of each feedback channel, look at the number of “Yes”, “Maybe”, “Probably not” and “No” that you have in each column.
- If you have one or more “No” -- you will not be able to implement this feedback channel in your context.
- If you have one or more “Probably Not” -- it may not be feasible for you to implement this particular feedback channel unless you consider specific mitigation measures (for instance, conducting a survey through SMS or phone calls if you don’t have physical access to your clients).
- If you have one or more “Maybe”-- it should be feasible for you to implement this feedback channel, however you may have to adapt the number or frequency of collecting feedback through this channel based on your context and operational constraints.
- The more “Yes” you have, the easier and more feasible it will be for you to implement this feedback channel.

AVAILABILITY		SURVEY	FGD	INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW	WOMEN'S FORUM / COMMITTEE MEETING	RADIO	COMMUNITY MEMBERS' MEETING
<i>Time</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Probably not
	Low	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Probably not	No
<i>Financial Resources</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	No	Maybe
<i>Human Resources & Capacity</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Probably not
	Low	Maybe	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	No
<i>Access to Clients</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Maybe
	Low	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	No	Yes	Maybe
<i>Access to Technology</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

2. Use Table 2 to assess the feasibility of implementing each REACTIVE Feedback Channel.

- Please circle the cell that correspond to the availability of each of the required resources you have at your disposal for each of the feedback channels listed in the table (see example of possible resources in the first column in the table).
- To analyze the feasibility of each feedback channel, look at the number of “Yes”, “Maybe”, “Probably not” and “No” that you have in each column
- If you have one or more “No”: -- you will not be able to implement this feedback channel in your context.
- If you have one or more “Probably not” -- it may not be feasible for you to implement this particular feedback channel unless you consider specific mitigation measures (for instance, conducting a survey through SMS or phone calls if you don’t have physical access to your clients).
- If you have one or more “Maybe” -- it should be feasible for you to implement this feedback channel, however you may have to adapt the number or frequency of collecting feedback through this channel based on your context and operational constraints.
- The more “Yes” you have, the easier and more feasible it will be for you to implement this Feedback Channel.

AVAILABILITY		SUGGESTION BOXES	TOLL FREE HOTLINES	WGSS PRIVATE CONVERSATION ROOM WALK-IN HOURS	SMS LINES	SOCIAL MEDIA
<i>Time</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low	Yes	No	Yes	No	Maybe
<i>Financial Resources</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Yes
	Low	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<i>Human Resources & Capacity</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low	Yes	No	Maybe	Probably not	Probably not
<i>Access to Clients</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes
	Low	Maybe	Yes	Probably not	Yes	Yes
<i>Access to Technology</i>	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low	Yes	Probably not	Yes	Probably not	No

- 3.** Use Table 3 to support you with choosing the right combination of proactive and reactive feedback mechanisms, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of each one.

PROACTIVE MECHANISM	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	BEST PRACTICES
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Information can be collected rapidly ✓ Can reach a broad sample ✓ Provide quantitative data ✓ Results easy to disaggregate ✓ Results easy to interpret ✓ Can be done frequently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires access to clients (unless conducted by a third party or by phone/ SMS, etc.) • Limited in the amount of qualitative data it provides 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask a max of 10-12 questions. 2. Focus on using closed questions, as this will aid quick analysis. 3. Test the survey with a small number of clients before use. 4. Inform clients about the WGSS, the project and how the survey results will be used. 5. Get clients' informed consent before starting the survey and state confidentiality of data. 6. Do not prompt clients' answers but be available to clarify questions if needed. 7. Include an option for the client to say that they do not want to answer, or do not know. 8. Provide an option for clients to share feedback on another issue which has not been covered in the survey. 9. Respecting principles of safety and confidentiality, flag issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them, e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person, or a code of conduct violation. 10. Consider having the survey administered by a third party for verification purposes, or to collect feedback on sensitive issues. Report back to clients regarding survey results, what you will do to respond and why. Do not report back on sensitive issues in any way that could be traced back to the source of the information.

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Ensure surveys are administered by teams of the same gender as those being surveyed. 12. Do NOT ask about direct experiences of GBV. Refer to Safety and Ethical Considerations for Sensitive Complaints and consult with GBV response specialists or GBV sub-cluster for more guidance. 13. Ensure any sensitive information is recorded and stored safely. Refer to your organization's safety and ethical considerations for sensitive complaints.
Focus Group Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Information can be collected rapidly ✓ Very good to collect qualitative information (for example to complement information collected through a survey) ✓ Good to collect views from specific groups on specific subjects (e.g. issues or challenges emerging from survey results for example) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires access to clients (unless conducted by a third party) • Some people may not feel comfortable expressing themselves in a group • People may not share sensitive information • Requires good facilitation skills to administer well 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use data and findings from other feedback channels as a prompt for discussion so that you're not starting the FGD "cold". 2. Inform clients about the WGSS, the project and how the survey results will be used. 3. Get clients' informed consent before starting the survey and state confidentiality of data. 4. Ensure that the person administering the FGD is briefed about the project, so they know how to interpret the feedback which is being shared and can effectively prompt deeper discussion. 5. Allow the clients to share feedback which isn't directly on the "agenda", but make sure that the discussion is broadly kept on topic. 6. Split FGDs into appropriate sub-groups of your clients in such a way that clients will feel comfortable sharing their views (e.g. men / women, younger women / older women). Pay specific attention to ensuring that vulnerable groups feel comfortable in the group that they are in.

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them (e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person, or a code of conduct violation). 8. Report back to clients what the survey results showed, and what you will do to respond and why. Make sure appropriate communication for women and girls is done. 9. Ensure surveys are administered by teams of the same gender as those being surveyed. 10. Do NOT ask about direct experiences of GBV. Refer to Safety and Ethical Considerations for Sensitive Complaints and consult with GBV response specialists or GBV sub-cluster for more guidance. 11. Ensure any sensitive information is recorded and stored safely. Refer to your organization's safety and ethical considerations for sensitive complaints.
<i>Individual Interviews</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good to collect feedback from people in position of power ✓ Good for collecting feedback from other stakeholders (non-WGSS members) ✓ Allow discussions about sensitive subjects ✓ Allow to collect very specific qualitative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming, (which means that you probably cannot run many individual interviews). • Requires good facilitation skills to administer well 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be clear about why you are conducting an individual interview (as opposed to an FGD, for instance). 2. Tailor the questions to the objectives/ information you want to collect. 3. Ask a max of 10-12 questions. 4. Inform the interviewee about the WGSS, the project and how the interview results will be used. 5. Get clients' informed consent before starting the survey and state confidentiality of data. 6. Ensure that the person conducting the interview is familiar with the project, knows how to interpret the feedback which is being shared and can effectively prompt deeper discussion.

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Allow the interviewee to share feedback which isn't directly on the "agenda", but ensure the discussion is broadly kept on topic. 8. Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them (e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person, or a code of conduct violation). 9. Report back to the interviewee on how the interview was used to inform WGSS programming. 10. Do NOT ask about direct experiences of GBV. Refer to Safety and Ethical Considerations for Sensitive Complaints and consult with GBV response specialists or GBV sub-cluster for more guidance. 11. Ensure any sensitive information is recorded and stored safely. Refer to your organization's safety and ethical considerations for sensitive complaints.
Community Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Give opportunity for a diverse mix of people to attend, get information and/or provide their feedback ✓ Good for building general rapport with clients and communities ✓ Provide qualitative information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be quite unstructured, and more difficult to obtain actionable, relevant information • Some people may not feel comfortable expressing themselves in a group • People may not share sensitive information • Some people may not be able to attend (access, working or caregiver responsibilities) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain and discuss the objective of the community meeting. 2. Discuss and agree on the best time/ location for the meeting to take place. 3. Ensure the community is aware of the time/location of the meeting. 4. Inform clients about the WGSS, the project, and how the survey results will be used. 5. Ensure that the person conducting the meeting is familiar with the project and knows how to interpret the feedback which is being shared and can effectively prompt deeper discussion. 6. Allow the clients to share feedback which isn't directly on the "agenda", but ensure the discussion is broadly kept on topic.

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Prompt participation/ answers from vulnerable groups while being cognizant of potential reasons for not wishing to discuss certain issues in public fora. 8. Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them (e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person, or a code of conduct violation). 9. Report back to the community on how the views shared in the meeting have/will inform WGSS programming. 10. In conservative/traditional environments, conduct community meetings for men and women separately. 11. Because community meetings are limited by complex power dynamics, it should never be the only form of proactive feedback used. 12. Inform community of time/ location of the meeting through multiple methods, including verbal when possible to account for non-literate population needs. 13. Ensure any sensitive information is recorded and stored safely. Refer to Safety and Ethical Considerations for Sensitive Complaints. 14. Note if certain identity groups choose not to discuss certain issues and set time/method for follow up.
Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Widely accessible (and sometime on the only “remote” mean for engaging with people living in isolated areas) ✓ Provide opportunity to inform large number of people about the WGSS and its programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comes generally at a (high) cost. • Only allows clients/ people having access to a phone/ network to call in/ make suggestions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comes generally at a (high) cost. 2. Only allows clients/ people having access to a phone/ network to call in/ make suggestions. 3. Respond to the questions and/or explain how suggestions and complaints will be treated.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allow clients to engage in a two-way communication (radio call-in) and this can therefore also be used as a reactive Feedback Channel. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. If a caller raises a sensitive complaint, immediately take the conversation off-air. Refer to the organization's safety and ethical considerations for sensitive complaints. 5. Ensure that the WGSS staff member speaking on the radio has been trained in gender concepts and knows how to combat sexist language. 6. Assess potential gendered limitations in access to radio. Because of the high likelihood of these, radio should never be the only feedback mechanism used.
Women's Forum / WGSS Committee meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good for bringing together key representatives of your client group and other stakeholders to participate in key decisions about the project. ✓ Can be a useful source of information to validate or explain feedback obtained through other channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of the group only representing the views of more powerful members of society and using the channel for their own gains. • Requires clear Terms of Reference and meaningful purpose to be efficient. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly define the role and terms of reference of the stakeholder group. 2. Discuss and agree on its size and composition (limit number of members and maximize the number of different client groups / other stakeholders represented and have a minimum number of women represented (if not women-only)). 3. Set up a clear schedule and agenda for the stakeholder meetings. 4. Define and agree on how suggestions should be agreed upon (e.g. consensus, majority, etc.). 5. Explain how and by whom suggestions will be treated. 6. Provide a feedback to the stakeholder group regarding how their suggestions were treated and how it has influenced the WGSS programming.

REACTIVE MECHANISM	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	BEST PRACTICES
Suggestion boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Easy and cheap to set up ✓ Can operate without electricity and / or mobile network coverage ✓ No cost for the client to use ✓ Can allow for anonymous feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excludes people who can't write. • Lacks confidentiality (depending on where the boxes are located and for clients to be seen using them). • Risks restricting access (clients living far away/ having challenges accessing the boxes). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remember that literacy levels often vary across women and girls from different identities. If a large % of women/girls are non-literate, ensure other feedback mechanisms have been selected in addition to suggestion boxes. 2. Explain to clients how to use the suggestion boxes (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback, etc.). 3. Explain / discuss with clients the process for opening the boxes (frequency, person responsible) and allow clients and members of the community to participate. 4. Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to clients. 5. Pay specific attention and engage clients, in sex-segregated sessions, to identify the best locations for the boxes (to avoid access or confidentiality challenges). 6. Ensure that suggestions are treated confidentially and in a manner that ensures the protection of clients. Refer to the organization's safety and ethical considerations for sensitive complaints. 7. Make sure you have selected locations after seeking feedback from women and girls on safe locations.
Toll Free Hotlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allows clients who can't write to provide feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks excluding clients without access to a phone or network • Risk of receiving lots of "spam" calls • Risks limiting access of clients to provide feedback to hotline opening hours/ days. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remember that phone access often has a gender dynamic. If a large % of women/girls do not have safe, confidential phone access, ensure other feedback mechanisms have been selected in addition to hotlines.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allows a two-way communication between WGSS and the client (and therefore the opportunity for staff to clarify / better understand the feedback being provided by the client) ✓ Confidential and accessible (if clients have a phone and network coverage) ✓ No cost for the client to use ✓ Can allow for anonymous feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge of having to deal with multiple languages/operators. • Risks having to deal with multiple mobile companies/networks costs (operator, hotline monthly fees, etc.). • Generally expensive to set up and to operate (communication and operator costs). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Set up ways/processes to mitigate costs for clients if possible, including reimbursement, provision of top-up cards, or others as appropriate. 3. Explain to clients how to use the hotline (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback etc.) and when (if not a 24/7 service). 4. Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients.
WGSS Private Conversation Room Walk-in Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allows clients who can't write to make suggestions. ✓ Allows two-way communication between WGSS staff and the client (and therefore the opportunity for staff to clarify / better understand the feedback being provided by the client). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to be used by clients who want to make an anonymous suggestion / complaint. • Risks excluding clients living far way/ having challenges to access the office. • Restricts access to certain working hours. • Potentially stigmatizing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain when and for what clients can walk-in to the private conversation room, and communicate available times through multiple methods. 2. Identify and communicate the name(s) of the staff clients can come to meet with. 3. Explain how this may influence the WGSS' way of working. 4. Ensure private and confidential space for walk-in hours. 5. Ensure staff participating in walk-in hours are prepared to respond safely and appropriately to a disclosure of GBV.
SMS Hotlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Confidential ✓ Accessible (if clients have a phone and network coverage) ✓ No cost for the client to use ✓ SMS lines generally also allow sending bulk SMS messages (and provide a useful channel for the WGSS service provider to send information to clients) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excludes clients who can't write. • Risks excluding clients without access to a phone or network. • Risks having lots of "spam" SMS. • Risks having to deal with multiple mobile companies/network. • Cost (hotline monthly fees, maintenance, etc). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remember that phone access and literacy often have a gender dynamic. If a large % of women/girls do not have safe, confidential phone access and/or cannot write, ensure that other feedback mechanisms have been selected in addition to SMS lines.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information may not be particularly actionable if the client hasn't explained their feedback well in the SMS. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Set up ways/processes to mitigate costs for clients if possible, including reimbursement, provision of top-up cards, or others as appropriate. Explain to clients how to use the hotline (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback etc.) and when (if not a 24/7 service). Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients.
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Accessible and confidential (if clients have access to a smartphone/ Internet) ✓ Attractive mean of communication, particularly for youth and clients living in urban areas ✓ No specific costs for clients (if they have internet access) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks excluding a potentially large number of clients (as requires access to smartphone, internet, social media savviness, etc.) Lacks confidentiality 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remember that the gender dynamics present in phone access and literacy will also be present for social media. If a large % of the most vulnerable women/girls do not have safe, confidential phone access, ensure other feedback mechanisms have been selected in addition to social media. Explain to clients how to use social media (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback etc.). Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients.



TOOL 14: TEMPLATE FOR DESIGNING FEEDBACK CHANNELS

WHY TO USE THIS TOOL?

This tool will help to plan design a feedback channels. It helps reflecting on key elements and analyze the most suitable channel based on type of informants, type of feedback, frequency among others elements.

WHEN (HOW OFTEN) TO USE THIS TOOL?

It should be used when setting up a new feedback mechanism and repeated on a regular base. How to determine the frequency of your proactive channels? The frequency of proactive feedback collection (such as surveys and focus group discussions) should be determined based on the operating context. Several factors influence that decision:

- The fluidity of the context: in protracted crisis situations, the priority needs and preferences of WGSS clients are not likely to change as often as they would in more dynamic, emergency contexts. Thus, clients' perspectives and the client groups being consulted are also less likely to change frequently. The less often clients' perspectives are likely to change, the less often teams need to consult them for their views. CAUTION: Program leadership and country program management should be careful that this does not serve as an excuse for not consulting clients for their feedback on a regular basis.
- The frequency of changes to WGSS programming or operations: in some contexts, the WGSS has been implementing a very similar program over a long period of time; in other contexts, our programming is new and continually changing under new grants and with new staff (who may interact differently with clients). In cases of more stable programming, clients' perspectives are less likely to change as frequently than with more continually changing programming and operations. As above, the less often clients' perspectives are likely to change, the less often we need to consult them. But note the word of caution!
- The closeness of the relationship between the WGSS team and members: much feedback is obtained through routine interactions between staff and clients in the course of delivering services. If the team has developed a close and open relationship with clients through such activities, it may be that formalized proactive feedback collection is not needed as often, compared to cases where the team has a more distant relationship with clients. However, teams should still consult clients periodically even if they consider the relationship to be good, as it may be that precisely because of this closeness, that clients feel less inclined to give open and honest feedback directly to staff members.
- The team's capacity to act upon feedback received: various factors may constrain the team's ability to act upon the feedback received, including the external context which cannot be changed frequently and quickly (e.g. having less control over their budget as a sub to another organization acting as prime on a grant).

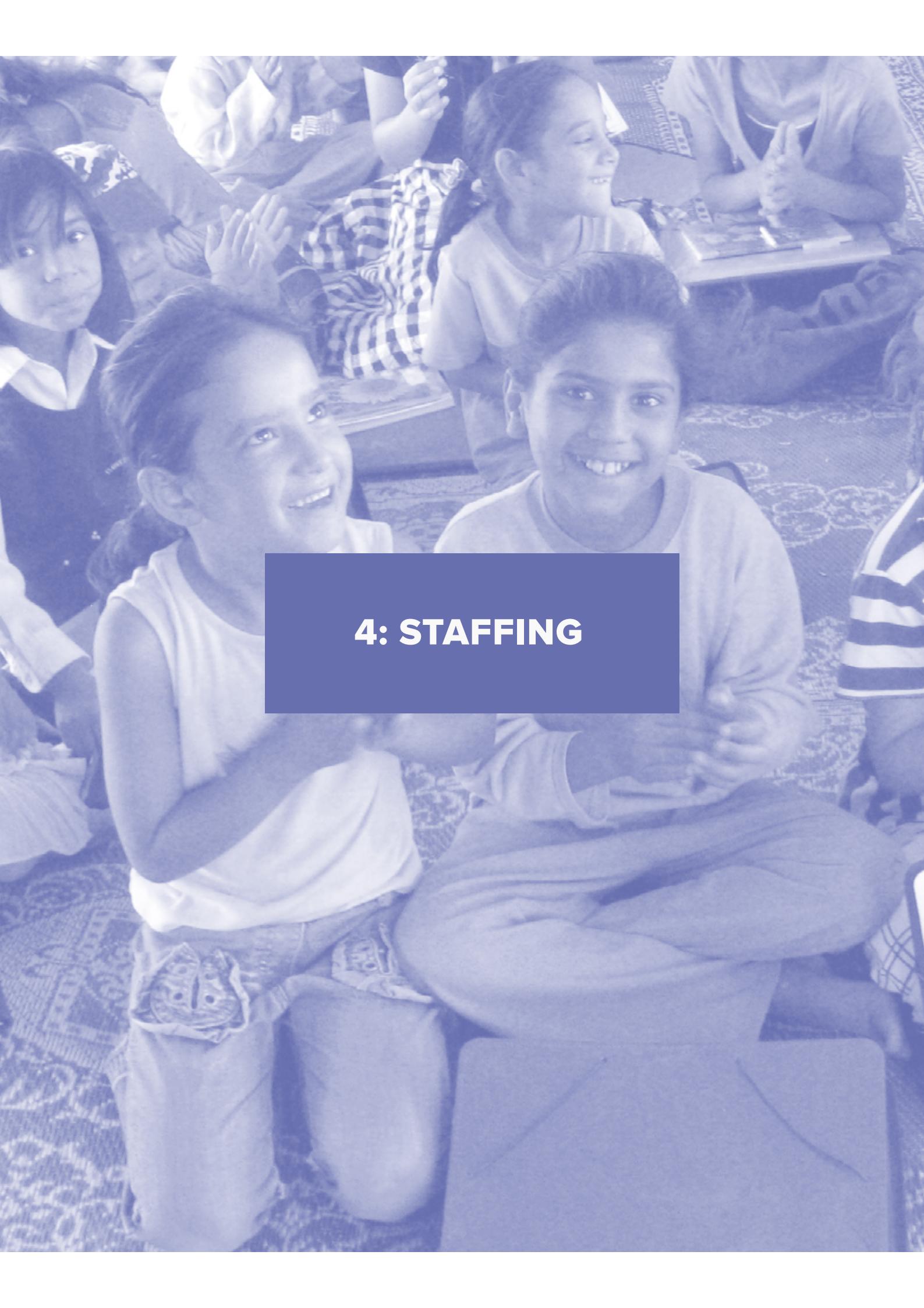
HOW TO USE THIS TOOL?

1. List all the feedback channels you have planned to use into the second column (FGDs, complaint boxes...)
2. Indicate who are the clients and clients' sub-groups you will be collecting feedback from with each channel.
3. Ensure that all direct and intended clients are considered, including indirect clients. Specify all clients' groups (leaders) and sub-groups (leaders of block 3) and other people you want to collect feedback from are all included in your table in the third and fourth columns (Client Group type and Client Group).
4. Indicate what Core Feedback Themes you will collect information on (column 6, Core Feedback Themes)
5. Indicate how often you will administer each Feedback Channel into the Frequency column 7.
6. Indicate the time when you are planning to administer your proactive feedback channels (Timing).
7. Here you need to consider any potential dependency in planning the timing of administrating your different proactive feedback channels. For example, you may want to structure the questions and target groups of your focus group discussions based on issues emerging from the results of a client survey. In that case, you would need to plan the FGD at a time when you know the results of the survey will be available (and have been analyzed).
8. Indicate who will be responsible for administering each feedback channel (Who is responsible).
9. Here you may consider having some proactive feedback channels administered by WGSS staff, and others administered by a third party (enumerators, partner organization, etc.). There is always a bias when clients are asked about their satisfaction or opinion about the aid and service, they receive by staff working for that same organization. People may provide responses that are "over positive" for many reasons (cultural inappropriateness to complain about aid or services received, fear of being excluded, etc.).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

1. Channel #	2. Channel (Specify)	3. Client Group (Specify)	4. Client Group (Specify)	5. Client Sub-group (Specify)	6. Core Feedback Themes (Specify)	7. Frequency	8. Timing (Specify if Relevant)	9. Who is Responsible for Administrating the Channel
1	[Insert type of Feedback Channel]	[Insert type of client #1] [Insert type of client #2]	[Insert description of Client group#1] [Insert description of Client group#2]	[Insert description of Client sub-group#1] [Insert description of Client sub-group#2]	[Insert selected Core Themes]	[Insert Frequency]	[Specify time]	[Specify person responsible]



4: STAFFING



ASSOCIATED WITH THIS **GUIDANCE**



FURTHER GUIDANCE

Annex 4.1. Inclusive Recruitment



TOOLS:

Tool 15: Job Descriptions

Tool 16: WGSS Candidate Attitude and Beliefs survey - for recruitment

Tool 17: WGSS Sample Roles and Responsibilities in Partnerships

Tool 18: Identifying Signs of Stress and Negative Coping Mechanisms

Tool 19: Team Wellness Mandala

Tool 20: Stress Management Techniques

Staff operating in WGSS often have responsibilities specific to both WGSS programming as well as other components of the broader GBV program and need to allocate different amounts of time across tasks and activities as needed. As such, within a typical GBV program organogram, there is often little distinction made between positions dedicated to WGSS and to other types of interventions. The distinction is made in this toolkit only to identify the minimum staff needed to run a WGSS independent from whether GBV case management or primary prevention services are also delivered by the service provider within the scope of their broader GBV program, in order that this guidance can better support the tailoring of context and team structure. For example, an international GBV actor might operate a WGSS and its wider GBV program might include other programs focused on specialized response and prevention interventions at the community level. Likewise, a women's rights organization might operate a WGSS but focus its wider program on women's movement building and national legal reform, and not provide GBV case management services. In fact, if the WGSS service provider does not have the specialized ability to provide GBV response interventions, it is recommended not to do so as the risk for harm is too high. It is important to recognize that WGSS remain relevant and empowering for women and girls despite the service provider not also providing specialized services for GBV survivors (such as case management) or primary prevention interventions (e.g. on social and behavior norms change).

4.1 KEY WGSS POSITIONS

Staffing Considerations for Mobile and Static Implementation Approaches

The staffing structure depends on several factors such as: the [implementation approach](#), humanitarian access, available resources, diversity and number of women and girls attending, type and number of activities offered in the WGSS, and the size of the physical space. For example, an integrated implementation approach may provide a larger number of services overall in the space, but require fewer WGSS-specific staff than in a stand-alone WGSS.

“There is a need of a person who coordinates the activities since normally there are integrated services. The WGSS is not only one service so it is good to have somebody who oversees the use of the center.”

GBV Working Group Lead, Cameroon

Mobile WGSS

When using a [mobile approach](#) to implement WGSS, teams drive out to remote and hard-to-reach communities at a specific time every week. The number and composition of the team depend on displacement density, population per site, the distance between sites, and type of programming intended based on findings from the WGSS assessment phase using:

[Tool 1: WGSS Key Informant Interview Guide](#)

[Tool 2: WGSS Service Mapping Questionnaire](#)

[Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls](#)

[Tool 5: WGSS Safety Mapping](#)

The variety of programming may change for each site, as well as over time. However, there are key factors that can help determine the number of frontline mobile staff required for mobile WGSS:

A minimum of one mobile worker for every 20-25 beneficiaries served, whereby beneficiaries are determined by the type of program (activities and services) delivered by the frontline mobile team at the same time.

- ✓ Mobile teams should be composed of a minimum of two staff members.
- ✓ Sites are divided by drive time plus activity time required for each site visit.
- ✓ Activity time should be at least 2 hours for every 20-25 beneficiaries in the site, recommended at least once per week at the start of the program.
- ✓ Team members to deploy at most 4 days per week with at least one day for supervision and paperwork in the office (or in the static WGSS).
- ✓ Activities implemented by mobile teams are an extension of those taking place in a static WGSS (in case of long-term mobile implementation) and can include both WGSS and GBV response activities. Timeframe is usually shortened, and activities are adapted based on the needs of women, girls or community members in an area.¹
- ✓ In terms of staffing, leads and supervisors should seriously take into consideration the risks the mobile team face during their day-to-day implementation. Especially if staff members are part of the community they serve, they may be exposed to risky dynamics connected to politics, leadership, conflict and the neutrality of the humanitarian intervention.

Static WGSS

Static WGSS should have at least 3 staff members solely dedicated to WGSS responsibilities. Therefore, if GBV prevention and response services are hosted in the WGSS, additional staff members should be dedicated to those specific services. The three staff members should cover three main areas of WGSS responsibilities:

- 1. Management oversight or supervision of the space:** in each WGSS, one staff member should carry out overall supervision, and be responsible for ensuring the safety, coordination, accountability and relevance of the WGSS. In some contexts, this position holds a manager title, while in others it may not – either way supervision is core to the position. Regardless of the title or size of the supervised team, one person needs to be assigned this set of responsibilities without ‘double-hatting’, i.e. also being responsible for the implementation of specific services and activities.
- 2. Activities taking place inside the WGSS:** Handling GBV disclosure and referring to a GBV responder is a **competency required of every WGSS staff member**, and particularly when case management services are hosted in the WGSS, GBV responders might at first join group activities to build rapport and trust with women and girls. However, individuals responsible for facilitating **group activities** in the WGSS should not be the GBV response focal point. Note that staff dedicated to activities in the WGSS will vary based on the type of programming (e.g. if curriculum- based activities with adolescent girls are delivered, an adolescent specialist may be required).

¹ Lebanon SGBV Task Force: Checklist for Women and Girls Safe Spaces- static and mobile. August 2015.

- 3. Activities taking place in the community:** Outreach personnel should be 100% dedicated to activities that increase safe access to WGSS programming for at least the first six months of implementation.

WGSS outreach activities vary according to needs and context, but they usually include information dissemination, awareness-raising activities and coordination with leaders and stakeholders. After the initial six months, depending on the context, area of coverage and level of community acceptance, outreach personnel can take on (or share) GBV prevention and risk mitigation responsibilities.

“So these are what I think are the basic roles: managers, facilitators, and outreach.”

Senior Staff, Global

WGSS Team Composition

The organogram example (see Figure 4.1 below) illustrates how a functional WGSS team might be organized. This is not meant to be prescriptive, as the right staffing structure for your WGSS must be adapted to the specific program, capacities, resources and context. It is important to keep in mind that any staffing structure will also change over time as the humanitarian response evolves, as the needs of women and girls change, and as the [diversity of women and girls attending the WGSS expands](#). It is equally important to note that similar positions may be given different names from one context to another, or from one organization to another.

Note on uncommon positions

- **The women’s and girls’ forum focal point:** is appointed to support the advisory board (Women’s Forum) described in [Part 6: Implementation](#). The forum represents an empowering mechanism that WGSS may put in place to increase ownerships and engagement of WGSS members. It is a group of [proactive members](#) that provides advice, information, feedback, and suggestions guiding decisions on empowerment and ownership of the space. The focal point should be mainly dedicated to strengthening the capacities of forum members to self-manage the forum over time, initially facilitating the forum’s meetings, helping forum members in identifying the structure and functioning of the forum, and connecting them with WGSS staff. The roles and responsibilities of this position will change over time according to the progress and self-management capacities of forum members. The role of the focal point is crucial especially during the first six months of the activity. Thereafter, a staff member should always be part of the forum as the focal point responsible for the activity, although with less of a role.
- **The activity specialist** should be decided based on the type of activities, content and target group, and whether the activity requires specifically skilled and trained staff (e.g. caseworker; livelihood specialist) or if it requires a dedicated person to facilitate a specific curriculum (e.g. group psychosocial support curriculum; adolescent girls curriculum; information sessions on domestic law). Specialists can be engaged for:
 1. One-off sessions (e.g.: a nurse collaborates with the WGSS to deliver a breastfeeding session).
 2. A set of sessions (e.g.: a midwife delivers five sessions on sexual and reproductive health).

3. A curriculum-based activity (e.g. a staff person is hired to deliver a curriculum-based resource package such as Girl Shine ; a skilled instructor is hired to deliver writing classes to older women).

Specialists engaged in curriculum-based activities are most likely supervised by staff dedicated to activities taking place inside the WGSS (or by the WGSS lead). Whether ad-hoc (like the first two examples) or curriculum-based, a WGSS staff member should always supervise content and delivery methods of the sessions and ensure these adhere to [WGSS principles](#).

Every staff member collaborating with WGSS whether on a long term or ad-hoc base should be informed and familiar with the PSEA/ safeguarding policy and reporting mechanism of the WGSS.

While the WGSS implementation approach may influence staffing considerations such as the number of staff always present in the WGSS, this may or may not require unique positions. For example, all WGSS, regardless of the approaches selected, will require staff with supervisory, activity-based or outreach roles. While within the wider GBV program, unique positions may be needed to manage and oversee GBV partnerships, within staffing specifically related to WGSS programming, such positions are typically not necessary. When implementing through an in-partnership approach, learning, capacity-building and implementation is best when mutually-supported by counterparts from each organization (e.g. the supervisor of the INGO with the LNGO; the outreach officer of the INGO with the LNGO). It is however critical to include specific tasks and responsibilities related to the partnership in the job description of all WGSS-related positions to ensure accountability towards partnership objectives.

[Tool 17: WGSS Sample Roles and Responsibilities in Partnerships](#) provides an example of how you can tailor job descriptions to ensure the partnership is prioritized at all staff levels. By promoting counterparts from each organization to directly collaborate, the partnership is likely more sustainable and successful, as it allows for stronger relationships to be established among peer partner staff, and enables mutual learning and support between frontline staff based on their exchange of skills, knowledge, competencies and experience.

Figure 4.1: Organogram Sample - for Static and Standalone WGSS



Minimum Staffing Considerations

- If the organization does not have prior experience in managing WGSS, it is generally recommended to start with a small team and a limited number of activities and services.
- A WGSS staff member must never be left alone in the space for security and operational reasons. A static WGSS should always guarantee the minimum presence of at least 2 staff members during operating hours— this refers to program staff only. The presence of cleaners or guards cannot be a substitute.
- In all cases, the minimum number of staff present must be able to provide timely information to GBV survivors who choose to disclose, as well as initiate referrals to response services according to their consent.
- In all cases, the minimum number of staff must be familiar with the range of female-tailored and more broadly available services, and serve as an important link to enable or facilitate access based on women's and girls' choices.
- A minimum number and set of group-based activities. Since only one of the two staff can fully be dedicated to the facilitation of activities, appropriate and feasible activities will need to be determined according to various factors. For example, even when only two staff are available at the WGSS, it is important to make sure that adult women and adolescent girls each have their own activity content and space and not combine them into one. The staff member's relevant technical capacity and each activity's supervision requirements may also influence which activities can be conducted if only two staff are present in the WGSS. Additionally, if specific information sessions (e.g. on civil rights) are scheduled at a time when neither the usual facilitators nor supervisors are among the two staff present, another activity should be proposed in its place.
- A welcoming environment and ongoing orientation for regular and new members. If only two staff are present, while one focuses on ensuring women and girls can engage in a minimum set of group-based activities, the other staff member should remain available to orient and inform individual women and girls seeking information or support in accessing either WGSS-based or alternate services through referral. When WGSS with usually large teams of staff operate at a reduced rate of only two staff, they should particularly ensure women and girls are informed of any related scheduling, activity or facilitation changes as early as possible.

The following circumstances represent contexts in which the safe and appropriate minimum number of staff always present in the WGSS will likely be more than two:

1. In WGSS where GBV case management or other response services are hosted, the number of minimum staff required will likely be higher. This is, first and foremost, because response services need to adhere to specific standards in terms of adequate technical supervision and maximum number of cases per GBV responder. In addition, the WGSS needs to also ensure that a minimum set of activities and adequate information dissemination is always available. When response services are available throughout the WGSS' daily operating hours and accessible in dedicated private spaces at the same time as group-based activities or other services are being facilitated, the WGSS will naturally require more than two staff members present. Newly recruited GBV caseworkers or newly established response services hosted in a WGSS can often be tasked at first to co-facilitate or lead non-survivor-focused group activities to establish rapport and trust with women and girls fundamental

to a survivor-centered approach. In fact, GBV response staff may take on multiple roles in the WGSS for a short period of time to create a protective environment where survivors feel comfortable seeking support. It is pivotal to prioritize **staff care and well-being** when planning for a minimum number of staff available at all times, to ensure a healthy and professional working environment.

2. When WGSS operate in unsafe contexts, security personnel are usually required. Security guards should be working in line with the domestic labor law, and when 24-hour surveillance is needed, a minimum of four guards should be planned for to ensure continuous coverage (accounting for standard work hours, weeks, paid leave and absences).
3. Interpreters may be required when the operating language of the WGSS is different from that of the affected women and girls primarily reached. In such cases, interpreters are needed to shadow WGSS staff and enable communication with members. They play a vital role and should be available throughout the WGSS' daily operating hours, and must uphold the same attitudes, beliefs and practices as expected of all staff. However, given the specific scope of their role, like security guards, they should always be counted in addition to the minimum two staff required.

Volunteers

Volunteers support the work of the WGSS on a non-compulsory basis and without compensation. Depending on the context, it may be worthwhile combining volunteers and paid staff. Several volunteers can be involved in **outreach activities** (e.g. information sessions; informal conversations at water points and other gathering places, etc.). They can also be given a vast range of WGSS-based tasks, such as gathering women and girls before activities, drafting of IEC material, helping to identify activity content and schedules, co-facilitate activities, etc. As time goes on, the volunteers can support a wider and a more sophisticated range of tasks based on their time availability and willingness. Volunteers can represent a big support and a great way to deeply engage members in the WGSS program. However, volunteering should be first and foremost an opportunity for members to learn and strengthen skills.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In terms of motivation and compensation, a study carried out by Jesuit Services International in Ethiopia on 'non-financial benefits for Community Health workers (CHW)' found that "...*the responsibility given to CHWs by the community which had elected them was an important motivation for some volunteers. A few also found the high level of community acceptance for themselves and their messages as reason enough to continue working as CHWs. Finally, there were also CHWs who were very motivated by the knowledge they had gained and the improved health practices they were able to adopt since their involvement as volunteers.*" According to the research findings, in fact the lack of payment generally does not reduce the motivation and commitment of volunteers – "...*because they had been told not to expect any payment from the outset, they were more interested in contributing to their community or the work was not too demanding ... Per diems for training or involvement in (...) campaigns were suggested forms of compensation as well.*"

When working with volunteers it is important to consider the following:

1. Regular staff must be aware of (and work in line with) the national labor law and its regulation on volunteers.
2. It is the responsibility of regular staff to support volunteers and not the other way around.
3. Ultimately, regular staff are accountable and responsible for activities even when performed by volunteers.
4. Level of effort in terms of number of hours per week/ tasks must be determined based on the availability of volunteers (for example a volunteer may decide to work one day per week or to dedicate her/himself to one activity happening twice a week) and it should be limited. By no means should the level of effort and availability requested of a volunteer be like the one requested of regular staff.
5. Volunteers do not receive financial benefit. Instead, they receive other types of benefits such as learning, participation in training, campaigns, and community recognition.

Male Staff

For the purpose of WGSS outreach activities, male personnel should be part of the team to promote access to WGSS and increase the level of acceptance and buy-in by the community, since most often, those activities target men, leaders (who are often male) and key stakeholders. Usually, a mixed gender team for outreach is beneficial to facilitate the broader engagement and participation of the community.

Male staff should not have any responsibility or task that requires their physical presence in the WGSS. However, their support is essential for the functioning and safety of the WGSS.² Male staff play a crucial role in creating conditions for WGSS to safely operate, such as strategic outreach interventions to create male WGSS allies in the community, to guarantee safe and regular access to WGSS for women and girls, and to strengthen community acceptance of WGSS.

If WGSS deliver GBV prevention and mitigation activities with men and boys, trained and dedicated staff should be employed. Over time and based on needs and context, male staff that is initially 100% dedicated to securing access to WGSS, may take on GBV prevention and risk mitigation responsibilities. Bear in mind though that diminishing attention to WGSS outreach could translate into less attention to rumors and underestimating the work that maintaining and strengthening community buy-in requires. This could impact the level of community acceptance of the WGSS, and therefore, the ability of WGSS to safely implement activities.

Generally, male presence within the WGSS area should be limited only to security guards (if female guards are not available) during non-operational hours, and otherwise be prohibited. If outreach and male engagement staff require a physical space to store resources, meet and coordinate activities, WGSS will not be the best fit for those purposes. Instead, a separate space will be needed (e.g. booking regular time in a training venue or in a community center). As a last resort, a specific time or portion of the WGSS can be assigned to ‘staff only’ space in which staff can store materials or have meetings. However, that should be organized on days and during times when women and girls are not present in the WGSS. Some

2 Adapted from: UNFPA and IRC, 2017. SSWG Standardization and Technical Guidance Bangladesh. Tab 3. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/sswg_technical_toolkit_oct_2017_final_2.pdf

practitioners³ suggested that in locations where WGSS is the only resource, staff meetings happen before the WGSS opening hours "...because after the activities women remain there, they don't want to leave, and we cannot let men in".⁴

In the case of male program managers, they may need to limit, as much as possible, their access to the WGSS. If possible, male managers should consider delegating the role of WGSS supervision visits to a senior female staff member. If a specific circumstance requires the male manager's presence in the WGSS, staff and members should be informed at least a day in advance.

Despite the specific considerations around male staff members and WGSS there are teams that currently are staffed or supervised by men. In such situations, the following are essential to note:

- ✓ Always explain to women and girls that if they do not feel comfortable in the presence of male staff, they can share this information confidentially with WGSS staff who will keep it anonymous. The feeling or request might be shared but never the identity of the person who spoke about it. Similarly, always check and openly discuss with members to verify if they feel comfortable having male staff entering the WGSS. This should be done regularly. If WGSS staff identify any member who does not feel comfortable speaking about this during group activities, regular check-ins can take place privately.
- ✓ Inform women and girls in a timely manner if male staff will enter the WGSS, the reason for entering, and how long they/he will be there for.
- ✓ If a group of women are comfortable having a male staff member in the WGSS, do not assume that this is the same for every member. Listen to the concerns of others who may not feel comfortable and take decisions accordingly.
- ✓ In some countries, regular mixed-gender events take place in the WGSS as part of the community buy-in strategy. These may either take place on a regular basis (e.g. once every 3 months) or according to specific dates and events (e.g. International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on November 25th, International Day of Human Rights on December 10th, International Women's Day on March 8th) In all cases, both members and communities should be consulted and informed in a timely manner.
- ✓ It is crucial for women to understand the regularity and the purpose of any activity led by male staff so they can take decisions accordingly (e.g. some may choose not to attend).
- ✓ Provide opportunities for women to decide what space of the WGSS will be made available for the male-led activity, the type of engagement women will have in the activity, and the timeframe.
- ✓ Discuss and ensure that outreach activities are treated as important as activities taking place inside the WGSS. Therefore, contribution given by male staff working through outreach is just as important as the one provided by staff working inside the WGSS.

3 IMC GBV team - Cameroon.

4 GBV staff member, IMC Cameroon.

In some contexts, specific activities in WGSS may be delivered by male staff because female staff are not available. For example, women may request for English language classes, but there are no female teachers in the community to teach them. In situations where female staff are unavailable:

- ✓ Women must agree that having men on board is the best/safest/only option. If there is no agreement, the WGSS team must put in more effort and time to identify a suitable female staff person.
- ✓ Even though only a small minority of women and girls does not welcome the idea of having a male facilitator, a mitigation strategy or a different solution should still be identified and put in place.
- ✓ Women and girls should have access to the activities' calendar to plan their attendance accordingly. That is particularly crucial when WGSS delivers male-led activities.

If an ad-hoc situation occurs that requires a male staff member to access the WGSS (e.g. a male manager visit, donor visit):

- ✓ Women and girls should be informed at least a day in advance.
- ✓ Women's and girls' thoughts and doubts should be discussed and prioritized prior to the visit.
- ✓ Male staff can be requested to visit the WGSS only externally, or partially ask volunteer women to be available in case of questions.
- ✓ Limit the time the male staff member spends in the WGSS as much as possible.
- ✓ Be able to explain to male community members the rational of the male presence, and the precautions taken.

4.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WGSS Roles and Responsibilities

The following are descriptions of the roles listed in the sample organogram in [Figure 4.1](#). More in- depth descriptions of roles and responsibilities are provided in [Tool 15: Job Descriptions](#). If the WGSS is implemented through an in-partnership approach, staff members may have additional roles and responsibilities as highlighted in [Tool 17: WGSS Sample Roles and Responsibilities in Partnerships](#).

WGSS lead: Main responsibility is to ensure a safe, relevant, inclusive and appealing delivery of activities and services. Leads work as a focal point for WGSS and plays a representative, supervisory and coordinating role. Leads are responsible for ensuring that the work of the WGSS is accountable towards the affected population, and that the WGSS team works in line with WGSS principles and objectives. Main tasks are: recruitment and supervision of WGSS staff; application of safety measures for staff and members; compliance with project proposals, budgets and work plans; liaison with supervisors of GBV team members hosted in the WGSS (since the GBV team supervisor is not usually based in the WGSS, the WGSS lead will be responsible for coordinating with GBV supervisors); oversight of procurement and logistics of the WGSS; and management of data and reporting.

WGSS-based activities: Main responsibility is to plan activities, supervise, implement and monitor the impact of activities taking place in the WGSS. She plays a key focal point role to develop material, plan sessions, communicate messaging, build capacities of activity facilitators, and coordinate with other humanitarian sectors to develop inter-sectoral activities and strategies. For this, she needs to constantly listen, gather and use information and feedback provided by women and girls.

WGSS-based activities, assistant: Main responsibility is to develop activity material and facilitate group activities ensuring they are inclusive and tailored to context, age and vulnerability type. She also monitors the impact of activities and captures feedback from women and girls. Based on strategy, schedule and target groups of the WGSS, the activities assistant role may have a focus (e.g. adolescents, curriculum-based activities).

Activity specialist: She oversees an activity that requires specialized knowledge to be delivered. An activities specialist can be engaged for an ad-hoc session, a set of sessions, or a curriculum-based activity.

Outreach focal point: Main responsibility is community engagement, to inform communities about WGSS programming and to increase women's and girls' access to WGSS. The outreach focal point plans, organizes and delivers information sessions with community members, leaders and stakeholders on WGSS programming and benefits. S/he collects community feedback, concerns about the WGSS and implements strategies to increase the level of acceptance from and buy-in of community members.

Outreach, assistant: Main responsibility is to work to increase the level of community acceptance and buy-in, to secure women's and girls' access to WGSS, to deliver group information sessions on WGSS services, activities and benefits.

Women's and girls' forum focal point: Main responsibility is strengthening and building the coordination and decision-making capacities of forum members. She also works to ensure that staff and forum members coordinate and share feedback aimed at constantly increasing of women's and girls' empowerment and ownership of the WGSS. Main tasks include building the capacities of forum members in organizing and coordinating the forum, providing feedback, analyzing the available data, developing implementation and inclusion strategies, and proposing action to improve the quality of the space.

Interpreter: Main tasks include shadowing WGSS staff and enabling communication with members whose language is different from the operating language of the WGSS. Interpreters must uphold the same attitudes, beliefs and practices as expected of all staff.

Security Guard: The responsibility of security guards is to contribute to the safety of WGSS' members, staff and premises by observing and reporting any suspicious activities; and preventing men and unwanted guests from accessing the WGSS. Security guards should work in line with the labor law and when 24-hour surveillance is needed, a minimum of four guards should be planned for to ensure continuous coverage (that accounts for standard work hours, weeks, leave, and absences).

WGSS child caretaker: Main responsibility is to take care of the children in the WGSS, and to engage them in learning and recreational activity. This role is important to contribute to a relaxed environment for members, where women and girls can feel free to talk and proactively take part in activities without worrying about their young children.

Cleaner: Main responsibility is to keep the WGSS clean internally and externally, and contribute towards a hygienic and welcoming overall environment.

Receptionist: Main responsibility is to welcome women and girls, provide information on activities and services, keep track of women and girls entering and exiting the WGSS, register newcomers and create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all women and girls.

WGSS-based M&E focal point: Main responsibility is to collect, track, document and analyze data gathered from different WGSS activities, services and initiatives to monitor progress and inform future programming.

Adapting WGSS Roles and Responsibilities Based on the Context

The WGSS staffing structure and organogram may vary based on several factors, including the implementation approaches chosen for the WGSS program and the context of the humanitarian response. Staff roles and responsibilities may also change over time. To remain relevant, a WGSS always needs to be context-adaptive. This means that the number of staff, the types of positions and their associated tasks must be fluid, re-assessed regularly and revised as necessary. The following are examples highlighting how responsibilities for different WGSS staff members may apply, and change, in practice.

If a new WGSS is established in a new operational area:

- Within the first 6 months of the WGSS, outreach staff may concentrate on meeting with other service providers' outreach teams to understand approaches that work best; identify social cohesion and inclusion strategies implemented by other organizations or recommended by coordination mechanisms; attend coordination or bilateral meetings and initiate relationships; engage with leaders and stakeholders to understand possible challenges and context sensitivities; implement strategies to inform women and girls on new WGSS services; inform communities about WGSS services and benefits; and plan strategies to identify and strengthen the capacities of male allies.
- In the following 6 months, outreach staff may focus more on community meetings, designing WGSS outreach materials, conducting assessments on the accessibility of the WGSS, identifying strategic collaborations, new geographical areas for outreach, and how to increase program inclusivity.
- Within the first 6 months of the WGSS, over 60% of the WGSS manager's time may be spent on conducting recruitment, staff orientation and training, 30% on community buy-in and relation-building with community leaders, authorities and service providers and just 10% on administrative and reporting tasks. In the following 6 months, the allocation of time is likely to change.
- Within the first 6 months, the WGSS-based activities staff may split time between assessing the activities women and adolescent girls wish to conduct, delivering information sessions and overseeing activities.
- In the following 6 months, the WGSS-based activities staff may spend more time on organizing and refining activities, discussing and integrating women's and girls' feedback, building the capacities of members to co-facilitate group activities, and identifying strategic collaboration.

GBV response staff members

If GBV prevention and response services and staff are hosted in the WGSS, it is crucial to avoid creating a division between GBV and WGSS staff. Sharing responsibilities is recommended only where safe and possible (it may not apply for GBV first responders for example). GBV responders are usually integrated into the WGSS structure, to implement activities and services in collaboration with other staff members, and everyone works in adherence to both GBV and [WGSS guiding principles](#).

It is important for GBV responders not to interact only with survivors. Often, women and girls feel more comfortable disclosing an incident, or will take less time to do so, if the GBV responder (case worker, case manager, lawyer, etc.) already interacts more broadly with women and girls at the WGSS, and therefore has had the opportunity to build trust. Furthermore, if GBV responders only work with survivors, this will be too obvious when women and girls are seen speaking with them, thereby unintentionally compromising confidentiality.

A few examples of how GBV responders can be integrated into the WGSS structure may include:

- Having GBV responders co-facilitate information sessions on available services in the WGSS.
- Having GBV responders co-facilitate or sit in on a few WGSS-based activities.
- Having GBV responders offer one-on-one sessions (following GBV guiding principles) with any woman or girl who wants to talk, disclose any type of problem, or learn about other services available and access referrals if needed. This should not be limited just to survivors.

WGSS-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) focal point

If the WGSS has no capacity for a dedicated M&E focal point, or this staff person sits at an office outside the WGSS and covers a larger number of interventions and areas, the various M&E tasks can be divided amongst WGSS staff. Here, it is important that adequate monitoring is conducted with enough impartiality so that the person conducting sessions is not the only person collecting feedback from stakeholders and participants.

In-partnership support staff

Usually, WGSS programs do not have personnel solely dedicated to effective partnerships. Instead, several staff from a range of positions within the broader GBV program team are engaged in ensuring effective, healthy and sustainable partnerships. Agreeing on, clearly communicating, and promoting accountability for roles and responsibilities are essential to ensure transparency, equality and complementarity between partners. Staff roles and responsibilities should be clearly reflected in individual job descriptions, and clearly agreed on, communicated and coordinated among staff from the international GBV actor's organization and the partner organization as relevant. An indicative list of roles and responsibilities the program team may have in the partnership process is provided in [Tool 17: WGSS Sample Roles and Responsibilities in Partnerships](#). The roles and responsibilities should reflect a communication protocol that establishes the primary focal point for each partner. This communication protocol should:

- Be discussed and agreed with each partner;
- Streamline communications with partners;
- Encourage personal interaction;
- Identify preferred communication channels, and who should be engaged in those channels (e.g. stipulate who within the WGSS service provider and partner organization should be copied on email correspondence);
- Incorporate agreed response times (e.g. response to all partner communications within one working day); and
- Ensure that each partner has the contact details of senior management representatives for use when appropriate, including for the escalation of contested issues.

4.3 RECRUITMENT

Key WGSS Recruitment Considerations

During the recruitment process, it is crucial to be familiar with (and to provide information on):

Labor law: Workers should be recruited, employed and treated according to domestic law. That includes employee rights, salaries, benefits and working hours. Job descriptions and vacancy announcements should always comply with local regulations. For example, in some contexts, the local labor office provides guidance on how to fairly encourage applications from minorities and female candidates.

Clear roles and responsibilities: Organogram and job descriptions should clearly indicate the supervisory lines, and roles and responsibilities of different team members. This will help prevent possible frustration related to lack of transparency and false expectations. Job descriptions and vacancy announcements should also highlight specific responsibilities and the technical capacities required for these.

Type of activities and services at the WGSS: This is necessary so the recruiter has an indication of the kind of personal and professional competencies and experience a candidate needs to implement specific tasks.

Implementation type and delivery model: This is important because women and girls may face restrictions of movement due to community gender norms. It is crucial to inquire about whether suitable candidates will be able to travel (in case of mobile WGSS) or be out of the house, safely, for several hours daily. In some circumstances, staff members are recruited from various areas of the country. In that case, accommodations and travel considerations should be clarified during the recruitment process.

Candidate attitude and beliefs: It is recommended to inquire about personal attitudes and beliefs towards gender roles, GBV, women's empowerment, humanitarian and protection principles. Using [Tool 16: WGSS Candidate Attitude and Beliefs survey- for Recruitment](#) will support the creation of a WGSS team that will challenge restrictive gender norms, promote women's agency and foster gender equality. It is also important to consider whether the team has capacities, opportunities, resources and time to address negative attitudes or beliefs of new staff members.

Inclusion of diverse women: Staff composition should ideally mirror the diversity of groups of women and girls, based on the findings from the WGSS assessment phase using:

[Tool 1: WGSS Key Informant Interview Guide](#)

[Tool 3: WGSS Stakeholder Analysis Template](#)

[Tool 4: WGSS Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls](#)

Community dynamic, conflict and social cohesion: The recruitment and representation of different groups in WGSS need to take conflict sensitivity into account. WGSS cannot substitute or be considered as a social cohesion intervention per se. Social cohesion strategies are usually long-term processes that work at multiple levels. Those strategies are usually led by local authorities and supported at the inter-agency and multisectoral level. In some humanitarian contexts, the protection sector takes the lead in identifying the possible strategies to work towards social cohesion and the steps communities are willing, able or prepared to take. As explained in [Part 3: Start Up](#) if the analysis of WGSS assessment tools indicate tensions between two or more groups of people, the WGSS should coordinate with the

protection sector, camp management and local authorities (when relevant and safe). This will help the WGSS program identify the safest and most appropriate social cohesion strategy, and ensure that it works in line with broader social cohesion strategies.

Importantly, including social cohesion strategies in WGSS requires extreme care to neither jeopardize the existing relationships in the community nor put any individual at risk – for example, in humanitarian settings where there exists a historical tension between two groups, the establishment of a single WGSS hosting both groups may or may not be the most suitable. It is crucial to analyze what impact that can have on service provision, (e.g. would the fact that staff, such as GBV case workers, are from one group prevent survivors from another group from disclosing? Will the presence of staff members from a specific group prevent women and girls from another group from accessing the WGSS?) In some cases, working with different groups of women can help to strengthen relationships, in other cases this can exacerbate tension.



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

In a refugee camp, two ethnicities co-exist. Women of one group have had access to education and job opportunities. Women of the other group are illiterate and did not work other than chores related to housework. If GBV staff are not conscious of how they recruit, during the initial recruitment process, most of the WGSS staff will likely be hired from the first group. However, that would not be fair in terms of ensuring women equal opportunities, and would in fact, be elitist and discriminatory. What's more, women belonging to the second group will not feel represented or, even worse, not welcome in the WGSS, as they would inevitably perceive the WGSS as only representative of a specific group of women and girls.

WGSS staff have a responsibility to ensure practical measures which value the skills and knowledge of all women and girls, and does not replicate structures which are elitist and that discriminate against those who have had limited exposure to educational and job opportunities. Rather, WGSS should serve as an opportunity in the community which equally values and increases the recruitment chances of diverse women.

Prioritizing Competencies

As identified by WGSS staff, the lack of female ‘skilled’ or ‘educated’ staff is a significant challenge in humanitarian settings.⁵ In the vast majority of humanitarian contexts, due to strict gender norms that prevent women and girls from going to school, working, or freely moving about in public spaces, the availability of educated, skilled and experienced female candidates is extremely limited. Before starting the recruitment process therefore, it is crucial for recruiters to be aware of the context – and gender dynamics in particular – to better understand the limitations for women, their average level of education and job experience, in order to adjust expectations and vacancy announcements accordingly.

5 This information showed up strongly during the KII with GBV practitioners that was implemented during formative research in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Thailand and Lebanon.

Especially in settings where the availability of technically-trained female personnel is limited, it is highly recommended to avoid requiring levels of education in the vacancy announcement because this will limit opportunities for women and girls. In such settings, recruitment should prioritize “competencies”. Competencies have been defined in a variety of ways but most models include the elements of knowledge, abilities, skills, personal characteristics, behaviors, and/or qualities that are linked to organizational objectives and are key to producing results.⁶ In this toolkit, the definition of competencies is the one used by the Inter-agency Working Group on Emergency Capacity Building: “Competencies are the experience, skills, and behaviors required to perform effectively in a given job, role or situation. Competencies are what a person has or can acquire, i.e. a characteristic, attitude, skill, aspect of one’s self-image, or body of knowledge and behavior, which s/he uses.”⁷

“To do this kind of job you need to be very open to listen to people, understand, not being judgmental, which is also sometimes difficult because in some places you have very entrenched cultural and religious ideas that may actually lead you to judgment. It is important to find objectivity, neutrality”

GBV Working Group Lead, Ethiopia

By prioritizing competencies, recruiters (or line managers involved in recruitment) should pay special attention to personal attitudes and skills that demonstrate that candidates are committed to supporting and working towards empowerment, equality and freedom of women and girls (e.g. shown through some form of voluntary activity). Candidates should also demonstrate behavioral competencies including willingness and skills to work in a team, to respect minorities and diversity, and to have a women-friendly attitude. [Using Tool 16: WGSS Candidate Attitude and Beliefs survey](#) - for recruitment can help to identify women-friendly attitudes.

In order to properly function in WGSS, staff members require specific attitudes or behaviors no matter what specific technical role they perform.⁸ Behavioral competencies, which include both non-technical competencies and leadership competencies, are a frequently overlooked, underestimated, and ill-defined standard. It is difficult to measure and difficult to determine in an interview setting but crucial in determining the right candidate.

Some key competencies WGSS staff should have:

- Commitment to gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment
- [Inclusive attitudes towards diversity](#)
- [Non-judgmental attitudes toward survivors or gender roles](#)

⁶ Martin, S., 2014. Core Competencies for GBV Specialists. GBV AoR LTT. <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Core%20Competencies%20for%20GBV%20Specialists%20-%20GBV%20AoR%2C%202014.pdf>

⁷ The Inter-agency Working Group on Emergency Capacity-Building definition of competency has also been used in the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) and Humanitarian/Resident Coordinators competency frameworks.

⁸ Core Competencies for GBV Specialists- GBV AoR LTT / December 14, 2014 / Sarah Martin

- Positive interpersonal attitudes
- Willingness to work as a team player
- Cultural understanding

During the recruitment process, recruiters/line managers should take note of skills gaps and capacity-building needs of selected candidates. WGSS programming should help address root causes – such as unequal gender norms – that make experienced and educated female candidates so few in number. Strategies should be identified relevant to the context (e.g. inter-agency advocacy plans, providing skills-building and informal education activities in the WGSS, identifying multisectoral collaborations between education and empowerment programming). Much more is covered under Part 5: Capacity-Building.

4.4 STAFF AND SELF CARE

Supervisors play a critical role in creating a culture that prioritizes the safety and well-being of staff. This is particularly critical for organizations that are providing GBV services in humanitarian settings, given the exposure of staff to highly stressful situations and the risk of vicarious (also known as secondary) trauma. We often talk about “self-care” in our work—or what an individual can do to prevent stress from becoming overwhelming. On a personal level, not practicing good self-care can lead to physical, emotional, mental and spiritual harm. It can disrupt overall well-being, quality of life and personal relationships. While the emphasis of self-care is usually on the individual, it is important for both individuals and organizations, as performance and quality of work often suffer when good self-care is not promoted and encouraged by supervisors and individuals alike. For these reasons, organizations, particularly those dealing with trauma or working on inequality, also have a responsibility to provide a level of care for their staff.⁹

To provide the best care and services to women, girls and GBV survivors, WGSS staff members including volunteers, women and girls who are part of the side-by-side approach, and outreach teams need to feel well and actively practice self-care.

Stress

Stress is a natural and normal response of all organisms to a specific event. It can be positive or negative.

Negative stress is a state of psychological and physical arousal that comes about as a result of a threat, challenge, or change that exceeds our coping resources, and that results in distress. There are three types of negative stress, all of which are usually experienced by WGSS staff, including GBV responders.

- A. Cumulative stress is the result of prolonged, accumulated, unrelieved exposure to a variety of stressors. It is the most common form of negative stress experienced by humanitarian workers and therefore, WGSS staff members. When not recognized and managed, it can lead to burnout, a common reaction to cumulative stress, which occurs over time after prolonged exposure to stress factors. When we are regularly exposed to demanding situations, over time we may no longer have the coping resources to be able to deal with the stress. While burnout is common, it does not remain permanent if people are given the time and space to recover.

9 Interagency GBV Case Management Guidelines, 2017. Part 5. http://www.gbvims.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Interagency-GBV-Case-Management-Guidelines_Final_2017.pdf

- B.** Critical incident stress is caused by extraordinary events that provoke high levels of stress in almost everyone involved. While not everyone experiences stress the same way, critical incident stress is commonly understood as a response to an event in which nearly everyone involved has a stress reaction. When we think of “trauma,” we typically are thinking of events that would cause a critical stress reaction. There are some key aspects of critical incident stress that are important to note – it is sudden and disruptive; it involves an actual or perceived threat or loss; it causes a sense of vulnerability, and it disrupts our sense of being in control and perception of the world as safe and predictable.
- C.** Secondary trauma, which is not common, is a risk of humanitarian work as we work closely with individuals who have been through traumatic experiences. This may be particularly true when working with women and girls who have experienced violence and abuse. It is important to know that secondary trauma is a process – it does not happen after one encounter. Rather, it may occur when a WGSS staff member engages with extremely vulnerable, marginalized populations or with GBV survivors. Through empathy and involvement, staff may feel affected in a way that changes their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

All the types of negative stress mentioned above can lead to changes in our body, mind and spirit. Many of us are familiar with physical reactions, such as headaches or difficulty sleeping.

Working with women and girls in emergency settings is rewarding and stressful at the same time. It is important for supervisors to recognize signs of stress in themselves and work to address possible sources of stress for the team. This toolkit provides a simple tool for staff members to approach the topic and start analyzing whether they are stressed, and to then reflect on personal coping mechanisms – **Tool 18: Identify Signs of Stress and Negative Coping Mechanisms.** Importantly, while the tool may help staff members to identify signs of stress, it does not replace regular personal and team monitoring. Supervisors should still develop personal and team strategies to address stress and burnout. Having said this, individual supervision, or self-care is still a fundamental way to identify and manage stress for both parties.

Staff Care

Team wellness should be the result of a group effort. Discussing challenges and ideas about the team’s wellness is important and must be handled with honesty and sensitivity. Despite the communal responsibility, supervisors play a crucial role in guaranteeing the well-being of the team, identifying stress factors and reactions, and preventing the negative impact of stress on team members. To do this, supervisors need to be aware of their limits, the factors that provoke stress, and their coping mechanisms. It is crucial that supervisors think of their well-being first.

There are many possible actions that the team and supervisor can undertake to strengthen relationships and create a positive and healthy environment. They can be categorized into 3 groups:

- 1. Ensure an equal, safe and positive working environment.** As a supervisor, define working hours; aim to divide the workload among staff; support and encourage interaction between staff members and other social support mechanisms (families, communities, friends, etc.); ensure the availability of clear and updated job descriptions; define objectives and activities; ensure clear lines of management and communication; do not force anyone to take risks that others are not allowed or not willing to

take; ensure adequate and culturally-sensitive technical supervision; ensure that members of senior management visit field projects regularly; monitor the health and well-being of staff; encourage space to take breaks during work; set realistic expectations of the team. Make available appropriate self-care materials, which include contact information for a staff welfare officer/mental health professional.

2. Learn from and support each other. As a supervisor, conduct regular individual and team supervision meetings; develop a coaching attitude and skills; recognize signs of stress and burnout in team members; support exploring ways to manage stress; promote respectful and effective communication within the teams; empower and encourage team members in being self-aware and self-confident; acknowledge and validate the experience of team members; be a role model to the team; facilitate integration between staff and address intra-team conflict and other negative team dynamics; establish a relationship of trust, be open and show that you are paying attention and listen without judgment; create a supportive climate by regularly checking on the well-being of staff. For example:

- Be mindful of how staff are taking care of themselves (e.g. encourage them to take lunch breaks, etc.) and take note of changes in appearance or health, monitor stress levels – support staff to identify and monitor stressors in their lives and to develop self-care plans.
- Encourage staff to identify a “self-care buddy” – another staff person with whom they connect with on a regular basis to discuss how they are feeling and what support they need from each other.

3. Strategize and implement concrete actions. As a supervisor, ensure that all staff are briefed on the spectrum of stress and stress management techniques through promoting the use of:

- [Tool 18: Identify Signs of Stress and Negative Coping Mechanisms](#)
- [Tool 19: Team Wellness Mandala](#)
- [Tool 20: Stress Management Techniques](#)

In addition, promote any existing organizational policy for psychosocial support to staff if you supervise them. Coordinate with HR/management to ensure a protocol for caseworkers showing signs of stress/burnout; make sure you meet with each staff member individually once a month to de-brief, hear how they are feeling and if required, do relaxation and stress management exercises together like those available in [Tool 20: Stress Management Techniques](#) (follow the same principles as for case management and psychosocial support). Establish routines – including for supervision and team meetings; regularly demonstrate appreciation for staff; routinely share program information to create an environment of transparency; organize “staff care” days that allow staff to come together to do something fun or relaxing.

If needed, the supervisor can support staff to develop strategies to address the stress factors in their work, but sometimes all people need is a safe space to share their thoughts and feelings. It is important that, through open communication channels, team members and supervisors identify negative stressors during a bilateral session – the supervisor may suggest the use of [Tool 18: Identify Signs of Stress and Negative Coping Mechanisms](#) and plan a tailored stress prevention and response mechanism accordingly.

Sometimes stress is severe enough that these strategies will not have the expected result. In this case, reaching out to professional support may represent the most appropriate solution. In the event that a WGSS team member experiences acute and severe distress that limits their basic functioning, s/he must stop working and receive immediate care by a mental health professional trained in the treatment of acute traumatic stress.

Self-care

We all need to take care of our well-being to support others. That includes understanding the sources and signs of negative stress which is the first step in learning how to better deal with it. Stress chemicals can trigger physical reactions that can linger for days, weeks, or sometimes months. In addition to triggering physical reactions, stress hormones and chemicals affect brain chemistry and impact the way we think and feel. Over time, our bodies, emotions and minds can be seriously affected by stress.

The second step involves identifying the activities in your life that reduce stress and give you energy. Plan to do one of your chosen activities at least once per week, or during times of stress.

Most considerations valid for staff care are applicable to self-care. For example, the “self-care buddy” highlighted as a staff-care practice, is a methodology that brings positive effects at both the individual and team level.

It is essential to recognize positive methods of coping that tend to be helpful across different cultures, such as:

- Seeking out social support
- Providing structure to the day
- Relaxation methods
- Recreational activities

Staff should familiarize themselves with helpful coping methods by reviewing available resources of other organizations¹⁰, as well as through discussions with community members who are coping well with stressful situations. Sometimes spreading messages about how to help others can be useful, as they encourage colleagues, as well as women and girls, to take care of others and, indirectly, of themselves.

10 Move to the End of Violence developed a 21-day challenge for self-care for sustainability and impact.
See: <https://www.movetoendviolence.org/resources/21-day-challenge-self-care-for-sustainability-impact/>

A black and white photograph showing several women and children in a makeshift settlement. In the foreground, a woman in a patterned dress and a white headscarf is smiling. Behind her, another woman in a polka-dot headscarf is working on a long, thin object. To the right, a child sits on the ground. In the background, a brick wall and more tents are visible.

4: FURTHER GUIDANCE



ANNEX 4.1. INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

During the development of this toolkit, it was raised that often, not every female group attends the WGSS, and instead, only a specific proportion of the female population takes part in activities.¹ In fact, the WGSS is sometimes perceived as a place for specific groups of women and girls only (e.g. for ‘educated women’; for a specific ethnicity; for women above 20 years old; for women without disabilities etc.).

Ensuring the diversity of staff is essential to attract diverse groups of women and girls to the WGSS. It demonstrates a concrete effort to not replicate any identity-based oppression, marginalization and exclusion which women and girls may face in the community, and establishes the WGSS as an inclusive environment for all women and girls.

Therefore, while skills, knowledge, previous experience and attitudes are all important factors with which to assess potential candidates during the recruitment phase for the WGSS program, staffing should be as representative of the diverse groups of women and girls in the community as possible. This will help increase comfort levels, as well as the likeliness of quality input and feedback. In fact, diverse staff play a key role in tailoring programming and obtaining comprehensive feedback and input, and this is a recommended methodology to contextualize and enrich information coming from FGDs or wider consultations with women and girls.

The diverse composition of staff should not, however, lower the quality of WGSS activities and services, and inclusion cannot become the only criteria of recruitment. Instead, recruiters should find a balance between maintaining high-quality programming and recruiting people from diverse groups. An important consideration here, to ensure equal opportunities for women from diverse groups, is to provide tailored capacity-building support to strengthen the capabilities of less experienced women on the team. Furthermore, inclusion is not a pure numerical issue and therefore, it is neither mandatory nor realistic to have one staff member representing each group in the community. Inclusion is not a process that happens overnight, it is a process that must be identified, initiated, analyzed, discussed and reviewed on a regular basis with WGSS staff and its attending members.

¹ Raised in several informal conversations conducted with practitioners during the development of this toolkit.



Lessons Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Some identities are more hidden than others. Women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities tend to suffer from extreme discrimination. While inclusive recruitment is about equal opportunities, it cannot stigmatize further or force individuals to disclose identities they keep confidential for their own safety. In this sense, the sexual orientation of candidates should not influence the selection or the recruitment of WGSS staff, and candidates should neither be forced, or feel they need to, disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity. Particularly in contexts where homosexuality is illegal, vacancy announcements or job descriptions should not explicitly invite LGBTI individuals to apply, to avoid placing staff and candidates under the scrutiny of investigations by authorities seeking to assess their sexual orientation.

Instead, to begin the process of creating safer and more inclusive teams, the WGSS program could include questions related to candidates' beliefs and attitudes towards diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

To carry out recruitment that is sensitive to inclusion, the worksheet below provides examples of some practices to consider.²

INCLUSION-SENSITIVE PRACTICE	METHOD
Ensure access to job opportunities for marginalized or excluded groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure proactive advertising and recruiting to a wide variety of networks.• Ensure that the locations where vacancy announcements are posted are accessible by everyone, including vulnerable and marginalized groups.• Interview panels should be diverse.• Ensure that job postings include languages that reflect your WGSS' inclusive hiring practices.• If women and girls are not usually exposed to educational and job opportunities, in the vacancy announcement do not put emphasis on educational requirement and previous work experience.

² See TAAP Toolkit: Managing Inclusive Teams. <https://rescue.app.box.com/s/8l2wuw4yl0n8qezkck3qhgsuvxa60vh9/file/295583285323>

INCLUSION-SENSITIVE PRACTICE	METHOD
<p>Ensure access to job opportunities for marginalized or excluded groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proactive advertising and recruiting to a wide variety of networks. • Ensure that the locations where vacancy announcements are posted are accessible by everyone, including vulnerable and marginalized groups. • Interview panels should be diverse. • Ensure that job postings include languages that reflect your WGSS' inclusive hiring practices. • If women and girls are not usually exposed to educational and job opportunities, in the vacancy announcement do not put emphasis on educational requirement and previous work experience.
<p>Consider appointing a dedicated staff member to promote inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, appoint and train a dedicated staff member to support integration of inclusion practices across the team and activities. • Staff members with knowledge on diversity and inclusion should inform the development of vacancy announcements and the recruitment process to ensure fairness and equal accessibility.
<p>Use inclusion-sensitive selection criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job descriptions should explicitly refer to a diverse working environment and to the non-discrimination principle. • Consider the average level of female education and access to previous job opportunities before developing the interview questionnaire.
<p>Address 'inclusion' in all job descriptions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job vacancies should include messaging that minorities, women, persons with disabilities, etc. (customize to local context) are encouraged to apply following the local labor regulation.

INCLUSION-SENSITIVE PRACTICE	METHOD
<p>Interview potential employees about inclusion attitudes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the interview make sure to ask questions on inclusion: for example, “please tell me about one time that you implemented an inclusion strategy”. Or present a scenario to the candidate and ask “please explain how you would integrate inclusion in this scenario”.

In addition, the following considerations are applicable in the recruitment and relationship with WGSS staff with different abilities.³

1. Focus on the person first, not their disability or health condition.
2. Assume capacity. Look at what they can do, not just at what they can't do. This gives us many more options for communication and participation.
3. Treat adults with disabilities as you would other adults, paying attention to gender issues.
4. Take time, watch and listen. This is a process, not a one-time event. Each time you meet the person, you will learn something new about them and understand better how they communicate and what they mean.
5. Conduct open conversations with caregivers in which the individual can hear what is being said and participate in any way possible. Remember that people who can't speak or move may still understand what is happening around them and what people are saying about them.
6. Pay attention to any way in which the individual wishes to communicate. This could be through gestures and sometimes their emotions. It is OK, however, to say “I don't understand.”
7. When you understand, acknowledge this with the individual. In the past, they may have been dismissed by others when trying to communicate their feelings and experiences. Reassure them that you believe them, validating any experiences and emotions that they share with you.
8. Some persons with intellectual and mental disabilities can exhibit a wide range of behaviors. This is sometimes the way they communicate with others.

³ The following recommendations were developed by the Women's Refugee Commission to support GBV practitioners to identify the skills and capacities of persons with disabilities that may be useful in both case management with survivors, and supporting participation in empowerment activities.

A close-up, black and white photograph of a woman with short, wavy hair. She is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. Her right hand is raised to her face, with her fingers resting near her eye. She is wearing a light-colored, ribbed top. The background is blurred.

4: TOOLS



TOOL 15: JOB DESCRIPTIONS (JDS)

WHY TO USE THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS?

JDs clarify the tasks and responsibilities each staff member is assigned to, and the characteristics or competencies that each staff member should have to properly perform their tasks. It is a tool that supports recruiters in identifying suitable candidates and recruiting them upon considering the tasks they will be assigned to.

Moreover, JDs clearly define roles and responsibilities providing staff members with a clear responsibilities' framework. They can be used by line managers to cross-check if supervisees operate in line with the employee agreement. JDs can also be used as terms of reference for each staff member, helping the team and supervisors to clearly divide roles and responsibilities.

WHEN TO USE THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS?

During the recruitment, a JD describes the roles and responsibilities of vacant posts providing information for candidates to decide whether or not to apply for that position. Recruitment and interviews carried out by line managers, recruiters or human resources focal points, are based on the roles, responsibilities and competencies described in the JDs. Usually, candidates are evaluated based on the specific role described in the JD.

JDs are created for recruitment purposes but they also establish the frame of personnel responsibilities. Therefore, they are used by staff members and supervisors over the course of the entire employment period.

HOW TO USE THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS?

JDs should be as comprehensive as possible and should include both technical, administrative and operational responsibilities. The content of a JD should be developed by technical and administrative line managers with the support of the human resources focal point.

The job descriptions (JDs) provided below are based on the example of the organogram provided in Part 4: Staffing. Job titles and tasks assigned to each staff vary according to multiple factors such as structure of the team, type of activities, size of population served, implementation approach, delivery model, capacities of organization, years of WGSS presence, strategic plan etc. Therefore, all JDs have to be tailored to the specific context. This is particularly true for WGSS that do not operate through a static and stand-alone model.

In contexts where women and girls have limited or no access to educational or job opportunities, requiring previous work experience or educational qualifications may prevent women from applying. In this case, recruitment should focus more on attitude, beliefs, personal skills and commitment toward women's empowerment. The JDs below do not include educational and professional requirements, and should be tailored to actual availability of expertise and educational background.

In societies where women do have access to education and working experience, JDs should spell out that experience working with diverse populations (including minorities and vulnerable categories of the community) is a plus or a requirement depending on the context. Moreover, JDs and vacancy announcements should include messages about minorities and vulnerable categories of the community (to be customized to the local context).

The JDs that follow are just examples – they need to be tailored to the specific role and context:

List of JDs:

1. WGSS lead
2. WGSS based activities role
3. WGSS based activities assistant role
4. Community outreach and engagement role
5. Community outreach and engagement assistant role
6. Women's (and girls') forum focal point
7. Activities specialist
8. Security Guards
9. Cleaners
10. Receptionist
11. WGSS based M&E officer

1. JOB DESCRIPTION: WGSS LEAD

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to ensure a safe, relevant, inclusive and appealing delivery of activities and services. Leads work as a focal point for WGSS and plays a representative, supervisory and coordinating role. Leads are responsible for ensuring that the work of the WGSS is accountable towards the affected population, and that the WGSS team works in line with WGSS principles and objectives. Main tasks are: recruitment and supervision of WGSS staff; application of safety measures for staff and members; compliance with project proposals, budgets and work plans; liaison with supervisors of GBV team members hosted in the WGSS (since the GBV team supervisor is not usually based in the WGSS, the WGSS lead will be responsible for coordinating with GBV supervisors); oversight of procurement and logistics of the WGSS; and management of data and reporting.

Supervision:

- Supervise and provide ongoing support to the WGSS team.
- Recruit new team members and assess capacities.
- Identify and develop team and individual capacity-building strategies.
- Strengthen the capacities of the team in managing and delivering activities and services.
- Review and provide members' feedback on activities and services, tools and resources in use in the WGSS.

- Review, evaluate and produce improvement plans on performance, belief and attitude of the staff.
- Ensure that (as much as possible) staffing of WGSS represent different population groups (to tailor to the context, relevant diversities in terms of ethnicity, religion, minorities, vulnerabilities, LGBTI..)
- Ensure that staff understand and promote the consensus method, instead of majority, as applicable.

Management:

- Develop a program that prioritizes inclusion.
- Identify and put measures in place to promote women's and girls' ownership in collaboration with staff and members.
- Set up and ensure the correct functioning of feedback and consultation mechanisms.
- Support in designing program concept notes and proposals for WGSS.
- Monitor the budget of the WGSS while identifying and proposing measures for sustainability.
- Receive weekly reports from staff and compile regular program reports and data analysis.
- Administer logistics and procurement of the WGSS.
- Keep the WGSS, its activities and material relevant and, as much as possible, innovative.
- Analyze trends of GBV and develop/adjust program strategies accordingly.
- Monitor and promote the WGSS staff well-being and healthy functioning of the team.
- Discuss and find tailored mechanisms to work on staff care with WGSS team and members.
- Ensure availability and proper functioning of safe and reliable complaint mechanisms for safeguarding, SEA and program-related complaints.

Coordination:

- Take part in women's forum meeting and ensure to discuss action points with WGSS staff to inform activities
- Identify interaction points and link up GBV response, prevention and outreach programming
- Represent WGSS in coordination meetings and presentations
- Support the team in developing activity plans for the WGSS
- Identify strategic collaboration and priorities and implement them
- Align WGSS work with social cohesion strategies developed by other humanitarian sectors
- Engage and collaborate with GBV coordination mechanisms
- Promote connection between WGSS members and forums and other women's platforms and network
- Work as an advocate for women and girls' rights and needs in humanitarian forums and other relevant platform
- Collaborate with humanitarian coordination mechanisms to identify and ensure the well functioning of community feedback mechanisms

Personal requirements:

- Demonstrates sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Demonstrates ability and commitment toward diversity and inclusion.
- Demonstrates commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Strong communication skills, with good understanding of relevant cross-cultural issues.
- Qualitative and quantitative reporting skills.
- Strong problem-solving attitude.
- Attention to detail and ability to produce timely and high-quality work.
- High level of flexibility, responsiveness, and reliability.
- Ability to work under pressure, and time management skills.
- Strict adherence to humanitarian, Protection and GBV principles and standards, as well as organizational policies including Code of Conduct and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

2. JOB DESCRIPTION: WGSS-BASED ACTIVITIES ROLE

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to plan activities, supervise, implement and monitor the impact of activities taking place in the WGSS. She plays a key focal point role to develop material, plan sessions, communicate messaging, build capacities of activity facilitators, and coordinate with other humanitarian sectors to develop inter-sectoral activities and strategies. For this, she needs to constantly listen, gather and use information and feedback provided by women and girls.

Supervision:

- Supervise and provide ongoing support to activities' facilitators and activity specialists.
- Monitor, build or strengthen the capacities of activities' facilitators and specialists.
- Recruit team members.
- Collaborate with proactive members to build their capacities in planning, organizing, delivering activities.
- Review, evaluate and produce improvement plans on performance, beliefs and attitudes of the activities' facilitator and specific activities' specialist.
- Monitor and analyze data related to the progress and impact of the activities delivered and inform the program accordingly.

Management:

- Collaborate in the development of curricula, tools and other resources for activities hosted in the WGSS.
- Facilitate activities in collaboration with activities' facilitator.
- (based on assessment's findings and security recommendations) Identify strategies to ensure that activities represent and include different population groups (ethnicities, religions, minorities, vulnerabilities, LGBTI...).

- Identify, design and facilitate activities tailored to age and vulnerability type.
- Ensure activities taking place in the WGSS are relevant and, as much as possible, innovative.
- Ensure activities feedback informs both activities based inside and outside the WGSS.
- Ensure consistency between the messages delivered inside and outside the WGSS.
- Draft, in collaboration with women and girls and activities' facilitators, the WGSS work plan on a regular basis.
- Identify strategies to promote solidarity and inclusion among members.
- Meet with the outreach team to get information on trends, community dynamics, community acceptance to modify program accordingly.
- Support in the development of IEC material.
- Review and incorporate members' feedback into planning.
- Provide input for weekly and staff activity reports.
- Refer GBV survivors to specialized services (ensuring to not proactively seek for survivors).

Coordination:

- Take part in women's forum meetings and inform activities accordingly.
- Attend field-level coordination mechanisms.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure a fruitful and smooth field-level coordination.
- Identify strategic collaboration and implement activities in collaboration with other service providers.
- Coordinate activities and initiatives with other women's forum/networks/platforms.

Personal requirements:

- Sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Interest and inclination toward women's empowerment and gender equality.
- Commitment toward diversity promotion and inclusion.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Personal qualities: good listener, team player, flexible, network-builder, able to handle pressure well and work in cross-cultural setting.
- Communication skills, with good understanding of relevant cross-cultural and sensitive issues.
- Strict adherence to humanitarian, protection and GBV principles and standards, as well as organizational policies including Code of Conduct and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

3. JOB DESCRIPTION: WGSS-BASED ACTIVITIES - ASSISTANT ROLE

(Type of activities is decided based on the strategy and workplan of the WGSS. Therefore, the JDs of this position should be adapted to the specific role. Here below, are general requirements and responsibilities).

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to develop activity material and facilitate group activities ensuring they are inclusive and tailored to context, age and vulnerability type. She also monitors the impact of activities and captures feedback from women and girls. Based on strategy, schedule and target groups of the WGSS, the activities assistant role may have a focus (e.g. adolescents, curriculum-based activities).

Management:

- Facilitate group activities in the WGSS.
- Collaborate in the development of curricula, tools and other resources for WGSS activities.
- Design and implement activities tailored to age and vulnerability type.
- Identify delivery methods and languages that make activity content accessible to all members.
- Support the WGSS-based activities staff in identifying type of activities, session content as well as delivery methodology and material to keep the WGSS workplan relevant, up-to-date and innovative.
- Collaborate with one or more members to build their capacities in planning, organizing and delivering group activities.
- Identify strategies to ensure that (as much as possible) activities are tailored to the context and promote inclusion of different population groups (ethnicities, religious, minorities, vulnerabilities, LGBTI...).
- Gather women's and girls' feedback on activities, schedule and methodologies used.
- Monitor the quality and impact of activities.
- Draft the WGSS workplan on a regular basis in collaboration with the WGSS-based activities staff
- Identify and implement strategies to promote inclusion and solidarity among women and girls.
- Support IEC material development.
- Review and incorporate activity feedback received by women and girls.
- Guarantee fairness of selection criteria and access to group activities.
- Provide input for weekly and staff activity reports.

Coordination:

- Take part in women's forum meetings and inform activities accordingly.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure a fruitful and smooth field-level coordination.
- Identify strategic collaboration and implement activities in collaboration with other service providers.
- Meet with the outreach team to get information on trends, community dynamics, community acceptance, in order to modify activities and material accordingly.

Personal requirements:

- Demonstrates sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Demonstrates ability and commitment toward diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Personal qualities: good listener, team player, flexible, network-builder, able to handle pressure well and work in cross-cultural setting.
- Communication skills, with good understanding of relevant cross-cultural and sensitive issues.
- Strict adherence to humanitarian, protection and GBV principles and standards, as well as organizational policies including Code of Conduct and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

4. JOB DESCRIPTION: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH ROLE

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is community engagement, to inform communities about WGSS programming and to increase women's and girls' access to WGSS. The outreach focal point plans, organizes and delivers information sessions with community members, leaders and stakeholders on WGSS programming and benefits. S/he collects community feedback, concerns about the WGSS and implements strategies to increase the level of acceptance from and buy-in of community members.

Supervision:

- Establish, plan and supervise community-based activities.
- Supervise and provide ongoing support to community engagement assistants (or team).
- Train, mentor, coach outreach team members based on capacity assessment and personalized capacity-building plan.
- Collaborate with proactive members to build their capacities to plan, organize and deliver outreach activities.
- Build capacities of staff and members to identify possible WGSS allies willing to get involved in outreach or to support WGSS programming in different ways.
- Train staff in conducting safety audits in collaboration with the WGSS-based team.

Implementation:

- Develop and implement context, age and vulnerability-tailored activities and outreach methodologies.
- Collaborate in the development of curricula, tools and other resources for outreach.
- Ensure consistency between the messages delivered inside and outside the WGSS.
- Ensure communities' feedback informs both activities based inside and outside the WGSS.
- Identify strategies to promote inclusion and solidarity among activity participants and staff members.
- Identify, design and implement activities tailored to age and vulnerability type.

- Identify outreach strategies to engage with women and girls who cannot access or are not aware of the WGSS.
- Adapt activities to make them context-relevant and informative for community members and for WGSS programming.
- Coordinate with religious/community/traditional leaders and key stakeholders to strengthen support and information networks.
- Raise awareness and spread information about activities, services, initiatives and benefits of WGSS to communities and stakeholders.
- Meet with the WGSS-based team to discuss GBV trends, community dynamics, community acceptance and modify program accordingly.
- Develop IEC creative material and methodologies to present WGSS activities and benefits to communities, leaders and other stakeholders.
- Conduct or participate in safety audit and write the safety audit report.
- Review safety audit report and follow up with service providers to increase safe access to WGSS.
- Collaborate with specialized social cohesion stakeholders to deal with tensions and discriminatory community dynamics.
- Link women and girls with WGSS activities and services.
- Refer GBV survivors to WGSS or to other specialized services (ensuring to not proactively seek for survivors).
- Provide input for weekly and staff activity reports.

Coordination:

- Conduct meetings with local stakeholders to increase the level of community acceptance and to strengthen relationships.
- Coordinate with other colleagues to analyze trends and information that can inform the content and the structure of activities.
- Identify strategic collaborations to channel messages and increase access to WGSS.
- Attend field-level coordination mechanisms.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure field-level coordination and proper functioning of communities' feedback mechanisms.

Personal requirements:

- Committed to rights-based and community-based approaches.
- Interest and inclination toward women's empowerment and gender equality.
- Sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Ability and commitment toward diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.

- Analytical capacities to recognize community dynamics, gender roles, leadership and hierarchies.
- Personal qualities: good listener, team player, flexible, network-builder, able to handle pressure well and work in cross-cultural setting.
- Native speaker.
- Diplomatic and negotiation skills.
- Communication skills, with good understanding of relevant cross-cultural and sensitive issues.

5. JOB DESCRIPTION: OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - ASSISTANT ROLE

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to work to increase the level of community acceptance and buy-in, to secure women's and girls' access to WGSS, to deliver group information sessions on WGSS services, activities and benefits.

Management:

- Collaborate in the development of curricula, tools and other resources for outreach activities.
- Identify strategies to ensure that (as much as possible) activity participants represent different population groups (ethnicities, religious, minorities, vulnerabilities, LGBTI...).
- Identify, design and implement activities tailored to age and vulnerability type.
- Identify possible WGSS allies and, with them, plan actions to support (and increase acceptance toward) WGSS programming.
- Ensure consistency between messages delivered inside and outside the WGSS.
- Adapt activities according to both clients' and community feedback.
- Conduct service mapping sessions, keep the documents updated and share it with WGSS colleagues.
- Coordinate with religious/community/traditional leaders and key stakeholders to strengthen support and information networks.
- Collaborate in the development of IEC material and methodologies to present WGSS activities and benefits to communities, leaders and other stakeholders.
- Conduct a safety audit in collaboration the outreach officer and relevant staff members; inform the safety audit report and follow up with service providers to improve access to WGSS.
- Collaborate with specialized social cohesion stakeholders to deal with tensions and discriminatory community dynamics.
- Link women or girls with WGSS activities and services.
- Refer GBV survivors to WGSS or to other specialized services (ensuring to not proactively seek for survivors).

Coordination:

- Conduct meetings with local stakeholders to increase the level of acceptance and to strengthen relationships.
- Coordinate with other WGSS staff to analyze trends and information to inform outreach programming.
- Facilitate activities in collaboration with other stakeholders and humanitarian practitioners (based on strategic collaborations identified by the officer and the WGSS lead).
- Meet with the WGSS team to discuss GBV trends, community dynamics, community acceptance in order to modify programming accordingly.
- Coordinate efforts to update and maintain a properly functioning community feedback mechanism.

Personal requirements:

- Committed to rights-based and community-based approaches.
- Sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Ability and commitment toward diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Analytical capacities to recognize community dynamics, gender roles, leadership and hierarchies.
- Personal qualities: good listener, team player, flexible, network-builder, able to handle pressure well and work in cross-cultural setting.
- Native speaker.
- Diplomatic and negotiation skills.
- Communication skills, with good understanding of relevant cross-cultural and sensitive issues.

6. JOB DESCRIPTION: WOMEN'S (OR GIRLS') FORUM FOCAL POINT

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is strengthening and building the coordination and decision-making capacities of forum members. She also works to ensure that staff and forum members coordinate and share feedback aimed at constantly increasing of women's and girls' empowerment and ownership of the WGSS. Main tasks include building the capacities of forum members in organizing and coordinating the forum, providing feedback, analyzing the available data, developing implementation and inclusion strategies, and proposing action to improve the quality of the space.

Responsibilities

- Facilitate (or co-facilitate) women's forum and girls' forum meetings.
- Ensure all forum members are clear about forum objectives, possibilities, schedule and methodologies as well as the level of commitment that the forum requires.
- Explain and promote the method of consensus when applicable, and facilitate discussions to reach consensus.
- Build the capacities of forum members to actively listen, coordinate, provide feedback, discuss programming, identify implementation and inclusion strategies through consensus.

- Manage the expectation of members as needed.
- Encourage women to speak out, feel comfortable in expressing opinions and promote positive changes.
- Ensure that discussions, feedback and suggestions of forum members inform programming.
- Help forum members in taking an increasing role and commitment in discussing innovative and safe implementation and inclusion strategies.
- Support women's forum members in providing feedback to improve the quality of staffing and programming.
- Support forum members in taking an active role in the WGSS (on a voluntary base) and monitor that the empowerment process of forum members is at all times safe, equitable and respectful.
- Guarantee fairness of selection criteria and access to empowering opportunities (volunteering, forum, co-facilitation...)
- Provide input for weekly and staff activity reports.

Personal requirements:

- Sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Interest and inclination toward women's empowerment and gender equality.
- Commitment toward diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Personal qualities: good listener, team player, flexible, network-builder, able to handle pressure well and work in cross-cultural setting.
- Communication skills, with good understanding of cross-cultural issues.
- Diplomatic skills.

7. JOB DESCRIPTION: (SPECIFIC) ACTIVITY SPECIALIST

Key Responsibilities: She oversees an activity that requires specialized knowledge to be delivered. An activities specialist can be engaged for an ad-hoc session, a set of sessions, or a curriculum-based activity. For example:

- A. an ad -hoc session (e.g: a nurse collaborates with the WGSS to deliver a breastfeeding session).
2. a set of sessions (e.g. a midwife is engaged to deliver five sessions on sexual and reproductive health).
3. a curriculum-based activity (e.g. an adolescent expert is hired to deliver "Girls Shine"; a teacher is hired to deliver writing classes to older women).

This JD and specific roles and responsibilities will depend on the activity and its structure. In the case of an ad-hoc intervention, this JD may not be useful.

Management:

- Adapt the curricula, tools and other resources to the age and characteristics of the group.
- Facilitate (insert name of activity).
- Ensure fairness and relevance of selection criteria.
- Monitor attendance. If attendance is inconsistent, discuss with participants to identify and put into practice relevant mechanisms to improve attendance.
- Gather women's and girls' feedback on activities, schedule and methodologies used.
- Co-organize and co-facilitate the activity with WGSS members.
- Identify strategies to ensure that (as much as possible) activities are tailored to the context and promote inclusion of different population groups (ethnicities, religious, minorities, vulnerabilities, LGBTI...).
- Support the outreach officer in gathering data to monitor the quality and impact of activities.
- Support the outreach officer in developing the WGSS outreach work plan.
- Identify and implement strategies to promote inclusion and solidarity among women and girls.
- Review and incorporate activity feedback received by women and girls.
- Provide input for weekly and staff activity reports.

Coordination:

- Take part in women's forum meetings and inform activities accordingly.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure a fruitful and smooth field-level coordination.
- Meet with the outreach team to get information on trends, community dynamics, community acceptance in order to update the activities and material accordingly.

8. JOB DESCRIPTION: SECURITY GUARD

Key Responsibilities: The responsibility of security guards is to contribute to the safety of WGSS' members, staff and premises by observing and reporting any suspicious activities; and preventing men and unwanted guests from accessing the WGSS. Security guards should work in line with the labor law and when 24-hour surveillance is needed, a minimum of four guards should be planned for to ensure continuous coverage (that accounts for standard work hours, weeks, leave, and absences).

- Maintain the security watch during the assigned shift.
- Conduct regular rounds and stick to security directives.
- Note and report problems including suspicious activities, behavior and maintenance concerns.
- Maintain security and visitors log.
- Prevent men and boys from accessing the WGSS unless explained otherwise.
- Respond to security problems in line with the code of conduct, security SOPs and WGSS policies.
- Participate in capacity-building activities as needed or requested.

- Monitor and ensure the provision of water and electricity.
- Perform other duties as needed or requested.

Personal requirements:

- Ability to work independently and quickly.
- Ability to ensure the highest degree of discretion.
- Responsible and attentive character.
- Familiarity with non-discrimination principle, and displays a non-judgemental attitude.
- Ability to work in a multi- cultural environment.
- Ability to create a welcoming and respectful environment.

9. JOB DESCRIPTION: CHILD CARETAKER

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to take care of the children in the WGSS, and to engage them in learning and recreational activity. This role is important to contribute to a relaxed environment for members, where women and girls can feel free to talk and proactively take part in activities without worrying about their young children.

Management:

- Identify possible activities and consult with the WGSS-based activities staff person.
- Develop activities material and tools for recreational and learning activities.
- Facilitate recreational and learning activities with children in WGSS.
- Ensure the safety of children.
- Ensure children spend time in a positive and stimulating environment.

Personal requirements:

- Committed to rights-based and community-based approaches.
- Ability and commitment toward diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Ability to ensure the highest degree of discretion.
- Responsible and attentive character.
- Native speaker.
- Demonstrates sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.

10. JOB DESCRIPTION: CLEANER

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to keep the WGSS clean internally and externally, and contribute towards a hygienic and welcoming overall environment.

- Ensure the cleanliness of the WGSS by cleaning facilities, including sanitary facilities.
- Maintain supplies of soap and cleaning items.
- Prepare tea and coffee for the team and for WGSS members (if relevant).
- Note and report problems including suspicious activities, behavior and maintenance concerns.
- Ensure confidentiality of WGSS.
- Participate in capacity-building activities as needed or requested.
- Monitor and ensure the provision of water and electricity.
- Contribute to creating a welcoming, respectful and supportive environment.
- Perform other duties as needed or requested.

Personal requirements:

- Ability to work independently and quickly.
- Ability to ensure the highest degree of discretion.
- Familiarity of non-discrimination principle, and displays a non-judgmental attitude.
- Responsible and attentive character.
- Ability to work in a multi- cultural environment.

11. JOB DESCRIPTION: RECEPTIONIST

Key Responsibilities: Main responsibility is to welcome women and girls, provide information on activities and services, keep track of women and girls entering and exiting the WGSS, register newcomers and create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all women and girls.

- Register women and girls accessing WGSS based on WGSS recommendations.
- Keep attendance sheets and registration files updated and orderly.
- Compile and submit data collected.
- Welcome women and girls.
- Provide information about services and activities of WGSS.
- Promote a welcoming and inclusive environment.
- Support survivors in accessing case management services in a safe and confidential manner.

Personal requirements:

- Demonstrated capacities of collecting numeric data.¹
- Good quantitative reporting skills.
- Sensitivity to gender equality and GBV issues.
- Ability and commitment toward diversity and inclusion
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Interest and enthusiasm toward the work done by the WGSS.
- Ability to ensure the highest degree of discretion.
- Familiarity of non-discrimination principle, and displays a non-judgmental attitude.
- Good communication skills, with good understanding of cross-cultural issues.
- Attention to detail.
- Patience and empathy.

12. JOB DESCRIPTION: WGSS-BASED M&E FOCAL POINT

Key responsibilities: Main responsibility is to collect, track, document and analyze data gathered from different WGSS activities, services and initiatives to monitor progress and inform future programming.

Management:

- Oversee data collection.
- Handle day-to-day tracking and reporting on activities.
- Review and provide technical support on methodologies to calculate and support against the indicators.
- Develop the M&E plan in collaboration with WGSS staff.
- Review against activities, dedicated staff data collection instruments, schedules, and use of information generated.
- Perform regular analysis of data and share with WGSS staff and forum members.
- Prepare monthly report and recommendations based on the analysis of the data.
- Coordinate and join outreach or mobile team as needed.

Coordination:

- Provide technical support to WGSS staff on implementing M&E plan.
- Coordinate with staff and ensure good information flow.
- Coordinate with M&E focal point at the program/ office level

¹ In various contexts women and girls do not have access to education or job opportunities. Professional and educational requirement may discriminate women and girls during the recruitment process

Personal requirements:²

- Demonstrates sensitivity and understanding of working with vulnerable women and GBV survivors.
- Commitment toward a healthy and supportive working environment.
- Willingness to undertake regular field-visits and interact with different stakeholders.
- Understanding of GBV programming is a plus.
- Ability to ensure the highest degree of discretion.
- Familiarity of non-discrimination principle, and displays a non-judgmental attitude.
- Good communication skills, with good understanding of cross-cultural issues.
- Attention to detail.
- Patience and empathy.

² In various contexts women and girls do not have access to education or job opportunities. Professional and educational requirement may discriminate women and girls during the recruitment process



TOOL 16: CANDIDATE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS SURVEY - FOR RECRUITMENT

WHY USE THE CANDIDATE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS SURVEY?

The questions in this tool are taken from [Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#) available in Part 5: Capacity-building. This is a reduced version of the survey to support recruiters to identify during interviews whether candidates have positive or negative attitudes and beliefs toward key issues, that impact the well-being and rights of women and girls. The tool by itself is not sufficient to determine whether a candidate should or should not be hired, but it can support the following:

- **Making a final decision between two or more final candidates.** If two or more candidates make it to the last recruitment stage, the answers to the 5 statements (in the table below) could influence the final decision.
- **Identifying gaps or negative beliefs.** If the candidate disagrees with some of the statements, both recruiter and manager should consider:
 - A. Capacity-building implications (are there enough resources/capacities to address this gap/belief?)
If there aren't sufficient capacities to immediately address the gaps/beliefs identified, the candidate should likely not be hired.
 - B. Impact on team dynamic (how this attitude or belief will influence the WGSS work/staff dynamic).
 - C. Effect on WGSS members (how this attitude or belief will influence the relationship with women and girls).
- **Identifying if there is an immediate need for specific training or support.** For example, if the candidate answers "Agree" to statement 5, this person needs to receive a 'Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse' training before start work or even before signing the contract.

WHEN TO USE THE CANDIDATE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS SURVEY?

The tool is used during the recruitment process. The 5 statements in the table below should be framed as questions to every new candidate interviewed for any WGSS position. The statements/questions should be added to a tailored interview questionnaire and cannot substitute enquiries on technical, managerial or any specific set of skills. The use of this tool during recruitment does not replace the use of [Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#) as a capacity-building tool for WGSS staff and volunteers.

HOW TO USE THE CANDIDATE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS SURVEY?

Instruction: The interviewer should read the statement and ask the candidate to say if s/he 'Agrees' or 'Disagrees' with the statement. The interviewer will tick the answer given.

The column “Considerations for recruiter” suggest what to keep in mind before hiring a candidate who may have negative attitudes and beliefs, which can negatively impact the well-being and rights of women and girls.

Scoring: Each positive attitude scores 1, each negative attitude scores 0. If the candidate has the right attitude/beliefs toward all 5 statements, s/he will score 5. If s/he has negative attitudes/ beliefs toward all 5 statements s/he will score 0. The higher the score, the better the attitude. The lower the score the worse the attitude.

If some negative attitudes are identified during the recruitment process, these should be reassessed after a period of time and after putting in practice capacity-building strategies to address the attitude identified. The assessment should be conducted using [Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

			CONSIDERATIONS FOR RECRUITER:
	1 POINT	0 POINT	TIPS FOR RECRUITERS:
1. A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep the family together.	Disagree	Agree	<p>The candidate Agrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider if the candidate is appropriate to the role s/he will be assigned to.• Consider what type of training or support your organization can provide to the candidate and if that will be sufficient to address the negative belief identified.• Ask yourself how to prevent/mitigate this attitude to avoid harm to colleagues or staff members, and a negative impact on the work of the WGSS.

<p>2. A woman's most important role is to take care of her family.</p>	<p>Disagree</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>The candidate Agrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider if the candidate is appropriate to the role s/he will be assigned to. • Consider what type of training or support your organization can provide to the candidate and if that will be sufficient to address the negative belief identified. • Ask yourself how to prevent/mitigate this attitude to avoid harm to colleagues or staff members, and a negative impact on the work of the WGSS.
<p>3. It is okay for a woman to work outside the home.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>Disagree</p>	<p>The candidate Disagrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider if the candidate is appropriate to the role s/he will be assigned to. • Consider what type of training or support your organization can provide to the candidate and if that will be sufficient to address the negative belief identified. • Ask yourself how to prevent/mitigate this attitude to avoid harm to colleagues or staff members, and a negative impact on the work of the WGSS.

<p>4. Homosexuality is wrong.</p>	Disagree	Agree	<p>The candidate Agrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider what type of training or support your organization can provide to the candidate and if that will be sufficient to address the negative belief identified. • Ask yourself how to prevent/mitigate this attitude so it will not impact negatively affect women's and girls' access to the WGSS? • Ask yourself how to prevent this belief from discriminating against or offending anyone in the WGSS?
<p>5. Women and girls are very lucky when they have a romantic or sexual relationship with humanitarian workers because they get more assistance.</p>	Disagree	Agree	<p>The candidate Agrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask yourself, do we have the capacity to strictly monitor the candidate's attitudes toward the women and girls we serve? • Ask yourself, can we deliver a PSEA training to the candidate before making her/him sign the contract?
<p>SCORE</p>			<p>TOTAL SCORE:</p>



TOOL 17: WGSS SAMPLE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES IN PARTNERSHIPS

WHY USE THE WGSS SAMPLE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PARTNERSHIPS?

Working in partnership entails a set of specific responsibilities. The list of responsibilities below should be included in the job descriptions ([Tool 15: Job Descriptions](#)) of staff dedicating a percentage of their time to support the partnership implementation of the WGSS.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS SAMPLE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PARTNERSHIPS?

When the WGSS selects an in-partnership implementation approach this tool will help guide the clear definition of roles and responsibilities in WGSS staff job descriptions. This promotes accountability towards the partnership, and ensures transparency, equality and complementarity between partners.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS SAMPLE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PARTNERSHIPS?

The following roles and responsibilities are indicative. Only the relevant roles and responsibilities should be selected and reflected in actual staff job descriptions. Also, consider whether additional ones not reflected in this tool should be added. The list below is not a full job description but highlights typical key responsibilities:

- Responsible for leading the stakeholder analysis and service mapping as well as guiding the analysis of findings to inform a decision on program approach and ways of working in partnership.
- Provide technical leadership for partner identification, collaborative program design, partnership management and performance review.
- Contribute to relevant proposal content and ensure appropriate budget resourcing for partner projects and support.
- Co-design with Partnership Lead (if relevant to organization's structure), and lead partner selection processes.
- Ensure collaborative program design processes that fully leverage the perspectives, experience and expertise of local actors, where possible based on collaborative needs assessment processes.
- Lead strategic liaison and relationship management with partner organizations.
- Co-lead the Partner's Project Capacity Review of potential partners, in coordination with other relevant departments, and participate in identifying appropriate risk mitigation strategies as necessary.
- Design partner project support to address program issues identified.

- Explore with partners, potential capacity-strengthening support, including system strengthening, trainings and overall organizational development, and identify requisite resources with other departments.
- Provide input as required by the Partnership Lead (if relevant to organization's structure) for the Partnership Agreement Signing Memorandum, partnership agreements, and agreement modifications.
- Collaborate with partners on the development and implementation of project monitoring frameworks.
- Co-lead Partnership Project Opening, Review and Closing Meetings, together with the Partnership Lead (if relevant to organization's structure).
- Review partnership project narrative reports, and provide feedback as appropriate (and support partners in the development of reports as necessary).
- Provide a summary review of partnership project finance reports to ensure expenses match activities, and provide feedback as appropriate.
- Direct responsibility for effective, timely partner support as it relates to program issues.
- Lead timely and effective partnership project review and reflection (monitoring), identifying appropriate follow-up actions, and provide completed reports to Partnership Lead (if relevant to organization's structure).
- Promote full partner participation in decision-making with respect to the project, including any project adaption based on project data.
- Ensure that supported partner projects abide by humanitarian principles, and sector principles and standards.
- Support partners as useful in coordination with other entities such as UN agencies, governmental organizations and other humanitarian actors.
- Engage with partners to identify and pursue shared advocacy priorities.
- Where and when appropriate, support partners in the development of proposal submissions.
- Co-lead the review of the performance of the partner, of the organization (including based on partner feedback), and of the partnership, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, and foster ongoing partnerships beyond the sub-award cycle.



TOOL 18: IDENTIFY SIGNS OF STRESS AND NEGATIVE COPING MECHANISMS

WHY USE THE IDENTIFY SIGNS OF STRESS AND NEGATIVE COPING MECHANISMS TOOL¹?

The tool supports you to:

Recognize your personal signs of stress: It is important to identify and recognize signs of stress, understand how it manifests and what aspect of your life it is impacting the most. Reviewing the tab below, you can identify various signs of stress to help guide your analysis. Recognition is the first step to recovery.

Identify personal coping mechanisms: The tool provides examples of positive and negative coping mechanisms. Even though some of the negative mechanisms might provide an immediate sense of relief, they do not help the recovery process. Identifying positive coping mechanisms that you already use allows you to gauge how you are working towards your well-being, and can help with identifying additional strategies you might want to use. If, while using this tool you realize that you are relying on more negative than positive coping mechanisms, this tool will help you reflect on and try out positive coping mechanisms that you can replace them with.

WHEN TO USE THE IDENTIFY SIGNS OF STRESS AND NEGATIVE COPING MECHANISMS TOOL?

This tool can be used at any time you want to identify signs of stress and personal coping mechanisms. Managers and supervisors should provide the tool to staff members, and encourage them to use the tool on a regular basis especially in emergency or stressful contexts.

HOW TO USE THE IDENTIFY SIGNS OF STRESS AND NEGATIVE COPING MECHANISMS TOOL?

This is a self-administered tool, anyone can use it to identify their own signs of stress and personal coping mechanisms. It is a tool that can support every staff member to monitor her/his own well-being when used on a regular basis.

Review the different signs of stress listed in the first table and, once identified, review the various coping mechanisms listed in the second table to identify which ones are most relevant and realistic for you to implement.

¹ This tool is adapted from an Info sheet written by International Medical Corps, Dr. Inka Weissbecker. "Staff exposed to stressful incidents". 2010.

IDENTIFY YOUR SIGNS OF EXCESSIVE STRESS:

The table below provides examples of some signs of stress. By answering the three questions below, you should be able to identify what signs of stress you may feel more often.

1. When you are under pressure, which of these signs of stress tend to appear first?
2. Have you noticed any of these general signs of stress lately?
3. Which is the one that you should NOT ignore?

PHYSICAL	EMOTIONAL	COGNITIVE	BEHAVIORAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Sleep disturbances✓ Changes in appetite✓ Stomach upsets✓ Rapid heart rate✓ Fatigue✓ Muscle tremors and tension✓ Back and neck pain✓ Headaches✓ Inability to relax and rest✓ Being easily startled	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Mood swings✓ Feeling "over-emotional"✓ Irritability✓ Anger✓ Depression✓ Anxiety✓ Emotional numbness✓ Discouragement and loss of hope✓ Alienation and loss of sense of connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Poor concentration✓ Confusion and disorganized thoughts✓ Forgetfulness✓ Difficulty making decisions✓ Dreams or nightmares✓ Intrusive thoughts✓ Cynicism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Risk taking (such as driving recklessly)✓ Overeating or undereating✓ Increased smoking✓ Listlessness✓ Hyper-alertness✓ Aggression and verbal outbursts✓ Alcohol and/or drug use✓ Compulsive behavior (i.e. nervous tics and pacing)✓ Withdrawal/ isolation✓ Promiscuity

IDENTIFY YOUR COPING STRATEGIES

Human beings usually resort to coping strategies to feel better during a stressful period. Using positive coping mechanisms help maintain a balance between private and professional life, as well as overcome, as positively as possible, a stressful period. However, staff often resort to negative coping mechanisms as a natural reaction, or to feel better in the immediate term. Over the longer-term such negative coping mechanisms can result in dangerous or unhealthy consequences, and ultimately, do not support the process of coping with stress. In the table below, examples of positive and negative coping mechanisms are provided, to identify if the coping mechanisms that we usually resort to are positive or negative, and to identify which among the positive mechanisms we might consider using.

POSITIVE COPING STRATEGIES	NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Regular exercise and sports activities✓ Getting enough sleep✓ Healthy eating✓ Drinking water✓ Laughter✓ Relaxation techniques✓ Therapeutic massage✓ Religious activities and practices✓ Talking about experiences and listening/talking with others✓ Reading books or magazines✓ Enjoying time with nature✓ Listening to music✓ Watching movies✓ Reflection: journaling, writing, meditating, poetry✓ Contact with friends and family over email, phone or skype✓ Nurturing relationships with the group✓ Having balanced priorities✓ Having realistic expectations✓ Asking for help or seeking counselling support if needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Using alcohol or drugs to self-medicate✓ Smoking✓ Sleeping all day✓ Excessive eating (or not eating)✓ Avoidance and detachment from family and friends, social isolation✓ Negative thinking✓ Blaming✓ Avoiding responsibilities✓ Violent behavior, loosing temper✓ Neglecting personal hygiene



TOOL 19: TEAM WELLNESS MANDALA

WHY USE THE “TEAM WELLNESS MANDALA” ?

The team wellness mandala supports team members in discussing the characteristics of a healthy team (the team they would like to have), what changes and improvement the team should undertake to be productive and healthy, and to strategize the process to get there.

WHEN TO USE THE “TEAM WELLNESS MANDALA”?

It is an exercise that can be implemented on a regular basis (annually or biannually), throughout the entire implementation of the WGSS program.

HOW TO USE THE “TEAM WELLNESS MANDALA”?

Select the activity’s facilitator, but making sure to be aware that line management roles between facilitator and participants may bias the activity’s flow and participation. It is recommended to identify a facilitator that can guarantee a certain degree of comfort, and encourage sharing of ideas and frank feedback.

This exercise entails multiple steps and facilitators should familiarize themselves with the tool in advance. Before starting the activity, the facilitator should reassure participants about the purpose of the exercise: “This exercise is not a performance evaluation and there are no right or wrong answers. The aim of the exercise is to strengthen the team and to work together toward collective well-being. This exercise will help us collectively in identifying how we would like our team to be and how to get there. During the exercise, we should all maintain a non-judgmental and respectful attitude, valuing and accepting each other’s opinions.”

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1. Brainstorm

Draw a large circle on a flipchart.

Facilitate a brainstorming session on the attributes of a “healthy” or “productive” team (guiding questions: What do you think are a healthy team’s characteristics? And what are those of a productive team?). Write down participants’ ideas on different sticky notes and put them in the circle (on the flipchart).

Example: “A healthy team should have a good internal communication strategy”.

Step 2. Agree

Organize the ideas into categories (suggest 4-6 categories).

In this step, you will divide the circle into slices where each slice represents a category (as per the example below). Categories should represent the main subjects captured in the sticky notes. (Categories provided in the pie below are examples.)

Make sure that each sticky note is placed into one slice (category). After that, write the name of the category at the outside edge of each segment.

Example: “*a healthy team should have a good internal communication strategy*” would be categorized under the “communication” category.

Examples of categories might be: Communication; Boundaries; Self-awareness; Expectations of Self and Others; Roles and Responsibilities; Supportive Structures (supervision, meetings..), etc.



Once you have the mandala divided into different categories (slices), you can remove the sticky notes from the inside of the mandala and stick them on the outside edge of the circle (or simply keep them handy because you will need them later during the exercise).

Step 3. Dream Mandala:

Per each category identified (slice), participants will ‘dream’ and discuss how they would like their team to be, that is, characteristics of their ideal team.

Example: For the communication category, a team member may say: “*Members of my dream team listen to each other and value experiences and ideas of other colleagues.*”

Facilitate a discussion on the full realization of each category, leaving space for everyone to intervene and share ideas. Capture this description of “how your team could be” in each slice of the circle (slices should be empty as you moved the sticky notes to the outside edge of the circle in the last step).

What is now in each slice becomes the goals of your action plan. Be creative, use symbols or colors to represent your teams’ vision.

Step 4. Reality Mandala

Now you have completed the ‘dream mandala’. Take a few minutes to design a new mandala—the ‘reality mandala’ --using the same categories (slices) of the ‘dream mandala”. Write down the categories on the outside edge of each slice.



The team will discuss how they perceive their team in relationship to each category that was identified in Step 3 (proceed category by category). Each participant should be encouraged to describe how they see the current situation for each idea and category.

The facilitator can help the discussion by reviewing the ideas on the “dream mandala”. Be honest, and encourage honesty. The facilitator should also consider context sensitivity as necessary – e.g. allow participants to write their ideas on a sticky note, instead of sharing them directly in a plenary discussion. After a few minutes, the facilitator will collect the sticky notes and place them in the ‘reality mandala’. The review of the inputs can be done in plenary keeping the feedback anonymous.

Now you have two mandalas filled and completed: the ‘dream mandala’ and the ‘reality mandala’. Facilitator and participants together review the sticky notes and compare inputs and ideas gathered in the “dream mandala” with those in the “reality mandala”.



Example: From Step 1 “a healthy team should have a good internal communication strategy” becomes “members of a healthy team listen to each other and pay attention to the work of their colleagues” in Step 3. A possible transformation that can happen in Step 4 (Reality Mandala) is “we are focused on our own tasks and we don’t pay attention to what colleagues say or do”.

Step 5. Creative Planning

Comparing the two mandalas, facilitator and participants should identify actual practices of the team (reality mandala) and the ideal attitude and behaviors the team would like to have (dream mandala).

The two mandalas provide the starting point and the direction toward which the team should move. These are the building blocks of any action plan. Your task now is to think of concrete actions that can be taken to move from the current situation to the desired outcome. In plenary, the facilitator asks the following question and takes notes to create an action plan that will be distributed and followed up on:

- What are the steps we should take to move from our reality mandala to our dream mandala?
- What actions should be prioritized?
- How are we going to implement those changes?

Encourage creativity in solving these problems and develop an action plan including timeframe and specific actions.

The mandala tool helps people to think creatively and come up with solutions that might not be obvious.



TOOL 20: STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

WHY USE ‘STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES’?¹

This tool offers simple, practical exercises that help team members dedicate a little bit of time to their own psychosocial well-being whether at the individual or social level. Supervisors and managers should encourage the implementation of stress management techniques to create a working environment where staff well-being is prioritized. However, these exercises cannot substitute a specialized psychological or social intervention.

WHEN TO USE ‘STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES’?

They can be implemented anytime at staff request or based on supervisors’ findings. They can be implemented on a regular basis especially in the case of a particularly stressful situation (such as a new emergency, high turnover, intense workload...).

How to Use ‘Stress Management Techniques’?

This tool provides six ‘stress management exercises’ for all staff members. The techniques are divided into two main categories:

Self-care exercises: these exercises are self-administered, and each staff member can implement them individually. However, they can also be implemented in a group. In the latter case, the team should review and adapt them before starting the activity.

Group debriefing/Stress management exercises: Those exercises are implemented in groups and require a facilitator. The facilitator should be someone familiar with the activity, despite her role and position.

SELF-CARE EXERCISES:

1. Deep Breathing

Imagine you have a balloon inside your stomach. Place one hand below your belly button, and breathe in slowly through the nose for four seconds, feeling the balloon fill up with air – your belly should expand. When the balloon is full, slowly breathe out through your mouth for about four seconds. Your hand will rise and fall as the balloon fills and empties. Wait 2 seconds, and then repeat a few times. When belly breathing, make sure the upper body (shoulders and chest area) is fairly relaxed and still.

¹ Adapted from: UNFPA: " Establishing Women and Girls Safe Spaces Training Manual-Facilitator Guide, Page 55 <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Establishing%20WGSS%20Training%20Manual%20UNFPA%202017.pdf>

2. Visualization

Find a quiet place and close your eyes. Think of the calmest, most peaceful place you have ever been. Picture yourself in that place. Describe what it looks like, sounds like, smells like, feels like. Imagine yourself in the place and breathe deeply. Repeat the exercise when you are feeling stressed or worried.

GROUP DEBRIEFING /STRESS MANAGEMENT EXERCISES

3. Success Stories

When the suffering of the population is pervasive and the needs are enormous, it can seem as though no matter what we do, it is never enough. This exercise is designed to help staff recognize even small accomplishments.

At the end of a work-day, gather staff together and ask each person to talk about one success they had during that day or that week – no matter how small. If someone is unable to come up with something, other team members should help them. Doing this on a regular basis can help staff recognize what they accomplished, rather than focus exclusively on what might have failed. This can be a helpful – and simple – strategy against burnout.

4. Creative Expression

The facilitator asks group members to express their reactions to the following question: “*What got you involved in this work; and what gives you the strength to keep doing the work?*” Participants can answer using art or creativity. For example, participants can draw, paint, sculpt, write a poem or a song, etc.

After 10 minutes of expression (writing, painting...), the facilitator will ask each group member to present their creative work and to place it on the wall, on the ground or in a way that other participants can see it. The group members will present their reactions to the creative work, and their experience of making it.

5. Poetry in motion

Ask group members to tear a piece of paper into strips and prepare to write and explain: “*Without thinking too much, what strengths and personal qualities do you have inside yourself that allows you to do this work?*”

Divide the group into smaller groups (no more than five people each). Each group is then asked to put their pieces of paper together into a poem (create a poem using the strengths and qualities mentioned in the strips). Each group is then asked to present the poem to the larger group. These poems can be decorated in creative ways and posted on walls of offices to remind staff of the qualities in themselves and in their work that keep them strong.

6. Body relaxation²

Staff, participants, survivors, adults and children can use this exercise as a way to relax their bodies and decrease muscle tension. This is helpful for people who have trouble falling asleep or who have physical symptoms of anxiety. Body relaxation is usually taught by having people alternate between tensing and relaxing their muscles. Focusing on this difference shows participants how to recognize tense feelings and neutralize them. There are many ways to teach people relaxation skills, some of which depend on age. This section will explain some of them, but feel free to be creative when helping people learn to relax.

Step 1: before starting the exercise, the facilitator explains what body relaxation is and why it is important. The facilitator should be trained in (and know how to practice) body relaxation to make sure they can demonstrate it effectively. A sample introduction script could be:

"Sometimes we all feel a little scared or nervous. When we have these feelings, our bodies can get tense or tight. This is an uncomfortable feeling; sometimes it even hurts. To help get rid of these tense feelings, we're going to relax our bodies. This can help you feel looser and calmer."

Step 2: lead the person through the body relaxation exercise.

The facilitator can guide people in body relaxation techniques by following these directions:

Have the person sit in a comfortable position. Lying down is okay, too. The person should get as comfortable as possible. Have the person close their eyes if they would like.

Tell the person, *"Take a deep breath in and out through your nose. Do this again. What you'll be doing is tightening and relaxing specific muscles in your body. Concentrate on how your muscles feel, specifically the difference between tight and relaxed. After tightening, a muscle will feel more relaxed."*

Here is a sample script to read to the person involved in the exercise:

"First concentrate on the large muscles of your legs. Tighten all the muscles of your legs. Feel how tight and tense the muscles in your legs are right now. Hold it for a few moments more...and now relax. Let all the tension go. Feel the muscles in your legs going limp, loose and relaxed. Notice how relaxed the muscles feel now. Do you feel the difference between tension and relaxation? Enjoy the pleasant feeling of relaxation in your legs.

Now focus on the muscles in your arms. Tighten your shoulders, upper arms, lower arms, and hands. Squeeze your hands into tight fists. Make the muscles in your arms and hands as tense as you can. Squeeze harder...and harder...hold the tension in your arms, shoulders, and hands. Feel the tension in these muscles. Hold it for a few moments more...and now release. Let the muscles of your shoulders, arms and hands go limp. Feel the relaxation as your shoulders lower into a comfortable position and your hands relax at your sides. Allow the muscles in your arms to relax completely.

Focus again on your breathing—slow, even, regular breaths. Breathe in and relax. Breathe out the tension. Breathe in and relax. Breathe out the tension. Continue to breathe slowly, in and out.

² Adapted from Caring for Child Survivors Sexual Assault training material. Module 17, psychosocial intervention 2. <https://gbvresponders.org/response/caring-child-survivors/#CCSTrainingMaterials>

Now tighten the muscles of your back. Pull your shoulders back and tense the muscles along your spine. Arch your back slightly as you tighten these muscles. Hold (wait a few seconds)...and relax. Let go of all the tension. Feel your back comfortably relaxing into a good and healthy posture.

Turn your attention now to the muscles of your chest and stomach. Tighten and tense these muscles. Tighten them further...hold this tension...and release. Relax the muscles of your chest and stomach.

Finally, tighten the muscles of your face. Scrunch your eyes shut, wrinkle your nose and tighten the muscles of your cheeks and chin. Hold this tension in your face...and relax. Release all the tension. Feel how relaxed your face is!

Try to think about all the muscles in your body...notice how relaxed your muscles feel. Allow any last bits of tension to drain away. Enjoy the relaxation you are feeling. Notice how calm you breathe, how relaxed your muscles are. Enjoy this relaxation for a few moments.”

Step 3: When the person is ready to return to the usual level of alertness and awareness, have her/him slowly reawaken his/her bodies. They can wiggle their toes and fingers, swing their arms gently or stretch out their arms and legs.

Step 4: Encourage her/him to practice this at home before they fall asleep.



5: CAPACITY BUILDING



ASSOCIATED WITH THIS **GUIDANCE**



FURTHER GUIDANCE

[Annex 5.1. Building Members Ownership Through Capacity-Building Opportunities](#)

[Annex 5.2. List Of Helpful Resources And Where To Access Them](#)

[Annex 5.3. Tip Sheet for Peer Learning Techniques](#)

[Annex 5.4. Tip Sheet for Individual And Team Supervision](#)



TOOLS:

[Tool 21: Individual Capacity Assessment](#)

[Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#)

[Tool 23a: Teamwork Skills Assessment Questionnaire](#)

[Tool 23b: Teamwork Skills Assessment Scoring Sheet](#)

[Tool 24: Capacity Building Plan](#)

[Tool 25: Shadowing Observation Template](#)

[Tool 26: Group Supervision Meeting Template](#)

[Tool 27: Facilitation Observation Checklist](#)

[Tool 28: Partnership Project Opening & Expected Support Initial Meeting Outline](#)

[Tool 29: WGSS Partnership Project Review And Reflection Monitoring Tool](#)



DATABASES:

[Database C: Capacity-building tracker](#)

5.1 INTRODUCTION TO SUPPORTING CAPACITY OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, PARTNERS AND MEMBERS

“There is the technical capacity, but in terms of practice they need to acquire and continue to expand several competencies and skills to facilitate the group of women.”

Senior Staff, Cameroon

The terms ‘capacity-building’ or ‘capacity development’ describes a range of activities to develop or strengthen capacities. The United Nations has defined capacity as ‘the ability of individuals, institutions, and societies to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner.¹

To contextualize ‘capacity’ it is necessary to answer the question: capacity for what? [Part 5: Capacity-Building](#) describes required capacities as professional competencies (technical, functional and knowledge-based) needed to do the job, and behavioral competencies (non-technical) related to personal characteristics², which are needed to achieve WGSS objectives and deliver high-quality WGSS services and activities, as well as foster ownership and sustain the capacity of local partners, and women and girls, to operate the WGSS.

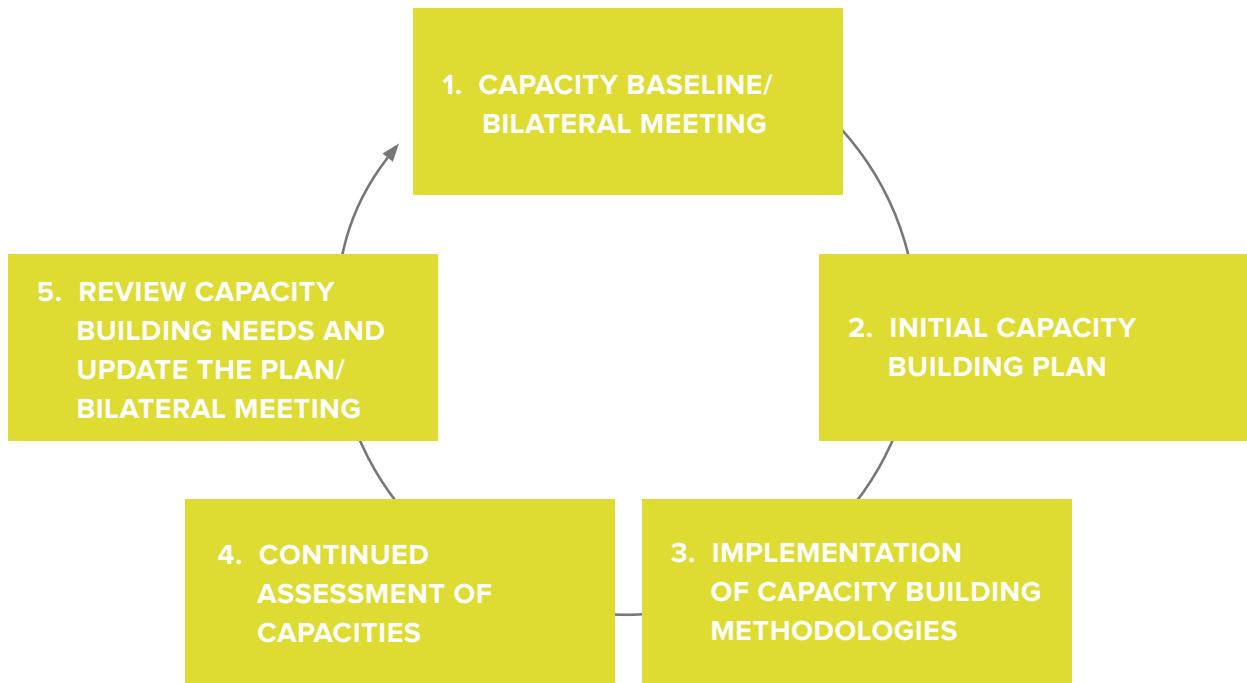
WGSS capacity-building is a continuous and reciprocal process of adjusting individuals’ attitudes, values and technical knowledge to create a space free of judgment and stress, and a positive environment for empowerment and social support, both of which are fundamental to women and girls safe spaces.

Capacity-building is one of the most challenging and crucial components of WGSS programming. It requires capacity assessment, monitoring and planning as well as investment of time, human resources, commitment, production of tailored resources, and facilitation or mentoring skills.

To strengthen capacities of WGSS staff, volunteers, partners and members, there are five main steps to be followed (see diagram).

1 United Nations Development Programme, 2010. Capacity Development: Measuring Capacity. http://content-ext.undp.org/aplaws_publications/2679640/UNDP_Measuring_Capacity_July_2010.pdf.

2 Martin, Sarah, n.d. Core Competencies for GBV Program Managers and Coordinators in Humanitarian Settings. Gender Based Violence Area of Responsibility Learning Task team. <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5c3704637.pdf>.



Step 1: Establishing a baseline of existing capacities and skills for each staff, volunteer or partner staff is the initial step to guarantee tailored and personalized support to individuals implementing WGSS programs. The capacity assessment meeting - where each staff or volunteer meets with supervisors, or partner staff meet with capacity-building focal points to discuss gaps, weaknesses and strengths - is only the initial step to assess capacities. Associated tools provided by the toolkit for this step include [Tool 21: Individual Capacity Assessment](#); [Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#); [Tool 23a: Teamwork Skills Assessment Questionnaire](#); [Tool 23b: Teamwork Skills Assessment Scoring](#); [Tool 28: Partnership Project Opening & Expected Support Initial Meeting Outline](#).

Step 2: Baseline results for the individual staff's capacity identify areas of strength and areas where further development is needed. Developing a capacity-building plan means strategizing how those gaps will be filled and what capacity-building efforts and activities are needed. This may include training, mentoring, shadowing, among other methodologies. See [Tool 24: Capacity-building Plan](#).

Step 3: For 3 to 6 months, the actions identified in the capacity-building plan are put into motion. This includes actions that are assigned to both the supervisor and supervisee or the partner staff and the capacity-building focal points. Associated tools for this step include [Tool 25: Shadowing Observation Template](#); [Tool 27: Facilitation Observation Checklist](#).

Step 4: On a regular basis (every 3 to 6 months), capacities (including skills, attitudes and beliefs) should be reassessed. Capacity-building should be continuous throughout the entire employment period of staff, or the entire partnership for partner staff. The same tools can be used until staff comfortably answer all questions across tools. More guidance is provided in each tool. [Tool 29: WGSS Partnership Project Review and Reflection Monitoring](#) for example can be used with partners.

Step 5: Based on the results, capacity development meetings will be held to monitor progress, identify remaining gaps or new gaps and update the capacity-building plan accordingly. The updated capacity-building plan should reflect the efforts that have been undertaken in the previous period and the results and progress generated. See [Tool 29: WGSS Partner Meeting Notes Template](#).

The capacity-building methodologies actions or techniques listed in the tab below are those acknowledged throughout this chapter.

CAPACITY-BUILDING METHODOLOGIES	SUPPORT TO	RESOURCES REQUIRED
<i>Capacity baseline, assessment and capacity-building plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the level of capacities of team members and strategize an individual and tailored capacity-building plan. Help the capacity-building of staff as well as the supervision and monitoring of performance improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A supportive supervisor or a partner capacity-building focal point (or capacity-building focal point) who identifies gaps and weaknesses, analyzes existing capacities, skills and develops a tailored plan. Time of the supportive supervisor or capacity-building focal point to follow up and keep the plan up to date. Openness and willingness of the staff members or partner staff to recognize weaknesses and accept guidance.

<p>Mandatory trainings - basic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that every WGSS staff member has the basic technical knowledge to work in line with WGSS and GBV principles and vision. • Convey solid knowledge in a structured and equal way. • Content is available and staff members can review it any time they have doubts. • Give the opportunity to trained staff to co-facilitate and increase their skills as trainers. • Give opportunities to line managers and colleagues to go back to training content if the staff member or partner staff /colleague does not work according to messages conveyed during the training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time for preparation • Venue • Facilitator • Can be a costly activity • Training modules, guides, tools • Translator if needed • Transportation if needed • Accommodation if needed • Time for follow-up
---	--	--

<p>Role-based training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the level of specialization guaranteeing professional service delivery. • Ensure that personnel dedicated to specific tasks have the knowledge and the technical experience to fulfill the responsibility. • Content is available and staff member can review it any time they have doubts. • Gives the opportunity to trained, experienced and professional staff to co-facilitate and increase their skills as trainers. • Gives the opportunity to technical or partner capacity-building focal points to go back to training content if the or partner staff does not work according to messages conveyed during the training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time for preparation • Venue • Facilitator • Can be a costly activity • Training modules, guides, tools • Translator if needed • Transportation if needed • Accommodation if needed • Time for follow-up
<p>Team meeting and workshops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and discuss team's weaknesses and capacity gaps. • Identify common team strategies and steps to address gaps and weaknesses. • Learn from others' experiences and suggestions. • Discuss and review the work in detail and learn about colleagues' work, challenges and achievements. • Working on consensus and respect each other's priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue • Facilitation skills • Time for preparation

Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim at achieving a specific goal or strengthening a specific skill. • Improve performance and technical capacities. • Motivate individuals in striving for excellence. • Provide on-the-job training. • Support transitions to new roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A capable coach • Openness and willingness to identify and discuss weaknesses
Mentoring³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantee continuous learning • Strengthen the overall performance of the mentee. • Support the development of behavioral and personal competencies (including attitudes and beliefs). • Encourage thirst for new knowledge. • Provide time and space to reflect on the job, practices and performance. • Beneficial for both mentor and mentee because it is not a one-way knowledge transfer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of a person who has mentor characteristics⁴ • Availability of time • Openness and willingness to identify and discuss weaknesses

³ Despite most resources identifying coaching and mentoring as two different capacity-building methodologies, for the scope of this WGSS toolkit, coaching will not be considered a stand-alone technique, but is instead, incorporated into the mentoring technique, which is a longer-term capacity-building methodology.

Staff shadowing⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn by doing. • To supervise the performance of less experienced colleagues. • To gain exposure to others' work methodologies and approaches. • Contributes to building relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of time to shadow. • Availability of time to follow up. • Openness of the individual being shadowed.
------------------------------------	--	---

Each of the above-mentioned techniques can be delivered alongside the others.

To ensure the WGSS program supports the transparent communication of information with member women and girls, as well as builds their capacity to progressively gain ownership of the WGSS, a certain number of opportunities should be offered to members. See [Annex 5.1: Building WGSS Members' Ownership Through Capacity-building Opportunities](#) for further guidance.

“It is more important to look at the skills than the position itself in terms of the attitudes to work with women and girls and survivors of GBV.”

Protection Lead, Thailand

5.2 ASSESSING STAFF CAPACITY

Capacity-Development Meetings to Assess Baseline and Continued Capacity

In this toolkit, capacity-development meetings refer to a private conversation between a supervisor and supervisee, or capacity-building focal point and partner staff, to assess existing capacities and to develop a tailored capacity-development strategy.

The first capacity-development meeting aims at setting the capacity baseline. Capacity-development meetings can be carried out using different methodologies and tools. However, each meeting should share the following characteristics:

- **Consent:** Individuals being assessed should be previously informed about the methodology, and the purpose of the activity and provide verbal consent.

4 GBV AoR - Capacity Building Strategy 2015-2020. Annex 2. page 40-41.

<https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-10/GBV-AoR-5-Year-Cap-Devt-Strategy.pdf>

- **Location:** Capacity-development meetings are private and should be conducted in a space that allows confidentiality, supports concentration and prevents interruptions and distractions.
- **Meeting length:** Each capacity-development meeting should take between 60 and 90 minutes.
- **Identification of capacity baseline:** The capacity baseline meeting should be carried out as early as possible to identify available capacities and competencies, as well as gaps and weaknesses of new staff members or new partner staff. After the baseline is identified, capacity-development meetings will take place on a regular basis.
- **Meeting preparation:** The supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point (when in-partnership implementation approach is selected) is responsible for facilitating the meeting while filling up the capacity-building plan. Before the meeting, the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point should familiarize themselves with assessment tools that will be used during the meeting, as well as with all efforts and capacity tools that were used by the supervisee or partner staff since the last meeting. The supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point should have a clear idea of progress and weaknesses of the supervisee or partner staff before sitting with her/him. However, an open-minded attitude is crucial to maintain a positive learning environment and the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point should be open to listening and acknowledging progress and achievements identified by the supervisee or partner staff.
- **Regular implementation:** Capacity-development meetings take place on a regular basis (every 3-6 months) to monitor progress, identify remaining gaps and update the capacity-building plan. During the discussion, the supervisor and supervisee or partner capacity-building focal point and partner staff should review gaps previously identified. The discussion should clarify whether the same gaps remain or if the focus should shift to addressing new gaps.
- **Technical background:** The supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point should be someone with technical background in implementing or supervising WGSS programming or in the specific area of capacity being assessed (e.g. to assess progress and weaknesses in delivering community engagement activities, the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point should have relevant previous experience or technical expertise on this).
- **Action-oriented:** During the meeting, gaps, weaknesses and action points discussed should be operationalized and converted into an action plan. Using [Tool 24: Capacity-building Plan](#) will help operationalize discussion points, which the supervisee or partner staff can then consent to work on to address gaps. Once next steps are agreed on, the supervisor and supervisee, or partner capacity-building focal point and partner staff, set the date for the next capacity-development meeting.

Using Capacity Assessment Tools

Organizations may choose among a broad variety of tools and methodologies to assess technical knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs including capacity assessment tools, day-to-day mentoring or supervision, one-on-one conversations, client feedback forms, training post-tests, group activities, etc. Capacity assessment tools provided in this toolkit are connected to each other and directly inform [Tool 24: Capacity-building Plan](#) which outlines the capacity-development strategy and milestones to be achieved, and the methodologies to do so (such as training, mentoring, shadowing, studying etc.).

Supervisors or partner capacity-building focal points have the final responsibility of monitoring performance and identifying supervisee or partner staff capacity and competency gaps through regular supervision and support. Capacity assessments and capacity-building plans should thus compile information from direct observation, as well as from specific activities and scoring tools.

This toolkit specifically developed, tested and recommends the use of the following to support WGSS capacity-building efforts:

- [Tool 21: Individual Capacity Assessment](#) and [Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#): Both can be used before or during capacity-development meetings. Results from these tools will help in filling out the capacity-building plan.
- [Tool 23a: Teamwork Skills Assessment Questionnaire](#) and [Tool 23b: Teamwork Skills Assessment Scoring Sheet](#): Teamwork skills should be analyzed by supervisors or partner capacity-building focal points and presented to the team to identify and discuss together the appropriate capacity-building strategies to address common gaps (at the team level).
- [Tool 24: Capacity-building Plan](#): In this tool, supervisors and supervisee or partner capacity-building focal points and partner staff capture all gaps identified during the capacity- development meeting and in the period preceding it.

5.3 DEVELOPING A TAILORED CAPACITY-BUILDING PLAN

The capacity-building plan is filled out and updated during capacity-development meetings. The meeting gives space to the supervisee or partner staff to discuss and reflect on skills or competencies practiced, acquired, or remaining challenges. During the meeting, supervisors or capacity-building focal points may decide to use [Tool 21: Individual Capacity Assessment](#) and / or [Tool 22: WGSS Staff and Volunteer Attitude Survey](#)– the scoring and outcomes from these tools should be captured in [Tool 24: Capacity-Building Plan](#).

Supervisors or capacity-building focal points will create one capacity-building plan per staff member or partner staff, and the plan will be reviewed and updated over time. When discussing progress and gaps, it is recommended to emphasize achievements at the beginning of the meeting, in order to create a positive environment for dialogue, and avoid a sense of frustration and defensiveness, which would be counterproductive.

Key information to be captured in a capacity-building plan to help in developing individual strategies includes:

- Gaps remaining from previous discussions and capacity-building plans.
- Gaps filled specifying the type and timeline of actions that led to the achievements (Capacity- building plan-second sheet).
- Information from day-to-day supervision (e.g. the supervisor or capacity-building focal point can identify specific gaps while the staff or partner staff is facilitating a group activity, attending a training, a coordination meeting, having a bilateral discussion with more experienced colleagues, etc.).

- Client feedback – If WGSS members provided feedback on staff behavior or attitude, this should be discussed and addressed during the capacity-development meeting.⁵
- Tools provided for peer learning or supportive supervision such as [Tool 25: Shadowing Observation Template](#) and [Tool 27: Facilitation Observation Checklist](#) can also help provide information on gaps and weaknesses, and directly inform the capacity-building plan.
- Capacity assessment activities findings and scoring: If supervisors or capacity-building focal points use specific capacity-building or supportive supervision tools, results should be captured in [Tool 24: Capacity-Building Plan](#) (most capacity-building tools provided in this toolkit must be used regularly to monitor progress).
- Needs and gaps identified by the supervisee or partner staff: Each staff member may also individually identify specific areas of improvement for her/himself, as well as the capacity-building technique they feel most comfortable with. This information is important to ensure a tailored capacity-building plan.

5.4 CAPACITY-DEVELOPMENT PACKAGES BASED ON STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

While most WGSS staff members are assigned tasks related simultaneously to WGSS programs as well as to interventions from the broader GBV program (e.g. staff dedicated to WGSS outreach activities also delivers GBV awareness-raising sessions as part of the GBV risk mitigation component of the wider GBV program), as previously specified, this toolkit focuses only on the capacities needed to deliver WGSS activities and tasks. Specialized knowledge and training required for other GBV program components (e.g. case management; social norms behavior change) or associated with services hosted in the WGSS (e.g. legal, medical, livelihood) will not be covered in this toolkit. However, the toolkit does specify which topics staff from hosted services (e.g. medical staff, livelihood staff, etc.) should be oriented on in order to ensure they contribute to and uphold the safe space as a safe and empowering environment.

The four packages below are tailored to the roles and responsibilities of staff members in the WGSS. The packages capture concepts and topics that each staff member should be familiar with in order to deliver services in line with WGSS objectives and guiding principles (See [Part 1: Core Concepts](#)). If individual staff members have multiple roles, they should receive different training orientation accordingly.

Package 1 represents the basic capacity-building package that ALL staff (includes WGSS programming dedicated staff, GBV response and prevention dedicated staff and operational staff including guards, cleaners) working in WGSS should receive. Based on specific roles and responsibilities, WGSS staff are recommended to additionally receive package 2 and package 3 based on their roles. All services hosted in WGSS should receive package 4 to ensure they contribute to and uphold the safe space as a safe and empowering environment.

⁵ If the client's feedback refers to a breach of the code of conduct or to a safeguarding/ PSEA issue, supervisors should implement measures in line with their organization policy.

PACKAGE 1 <i>All staff (including broader GBV team)</i>	PACKAGE 2 <i>Staff dedicated to WGSS activities</i>	PACKAGE 3 <i>Supervisors and line managers</i>	PACKAGE 4 <i>Hosted Services (e.g.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding/ PSEA • GBV Core Concepts • WGSS Core Concepts • How to handle disclosure/ basic GBV response • Diversity and inclusion • WGSS operation/ schedule/ procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feminist approaches to WGSS • WGSS Toolkit Package - specific parts depending on WGSS role • Working with adolescent girls • Mobile service provision • Self care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff care • Mentoring and supervising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding/ PSEA • GBV Core Concepts • WGSS Core Concepts • How to handle disclosure/ basic GBV response

Package 1: All staff working in WGSS should be familiar with all topics of package 1. All staff includes GBV responders such as caseworkers, case managers, GBV prevention officers, as well as operational and M&E staff operating in the WGSS. Depending on the context, most of the content of package 1 may be relevant and customized for cleaners, guards and drivers.

Package 2: Staff members dedicated to WGSS programming and activities (WGSS lead, outreach officers, WGSS activities facilitators, etc.) should be familiar with the concepts of package 1 and package 2.

Package 3: Staff members dedicated to WGSS programming and activities and who have a line management responsibility, should be familiar with the concepts of package 1, 2 and 3.

Package 4 is for hosted services personnel (legal, medical, psychological, livelihood) who need to receive, at the minimum, the information contained in package 4 to operate in line with GBV and WGSS principles.

[**Annex 5.2: List of Helpful Resources and Where to Access Them**](#) offers a list of technically solid resources that supervisors and or partner capacity-building focal points can use to build the capacities of supervisees and partner staff based on their roles and responsibilities. The type of knowledge needed for each group of staff should be tailored based on specific responsibilities, previous experience working in WGSS and the stability of the program. In the first six months of working in a WGSS, all staff, including outreach, partner staff or staff from services hosted in the WGSS should receive an orientation on the WGSS Core Concepts.

5.5 ON-THE-JOB CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Often, due to various factors (e.g. staff turnover, short project timeframes, emergency responses), not all WGSS staff receive role-based and refresher trainings. One-off trainings need to be combined with other mid- to long-term capacity-building methodologies⁶ to effectively support staff members' capacity development. It has been proven that regular on-the-job training sessions can increase staff skills and confidence, facilitate reflection and support learning.⁷ It is, therefore, crucial to incorporate on-the-job capacity development methodologies into WGSS staff capacity-building plans.

Group Learning

Workshops: Workshops require a group of WGSS staff, volunteers and partner staff as relevant, to sit together to discuss and address specific issues. Different from trainings, workshops entail collaboration and the provision of input and feedback from participants. Workshops have great capacity-building value because they require staff members to present, share, interact and reflect on a specific topic and then agree on a way forward. It is a learning methodology that includes a degree of learning-by-doing (group work), as well as discussion with colleagues and facilitators. Specific workshops can be organized on any topic requiring analysis, understanding, review and agreement.

Workshops allow staff members to:

- Deeply analyze specific topics;
- Engage in listening to each other's ideas;
- Provide comprehensive feedback;
- Review, discuss and develop concepts, tools, strategies, plans;
- Reflect in collaboration with others;
- Find a way to operationalize discussion points;
- Identify next steps and common solutions;
- Work on consensus-building;
- Exchange experiences, (especially between staff already implementing WGSS);
- Better understand colleagues' perspectives;
- Strengthen relationships with colleagues.

It is a best practice to engage WGSS staff including partner staff (when WGSS programs are implemented though an in-partnership approach) in annual review and strategic workshops to collectively reflect on implementation to-date and develop strategies for the upcoming implementation period. Ideally, the outcome of this workshop should directly inform project proposals or any resource mobilization effort.

6 Short-term planning looks at the characteristics/capacities of the staff member in the present and develops strategies for improving them (training). Medium-term planning applies more permanent solutions to specific weaknesses or gaps. The long-term intervention aims at reaching the highest level of capacities and quality of performance. The time frame of mid-long term varies from one context to another. However, long-term is generally used to indicate a period that may cover from a few years to the entire intervention period.

7 Humanitarian Leadership Academy. Coaching and Mentoring Skills Boost for Humanitarian Responders. Online course. <https://www.humanitarianleadershipacademy.org/coaching-mentoring-skills-boost-humanitarian-responders/>



Lesson Learned | Reality Check from the Field

Workshops can be organized for many different reasons such as the need for an internal review, the development of a new strategy or as a consultation to develop a donor's final report or a new proposal. Strategic workshops can represent opportunities for staff and members to sit together and discuss WGSS programming, including topics for activities, inclusion or implementation strategies, international guidelines or to simply review achievements or gaps that need attention.

There are multiple methods to also engage women and girls directly in strategic workshops, and every WGSS should choose, according to context, resources, availability and capacities, the best way to engage women and girls meaningfully. If annual review workshops are implemented, women's and girls' inputs should be captured and analyzed. To do so, representatives of members should attend the workshops or, if that is not possible, a pre-workshop meeting with proactive members should be held. During this meeting, the workshop's agenda should be reviewed against members' input, and feedback should be collected to inform the agenda, content material and the discussion of the workshop.

Gathering and analyzing women's inputs is as important as engaging women in informing material or co-facilitating the activity. In fact, workshops (or pre-workshop meetings) should be considered an opportunity to hear women's and girls' voices and to build their organizational, facilitation and feedback skills.

Staff meetings: These usually take place on a weekly basis and do not have a direct capacity-building objective. However, especially for new or less experienced staff members, it can still be an occasion to better understand programming, get familiar with technical language and WGSS guiding principles, as well as learn from colleagues' experiences and give feedback. Weekly staff meetings are also a means to strengthen relationships, create a sense of team spirit, learn from each other's experiences, and improve the quality and overall effectiveness of programming.⁸

Peer Learning

Mentoring, coaching and shadowing are capacity-building techniques that promote peer learning. Peer learning is extremely important for the capacity-building process, and a supportive supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point can certainly benefit by using these techniques with individual staff members. Often, these terms are used interchangeably but in fact have different meanings.

⁸ IRC and UNFPA. Safe Spaces for Women and Girls (SSWG) Standardization and Technical Guidance – How to set up a SSWG in practice. October 2017. Rohingya Crisis, Cox Bazaar, Bangladesh <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/SSWG%20Technical%20Guidance%20and%20Toolkit%20UNFPA%20IRC%202017.pdf>

Coaching: This is task-oriented and a short-term intervention that focuses on a limited number of capacities or tasks. The coach may work side-by-side with the coached staff to monitor the development of specific skills, with the coach always modelling good practice. Coaching can help provide “on-the-job training” which many GBV specialists note, in the GBV AoR Capacity-building strategy, is the way they learned their skills. Specialists noted that they were thrown into situations and forced to learn as they went along: “You learn by going and doing the work and working alongside someone else who is more senior. A good [coach] says ‘I want you to take over the work and I’ll be there, but it is yours.’”⁹

Mentoring: The mentorship process is relationship-oriented. To be successful, mentoring requires time so that both the mentor and mentee can learn about one another and build a climate of trust that in turn, helps foster an environment in which the mentee feels secure sharing real issues that impact his or her success. Mentoring can take place between individuals from partnering organizations, between supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point and employee, between a more and a less experienced staff member, between a technical specialist and a team member, between two former colleagues, and even between a former supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point and or partner staff. Good mentoring is mutually beneficial, not a one-way knowledge transfer. Although specific learning goals or competencies may be used as a basis for creating the relationship, its focus goes beyond these areas to include things, such as work/life balance, self-confidence, self-perception, and how the personal influences the professional.

Shadowing: Unlike the other methodologies, shadowing provides individuals with a unique opportunity to see first-hand how another staff member applies skills and knowledge, and understand through observation, the nuances of a job as it is being done. Job shadowing is a technique that can be used for capacity-building, as well as for supervision purposes.

- For capacity-building purposes, it is effective with new employees but also with staff who want to learn about different WGSS roles, or implement activities they might be less familiar with. It also serves as a means of support whereby a trained and experienced individual follows and observes a less experienced individual and provides constructive feedback.
- For individual supervision, shadowing can also be carried out by a supervisor or capacity-building focal point to monitor performance and provide feedback to the staff they oversee.

Job shadowing offers the opportunity to:

- Share first-hand experiences with colleagues as they perform their tasks and exchange ideas.
- Contextualize learning gained through other capacity-building methods by seeing it applied in practice. This is a useful technique particularly for soft skills such as communication and active listening.

[Tool 25: Shadowing Observation Template](#) can be used whether:

- the observation is done to build the capacities of the observer; or
- to supervise the observed staff member.

Main characteristics and differences between peer learning techniques are summarized below:

COACHING	MENTORING	SHADOWING
<p><i>Who is the coach?</i></p> <p>The coach is a tutor or a trainer that supports the development of specific skills over a period of time. Some humanitarian agencies provide “coaches” or have a “coaching pool of experts” who can be deployed to assist in specific on-the-job training and support, particularly for new professionals or those who are moving into a new role in their careers.¹⁰ In other circumstances, the coach is a skilled direct supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point or a specialist who can support the development of specific skills.</p> <p><i>Why coaching?</i></p> <p>Most WGSS skills are learnt by doing, and most of the time WGSS staff benefit from having a coach who can help correct and strengthen practices and skills.</p>	<p><i>Who is the mentor?</i></p> <p>A mentor has knowledge and experience that s/he can pass on in order to help a mentee grow and develop skills required to work in a specific role. The best mentors are people who thirst for new knowledge and continually strive to find ways to improve their own performance.¹¹ A mentor can be a person working for a different agency. In fact, it is often recommended to seek mentors outside the same organization to offer a different perspective and not be linked to performance. Different mentors can be chosen for their different skill sets. For example, you may choose one mentor with extensive experience in humanitarian response management and another with solid GBV technical knowledge.</p> <p><i>Why mentoring?</i></p> <p>Mentoring is designed to support the progress of employees over a long period of time or during their lifelong career development.</p>	<p><i>Who performs the shadowing approach?</i></p> <p>The shadowing approach can be used in two different ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. less experienced staff observe more experienced staff to learn; 2. more experienced staff observe less experienced staff - to mentor or supervise. <p><i>Why shadowing?</i></p> <p>Shadowing is designed for staff members to learn from each other’s experience and practices, strengthen the capacities of less experienced staff, ensure quality of activities by observing staff practice, and create a sense of solidarity between staff members.</p>

10 GBV AoR Capacity-building Strategy 2015-2020 - Annex 5 <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-10/GBV-AoR-5-Year-Cap-Dev-Strategy.pdf>

11 Ibid.

Timeframe: The timeframe of the coaching coincides with the time the coached staff needs to develop a specific skill. In general, it is a short-term intervention (a few sessions).	Timeframe: The duration of mentorship can also vary from just one or two interactions to several years and can occur face-to-face or remotely.	Timeframe: Observation sessions should not last more than one or two hours. There can be as many sessions as needed.
---	--	--

For further guidance see [Annex 5.3: Tip Sheet for Peer Learning Techniques](#).

Other important considerations:

- Debriefing on strengths and weaknesses identified by the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal points or more experienced staff should take place one-on-one after the activity (or during the capacity-development meeting).
- Feedback and recommendations should always be provided one-on-one and never in public or during a group activity.
- Feedback should be provided to the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal points or appointed focal point in case of safeguarding issues or any breach of the Code of Conduct.
- Gaps identified through this activity can directly inform [Tool 24: Capacity-building Plan](#).
- If the tool is used to supervise or build the capacities of less experienced staff in delivering and facilitating group activities, it can be combined with [Tool 27: Facilitation Observation Checklist](#).

5.6 SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION

Supportive supervision is “the relationship between a supervisor and supervisee in which the responsibility and accountability for the development of competence, demeanor, and ethical practice takes place.”¹² The supportive supervisor is responsible for providing direction to the supervisee who applies theory, standardized knowledge, skills, competency, and ethical content in the practice setting.¹³

¹² GBV AoR Capacity building strategy 2015-2020 - Annex 5 <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-10/GBV-AoR-5-Year-Cap-Dev-Strategy.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

Even though capacity-building and supervision are usually understood as two different processes, they are two sides of the same coin. Most of the time, capacity assessments, capacity-building plans, and capacity-related observations and follow-up (both with individuals and teams) are implemented by supervisors as part of their responsibilities. However, for the scope of this toolkit, supportive supervision is described as separate from on-the-job capacity development, although they often overlap, recognizing that on the job capacity development can be implemented and led not only by supervisors but dedicated and various capacity building focal points who are not directly the supervisors of those WGSS staff (e.g. in direct implementation approaches when direct supervisors do not have the specific technical competencies or in the case of in-partnership implementation approaches where capacity building may be led by staff from another organization).

The main functions of supportive supervision are¹⁴:

Accountability: Ensuring all staff are competent and accountable.

Professional Development: Ensuring all staff are continually updating their knowledge and skills. It includes assessing competencies; creating professional development plans and strengthening capacity on an on-going basis; promoting reflective practice, critical thinking and decision-making; reinforcing guiding principles; encouraging self-awareness, sensitivity, and normalizing feelings; and defining boundaries and recognition.

Support: Ensuring the emotional and psychological well-being of staff, including self-care by providing a safe space for reflection on well-being. The relationship that develops between a supervisor and a staff member is nurtured by consistent, regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings.

All WGSS staff should have an assigned supervisor responsible for ensuring they are trained and prepared for their role, and who regularly monitors their practice and supports them in providing quality services and activities. In WGSS programming, supportive supervision should:

- Ensure that staff can put knowledge into practice.
- Provide staff with the opportunity to discuss their work and receive constructive feedback.
- Provide the opportunity to reflect on their values and attitudes, and think about the impact of these.
- Provide staff with space/time/forums to debrief (necessary to de-stress).
- Discuss how each staff member contributes to WGSS objectives.
- Provide possibilities to strengthen capacities.
- Monitor and manage team stress.

¹⁴ Inspired by the Interagency GBV Case Management Guidelines (<https://gbvresponders.org/response/gbv-case-management>) and by the Case Management Task Force (CMTF) of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action's Child Protection Case Management Supervision and Coaching Package <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/case-management-supervision-and-coaching-package>

SUPERVISION DOS	SUPERVISION DON'TS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to staff • Identify and clarify stressful issues • Encourage expression of emotions • Help staff to name and release emotions • Identify positives; modify inappropriate expectations; reframe the stressful event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deny challenges • Avoid discussing the stressful issue • Minimize a staff member or partner staff's challenge • Insist that things will get better • Blame staff, or make them feel totally responsible for the stressful event/situation

Individual-Level Supervision

Good practice suggests that individual supervision meetings are most effective when they are:

- **Regular and consistent:** Meetings should occur regularly (e.g. once a month), and at a set time (e.g. every first Monday of the month at 4 pm) to give an opportunity to both supervisor and supervisee to prepare for the session. If a staff member needs ad-hoc support, that should be provided but should not replace a regular supervision meeting.
- **Collaborative:** The supervisor and staff member should work together to define goals, opportunities and possible actions.
- **An opportunity for learning and professional growth:** The supervisor should use this time to support the staff member's learning and professional development. Individual supervision meetings and capacity-development meetings should be combined to make the best use of time and effort.
- **Safe:** Supervisors should ensure that supervision meetings feel like a safe space for staff members where they can ask questions without reservation, make mistakes and receive constructive feedback.
- **An opportunity to “model” good practice:** Supervisors should model good practice during supervision sessions. For example, when communicating with supervisees, supervisors should implement active listening skills and project a non-judgmental, respectful and validating attitude.
- **An opportunity to verify the well-being of staff members:** Supervisors should know whether any staff member feels low or is suffering from stress. Regular one-on-one meetings represent a good occasion to check-in on staff well-being.

Team-Level Supervision

Group/team supervision provides staff in the same workplace the opportunity to talk with each other about their job, reflect on their work and share information, experiences, challenges and strategies they have used to overcome them. Peer supervision should be a supportive learning and sharing experience. It is also a chance to acknowledge the team's achievements, and to strategize how to reach WGSS objectives better, and how to make the WGSS more inclusive, empowering and accountable for its members.

For further guidance see [Annex 5.4: Tip Sheet for Individual and Team Supervision](#).



5: FURTHER GUIDANCE



ANNEX 5.1. BUILDING MEMBERS' OWNERSHIP THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

This guidance is related to supporting the capacity of WGSS members rather than staff. Membership of WGSS may include [WGSS volunteers, committees or forum members](#) as well as any other women and girls voluntarily involved in WGSS programming.

[**The overall objective of the WGSS**](#) is the empowerment of women and girls. To ensure the program works toward the overall objective, WGSS must offer women and girls the opportunity to work towards greater ownership of the WGSS. For this reason, in addition to the need for transparency and accountability, new WGSS members should be offered the “Orientation package for new members” ([Tool 31: Orientation Package for New Members](#)), and interested WGSS members should be engaged in [shadowing techniques](#).

INTRODUCING NEW WGSS MEMBERS TO BASIC WGSS CONCEPTS

The new member orientation package¹ ([Tool 31](#)) should be delivered to [volunteers, committees or forum members](#).

The orientation focuses on the following topics:

1. WGSS Core Concepts
2. Power and Empowerment
3. Gender Equality Basic Concepts
4. Violence Against Women and Girls (basic)
5. Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
6. Feedback Mechanisms and Decision-making

The “Orientation for New Members” should be organized and delivered on a regular basis (monthly, quarterly or bi-annually depending on new members’ inflow). Trained and proactive members should be involved in co-organizing and co-facilitating the orientation on a rotational basis, so different WGSS members have the opportunity to learn facilitation skills.

To the extent possible, members should have the opportunity to attend an orientation session as many times as they need to properly familiarize themselves with the concepts.

¹ The orientation package for new members is further explained in Part 6, 6.2. Key strategies for WGSS implementation

ENGAGING INTERESTED WGSS MEMBERS IN SHADOWING TECHNIQUES

Side-By-Side Approach

To work towards members' empowerment and ownership of the WGSS, members should have the opportunity to learn and gain skills on how to inform and run WGSS programming. One way in which this can tangibly be supported is by engaging women and girls in observing staff members perform their day to day work.

The side-by-side approach is an engaging capacity-building technique that aims at strengthening skills and ownership of WGSS members, as well as staff members' accountability—it is like the shadowing technique (described in the capacity-building for staff section).

A WGSS proactive member (observer) will pair with a staff member when s/he is delivering a specific activity, to learn from the staff member how to implement the activity. The staff member should dedicate some time before and after the activity to brief and debrief with the observer. Over time, the observer should gain a role as a co-organizer or co-facilitator of the activity. This type of shadowing will take place over a pre-agreed period with the objective of building the capacity of members to organize, deliver and monitor specific activities. The approach places WGSS members in a position of learning, collaborating and facilitating by observing and doing.

Selection criteria: Ideally, women and girls engaging in the side-by-side approach are those who have demonstrated commitment toward WGSS programming or who are part of the women's forum; volunteers; committees or any other WGSS empowering structure. Selection criteria should be determined strictly at the field level, taking into consideration the degree of commitment and consistency required. If a women's forum is established, the side-by-side approach (and selection criteria) could be directly discussed during forum meetings. Otherwise a series of ad-hoc meetings should be conducted.

It is crucial to remember that WGSS members who take part in the side-by-side approach do not have final responsibility for the actual activity. Instead, their involvement is solely intended to strengthen their capacities. Staff members remain accountable and responsible for each WGSS activity and the quality of the programming. Decisions taken to implement the side-by-side approach should thus be discussed and coordinated with WGSS staff members.

To ensure that women and girls are not (or do not feel) exploited, the weekly or monthly amount of time dedicated to carrying out this approach must be decided based on participant's and staff's availability and willingness. It is the responsibility of the staff to ensure that members commit to a very limited number of hours per week.

Staff involved: Members may shadow activity facilitators as well as WGSS managers, the M&E focal point or any other staff member undertaking more administrative tasks. Staff members should support members more than the other way around. Staff involved will depend on various factors such as women's interest, availability of time and commitment, workload of staff members as well as staff's roles and level of experience. It is important to consider the side-by-side approach as an extra task for WGSS staff members, which should properly be planned to avoid creating work overload.

How: The side-by-side approach should provide opportunities to participate to every interested member who matches the selection criteria. It is important to develop a shared timeframe, which clearly highlights who will be shadowing whom, for how long and how many hours per week. Also, the waiting list should be made available and public. Preparation and implementation of side-by-side sessions follow the recommendations provided for the [**shadowing approach**](#), bearing in mind that members are engaged on a voluntary basis, so the level of effort required needs to be adjusted accordingly.

Participation in the side-by-side initiative can be planned on a rotational basis so WGSS members can shadow more than one staff member over time, or on a minimum commitment basis, which limits the shadowing to one or two staff per member. This is decided at the field level based on availability of staff and number of WGSS members who want to participate. The timeframe should be determined after knowing how many women are interested, considering availability and workload of staff members, and keeping in mind the volunteer nature of the activity. Acquiring diverse skills requires time and dedication and since women engage on a voluntary basis only, this capacity-building initiative will likely be long-term and/or implemented throughout the whole WGSS program implementation period. Regular meetings on the side-by-side activity are highly recommended to determine how new women will engage in the initiative, and how to keep engaging women who have already participated.

For example, three women participate for a pre-established period (e.g. 5 months each). Each woman will shadow a staff member once a week for a maximum of two hours during a specific task or activity. After the five months, each woman should either leave the task/activity or switch to shadow a different WGSS staff member (if the initiative is planned on a rotational basis).

Other considerations:

- Many women may want to participate in the initiative, which may not be manageable by the WGSS staff. In this case, it is recommended to agree on how many staff members each participant can shadow and for how long (e.g. each woman can collaborate at maximum with two staff members in a year, and each experience cannot last more than four months).
- The side-by-side approach can be overwhelming for new employees and it may be necessary to have at least six months (or more) of experience working in the WGSS before being observed by a member.
- In terms of sustainability (where relevant) this approach can be particularly interesting if the WGSS is to be handed over to the women and girls of the community, or women and girls are to be requested to take an active role in the management of the WGSS.
- **Warning:** To ensure equal access to this opportunity it is important to identify power dynamics and prevent them from dominating the process. If not properly managed, this could inadvertently create 'first and second class' members, where those who participate are considered more important than those who do not. Extra effort should be made therefore, to guarantee equality and equal opportunity in the selection criteria and rules for participation.
- **Commitment and compensation:** Women and girls taking part in this initiative should be committed to taking on a broader role during a pre-agreed period. It is highly discouraged to provide incentives or in-kind compensation to any members engaged in this capacity-building activity. In most contexts, participating in similar initiatives is considered rewarding in itself because participants gain useful skills and knowledge, because they may publicly be involved in events and campaigns, and because they may gain community appreciation for their efforts (which helps boost their self-confidence, and can help challenge restrictive gender norms in their community).



ANNEX 5.2. LIST OF HELPFUL RESOURCES AND WHERE TO ACCESS THEM

ORIENTATION OUTLINE 1

For all staff (including GBV dedicated staff) and WGSS members

Training or resource title	Target audience	Available and public resources
Safe guarding/ PSEA	All staff	<p>Training package: Course material for preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, InterAction. InterAction developed several tools and resources to establish a sustainable policy framework and staff capacity to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse at all levels of an organization. The training guides, resources and handouts are available for download.</p> <p>Training of Trainers on GBV focusing on SEA, UNICEF Facilitators are expected to take specific modules and adapt them to their needs and the context where the training is taking place (objectives, profile of participants, office and national culture and time available etc.). This is a two-day training. The first day is designed to increase participant's knowledge and understanding of the concept of gender, and gender-based violence. The second day takes a closer look at sexual exploitation and abuse and includes sessions on the core principles for a code of conduct, reporting mechanisms and developing a programmatic response.</p> <p>Video "To serve with Pride" Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and Peace and Security (ECHA/ECPS) United Nations (UN) and Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.</p> <p>Compendium of practices Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Compendium of Practices on Community-Based Complaints Mechanisms, Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by our own staff. The purpose of the present compendium is to reference practices which have been applied during the implementation of community-based complaints mechanisms, particularly those established with the explicit objective of addressing sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries by humanitarian or development personnel. The purpose is also to highlight practices used when operating CBCMs in a broader range of issues.</p> <p>It's Not That Grey - How to identify the grey area — a practical guide for the twilight zone of sexual harassment, Period.</p>

		<p>This guide is for everyone. It is for those of us who have experienced harassment and for those who have not. It is for those who have witnessed harassment, and those who do not really know what harassment looks like. It is for those who want to know about the mechanisms of harassment, and those who want tools for a specific action plan. We believe this guide contains public interest knowledge and should be put in everyone's hands.</p> <p>Now go ahead and dive into the guide! Go through the exercises, practice using the tools and adapt them to your situation. And most importantly: talk about it. Share it with your friend, your colleague, your sister, your mom, or anyone you feel can benefit from this information.</p> <p>Open Letter</p> <p><u>'We stand together': open letter on sexual misconduct in aid sector.</u> The letter signed by more than 1,000 women aid workers urging reform.</p> <p>We stand together to speak out about the violence and abuse perpetrated against women and girls by men who work within charities. We stand together because our voices are stronger in unison and have often not been heard when we have stood alone. We acknowledge that not all women have the same amount of power - race, class, sexual orientation, economic realities and other forms of discrimination and oppression all play a part in women's ability to be heard. Patriarchy impacts women and girls from the global south and women of color hardest. We acknowledge that these women are most affected and vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by aid workers, yet are also the least likely to be heard and least likely to be able to sign on to support this letter.</p>
GBV Core concepts	All staff (may exclude guards, cleaners and other operational staff)	<p>Training packages:</p> <p>CORE CONCEPTS TRAINING, International Rescue Committee</p> <p>The Handbook and Facilitator's Manual is a basic introduction to the issue of violence against women and girls, the scope and scale of violence they experience, and its long-lasting consequences in conflict-affected and post-conflict settings. It should be used to support and train new GBV staff as well as other humanitarian staff to implement programming that is grounded in gender equality and the needs, wishes, and dreams of women and girls in the places where they work. This training is currently being updated and revised.</p> <p>Resource Package</p> <p><u>Interagency Gender-based Violence Case Management Resource Package.</u> Use training Modules 1 to 7 for training material related to GBV core concepts.</p> <p>Primer</p> <p><u>All About Power Understanding Social Power & Power Structure,</u> CREA</p> <p>The purpose of this primer is to sort out the confusion and help us move to a shared understanding of power, so that all of us who are committed to social and gender justice can build our strategies from a more comprehensive, shared definition and analysis of power as it operates in society, regardless of our specific issues or socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts.</p>

WGSS Core concepts	All staff	<p>Toolkit:</p> <p>Part 1: Core Concepts</p>
How to handle disclosure/ basic GBV response	All staff	<p>Training packages:</p> <p>IASC: Guidelines for integrating GBV intervention in humanitarian action.</p> <p>Use training package Module 4: Responding to GBV incidents.</p>
Diversity and inclusion	All staff (may exclude guards cleaners and other operational staff)	<p>Toolkit:</p> <p>GBV and Disability Inclusion Toolkit, Women's Refugee Commission and the International Rescue Committee</p> <p>Each tool was created with input and participation of persons with disabilities, as well as GBV practitioners, over a period of a year. They are intended to support GBV staff to build disability inclusion into their work, and to strengthen the capacity of GBV practitioners to provide services to survivors with disabilities. The tools are designed to complement existing guidelines, protocols, and standards for GBV programming, and should not be used in isolation. GBV practitioners are encouraged to adapt them to individual programs and contexts, and integrate them into trainings and capacity-building efforts.</p> <p>Building Trust in Diverse Teams: The toolkit for emergency response, Emergency Capacity Building Project (ECB). The ECB is a collaborative effort by CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, the International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Oxfam GB, Save the Children, and World Vision International.</p> <p>Building Trust in Diverse Teams can be used throughout the cycle of an emergency response and features a Trust Index, to assess and measure trust within diverse teams, and ten trust-building tools that can be selected based on the identified team needs. The tools are user-friendly with clear instructions and handouts to make preparation effortless. The concepts and tools can also be applied to existing organizational strategies on leadership development and diversity.</p> <p>Resource Package</p> <p>The Age and Disability Capacity Programme</p> <p>At the heart of ADCAP is the humanitarian inclusion standards for older people and people with disabilities. Humanitarian inclusion standards for older people and people with disabilities. This document brings together nine key inclusion standards, from learning and resource management, to identification and resilience, alongside seven sector-specific standards, which include nutrition, shelter and education. Each standard comes with key actions, guidance, tools and resources, and case studies illustrating how older people and people with disabilities have been included in humanitarian responses.</p> <p>A series of interactive online courses for humanitarian staff, available on DisasterReady</p> <p>A two-day training package on ageing and disability inclusion in humanitarian crises with our partner RedR training package</p>

		<p>Magazine Series</p> <p>The Zines - Intersectionality, JASS, FURIA and Raising Voices</p> <p>The Zines emerged from a feminist movement collaboration between JASS, FURIA and Raising Voices. This partnership intended to strengthen collaboration to build momentum for violence against women prevention in the Global South. At a global convening in Kampala, activists reflected on and discussed the critical issues affecting activism today. These issues have been expounded in the Zines that describe why they matter, questions for reflection and what communities can do. This one is on Intersectionality.</p>
WGSS operational information (schedule, procedures, etc.)	All Staff	<p>This resource should be developed at the field level by the WGSS staff. The development of this messages should help staff and members to receive useful information on WGSS logistic and access (schedule, work plan, registration process, feedback mechanisms...)</p>

ORIENTATION OUTLINE 2

Staff dedicated to WGSS activities

Training or resource title	Target audience	Available and public resources
Feminist approach for WGSS	All Staff dedicated to WGSS programming	<p>Resource Package: Get Moving! Raising Voices</p> <p>Get Moving! is designed for any organization working on violence against women or women's rights work in general. It aims to provide opportunities for intensive self-reflection and self-discovery in order to lead staff to feel more passionate about and committed to their work. Get Moving's! activities and discussions help build a positive organizational culture by exploring not just what the organization does but more so how it does it.</p> <p>Toolkit</p> <p>FEMINIST REALITIES OUR POWER ACTION EXPLORATORY TOOLKIT, AWID</p> <p>Created to support AWID staff and partners in their work to seek, identify and amplify Feminist Realities, this document has been expanded to offer the wider community some tools, and hopefully inspiration, to explore, share and unearth their Feminist Realities.</p> <p>Magazine Series</p> <p>The Zines - Movement Building, JASS, FURIA and Raising Voices</p> <p>The Zines emerged from a feminist movement collaboration between JASS, FURIA and Raising Voices. This partnership intended to strengthen collaboration to build momentum for violence against women prevention in the Global South. At a global convening in Kampala, activists reflected on and discussed the critical issues affecting activism today. These issues have been expounded in the Zines that describe why they matter, questions for reflection and what communities can do. This one is on Movement building</p>

		<p>Guide</p> <p>The Oxfam Guide to Feminist Influencing, Oxfam</p> <p>This guide begins with an overview of what it means to have a “feminist approach” to influencing, and why it matters, and then addresses internal organizational culture, which is where a feminist approach really starts. The ideas, strategy and tools presented here are applicable to any issue area and so can be used to either integrate gender, or create gender-focused work, across all the themes and issues we work on.</p> <p>Podcast</p> <p>Women’s Protection & Empowerment PODCAST, International Rescue Committee</p> <p>New to Podcasts? They’re like recorded radio shows that you can listen to anytime, anywhere. Just subscribe through iTunes, Google Play, Stitcher or SoundCloud and listen on the go. Each episode is around 20 minutes. It’s a small commitment to continually build capacity. The Women’s Protection and Empowerment podcast is dedicated to creating space for women and girls in humanitarian settings. Episodes showcase programming achievements, lessons learned, good practices, useful tools.</p> <p>Pocketbook</p> <p>COFEM FEMINIST POCKETBOOK, Coalition of Feminists for Social Change</p> <p>Sometimes it can be hard to find accessible, non-academic resources to help people working in humanitarian and development settings understand and implement feminist approaches to addressing violence against women and girls, and empower them to promote women-centered GBV theory and practice. To build the confidence and competence of practitioners, researchers, policy-makers and other advocates, COFEM has developed the Feminist Pocketbook – a series of short, easily digestible tip sheets.</p>
WGSS toolkit package - specific part for specific role	Depending on roles and responsibilities, WGSS staff members should familiarize themselves with specific parts of the toolkit. (For example, the WGSS manager should be trained and familiar with the whole toolkit while the activity specialist may benefit particularly from the implementation section).	<p>Resource package</p> <p>This toolkit: Women and Girls safe spaces. A Toolkit for advancing Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in Humanitarian Settings</p>

Working with girls/adolescent girls	All Staff dedicated to WGSS programming	<p>Resource Package</p> <p>Girl Shine, International Rescue Committee</p> <p>The Girl Shine program model and resource package can be used in multiple humanitarian settings, including conflict and natural disasters, as well as within the various phases of emergency response. It is based on the experience and knowledge gathered through years of IRC's Women's Protection and Empowerment efforts to reach adolescent girls in humanitarian settings. It has been adapted to reflect the latest research findings on the experiences of adolescent girls in humanitarian settings, and the nature of GBV against adolescent girls. Girl Shine represents the culmination of IRC's learning, shaped by research findings, our technical expertise in working with adolescent girls and feedback from those we work with and their caregivers.</p> <p><u>Including Adolescent Girls with Disabilities in Humanitarian Programs Principles and Guidelines</u>, Women's Refugee Commission</p> <p>Adolescent girls with disabilities and girls who live in households with persons with disabilities are often overlooked in humanitarian programming. The Women's Refugee Commission has developed these principles to foster their participation and to strengthen protective assets, which will mitigate their risk of violence, abuse and exploitation.</p>
Mobile service provision and capacity building of staff	All Staff dedicated to WGSS programming	<p>Guidelines:</p> <p><u>Guidelines for Mobile and Remote GBV Service Delivery</u>, International Rescue Committee</p> <p>Mobile and remote GBV service delivery responds to the changing nature of displacement. Increasingly, displaced persons are living in host communities, urban settings or informal settlements with more than half of the world's displaced people living in urban areas. The humanitarian community has been challenged to develop replicable, scalable and quality GBV mobile and remote service delivery models designed to meet the needs of GBV survivors from vulnerable, displaced, and out-of-camp populations, dispersed in urban and rural settings.</p> <p>Phone or tablet APP</p> <p><u>REMOTE OFFERED SKILL BUILDING (ROSA) APP</u>, International Rescue Committee</p> <p>To accommodate frontline staff working in gender-based violence response in static or mobile teams, creative solutions are required to meet the needs of GBV staff in complex settings. IRC is offering an innovative approach to capacity-building through an interactive, blended curriculum that can be utilized in remote, low-connectivity settings as well as in face-to-face instruction (on the GBV Responder's Website)— both platforms designed to utilize technology and keep the content, community and continual skill assessment ongoing for staff working in and outside of traditional offices. The curriculum provides key content on gender-based violence knowledge, case management, communication and attitude skills; offers self or supervisor-administered skills assessments; and a community space for users to expand their learning through facilitated remote discussions and distance supervision.</p>

Self-care	All Staff dedicated to WGSS programming	<p>Practical exercises</p> <p><u>Self Care for Sustainability and Impact</u>, Move to End Violence</p> <p>To achieve lasting social change, we need a movement that is driven by powerful, creative and impactful individuals who can stay in this work for the long-haul. To show up as our most innovative and strategic selves, we need to consciously practice self-care! At Move to End Violence we call this self-care for sustainability and impact—and it is one of our core practices. Move to End Violence created the 21-Day Challenge as a resource for individuals and organizations to practice self-care for sustainability and impact. A new challenge starts the first Tuesday of every month. Sign-up for a future challenge!</p> <p><u>Integrated Wellness Exercises</u>, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation</p> <p>The integrated security workshop came about as a result of the work that has been done both internationally and by different organizations to highlight the security situation for human rights defenders, focusing on women. The section on integrated wellness is a resource to help feminist activists know themselves better, optimize their strength, reflect upon their context, and work on caring for themselves. It contains a series of reflections and self-administered exercises to help to work on one's self, take an important step forward in building personal self-care strategies, and provide a vital basis for self-defence against various forms of violence.</p>
-----------	---	---

ORIENTATION OUTLINE 3 Staff with supervisory roles		
Training or resource title	Target audience	Available and public resources
Mentoring and supervising	Staff care	<p>Training package:</p> <p>1. The Case Management Task Force (CMTF) of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action: Chapter 4: Staff Care and Wellbeing of the Case Management Supervision and Coaching Package</p> <p><u>https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/case-management-supervision-and-coaching-package-chapter-4-staff-care-and-wellbeing</u></p> <p>Interagency Gender-based Violence Case Management Resource Package: Module 19</p> <p><u>https://gbvresponders.org/response/gbv-case-management/</u></p> <p>Magazine Series</p> <p><u>The Zines - Self and Collective Care</u>, JASS, FURIA and Raising Voices</p> <p>The Zines emerged from a feminist movement collaboration between JASS, FURIA and Raising Voices. This partnership intended to strengthen collaboration to build momentum for violence against women prevention in the Global South. At a global convening in Kampala, activists reflected on and discussed the critical issues affecting activism today. These issues have been expounded in the Zines that describe why they matter, questions for reflection and what communities can do. This one is on self and collective care.</p>

ORIENTATION OUTLINE 4

Hosted services (legal, medical, psychological..)

<i>Training or resource title</i>	<i>Target audience</i>	<i>Available and public resources</i>
Safe guarding/ PSEA		Resources available are listed above in training package 1
GBV Core concepts		
WGSS Core concepts		
How to handle disclosure/ basic GBV response		



ANNEX 5.3. TIP SHEET FOR PEER LEARNING TECHNIQUES

COACHING TIPS

Investigative Questions: Ask investigative questions to identify core issues, successes, or areas of opportunity. Investigative questions solicit facts and objective data on which to base the remainder of the coaching session. Some examples:

- “Tell me what you have accomplished so far.”
- “How long has this been happening?”
- “What are the relevant facts around this issue?”
- “What are the root causes for this?”

Ask only enough investigative questions to identify real and accurate content on which to base the rest of the session. Stay focused and ask follow-up questions to help those you coach stay focused too.

Exploring Questions: Exploring questions encourage coached staff to learn from experience and identify new knowledge or insights. Examples include:

- “What is contributing to this issue?”
- “In your mind, what’s the true issue here?”
- “What have you learned from that?”
- “What are the benefits or negatives of this?”
- “What do these facts mean to you?”
- “What would you do differently?”

Ask as many exploring questions as necessary to help coached staff fully discover root causes for current issues.

Empowering Questions: Empowering questions inquire into what coached staff are feeling, planning, wanting, and are ready to commit to. They help people identify and act on solutions. Examples include:

- “What do you want from this?”
- “What should you do to make it happen?”
- “What will be your first step?”
- “How will you overcome obstacles along the way?”
- “What are you going to do?”
- “What resources do you need?”
- “What do you need from me?”
- “When will you start?”

By asking questions such as these, you will encourage coached staff to be open, to share with you, and allow you opportunities to provide guidance.

Dos and Don'ts

Do: Ask thought-provoking, necessary, questions.

Do: Know that only those you coach have the right answers.

Do: Allow those you coach to come up with their own answers.

Don't: Grill those you coach with unnecessary questions.

Don't: Assume you have the right answer.

Don't: Provide those you coach with answers.

If the coach is the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point (or the capacity-building focal point), at the end of the meeting, the capacity-building plan should be updated as needed.

MENTORING TIPS

The mentor's role is to guide the meeting/session, ask questions, and listen. Remember, the mentor is NOT here to solve the mentee's issues or do the work for them. The mentee is in the driver's seat.

- 1.** Encourage the mentee to come prepared and bring relevant materials and information to the meeting.
- 2.** Build rapport (for e.g., ask about the mentee – try to remember what you learned about the mentee's life at the last session and ask about it).
- 3.** Discuss action items from the previous meeting (you may use the capacity-building plan from the previous meeting).
- 4.** Do not judge the mentee if he/she does not complete all action items. Discuss the roadblocks in completing the items and give support. New commitments for action items can be set.
- 5.** Establish new objectives for each meeting (remember that mentoring targets the entire career path of a mentee including work-life balance, career projections, long-term goals, etc.).
- 6.** Allow the conversation to not stick simply to the objectives but also explore doubts and ideas. After that, you can always bring the mentee back to the original goals set and how to accomplish them.
- 7.** Explore the set objectives. Ask questions, share, and encourage. Ask the mentee what actions need to be taken to achieve her/his goals. This is a great time to ask questions, so the mentee can find their own answers. After the mentee analyzes possibilities and ideas, provide suggestions and share experiences.
- 8.** Discuss the plan for possible roadblocks (it can be part of the capacity-building plan). This will allow the mentee to realize when the roadblocks occur and how to effectively deal with them.
- 9.** Establish new action items with the mentee. These will help the mentee move towards achieving his/her goals. Consider first asking the mentee what actions they will take to move towards their goal. After they come up with a few items, then it is fine to suggest items as well.
- 10.** At the close of the meeting, express confidence in the mentee and acknowledge the progress so far. Confirm action items and next steps.
- 11.** Set a date for the next meeting.

- 12.** If the mentor is the supervisor or partner capacity-building focal point (or the capacity-building focal point), at the end of the meeting, the capacity-building plan should be updated as needed.

SHADOWING TIPS

Before the session, the individual who is shadowing should consider the following:

- Allowing staff to ask any questions and raise any concerns they have in advance of the scheduled observation exercise.
- (If shadowing is taking place during a group activity) how best the facilitator would like the person shadowing/observing to intervene, as well as how to introduce the person to participants and the reason for their presence.

During the session, the individual who is shadowing should consider the following:

- It is highly important to respect the individual who is being observed and their interactions with participants; they are delivering a service for women and girls who should fully benefit from the service. Hence, to avoid disruptions, it is preferable not to interfere during the session at all, except if there are harmful attitudes or statements displayed by the individual being observed. Feedback should be provided after the session.
- While the person shadowing must be cautious to not interfere with the activity being conducted, they may take part in activities such as ice breakers, energizers and closure activities (if applicable).
- It is not recommended to use a laptop or to use paper to write down notes as it can be a source of stress to the person being shadowed and can disrupt the flow of the activity as well as distract participants.

OPTION 1: When the individual shadowing is a more experienced staff member supporting a less experienced staff member, they should consider the following when providing feedback (after the session):

- Focus should be placed on positive points, even if these were minor. Start with the positive and emphasize the individual's strengths, suggest recommendations and end with positive statements highlighting their capacities and skills.
- Feedback should be interactive. It is not recommended to use a 'lecturer' attitude. Questions such as "What did you notice about your performance?", "What did you like about what you did?", "If you could do it again, what would you do differently?" can be supportive towards this end.

OPTION 2: When the individual shadowing is a less experienced staff member observing a more experienced staff member, the following are important considerations (for after the session):

- The more experienced staff member should leave space and time for discussions and clarifying questions.
- The less experienced staff member should be open to learn from a more experienced colleague by observing as well as by asking questions and discussing unclear points.
- If the less experienced staff member noticed something unethical performed during the shadowing session, he/she should assess what the risks are of sharing this concern during the debriefing

session. If safety risks are identified, it is recommended to report unethical behavior to the appointed focal point or the line manager.



ANNEX 5.4. TIP SHEET FOR INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SUPERVISION

OVERALL TIPS FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION MEETINGS

- Listen before asking questions.
- Pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal communication (yours and the supervisee).
- Do not begin a question with “why”— instead of saying “Why did you do that?” try to understand the rationale behind the supervisee’s decision or action by saying something like, “Tell me more about your strategy or decision when you did x.”
- Summarize your understanding of what the supervisee told you to limit miscommunication. For instance, say: “What I hear you saying is xxx” or “Let me make sure I get this right, you were saying xxx”.
- Demonstrate empathy for the supervisee’s challenges and concerns about the job.
- Work from a strengths-based perspective, being sure to highlight what you think the staff member did well and ask them what they think could have been done differently before you share your feedback.
- Make sure you find a respectful but effective way to highlight errors, gaps and weaknesses.
- Seek to empower the supervisee by asking her/him to problem-solve instead of immediately providing solutions.

TIPS FOR STRUCTURING AN INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION MEETING

1. Opening and check-in:

- Check in with the supervisee on how the week was for them.
- If the supervisor and supervisee have a personal relationship, the supervisor can take a few minutes to check in on the supervisee’s life (family, children, house...)
- Share the agenda of the meeting with the supervisee and check if there are any points that s/he would like to add.
- Review action points from the previous meeting and discuss pending tasks to understand if they have been addressed or if they require discussion again today.
- Establish a goal for today’s meeting.
- Take some time to acknowledge progress and to congratulate the supervisee for any achievements.
- Explain to the supervisee that you will take notes of the discussion including action points coming out from this meeting.
- Check in with the supervisee about how s/he is dealing with her/his job and tasks. Allow space for him/ her to share opinions and feelings.

- Discuss activities (for each staff member this session should be customized based on their role. This is particularly true for case workers, case managers or other GBV responders).
- Start by asking how many activities the supervisee was delivering between the previous meeting and now.
- Ask information about how many women and girls attended and if the activities schedule is working well for staff members and participants.
- Ask information about topics covered between the previous meeting and now.
- Let the supervisee express how s/he feels about the topics and how women and girls felt about the topics.
- Discuss the accomplishments of the activity(s) to be celebrated.
- Ask about challenges in organizing, delivering or monitoring that activity(s).
- Ask if there are any challenges the supervisee would like guidance on, whether related to the activity or to other tasks.

2. The following questions should be asked if challenges are identified:

The supervisor can help the supervisee to think through challenges by asking some of the following questions (question selection should be done by the supervisor on a case-by-case basis). Supervisor should be familiar with this list of questions and should not read them during the meeting because that could prevent a natural flow of the conversation.

- What and how great is your concern about this?
- Who is affected by this issue other than you?
- How much control do you personally have over the outcome?
- Who else has some control over it, and how much?
- What action(s) have you taken on it so far?
- What stopped you from doing more?
- What obstacles do you face to take action?
- What resources do you already have –e.g., skill, time, enthusiasm, money, support, etc.?
- What other resources will you need? Where will you get them from?

Solution-oriented questions:

- What are the different ways in which you could approach this issue?
- Make a list of the alternatives - large or small, complete or partial solutions.
- What else could you do?
- What would you do if you had more time, had a larger budget, or were the boss?
- What would you do if you could start again?
- Would you like to have a suggestion from me?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each of these options in turn?

- Which would give the best result?
- Which of these solutions appeals to you most or feels best to you?
- Which would give you the most satisfaction?

3. Feedback and action points

Based on the discussion, supervisor and supervisee will discuss the challenges and decide on action points, timelines and methodology. The supervisor can ask the following questions to understand how the action identified will be implemented.

- What support do you need and from whom?
- What will you do to obtain that support and when?
- What could I do to support you?

Discuss observation (only if this is not the first individual supervision meeting for the supervisee).

If the supervisor conducted observation sessions in the time before the meeting, it is critical that concrete and detailed feedback is provided in a supportive manner specifying strengths and weaknesses identified. Make sure to also provide positive feedback.

- What does the staff member think about the observation session?
- Does the staff member have any questions or concerns?

If the supervision meeting is combined with the capacity-development meeting, the supervisor could:

- Use some of the capacity assessment tools.
- Populate the capacity-building plan with gaps/weaknesses observed during the observation session.
- Plan together how to fill those gaps, what activities and efforts the supervisee will undertake over a specific timeframe.
- Review the status of the capacity-building plan and celebrate achievements.
- Populate the capacity-building plan with any new gaps and new capacity-building strategies.

You can also add questions on the well-functioning of the team such as:

- How would you describe your relationship with the other team members?
- How would you describe this team? Can you explain more?
- Is there any specific situation or activity that is particularly frustrating or particularly encouraging for you as a team member?

4. Closing and action points

Before closing, ask the supervisee if there is anything else s/he would like to talk about. Otherwise, supervisor and supervisee should then agree on the main action steps to be taken following the meeting and the time frame for accomplishing these tasks. Agree on the next meeting's date and time. Thank the supervisee for her/his time.

OVERALL TIPS FOR TEAM SUPERVISION MEETINGS

Frequency/duration: Depending on the team's schedule, group supervision meetings can be held for 60–90 minutes once a month, once every two months, or as frequently as the team decides is manageable.

Preparation: Supervisors should prepare and distribute the agenda and any other supporting materials to the group at least a couple of days before the meeting to allow team members to provide inputs to the agenda and prepare themselves.

Format: There are many ways to structure group supervision meetings; the structure the supervisor chooses should be discussed and agreed with the team. The goal of the session will also influence the structure of the meeting. For example, it may include some (or all) of these sessions:

- **Activities and services discussion** – A representative of different teams (GBV response, empowerment, outreach, shadowing, volunteers, etc.) presents the work that was done focusing on challenges and achievements and trying to identify space for improvement.
- **Topical sessions** – The supervisor should either choose the topic in advance (based on the technical support she identifies to be a priority) or ask team members to identify topics for which technical support is desired.
- **Share-back** – The supervisor identifies a staff member with a specific strength (each meeting, a different team member) or one who has been successful with a new strategy to “share back” his/her experience and practice with their colleagues. If this strategy is used, it is essential that the supervisor review with the staff member their plan for the group session before the activity.

TIPS FOR STRUCTURING A TEAM SUPERVISION MEETING

Regardless of the format chosen, it is suggested that supervisors use the following structure for the session:

Opening and check-in (10–15 min). Provide participants with the opportunity to do a quick group check-in about how they are feeling, their mood, etc. Be creative in how you do this (e.g. you can ask participants to tell you what color or animal they feel like today and why (i.e. something descriptive other than adjectives). Thank everyone for sharing (make sure that you share also) and make a mental note of anyone who seems like they may need an ad-hoc individual check-in after.

Session content (45–60 min). This is the core of the session (e.g. topical session or share-back) and it should include presentation, questions and discussion.

Closing and care (5–15 min). Make sure you summarize the key learning points from the session. Finally, give participants the opportunity to do something that revives their energy, spirit and motivation. It could be a dance, a song, a joke, a relaxation exercise — anything that will bring some joy or calm (even if just a little) to their day.

[Tool 26: Group Supervision Meeting Template](#) can help with organizing the group supervision session.

A photograph of a diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, smiling and laughing together in what appears to be a professional office environment. They are dressed in casual to semi-formal attire. In the foreground, a woman with short dark hair and a man with glasses are prominent. The background shows shelves with books and other office supplies.

5: TOOLS



TOOL 21: INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

WHY USE THE INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT?

The individual capacity assessment tool is a structured tool to assess WGSS staff capacity—it does not help to evaluate performance but aims to identify existing knowledge relevant for WGSS programming. Using this tool allows for action planning for capacity improvements. This tool targets primarily staff members, however, WGSS staff may see this tool as an opportunity to better understand the proactive members' (volunteers, forum members, vo-facilitators...) attitudes, beliefs and understanding of core concepts. If gaps and harmful attitudes are identified, WGSS staff may ask volunteers and committee members to take part in capacity-building initiatives. However, being volunteers, the commitment request to fill the gaps should be tailored to volunteers' willingness, existing capacities and availability of time.

WHEN TO USE THE INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT?

Each staff member should undertake the questionnaire on a regular basis. This will allow comparison of results, in order to monitor progress on specific thematic areas over time. The tool should be used regularly until the staff member can comfortably answer all questions correctly and extensively. Supervisors should increase the level of difficulty of the tool over time to reflect improving capacities and existing gaps that need to be addressed. Since this is a score-based tool, this can be done by asking the same questions, but requiring a more detailed response from the supervisee.

For example:

- A new staff member might provide 2 examples to answer question 1 and get the full score.
- After taking the questionnaire a few times, the same staff member should provide at least 3 examples to get the full score.

HOW TO USE THE INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT?

Supervisors should decide whether to use the tool and how to score the answers based on direct experience and on previous capacity assessments – for instance, some new staff members can be very experienced and knowledgeable and others are not, so each must be treated on a case-by-case basis. The annotated tool below (at the end of this document) provides the answers after the blank template. Supervisors should familiarize themselves with the range of possible answers before using the tool to properly score it and decide how many answers per question the supervisee should provide in order to get the full score. The decision should be taken fairly based on level of experience, years of work in WGSS, and amount of time the staff member needs to answer the questions. During the activity, the facilitator will use the template below. Once the template is filled, the facilitator will take a few minutes to compare the supervisee's answers with those provided in the annotated tool. Based on this final cross-check the facilitator will then score the tool.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Date: _____

Location: _____

Name and role of facilitator: _____

Name and role of the WGSS staff respondent:

Translation necessary: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language) to

_____ (language)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE TOOL

The individual capacity assessment tool is not a performance evaluation tool but aims at identifying existing knowledge relevant for WGSS programming. Each staff member should undertake the questionnaire on a regular basis over a period of time. This will allow for comparison of results, to monitor progress on specific thematic areas. In the questionnaire below, some of the questions are mandatory and others can be omitted according to:

- Context-sensitivity;
- The position of the staff being assessed;
- The capacities of the organization to fill the gaps that may show up from the assessment.

Questions related to LGBTI should be asked in each context in which homosexuality is legal. In most of emergency contexts, there is a certain degree of stigma toward the LGBTI population but that should not prevent supervisors from knowing what the beliefs of team members are in relation to this.

Mandatory questions are written in purple. Supervisors should identify which among the other questions should be part of the questionnaire.

Before delivering the questionnaire, supervisors should carefully review the language and the answers provided in the annotated tool (at the end of this document). It should be customized in case the answers or the language do not align with the technical messages being promoted at field level. For example, for question 3, not every WGSS categorizes GBV types the same way. Some teams follow the GBVIMS classification (as this tool does), while other teams do not. Answers should be customized to suit the technical knowledge promoted at the field level to avoid confusion.

The tool should be used on a regular basis until the staff member comfortably answers all questions correctly and extensively. Importantly, if the questionnaire is used on a regular basis, over time it could become meaningless (after years of collaborations for example) for staff who answer the same questions over and over again. Supervisors should therefore consider increasing the level of difficulty of the tool overtime. This is possible by asking the same questions but expecting staff to provide more detailed and comprehensive answers.

For example, a staff member who answered the questions on multiple occasions should provide a more detailed answer as compared to a new staff member. Likewise, a new staff member might provide 2 examples to answer question 1 and get the full score. But after taking the questionnaire a few times, the same staff member should provide at least 3 examples to get the full score.

These considerations must be done by supervisors on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes new staff members can be very experienced and knowledgeable, while others are not. Based on direct experience and on previous individual assessments, the supervisor should decide whether to use the tool and how to score the answers.

In WGSS where this tool is used with proactive members (volunteers, forum members, WGSS committee members...) in case gaps and wrong attitudes are identified, staff may suggest to proactive members to take part in capacity building initiatives. However, being volunteers, the commitment request to fill the gaps should be tailored on volunteers' willingness, capacities and availability of time.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DELIVERING THE ACTIVITY

This capacity assessment tool should be conducted through a bilateral interview between the staff member and supervisor (or capacity-building focal point) in a quiet and confidential location.

1. The administrator or supervisor takes some time to familiarize her/himself with the tool, questions, answers and scoring system before meeting with the staff member.
2. The administrator or supervisor takes some time to review the annotated tools provided at the end of this document and the possible answers that the staff member should give to get the full score.
3. The administrator or supervisor, before starting, decide how many answers or how detailed the answer should be for the staff member to get the full score.

4. At the meeting the supervisor should explain that this tool is used to assess beliefs, knowledge and understanding of the WGSS program and to develop a tailored capacity-building plan. The facilitator should explain the fact that, despite the score system, this tool is not a performance evaluation tool. The score is intended to help compare progress over time.
5. The supervisor will leave space for questions and answers, and will ask for verbal consent to proceed.
6. The facilitator will ask the staff person to answer the questions of the questionnaire.

During the activity, the facilitator will score each response accordingly:

- **Met:** If the individual can answer the questions correctly and thoroughly, they will receive a mark of ‘met’.
 - **Partially Met:** If the individual can answer at least 50% of the questions, they will receive a mark of ‘partially met’. For example, if the question is, “what are the WGSS guiding principles” and the person can only name 3, s/he will receive a ‘partially met’ score.
 - **Not Met:** If the individual is unable to answer the question, they will receive a mark of ‘unmet’.
7. The supervisor will write down the answers in the “answer column” before moving to the next question.
 8. At the end of the exercise, the supervisor will take a few minutes to assign a score to each question and to calculate the final score. If the de-brief is planned for right after the exercise, while the supervisor is scoring, the staff can take a short break and come back when the scoring is finalised.
 9. To score the tool, supervisor should compare the answers given by the staff members with the answers provided in the annotated tool. Scoring will be based on how many correct answers were given. Wrong answers do not score.
 10. Supervisor and staff member then discuss the tool outcomes, strategize how to fill gaps identified and start filling out the capacity-building plan.

At the end of the exercise, the supervisor may add general questions to know more about new staff members (volunteers or WGSS committees’ members). Despite the fact that no score will be associated with open-ended questions, through a larger discussion, the supervisor may identify different gaps and capacity-building needs, and how new staff and volunteers perceive and understand programming (this information will inform the capacity-building plan).

Open-ended questions should be customized to the context but some examples may be:

1. What do you think is the added value of WGSS in this community?
2. Why do you think we are working only with women and girls in the space and do not allow men and boys in?

KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCY AREA	CRITERIA FOR ANSWERING CORRECTLY	ANSWERS (supervisors annotate here all answers provided by the staff members. At the end of the exercise supervisor will compare staff answers with the annotated tools' answers and calculate the based on the number of right questions will decide the score.)	MET 2 PTS	PARTIALLY MET 1 PT	NOT MET 0 PTS
1. Can you explain the rationale behind WGSS? For all staff	Staff should mention at least 2 examples to get the full score				
2. What are the WGSS objectives? For all staff	Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score				
3. Can you list the types of GBV/VAWG? For all staff	Staff should mention at least 4 examples to get the full score				
4. Can you explain what are the steps to conduct a group activity? Only for staff members delivering or supervising group activities	Staff should mention at least 2 examples to get the full score				

<p>5. Can you explain the different ways the WGSS ensures that the voices and opinions of women and girls are listened to and considered?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>6. What are the actions that the survivor-centred approach entails?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>7. What would you do if you don't know the answer to questions asked by women and girls?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>8. What methods can the WGSS use to increase women's and girls' ownership of the WGSS?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>				

<p>9. What are the ingredients to work well as a team?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>10. Can you explain which emotions and feelings you would like women and girls to experience when they are in the WGSS?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>11. What can WGSS staff do to ensure that women and girls feel the emotions you mentioned?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>12. What measures should the WGSS put in place to ensure that women and girls who come to the WGSS feel progressively empowered?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>				

<p>13. What strategies should WGSS staff implement to increase inclusion of diverse groups of women and girls?</p> <p>NOTE FOR FACILITATOR:</p> <p><i>Inclusion of diverse groups that may include different religions, languages, different places of origin, different status, different sexual orientations, different disabilities...).</i></p> <p><i>Diverse groups of women and girls are different from place to place and should be determined at the field level.</i></p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>			
--	---	--	--	--

<p>14. Explain the steps you would take if a woman or girl reported to you a safeguarding¹ issue occurring within the WGSS (or through mobile/outreach WGSS programming).</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>15. During an awareness-raising session, a woman starts disclosing a personal GBV incident. As a facilitator, what would you do?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>				
<p>Final score</p>					

¹ Safeguarding means putting processes in place to ensure that vulnerable people are not abused in any way, including verbally or physically. This includes all procedures designed to prevent harm, also refers to the process of protecting children and adults - by providing safe and effective care. Safeguarding policy may include different types of abuse depending on organizational policy. The IRC global safeguarding policy includes exploitation and abuse (including sexual exploitation and abuse), harassment in the workplace, trafficking, safeguarding of minors.



ANALYSIS- ANNOTATED TOOL

Below is the annotated Individual capacity assessment - this annotated tool includes “possible answers” for the template provided above.

KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCY AREA	CRITERIA FOR ANSWERING CORRECTLY	Possible answers (additional answers can be identified by the supervisor)	MET 2 PTS	PAR-TIALLY MET 1 PT	NOT MET 0 PTS
1. Can you explain the rationale behind WGSS? For all staff	Staff should mention at least 2 examples to get the full score	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public spaces dominated by men.• Women are disproportionately exposed to violence and judgment.• Women need a place to feel safe and to create social networks because isolation aggravates the effects of GBV.• Women and girls suffer from unequal gender norms – in WGSS there is no gender discrimination toward women and girls.• Women and girls need a place to disclose violence and receive support.• Especially in stressful situations, women and girls benefit from being part of social networks and equal relationships.			

<p>2. What are the WGSS objectives?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support women and girls through the process of empowerment. • To facilitate access for all women and girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services • To support women's and girls' psychosocial well-being and creation of social networks. • To serve as a place where women and girls can organize, and access information and resources to reduce risk of violence. • To serve as a key entry point for information, referral or specialized services for GBV survivors. • To provide a place where women and girls are safe and encouraged to use their voice and collectively raise attention to their rights and needs. 		
--	---	---	--	--

3. Can you list the types of GBV/VAWG? For all staff	Staff should mention at least 4 examples to get the full score	<p>1. Rape: non-consensual penetration (however slight) of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis or other body part. Also includes penetration of the vagina or anus with an object.</p> <p>2. Sexual Assault: any form of non-consensual sexual contact that does not result in or include penetration. Examples include: attempted rape, as well as unwanted kissing, fondling, or touching of genitalia and buttocks. FGM/C is an act of violence that impacts sexual organs, and as such should be classified as sexual assault. This incident type does not include rape, i.e., where penetration has occurred.</p> <p>3. Physical Assault: an act of physical violence that is not sexual in nature. Examples include: hitting, slapping, choking, cutting, shoving, burning, shooting or use of any weapons, acid attacks or any other act that results in pain, discomfort or injury. This incident type does not include FGM/C.</p>		
---	--	--	--	--

	<p>4. Forced Marriage: the marriage of an individual against her or his will.</p> <p>5. Denial of Resources, Opportunities or Services: denial of rightful access to economic resources/assets or livelihood opportunities, education, health or other social services. Examples include a widow prevented from receiving an inheritance, earnings forcibly taken by an intimate partner or family member, a woman prevented from using contraceptives, a girl prevented from attending school, etc. Reports of general poverty should not be recorded.</p> <p>6. Psychological / Emotional Abuse: infliction of mental or emotional pain or injury. Examples include: threats of physical or sexual violence, intimidation, humiliation, forced isolation, stalking, verbal harassment, unwanted attention, remarks, gestures or written words of a sexual and/or menacing nature, destruction of cherished things, etc.</p>		
--	--	--	--

<p>4. Explain the steps to conduct a group activity.</p> <p>Only for staff members delivering or supervising group activities</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 2 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan activities' main content, time and structure with women and girls. • Review women's and girls' feedback from previous activities and take them into account while developing the new activity. • Prepare yourself and the material needed. • Ensure progressive implementation if relevant. • Ensure safety of members and facilitators. • Strive for diversity of members and facilitators (if safe). • Proactively engage women and girls during the activity. • Put in place measures to enable participation (child care, transportation, etc.). 		
--	---	--	--	--

<p>5. Please explain different ways the WGSS ensures that the voices and opinions of women and girls are listened to and considered.</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a mechanism in which women and girls can learn how to provide feedback and inform programming. • Consult with women and girls on WGSS decisions. • Engage WGSS members in facilitation and implementation of activities. • Establish a forum or other type of platform for women to discuss and provide feedback. • Capture, review and discuss feedback received. • In collaboration with women and girls, plan and define the implementation of feedback. 			
<p>6. What are the actions that the survivor-centered approach requires?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and respect survivors' decisions. • Prioritize survivors' rights and capacities. • Be aware of the healing process survivors choose for themselves. • Follow the GBV guiding principles. • Ensure survivors have safe access to services. 			

<p>7. What would you do if you don't know the answer to questions asked by women and girls?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't make up arguments to show your knowledge. • Don't pretend you didn't hear the question. • Be as honest as you can. • Ask if there is any woman, girl or colleague present who has more information about it. • Commit to inform yourself and to be prepared on that topic for the next session. • Commit to properly prepare for all relevant topics before delivering the activity. 		
--	---	---	--	--

<p>8. What methods should the WGSS use to increase women's and girls' ownership of the WGSS?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support women and girls in understanding the importance of their role in the WGSS. • Take suggestions of women and girls seriously and operationalize them as much as possible. • Regularly meet to discuss strategies and activities of WGSS. • Meet with women and girls to discuss how to implement their feedback. • Support and build capacities of women and girls to take a proactive role in the management of the space and in the facilitation of activities. • Set up an empowering mechanism to facilitate and encourage women's and girls' role in managing and implementing WGSS programming. 		
---	---	--	--	--

<p>9. What are the ingredients to work well as a team?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value each colleague's job. • Listen and accept constructive criticism. • Be open and honest. • Be respectful of each other's values. • Be respectful of each other's space and time. • Consider each colleague's job as important as yours. • Congratulate your colleagues when they do a good job. • Be aware of other team members' challenges and achievements. • Be available to support your colleagues when they face difficulties. • Respect office hours and deadlines. • Check in with your colleagues to see if they feel ok or not. • Pay attention to the emotional and physical well-being of your colleagues. • Treat your colleagues with respect and patience. • Do not gossip about colleagues. • Be reliable. • Be problem-solving oriented. 		
---	---	--	--	--

<p>10. Explain which emotions and feelings you would like women and girls to experience when they are in the WGSS.</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Freedom from judgment • Solidarity • Support • Equality • Belonging • Ownership • Harmony • Trust • Comfort • Engagement • Being in a stimulating environment • Being valued 		
<p>11. What can WGSS staff do to ensure that women and girls feel the emotions you mentioned?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome women and girls when they access the WGSS. • Identify toxic power dynamics or hierarchical relationships in the WGSS and address them in collaboration with staff and members. • Promote inclusion of every group present in the WGSS by engaging them equally and respectfully. • Dedicate activities or sessions to prevent and address discrimination. • Involve women and girls in discussions and decisions. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay attention to staff members who show favoritism toward individuals or groups. • Value member feedback. • Listen carefully. • Be patient and repeat information as many times as needed. • Openly discuss objectives, plans and strategies of WGSS • Ask for the support and proactive participation of women and girls. • Allow women and girls to organize and facilitate part of the activities of the WGSS. • Give the opportunity to women and girls to provide inputs on IEC material and WGSS decoration • Engage women and girls in deciding schedule, structure and content of activities. • Decide with women and girls how to increase access to and from the WGSS for vulnerable women and girls. 		
--	--	--	--

<p>12. What measures should the WGSS put in place to ensure that members feel progressively empowered?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan context-tailored programming. • Carry out activities through progressive implementation. • Maintain open discussion on gender dynamics and discrimination. • Progressively increase the influence of women and girls into the design of programming. • Allow members to organize and facilitate activities of the WGSS. • Give the opportunity to members to provide inputs on IEC material and WGSS decoration. • Ensure women and girls have a crucial role in organizing, facilitating, providing feedback on services and activities. • Strive for improvement of members' feedback quality. • Support women in taking decisions and put the decisions into practice. • Discuss women's empowerment (both individual and group) trajectories and vision. • Create space for dialogue and discussions. 		
---	---	--	--	--

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for women and girls to implement skills and knowledge gained during activities. • Talk about gender-related taboos. • Provide information on women's rights, SRH, GBV, etc. • Make sure all women have access to comprehensive information on services available. 		
13. What strategies WGSS staff should implement to increase inclusion of diverse women's and girl's groups?	Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the groups co-existing, and the risks each group is more exposed to. • Assess and identify context-tailored vulnerabilities and risks. • Identify barriers preventing vulnerable women and girls from accessing activities or services. • Identify groups that are usually discriminated in the community (specific minority, disabled, widows, sex workers...) • Talk about different disabilities and vulnerabilities as part of human diversity. 		

<p>NOTE FOR FACILITATOR:</p> <p><i>Inclusion of diverse groups may include: minorities, different religions, languages, different place of origin, different status, different vulnerabilities, different sexual orientations, different disabilities, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Co-existing groups of women and girls are different from place to place and should be determined at the field level.</i></p> <p>For all staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use appropriate terminology to describe disabilities. • Focus on barriers to access services and activities rather than focus on challenges and problems of vulnerable groups. • Ensure the diversity of the staff reflects the context where the WGSS is located. • Reduce the physical barrier to WGSS. • Collaborate with protection sector colleagues to identify and reach the most vulnerable women and girls through outreach programming. • Ensure diversity of participants in activities (if appropriate and safe). • Ask the opinion of women and girls on how to reach excluded and marginalized groups of women and girls. 		
--	---	--	--

<p>14. What steps would you take in case you receive a SEA/ safeguarding⁷ complaint?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 5 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a private space to discuss. • Tell her/him s/he did a great job in reporting. • Explain that you will do your best to treat the issue with privacy and respect but you have to report this issue to the appointed focal point and explain exactly what you will do and what information you have to report. • Explain to her/him how the response mechanisms function. • Explain that s/he does not need to disclose her/his name if she does not want to, but that limits the capacity of carrying out the investigation. • Explain possible consequences for her/him. • Explain consequences for the perpetrator. • Listen carefully. • Believe her/him. • Take the issue seriously. • File and report the case confidentially and timely. • Ensure s/he gets the services and the support s/he needs. 		
--	---	--	--	--

<p>15. During an awareness-raising session, a woman starts disclosing a GBV incident she has just experienced. As a facilitator, what would you do?</p> <p>For all staff</p>	<p>Staff should mention at least 3 examples to get the full score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind yourself that a survivor has the right to disclose anywhere she feels comfortable. • Listen and don't interrupt. • Show empathy. • When disclosure finishes, validate what happened to her (e.g. 'many women in your situation would feel angry'). • When disclosure finishes, use healing statements (e.g. 'we are sorry for what happened to you'). • Provide general information on services available in case she, or any other woman, wants to receive specialized support. • Ask the survivor if she would like to talk to you after the session and if she is ok in parking the conversation for the moment. • At the end of the session, bilaterally provide all information on services and support possibilities. • Ask for her verbal consent and refer her to specialized services if given. 		
--	---	---	--	--

Final score



TOOL 22: WGSS STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS SURVEY

WHY USE THE WGSS STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS SURVEY?

This tool assesses the gender-equitable attitudes and beliefs of staff. In WGSS, where committees and volunteers disseminate program messages in the community, WGSS supervisors may also see this tool as an opportunity to better understand the attitudes and beliefs among volunteers and WGSS committee members. If harmful attitudes or gaps are identified, WGSS may ask volunteers and WGSS committee members to take part in capacity-building initiatives. However, being volunteers, the commitment request to fill the gaps should be tailored to volunteers' willingness, capacities and availability of time.

The tool is provided in two versions: self-administered or supervisor administered. The latter can also be used as a scoring sheet for the self-administered version. The survey should not be tailored as it is based on internationally tested and validated gender attitudes and norms. Findings of the survey should be discussed in capacity-development meetings, and gaps addressed through the capacity-building plan.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS SURVEY?

The survey should be used with each staff member on a regular basis to compare results as well as monitor progress on specific thematic areas over time. However, it is important to be mindful of the way the tool is used. It should be used regularly until the staff member can comfortably answer all questions correctly and extensively.

During the recruitment phase (see [Part 4: Recruitment](#)) recruiters may use [Tool 16: WGSS Candidate Attitude and Belief Survey - for Recruitment](#) which has been specifically adapted for recruitment purposes.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS SURVEY?

Below, the questionnaire is provided in 2 versions: the first one is the self-delivered version and the second one is the supervisor-administered version (that can also be used as a scoring sheet for the self-administered version).

- 1. The self-delivered questionnaire:** Each staff member can directly and individually use the survey. Read the questions and tick the answer. When using the questionnaire in a self-administered way, it is important to remove the second questionnaire from the tool as it provides the score related to each question, suggesting what answer is right and which one is wrong. Depending on the case, the

questionnaire can be handed to the supervisor, or the staff member can access the score sheet to self-score the exercise.

2. **The supervisor-administered version:** This version has the score of each question, and it can also be used as a scoring sheet for the self-administered version. The supervisor will read the statements one by one asking the supervisee if s/he agrees or disagrees with what she has read. The supervisor will then tick the box for ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’. At the end of the exercise the supervisor calculates the final score.

There is no hierarchy among the different attitudes and beliefs, they are all important to work in WGSS programming.

The supervisor can add open-ended questions at the end of the exercise to know more about the attitudes and beliefs of volunteers or committee members. Even though no score will be associated with open-ended questions, through a larger discussion, the supervisor may identify different gaps and capacity building needs.

Open-ended questions should be customized to the context, but some example may be:

1. What do you think is the added value of WGSS in this community?
2. Why do you think we are working only with women and girls in the space and do not allow men and boys in?



TOOL'S TEMPLATES

Guidelines for the staff and volunteer attitude and beliefs survey

Delivering the tool: Ask the individual if they are able to take the assessment on their own. If yes, explain the following: “This survey has 15 questions. You will choose whether you agree or disagree with a question.” Then, provide them with the assessment tool and a pen. If they cannot take the assessment alone, sit with the individual and ask them the questions. Circle their response.

Calculating the score: Look at the scoring guide and match the individual’s “attitudes scale” answers to the appropriate number (0 or 1). Add up the numbers to calculate the total score. Alternatively, enter data into the database “Staff Quality Tracker” for automatic calculation.

Interpreting the scores: 11-15 points: Scores in this range indicate that the individual has a high level of gender equitable beliefs and attitudes. They should be chosen to work or volunteer as part of the Women and Girls Safe Space intervention, if possible.

7-10 points: Scores in this range indicate that this person holds some attitudes that are not gender equitable. This individual might be able to become a member of the WGSS staffing structure with extra training.

6 points and below: Scores in this range indicate that an individual mostly does not hold gender equitable attitudes. They should not be considered to work or volunteer within the WGSS intervention

VERSION 1

Self-Delivered Version

Name: _____

Gender: Male Female

Safe space location/team: _____

Date: _____

*Circle whether you **Agree** or **Disagree** with each statement*

1. Women often say they have been raped or abused so that they can get attention or money.	Agree	Disagree
2. There are times when a husband is justified in beating his wife.	Agree	Disagree
3. Intimate partner violence is a family matter and should be handled within the family.	Agree	Disagree
4. A survivor should have the right to make a decision about what actions are best for her/him.	Agree	Disagree
5. A GBV survivor should always report their case to the police or other justice authorities.	Agree	Disagree
6. Changing the diapers, giving the kids a bath and feeding the kids are the mother's responsibility.	Agree	Disagree
7. A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep the family together.	Agree	Disagree
8. Men and women should share household chores.	Agree	Disagree
9. Women should be allowed to communicate to their sexual partners when they do and do not want to have sex.	Agree	Disagree
10. A woman is not complete until she has children.	Agree	Disagree

11. A woman's most important role is to take care of her family.	Agree	Disagree
12. It is okay for a woman to work outside the home.	Agree	Disagree
13. A woman has the right to go out in public whenever she chooses.	Agree	Disagree
14. Homosexuality is wrong.	Agree	Disagree
15. If a human being is born male but says they are a woman, this person is a woman.	Agree	Disagree

VERSION 2

Supervisor - Administered Version or
Scoring Sheet

Name: _____

Gender: Male Female

Safe space location/team: _____

Date: _____

*Circle whether you **Agree** or **Disagree** with each statement*

Answer:	Agree	Disagree
1. Women often say they have been raped or abused so that they can get attention or money.	0	1
2. There are times when a husband is justified in beating his wife.	0	1
3. Intimate partner violence is a family matter and should be handled within the family.	0	1
4. A survivor should have the right to make a decision about what actions are best for her/him.	1	0
5. A GBV survivor should always report their case to the police or other justice authorities.	0	1
6. Changing the diapers, giving the kids a bath and feeding the kids are the mother's responsibility.	0	1
7. A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep the family together.	0	1
8. Men and women should share household chores.	1	0
9. Women should be allowed to communicate to their sexual partners when they do and do not want to have sex.	1	0

10. A woman is not complete until she has children.	0	1
11. A woman's most important role is to take care of her family.	0	1
12. It is okay for a woman to work outside the home.	1	0
13. A woman has the right to go out in public whenever she chooses.	1	0
14. Homosexuality is wrong.	0	1
15. If a human being is born male but says they are a woman, this person is a woman.	1	0
Compare this scoring sheet to the assessment you want to score and circle the correct column for each row. Then add up the totals at the bottom of each column.	Total Agree (total possible score of 6):	Total Disagree (total possible score of 9):
Add the Agree and the Disagree total columns to calculate the total score.	Total score (out of 15):	



TOOL 23A: TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

WHY USE THE TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE?

The Teamwork Skills Assessment Questionnaire does not focus on technical capacities but on teamwork skills and competencies of the team. It is not meant for performance evaluation. Different from the other tools in Part 5, findings will not feed into the capacity-building plan but will instead be presented to and discussed with the team. An important outcome of this tool is identification of how a healthy (or unhealthy) team and supervision can contribute (or not) to a safe, welcoming, inclusive, empowering and free-of-judgment environment. The tool should be regularly used to compare results and monitor progress over time.

This questionnaire assesses the team's effectiveness from the perspective of seven thematic areas:

1. Purpose and goals
2. Roles
3. Team ethics
4. Team spirit
5. Constructive feedback
6. Motivation
7. Skills and resources

WHEN TO USE THE TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE?

The tool should be regularly used to compare results and monitor progress over time. It can be used every six months or once a year in a team with little staff turnover, in a stable environment, and based on positive team dynamics from previous results when using this tool. However, if there is a large or frequent turnover of staff, if the operational context is challenging, or if previous results from this activity have pointed to challenging team dynamics, it may be recommended to conduct the assessment every three months.

HOW TO USE THE TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE?

The tool consists of a written survey that staff members take individually but all at the same time, in the same room. Staff are asked to reflect on seven thematic areas: purpose and goals; roles; team ethics; team spirit; constructive feedback; motivation; skills and resources. Completed surveys, which are anonymous, are handed in to supervisors, who will review, compile and analyze findings based on [Tool 23b: Teamwork Skills Assessment Scoring Sheet](#).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

INSTRUCTIONS ON USING THIS TOOL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Each team member receives one questionnaire and, individually, answer the questions. Ideally, the whole team undertakes the exercise at the same time in the same room.

Once the questionnaire is filled, each team member should submit it to the supervisor. The supervisor will gather all the questionnaires to review, analyze and score each of them (to score the questionnaire, the supervisor will use Tool 23b: Teamwork Skills Assessment Scoring Sheet). The analysis should not only look at the score—the supervisor should also be able to identify the areas where the team is weaker or stronger.

The tool will contribute to the assessment of the effectiveness of the team and identify team dimensions that need to be improved to increase effective teamwork in the WGSS.

The team capacity assessment should be implemented on a regular basis to identify gaps, weaknesses and strengths and how they change over time. That level of monitoring takes place by comparing results over time.

This questionnaire assesses the team's effectiveness from the perspective of seven thematic areas:

- 1.** Purpose and goals
- 2.** Roles
- 3.** Team ethics
- 4.** Team spirit
- 5.** Constructive feedback
- 6.** Motivation
- 7.** Skills and resources

Useful to know:

- It should take about forty minutes to respond to the questions.
- The questionnaire is anonymous.
- Please respond to all statements.
- For each statement, check the box reflecting the extent you agree that the statement is true for your team. For each statement, check only one box to indicate your thinking.
- Be open and honest!

QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose and goals	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1. We are strongly committed as a team to shared principles and objectives.					
2. The WGSS objectives are not clear for WGSS staff and volunteers.					
3. I understand how our tasks contribute to our overall objective for women and girls.					
Roles	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
4. I clearly understand my role within the team.					
5. We are not clear on who does what in the WGSS, which leads to a duplication of effort.					
6. Tasks are not assigned to the right person with the right skills.					
Team ethics	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
7. Team members lack honesty and ethics in dealing with each other.					
8. Team members are careful not to hurt each other's feelings.					
9. The way we work as a team does not reflect the principles of collaboration and solidarity.					

Team spirit	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
10. Not every team member contributes to group discussions and team activities.					
11. Team members take time to listen to others and show empathy towards each other.					
12. Team members do not enjoy working together.					
Constructive feedback	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
13. Team members are not encouraged to give suggestions on how to move our work forward.					
14. Team members give unconstructive feedback for improvements.					
15. Team members have a clear way to incorporate the feedback from women and girls to improve our work as a team.					
Motivation	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
16. Working on our team inspires people to do their best.					
17. My team has a strong sense of accomplishment relative to our work.					
18. Team members don't motivate each other to do our best.					

<i>Skills and Resources</i>	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
19. We have the skills to do our jobs effectively.					
20. Team members don't share knowledge and information with each other.					
21. Resources are not shared between team members for productive use.					



TOOL 23B: TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET

WHY USE THE TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET?

This scoring sheet helps supervisors calculate in a systematic way, the team's perspective and team dynamics across seven dimensions of teamwork:

1. Purpose and goals
2. Roles
3. Team ethics
4. Team spirit
5. Constructive feedback
6. Motivation
7. Skills and resources

The score sheet only guides and cannot substitute for a supervisor's analysis, as answers will depend on contextual factors. Therefore, this scoring sheet offers only a general interpretation of the scoring ranges for each of the seven categories.

WHEN TO USE THE TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET?

This scoring sheet should be used as often as [Tool 23a: Teamwork Skills Assessment Questionnaire](#) is used.

HOW TO USE THE TEAMWORK SKILLS ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET?

In the scoring sheet, there is guidance on how to score single questions, each thematic area, and to assign a total score to each questionnaire. The questions, scoring and score ranges cannot be tailored or modified.

Importantly, supervisors must consider the day-to-day dynamics of the team while scoring the questionnaires. This could help in determining why certain teamwork dimensions or individual statements might get a low score.

Before sharing the information back with the team, the supervisor should try to identify the underlying factors that influenced the scores. To do so, they may need to look at each survey result closely to examine whether specific statements within each thematic area were, for example, overwhelmingly selected by staff, which might entail a teamwork challenge. The supervisor/facilitator should arrange for

one or two hours of discussion to share-back the overall findings and discuss challenges with the team. The process should allow staff to:

Discuss strengths of teamwork and brainstorm to:

- Identify strategies to reinforce strengths;
- Ensure that any new, on-boarded staff are adequately supported to uphold positive practices.

Discuss limitations and challenges of teamwork and brainstorm to:

- Identify capacity/skill building priorities;
- Find strategies to turn weaknesses into strengths.



ANALYSIS- SCORING SHEET

FACILITATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS

1. This tool is the scoring sheet of [Tool 23a: Teamwork Skills Assessment Questionnaire](#)
2. The supervisor collects all questionnaires. To review and score them, supervisor will use this scoring sheet (annotated tool).
3. After having assigned a score to each of the questions, the supervisor calculates the average per question (21).
4. Transfer to the scoring sheets below (after the annotated questionnaire) the numerical value for each of the 21 statements (scoring sheet - divided by question).
5. Review your “Scoring sheet - divided by question” below, identify the thematic areas with higher averages and those with lower ones. Try to identify the underlying factors that influenced the scores; think of looking at specific statements within each dimension which might be the most selected and prompting the low score. Try to explain any significant differences between perspectives. Brainstorm one or two things that can be done differently to raise the lowest scores in the future.
6. Discuss the different perspectives with the team to solicit ideas about what may have led to the different assessments. Identify with the team areas of priority for the focus of the capacity-building period.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose and goals	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: There is a poor sense of shared purpose and goals among team members which reduces the effectiveness of teamwork. Scores in this range might indicate, for example, that frontline staff are not sufficiently exposed to the overall objectives of the WGSS or clear on how their day-to-day tasks contribute to this objective. It may also indicate that the team is not sufficiently committed to shared principles either related to interpersonal dynamics or high turnover of staff, for example.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: There is a good sense of shared purpose and goals among team members, but some additional efforts are needed to strengthen this dimension of teamwork. Scores in this range might indicate, for example, that supervisors should ensure in their one-on-one meetings that each staff member understands how their tasks contribute to the overall objective of the WGSS.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: There is a strong sense of shared purpose and goals among team members contributing to the effectiveness of teamwork. Efforts should be sustained.</p>					
1. We are strongly committed as a team to shared principles and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The WGSS objectives are not clear for staff and volunteers.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I understand how our tasks contribute to our overall objective for women and girls.	1	2	3	4	5

Roles	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: Lack of clarity on roles and how they are allocated is affecting the effectiveness of teamwork. For example, if the WGSS is implemented through a partnership approach, scores in this range might indicate the need for a facilitated conversation with staff from both partners to clarify roles and responsibilities. Similarly, if the WGSS is hosting numerous other services and teams in the WGSS, this might indicate the need for more regular communication on the roles and responsibilities of each staff.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: Roles are perceived as clear and duplication of effort is minimized. It would be important to look at scores for each of the three statements to pinpoint where efforts might be increased for this dimension of teamwork to be more effective.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: This dimension of teamwork is considered effective.</p>					
4. I clearly understand my role within the team.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The WGSS objectives are not clear for staff and volunteers.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I understand how our tasks contribute to our overall objective for women and girls.	5	4	3	2	1

Team ethics	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: Conflicts and tension among team members are reducing collaboration and affecting effectiveness. Team values and ethics are not only essential to ensure a safe work environment but also to ensure that the WGSS is safe for members as well. Scores in this range indicate that stronger supervision and teambuilding efforts are required immediately.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: Values and ethics are perceived as somewhat shared by team members but scores in this range might indicate nascent issues between staff members which at this stage can be transformed positively through teambuilding and team communication activities.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: Scores in this range indicate that this dimension of teamwork is effective.</p>					
7. Team members lack honesty and ethics in dealing with each other.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Team members are careful not to hurt each other's feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The way we work as a team does not reflect the principles of collaboration and solidarity.	5	4	3	2	1

Team spirit	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: There is poor team spirit and communication among team members. It is most likely that staff will have equally ranked the dimension of ethics and values within the same score range. Analysing the individual statement scores for this dimension and the one above will identify the most prominent issue to be addressed.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: Team spirit is good and overall contributing to the effectiveness of teamwork. Scores in this range might indicate that supervisors try using different techniques during group discussions with staff to ensure all staff feel comfortable or are provided the space to contribute.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: Communication and team spirit is considered effective and should be sustained.</p>					
10. Every team member contributes to group discussions and team activities.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Team members take time to listen to others and show empathy towards each other.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Team members do not enjoy working together.	5	4	3	2	1

Constructive Feedback	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: Feedback whether provided by staff or by women and girls and the degree to which feedback is solicited and incorporated into teamwork and processes is considered poor and is affecting the effectiveness of teamwork. Scores in this range indicate overall, that feedback processes need to be reconsidered to better support teamwork. For example, staff may need training and support in order to gain skills on how to provide constructive feedback, or monitoring processes need to be strengthened to ensure monitoring informs program changes.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: Scores in this range indicate overall, that staff have the skills and ability to provide and incorporate feedback to support their work as a team. Further support might increase their ability to ensure feedback provided is constructive or that pathways for incorporating feedback into action are clear and easily applicable.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: Feedback is constructive and clearly informs teamwork and programming contributing to the overall effectiveness of teamwork.</p>					
13. Team members are not encouraged to give suggestions on how to move our work forward.	5	4	3	2	1
14. Team members give unconstructive feedback for improvements.	5	4	3	2	1
15. Team members have a clear way to incorporate the feedback from women and girls to improve our work as a team.	1	2	3	4	5

Motivation	Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: Scores in this range indicate that motivation is low within the team. While individual members may be motivated, as a team this dimension is lacking and as a result, overall, affects teamwork. Understanding what motivates the team and ensuring that periodically, achievements are acknowledged and celebrated, might be important first steps to strengthening motivation within the team.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: There is a good sense of motivation within the team. Peer approaches or creating additional space and time for team members to inspire and motivate each other can potentially further increase this dimension of teamwork.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: Team members mutually motivate each other and overall motivation within the team contributes to effective teamwork.</p>					
16. Working on our team inspires people to do their best.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My team has a strong sense of accomplishment relative to our work.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Team members don't motivate each other to do our best.	5	4	3	2	1

Skills and Resources	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<p>Score of 3 – 7 points: Scores in this range indicate that team members lack skills to perform their tasks effectively and there is insufficient investment in ensuring that resources existing within the team are shared and distributed effectively.</p> <p>Score of 8 – 11 points: Overall the team feels they have the skills and share resources across the team which contributes to effective teamwork. Scores in this range may indicate that existing gaps are either related to the actual skills to perform or to the process of acquiring and sharing these skills within the team.</p> <p>Score of 12 – 15 points: Skills and resources are effectively transmitted and distributed among team members.</p>					
19. We have the skills to do our jobs effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Team members don't share knowledge and information with each other.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Resources are shared between team members for productive use.	1	2	3	4	5

SCORING SHEET - DIVIDED BY QUESTION

<i>Purpose & Goals</i>	<i>Roles</i>	<i>Team ethics</i>	<i>Team spirit</i>	<i>Constructive feedback</i>
Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Q1 _____	Q4 _____	Q7 _____	Q10 _____	Q13 _____
Q2 _____	Q5 _____	Q8 _____	Q11 _____	Q14 _____
Q3 _____	Q6 _____	Q9 _____	Q12 _____	Q15 _____
Total: _____	Total: _____	Total: _____	Total: _____	Total: _____
Motivation	Skills and resources	TOTAL OF ALL 7 AVERAGE SCORES:		
Score	Score	_____ = Team effectiveness score		
Q16 _____	Q19 _____			
Q17 _____	Q20 _____			
Q18 _____	Q21 _____			
Total: _____	Total: _____			

COMPILED SCORING SHEET - DIVIDED BY THEMATIC AREA

<i>Purpose & Goals</i>	<i>Roles</i>	<i>Team ethics</i>
Total Average: _____	Total Average: _____	Total Average: _____
<i>Team spirit</i>	<i>Constructive feedback</i>	<i>Motivation</i>
Total Average: _____	Total Average: _____	Total Average: _____
<i>Skills and resources</i>	TOTAL OF ALL 7 AVERAGE SCORES:	
Total Average: _____	_____ = Team effectiveness score	



TOOL:24 CAPACTIY BUILDING PLAN

<https://app.box.com/file/546677623998>



TOOL 25: SHADOWING OBSERVATION TEMPLATE

WHY USE THE SHADOWING OBSERVATION TEMPLATE?

Job shadowing is a technique that can be used for capacity-building as well as for individual supervision purposes.

- For capacity building purposes, it is effective with new employees but also with staff who want to learn about different WGSS roles or implement activities they might be less familiar with. It also serves as a means of support where a trained and experienced individual follows and observes a less experienced individual.
- For individual supervision, shadowing can also be carried out by a supervisor to monitor and provide feedback to the staff they oversee.

This tool can be used:

1. **By less experienced staff members who shadow a more experienced staff member.** Less experienced staff may observe and learn directly how experienced colleagues apply their skills and knowledge. In this scenario, the tool is used as a capacity-building tool for the observer.
2. **By more experienced staff members who shadow a less experienced staff member.** The experienced staff may observe how the less experienced colleague implements a specific task or activity. Findings and outcomes of the observation should be presented from the observer to the observed staff after the session (or during the capacity-assessment meeting). In this scenario, the tool can be used as a capacity-building tool for the individual who is being observed.

WHEN TO USE THE SHADOWING OBSERVATION TEMPLATE?

An observation session should not last more than one hour. In the case of a group activity observation, it should be finalized at the end of the activity. However, the maximum length of the observation session should be discussed and agreed with the individual who is being observed.

If the observation takes place during a group activity, the observer should avoid taking notes. Instead it is recommended to fill the questionnaire at the end of the activity. That will avoid biasing the participation and influencing the flow of the activity. The de-briefing can also take place during the capacity-assessment and capacity-building plan meeting. In fact, gaps identified through this activity can directly inform [Tool 24: Capacity-Building plan](#).

If the tool is used to supervise or build the capacities of less experienced staff in delivering and facilitating group activities, it can be combined with [Tool 27: Facilitation Observation Checklist](#) because they serve similar purposes. In this case, the observer should familiarize her/himself with both tools before starting the observation and, while observing, tick the boxes on the “facilitation observation checklist”.

The facilitation observation checklist can be ticked during the activity; however, notes should wait until the end of the activity. Information gathered using both tools at the same time can better support observers in identifying staff weaknesses and strengths.

HOW TO USE THE SHADOWING OBSERVATION TEMPLATE?

Before starting the observation, the observer should review the questionnaire and identify the activity ‘steps’ the observation will focus on (preparation, activity opening, etc.). Being familiar with the questions in advance helps the observer in identifying details that will be helpful to fill out the tool at the end of the observation session.

Remember to be encouraging and positive while providing feedback – point out what they did well at first, and then where there might be areas for improvement. The consistent gaps should be raised during supervision meetings to help build their capacity. If you are another staff member or a community member, please share the filled-out form with the WGSS supervisor and be prepared to discuss any questions they may have.

The bullet point in the “areas of observation” serve as orientation for the observer. However, not each and every single point must be applied to each activity or session and the lack of some bullet points may or may not be a gap, depending on the activity and the context.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

STEPS OBSERVED	AREAS OF OBSERVATION: <i>*Not all areas below need to be observed during a single observation nor should observation be limited to these areas. They serve just as examples.</i>	NOTES: <i>If the tool is used by the supervisor: use this column to identify strengths and weaknesses to work on.</i> <i>If the tool is used by a learner: use this column to identify good and bad practices as well as lessons learnt to put in practice.</i>
1. PREPARATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the objective/goal for the activity guide the planning of the session?• How are the materials for the activity decided on and other logistical aspects prepared?• How are messages specifically tailored for the target group?• How are participants informed about time, location, content and objective of the session?• How does the facilitator plan for different facilitation techniques to ensure inclusive participation?	

<p>2. ACTIVITY OPENING</p> <p>How does the facilitator open the activity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the facilitator introduce themselves and participants? • How does the facilitator introduce the purpose of the activity and how it will unfold? • How does the facilitator explain expectations from participants and ground rules? 	
<p>3. EMPOWERING PARTICIPATION THROUGH FACILITATION</p> <p>How does the facilitator engage participants in an empowering way?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the facilitator use language for all participants to understand? • How does the facilitator ask open-ended questions to invite participants to express themselves? • How does the facilitator welcome participants' expression without having them share their individual experiences? • How does the facilitator summarize discussion points throughout the facilitation of the activity? • How does the facilitator maintain high participation levels? • How does the facilitator ensure that all participants have a chance to engage at their own pace? • How does the facilitator adapt facilitation for the activity to allow participants living with disabilities to equally participate? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the facilitator demonstrate active listening? • How does the facilitator share information without resorting to a lecturing style of communication? • How does the facilitator address information shared by participants which might not be accurate? • How does the facilitator balance between creating the space for participants who might be shyer to speak up, and not cutting off more expressive participants? • How does the facilitator engage willing participants to actively co-facilitate portions of the activity (e.g. lead and ice breaker, provide a recap, ice break, etc.)? • How does the facilitator solicit participants' input during the activity or for a follow-up activity? 	
<p>4. ACTIVITY CLOSING</p> <p>How does the facilitator close the activity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the facilitator close with a ritual (e.g. a song, a statement, a game, a relaxation exercise, etc.)? • How does the facilitator summarize the activity and the objective reached during the session? • How does the facilitator address questions which might arise at the close? • How does the facilitator provide information on next steps or alternative opportunities? 	

GENERAL NOTES:

NEXT STEPS:

NEXT OBSERVATION SESSION:



TOOL 26: GROUP SUPERVISION MEETING TEMPLATE

WHY USE THE GROUP SUPERVISION MEETING TEMPLATE?

The group supervision meeting is a scheduled support session where the supervisor provides needed support (technical, managerial, emotional) on challenges identified within the team. This template helps systematically document the content of these sessions.

WHEN TO USE THE GROUP SUPERVISION MEETING TEMPLATE?

Depending on the schedule of the team, group supervision meetings can be held for 1.5-2 hours once a month, once every two months, or however frequently the team decides is useful. Whatever the frequency, meetings should be held consistently and according to a schedule (e.g. the first Tuesday of every month), so that team and supervisors know to set that time aside in their schedule. The supervision meeting has a different purpose from the regular team meeting.

HOW TO USE THE GROUP SUPERVISION MEETING TEMPLATE?

The Group Supervision (meeting) tip sheet available in [Annex 5.4: Tip Sheet for Individual and Team Supervision](#) should be used by a supervisor to prepare and deliver a group supervision session. [Tool 26: Group Supervision Meeting Template](#) should be filled out by the facilitator at the end of the activity. It is important to show interest not writing during the activity. If GBV responders (case workers, case managers, etc.) are present in the group, it is recommended that the GBV technical supervisor be there as well.

The supervisor should make sure that s/he prepares and distributes an agenda and any other supporting materials prior to the meeting. There are many ways to structure group supervision meetings and the structure the supervisor chooses will depend on the goal of the session. The “session content” should include one of the three following examples:

- 1. Activities and services discussion.** A representative of different teams (GBV response, empowerment, outreach, shadowing, volunteers, etc.) present the work that was done, focusing on challenges and achievements and trying to identify the space for improvement. It is important to put the emphasis on achievements and the efforts that led to these achievements for colleagues to learn from each other.
- 2. Topical sessions:** The supervisor should either choose the topic in advance (based on the technical support she identifies as a priority) or ask team members to identify topics for which technical support is desired.
- 3. Share back:** The supervisor can identify a team member with a particular strength or who has been successful with a new strategy to lead the group session and “share back” his/her experience and discuss it with colleagues (each month the staff member selected for share back should be different). If this strategy is used, it is essential that the supervisor review with the staff member their plan for the group session before the activity.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

The group supervision meeting requires prior preparation. The Table below helps supervisors (or facilitators) to prepare the session using key questions and considerations.

WHO?	Target Group	Who will be attending the Group Supervision session?	Comments
WHY?	Purpose	What is the topic that has been prioritized for this session? What is the knowledge/skill gap that is being addressed? How have we observed this gap? What knowledge, skills and experiences does the team have, related to this topic?	
WHAT?	Learning Outcomes	What must the team do/know/ feel by the end of the group supervision meeting so that the identified need is met?	
WHEN?	Key Messages	What should be covered to ensure learning outcomes are met?	
WHERE?	Date; time Session Plan & Agenda	When will the group supervision session happen? Where will the session happen?	

HOW?	Methodology Resources	Which participatory techniques will you use? How will you make the session practical for the team's day-to-day work? What resources and equipment are needed?	
OTHER?			

To start the meeting, the facilitator says: “*Group supervision is an occasion to talk to each other about the job, reflect on work and share information, experiences and problems. It is neither a case management meeting or an individual supervision session, therefore neither clients' information nor personal information should be shared. All information provided to the group should be on the topic and helpful for the whole group. This is a safe space where everyone should feel comfortable sharing information about our work and experience. Therefore, it is important that everyone commit to keeping the confidentiality of the discussion, and to maintaining a non-judgmental and respectful attitude.*”



GROUP SUPERVISION SESSION/PLANNING TOOL

AGENDA AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	NOTES FROM DISCUSSION
<p>Opening and check-in: Provide participants with the opportunity to do a quick group check-in about how they are feeling, what their mood is, etc. (Be creative in how you do this!)</p>	
<p>Session content: To be designed by supervisor, as per guidance above.</p>	
<p>Closing and care: Make sure you summarize the key learning points from the session. Give participants the opportunity to do something that revives their energy, spirit, motivation. It could be the “brush off”, an energizer, a dance, a song, a joke, a relaxation exercise—anything that will bring some joy or calm (even if just a little) to their day.</p>	
At the end of the session, the facilitator summarizes action points: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY SUPERVISOR2. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY staff member/groups:	



TOOL 27: FACILITATION OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

WHY USE THE FACILITATION OBSERVATION CHECKLIST?

The Facilitation Observation Checklist is part of the tools linked to [Tool 8: WGSS Logical Framework](#) as indicated in the [dataflow](#), and serves to monitor the quality of group activities facilitated in the WGSS.

WHEN TO USE THE FACILITATION OBSERVATION CHECKLIST?

This tool should be used if the indicator 1.3.c. - % of WGSS staff who meet quality criteria for facilitation skills is one of the indicators you plan to report on as part of your WGSS project's logical framework. If this is the case, you should be collecting data either on a quarterly or semi-annual basis depending on what you have agreed with your donor.

HOW TO USE THE FACILITATION OBSERVATION CHECKLIST?

Before starting the observation, the observer should review the questionnaire. Being familiar with the questions will help in identifying details to fill out the tool at the end of the observation session. During the activity, the observer should tick the boxes of the checklist, but avoid writing notes which could bias participation and influence the flow of the activity.

Observe the activity quietly from beginning to end while completing the checklist below.

If you are using the tool as a supervisor: discuss your observations with the facilitator directly after the activity. The debriefing can also take place during the capacity assessment and capacity-building plan meeting. In fact, gaps identified through this activity can directly inform [Tool 24: Capacity-building Plan](#). Remember to be encouraging and positive – point out what they did well at first, and then where there might be areas for improvement. Any consistent gaps should be raised during supervision meetings to help build staff's capacities. If the checklist is filled out by a colleague, it should be submitted to the supervisor of the individual observed.

During the observation, the observer can use 2 tools at the same time: [Tool 25: Shadowing Observation Template](#) and this one. In fact, a specific session of the shadowing tool observes the facilitation skills of WGSS staff. Information gathered through the shadowing tool may complement those gathered through this checklist, and using both tools at the same time can better support observers in identifying staff's weaknesses and strengths.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

If using the 2 tools (tool 25 and tool 27) to evaluate the same activity, please consider tool 27 can be filled during the activity, while Tool 25 should be compiled at the end of the activity.

Observer name:	Observer role: <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Other staff member (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Adult female WGSS member <input type="checkbox"/> Adolescent girl WGSS member <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer/ WGSS committee member
Date:	
Type of activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Information dissemination and awareness raising <input type="checkbox"/> Skills-building <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation of capacities and skills <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops or other group capacity-building activities	Location: (name of the camp/ setting/ community/ town) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of facilitator being observed:	Role of facilitator being observed: <input type="checkbox"/> WGSS staff (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Adult female WGSS member <input type="checkbox"/> Adolescent girl WGSS member <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer/ WGSS committee member

PARTICIPATION & FACILITATION

	Yes (+1)	No (0)	NA
Did the facilitator ask the whole group questions during the session?			
Did the facilitator demonstrate active listening skills?			
Did all participants have an opportunity to speak, either in groups/pairs or as part of the wider group?			
Did the facilitator create space for the inclusive and equal participation of participants with different abilities?			
Were participants actively engaged?			
Did the facilitator allow for different views among participants to be shared without interruptions from participants with opposing views?			
Did the facilitator establish or remind participants of ground rules to ensure a positive group dynamic?			
Did the facilitator hold participants accountable in a respectful way when participants were not following ground rules affecting the group dynamic?			
Did the facilitator watch for non-verbal cues indicating discomfort or otherwise from participants and adjust facilitation?			
Did the facilitator stay on the topic of the session?			
Did the facilitator keep the conversation natural and allow for good flow?			

Did the facilitator display a positive attitude towards all members of the group?			
Tally total number of “yes” answers (Participation & Facilitation total):			
If the observer is the supervisor, highlight the key areas for improvement:			

ACTIVITIES	Yes (+1)	No (0)	NA
Was there a welcoming/an icebreaker activity at the start of the session?			
Was there a discussion about group ground rules?			
Was there any group work during the session?			
Was the activity chosen by the women and girls attending?			
Was a recap provided at the end of the session and information provided on what to expect for the next session?			
Were the activities age-appropriate?			
Tally total number of “yes” answers (Activities total):			

What resources were used during this activity? Check all that apply.

- Handicraft materials
- [insert suggestion]
- [insert suggestion]
- Technology/audio-visual resources
- Other instructional resources. Please specify: _____

If the observer is the supervisor, highlight the key areas for improvement:

OVERALL

Sum the Participation & Facilitation total and the Activities total: _____

If the total is 10 or above, the individual meets quality criteria for facilitation skills.

If the total is 9 or below, the facilitator should be offered additional training and support.

What were the best things about this session?

Are there any additional areas for improvement?

Any other comments?



TOOL 28: PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OPENING & EXPECTED SUPPORT INITIAL MEETING OUTLINE

WHY USE THE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OPENING AND EXPECTED SUPPORT INITIAL MEETING OUTLINE?

This outline offers guidance for conducting Partnership Project Opening Meetings (PPOMs), an important and mandatory step in the partnership project cycle which is critical for setting the pace for collaborative and supportive partnerships, including in terms of discussing capacity support which will be needed.

PPOMs promote effective implementation of partnership projects by bringing together WGSS and partner program and operations staff to:

- Promote a common understanding of the program, including start up, management, implementation, and operational aspects;
- Ensure that both the WGSS service provider and partner understand the contractual, financial, and donor compliance requirements of the partnership agreement, including any special conditions;
- Ensure a common understanding of any partnership project support to be provided or supported by the WGSS, including in response to issues identified in the Partner's Project Capacity Review (Pre-Award Assessment);
- Plan any capacity-strengthening support (where applicable); and
- Ensure coordinated and timely planning for efficient project start-up.

The PPOM reflects the WGSS's responsibility to ensure that the partner understands its partnership agreement requirements and is appropriately supported to meet those requirements.

WHEN TO USE THE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OPENING AND EXPECTED SUPPORT INITIAL MEETING OUTLINE?

Generally, the PPOM will take place after, and be informed by, the international GBV actors' internal Grant Opening Meeting. The PPOM should take place before the partnership project start up and ideally, before signature of the partnership agreement, in case any final issues identified in the meeting may impact the agreement. In the case of a multi-year partnership agreement, with annual project descriptions and annual obligations of funds, it is recommended to hold a PPOM at the beginning of each project year.

A thorough PPOM may take up to a day, depending on the scope and complexity of the project and partnership agreement; but the time will be well spent, ensuring a strong foundation for the partnership project. The more time invested up front, ensuring that WGSS and partner staff understand and share the same expectations with respect to the partnership agreement terms, conditions, and deliverables, the more likely the project and partnership will be successful.

HOW TO USE THE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OPENING AND EXPECTED SUPPORT INITIAL MEETING OUTLINE?

Use the following outline to support your selection of participating members, preparation for the meeting and detailed outline to structure the meeting.

Participation

The technical or partnership lead generally convenes the PPOM. Focal points from the WGSS and partner program, grants, and finance should participate, as well as other operational focal points, where relevant. It is also valuable for both the WGSS and partner's senior management to participate, at least for part of the meeting, to demonstrate commitment to the partnership, as well as to address any issues that may arise.

One WGSS staff member should take meeting minutes using the WGSS Meeting Note Template.

The PPOM should take place at a mutually-convenient time and location. Where appropriate, the PPOM is a good opportunity for WGSS staff to visit the partner's office. While not preferable, a conference call or Skype meeting may be used, if an in-person meeting is not possible. It is important to hold the meeting prior to the partnership agreement's signature, where possible, to ensure mutual understanding of roles, responsibilities, requirements, and due dates by both the WGSS and partner.

Preparation

All WGSS and partner meeting participants should be provided with the following documents in advance of the PPOM:

- Partnership agreement with proposal, budget and work plan (where available);
- Applicable donor regulations (or access to them);
- Copy of Partner's Project Capacity Review (Pre-Award Assessment) report;
- Reporting templates and associated guidance;
- Draft partner project support plan (developed based on the WGSS template and in accordance with the guidance included in the template); and
- Partner Welcome Pack.

Prior to the PPOM, WGSS service provider participants should meet to review the partnership project and confirm the draft meeting agenda, identifying key issues to be addressed. The WGSS service provider should provide the draft agenda to the partner in advance, inviting the partner to identify any other specific issues. The draft agenda should identify the proposed meeting chair, as well as the WGSS or partner's discussion leads for each agenda item. There should be a balance between WGSS and partner's staff presenting agenda items; where appropriate, WGSS service provider and partner counterparts can jointly present.

Sample Meeting Agenda

The PPOM should include the following agenda items, tailored to the partnership agreement's requirements, such as discussion of any special conditions. The PPOM's objective should be to establish a common understanding of, and agreement on, each agenda item.

Project Overview

- Program objectives and activities
- How the program fits into the broader strategies of the WGSS service provider and partner
- Areas of operation and target beneficiaries
- Monitoring framework and plan, including indicators, tracking and targets
- Project management and reporting structure
- Project staffing
- Procurement plan of the WGSS and partner (where relevant)

Terms of the Agreement

- Total grant amount (estimated/obligated); start and end dates
- Roles and responsibilities of the partner and WGSS service provider (and donor, where relevant)
- Special conditions (if any)
- Budget and budget flexibility
- Workplan
- Matching requirements (if any), with responsibility for reporting
- Asset management and disposal requirements
- Document retention requirements
- Audit requirements, roles and responsibilities (if applicable)
- Report on applicable local taxes
- WGSS service provider code of conduct and process for reporting violations
- Anti-terrorism compliance policy
- Suspension and termination provision
- Sharing of WGSS service providers' agreement with the donor, and relevant project documents, where appropriate

Donor Regulations and Compliance Requirements

- Review of the applicable donor regulations and compliance requirements
- Cost eligibility
- International travel restrictions (if any)
- Branding and marking (visibility) requirements (if any)
- Procurement and equipment standards and specifications (where relevant)
- Review of any actions/decisions requiring WGSS prior approval and authority for approval within the WGSS

Reporting Templates and Timing

- WGSS service providers' donor reporting requirements
- Partner's narrative and financial requirements
- Narrative reporting template (consider need for separate training)
- Finance reporting template (consider need for separate training)
- Financial supporting documentation requirements
- Required monitoring plan reporting format and details
- Reporting deadlines
- Staff authorized to approve/sign the reports
- Report submission
- WGSS report feedback

Payment Terms

- Payment in advance or reimbursement
- Frequency of payments (monthly, quarterly)
- Expense forecasting and cash-balance reporting
- Payment supporting documentation requirements
- Payment method (and bank details where relevant)

Partner Project Support

- Review of Pre-Award Assessment findings
- Type of assistance required, responsibility and timing
- Partner project support plan – agree details, ensure resourced
- Explore areas for mutual learning (particularly in areas where the partner has expertise that can benefit WGSS staff and the project objectives)

Organizational Development Support (where applicable)

- Review organizational development plans the partner has in place and support that WGSS service provider may provide
- Discuss any plans to support the partner in an organizational capacity assessment process
- Linkages between this partnership agreement and wider partner capacity-strengthening efforts
- Budgetary implications of agreed organizational development support

Other Areas of Collaboration

- Context analysis and conflict sensitivity
- Humanitarian access
- Security
- Remote management
- Gender analysis
- Advocacy

Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) & Evaluation

- Types of review and reflection (on site, office-based project, finance/compliance, other)
- Review and reflection (monitoring) visits (share Partnership Project and Finance/Compliance

Review and Reflection (Monitoring) tools

- Monitoring schedules and visits
- Feedback and follow-up
- Project evaluation (where applicable)

Communication between the IRC and Partner

- Communication protocol and focal points
- Partnership Project Review Meetings, including timing and participation¹
- Agree mutual feedback mechanisms – proactive and reactive feedback channels (including in reports, meetings, monitoring), frequency, response - including with respect to sensitive issues

External Communication

- Messaging to external stakeholders (donors, networks, government, etc.) about the partnership, how this will be communicated and by whom
- Donor communication (explore opportunities to communicate jointly and represent partner work to donor)

Other

- Any partner expectations of WGSS not previously discussed
- Any other issues specific to the partnership agreement or partnership

AFTER THE PPOM

Within a week of the PPOM, the WGSS should share draft meeting minutes (see the annex WGSS Partner Meeting Notes Template) with the partner for input. The WGSS should then finalize and share the minutes with partner meeting participants, including senior management, and file appropriately.

¹ See Chapter 8: Partnership Accountability and Results for guidance on the frequency of PPRMs.



TOOL 29:WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION MONITORING TOOL

WHY USE THE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION (MONITORING) TOOL?

This tool begins with a summary of the review and reflection (monitoring), followed by guided questions. This template should be adapted as necessary to the project context and any specific donor requirements. It allows the International GBV actor to monitor the state of the partnership and how it is progressing.

WHEN TO USE THE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION (MONITORING) TOOL?

In a twelve months partnership agreement this should be used in month 4 of the agreement, and again in month 7, to allow time for adjustments to be made to ensure a supportive and results-oriented partnership.

HOW TO USE THE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION (MONITORING) TOOL?

This process and tool are designed to guide a collaborative review and analysis of project progress. The partner must not be asked to complete this on its own behalf.

PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION (MONITORING) SUMMARY	
Name of Partner	
Project Name	
Partnership Agreement Start and End Date	
Monitoring Place and Date	

Complete this section BEFORE the review and reflection (monitoring) visit

Documents reviewed before monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre Award Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Project Description	<input type="checkbox"/> Partnership Project Reports <input type="checkbox"/> Review & Reflection (Monitoring) Reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Project Workplan <input type="checkbox"/> Field Monitoring Reports
	Other (please note): 		
Outstanding project issues listed in Partnership Project Action Plan	1. 2. 3.		
Priority issues to explore this monitoring (including any special conditions in partnership agreement that require monitoring)	1. 2. 3.		

Complete this section DURING or IMMEDIATELY AFTER the review and reflection (monitoring) visit

Names & titles of participating partner staff	• • •
Names & titles of participating WGSS staff	• • •

Project issues listed in Partnership Project Action Point Tracker resolved or completed in this monitoring	1. 2. 3.
New project issues identified in this monitoring (consider whether new issues identified require a new special condition)	1. 2. 3.
Partner support needs identified in this monitoring	• • •

PROJECT MONITORING ACTION PLAN

Including any project changes, support plans, or new special conditions.

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date

SIGNED:

Acknowledgement of findings, and agreement to Partnership Project Monitoring Action Plan

Director or equivalent senior staff of partner	Name & title:	Date:	Signature
Comment (including any comments on action plan):			
Director or equivalent senior staff of partner	Name & title:	Date:	Signature
Comment (including any comments on action plan):			



PARTNERSHIP PROJECT REVIEW AND REFLECTION (MONITORING) COMPONENTS

Introduction

- Timeline, frequency and dates of the partnership project review meetings (and visits) should be decided in partnership.
- All WGSS and partner staff participating in the Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) should introduce themselves.
- WGSS staff should clearly explain the purpose and scope of the visit. In particular, that this is a key part of the standard partnership project management process, designed to support and monitor the partners' implementation of the project—in accordance with the partnership agreement—and to help promote the success of the project (as well as being required by donor regulations). The visit also provides an opportunity for the WGSS service provider and the partner to reflect on the partnership relationship and share feedback with each other.
- Explain that the WGSS service provider encourages open dialogue on any issues that are identified in the monitoring process, and is committed to working with the partner to support them to address challenges and issues. Similarly, the WGSS service provider is committed to addressing any issues identified relating to its own performance in the partnership project.
- Check whether the partner has any questions about the monitoring process.

1. Progress Toward Objectives

- 1.1. Is the partner monitoring the project in accordance with the partner's monitoring plan? If not, what are the challenges? Review available monitoring reports.
- 1.2. Is the project on track in terms of progress towards indicator targets? Review available monitoring data, and confirm that indicators are being defined and verified consistently.
- 1.3. If the project is not on track in terms of progress towards indicator targets, what are the reasons, and what actions are (or should be) planned to address this? Consider whether your organization has contributed to the issue. If changes in the project are required, note these in the 'Changes to Project Plans' section below, as well as in the 'Action Plan' section of the 'Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) Summary' above.
- 1.4. Has the partner identified any lessons learned from this project period? How are those lessons being used to guide the implementation of the project?
- 1.5. Has the partner observed or documented any notable project successes?
- 1.6. If so, consider the potential to document the successes as 'success stories'.
- 1.7. Discuss any issues raised in the previous Project Report submitted by the partner, and provide feedback on the report (if you have not already done so).

2. Progress Against Workplan

- 2.1. Is the partner's implementation of the project on track against the workplan? Review available evidence, which may be set out as 'means of verification' in the workplan.
- 2.2. If implementation is not on track against the workplan, what are the reasons, and what actions are (or should be) planned to address this? Consider whether your organization has contributed to the issue. If changes are required, note these in the 'Changes to Project Plans' section below, as well as in the 'Action Plan' section of the 'Partnership Project Review & Reflection (Monitoring) Summary' above.

3. Safe, Meaningful and Equal Access

- 3.1. Based on the project data, and the observations of the partner, do women and girls have safe, meaningful and equal access to WGSS and project-related services, regardless of age, ethnicity and other characteristics? Review service data disaggregated by age, ethnicity, and any other characteristics which you are focusing on and compare with disaggregated population data. Note here the data that evidences, or raises concerns, with respect to safe, meaningful and equal access.
- 3.2. Based on the project data, and the observations of the partner, are there any groups within the populations of women and girls that the partner is unable to reach? What steps can be taken to improve access for these groups? Note here the data that evidences, or raises concerns, with respect to project reach to certain groups of women and adolescent girls.

3.3. Has the partner observed, or is there any evidence of, any unintended negative impacts of the project?

For example, are any threats to the safety and security of women and girls caused or worsened by the assistance, or are there tensions between certain groups of women and girls as a result of the assistance?

3.4. Has the partner observed, or is there any evidence of, any environmental impacts of the project?

For example, from any construction activities, or medical waste, or the use of raw materials from the environment.

3.5. Are any changes to project or service design necessary to promote safe and meaningful access to project services, without discrimination?

If so, note the reasons for the change here, the proposed changes in the ‘Changes to Project Plans’ section below, as well as in the ‘Action Plan’ section of the ‘Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) Summary’ above, including responsibility (partner or the WGSS service provider).

4. Women and Girls Participation

4.1. How does the partner learn the perspectives of women and girl members of the WGSS on the project as a part of (a) project design and planning, and (b) project implementation and monitoring?

Would the partner like the WGSS service provider to support to address any challenges in designing or implementing those feedback and response channels?

4.2. How does the partner ensure that women’s and girls’ perspectives inform project design and implementation?

What are examples of the changes that the partner has made based on client feedback?

4.3. How does the partner explain its decisions and actions to female and male participants in WGSS-related activities or to members of the broader community, and provide clients with an opportunity to seek clarification and challenge them?

In what settings or by what communication means are responses to clients’ feedback provided? Is the partner committed to a reasonable timeframe of response to clients after receiving their feedback? Would the partner like the WGSS staff’s support with this?

4.4. Please list any recommendations for improvement with respect to women’s and girls’ involvement.

5. Adherence to Humanitarian Principles

5.1. Has the partner faced any challenges in maintaining its neutrality, impartiality and independence from political or armed groups in the implementation of the project?

For example, have armed groups sought to divert project resources? Have political actors sought to influence the targeting of the project? Is their affiliation with the WGSS a factor?

5.2. If the partner has faced challenges in its adherence to humanitarian principles, what steps has it taken to address those challenges?

5.3. Are there any steps that the WGSS service provider can take to support the partner to manage or mitigate these challenges?

6. Security

- 6.1. What are the threats to the safety and security of the partner staff associated with the implementation of the project? How are these threats different for male and female staff?
Is their affiliation with the WGSS a factor?
- 6.2. How does the partner mitigate those threats? How are these mitigation efforts different for female and male staff?
Does the partner have a security management plan in place? Are staff appropriately trained on the plan? Is it implemented? Is the mitigation plan put together in a collaborative way with male and female staff, to ensure their unique needs?
- 6.3. Are there any steps that the WGSS service provider can take to support the partner to manage or mitigate those risks?

7. Coordination

- 7.1. Does the partner collaborate or coordinate with government entities in the implementation of the project?
Ministries and departments? Central or local level? Nature and type of collaboration? Challenges and successes of relationships?
- 7.2. Does the partner collaborate or coordinate with other local or national civil society organizations, including any networks?
Understand type and nature of collaboration; challenges and successes.
- 7.3. Does the partner collaborate or coordinate with international organizations in the implementation of the project, including UN agencies and INGOs?
Understand type and nature of collaboration; challenges and successes.
- 7.4. Can the WGSS service provider support the partner in its efforts to coordinate and collaborate with other actors?
Does the partner's affiliation with the WGSS service provider contribute to challenges and successes in collaboration with other actors?

8. Changes to Project Plans

- 8.1. Based on the progress towards the workplan and monitoring plan targets, and the analysis of issues of beneficiary participation, protection, humanitarian principles and security, should the partner make any changes to the project strategy or workplan?
If so, note these in the 'Changes to Project Plans' section below, as well as in the 'Action Plan' section of the 'Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) Summary' above.
- 8.2. Would those changes require a formal modification of the project agreement?
If so, note this in the 'Changes to Project Plans' section below, as well as in the 'Action Plan' section of the 'Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) Summary' above. (This may need to be considered in more detail after the meeting).

9. Staffing

- 9.1. Have there been any significant changes to management or program staffing in the last six months? Have these changes impacted project implementation?
- 9.2. Review the current staffing structure, gender data and skill sets, and discuss whether the staffing is appropriate for the project.

10. Partner Project and/or Organizational Development Support

(Note: if finance & compliance monitoring is conducted with the project monitoring, these questions can be combined)

- 10.1. Has the finance, supply chain or other partner project support from the WGSS service provider had an impact on the partners' ability to implement the project?
Review progress against Partner Support Plan. Solicit partner feedback on method and effectiveness of support, and impact. (Partner project support is the support provided by the WGSS service provider to the partner to assist the partner to implement the project.)
- 10.2. What are the partner's project support priorities in the coming months?
Note how this compares to the priorities identified in the Partner Project Support Plan agreed between the WGSS service provider and the partner at the start of the project. Discuss the WGSS service provider's ability to provide that support.
- 10.3. Has any organizational development support provided by the WGSS service provider had an impact on the partner as an organization?
Review progress against organizational development plan (if any). Discuss effectiveness of support, and impact. Note both the partner's perspective, and any observations you may have in terms of capacity changes. (Organizational development support is the support provided by your organization to support the partner to pursue its broader strategic objectives as an organization. This may include, for example, support for the development of a strategic plan, or support for the development of finance policies, gender sensitization training, anti-sexual misconduct training, etc.)
- 10.4. Is the partner accessing any capacity strengthening support from other sources?
This may include from institutions, consultants, or other INGOs.
- 10.5. What are the partner's organizational development support priorities in the next six months?
Note how this compares to the priorities identified in any capacity development plan the partner may have in place. Discuss the WGSS service provider's ability to provide that support, or to help the partner access third party support.

11. Partner Advocacy Priorities

- 11.1. What are the partner's key advocacy priorities, and how does it pursue those priorities?
- 11.2. Would the partner like to collaborate with the WGSS service provider to pursue any joint advocacy priorities?
Explore partner perspectives on advocacy priorities.
- 11.3. Is there any advocacy support that the partner would like from the WGSS service provider, for example support to develop advocacy strategy and advocacy skills?

12. Relationship between Partner and the WGSS Service Provider

(Note: if finance & compliance monitoring is conducted with the project monitoring, these questions can be combined)

12.1. What is working well in the relationship between your organization and the WGSS service provider?

Ask probing questions, particularly if the partner says everything is working. For example: Tell me more about what is working well? Can you offer us more details?

12.2. What can be improved in the relationship between your organization and the WGSS service provider's organization?

Ask probing questions, particularly if the partner says that there is no improvement to be made. For example: Do you feel our communications are working well? Do you feel we respond to your questions or concerns in a suitable timeframe?

12.3. What would you like the WGSS organization to do differently? For example, what would you like to see improved in the next three months?

12.4. What do you see as the added value of partnering with the WGSS?

Ask probing questions. If there is no value add, what is missing in the partnership? Or, besides continued financial and grant support, what else can the WGSS service provider do to strengthen our partnership?

12.5. Are there any other issues you would like to raise or discuss, or any other feedback you would like to provide to the WGSS service provider?

13. Additional Context or Project-Specific Questions

(including questions to monitor the implementation of previous pre award or monitoring action plans)

13.1. [Write your own question]

MEETING WRAP-UP

Thank the partner for the time spent with the WGSS service provider. Develop the draft Project Monitoring Action Plan together. Confirm that the WGSS service provider will provide the draft Partnership Project Review and Reflection (Monitoring) Summary and meeting notes to the partner for review within two weeks of the monitoring visit.



DATABASE C: CAPACITY BUILDING TRACKER

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



6: IMPLEMENTATION



ASSOCIATED WITH THIS **GUIDANCE**



FURTHER GUIDANCE

[Annex 6.1: How to build consensus](#)

[Annex 6.2: Facilitator DOs](#)

[Annex 6.3: Outreach strategies](#)

[Annex 6.4: Information, Education and Communication Material to Raise Community Acceptance and Understanding of WGSS Programming](#)

[Annex 6.5: Available Technical Resources to Design and Implement WGSS Activities](#)

[Annex 6.6: Safely Integrating Survivors in WGSS Activities](#)



TOOLS:

[Tool 30a: WGSS Member Survey \(Baseline\)](#)

[Tool 30b: WGSS Member Survey \(Follow Up\)](#)

[Tool 30c: WGSS Member Survey Participant List](#)

Remember [Tool 9a; WGSS indicator matrix](#) and [Tool 9b: Data source, databases and indicators](#) can support you in deciding which tools might be useful for your program

[Tool 31: Orientation Package For New Members](#)

[Tool 32: Community Survey](#)

[Tool 33: WGSS Member Input Form](#)

[Tool 34: WGSS Daily Attendance Rate Form](#)

[Tool 35: WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form](#)

[Tool 36: Community Engagement Attendance Form](#)



DATABASE

[Database D1: WGSS Attendance Tracker](#)

[Database D2: WGSS Attendance Tracker](#)

[Database E: WGSS Members' Input Tracker](#)

[Database F: WGSS Member Active Role Registration Book](#)

[Database G: WGSS Member Survey Database](#)

[Database H: Community Engagement Database](#)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Agency (the ability of women and girls to consider options and meaningfully choose between them), and the space for seizing opportunity (the context that influences women's ability to transform choice into action), both influence the degree of an individual's empowerment. WGSS implementation aims to increase women's and girl's degree of empowerment in humanitarian settings by both creating the space for opportunity and supporting women's and girls' ability to make effective choices in their lives.

First and foremost, this means breaking down existing barriers between service providers and beneficiaries by ensuring implementation informs, consults, involves, collaborates and empowers women and girls as co-creators of the WGSS program. It is the collective process – between women and girls who, daily, choose to gather and contribute whether as beneficiaries, members, facilitators, mentors, service providers, agents of change or in any other capacity – which creates the relevant space for women's and girl's empowerment.

The guidance and tools associated with implementation in this toolkit outline the strategies and approaches that can be used to design the implementation process, as well as track and measure rising degrees of empowerment among women and girls, without being too prescriptive so as to avoid compromising the transformative potential of WGSS.

6.2 KEY STRATEGIES FOR WGSS IMPLEMENTATION

In humanitarian crises, women's and girls' voices are often sidelined. All WGSS activities should be based on women's and girls' priorities and customized according to their specific needs.¹ The following are key considerations before and during the implementation process.

WGSS implementation is context-tailored

To encourage and enable access, WGSS services and activities should reflect the range of needs, experiences, ages, and comfort levels of the women and girls accessing the safe space, as well as organizational expertise and capacity in implementing WGSS programming. This will vary widely depending on the context, requiring both adaptation and flexibility. Still, there are common enabling factors relevant to all contexts that should be considered during implementation:

Promote inclusive group activities: During the assessment and design phases, best practice recommends separate consultations with women and girls (especially adolescent girls) from diverse groups based on their age, race, class, nationality, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, etc. to ensure a safe environment where they can confidentially share the specific barriers and enablers they face in accessing services, and how a WGSS program could help address these. However, during the actual implementation of WGSS services and activities, staff should support more collective opportunities for all women and girls to build supportive relationships based on their shared experiences as women and girls. This requires that staff avoid reinforcing bias and prejudice among diverse groups of women and girls in the community (e.g. holding activities for women and girls with physical impairments separate from those without; singling out those with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities to share their experiences accessing services during information sessions). While adolescent girls should, for the most

¹ UNFPA, 2015. Women & Girls Safe Spaces: A Guidance Note Based on Lessons Learned from the Syrian Crisis. <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/women-girls-safe-spaces-guidance-note-based-lessons-learned-syrian-crisis>.

part, participate in different activities and groups than adult women, segregating participation based on any other identity marker, can be harmful as it reinforces segregation (“othering”).

Adapt staff communication and facilitation methods for women and girls with disabilities. In most cases, women and girls with speech and hearing impairments can communicate directly with WGSS staff with no or minimal adaptations, e.g. through sign-language interpreters or by using simplified language in discussions. In some cases, however, it may be less clear what the best way to communicate might be, and efforts could be required to determine this. When working with persons who find it difficult to communicate:

- Take time, watch and listen. This is a process, not a one-time event. Each time you meet the person, you will learn something new about them and understand better how they communicate and what they mean.
- Conduct open conversations with caregivers where the cared-for individual can hear what is being said and participate in any way possible. Remember that people who can't speak or move may still understand what is happening around them and what other people are saying about them.
- Pay attention to any way in which the individual wishes to communicate. This could be through gestures and sometimes emotional expression. Some persons with intellectual and mental disabilities can exhibit a wide range of behaviors. This is sometimes the way they communicate with others. It is OK, however, to say “I don’t understand.”²

Provide childcare: One of the most commonly-cited barriers preventing women and girls from accessing WGSS, or limiting their ability to fully engage and benefit in activities and services, is the lack of available childcare services. This is especially true if there are no childcare service providers in the area. Providing care for members’ infants and young children while they participate in an activity or service at the WGSS can help ensure that both caregivers and children are safe and attended to. They also help free up adolescent girls, who are often caregivers of younger children, so they are able to participate. If there are childcare providers in the area, the WGSS can collaborate with them. Or else the WGSS could create a dedicated space on the premises. If childcare is provided within the WGSS, at least one staff member will need to be dedicated solely to this, with more staff on-hand as necessary if the children number more than 20 (per child protection standards). Importantly, while the primary aim of this service is to support mothers and caregivers, the care provided should still be socially age-appropriate and guided by child safeguarding principles.

Provide transportation to and from the WGSS: If certain groups of women and girls are not able to reach the WGSS due to distance, the provision of transportation or transportation stipends should be considered. For urban settings, public transportation is a common solution, and stipends would be useful. For other types of displaced settings, if other agencies provide transportation, the WGSS should coordinate with them. Where relevant, camp management and coordination mechanisms should also be informed of the transportation service/stipend provided by the WGSS specifically as a measure to ensure women’s and girls’ safe access. Communication on this is important because if other service providers do not equally provide this access measure, they might not be adequately reaching women and girls. It should be an important advocacy point that women and girls be able to equally access other humanitarian services besides the WGSS.

2 WRC and IRC, 2015. Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in GBV Programming in Humanitarian Settings: “Tool 8: Guidance for GBV caseworkers: Applying the guiding principles when working with survivors of disabilities”. <https://gbvresponders.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/GBV-disability-Tool-8-Guidance-for-GBV-caseworkers-Applying-the-guiding-principles-when-working-with-survivors-of-disabilities.pdf>

Provide female interpreters: The presence of [interpreters](#) who can facilitate communication between groups speaking different languages might be needed in certain contexts. If women do not feel listened to and understood, or do not have the opportunity to freely communicate, they may feel easily frustrated, underappreciated and may no longer identify the space as safe, leading them to discontinue their participation. Unless all the women and girls in the WGSS speak a common language, interpreters should be considered as critical staff to be hired. If the WGSS does not have the resources or if interpreters are unavailable, consider whether there may be volunteers willing to assist at given intervals (this should never be considered a full-time job). More information on engaging volunteers is available in [Part 4: Staffing](#).

Context-tailored:

- promote inclusive group activities
- adapt communication methods for persons with disabilities
- provide childcare
- provide transport
- provide female interpreters

WGSS implementation is women and girl-led

Women and girls should have the opportunity to increasingly participate in organizing and leading WGSS programming. Although engagement of women and girls begins during the assessment phase and is reinforced over the course of the program, to ensure the WGSS is consistently women and girl-informed and -led, WGSS should create during the implementation phase opportunities for women and girls to gain skills and knowledge, and take on active roles in developing programs. The following are some of the empowering opportunities the WGSS can put in place:

Provide orientation for new members (Tool 31): For the WGSS to be truly women and girl-led, and to be true to core empowerment objectives, the WGSS must provide women and girls with the means to fully understand the functioning of the WGSS and its potential. To do this, and to develop a sense of ownership and trust, new WGSS members should be offered [Tool 31: Orientation Package for New Members](#).

The six key concepts delivered through the orientation package include:

- Core concepts of WGSS
- Power and empowerment concepts
- Gender equality basic concepts
- Violence against women and girls (basic)
- Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)
- Feedback mechanisms and decision-making

The orientation package is divided into six modules. Each of them can be delivered separately and on different days but must follow the sequence (from 1 to 6)³. The modules are intended to help members understand the opportunities, objectives, and approaches of the WGSS, to ensure accountability to members, and to enhance their leadership and decision-making abilities. The package should be delivered on a regular basis (monthly, quarterly or biannually depending on new members' inflow) so members have different options to attend during their first six months at the WGSS. To the extent possible, members should be able to attend an orientation session as many times as they need to, to fully understand the concepts. Seasoned members of the WGSS, including WGSS volunteers, committee members or women's forum members—as well as any other women and girls voluntarily involved in WGSS programming—should have the opportunity to support tailoring and delivering the orientation package for new members. Trained and proactive members can help co-organize and co-facilitate the orientation on a rotational basis, so different members have an opportunity to learn facilitation skills.

Women and girl-led recreational activities: While staff remain accountable for the program overall, at least in the earlier phases of the WGSS' lifespan, women and girls should increasingly take on responsibilities and be introduced to the wider role and requirements the implementing organization is accountable for. Members should, in particular, be encouraged to discuss, identify, organize and deliver recreational group activities, with the support of staff. Mechanisms should therefore be put in place, such as the [side-by-side approach](#) or peer facilitation, for members to gain skills needed to organize and deliver these activities. The WGSS should also provide opportunities for women and girls to discuss and identify the content of activities, and learn facilitation techniques through women's forum meetings or any other type of consultation.

Women and girl-led recreational activities:

- Boost the sense of belonging women and girls feel when in the space.
- Increase members' engagement and feelings of responsibility towards WGSS programming as they are not only beneficiaries but active contributors.
- Allow members to practice and teach skills acquired through various capacity-building techniques.
- Strengthen social networks and sense of solidarity among members.
- Prioritize the psychosocial well-being of women and girls.
- Create an environment where members can feel free to talk and discuss common challenges and experiences as these relate to them, and at the pace that suits them.
- Promote an empowering environment for members.

Women's Forum is an advisory group that supports the relevance, accountability and ownership of the WGSS. It aims to boost the sense of ownership, and provide practical empowering techniques in compliance with WGSS principles and objectives. The Forum is not the final decision maker, although recommendations will be discussed with staff and management. Ultimately, staff and management have the responsibility to sit with Forum members regularly to discuss their feedback and recommendations, and it is entirely the staff and management's responsibility to ensure that these are heard, discussed and considered, and that they ultimately inform programming for the WGSS.

3 More information on how to plan, organize and deliver the orientation package's sessions are provided in the introduction to Tool 31.

The core function of the Forum is to:

- Share and listen to feedback, recommendations and opinions on activities and services (and learn how to provide significant feedback);
- Deepen the knowledge of women's and girls' needs and opportunities;
- Make members feel heard;
- Deepen understanding and knowledge on topics discussed during activities;
- Discuss and challenge traditional gender roles;
- Take a more proactive role in the WGSS;
- Promote involvement in the organization, facilitation and delivery of services and activities;
- Gain analytical, decision-making and management skills;
- Discuss inclusion, outreach and other implementation strategies;
- Support the identification of selection criteria for WGSS activities;
- Engage and create, as much as possible, networks with other existing female platforms.

Especially during the first six months or year of implementation of the Forum's, it is essential to have a well-trained, experienced facilitator (**dedicated staff member**). The facilitator plays a pivotal role to identify and intervene when the agreement is reached, when the discussion may create tensions or frustrations, and when there is an impasse, more information on the facilitator's role and skills are provided in the [**Annex 6.1: how to build consensus.**](#)

Should support and build the capacities of the group to:

- Organize meetings', as well as agenda and material;
- Learn facilitation skills, e.g. use active listening techniques;
- Set up solution-oriented meetings;
- Analyze the impact of activities;
- Identify priorities;
- Suggest new implementation strategies (such as inclusion strategies, activity delivery strategies, etc.); and
- Take decisions through consensus.

It is recommended to start with small-scale implementation (a few members, a few topics) and then progressively increase the level of participation and involvement over time based on members' willingness and availability. Gradually, the facilitator role should transition from the staff member to Forum members, although as mentioned, the final responsibility for the activity overall, still rests with staff.

Women and girls should advise on the age of membership, but it is usually recommended to set up separate forums for women and adolescents. Participation is voluntary, but it requires a certain degree of commitment. Selection criteria and the number of members can be flexible, depending on how many interested members there are. Importantly, the commitment required should be identified, agreed on by the group, then written and made public. A horizontal rather than hierarchical organizational structure

should be used for the group, guaranteeing that every member has the same power and proportionate roles. This avoids replicating any unequal power structures, while also supporting inclusion. As much as possible, decisions should be taken via consensus (see [Annex 6.1: How to Build Consensus](#)), so each member can express her opinions and suggestions.

Women and girl-led:

- provide orientation for new members
- involve members in organizing recreational activities
- Put in place structures for members to inform programming

WGSS implementation is community-informed

During implementation, outreach (see [Annex 6.3: Outreach Strategies](#)) is the way to communicate with and engage the wider community in order to cultivate acceptance of the WGSS, and secure women's and girls' access to and use of it. Outreach can take many forms including information sessions, door-to-door visits, and written communication materials. Every WGSS should, at a minimum, engage the community by implementing the following outreach strategies:

- Inform yet-to-be-reached, isolated or hard-to-reach women and girls about WGSS activities and services. A WGSS should actively reduce barriers preventing some women and girls from access whether related to age, disability, geographical location, ethnic minority, etc. Outreach activities should especially target women and girls belonging to identity groups currently not accessing the WGSS and actively engage them in strategizing solutions to enable access. In-person information dissemination sessions led by a WGSS outreach team might be carried out through local community institutions such as community centers, public spaces, or at other service providers' delivery points (e.g. health clinics).
- Door-to-door visits may be used to communicate the availability of services to women and girls who might have restricted physical access or who are unlikely to be reached through the information sessions. More specifically, such an approach is recommended only in two cases:
 - To reach specific groups of women and girls who otherwise might not receive the information through the main information dissemination channel employed (e.g. to reach blind women and adolescent girls who cannot read the billboards placed in the neighborhood).
 - To follow up on drop-out by members (e.g. a member known for her consistent presence in a WGSS activity is no longer attending without indicating reasons for her sudden absence). Depending on the context, the facilitator or an outreach staff member may decide to visit her house to better understand the situation, and find ways to improve her access.

Importantly, this approach should not be implemented by default nor should it be used to deliver in-house/private activities for women who cannot access the WGSS. While well intended, doing so may reinforce marginalization. Instead, the outreach team should use the visits to better understand the barriers preventing women and girls from attending the WGSS, in order to identify strategies for access and inclusion. The outreach team must be fully aware this approach may prompt women and girls to disclose experiences of violence, and so teams must be skilled in managing such situations according to GBV guiding principles and existing referral systems.

- Raise male community members' awareness of the purpose of the WGSS, the services available and why it is a female-only space. Male community members' acceptance and buy-in of the WGSS is likely to directly influence both access and participation of women and girls in their community. In gender-unequal contexts, because WGSS are for females only, there will be male community members that are inherently suspicious and have negative perceptions of the WGSS. Designing WGSS information materials for male community members which preempt negative perceptions and galvanize men's support for the WGSS are thus pivotal. The outreach team should fully be aware of the unequal gender norms and practices which might undermine male community members' acceptance of the WGSS, and prevent some women's and girls' access. They should also be sufficiently skilled and able to facilitate and moderate discussions in which gender-inequitable beliefs may be voiced by participants.
- Engage key WGSS community stakeholders. Managing stakeholders' expectations of programming and ensuring their support for the WGSS is essential to ensure women's and girls' access. Male community members, community governance structures and other key stakeholders can significantly influence women's and girls' access. The stakeholder analysis initially conducted during the assessment phase should be periodically updated during the implementation phase to ensure the relevance of outreach strategies. Because the program may require outreach to local authorities, community leaders and humanitarian coordination structures, WGSS outreach staff may need the support of senior staff to carry out their communication and engagement plans.

Community Informed:

- Inform yet-to-be-reached, isolated or hard-to-reach women and girls about WGSS activities and services
- Raise male community members' awareness of the purpose of the WGSS
- Engage key WGSS community stakeholders

6.3 CREATING SPACE FOR OPPORTUNITY ACROSS MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF EMPOWERMENT

Dimensions of Empowerment Supported by WGSS Activities

WGSS programming explicitly works toward multiple dimensions of empowerment:

- 1.** Personal empowerment refers to the concept of power within: encompasses activities which develop women's and girls' self-confidence, self-awareness, self-respect, ability to assert their rights and make choices. In some programs, personal empowerment embraces a component of economic empowerment, in which income-generation activities are specifically designed to increase women's and girls' access to and control over the use of resources, and reduce their dependence and vulnerability to exploitative and abusive situations.
- 2.** Cognitive empowerment refers to the idiom 'knowledge is power': encompasses activities and opportunities which allow women and girls to gain new skills and knowledge so they can make choices and take control of their lives. Cognitive empowerment includes a component of understanding rights focused on women's and girls' awareness of and understanding of their rights, services available, how to access them and how to report complaints and safety concerns.
- 3.** Psychosocial empowerment: includes activities and services which recognize women's and girls' strengths. These support women's and girls' freedom of expression, ability to cope positively with stress, and mutual support through strengthened social networks.
- 4.** Socio-civic empowerment: encompasses activities and services to enhance women's and girls' participation in public life, as well as opportunities to mobilize and organize for social change.

[Tool 30a: WGSS Member Survey \(Baseline\)](#); [Tool 30b: WGSS Member Survey \(Follow-up\)](#) and [Tool 30c: WGSS Member Survey Participant List](#) measure outcomes related to empowerment, knowledge of services, and social networks among women and girls. Data is collected from a sample of participants when they first come to the WGSS (registration) and again 3 months later.



Lessons Learned | Reality Check from the Field

As part of the toolkit's development we conducted research to test the feasibility and acceptability of the toolkit. This included the piloting of [Tool 30a: WGSS Member Survey \(Baseline\)](#); [Tool 30b: WGSS Member Survey \(Follow-up\)](#) and [Tool 30c: WGSS Member Survey Participant List](#). In each country, we surveyed women and girls using the WGSS survey as a baseline at the start of the pilot phase, and then followed up with the same women and girls at the end of the pilot phase.

Through WGSS activities and participation, 53.9% of women and girl members reported an increase in their perceived decision-making skills (Cameroon: 62.9%; Ethiopia: 31.0%; Lebanon: 65.2%; Thailand: 56.6%). Additionally, 65% reported an increase in their sense of empowerment (Cameroon: 62.9%; Ethiopia: 62.0%; Lebanon: 65.2%; Thailand: 70.0%).

WGSS members reported feeling respected, free, comfortable, and happy that the WGSS is an inclusive place where they can safely relieve their stress regardless of their disability status or socio-cultural background. WGSS also provide vital knowledge, resources and services for women and girls who experience or know of someone experiencing violence, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Of members surveyed, 93.5% reported knowing where someone can get support if they're experiencing violence, and 87.0% were able to identify safe methods of reporting SEA. Members across all 4 pilot countries listed WGSS as an essential service provider in their area for survivors of violence. Possibly most importantly, WGSS have provided opportunities for women and girls to meet and build relationships—96.8% of surveyed members reported an increase in social networks they can turn to for support due to the WGSS (Cameroon: 96%; Ethiopia: 100%; Lebanon: 91%; Thailand: 100%).

Connecting Activities, Objectives and Types of Empowerment

The list below illustrates the link between the WGSS objectives, core activities in which WGSS or community members participate, and the types of empowerment that all these work towards and support. While the activities/services mentioned are those usually delivered in WGSS, they are not intended to be a standard set of activities and services (e.g. see Objective 4 below – case management services may or may not be available in a particular WGSS); and only a few may be delivered out of the whole list.

Objective 1: WGSS facilitate access for all women and girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services.

Illustrative WGSS activities that support achievement of this objective include:

- Orientation for new members
- Information dissemination on available services
- Referrals to other humanitarian services (for all women and girls, not specific to survivors)
- Periodic service mapping
- Hosted information sessions from other service providers (e.g. legal, nutrition or sexual reproductive health service providers)
- Life skills sessions for groups of adolescent girls
- Skills-building groups or hosted skills training (e.g. vocational or livelihood service providers)

Supports: personal, cognitive, psychosocial empowerment

Objective 2: WGSS support women's and girls' psychosocial well-being and creation of social networks.

Illustrative WGSS activities that support achievement of this objective include:

- Arts-based activities (e.g. music, dancing, theatre, drawing)
- Exercise and sport (e.g. yoga, volleyball, football)
- Leisure and relaxation activities (e.g. coffee or tea ceremonies, meditation, storytelling, movies)
- Craft-making (e.g. soap making, tailoring, beading, basket making)
- Community development initiatives (e.g. gardening, rehabilitation of community spaces)
- Positive support groups (young mother support groups, community development groups)
- Communal income-generating activities to support the WGSS

Supports: personal, psychosocial, socio-civic empowerment

Objective 3: WGSS serve as a place where women and girls can organize and access information to reduce risk of violence.

Illustrative WGSS activities that support achievement of this objective include:

- Facilitated discussions to understand concerns and safety risks
- Awareness sessions on risks to GBV, including SEA, and available response services
- Awareness sessions on feedback and reporting mechanisms
- Community mapping and safety planning exercises including safety audits
- Hosted information sessions from safety/security actors (e.g. peacekeepers, police, community watch groups)
- Direct or hosted distribution of dignity kits, cash, or voucher assistance

Supports: personal, psychosocial, socio-civic empowerment

Objective 4: WGSS serve as a key entry point for specialized services for GBV survivors.

Illustrative WGSS activities that support achievement of this objective include:

- Information dissemination on available GBV response services
- Safe referral to GBV response services or any other relevant service
- Basic response to survivors who report incidents of GBV
- Provision of GBV case management services and individualized psychosocial support services for survivors of GBV
- Confidential integration of survivors into WGSS group activities

Supports: personal, cognitive, psychosocial empowerment

Objective 5: WGSS provide a place where women and girls are safe and encouraged to use their voice and collectively raise attention to their rights and needs.

Illustrative WGSS activities that support achievement of this objective include:

- Facilitated discussions (FGDs or meetings) to understand women's and girls' perspectives and needs
- Women's forum meetings and advocacy planning
- Mentorship, peer facilitation, and side-by-side support from active members
- Meetings of women and girl-led initiatives (e.g. associations, savings and loans groups)
- Leadership and advocacy training

Supports: personal, cognitive, psychosocial and socio-civic empowerment

6.4 CREATING SPACE FOR WOMEN AND GIRL-CENTERED AND -LED ACTIVITIES

Promoting Opportunities for Women and Girls to Lead

While women and girls should influence WGSS programming and lead some of the activities, matching various groups' requests with organizational, donor or GBV response coordination requirements can be challenging. Building flexibility into implementation design for WGSS members to provide inputs at various stages, as well as specifically equipping them with knowledge and skills related to program processes is necessary to ensure both meaningful participation and ownership.

Indeed, ownership and empowerment work hand in hand in the WGSS. Each WGSS should set up mechanisms to empower members, by building their capacities and providing opportunities for them to proactively inform programming.

This toolkit identifies "Proactive members" as those who take part in some empowering mechanism or opportunities like those explained below:

Volunteers are WGSS members who usually support WGSS programming whether onsite or through outreach or mobile interventions by voluntarily contributing their time, effort or talent, without expectation of compensation. As time goes on, volunteers may support a broader and more sophisticated range of tasks (based on their availability). Volunteering has many benefits, including contributing to self-confidence and satisfaction, stronger social networks, the ability to use previously established skills or develop new ones, and a possible entry point to paid employment.

Volunteering is a strategy that helps WGSS to ensure that members are active contributors. By volunteering, women and girls have access to empowering opportunities that are often denied in traditional gender-unequal societies. Those opportunities include engaging with others, getting involved in organizing, making their voices heard, taking decisions. This helps cultivate a sense of ownership and belonging to the WGSS.

Peer facilitators are usually WGSS members who gained knowledge and skills through the [side-by-side approach](#), through volunteering, or though other capacity-building initiatives. Peer facilitators co-facilitate activities and capacity-building initiatives such as the ‘orientation for new members’. To gain the necessary skills, peer facilitators shadow staff members in planning, organizing and delivering daily tasks that support the efficient functioning of the WGSS. Peer-facilitators, if needed and relevant, can also help newcomers by telling/showing them the basic functioning of the space, the services and opportunities available. This level of support promotes an environment of solidarity and mutual support.

This empowering mechanism guarantees that women and girls of the community are aware and trained in delivering activities and programming. It is a capacity-building initiative that contributes to a participative, equal and inclusive environment.

Committees or women’s and girl’s Forum members – The establishment of these mechanisms offer opportunities to make women’s and girls’ voices heard, to inform programming and to ensure that the WGSS is women and girl-led. By regularly engaging in group discussions, forum or committee members develop a specific set of skills that includes decision-making, active listening, context analysis, strategic planning, feedback provision, among others. WGSS Committees and Forums are concrete strategies to foster empowerment, solidarity, partnership, accountability and inclusion.

Mentors are women or young women from the community who members can identify with. This empowering mechanism is most often associated with approaches in adolescent girls programming such as curriculum-based activities. Here, mentors support the implementation of the curriculum and also serve as role models. Mentors are trained on the particular curriculum-based activity and are typically WGSS members who have the knowledge needed to support other members through a specific process. In some circumstances, members can first be participants and then become mentors themselves for subsequent program implementation. This approach helps to expand the member’s social and safety network in their communities, and allows for sustainability and ongoing solidarity. If the WGSS decides to use young mentors, those should be managed and supervised by professional staff. The aim is to create a connection between a member and a “safe person” contributing to the member’s safety and well-being. Selection of mentors will depend on the specific activity, including the program environment and availability of mentors and staff. Roles and responsibility of mentors should be highlighted in the instructions to the curriculum-based activity that the WGSS decides to implement.

Increasing opportunities for participation through balancing group activities

WGSS implementation is largely centered around group activities which help validate members’ individual experiences, while also serving as a catalyst to grow and amplify individual knowledge, skills and assets to contribute towards a stronger collective experience. While the WGSS can host a range of services from non-specialized to more specialized group psychosocial support interventions, those which are directly implemented by WGSS staff are typically community-based psychosocial support activities.

In general, group activities in WGSS can be categorized into three types of structures:⁴

- **Curriculum-based activities.** These include a set of topics arranged in pre-determined order of presentation over several sessions, and may be complemented with activities, worksheets, etc. They generally include the same members from start to finish. Especially when WGSS are first established, at the onset of emergencies or in situations of active displacement, curriculum-based activities tend to be few. They tend to increase over time as situations stabilize.
- **Topic-focused activities:** These are less structured than curriculum-based activities but still include specific topic areas. Topics can be rotated based on interest and group members may come and go over time (e.g. a sewing group that discusses common camp issues women face and ways they would like to see them addressed). Such activities tend to remain fairly consistent throughout the lifespan of the WGSS, partially due to the ‘sense of balance’ they offer in creating an environment which remains fluid, but also allows for relationships and shared experiences to be built and strengthened.
- **Open Forums:** These activities have no pre-arranged agenda and group members can drop in for one or multiple sessions. Discussions are based on group interest at each meeting. (e.g. a henna group with no set discussion where women can attend as often or as little as they like). These are often the bulk of activities offered especially in the earlier stages of an emergency.

Open-structure activities are essential because they are the foundation for creating a welcoming environment that is open to any woman or girl in the community and that does not require strict attendance. Such activities also offer an important means of support for members while they wait to participate in more specialized and focused group interventions. In addition, these activities offer a greater number of opportunities for women and girls to directly lead activities and share their knowledge with others.

Group Facilitation

At the same time, because the open-forum structure is informal and ‘drop-in’, it can often be challenging for facilitators and participants to create an environment which is conducive to building trust and relationships. [Facilitating groups \(see Annex 6.2: Facilitator Dos\)](#) is a balancing act especially for information, awareness and/or recreational activities.

The table below shows the ideal relationship between participants in group activities⁵ and facilitators, bearing in mind that the number of available staff and size of the group may vary according to context (e.g. familiarity with the topic, level of education, size of the WGSS).⁶

4 International Rescue Committee. (Expected to be published in 2020) Women Rise: A Group Psychosocial Support Resource Package

5 The activities mentioned in the table fall into the three types of group activity structures described above.

6 Figures appearing in the table come from the WGSS formative research data analysis carried out in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Thailand during the development of this toolkit. Key informants include WGSS frontline staff, GBV senior managers, GBV WG coordinators, and technical advisors.

GROUP ACTIVITY	IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	MINIMUM NUMBER OF FACILITATOR
1. Orientation for new members	15/20	1 staff (accompanied by at least one WGSS member)
2. Information dissemination on available services	30	In the WGSS: 1 staff In the community: 2 staff
3. Hosted information sessions from other service providers (e.g. legal, nutrition or sexual reproductive health service providers)	30	In the WGSS: 1 hosted staff + 1 WGSS staff available for support In the community: 1 hosted staff + 1 WGSS staff available for support
4. Life skills sessions for groups of adolescent girls	20	1 staff
5. Skill-building groups or hosted skills training (e.g. vocational or livelihood activities.)	20 (it may vary based on the specificities of the activity)	1 staff- (it may vary based on the specificities of the activity)
6. Recreational activities	20/25 ⁷	Women and girl-led activity 1 staff to support
7. Community development initiatives (e.g. gardening, rehabilitation of community spaces...)	It may vary based on the specificities of the activity	Women and girl-led activity 1 staff to support
8. Positive support groups (young mother support groups, community development groups...)	15/20	1 staff

⁷ Most of the time, recreational activities are open-structure, however, activity groups with over 20/25 people can be difficult to manage and the benefit of the activity may be diluted.

9. Communal income-generating activities to support the WGSS	Same membership of the related recreational activity	Women and girl-led activity 1 staff to support
10. Facilitated discussions to understand concerns and safety risks	15	1 staff 1 note taker
11. Awareness sessions on risks of GBV, including SEA, and available response services	30	In the WGSS: 1 staff In the community: 2 staff
12. Awareness sessions on feedback and reporting mechanisms	30	In the WGSS: 1 staff In the community: 2 staff
13. Community mapping and safety planning exercises including safety audits	10/12	2 staff
14. Hosted information sessions from safety/security actors (e.g. peacekeepers, police, community watch groups)	30	In the WGSS: 1 WGSS staff + 1 security staff In the community: 1 WGSS staff + 1 security staff
15. Facilitated discussions (FGDs or WGSS meetings) to understand women's and girls' perspectives and needs	10	1 staff 1 note taker
16. Women's forum meetings and advocacy planning	20 ⁸	1 staff to support
17. Leadership and advocacy training	15/20	1 staff (accompanied by at least one WGSS member)

⁸ This is a generic estimate; the size of the groups should be decided at the field level depending on context. In some circumstances, women's forums can be an open-structure activity.

[Tool 33: WGSS Member Input Form](#); [Tool 34: WGSS Daily Attendance Rate Form](#); and [Tool 35: WGSS Group Activity Attendance Form](#) can assist with recording and monitoring participation rates and inputs provided by women and girls during group activities. This will be useful to inform adjustments to implementation as necessary.



6: FURTHER GUIDANCE



ANNEX 6.1. HOW TO BUILD CONSENSUS

Consensus is a form of decision-making that can be used in WGSS as part of the empowerment process. It can apply to small groups (e.g. forum members, group activity participants, FGD) or larger ones (e.g. the entire membership, all girls, all women). The method supports and encourages members to listen to each other's perspectives, contribute to the conversation, and take decisions, all on an equal footing. It is an important aspect of developing analysis, critical thinking and decision-making skills. It not only cultivates a sense of ownership of the final decision, but also can lead groups towards creating innovative solutions to complex problems.¹

Tips for the facilitators: “Are we in agreement?”

As a facilitator, you should identify when the group is reaching an agreement and avoid extensive discussions when there is general accord. To verify if the consensus is reached, it is worth rephrasing, summarizing and presenting the ideas discussed and asking participants if there is consensus. Some disagreement may still allow the group to move forward. Based on the specific circumstance, you should decide if it is worth leaving more time for discussion or better to move to a different decision-making technique.

If, as a facilitator, you notice an impasse, you may try:

- Asking probing questions.
- Giving suggestions.
- Dividing members into small groups and asking them to discuss and see if they can reach an agreement.
- Setting a time limit for establishing consensus, then suggest that the issue goes to a majority vote.
- Meeting individually with primary disputants and asking them, “What could be changed so that you could support it?”

In the most challenging situations, bring disputing parties together at a separate time to facilitate conflict-resolution and problem-solving. Make an action plan based on the decision and act accordingly. Follow up and monitor the implementation of the agreement.

¹ GBV AoR, 2019. Handbook for Coordinating Gender-Based Violence Intervention in Emergencies. https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Handbook%20for%20Coordinating%20GBV%20in%20Emergencies_fin.pdf

Consensus-building however, may not always be appropriate in all circumstances—it can be time-consuming, requiring equal input and commitment, and can lead to conflict if no consensus can be reached. In fact, the ability to determine when to build consensus around an issue or decision is a crucial skill.²

The following are key skills the facilitator should have:

1. Active listening.
2. Rephrasing and questioning skills.
3. Understanding other points of view.
4. Communicating openly.
5. Being able to identify and grow the “zones of agreement”, which are the areas on which the group agrees.
6. Trusting the process. Believing that you can reach an agreement and infusing this belief in the group.
7. Remaining calm and respectful at all times.

In WGSS, consensus-building is especially suitable when addressing decisions that affect the program strategy and work plan.

The steps below summarize how to lead a process of consensus-building:

1. Explain how the decision will be taken, and ensure everyone has equal opportunity to provide inputs. Everyone should be reminded that every participant may want to contribute to the conversation and, therefore, interventions (comments, questions, answers) should be as concise as possible.
2. Explain that agreement can be reached by listening and learning from each other's perspectives. However, in the event that an agreement will not be reached or different opinions create tensions, you may decide to use the majority methodology (or any other decision making methodology as highlighted in the Tips for the facilitators: “Are we in agreement?” above).
3. Provide all background information needed to make decisions, define the problem and explain what is the decision to be reached.
4. Clarify what the final objective of the decision is, and the action that the decision will generate.
5. Brainstorm possible solutions.
6. Narrow down the list of ideas/solutions and discuss the pros and cons.
7. Adjust, compromise and tweak the agreed-upon solution so all group members can accept the result.

2 Ibid.



ANNEX 6.2. FACILITATOR DOS

The more a facilitator is skilled and prepared, the more members commit to the activity.

FACILITATION STYLE

Everyone has a different style—there is no right or wrong. Facilitation style is very important when it comes to implementing activities because it can influence the level of engagement, and the group's trust in being able to freely express themselves. Facilitation skills may create (or prevent) an environment where everyone is encouraged to participate and understand one another's point of view. It is crucial thus to be aware of our own facilitation style to identify how it is influencing the group dynamic.

GOOD FACILITATOR DOS	TIPS
<p><i>Prepare extensively on the subject before the session.</i></p>	<p>If it is the first time you are addressing a specific topic, it may be helpful to have an experienced co-facilitator who has already delivered sessions on the topic previously.</p> <p>If such a person is not available among WGSS staff, you may ask for the ad-hoc support of specialists according to the topic (SRH, women's rights, GBV, community engagement, organization of events, etc.)</p>
<p><i>Prepare an outline of the session, with a corresponding timeline.</i></p>	<p>Especially if the facilitator is not too experienced, it is crucial to know exactly how the session will be conducted. Having an outline and a timeline of the session will help hold the attention of participants, and keep the discussion going.</p> <p>Be prepared to provide participants with additional time and support – including one-on-one support if they need to work through specific emotions that may arise.</p>

Listen to participants attentively with sensitivity and empathy.¹	Avoid sentences like: “That is wrong” or “You don’t know what you are talking about”.
Engage participants.	It is best to sit in a semi-circle or oval, so that participants can see each other and interact directly. Use sentences like: “Feel free to intervene in this conversation at any time. Everyone’s contribution is welcome and valued. If you have a doubt, someone else probably does as well.”
Rephrase questions gently, if there is no answer being directly given.	Use sentences like: “What I would like to know from you is...”
Summarize what participants are saying with different words.	Use sentences like: “I will try to rephrase the concept you expressed to ensure I properly understood what you meant, ok?”
Keep the conversation natural.	Avoid reading and leave plenty of space for conversation.
Create a relaxed and friendly environment.	Plan to cover a realistic number of topics and do not use a patronizing approach.
Allow for debate and disagreement, but monitor how this is influencing the group dynamic.	Stop when disagreement becomes hostile or a personal criticism of others. The facilitator may ask for a bilateral conversation with one participant at the time to address the tension and set up the tone for the next session.

¹ The IRC, Core Concepts in GBV. Facilitator Manual, Session 17. December 2018. <https://gbvresponders.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Core-Concepts-Facilitator-Manual.pdf> or IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action. Training package. Module 4: Responding to GBV incidents. 2015 <https://gbvguidelines.org/en/capacity-building/module-4-responding-to-gbv-incidents/>

<p>Respect, and encourage respect, of opinions among the group.</p>	<p>Use sentences like: “There is no right or wrong experience. It is good to have different opinions so we can learn from each other and see things from different perspectives.”</p>
<p>Ensure the discussion stays on-topic.</p>	<p>Use sentences like: “The topic you raised is important but it may require a bit of time to be fully addressed. In the interest of time, we will park this subject for the moment and go back to our initial point.”</p>
<p>Ask clarifying questions without being judgmental.</p>	<p>Ask open-ended questions to help participants think about the subject for themselves. Instead of “Why did you say that?” Try: “What factor brought you to this conclusion?”</p>
<p>Pay attention to body language² and ensure yours conveys positivity.</p>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look directly at participants when they speak. • Ensure your body language is open (e.g. don't cross your arms in front of you). • Do not shake your head as a ‘No’ while someone is speaking, but nod instead to encourage them to speak further. • Do not show disappointment or disagreement while somebody is talking. • Give your full attention to the session, the group, and to any individuals speaking, avoiding engaging in parallel actions such as looking at the phone, reviewing the next session, etc. <p>Watch for non-verbal cues that might indicate discomfort!</p>

<p>Ensure you believe and are committed to the topic you present/discuss.</p>	<p>You can't expect anyone to believe what you are saying if you don't believe it yourself first.</p>
<p>Be honest, if you don't know the answer ask for support or let participants know and commit to researching the answer for later.</p>	<p>Use sentences like: “Thank you for raising such an interesting point. I feel that I should learn more about it before answering your question. Is it ok if we discuss it during the next session? I would like to have a bit of time to deepen my knowledge on that.”</p>
<p>Manage your expectations – and those of participants.</p>	<p>Use sentences like: “This topic is complex and it requires time and dedication to be fully addressed.” or “There is no additional benefit from this session other than learning from the discussion.”</p>
<p>Review, acknowledge and implement participants' suggestions and feedback.</p>	<p>Take a moment at the end of the session to gather feedback and suggestions on the session. Before the next session make sure to review these and incorporate them as much as possible.</p>



ANNEX 6.3. OUTREACH STRATEGIES

There are numerous factors that shape the daily experiences and lives of women and girls, such as gender norms and practices, community power dynamics, availability and access to services and opportunities, and environmental factors. All of these, individually or collectively, can impact WGSS programming, enabling or hindering effectiveness.

For the scope of this toolkit, outreach is defined as the approach by which a WGSS strategically communicates and engages in its community (outside of the space's physical location) with the objective of securing and increasing women's and girls' access to the WGSS. Outreach strategies therefore encompass a wide range of different activities to engage with specific community audiences (e.g. male community members, isolated women and girls, camp committee leaders) to achieve its objectives.¹ Each of these activities may use a number of different communication methods including but not limited to: leaflets, newsletters, radio and television broadcasting, telephone and web-based applications; stalls and displays, dedicated public events, community discussions and door-to-door visits.

Can mobile safe spaces be considered part of the outreach strategy or should they be understood as a delivery model?

Mobile WGSS can be considered both. The distinction depends on the scale of programming in question. Within a GBV program, the mobile WGSS may be one of several outreach strategies. For example, the mobile WGSS enables women's and girls' access to GBV services by:

- Bringing GBV services to remote rural communities for women and girls who would otherwise not be able to reach urban-based services.
- Housing confidential GBV response and prevention services according to safety and ethical standards which might be compromised without the mobile safe space.

At the same time, this same mobile WGSS will also have its own outreach strategies to communicate with and engage the community.

¹ While the wider GBV program may implement primary prevention, risk mitigation or response outreach strategies in the same community as the WGSS, these strategies which may include service delivery or behavior change objectives, are not included in this toolkit because they are beyond the scope of purpose of WGSS outreach strategies.

PURPOSE OF THE OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Inform yet-to-be-reached, isolated or hard-to-reach women and adolescent girls about WGSS activities and services.

In-person information dissemination led by a WGSS outreach team might be undertaken through detached WGSS outreach posts (where relevant), local community institutions such as community centers, public spaces and so on, or at other service providers' delivery points. In specific circumstances, this may be delivered through door-to-door visits limited to communicating the availability of services to women and adolescent girls who are unable to physically access them, or unlikely to be reached through other means. In this case, the outreach team must also specifically seek to understand through these visits, the barriers which prevent these women and adolescent girls from attending the WGSS, so as to identify strategies for access and inclusion.

Specific capacity required: The outreach team must be fully aware that this approach may prompt women /adolescent girls to disclose experiences of violence. Outreach teams must therefore be skilled in managing such situations according to confidentiality standards and existing referral systems.

Specific recommendations on the door to door approach: This approach should not be implemented by default nor should it be used to deliver in-house/private activities for women who cannot access the WGSS. While well intended, doing so contrasts with the principle of inclusion and may reinforce marginalization. A WGSS should actively reduce barriers preventing some women and girls from accessing it whether related to age, disability, geographical location, ethnic minority, etc. Outreach activities should reach out to women and girls belonging to identity groups currently not accessing the WGSS and actively engage them in strategizing solutions.

The door to door approach is recommended only in two cases:

- To reach specific groups of women and girls who otherwise might not receive the information through the main information dissemination channel (e.g. to reach blind women and adolescent girls who cannot read the billboards placed in the neighborhood).
- To follow up on members' drop-out status (e.g. a member known for her consistent presence in a WGSS activity, is no longer attending without indicating reasons for her sudden absence). Depending on the context, the facilitator or an outreach staff member may decide to visit her house to better understand why. The information could help better inform the retention strategy for the WGSS.

Raise male community members' awareness on the WGSS purpose, its' female only rationale and inform them of services available.

Despite each context being unique, in every community, unequal gender norms will affect whether, when, how and which women and girls access humanitarian services, including those provided by the WGSS. Male community members' acceptance and buy-in for the WGSS is likely to directly influence the participation of their female family members (e.g. spouse, daughter, etc.) and in turn, indirectly influence buy-in among other male community members, thereby further increasing women's and girls' access overall. Note that social norms and behavior change to prevent GBV are not within the scope of the WGSS outreach objectives. However, designing WGSS information dissemination materials for male community members which address gender beliefs and attitudes, which are transparent about the WGSS objectives, and which are accountable to women and girls, may result in increasing the level of community acceptance.²

Specific capacity required: The outreach team should be fully aware of unequal gender attitudes, norms and practices which might undermine male community members' acceptance for the WGSS and prevent some women's and adolescent girls' access. They should also be sufficiently skilled and able to facilitate discussions in which gender-unequal beliefs may be voiced by participants, and to effectively moderate the discussion.

Engage key WGSS community stakeholders to secure and maintain buy-in for the WGSS.

Managing stakeholders' expectations and ensuring their support is essential throughout the WGSS lifespan to ensure women's and girls' access, their safety and that of WGSS staff. Community governance structures' and key stakeholders' influence in a community, as well as their vested interest to support the WGSS, will evolve and possibly change overtime. Through regular stakeholder analysis, provided in [**Part 2: Assessment**](#), the WGSS can identify and revise the suitable engagement strategy. To be successful the strategy should clearly articulate the expected collaboration (if relevant) and enable the WGSS to leverage the specific leader's and stakeholder's influence and interest to its benefit and that of women and girls.

Specific capacity required: As this outreach strategy specifically seeks to influence local authorities, community leaders and service providers, keeping power dynamics in mind, the WGSS team should strategically determine who within their organization is best suited to engage with the stakeholder.

Map surrounding services and audit for safety concerns.

While the first three outreach strategies are predominantly characterized by the WGSS communicating outwards to target audiences to increase access, this strategy relies on receiving information from the community to increase access. Through the [**Service Mapping**](#), information provided to the WGSS about available services in the community may indicate opportunities for referral and collaboration, thereby expanding availability and access to beneficial connections for women and girls. Through a Safety Audit, access risks and solutions are identified and advocated for by engaging a range of community entities and members.

2 Inspired from UNFPA Women and Girls Safe Spaces Training Manual "Establishing Women and Girls Safe Spaces" Participants' guide. Session 6. July 2017. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/whole-of-syria/document/women-and-girls-safe-spaces-training-manual>

Specific capacity required: For both the Service Mapping and the Safety Audit, the WGSS outreach team should be, at a minimum, trained on assessment methodologies, hold necessary gender-equal attitudes and beliefs and demonstrate strong interpersonal communication skills. For safety audits to be effective, it is important to have created positive working relationships with service providers and stakeholders who may be involved in the exercise.

THE OUTREACH TEAM

As described in [Part 4: Staffing](#), outreach team members are ‘responsible for collecting community feedback on the WGSS as well as assessing needs and changes in the community which may impact women’s and girls’ access to the WGSS, or their participation. In cases where the M&E officer is not based in the WGSS or has difficulties/barriers in directly monitoring WGSS outreach activities, the outreach team can take an active role in collecting data, monitoring and compiling data’.

Outreach staff members work toward women’s and girls’ access as well as community acceptance, both essential conditions to implement WGSS programming. The outreach team as well as the outreach program should be complementary to WGSS-based staff and programming.

The structure of the outreach team can be substantially different from one WGSS to another or even within the same WGSS over time. WGSS proactive members taking part in the side-by-side approach or in similar empowerment programming, should have opportunities to inform and co-facilitate activities delivered.

Outreach teams can consist of two staff (e.g. outreach officer and facilitator) and can grow quite large to include community mobilizers, committees and volunteers. The most appropriate structure must be chosen based on the outreach objectives, target audience and activities; in addition to the outreach context, supervision capacity and available human resources. If the outreach team decides to engage male community members, community leaders and stakeholders, ensuring a mixed team of male and female outreach staff may be important for effective outreach. Likewise, involving senior staff from the organization may be helpful to engage higher-level officials and stakeholders.

Capacity

The specific capacity required by the outreach team largely depends on the activities implemented. Therefore, a specific capacity-building plan and strategy—with an adequate timeframe—should be identified and factored into the outreach strategy’s implementation. Frequently, working through dedicated community committees is identified as a best practice to directly engage community members in a representative way. However, note that establishing functional, non-tokenized committees requires a substantial investment in capacity-building and dedicated skilled staff to carry it out. If not properly planned and supported, working with committees can become extremely challenging and can result in poor, and sometimes, negative effects.

Inclusion:

Before gathering community members, and representatives of different identity groups, a safety assessment should be conducted to determine the feasibility and acceptability of creating a heterogeneous committee structure. To avoid duplication of efforts, it is worth reaching out to camp management, peers or humanitarian coordination mechanisms to see if information already exists.

If determined safe to gather heterogeneous groups, outreach staff should, as much as possible, reflect the diversity of the target population. That may include different languages, ethnicities, places of origin, gender, disabilities. Each group should be engaged separately to ensure that power dynamics do not compromise the program and do not replicate unhealthy community dynamics.

HOW TO SET UP THE OUTREACH COMPONENT OF THE PROGRAM

STEP 1: Identify the location/ area of coverage. The outreach strategy is usually implemented in areas located within proximity of the WGSS. However, depending on the context, safety, availability of other WGSS, distance, or resources (among other factors), outreach strategies should carefully and strategically identify the area of reach. Even if geographical scope and specific locations may change over time, it is recommended to start with a limited area and then scale it up after solidifying the strategy, building capacities and understanding the acceptance level of communities.

STEP 2: Meet with local authorities. They should be promptly informed about the intention of operating in a specific area. Having formal authorization and support of local authorities is fundamental for the intervention to take place. In case of initial skepticism, WGSS outreach staff may plan for a second meeting that includes senior management staff.

STEP 3: Conduct an initial community-based consultation (assessment phase). Crucial information should have been gathered and considered on: gender-related social norms, attitudes and practices; access barriers; GBV; freedom of movement; and existing female community leadership structures. Findings of this first level of consultation should be analyzed to develop a tailored, sensitive and context specific outreach plan.³ During initial consultations, women should be asked (or at least informed about) the intention of engaging with men and boys through different activities and informative sessions (if this is the case). If women and girls explicitly disagree or display discomfort, a different strategy should be identified. For this, best practice suggests engaging with women and girls before engaging with men and boys or with the community as a whole.

STEP 4: Conduct a service mapping and identify referral pathways. It is crucial to have all information about available services and referral pathways including benefits and risks of each service available. Very often, disclosure of GBV or other types of violence happens during outreach activities. Facilitators must be trained and supported adequately on how to deal effectively with these situations.

³ Most of tools provided in [Part 2: Assessment](#) can be adapted and used in this specific type of assessment.

STEP 5: Develop an outreach plan. Start with identifying the objectives (e.g. inform the female population about the services available in the WGSS; increase the level of acceptance of community members especially community leaders, etc.). Once the objective is set, identify target groups, locations, type of activities, IEC material, focal points and logistics. It is important to then update the plan and review the existing objectives on a regular basis (e.g. every three months).

STEP 6: Safety audit. An initial safety audit exercise should be conducted to inform the outreach plan and identify priorities. The audit will provide information to strategize access for women and girls to activities and events, and inform the content of activities.

STEP 7: Identify outreach focal points. Decide who is responsible for reaching out to which target audience. Because outreach is about reaching out to those not currently served, seeking the help and support of individuals who identify with the target audiences can be hugely beneficial to plan, deliver and get feedback on the outreach strategy.

STEP 8: Identify community focal points. If community focal points are part of the outreach strategy, it is important to identify who the team will approach to be community focal points in each site, and what the next steps are for engaging them as volunteers. Training will be an important first step. This can be carried out either by training focal points from different sites in one communal location, or delivering trainings directly at each site.

STEP 9: Develop key messages for outreach and relevant IEC material: Specific materials need to be prepared to inform the community about services and activities (as well as benefits) of the WGSS. Thought should be given to how to brand the WGSS such that it is neutral and non-discriminatory. Promote WGSS programming and ensure that both the outreach team and community focal points are trained on how to speak about the WGSS to women and girls, other community members and stakeholders.

The following are also important considerations:

- During an emergency response or sudden influx in displacement, awareness-raising should focus on key protection risks and available services.
- As an emergency response stabilizes, or as a WGSS becomes well-established, outreach teams should move beyond information dissemination on WGSS services and establish strategies for working with communities to increase acceptance and support for WGSS objectives.
- While outreach should be women and girl-led and community-based, the WGSS outreach structure should still include dedicated staff. Outreach teams require specific competencies, skills and support to talk with communities about particularly sensitive issues. Female outreach staff prove in most contexts to be a principal entry point for women (including GBV survivors) to seek help. In the case of women with limited mobility, outreach staff often represent the only entry point.



ANNEX 6.4. INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION MATERIAL TO RAISE COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF WGSS PROGRAMMING

IEC combines “strategies, approaches and methods that enable individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to play active roles in achieving, protecting and sustaining their own health and wellbeing.”¹ IEC dissemination is the process of making available the learning from IEC messages, which empowers people to make decisions. This means that the content of the IEC messages and the dissemination approach are based on needs assessments and specifically tailored to each target audience. Dissemination is also the process of making the results and deliverables of a project or an assessment available to stakeholders and to the wider community.

IEC messages can be delivered in a multitude of ways, such as through:

- Interpersonal communication, such as individual or group discussions which may be formal or informal as well as community meetings and events.
- Service provider collaboration, such as with service providers who are already providing services in the community and which were identified through the service mapping as supportive of women’s and girls’ needs.
- Mass communication channels, such as radio, television, SMS, internet or phone applications, and other forms of one-way communication, such as posters, billboards, murals, leaflets, booklets, visual and audio-visual presentations.

PLANNING INFORMATION DISSEMINATION SESSIONS OR COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

WHY: While the safe space should be meant for and run by women and girls, its sustainability will require the input and support of many stakeholders. Husbands, parents, community leaders and other service providers or humanitarian agencies have a lot of influence over the ability of women and girls to attend WGSS or participate in its activities. It is, therefore, essential to understand the perspectives of the community while setting up a safe space, and to mobilize community support for the WGSS throughout, as doing so will support safe access and participation by women and adolescent girls. Dissemination of information about the WGSS intervention during the assessment and implementation phases is essential for community buy-in. Ultimately, the WGSS should not be an isolated unit, but an extension of broader community life—the essence of the WGSS should be neither stigmatizing nor detached from the community. In fact, quite the opposite, the WGSS should be inclusive and recognized.

¹ World Health Organization, 2010. Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings. http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/emergencies/field_manual_rh_humanitarian_settings.pdf

Using [Annex 3.2 WGSS Frequently Asked Questions Sample IEC Tool](#) will support you to disseminate general information on the purpose of the WGSS, why it is a female-only space, and the types of activities and services the WGSS will provide early in the design phase to community members (including men and boys), key stakeholders, community leaders and other service providers.

Even if you do not yet have all the details about the WGSS at this stage as you are still engaging women, adolescent girls and community members in its design, it is important for you to consider being proactive. Consider starting to disseminate information focused simply on framing the overarching elements of the WGSS before others, who may not be in support of your intervention but influential in the community, start disseminating their own messages (which may be misconceived or based on rumours) about the WGSS, which may prevent you from securing buy-in from the community.

WHEN: Information dissemination sessions or communication materials targeting different specific groups of the community, as well as service providers, should be delivered on a regular basis throughout the lifetime of the project. This means that messages constantly need to be changed and adapted.

During the assessment phase, information dissemination should focus at a minimum on communicating back the results of the context-informed assessment as well as communicating key messages about the overall design of the WGSS. Then transparently communicate next steps and timelines if you have a sense of what these might be.

Before engaging communities in information dissemination sessions on WGSS, you should have analyzed assessment findings related to traditional gender roles, harmful traditional practices and, in general, findings that reflect the most sensitive or controversial components of the program. This initial analysis will help in structuring the presentation of the WGSS.

During the information dissemination session, at least two persons (at least 1 of them possibly local or male if presenting to mixed or male population) will present the initial findings, explaining how the WGSS will be responding to needs encountered.

In case funds are not yet secured and design is not yet finalized, that should be explained during the session for managing expectations and starting a transparent relationship. Like in focus group discussions (FGD), information provided should be two-ways—if WGSS staff provide information about what a WGSS is, the community will provide information to inform the design of the WGSS.

HOW: The information dissemination session will probably be structured in different parts.

One part is dedicated to the presentation of assessment main findings (paying attention to any sensitivities). Generally, when the presentation is done in plenary and in a traditional context, it is recommended to present findings mainly related to needs, gaps in service provision and other not extremely sensitive information. In fact, presenting sensitive findings related to GBV and traditional gender roles can be threatening if done improperly, or too soon. GBV findings will be discussed over the course of the implementation, in order to have sufficient time to further discuss and work on GBV prevention and risk mitigation strategies.

The second part is dedicated to the description of WGSS objectives, rationale, activities and possible benefits for communities. During this presentation, there should be space for listening, answering questions and providing more in-depth information. Depending on the interest shown by the community and on the size of the setting, multiple sessions may take place.

Depending on the context, it may be helpful to have discussed with local authorities or community leaders the initial plan of WGSS before presenting the ideas to the community. If local authorities support the implementation idea, that will give substantial support to find the most appropriate methodology to get feedback from the community.

The content, duration and frequency of IEC dissemination sessions on WGSS have to be decided by the program manager based on assessment findings, understanding of the context and available capacities.

TARGET AUDIENCE: If you are planning on a session, you should, ideally, aim for 20 people maximum per session to ensure good sound and manageable facilitation conditions, and allow participants the opportunity to interact and fully engage in the session. It is preferable to deliver more sessions rather than targeting more people all at once.

Best practice recommends that participant groups be disaggregated by gender as the information will be tailored according to gender, and sessions should be facilitated by same sex staff. While at this stage you most likely have not yet established the WGSS, it is important to highlight that this activity should not take place in the WGSS or immediate surrounding of WGSS when held with men (and example of IEC session's content is available in [Annex 3.2](#)). Rather a location where men typically gather in the community should be identified to deliver the sessions.

Best practice also suggests that women and girls be consulted and that they support the development of messages. However, at this particular stage, women and girls may not yet be engaged given that programming has not yet been established.

FACILITATION: In the event the female facilitator is absent, the male facilitator should not facilitate sessions with women, and the postponing of sessions should be communicated to participants. In the event the male facilitator is absent, likewise it may be advisable to postpone the sessions.
However, in a context where it may be acceptable for female staff to facilitate conversations with men, it is important to assess whether—given the session topic at hand—it is appropriate and conducive to have a female facilitator lead the session with men. Supervisors should also assess and be mindful of the female staff member's comfort level in facilitating a session with men.

Maintaining a positive engagement with community members, while remaining accountable to women and girls—by challenging and not reinforcing the harmful beliefs, attitudes and cultural norms which shape how community members are socialized and which underpin gender-based violence—is the critical balance WGSS interventions need to achieve. Using this or a similar communication aid as an initial opportunity is paramount for the WGSS intervention to, on the one hand encourage an open dialogue with and identify possible concerns and expectations from community members, leaders or authorities, while on the other hand also remaining accountable to women and girls, and ensuring that the WGSS intervention is, first and foremost, guided by the input and realities of the women and adolescent girls in the community.

It is always important to keep in mind the following:

DO	DON'T
Find a participative and engaging way to communicate.	Use a language that reinforces negative gender norms (such as: "Women will be more respectful toward men after attending the WGSS").
Adapt the content and delivery methodology based on the audience.	Raise expectations (such as: "Through the skill-building activities women will be able to earn money and be independent").
Make sure the content will be understood and accepted by the community.	Overstress the component of GBV response. It is crucial to clearly explain what a WGSS is, in its entirety, without focusing only on one aspect of the intervention.
Leave space for questions, opinions and conversation among participants; keep the groups to 20 people maximum.	
Be strategic and think about what you should stress the most during the information dissemination session.	
Be clear about the objective of the WGSS.	Feel pressured to match the expectations of the audience.



ANNEX 6.5. AVAILABLE TECHNICAL RESOURCES TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT WGSS ACTIVITIES

The table below provides links to technical resources which WGSS staff can use to guide their design and implementation of WGSS activities.

OBJECTIVE 1: <i>WGSS facilitates access for all women and girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services</i>	
ACTIVITY	RESOURCES AVAILABLE
1. Orientation for new members	WGSS Toolkit: Part 5: Capacity-Building: Paragraph 5.4: Capacity Development Packages Based on Staff Roles and Responsibilities and Tool 31: Orientation Package for New Members
2. Information dissemination on available services	To be developed at the field level based on available services. For information dissemination on WGSS, guidance and tools available in the WGSS toolkit. Guidance: Part 3: Start Up: Paragraph 3.7: Securing Buy-in for the WGSS in the start up phase Annex: 6.4: IEC Material to Raise Community Acceptance
3. Referrals to non-GBV services	Non-GBV referral follows the referral pathway procedure available at the camp level.
4. Periodic service mapping	Guidance on how to deliver service mapping available in Tool 2: Service Mapping Questionnaire.

<p>5. Hosted information sessions from other service providers (e.g. legal, nutrition or sexual reproductive health service providers)</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level according to the content of the information sessions.</p> <p>In case of Reproductive Health, information should be in line with the Women's Refugee Commission "Minimum Initial Service Package" (MISP) content: https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/MIHP%20for%20RH%20in%20Crises%20Situations%20WRC%202011.pdf</p>
<p>6. Life skills sessions for groups of adolescent girls</p>	<p>IRC: Girl Shine curriculum https://gbvresponders.org/adolescent-girls/girl-shine/</p>
<p>7. Skill-building groups or hosted skills training (e.g. vocational or livelihood service providers)</p>	<p>IRC: EA\$E (for economic development) https://gbvresponders.org/empowerment/ease-approach/</p> <p>For other trainings, the resource should be selected based on sector and topic.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2:

WGSS supports women's and girls' psychosocial well-being and creation of social networks

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES AVAILABLE
<p>8. Arts-based activities (e.g. music, dancing, theatre, drawing)</p> <p>9. Exercise and sports (e.g. yoga, volleyball, football)</p> <p>10. Leisure and relaxation activities (e.g. coffee or tea ceremonies, meditation, story-telling, movies)</p> <p>11. Hand-made / crafting activities (soap making, tailoring, beading, basket making...)</p>	<p>The IRC upcoming curriculum 'Women Rise' will be available soon at www.gbvresponders.org</p>

<p>12. Community development initiatives (e.g. gardening, rehabilitation of community spaces)</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level in collaboration with women and girls. Resource should include schedule, content, IEC material, actions required, monitoring methodology and tools.</p>
<p>13. Positive support groups (young mother support groups, community development groups)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance available in WGSS Toolkit: in the <u>Part 6: Implementation main content (paragraph 6.3)</u> and in <u>Part 6: Annex 6.2: Facilitator DOs</u> • To be developed at the field level in collaboration with women and girls. (Resource should include schedule, content, structure of the session and redlines).
<p>14. Communal income-generating activities to support the WGSS</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level in collaboration with women and girls and based on existing activities (e.g. if women and girls produce soap as part of the recreational activities, the communal IGA supports WGSS programming by selling the soap produced in the WGSS).</p>

OBJECTIVE 3:

WGSS serves as a place where women and girls can organize and access information to reduce risks of violence

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES AVAILABLE
<p>15. Facilitated discussions to understand concerns and safety risks</p>	<p>Guidance on how to deliver FGD available in WGSS Toolkit</p> <p><u>Tool 4: Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls</u></p>

<p>16. Awareness sessions on risks of GBV, including SEA, and available response services</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level based on specific risks identified and available services.</p> <p>GBV awareness-raising available resources: SASA! Is an awareness raising, GBV prevention and behavior change activity that can be implemented that takes a long-term view. http://raisingvoices.org/sasa/</p>
<p>17. Awareness sessions on feedback and reporting mechanisms</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level based on available reporting mechanisms.</p>
<p>18. Community mapping and safety planning exercises including safety audits</p>	<p>Community mapping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available in Tool 7: Community Mapping. <p>Safety Audits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on how to deliver safety audits available at: GBV Minimum standards. Standard 7: https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBVIE.Minimum.Standards.Publication.FINAL_.ENG_.pdf IRC Safety Audits tool available at: https://www.google.com/search?client=afari&rls=en&q=GBV+safety+audit&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8#
<p>19. Hosted information sessions from safety/security actors (e.g. peacekeepers, police, community watch groups)</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level according to the content of the information sessions. The resource development process should be a collaboration between GBV and safety and security actors ensuring consistency with GBV minimum standards:</p> <p>GBV Minimum standards. Standard 7: https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBVIE.Minimum.Standards.Publication.FINAL_.ENG_.pdf</p>

20. Direct or hosted distribution of dignity kits, cash, or voucher assistance

GBV Sub Cluster- Syria cross-border operation from Turkey produced a Dignity Kits Guidance Note:

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/dignity_kits_guidance_note_en.pdf

More information available in the UNFPA minimum standards, standard 9:

https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBVIE.Minimum.Standards.Publication.FINAL_ENG_.pdf

OBJECTIVE 4:

WGSS serves as a key entry point for specialized services for GBV survivors.

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES AVAILABLE
21. Information dissemination on available GBV response services	To be developed at the field level based on context-specific referral pathways procedures and available services.
22. Safe referral to GBV response services or any other relevant service	GBV referral procedure should be established at the field level and at the interagency level ensuring consistency with the “Guidelines for GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence in Emergencies”- IASC 2005 https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy_files/guidelines_for_gender_based_violence_interventions_in_humanitarian_settings_english_.pdf Referral training and capacity-building resource packages are listed in the WGSS Toolkit Annex 5.2: List of Helpful Resources and Where to Access Them

<p>23. Basic, supportive response to survivors who report incidents of GBV</p>	<p>GBV basic response training and capacity-building resource packages are listed in the WGSS Toolkit Annex 5.2: List of Helpful Resources and Where to Access Them</p>
<p>24. Provision of GBV case management services and individualized psychosocial support services for survivors of GBV</p>	<p>GBV case management guidance and tools are available in the “Interagency GBV case management resource package” https://gbvresponders.org/response/gbv-case-management/</p>
<p>25. Confidential integration of survivors into WGSS group activities</p>	<p>Guidance on how to integrate survivors in WGSS activities is available in Annex 6.6: Safely Integrating Survivors in WGSS Activities</p>

OBJECTIVE 5:

WGSS provides a place where women and girls are safe and encouraged to use their voice and collectively raise attention to their rights and needs.

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES AVAILABLE
<p>26. Facilitated discussions (FGDs or WGSS meetings) to understand women’s and girls’ perspectives and needs</p>	<p>Online there is a vast literature and tools for group discussions and information-gathering activities.</p> <p>Tool 4: Focus Group Discussion Guide with women and girls provides guidance on how to conduct FGDs</p>
<p>27. Women’s forum meetings and advocacy planning</p>	<p>Women’s and Girls’ Forum is an activity promoted by the WGSS in Part 6: Implementation.</p>
<p>28. Mentorship, peer facilitation, and side-by-side support from active members</p>	<p>Capacity-building tools and guidance for staff and members in Part 5: Capacity-Building</p>

<p>29. Meetings of women and girl-led initiatives (e.g. associations, women's platforms)</p>	<p>To be developed at the field level based on existing relationships and priorities.</p>
<p>30. Leadership and advocacy training</p>	<p>The training module for WGSS should be developed at the field level based on the available resources: The “Arab women speak out” is a self-empowerment tool: https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/sites/default/files/project_examples/Arab%20Women%20Speak%20Out-Profiles%20of%20Self-Empowerment.pdf</p> <p>The IRC “Engage men through accountable Practices’ EMAP https://gbvresponders.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/EMAP-Implementation-Guide.pdf</p>



ANNEX 6.6. SAFELY INTEGRATING SURVIVORS IN WGSS ACTIVITIES

MANAGING DISCLOSURE DURING GROUP ACTIVITIES

Disclosure of GBV and VAWG by survivors may happen anytime, and survivors may decide to come forward in a situation that is not safe or confidential. It is crucial to acknowledge that this is a reality and also a survivor's right to disclose when and to whom.

It is the responsibility of all WGSS staff, and all humanitarian actors in general, to protect women and girl survivors from further harm. In this context, the confidentiality and safety of a survivor can be compromised irremediably if the incident becomes public domain—this will seriously limit any guarantees of safety of the survivor and case worker afterwards. Moreover, being aware of a VAWG incident can represent a safety risk for every person present during the disclosure.

Before the session: WGSS staff and members should seek to prevent disclosure from happening in public or during group activities. This means:

1. Informing participants about hosted or referral services available at the beginning of the session.
2. Making material available during activities in the community or in the WGSS that explain how and to whom survivors should report VAWG incidents (only if it is safe).
3. Facilitators should begin sessions by saying: “If you would like to disclose private issues please come to me after the session to privately discuss. During the group activity, personal information should not be shared to ensure the safety and security of every participant.”
4. Requesting participants to not share identifiable information in any story they may be telling during the activity.
5. Asking participants to keep confidential any personal discussions that take place during the activity.

During the session: If despite the above-listed precautions, disclosure still happens during a group activity, facilitators and members should not rush the survivor, overwhelm her with questions or force her to provide details. Remember that this may be the first time she has talked about her experience and she may benefit from reassurance that what she experienced is not her fault, and from receiving some ‘healing phrases’ that make her feel listened to and understood. (e.g. I am sorry this happened to you; I am sorry you are going through this; Thank you for sharing that with us; It is not your fault.)

When a survivor stops disclosing, the facilitator should validate what happened to her (e.g. many women in your situation would feel angry; you are very brave for telling me this.) After that, the facilitator should provide general information on the availability of service providers specialized in listening and interacting with women and girls who have experiences like the one the survivor just shared. The facilitator should ask other group members to maintain the confidentiality of the disclosure, and invite the survivor to have a chat privately after the session.

After the session: If the survivor agrees, the facilitator and survivor should meet in a confidential and safe place. The survivor receives all information on existing services as well as a brief on the risks of public disclosure. After receiving verbal consent, the facilitator refers the survivor to case management services. Here, it is crucial that WGSS staff are clear about all referral pathways to specialized services. Remember that it is not the facilitator's role to get all the information about what happened, or to provide counselling, unless the facilitator is a GBV responder (case worker, case manager, etc). Instead, the facilitator's role is to listen to what the survivor wants to disclose in a supportive way and ensure she receives the support she needs. It is important to maintain a calm and positive attitude and to not push the survivor to disclose more than she wants. Above all, the facilitator should never ask information about the survivor's behavior before the incident or her sexual history – this is not relevant and can indicate that the survivor may be to blame for the violence she experienced. The facilitator does not make decisions for the survivor, and in the event a survivor refuses services, the facilitator can help her consider advantages and risks related to her decisions, without forcing her to do something she does not want to do.

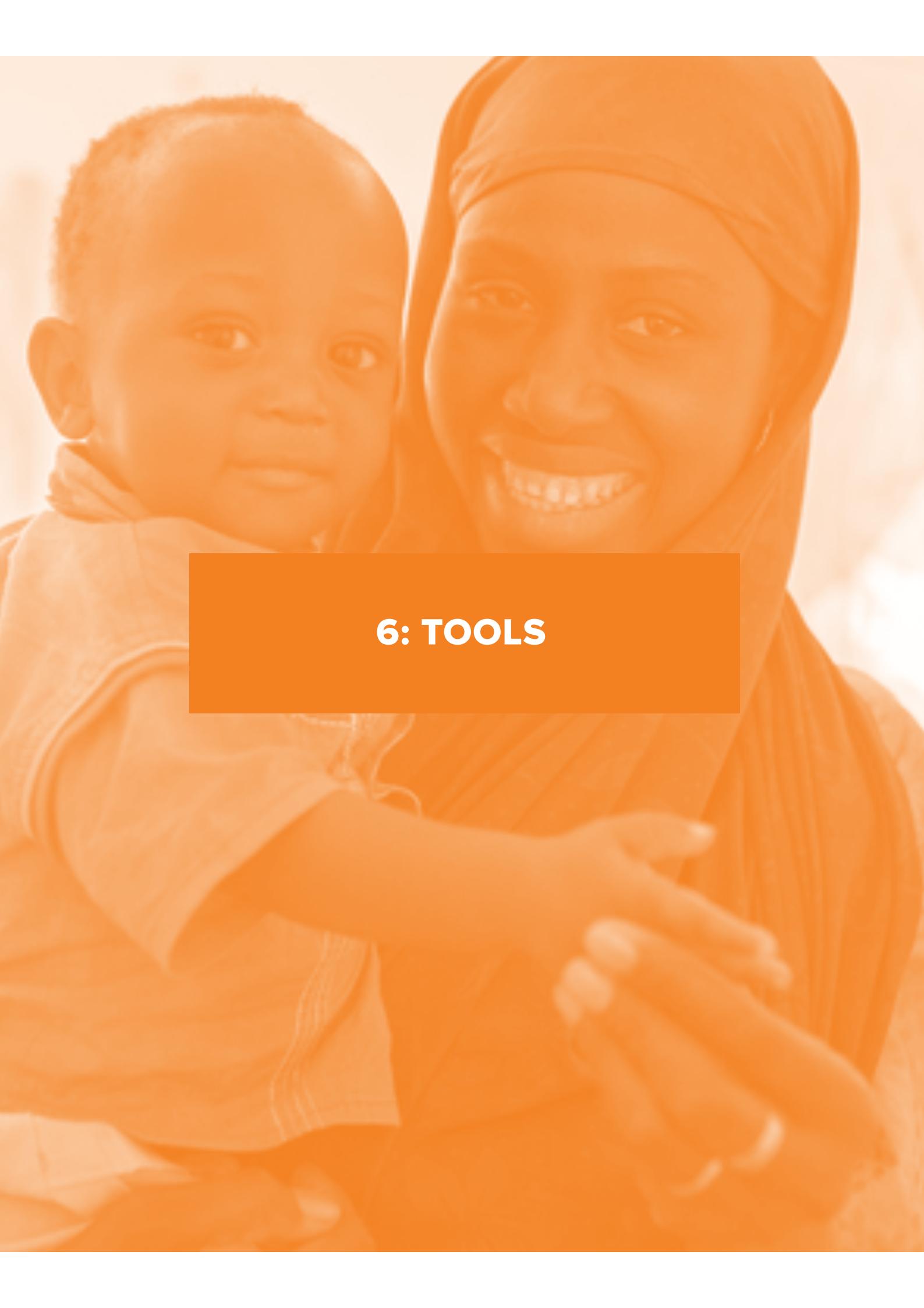
INTEGRATING SURVIVORS IN WGSS ACTIVITIES

WGSS are internationally recognized as one of the safest places to disclose GBV incidents. Therefore, each staff member has to receive specific training on how to deal, refer and provide psychological first aid to survivors.

Refer survivors from WGSS activities to case management services: Disclosure may happen in the WGSS anytime whether in the context of an activity or not. Very often, survivors disclose to facilitators after a group activity (such as an awareness session or focus group discussion). If survivors come forward to WGSS staff other than case workers or case managers, the staff person who receives the disclosure has to provide survivors with all necessary information about services available. If survivors mention a situation that can have created medical risks, health services should be prioritized. After the survivor is informed about the services available, she can decide whether and to what kind of service she would like to be referred to¹. WGSS staff then need to receive verbal consent in order to refer survivors to specialized services. If survivors accept referral to services in the WGSS (if available), WGSS staff will coordinate with GBV responders and, if possible and safe, accompany the survivors to the dedicated room.

Refer survivors from GBV response services to activities: If during individual support sessions (case management), survivors express the need and interest to participate in one of the WGSS activities, the case worker should incorporate that into the survivor's action plan and refer the survivor to the activity. This type of 'referral' works differently from the one described above. When case workers refer survivors to WGSS group activities, the group activity's facilitators don't know that the new participant is a survivor (unless a safety risk represents a threat for the survivor or for the group). It is common practice to have survivors casually join and be welcomed at the selected activity just like any other WGSS member. Survivors should be incorporated into the activity, and while she can share her experience if she wishes, she should never be asked to identify herself as a survivor or to share her story. WGSS activity facilitators should always be mindful that among participants there might be GBV survivors (although they may not know who these might be).

¹ Interagency Gender-based Violence Case Management Resource Package. 2017. Part II "Steps of GBV Case Management" https://gbvresponders.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Interagency-GBV-Case-Management-Guidelines_Final_2017_Low-Res.pdf

A close-up photograph of a woman with short brown hair smiling warmly at the camera. She is holding a baby in her arms, with the baby's head resting against her shoulder. The woman is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus beige.

6: TOOLS



TOOL 30A: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY (BASELINE)

WHY USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY?

The member survey monitors how WGSS programming impacts women's and girls' empowerment and decision-making over time. It helps WGSS staff identify whether and how WGSS programming supports member's empowerment, access to services and development of decision-making skills.

The member survey is a combination of 3 tools. The first two tools (30a and 30b) are available in two versions. The first version is "Staff delivered", which is a format for using the tool during an interview between an informant and an interviewer. The second version is "Self- administered" allowing each staff member to directly answer the questions using the self-deliver questionnaire.

1. **Tool 30a: WGSS Member Survey (Baseline)** is a questionnaire to verify the initial status of empowerment, knowledge of available services and decision-making power. The baseline should only be conducted once per member.
2. **Tool 30b: WGSS Member Survey (Follow-up)** is similar to the baseline, but is implemented after a pre-established period from the baseline (3 or 6 months) to compare how the level of empowerment, knowledge of services and decision-making skills has changed after a few months of participation in WGSS programming. The follow-up survey has a more comprehensive set of questions and should not be used as a baseline questionnaire. It can be administered as many times as the project team thinks would be useful (in order to compare changes across time) but should not be completed more than once a quarter per member.
3. **Tool 30c: Participant List** assigns a code to each woman and girl participating in the survey to ensure the confidentiality of the survey.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY?

The member survey can be conducted on a regular basis to monitor progress over time.

The baseline survey sets the starting point for the comparison. After a pre-established period (3 to 6 months), the follow-up survey should be implemented with the same members who took part in the baseline survey. If the population you are working with is highly mobile, it is beneficial to conduct the follow-up at the 3 month mark, as members may leave more frequently. If the population you are working with is stable, it may be beneficial to conduct the follow-up at the 6 month mark, because they are likely to still be present and will potentially show a larger change during a larger follow-up period. However, it is completely fine to conduct the follow-up survey with a stable population at both the 3 month and 6 month marks and compare change across these three points (including baseline).

HOW TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY?

Guidance for staff

Print out only the version of the tool that will be used. If the activity is delivered by a staff member, only version 1 should be printed (interview format). Version 2 will be printed when the survey is undertaken directly by a WGSS member (self-administered format).

You may notice that the questions skip numbers in the baseline (for instance, where is number 30? where is number 33?). Don't worry! These are questions which appear in the follow-up but are not yet relevant at the baseline. All numbers in the baseline survey should match their equivalent question in the follow-up survey, but the follow up survey will have the additional 'missing' questions.

Participants should be assigned a code using [Tool 30c: Participant List](#).

It is recommended to conduct the baseline with a minimum of 20 percent of women and girls attending the safe space who consent to taking part in both the baseline and follow-up survey. The exact number of members engaged in the survey will change based on the influx of new members and the size of the WGSS. As much as possible, members targeted in the survey should be new members. However, in the case of established WGSS, long-term members may also be involved. Once a baseline is established with one group of members, make sure to continue conducting the baseline with a sample of new members as they begin coming to the WGSS.

The survey can be delivered by:

1. Staff members (version 1 - staff delivered- interview format)- in low-literacy contexts; through one-to-one conversations with members.
2. Members themselves (version 2 - self-administered) - in high-literacy contexts. In this case, members will receive a printed copy of the survey that they can complete themselves.

In both cases, the survey is for each individual, and both versions should ensure that answers are kept confidential and safe.

After conducting the baseline and follow-up survey, staff focal points should analyze the findings by comparing both surveys for each participant. The final results should provide useful information to strengthen specific components of WGSS programming.

After the analysis of the survey, it is recommended to schedule a session with participants to provide general and anonymous information on feedback received. For example: "When reviewing the surveys, it came up that most of you did not receive information on services available in the WGSS. Thanks to your feedback, we identified that the WGSS should increase information sessions about services available." It is essential to be cautious and consider the sensitivity of some of the survey questions – in contexts where questions of empowerment are particularly sensitive, findings can be grouped by type of empowerment.

Information gathered through the member survey should be transcribed to [Database G: WGSS Member Survey](#).

To deliver the survey:

1. Identify who on your team is going to administer the survey. Identify whether it will be self-administered (giving the person the survey to complete themselves) or whether a staff member will ask the questions and record the person's answers.
2. Explain the purpose (see client consent) and get verbal consent to proceed. If the beneficiary declines, tell the person that it is ok and if they change their minds, they can contact you.
3. Write down the beneficiary's name and contact information on the survey participant list. Write down the "PARTICIPANT CODE" from the same row on the survey.
4. Keep the participant list in a separate, safe and confidential space. This list should not be stored together with the surveys to ensure the confidentiality of members.

(See table below for steps 5 and 6 depending on whether self-administered or interview format.)

INTERVIEW FORMAT	SELF-ADMINISTERED
<p>5. Inform the WGSS member that you will ask them some questions but will not write their name on the form and that the interview will remain anonymous.</p>	<p>Inform the WGSS member that you will give them the survey and pen. Request that they do not write their name on the survey so that it is possible to keep their information anonymous.</p>
<p>6. For questions using the visual aid, place the picture in front of the beneficiary. Explain what each cup represents. Then check the participant's understanding using a simple example (e.g. 'If I said 'The weather is very cold today', which of the cups would you choose to show how much you agree with what I said?'). Read out the first statement and ask the participant to point to which represents how much they agree with the statement. Ask the participant if they would like to give a reason for their choice, and if so, make a note of what they say. Go to the next statement, and continue in the same way.</p>	<p>Hand the survey and the visual aid to the beneficiary (look at the end of Version 2). Explain what each cup represents. Then check participant's understanding using a simple example (e.g. 'If I said 'The weather is very cold today', which of the cups would you choose to show how much you agree with what I said?'). Inform the beneficiary that you are going to leave the room but if they have further questions, they can come and ask at any time.</p>



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

INFORMED CONSENT

My name is _____ and I work with _____ as _____. My colleagues and I would like to know if our programs are improving the lives of women and girls we work with. These questions are only to help us improve our programming and you do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. Your responses will remain completely confidential and will not affect your ability to participate in any way.

Do you agree to answer the questions on this survey?

Yes

No

If the consent is given, continue on to the survey.

VERSION 1

Staff-Delivered (Interview Format)

Participant Code:_____

WGSS MEMBER SURVEY

Date Survey Conducted: _____

Name of the safe space: _____

Administered by: _____

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey! Please answer the questions honestly. If you have any questions, please feel welcome to ask.

Participant Information

1. How old are you?

- 15-17 years old
- 18-24 years old
- 25-64 years old
- 65 years or older

2. Please select your community status.

- IDP
- Refugee
- Host community
- Other (please specify) _____

3. How did you first find out about our services? (tick one)

- Friend or family member
- Referral from another organization
- Neighbor or community member
- Community discussion
- Flyer or pamphlet you saw or received
- Other (please specify) _____

4. How long have you been coming to the safe space?

- 0 – 2 months
- 3 – 5 months
- 6 – 8 months
- 9 – 11 months
- More than 12 months

Program Outcomes

Decision-Making Sub-Scale

I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response)

I am able to decide which way of overcoming barriers works best for me.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
If I was in danger, I could choose the right people to help me.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
I am more comfortable when others make decisions for me.	Disagree (2)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (0)

5. Do you know where a woman could go for help if someone hit her?

- Yes
 No

Specify where: _____

6. Do you know where a woman or girl could go for support if someone tried to have sex with her or asked her for something in exchange for receiving services?

- Yes
 No

Specify where: _____

Empowerment Sub-Scale

I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response; only read the statement out loud, not the type of empowerment)

Psychosocial empowerment	I am capable of helping other women and girls.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Psychosocial empowerment	I am capable of asking for support when I need it.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Cognitive empowerment	I know enough about service options available to decide which ones are right for me.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Cognitive empowerment	I have the skills I need to work towards my goals.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Personal empowerment	I think I am worthwhile.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Personal empowerment	I do things I consider important.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Socio-civic empowerment	I am capable of expressing what is important to me to my community.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)

Thank you for taking the time to take this survey. We hope that the responses to these questions and your honest feedback will help us improve our services.

VERSION 2

Self-Administered

Participant Code: _____

WGSS MEMBER SURVEY

Date: _____

Name of Safe Space: _____

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey! Please answer the questions honestly. If you have any questions, please feel welcome to ask.

Participant Information

1. How old are you?

- 15-17 years old
- 18-24 years old
- 25-64 years old
- 65 years or older

2. Please select your community status.

- IDP
- Refugee
- Host community
- Other (please specify) _____

3. How did you first find out about our services? (tick one)

- Friend or family member
- Referral from another organization
- Neighbor or community member
- Community discussion
- Flyer or pamphlet you saw or received
- Other (please specify) _____

4. How long have you been coming to the safe space?

- 0 – 2 months
- 3 – 5 months
- 6 – 8 months
- 9 – 11 months
- More than 12 months

Please read the following statements and circle how much you agree with each.

I am able to decide which way of overcoming barriers works best for me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
If I was in danger, I could choose the right people to help me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I am more comfortable when others make decisions for me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree

5. Do you know where a woman could go for help if someone hit her?

- Yes
- No

Specify where: _____

6. Do you know where a woman or girl could go for support if someone tried to have sex with her or asked her for something in exchange for receiving services?

- Yes
- No

Specify where: _____

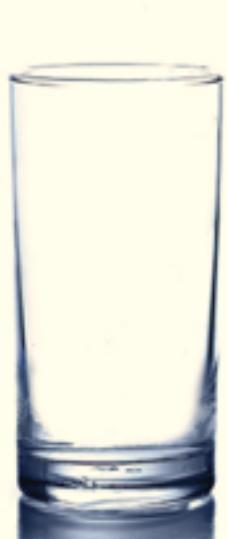
Empowerment Sub-Scale

I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response; only read the statement out loud, not the type of empowerment)

I am capable of helping other women and girls.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I am capable of asking for support when I need it.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I know enough about service options available to decide which ones are right for me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I have the skills I need to work towards my goals.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I think I am worthwhile.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I do things I consider important.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I am capable of expressing what is important to me to my community.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree

Thank you for taking the time to take this survey. We hope that the responses to these questions and your honest feedback will help us improve our services.

Visual Aids



Disagree



Partially agree



Agree



TOOL 30B: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY (FOLLOW-UP)

WHY USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY?

The member survey monitors how WGSS programming impacts women's and girls' empowerment and decision-making over time. It helps WGSS staff to identify whether and how WGSS programming supports member's empowerment, access to services and development of decision-making skills.

Member survey is a combination of 3 tools. The first two tools (30a and 30b) are available in two versions. The first version is "Staff delivered", which is a format for using the tool during an interview between an informant and an interviewer. The second version is "Self-administered" allowing each staff member to directly answer the questions using the self-deliver questionnaire.

1. **Tool 30a: WGSS Member Survey (Baseline)** is a questionnaire to verify the initial status of empowerment, knowledge on available services and decision-making power. The baseline should only be conducted once per member.
2. **Tool 30b: WGSS Member Survey (Follow-up)** is similar to the baseline, but is implemented after a pre-established period from the baseline (3 or 6 months) to compare how the level of empowerment, knowledge of services and decision-making skills has changed after a few months of participation in WGSS programming. The follow-up survey has a more comprehensive set of questions and should not be used as a baseline questionnaire. It can be administered as many times as the project team thinks would be useful (in order to compare changes across time) but should not be completed more than once a quarter per member.
3. **Tool 30c: Participant List** assigns a code to each woman and girl participating in the survey to ensure the confidentiality of the survey.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY?

The member survey can be conducted on a regular basis to monitor progress over time.

The baseline survey sets the starting point for the comparison. After a pre-established period (3 to 6 months), the follow-up survey should be implemented with the same members who took part in the baseline survey. If the population you are working with is highly mobile, it is beneficial to conduct the follow up at the 3 month mark, as members may leave more frequently. If the population you are working with is stable, it may be beneficial to conduct the follow up at the 6 month mark, because they are likely to still be present and will potentially show a larger change during a larger follow-up period. However, it is completely fine to conduct the follow-up survey with a stable population at both the 3 month and 6 month marks and compare change across these three points (including baseline).

HOW TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY?

Guidance for staff

Print out only the version of the tool that will be used. If the activity is delivered by a staff member, only version 1 should be printed (interview format).. Version 2 will be printed when the survey is undertaken directly by a WGSS member (self-administered format).

Participants should be assigned a code using [Tool 30c: Participant List.](#)

It is recommended to conduct the baseline with a minimum of 20 percent of women and girls attending the safe space who consent to taking part in both the baseline and follow-up survey. The exact number of members engaged in the survey will change based on the influx of new members and the size of the WGSS. As much as possible, members targeted in the survey should be new members. However, in the case of established WGSS, long-term members may also be involved. Once a baseline is established with one group of members, make sure to continue conducting the baseline with a sample of new members as they begin coming to the WGSS.

The survey can be delivered by:

1. Staff members (version 1 - staff delivered- interview format)- in low-literacy contexts; through one-to-one conversation with members.
2. Members themselves (version 2 – self-administered)- in high-literacy settings. In this case, members will receive a printed copy of the survey that they can complete themselves.

The survey should be conducted individually with no other persons in the room besides the facilitator and the member. If you are using version 2, then it is okay to leave the member alone in the room to fill out the survey privately. Whether you are using version 1 or 2, in both cases you should ensure that the answers of all members are kept confidential and safe.

You may notice that there are some numbers missing at the start of the survey. Don't worry! These are demographic questions which were already collected at the baseline and do not need to be repeated.

After conducting the baseline and follow-up survey, staff focal points should analyze the findings by comparing both surveys for each participant. The final results should provide useful information to strengthen specific components of WGSS programming.

After the analysis of the survey, it is recommended to schedule a session with participants to provide general and anonymous information on feedback received. For example: "When reviewing the surveys, it came up that most of you did not receive information on services available in the WGSS. Thanks to your feedback, we identified that the WGSS should increase information sessions about services available." It is essential to be cautious and consider the sensitivity of some of the survey questions – in contexts where questions of empowerment are particularly sensitive, findings can be grouped by type of empowerment.

Information gathered through the member survey should be transcribed to [Database G: WGSS Member Survey.](#)

To deliver the survey:

1. Identify who on your team is going to administer the survey. Identify whether it will be self-administered (giving the person the survey to complete themselves) or whether a staff member will ask the questions and record the person's answers.
2. Explain the purpose (see client consent) and get verbal consent to proceed. If the beneficiary declines, tell the person that it is ok and if they change their minds, they can contact you.
3. Write down the beneficiary's name and contact information on the survey participant list. Write down the "PARTICIPANT CODE" from the same row on the survey.
4. Keep the participant list in a separate, safe and confidential space. This list should not be stored together with the surveys to ensure the confidentiality of members.

(See table below for steps 5 and 6 depending on whether self-administered or interview format.)

INTERVIEW FORMAT	SELF-ADMINISTERED
<p>5. Inform the WGSS member that you will ask them some questions but will not write their name on the form and that the interview will remain anonymous.</p>	<p>Inform the WGSS member that you will give them the survey and pen. Request that they do not write their name on the survey so that it is possible to keep their information anonymous.</p>
<p>6. For the questions using the visual aid, place the picture in front of the beneficiary. Explain what each cup represents. Then check the participant's understanding using a simple example (e.g. 'If I said 'The weather is very cold today', which of the cups would you choose to show how much you agree with what I said?'). Read out the first statement and ask the participant to point to which represents how much they agree with the statement. Ask the participant if they would like to give a reason for their choice, and if so, make a note of what they say. Go to the next statement, and continue in the same way.</p>	<p>Hand the survey and the visual aid to the beneficiary (look at the end of Version 2). Explain what each cup represents. Then check participant's understanding using a simple example (e.g. 'If I said 'The weather is very cold today', which of the cups would you choose to show how much you agree with what I said?'). Inform the beneficiary that you are going to leave the room but if they have further questions, they can come and ask at any time.</p>



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

INFORMED CONSENT

My name is _____ and I work with _____ as _____. My colleagues and I would like to know if our programs are improving the lives of women and girls we work with. These questions are only to help us improve our programming and you do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. Your responses will remain completely confidential and will not affect your ability to participate in any way.

Do you agree to answer the questions on this survey?

Yes

No

If the consent is given, continue on to the survey.

VERSION 1

Staff-Delivered (Interview Format)

Participant Code:_____

WGSS MEMBER SURVEY

Date Survey Conducted: _____

Name of the safe space: _____

Administered by: _____

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey! Please answer the questions honestly. If you have any questions, please feel welcome to ask.

Service Experiences and Feedback

1. How long have you been coming to the safe space?

- 0 – 2 months
- 3 – 5 months
- 6 – 8 months
- 9 – 11 months
- More than 12 months

2. How often do you come to the safe space?

_____ days per week/month (please circle either week or month)

3. Did you ever have any difficulties accessing the safe space?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

4. Did you ever have difficulties accessing the activities and services offered in the WGSS?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response)

STATEMENT	DISAGREE (0+)	PARTIALLY AGREE (+1)	AGREE (+2)	COMMENTS
I enjoy participating in group activities at the safe space.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
The activities at the safe space are relevant to my needs.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel able to talk to staff about my problems.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel safe at the space.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I tell my friends and neighbors to come to the space.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel welcome by the staff every time I come to the WGSS.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Women of my identity (religious, ethnic, age, sexual orientation etc.) are welcome and represented in the WGSS.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel I directly contribute to “I feel ownership over” the functioning of the WGSS.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	

Please name the facilitator that you see and speak with the most often.

Facilitator's name: _____

I am going to read some phrases about this facilitator and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response)

I think that [insert name] is... (please repeat each time you read a new phrase)

STATEMENT	DISAGREE (0+)	PARTIALLY AGREE (+1)	AGREE (+2)	COMMENTS
Approachable	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
A positive influence on the group	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Sensitive to each person's needs	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Non-judgmental towards all group members	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Skilled at group management	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Considerate of the feedback and opinions provided by members	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	

5. Did you feel that your opinions and contributions to the group have been listened to and respected?

- Yes
 No

Please explain:

6. Which activity have you liked the most?

7. Which activity has provided you with the most useful information?

8. Do you have any feedback or concerns about the staff delivering the services and activities and how they can support your engagement and participation in the WGSS?

9. Do you have any additional feedback or concerns about how we can improve our work with other women and girls?

Program Outcomes

Decision-Making Sub-Scale

I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response)

I am able to decide which way of overcoming barriers works best for me.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
If I was in danger, I could choose the right people to help me.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
I am more comfortable when others make decisions for me.	Disagree (2)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (0)
I am capable of making decisions about my safety with the help of safe space staff.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)

10. Can you name one service in your community that you learned about in the WGSS?

- Yes
 No

Specify which service: _____

11. Do you know where a woman could go for help if someone hit her?

- Yes
- No

Specify which service: _____

12. Do you know where a woman or girl could go for support if someone tried to have sex with her or asked her for something in exchange for receiving services?

- Yes
- No

Specify which service: _____

13. Have you met women and girls at the WGSS that you can turn to for support since becoming a member?

- Yes
- No

Specify which service: _____

Empowerment Sub-Scale

I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response)

Psychosocial empowerment	I am capable of helping other women and girls.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Psychosocial empowerment	I am capable of asking for support when I need it.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Cognitive empowerment	I know enough about service options available to decide which ones are right for me.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)

Cognitive empowerment	I have the skills I need to work towards my goals.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Personal empowerment	I think I am worthwhile.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Personal empowerment	I do things I consider important.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)
Socio-civic empowerment	I am capable of expressing what is important to me to my community.	Disagree (0)	Partially agree (1)	Agree (2)

Thank you for taking the time to take this survey. We hope that the responses to these questions and your honest feedback will help us improve our services.

VERSION 2
Self-Administered

Participant Code: _____

WGSS MEMBER SURVEY

Date: _____

Name of Safe Space: _____

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey! It will help us understand your satisfaction with the WGSS. Please answer the questions honestly. If you have any questions, please feel welcome to ask.

1. How long have you been coming to the safe space?

- 0 – 2 months
- 3 – 5 months
- 6 – 8 months
- 9 – 11 months
- More than 12 months

2. How often do you come to the safe space?

_____ days per week/month (please circle either week or month)

3. Did you ever have any difficulties accessing the safe space?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

4. Did you ever have difficulties accessing the activities and services offered in the WGSS?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

;

Please read the statements and circle how much you agree with each.

STATEMENT	DISAGREE (0+)	PARTIALLY AGREE (+1)	AGREE (+2)	COMMENTS
I enjoy participating in group activities at the safe space.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
The activities at the safe space are relevant to my needs.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel able to talk to staff about my problems.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel safe at the space.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I tell my friends and neighbors to come to the space.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	

I feel welcome by the staff every time I come to the WGSS.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Women of my identity (religious, ethnic, age, sexual orientation etc.) are welcome and represented in the WGSS.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
I feel I directly contribute to/ "I feel ownership over" the functioning of the WGSS.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	

Please name the facilitator that you see and speak with the most often.

Facilitator's name: _____

I am going to read some phrases about this facilitator and I would like you to tell me how much you agree with them using the visual aid. (circle the response)

I think that [insert name] is... (please repeat each time you read a new phrase)

STATEMENT	DISAGREE (0+)	PARTIALLY AGREE (+1)	AGREE (+2)	COMMENTS
Approachable	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
A positive influence on the group	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Sensitive to each person's needs	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	

Non-judgmental towards all group members	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Skilled at group management	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	
Considerate of the feedback and opinions provided by members	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	

5. Did you feel that your opinions and contributions to the group have been listened to and respected?

- Yes
 No

Please explain:

6. Which activity have you liked the most?

7. Which activity has provided you with the most useful information?

8. Do you have any feedback or concerns about the staff delivering the services and activities and how they can support your engagement and participation in the WGSS?

9. Do you have any additional feedback or concerns about how we can improve our work with other women and girls?

Please read the statements below and circle how much you agree with each.

I am able to decide which way of overcoming barriers works best for me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
If I was in danger, I could choose the right people to help me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I am more comfortable when others make decisions for me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree

I am capable of making decisions about my safety with the help of safe space staff.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
---	----------	-----------------	-------

10. Can you name one service in your community that you learned about in the WGSS?

- Yes
- No

Specify which service: _____

11. Do you know where a woman could go for help if someone hit her?

- Yes
- No

Specify which service: _____

12. Do you know where a woman or girl could go for support if someone tried to have sex with her or asked her for something in exchange for receiving services?

- Yes
- No

Specify which service: _____

13. Have you met women and girls at the WGSS that you can turn to for support since becoming a member?

- Yes
- No

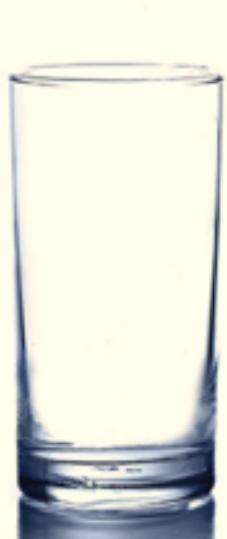
Specify which service: _____

Please read the statements below and circle how much you agree with each.

I am capable of helping other women and girls.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I am capable of asking for support when I need it.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I know enough about service options available to decide which ones are right for me.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I have the skills I need to work towards my goals.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I think I am worthwhile.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I do things I consider important.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree
I am capable of expressing what is important to me to my community.	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree

Thank you for taking time to take this survey. We hope that the responses to these questions and your honest feedback will help us improve our services.

Visual Aids



Disagree



Partially agree



Agree



TOOL 30C: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY PARTICIPANT LIST

WHY USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY PARTICIPANT LIST?

The participant list is a member survey supporting tool. It should be used when delivering the member survey ([Tool 30a: WGSS Member Survey \(Baseline\)](#) and [Tool 30b: WGSS Member Survey \(Follow-up\)](#)). All information and guidance on how to use the survey is available in [Tool 30a](#) and [Tool 30b](#).

The participant list assigns a code to each woman and girl participating in the survey to ensure the confidentiality of their identifiable information.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY PARTICIPANT LIST?

Before filling up the survey questionnaire (baseline), the staff member administering the survey should use the participant list to assign a code to each survey participant. The code will be written in the member survey baseline form.

When delivering the follow-up (after a pre-established period), before filling up the survey, each participant should be given her code (the same as the baseline), and it should be written on the follow-up form.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER SURVEY PARTICIPANT LIST?

After assigning a code to each participant, the participant list will be kept in a safe place (a lockable cabinet or drawer) separately from the surveys. The survey forms are anonymous and keeping the participant list separate from the surveys prevents any identifiable association between questionnaires and participants.

New codes should be created for new participants so each participant has a unique code which is not identifiable in any way. The code needs to be long enough (6 or more characters) and random enough (a mix of letters, numbers and/or symbols) so it is unlikely for the same code to be repeated twice. You can generate new codes using an online random code generator, for example: <https://www.randomcodegenerator.com/en/generate-codes@quickgenerate#result>

Simply copy and paste codes from this website into the far left column below but pay particular attention to the codes when the survey is delivered in multiple WGSS to avoid having more than one participant connected to the same code.



TOOL'S TEMPLATE



TOOL 31: WGSS ORIENTATION PACKAGE FOR NEW MEMBERS

<https://app.box.com/folder/91835107878>



TOOL 32: COMMUNITY SURVEY

WHY USE THE COMMUNITY SURVEY?

Community members' acceptance and buy-in of the WGSS is likely to directly influence the participation of women and girls in their community. Because WGSS focus on reducing gender inequalities by providing female-only spaces, some male community members will inherently have negative perceptions of the WGSS.

Community surveys help to identify negative perceptions or misunderstandings related to WGSS, in order to better plan how to address false or negative assumptions/beliefs of the community. They also help to monitor the impact of information dissemination activities to identify gaps and weaknesses and to strategize accordingly.

WHEN TO USE THE COMMUNITY SURVEY?

The community survey should be conducted on a regular basis (once a month) with a small number of community members (4 or 5). It is a concise survey, and it can be conducted at the beginning or at the end of other activities. It is recommended to plan for the survey not only in conjunction with WGSS information dissemination sessions, but at a range of other dissemination or awareness-raising events, community meetings, other organization's information sessions or service delivery points, etc. If needed, they can also be conducted in neighbouring communities.

HOW TO USE THE COMMUNITY SURVEY?

During the activity, the facilitator asks if there is anyone who would like to take part voluntarily in the survey after the session that should take approximately ten minutes.

At the end of the session, the facilitator meets individually with participants to fill out the survey. It is recommended to have at least two facilitators conducting the survey to avoid long wait times for participants. During the survey, the facilitator reads the statement and ticks the box "agree" or "disagree" according to participants' answers.

Individuals should represent a range of different populations (age, gender, vulnerable persons, etc.). The sample of the population will be different from one survey to another, and so the results should not be compared to monitor progress. Each survey provides information that should be analyzed and discussed with colleagues and proactive members to identify possible misconceptions, negative perceptions and spreading of rumors. Staff and proactive members should then develop tailored strategies to address or mitigate the issues identified.

Information gathered through the community survey should be transcribed to the [Database H: Community Engagement Database](#)



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Date of survey: _____

Location of survey: _____

1. Community member gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Community member age group:

- 15-17 years old
- 18-24 years old
- 25-64 years old
- 65 years or older

3. Are you aware of the WGSS in your community?

- Yes
- No

If the answer to question 3 is yes, ask questions from 4 to 7. If the answer to question 3 is no, thank the community member for their time and say the survey is complete.

4. Please tell me how much you agree with each of the following statements.

STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
WGSS support women and girls in creating or strengthening social groups.	Agree (1)	Disagree (0)
WGSS only provides information and support to women who experience violence.	Agree (0)	Disagree (1)

WGSS are places where women become financially independent.	Agree (0)	Disagree (1)
Women and girls learn to be disobedient at the WGSS.	Agree (0)	Disagree (1)
Women and girls learn to manage their stress at the WGSS.	Agree (1)	Disagree (0)
WGSS are only open to certain groups of women and girls.	Agree (0)	Disagree (1)
Women and girls can voice their needs at the WGSS.	Agree (1)	Disagree (0)

5. In what ways has your community benefited from having a WGSS?

6. Do you have any concerns about the WGSS in your community?

7. Other feedback or comments:



TOOL 33: WGSS MEMBER INPUT FORM

WHY USE THE WGSS MEMBER INPUT FORM?

This tool aims to gather feedback and suggestions provided by women and girls, as well gather members' suggestions on how those feedbacks should be used. Feedback mechanisms and activities encourage women and girls to give feedback and ideas to WGSS staff are diverse and should be tailored to context. If women and girls are consistently requested to provide opinions and feedback, over time, they will be more comfortable and capable of informing programming and the most suitable types of feedback mechanisms to use.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER INPUT FORM?

Members should provide feedback using the channels and activities mentioned in the list below. However, WGSS staff should capture, consider and possibly implement (or advocate to implement) women's and girls' suggestions beyond just the feedback channels used. For example, some interesting comments may come up during an ad-hoc "one-on-one conversation" that is not part of the list below. In this case, WGSS staff should capture the feedback and follow up on it regardless of the channel used (under the column of channels select "other" and specify).

HOW TO USE THE WGSS MEMBER INPUT FORM?

Staff should capture feedback only if it is safe, realistic and in line with the WGSS objectives. If the feedback provided is not realistic or in line with WGSS core concepts, staff members should be honest with members and provide explanations. Staff members should instruct women and girls on the feedback channels to use (e.g. women's forum meetings, complaint's boxes, annual review workshops...).

A possible script can be:

"Thank you very much for providing your feedback. It shows that you care about the quality of the WGSS. I will capture your feedback and make sure to consider how to put your comment into practice. To do this, I may need to discuss with my supervisor and my colleagues and understand their point of view as well. However, your feedback will not get lost, and we will try to operationalize it as much as possible. You are always welcome to share feedback to WGSS staff if that is most comfortable, but there are also established channels you can use such as ... (the list of channels should be customized based on context). I will try to give you an update on how your feedback has been considered within a month. If you do not hear from me, please feel welcome to check in directly."

Each WGSS member's input form should capture only one feedback item. Per each new feedback item, a new form should be used. If inputs received are extremely similar to each other, the staff member may decide to capture the input only once.

Information gathered through the WGSS Member Input Form should be transcribed to [Database E: WGSS Member Input Tracker](#).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Date: _____

WGSS Location: _____

Name of staff gathering feedback: _____

ROLE OF FEEDBACK PROVIDER:	SEX OF FEEDBACK PROVIDER:	AGE OF FEEDBACK PROVIDER:
<input type="checkbox"/> WGSS member <input type="checkbox"/> Community member	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> 18+ <input type="checkbox"/> 17 and under
CHANNEL USED TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK:	TYPE OF FEEDBACK:	
<input type="checkbox"/> WGSS member survey <input type="checkbox"/> WGSS community survey <input type="checkbox"/> WGSS forum meetings <input type="checkbox"/> WGSS feedback mechanism <input type="checkbox"/> FGD/assessment tools <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop/trainings <input type="checkbox"/> [Insert other activities during which feedback may be collected. If no other activities are relevant, this option should be removed] <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to WGSS <input type="checkbox"/> Access to services and activities <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Management <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback mechanism <input type="checkbox"/> [Insert other possible types of feedback relevant to your programs. If no other types are relevant, this option should be removed] <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

Please describe the feedback:

Please describe the proposed solution:

After one month, please respond to the following:

Has the feedback been addressed?

Yes

If yes, how was it addressed:

If yes, what changes did it bring?

No

If no, why not? Will it be addressed?



TOOL 34: WGSS DAILY ATTENDANCE RATE FORM

WHY USE THE WGSS DAILY ATTENDANCE FORM?

Providing figures on WGSS attendance is a challenge for most WGSS, often because of double counting or the lack of precise tools.

In an attempt to address this problem of double counting, Tool 34 allows staff to consistently gather WGSS daily attendance figures and distinguish between new, first-time members (i.e. unique participants) and members who have been to the WGSS before. Adding up the “first time” members across the week would provide you with a unique beneficiary count for the week, which you then can add up across months or quarters or entire projects. Of course, there is always the risk of human error in counting this way, so if safe to do so in your WGSS, the best unique beneficiary count would come from registering members one by one directly into [Database D2: WGSS Attendance Tracker](#).

This tool captures the number of members attending the WGSS but does not capture a) group activity attendance of those members; b) participants in outreach activities. [Tool 35](#) allows teams to capture group activity attendance and [Tool 36: Community Engagement Attendance Form](#) captures the number of participants at WGSS outreach activities in the community.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS DAILY ATTENDANCE FORM?

The tool should be used on a daily basis. During the day, the appointed focal point will calculate how many women and girls were present in the space that day (each member will be calculated once regardless of how many times she goes in and out), and at the end of the working day will fill out the form.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS DAILY ATTENDANCE FORM?

Please fill out a separate form for each safe space each day. Facilitator will indicate the name of the space and the date. This can be tailored to any context by typing in a checklist of all the relevant WGSS names.

The first question to ask is “can I use a laptop in the WGSS” – if the answer is “no” use Tool 34 and [Database D1: WGSS Attendance Tracker](#). If you can use a laptop in the WGSS, ask yourself if you can “speak privately to each member in order to collect demographic data?” If the answer is no, use Tool 34 and [Database D1](#).

Throughout the day, the designated staff member counts the number of girls (age 17 and below) who are present at the WGSS for the first time and writes this into the table (see below). Also to be counted is the number of girls (age 17 and below) that are present at the safe space on that day for a second, third, fourth (etc.) time – this should also be written into the table. The staff member repeats this process for

women (age 18 and older). In cases where the staff member knows all the members, and which women and girls have or have not been to the WGSS before, she can use this knowledge to help fill out the table. If she doesn't remember, it's okay to ask!

At the end of the day, the staff person can use the “feedback/comments/concerns” section to take notes of anything the women and girls have said that should be recorded, or any other comments they may have for the supervisor or colleagues.

If there are multiple safe spaces in your context, a different “Daily Attendance Rate Form” should be filled for each safe space on each day. For instance, if the same organization is running 3 safe spaces and they are all open 5 days a week, the supervisor or M&E staff should receive 15 “Daily Attendance Rate Forms” at the end of the week (one for each space on each of the 5 days).

The data collected through the WGSS Daily attendance rate form will then be entered into [Database D1: WGSS Attendance Tracker](#).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Safe Space: _____

Date: _____

Number of WGSS Members Attending the Space:

AGE	RETURNING	FIRST TIME
17 and under		
18 and above		

Feedback/Comments/Concerns:



TOOL 35: WGSS GROUP ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE FORM

WHY USE THE WGSS GROUP ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE FORM?

This tool is an attendance sheet to track the number of participants per each activity taking place inside the safe space. Participants in group activities taking place within the community are calculated separately – Tool 36: Community Engagement Attendance Form captures the number of participants in WGSS outreach activities.

WHEN TO USE THE WGSS ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE FORM?

Activity facilitators should use this form every time they are conducting a group activity to capture the number of women and girls attending (each specific session). It also applies to WGSS members delivering recreational activities.

HOW TO USE THE WGSS ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE FORM?

The facilitator will indicate the name of the space, the date, the type of activity, and then specify the topic. This section can be tailored to any context by typing in a checklist of all the relevant WGSS activities and topics.

The tool provides an activities list organized by WGSS Objectives and Activity Macro-Categories. The columns ‘WGSS Objectives’ and ‘Activity Macro-Categories’ are NOT customizable, while the ‘Specific Activities’ list should be adapted to the context: For example, if no ‘positive support groups’, or ‘communal income-generating activities’ are implemented, these activities should be removed from the list. If other activities are implemented, those should be added to the list.

After the list of ‘Specific Activities’ is customized, you write or type the specific activity you would like to track into the appropriate space/column.

Then count the number of girls (age 17 and below) that are attending the specific activity for the first time and write this into the table. They may have been to the WGSS before but this is their first time doing that specific activity. In this case, they are a “first time” attendant. Then count the number of girls (age 17 and below) that are attending the specific activity for a second, third, fourth (etc.) time and write this into the table. The same process should take place for women (age 18 and older). If a facilitator knows all the participants and what activities they’ve been to, she can use her knowledge of their attendance to fill out the table. If the facilitator doesn’t remember, it’s okay to ask!

All girls (age 17 and under) should raise their hand if this is the first time attending that specific activity (or learning about that topic). The facilitator counts the hands and records the information in the table under “first time.” Then the facilitator asks all girls (age 17 and under) to raise their hand if they have been to this activity or learned about this topic before and record this into “returning.” To be repeated for women (age 18 and older).

At the end of the day, the facilitator can use the “feedback/comments/concerns” section to take note of anything the women and girls said that should be recorded, or any other comments they may have for the supervisor or colleagues.

If a facilitator conducts multiple activities in one day, a new form for each activity should be used. For instance, if the facilitator conducts 1 handicraft session, 1 awareness-raising session and 1 leadership training, 3 activity attendance forms would be shared with the supervisor or M&E staff at the end of the day.

The data collected through the WGSS Daily Attendance Rate Form will then be entered into the Database D1: WGSS Attendance Tracker or D2: WGSS Attendance Tracker. To decide which database you should use to gather and analyze attendance information, please go to ‘WGSS Attendance Tracker Decision Tree’ available in the Guidance sheet of Databases D1 and D2.

OBJECTIVE 1:

WGSS facilitate access for all women and girls to knowledge, skills and a range of relevant services.

ACTIVITY MACRO-CATEGORIES (Not customizable)	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY NAME
Skills and capacities development	Orientation for new members
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising ¹	Information dissemination on available services
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Periodic service mapping
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Hosted information sessions from other service providers (e.g. legal, nutrition or sexual reproductive health service providers)
Skills and capacities development	Life skills sessions for groups of adolescent girls
Skills and capacities development	Skills-building groups or hosted skills training (e.g. vocational or livelihood service providers)

¹ Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising activities include group or individual interviews conducted with assessment, monitoring and evaluation purposes.

OBJECTIVE 2:

WGSS support women's and girls' psychosocial well-being and creation of social networks.

ACTIVITY MACRO-CATEGORIES (Not customizable)	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY NAME
Recreational	Arts-based activities (e.g. music, dancing, theatre, drawing)
Recreational	Exercise and sport activities (e.g. yoga, volleyball, football)
Recreational	Leisure and relaxation activities (e.g. coffee or tea ceremonies, meditation, storytelling, movies)
Recreational	Craft-making activities (e.g. soap making, tailoring, beading, basket making)
Recreational	Community development initiatives (e.g. gardening, rehabilitation of community spaces)
Recreational	Positive support groups (young mother support groups, community development groups)
Income-generating	Communal income-generating activities to support the WGSS

OBJECTIVE 3:

WGSS serve as a place where women and girls can organize and access information to reduce risk of violence.

ACTIVITY MACRO-CATEGORIES (Not customizable)	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY NAME
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Facilitated discussions to understand concerns and safety risks
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Awareness sessions on risks to GBV, including SEA, and available response services
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Awareness sessions on feedback and reporting mechanisms
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Community mapping and safety planning exercises including safety audits
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Hosted information sessions from safety/security actors (e.g. Peacekeepers, police, community watch groups)

OBJECTIVE 4:

WGSS serve as a key entry point for specialized services for GBV survivors.

ACTIVITY MACRO-CATEGORIES (Not customizable)	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY NAME
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Information dissemination on available GBV response services

OBJECTIVE 5:

WGSS provide a place where women and girls are safe and encouraged to use their voice and collectively raise attention to their rights and needs.

ACTIVITY MACRO-CATEGORIES (Not customizable)	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY NAME
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Facilitated discussions (FGDs or meetings) to understand women's and girls' perspectives and needs
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Women's forum meetings and advocacy planning
Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising	Meetings of women and girl-led initiatives (e.g. associations, savings and loans groups)
Skills and capacities development	Leadership and advocacy training



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Background information

Safe Space: _____

Date of Activity: _____

Objective of the activity:

- Objective 1
- Objective 2
- Objective 3
- Objective 4
- Objective 5

Activity macro-category:

- Income generating
- Information gathering, dissemination and awareness raising
- Recreational
- Skills and capacity development

Specific activity name:

Facilitator(s):

- WGSS staff
- Woman community member
- Adolescent girl community member

Number of WGSS Members Attending the Space:

AGE	RETURNING	FIRST TIME
17 and under		
18 and above		

Feedback/Comments/Concerns:



TOOL 36: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ATTENDANCE FORM

WHY USE THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ATTENDANCE FORM?

This tool is an attendance sheet to track the number of participants at each WGSS activity taking place in the community (outside the safe space). Beneficiaries of activities taking place within the WGSS are calculated separately in [Tool 35: WGSS Activity Attendance Form.](#)

WHEN TO USE THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ATTENDANCE FORM?

This should be used every time a WGSS activity is delivered in the community to capture the number of people attending, divided by gender and age.

HOW TO USE THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ATTENDANCE FORM?

The facilitator will indicate the name of the space, the date, and the type of activity. This section can be tailored to any context by typing in a checklist of all the relevant location names and activities.

First, count the number of women (age 18 and older) that are attending the specific activity for the first time and write this into the table. They may have been to a session on a different topic before, but this is their first time learning about the WGSS, for example. In this case, they are a “first time” participant to that specific activity. Then count the number of women (age 18 and older) that are attending the specific activity for a second, third, fourth (etc.) time and write this into the table. Repeat this process for girls (age 17 and below), men (age 18 and older) and boys (age 17 and below).

If the facilitator knows all the participants and what activities they’ve been to, she can use her knowledge of their attendance to fill out the table. If the facilitator doesn’t remember, it’s okay to ask! Ask women (age 18 and older) to raise their hand if this is their first time attending that specific activity (or learning about that topic). The facilitator counts the number of hands and records it in the table under “first time.” Then ask women (age 18 and older) to raise their hand if they have been to this activity or learned about this topic before – this is recorded under “returning.” Repeat this process for girls (age 17 and below), men (age 18 and older) and boys (age 17 and below).

At the end of the day, the facilitator can use the “feedback/comments/concerns” section to take note of anything the women and girls said that should be recorded, or any other comments they may have for the supervisor or colleagues.

If a facilitator conducts multiple activities in one day, a new form for each activity should be used. For instance, if the facilitator conducts 2 outreach sessions about the WGSS in two different places, 2 community engagement attendance forms would be shared with the supervisor or M&E staff at the end of the day.

The data collected through this tool, will then be entered into [Database H: Community Engagement Database](#).



TOOL'S TEMPLATE

Date of Activity: _____

Location: _____

Type of Activity:

- Meeting with (circle one): Community leaders and with local stakeholders (providers)
- Outreach and awareness session on purpose and availability of services at WGSS

Facilitator(s):

- WGSS staff
- Adult woman community member
- Adolescent girl community member
- Male community member

	WOMEN (18+)	GIRLS (17 AND UNDER)	MEN (18+)	BOYS (17 AND UNDER)
First time				
Returning				

Feedback/Comments/Concerns:



DATABASE D1: WGSS ATTENDANCE TRACKER

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



DATABASE D2: WGSS ATTENDANCE TRACKER

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



DATABASE E: WGSS MEMBERS' INPUT TRACKER

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



DATABASE F: WGSS MEMBER ACTIVE ROLE REGISTRATION BOOK

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



DATABASE G: WGSS MEMBER SURVEY DATABASE

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



DATABASE H: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DATABASE

This tool is best used in an excel format. You can access the instructions and template [here](#).



7: EMPOWERING EXITS



ASSOCIATED WITH THIS **GUIDANCE**



TOOLS:

[Tool 37: Exit Strategy tools](#)

[Tool 38: WGSS Partnership Project Closure Meeting Guidance Note](#)

Localization, phase out, phase down, phase over, all of these describe strategies detailing how international humanitarian organizations plan to withdraw their program resources and ‘exit’ from a community while ensuring sustainability—meaning that outcomes achieved or program goals are not jeopardized.¹ Whether the timing of an international actor’s exit is chosen or imposed, it is certain to happen. Unfortunately, still too few resources exist to guide organizations through this process. This chapter aims to provide international actors with critical guidance to plan their exits in an accountable and sustainable way, while also discussing how such exits can simultaneously be empowering for women, girls and local women’s organizations in particular.

7.1 SETTING THE FRAME FOR WGSS EXIT STRATEGIES

The opportunity for a sustainable exit of international humanitarian actors from a WGSS program lies in the expertise and commitment of local women’s networks and organizations towards social change, who will continue efforts thereafter. Exit strategies have become a mandatory component for most, if not all, donor funding templates for over a decade and yet international humanitarian exit strategies lack transparency, predictability, sustainability, or accountability.² Specific to the GBV sector, part of the challenge is that local women’s networks and organizations are often not fully integrated into humanitarian response. When they are, international GBV actors must support and allow women’s organizations to become functional and independent, rather than passive, externally-managed organizations.³

All international actors implementing WGSS programs can plan for a sustainable exit if they first develop a sustainability strategy, which then drives their exit strategy.⁴ The key to success lies in ensuring that the sustainability strategy is led by what women and girls have prioritized to be sustained beyond the exit of the program (e.g. a WGSS objective, a specific type of empowerment or the program’s goal); and that responsibility is effectively transferred during the implementation of the WGSS to a local women’s network or organization. Based on this, the international actor should outline the key steps and conditions required to move from where the program currently stands, towards their vision for what it will be after the exit. In addition, exit strategies include contingency plans that address risks of unexpected phase-out of programming (e.g. loss of humanitarian access, sudden movement of the population). Use the related [Tool 37: Exit Strategy Tools](#) to guide your design of an exit strategy.

1 Sahyoun, K., 2006. ‘Phasing-Out Development Interventions – Approaches, Challenges and Opportunities for Change’, unpublished PhD thesis. Berlin, University of Berlin.

2 Gardner A., Greenblott K. and Joubert C., 2005. What We Know About Exit Strategies – Practical Guidance for Developing Exit Strategies in the Field. C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf>

3 Coalition of Feminists for Social Change, 2017. “Finding the balance between scientific and social change goals, approaches and methods”, Feminist Perspectives on Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls Series, Paper No. 3. <https://cofemsocialchange.org/learning-advocacy-tools/cofem-svri-paper-video-series/paper-3/>

4 Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). General Guidance 6.4: Promoting Practical Sustainability. Canberra: 2005

Best practice WGSS exit strategies are:

- Developed within six to nine weeks of the program start for a one-year project, and within 6 months to a year of a five-year project.⁵ This allows women and girls to more meaningfully engage and influence the sustainability strategy and the related exit strategy.
- Regularly reviewed and updated as needed based on the implementation of the program and monitoring of incremental progress towards women's and girls' prioritized objectives and goals, as well as contextual factors.
- Partnership-focused; aimed at strengthening the capacity of local women's networks or organizations to absorb large donor funds or comply with bureaucratic humanitarian systems to continue programming.

The three phases of WGSS exit strategies

The exit of an international actor implies three phases for a WGSS program:

- 1. Phasing down:** This refers to the gradual reduction of WGSS program activities and resources deployed by the international actor. Phasing down is often a preliminary stage to phasing over or phasing out. For example, an international actor might reduce its staffing for the WGSS because women from the community are now directly leading the facilitation of activities in the WGSS, as well as outreach. In another example, a WGSS program in its sixth year of programming in a complex, protracted emergency setting might be allocated less funds compared to the previous funded project cycle. Forced to phase down, the program may choose to reduce for instance, the number of staff, hours and days of operation, or the number and type of activities offered in the WGSS. The exit strategy should explain the components affected and how the reduction will be implemented and communicated.
- 2. Phasing over:** The international actor transfers the WGSS program to a sponsored informal women's network, a women's CBO, local nongovernmental organization or national organization. Phasing over exit strategies establish benchmarks and define the process for the gradual reduction of resources (technical, financial, operational) deployed by the sponsoring international actor relative to the local partner's increased ability and responsibility to sustain the WGSS program. Emphasis is placed on institutional capacity-building during the implementation so that the services provided can continue through local organizations.
- 3. Phasing out:** This refers to the withdrawal and discontinued implementation of a program and its services. According to humanitarian principles, permanent or self-sustaining outcomes are realized, and/or local service provision is recovered thus eliminating the need for external humanitarian aid. In practice however, women's and girls' empowerment requires a long-term investment and is unlikely to be realized entirely during the term of a given WGSS project or even humanitarian response phase. While funding cycles, crisis or other reasons might impose artificial timelines on program phase-out, these exit strategies are often referred to as contingency strategies, which allow the program to determine the knowledge, skills and tangible assets they must transfer to women and girls within a fixed time to avoid jeopardizing intended program outcomes or placing women and girls at risk after the exit.

5 Gardner A., Greenblott K. and Joubert C., 2005. What We Know About Exit Strategies – Practical Guidance for Developing Exit Strategies in the Field. C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf>

Accountable and sustainable WGSS exit strategies

Context-tailored

The timeline for when a program must exit is usually based on defined criteria which is then detailed in the exit strategy. This criteria in turn, is usually based on contextual programmatic factors⁶ which are specific to each humanitarian response and organization, and therefore different for each WGSS.

- Relief efforts meeting immediate lifesaving and basic needs, the recovered ability of local or national service provision to meet needs, and a low risk of recurring crisis or disaster once more are key context-based criteria. These trigger a change in the classification of a humanitarian operation from a relief to a recovery operation and thus prompts the exit of most relief services.⁷ While WGSS programs remain relevant across the relief, recovery and development continuum, a shift in operational context typically implies that components of the program will also change.
- Programmatic criteria should be developed to guide exit strategies. Ideally, the achievement of a program's goal should determine when to exit. Benchmarks can be established for outcome and impact indicators from the program's monitoring and evaluation framework and used as programmatic criteria guiding phasing down, phasing over or phasing out exit strategies.⁸ Given the complex concept of empowerment; short project timeframes in relief settings; and without a dedicated measurement framework; it has mainly been difficult for WGSS to use programmatic criteria to determine an exit. However, the Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Timebound (SMART) indicators in the WGSS logical framework offer a solution. Based on the outcome that women and girls want to sustain (as articulated in the sustainability strategy), the WGSS program should incorporate the related outcome or impact indicator from the WGSS logical framework into their monitoring framework. The value of the indicator collected through the program's regular monitoring efforts then becomes a baseline value for comparison. The program can then develop a sustainable and accountable exit strategy by identifying the benchmark value it should achieve for that indicator, and the timeline required to achieve it before an exit can be triggered. The same can be done in the context of a partnership, where jointly determined benchmarks trigger specific steps in phasing over exits.
- A staggered exit from communities or activities will allow for gauging the partners' and other stakeholders' ability and commitment to meet their obligations, as well as provide opportunities to gauge the success of the exit strategy on a limited basis, by learning from communities that are exited from earliest.
- It may be necessary to solicit supplementary funding for post-project follow-up with partners, and a post-project evaluation several months later to assess whether the activities and outcomes were indeed sustainable.

6 Gardner A., Greenblott K. and Joubert C., 2005. What We Know About Exit Strategies – Practical Guidance for Developing Exit Strategies in the Field. C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf>

7 IASC Secretariat, 2003. Inter-Agency Standing Committee Exit Strategy for Humanitarian Actors in the Context of Complex Emergencies. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/focal-points/documents-public/iasc-exit-strategy-humanitarian-actors-context-complex-emergencies>

8 Gardner A., Greenblott K. and Joubert C., 2005. What We Know About Exit Strategies – Practical Guidance for Developing Exit Strategies in the Field. C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf>

Women and girl-led

Whether staggered, transitioned or discontinued, the withdrawal of WGSS services will directly affect women's and girls' lives. At a minimum, they must be engaged and informed of any future strategies. Failing to do so not only directly goes against WGSS goals and principles, but is also disempowering, and can jeopardize their safety.

Exit strategies that are accountable to women and girls beyond the program's exit should first elaborate a sustainability strategy which articulates what women and girls want to sustain. It should be simple, and outline small actionable steps emphasizing quality rather than quantity. The strategy should also clearly outline the decision-making process as to when an exit would be appropriate. Highly accountable exit strategies formally establish processes empowering women and girls themselves to determine the best terms of exit as opposed to the service provider. For example, phasing over exit strategies can delegate authority to women and adolescent girls to define the criteria and vet community-based organizations (CBOs), local civil society or national institutions to whom the program will potentially be transitioned to. For phasing down or phasing over strategies, when women's and girls' collective ownership of the space is strong, the delegation of authority and responsibility to them for the continuation of services should be supported, especially when they express interest and the context allows for the mitigation of any risks transferred to them.

Community-informed

The exit strategy describes the process of an organization's engagement and disengagement with the community. In essence, it is a document that communicates to stakeholders, with suitable transparency, all the necessary information related to closing a program and where appropriate, defining any on-going relationship with the community post-exit. Without such a transparent approach, there could be a difficult exit when it does occur.

Exit strategies which utilize and support the role of CBOs and local civil society can present powerful opportunities to sustain program outcomes long after the organization has exited. The challenge is that the original service provider must select local partners based on their commitment to women's and girl's empowerment rather than institutional and human resource capacity, and they must allow CBOs to become functional, rather than passive, externally-managed organizations. This requires an active partnership approach to transfer capacity and responsibility during the implementation of the WGSS program to such local organizations. In doing so, such approaches need to be less risk-averse and more willing to learn from error.

7.2 BUILDING THE EXIT STRATEGY INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WGSS PROGRAM

When an international actor establishes a presence in a community at the onset of an emergency, it should be expected that the humanitarian system and donors are unlikely to provide support beyond only a few years of direct implementation of WGSS services. The international actor should thus build its exit strategy intentionally into the WGSS implementation plan from the outset to set the course for quality and sustainable programming, and lay out the route the program team must follow to get to the intended exit point.

The sooner the exit strategy is defined and integrated into the implementation plan the more likely:

- ✓ **The international actor can set the timeframe and conditions for its exit rather than react to an imposed exit.**

Developing an exit strategy early on genuinely demonstrates to donors a commitment to achieving and sustaining results with their funding (rather than out of self-interest to sustain presence or because the point is reached where they must exit).

For example, the program decides to create a strategy with a vision to exit after four years. The vision is to phase over the WGSS to a local women's organization, aligned in approach and feminist values, to ensure program objectives are sustained. The vision also includes the current donor supporting the exit strategy and ensuring uninterrupted programming by funding the local organization directly once the international actor has exited. Key timelines and benchmarks of this strategy include the following:

- By the second year, the program will likely have: a good foundation and pace of implementation based on monitoring of outcome-level indicators; a good sense of women's and girl's needs, priorities and service-seeking behaviors. If this is the case, the program will identify a local partner by the middle of the second year, with a six-month buffer period just in case it takes time to sign the partnership and get things going officially.
- The third year focuses on the program directly implementing WGSS services, as well as providing capacity-strengthening support to its local partner. Percentage breakdown of technical versus institutional capacity support should be determined based on assessments and donor support but it is likely that 60% will focus on technical capacity.
- By the end of year three, local partner staff should be fully shadowing WGSS program staff and sharing administrative responsibilities.
- In year four, the local partner mainly focuses on direct implementation of WGSS services with WGSS program staff available for coaching and shadowing. 80% of effort should be placed on institutional capacity building.

Based on this strategy, donors will be more likely to invest additional funds related to the partnership to support the international actor's vision. Also, while at this stage of the humanitarian response the standard funding cycle might be limited to a twelve-month agreement, the donor is more likely to plan for and renew funding agreements for the WGSS program to support the sustainable achievement of the exit strategy, even if their funding priorities have generally shifted attention to another location or issue.

- ✓ **The WGSS program can be sustained by a local partner to support women's and girls' empowerment.**

Partnerships between international actors and local organizations often fall short of genuine supportive collaboration, sustainability or mutual accountability. Some reasons include: international organizations defining the partnership; limiting local partners' involvement as conduits for delivery or access points for the international actor to deliver relief; partnerships created in a scramble with local organizations to mitigate disruption of services and potential harm to beneficiaries; lack of sufficiently-developed strategies or not having triggered implementation early enough, etc. However, when strategic partnerships bring local knowledge and experience together with humanitarian expertise in a working relationship that is collaborative, risk sharing and inclusive, they can deliver and achieve better immediate objectives, sustain delivery beyond relief efforts and achieve longer term goals.

Genuine commitment to cooperation and shared responsibility can be established early on through the exit strategy by phasing over the WGSS program to a local partner. This benefits overall quality and sustainability both immediately and over time. For example:

- A local partnership introduced to a relatively new WGSS program can offer complementarity to the international actor's humanitarian knowledge, expertise, relationships and skills by contributing local knowledge, expertise, networks and skills. This greatly increases the capacity to implement quality programming and achieve the objectives of the program.
- In turn, as partners mutually support and acquire complementary knowledge their shared understanding of the program increases. In phase over exits, the more time partners spend collaborating meaningfully, the stronger their shared vision and the chance of sustainability of the program over the long term. This also allows time for the local partner to establish independent, trusting relationships with women and girls attending the WGSS as well as with the international actor's donors, both vital for the WGSS program's sustainability beyond the exit of the international actor.
- The sooner a partnership is established, the sooner a SMART exit strategy can be defined jointly between partners to measure progress. Benchmarks can be established that, on the one hand, trigger the incremental increase in responsibility and accountability of the local partner over the course of the program, and on the other hand trigger an incremental reduced responsibility and fewer direct resources from the international actor. As a result, the overall timeframe for the successful implementation of the strategy can be determined more accurately and critical gaps in resources required to fully implement the strategy can be identified. Overall, the strategy then also becomes a tool reflecting partners' accountability to their donors, and to negotiate additional support required to achieve the strategy.

✓ **The international actor can manage unexpected phase out scenarios.**

When a phase out is unexpected, each situation will be highly contextual requiring the international actor to take of-the-moment decisions for the WGSS program. However, three common scenarios in humanitarian relief settings prompting phase outs—and their associated overarching mitigation approaches—can be used to create contingency plans within the international actor's exit strategy.

When the unexpected does happen, a contingency plan and exit strategy can serve as a stable reference point to guide immediate decisions. The effect of the sudden phase out can be plotted against the direction meant to be followed. The international actor can identify, prioritize and implement strategies which can eventually bring the program back on course or, in some cases, be limited to mitigating harm caused by the phase out. To support the development of contingency plans the following three scenarios can be used.⁹ [If the humanitarian response or your own organization have additional scenarios relevant to your context or have tailored any of these three more specifically to your context, use those instead.]

- Shifting lines of political or geographic control by state or non-state actors or heightened security risks: This contextual shift represents probably the most complex and challenging scenario in terms of "exit". Typically accompanied by mass displacement of populations, including humanitarian workers, phase out is often sudden—spanning a few days at most—therefore significantly reducing capacity to ensure the continuity of WGSS programming or broader GBV services. To ensure the security

9 GBV Sub-Cluster Whole of Syria, Turkey/Jordan Hub, 2018. Guidance Note on Ethical Closure of GBV Programmes. <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/guidance-note-ethical-closure-gbv-programmes-gbv-sc-whole-syria>

of beneficiaries and staff, information-sharing between organizations working under political or geographic lines of control by other state or non-state actors is reduced further, which in turn limits capacity to fully assess the extent of the contextual shift. Mitigation measures in this case could be to continuously update preparation, risk analysis and possible contingency plans; regularly analyze common triggers; and work in close collaboration with stakeholders that can provide political and strategic analysis to identify triggers in a timely way.

- Volatile political environment: Uncertainty about current and future political situations affect programming adversely as both international actors and local NGOs have no guarantee or certainty about their permissible scope of operation, their access to resources and how, when and with whom to plan an exit with. In some cases, political tensions bring about challenges in access to certain locations, for example when visas or other related permits are not granted to humanitarian workers and organizations. In these contexts, building critical relationships for program phase over is even harder than usual. An unstable economy also adversely affects exit plans due to price fluctuations and inconsistent availability of vital inputs, making it difficult to adhere to a plan. In this dynamic environment, it may be necessary to develop several different ‘exit scenarios’ and include regular re-assessments of current exit plans in the timeline so that adjustments can be made as the situation evolves.
- Shortage of funding / project cycles and the uncertainty of future funding: The funding / project cycle can force an exit even when the organization and/or community are not yet ready. As the project closeout date approaches, uncertainty about donor support to a proposed follow-on program can pose further constraints. Concerns about job security for staff and continued support to local partners cause attrition and anxiety until a budget is approved – which is often many months after a program’s proposed start date has come and gone. To address these issues, contingency plans for the various funding scenarios (including fundraising for complementary funding or additional expenses linked with the program’s emergency closure) are suggested, ensuring that the program is not 100% reliant on one donor. Keeping staff informed as plans change is also important, giving as much notice as possible when budgets for staffing are in jeopardy.

Key Points To Remember When Building Your Exit Strategy

- Establishing an exit strategy early on increases the international actor’s likely control over the timeframe for exit. Note that the exit plan remains flexible with the expectation that some of the exit criteria and benchmarks may need to be modified during the program cycle, but don’t wait to have all the details before designing the strategy.
- Implementing exit plans in a gradual, phased manner is recommended, as the staggered approach allows the local partner, members of the WGSS and donors time to progressively create a new way of working that can be sustained beyond the international actor’s exit.
- When faced with an unexpected phase out, contact with communities or the local partner (when relevant) will help to support sustainability of the program or ensure no further harm is caused.

7.3 COMMON PROGRAMMING CHALLENGES TO EXIT STRATEGIES

- **High turnover of staff:** For any organization regardless of whether it is international or local, when this occurs among staff, it can negatively impact continuity and service provision. To prevent the causes for the high turnover of staff (e.g. to prevent burnout, disinterest etc.) as much as possible, additional resources are required for repeating training, capacity building and ensuring staff care and well-being on a regular basis. High turnover can be especially difficult in terms of exit strategies when local partners who are initially targeted for assuming responsibility of program activities may not be present when the program exits.
- **Lack of local partners or active WGSS members to phase over to:** The international actor may not be able to identify an appropriate local organization to phase over their program to. While early planning may help to address some of this challenge in some situations, the lack of an appropriate organization to handover to may just be the reality in some communities. In other situations, proactive WGSS members might not be interested in entirely taking responsibility for the WGSS, or risks to their safety might be determined as too high to envisage handing over to active members (e.g. refugee women are not allowed to officially create associations or work; while women and girls from both displaced and host communities attend the WGSS, joint ownership is unequal and handing over to members directly might increase conflict dynamics and targeted violence towards a certain group). Furthermore, as women, even active WGSS members have limited availability due to their own daily responsibilities. In addition, if WGSS active members lack cohesion amongst themselves, or feel they have not been sufficiently supported to take over the full implementation of activities, the eventual exit can be hampered.
- **Evacuation, donation, transfer, return or destruction of assets and program inputs:** Whether phasing over, phasing down or phasing out, the exit plan relies on specifying which physical assets and inputs (e.g. facilities, vehicles, materials or tools for activities, incentives for guards, volunteers, etc.) procured to implement WGSS programming will be disposed of by the exiting organization. In the case of phasing over exits, this also may include how assets and inputs will be sustained by the organization or community members the program is handed over to. Plans should ensure compliance with relevant donor regulations which can quickly become challenging, as these are likely to differ per donor, country or region of operation, type of asset and input, and type of exit. Consider specifically building asset disposal means into the exit strategy, and engaging colleagues from supply chain, logistics and grants departments early on to guide the plan. This includes, for example, the preparation of inventories, clear communication procedures with concerned organizations, stakeholders and/or individuals, and relevant documentation to prevent any bureaucratic delays during operational closure.
- **Limited follow-up capacity:** To measure the success of an exit strategy, it may be necessary to conduct a post-project evaluation—ideally several months after the project has ended. It will be important to ask for instance:
 - Is the partner organization (who assumed responsibility for activities) continuing to meet its obligation to the WGSS members?
 - How can you be sure that other stakeholders are holding to their commitments, i.e. are agencies continuing to provide technical support?

- Will you be able to contact the women and girls who attended the WGSS when you were implementing the project?
- Will community members accept participating in an evaluation if they feel they have lost access to services due to your exit?

Each of these represents a challenge on its own, only further compounded by the biggest challenge overall, which is related to securing adequate resources for follow-up once the activities are phased over, the grant is closed, and funding is no longer available by the donor for the international actor to continue to monitor and follow-up with partners. At a minimum, these limitations should be factored in and transparently discussed with relevant stakeholders including partner organizations, community members, women and girl members of the WGSS and donors. Additional strategies are provided below in section [7.6 Monitoring & Evaluation of Exit Strategies](#).

7.4 DUTY OF STAFF CARE¹⁰

Exits, regardless of the type, are challenging and emotional for everyone. Consider strategies to keep motivation and team spirit high until the final days to ensure the quality of services to beneficiaries. Consider the development of a staff support plan for the team, including the local partner or community members in case of phase over exits, both during and immediately after the exit. Examples include:

- ✓ Disseminating regular messages reminding everyone to practice self-care;
- ✓ Supervisors intentionally creating time and space during the exit for staff care;
- ✓ Developing and making available support plans offering confidential emotional support sessions to staff who wish to access this kind of support.

In addition to self and staff care practices, some exits (e.g. the three humanitarian scenarios outlined above as most likely to cause an unexpected and sudden phase out), require further “duty of care” by the WGSS implementing organization towards its staff, including throughout program closures and exits. Measures of care are usually adapted, as much as possible, to the specific needs of staff and can require a substantial amount of financial and human resources. Therefore, they should be specifically mentioned within the exit strategy and discussed with donors to more likely ensure an available budget should they need to be implemented. Plans for “duty of care” should be revised in situations of emergency evacuations.

Duty of care should include the following considerations, among others:

- ✓ Evacuation of staff and their families;
- ✓ Accommodation at destination (rent for X number of months, shared guest house, etc.);
- ✓ Provision of advanced salary for one or two months;
- ✓ Medical support in case of injury during the emergency;
- ✓ Including staff in emergency food and NFI distributions;
- ✓ Giving priority in case of job opportunities within the organization at destination; promoting and advertising staff capacity among different organizations at destination to ensure job retention.

10 GBV Sub-Cluster Whole of Syria, Turkey/Jordan Hub, 2018. Guidance Note on Ethical Closure of GBV Programmes. <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/guidance-note-ethical-closure-gbv-programmes-gbv-sc-whole-syria>

In situations of sudden phase out due to active conflict, with envisaged changes in lines of control and mass displacement of populations, including staff, the decision on whether to leave or stay must remain a personal choice for everyone. Organizations should neither coerce nor force staff to make any particular choice.

7.5 TRANSPARENTLY COMMUNICATING EXITS TO WGSS STAKEHOLDERS

In the same way that the WGSS program engages several stakeholders during the implementation of the program, likewise stakeholders must transparently be made aware of exits. Communication strategies should reflect engagement strategies based on each stakeholders' unique influence, interest and ties to the WGSS program. The following are stakeholders that are typically connected to all WGSS:

- ✓ **Staff and Partners:** Program supervisors should meet with relevant staff and partners to explain the reasons for exit. It is important to try to strike a balance between keeping staff informed of the exit and process, and not increasing their stress and panic about their future. Discuss the main steps of the exit strategy, including key messages you entrust them to convey to the community.
- ✓ **Case management services (when hosted in the WGSS):** Regardless of whether the same or different organization provides the WGSS program and case management services, if case management services are hosted in a WGSS going through an exit, case management staff must be made aware as soon as possible. This will give them as much time as possible to inform clients and determine the best way forward to continue services according to the exit strategy. Ideally, WGSS staff should engage the case management team in developing potential strategies based on the preferred exit, along with alternative scenarios, so that when the teams meet again to discuss implementation of the strategy, they are not starting from scratch but just confirming or adjusting the information to be transferred and how, in full respect of data protection protocols.
- ✓ **WGSS members:** WGSS staff must inform WGSS women and girl members about the upcoming exit and timeframe, and discuss their questions, concerns or any opportunities associated with the exit. Communication should very clearly explain what will stop and by when, and what will continue and until when. It should also specify the phased approach, partners in the case of phased over approaches, and provide information on where members can access similar or alternative services (if other service providers are going to provide these). This communication is extremely important because:
 - The WGSS program team is accountable to feedback provided by women and girls right until the end.
 - Women and girls were central in developing the initial strategy, and since then they will have likely progressed in their understanding of the WGSS program, and feel more empowered to share openly with the WGSS their concerns and suggestions.
 - Far from a token step, women and girls often provide highly important feedback to WGSS teams which influence shifts in how exits are implemented.

In situations of sudden phase out due to active conflict, with envisaged changes in lines of control and mass displacement of populations, including staff, the WGSS program can explore different ways of rapid communication, considering the security risks. For example: sending SMS or a WhatsApp message to regular attendees, posting on the WGSS front door the temporary suspension and

indicating a focal point to contact for updates (as appropriate), organizing volunteers to call different women and requesting each one to continue the chain to inform other beneficiaries.

- ✓ **Community stakeholders:** The WGSS program should also plan to meet with relevant community stakeholders such as community leaders, representatives of women's movement and community-based organizations, as well as other humanitarian service providers it has interagency or bilateral referral pathways with. Communication should very clearly explain what will stop and by when, and what will continue and until when, specifying phased approaches, and partners in the case of phased over approaches. This is to ensure sustainability and accountability and demonstrate commitment to coordinated efforts benefiting women and girls. Any changes in referral focal points should be also communicated.
- ✓ **Donors:** When the exit is not related to the end of a funding cycle and a non-renewed cycle from the donor, the WGSS program should inform their donors of the upcoming closure/exit from a certain location, and discuss the implications of the sudden change in terms of the ongoing funded program. Engaging donors to buy in to an exit strategy well before they expect it, is likely to positively result in the donor committing additional funds in support of the program seeing its strategy through. Likewise, when WGSS programs have approached donors with alternative plans based on context-tailored, women and girl-led, and community-informed feedback received through conducting exit communications with stakeholders, they often have received positive feedback.
- ✓ **GBV Sub-Cluster (SC) or working group:** GBV SC coordinators should be given the reasons for exiting (e.g. funding, access, security, etc.). Explain the exit strategy, using mapping of each site to clarify what is going to happen in each location and who the service provider will be to transfer cases to (for case management) or to transfer responsibility for other GBV activities (e.g. in WGSS). This is important because the coordination mechanism can support with:
 - identifying geographical gaps or prioritizing services needed;
 - providing technical support and feedback as needed;
 - supporting communication and connections with a broad range of humanitarian and national stakeholders which might benefit the strategy; and
 - advocating for funding.

7.6 MONITORING & EVALUATION OF EXIT STRATEGIES

Like any other aspect of a WGSS program, an exit strategy should be monitored and evaluated.

Monitoring implementation of the exit strategy: The benchmarks established within the exit strategy effectively monitor the strategy's implementation as each triggers the next set of actions and should, in fact, be integrated into the overall program's monitoring and evaluation plan. Likewise, the outcome and impact indicators in the program log frame which assess increase in women's and girls' sense of empowerment and decision-making from baseline, can serve as an indication for the readiness of the program to exit. This linking prevents duplication of monitoring efforts and maximizes the use of existing data. Women and girls and other key stakeholders should also adequately be involved in the monitoring process.

Evaluation of the exit strategy: While the WGSS program team should regularly monitor, discuss progress and update their exit plans, to determine the success of an exit strategy, an evaluation would need to be conducted after the program exit. Since funding is not usually accounted for in this manner, exit strategies are rarely evaluated. However, measures of success do exist (as represented in the box below), for two variations of exits: A) whether the program exited earlier on within a humanitarian response, or B) after a longer period.

A. EMERGENCY RELIEF EXIT STRATEGY MEASURES OF SUCCESS ¹¹	B. RELIEF, RECOVERY, DEVELOPMENT EXIT STRATEGY MEASURES OF SUCCESS ¹²
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the relevant activities are continued in the same or modified format; 2. If the systems developed continue to function effectively and, 3. If principles of participation and do no harm were respected during the closure. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the program impact has been sustained, expanded or improved after program end; 2. If the relevant activities are continued in the same or modified format; and 3. If the systems developed continue to function effectively.

Practice-based evidence: Insight through studies and lessons learned show that best practice is when international actors exit by investing in strengthening capacity and transferring material, intellectual and financial resources to local women's organizations to ensure that WGSS are sustainable. By sharing challenges and benefits to this practice with the wider GBV sector, this accountable and sustainable approach to exit strategies can become the standard model.

7.7 PRIORITIZING EXIT STRATEGIES IN SOLIDARITY WITH LOCAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

In the context of partnerships, capacity-strengthening is a process of mutual learning between the international actor and the local women's partner organization (or other local entities). The partnership not only increases the quality of services and outcomes for members of the WGSS, but strengthens solidarity with the local women's movement, and recognizes the expertise of local women's organizations. The partnership, therefore, builds towards a feminist vision of the WGSS that is strongly women-led and women-owned.

¹¹ GBV Sub-Cluster Whole of Syria, Turkey/Jordan Hub, 2018. Guidance Note on Ethical Closure of GBV Programmes. <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/guidance-note-ethical-closure-gbv-programmes-gbv-sc-whole-syria>

¹² Gardner A., Greenblott K. and Joubert C., 2005. What We Know About Exit Strategies – Practical Guidance for Developing Exit Strategies in the Field. C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf>

Similarly, all capacity-strengthening undertaken by the WGSS service provider must be consistent with the WGSS principles:

- identification of priorities must be collaborative;
- areas should be prioritized to support women and girls through the process of empowerment and;
- the learning process should be mutual.

The focus of capacity-strengthening should be determined according to the local partner's strategic objectives and longer-term goals. This is different, and in addition to, the support they receive to directly implement the WGSS program (the latter is the same for local partners and all WGSS frontline staff as detailed in [Part 5: Capacity-Building](#)).

Organizational development support

Organizational development support is often an essential component of an international actor's sustainable exit strategy and promotes greater representation of local women's organizations within humanitarian implementation and decision-making circles. This is important not only because local women's organizations are usually fully grounded in the local women's movement and driven by social change objectives, but also because most often lack adequate funding opportunities and support from their national institutions. Such support should be initiated where:

- it aligns with both the international actor and the local partner's strategies and objectives;
- there is demand and commitment from the local partner;
- the international actor has the requisite resources to support the partner in doing so (e.g. directly through dedicated organizational capacity-strengthening teams, or indirectly through secured funds to be used for this purpose).

This partnership commitment requires strong collaboration built on trust to jointly assess and identify areas for growth, according to organizational and professional standards, as well as partner needs and context. Capacity-strengthening requires specific skills and approaches which will impact the staffing structures necessary to support transfer of knowledge and building of capacity.

There are several scenarios in which organizational development support may not be appropriate. For example, a partner organization may have high capacity and may not prioritize organizational development activities; indeed, it may itself be a provider of organizational development support for other organizations. Other examples include, when a partner's organizational development needs may be met by another organization or may not align with the international actor's strengths; or the international actor may not have the internal specialized skills needed, and may not be able to engage a third party to provide the required support.

Where a partnership is short-term, longer-term organizational development support may not be achievable. The time required for capacity-strengthening processes varies. Project support, by its nature, must be accomplished within the time frame of the funded project, and generally focuses on the early months of a project. Organizational development support, like the learning process of individuals, may take months or years. Indeed, while it should have very clear and achievable milestones, it is best understood as an ongoing process of continual strengthening that is never 'finished,' in the sense that there will always be room for an organization to improve.

A fundamental prerequisite for organizational development support is partner commitment and ownership, no matter how small or large the undertaking. Organizational development support processes must be led by the partner organization itself; they will not be effective without the genuine commitment of the partner organization's leadership and staff. The desire to enact change, together with a clear understanding of and appetite for the level of commitment required, is an important precondition for the success of any organizational development process. While not necessarily based on priorities identified by the partner, project support will be far more effective where there is genuine commitment on the part of the partner organization. The international actor's commitment is just as critical in both types of support. While the partner owns the organizational development plan, as well as the success or failure of the effort, the international actor must deliver the committed support in a timely and effective manner.

The international actor and partner's documentation of mutual commitments to organizational development support – either in the context of a Partnership Agreement or Collaboration Agreement – is the primary tool for accountability between the WGSS service provider and partner. The benchmarks established through the exit strategy serve as a second tool for accountability. As well as documenting the WGSS service providers' support commitments, the agreement should describe the ways in which the partner will engage with and utilize that support.

Another key aspect of accountability is local partner feedback on the support provided by the international actor. Such feedback must consistently be sought while providing capacity support, including on whether the support is effective, high quality, on schedule, and achieving the intended objectives. (see IRC's Partner Feedback Guidance Note from IRC's PEERS system as an example). Local partner feedback is most effectively obtained by promoting a culture of open communication and making available a range of feedback channels. Partner feedback points should be included throughout the WGSS partnership cycle; for example, in review meetings, reporting formats, monitoring formats and through a partner survey at the close of each agreement. Several of these feedback points encourage mutual feedback between the international actor and the partner (in particular, review meetings and monitoring formats); others are focused specifically on partner feedback to the international GBV actor.

Key issues to consider

Considerations before engaging with partners on organizational development activities:

- **Commitment:** Has the partner organization communicated or demonstrated a commitment to change, improvement, and learning?
- **Strategic Role:** Does or could the partner organization play a strategic role in contributing to supporting women and girls through the process of empowerment? Would the organizational development support further enable the partner to assume more programmatic, operational, or donor responsibilities in the future?
- **Relationship:** Does the international actor have a partnership with the organization? Has a relationship of mutual trust and respect been established?
- **International actor's resources:** Does the international actor have organizational development funding and other resources within the scope of a funding award? Are financial resources budgeted as necessary, and are there conditions attached?

- **Other Resources:** What other resources exist? For example, a partner may have an ongoing grant with another organization that provides resources for capacity-strengthening. Where a partner works with organizations other than the international actor, the delivery of any support should be planned and coordinated for the benefit of the partner, based on analysis of which organization is best placed to provide the relevant support.
- **Existing Plan:** Does the organization already have an organizational development plan based on a recent capacity assessment? If so, can areas be identified where the international actor could fill capacity or resource gaps in accordance with the plan?
- **International actor capacity:** Does the international organization have the capacity, in terms of skills and time, to provide support that addresses the priorities of the partner, considering the nature and complexities of the priorities? If not, are there third parties (consultants or contractors) who could be engaged that have the required capacity?
- **Mutual Learning:** What potential is there for the international actor to learn and benefit by engaging more deeply with the local partner on its operational and programmatic functions?

If the International GBV actor does phase over the ownership of the WGSS program to a local women's organization [Tool 38: WGSS Partnership Project Closure Meeting Guidance Note](#) can help with the closure process.



7: TOOLS



TOOL 37: EXIT STRATEGY TOOLS

The following tool is a package consisting of three activities to support your planned exit from WGSS programming:

1. Planning Matrix - WGSS Exit Strategy Tool
2. Defining the Exit Strategy and Planning the Exit Activities
3. Developing and Implementing a Flexible Timeline

WHY USE THE EXIT STRATEGIES PACKAGE OF TOOLS ?

This package of tools helps organizations plan sustainable and empowering exit strategies. The key to a successful exit strategy is that it must be identified and prioritized by women and girls, and should aim to transfer responsibility during the implementation of the WGSS to a local women's network or organization.

WHEN TO USE THE EXIT STRATEGIES PACKAGE OF TOOLS¹?

If the WGSS program planned for a one-year implementation, the exit strategy should be strategized and developed within the first 6 to 9 weeks of implementation.

If the WGSS program planned for a five-year implementation, the exit strategy should be strategized and developed with the first 6 months to a year of program inception.

HOW TO USE THE EXIT STRATEGIES PACKAGE OF TOOLS?

- ✓ The overall question to answer when planning an exit strategy is: What outcomes from the program do we want to sustain after it has ended?
- ✓ Discuss this question with the stakeholders selected to participate in the discussion. The responses will inform the rest of your Exit Strategy planning process.

The team focal point (WGSS frontline staff, WGSS members, GBV senior manage, etc.) for the use of the tools should be decided through internal discussions and method of consensus. The level of Exit Strategy to be developed (i.e. program, community, district, consortium) will determine whom to include in the discussions.

¹ Adapted from: Gardner A., Greenblott K. and Joubert C., 2005. What We Know About Exit Strategies – Practical Guidance for Developing Exit Strategies in the Field. C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf>



1. PLANNING MATRIX - WGSS EXIT STRATEGY TOOL

With whom: WGSS staff and GBV senior managers should meet to answer the following questions. Consult with Forum members, GBV case management and prevention service providers, local women's organizations, relevant national institutions and community-based structures on question 1 and 2 of the table below. This can be done in a group meeting or in the form of a facilitated workshop.

After having discussed the questions, staff responsible for WGSS programming should develop their own unique strategy by answering all the questions provided in the planning matrix (below) and amend it accordingly based on activities 2 and 3 of the tools package.

ACTIVITY 1. PLANNING MATRIX TEMPLATE— WGSS EXIT STRATEGY TOOL

QUESTIONS:

1. In your context what is your wgss program's goal?
2. What parts of your program and which of its outcomes do you, women & adolescent girls want to sustain?

COMPONENT	KEY QUESTIONS	KEY CONSIDERATIONS	CHALLENGES
<p>1. Plan for Exit from the Earliest Stages of Program Design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will we “phase-down” our program? • Will we “phase out” activities or hand them off to a local actor? • What is the appropriate timeline? • How will we know we are on track for phase out? • What indicators or benchmarks will we use? How will we monitor them? • What are the specific action steps for each of the benchmarks? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility; consider the humanitarian response timeline, i.e. the needs of refugee or displaced women and adolescent girls or changes in displacement / settlement trends and whether located in dispersed and remote locations. • Ongoing program review and revision. • Transparent communication especially regarding program limitations and funding cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing firm commitments with flexibility as conditions change; sometimes planning is necessary although future funding is uncertain. • Allowing adequate time to develop capacity, while working within the program funding cycle. • Responding to changing needs of refugee, internally displaced women and adolescent girls as well as women and girls from host communities.

<p>2. Develop Partnerships and Local Linkages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With what types of organizations should we partner with? • What will our partners bring to the partnership? What can we offer? • How will the partnership prepare for exit? • How can the partnership help facilitate a successful exit? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider if other program inputs may be needed based on the different stages women and girls may be in their empowerment process. • Complementarity: consider all possible partners, build in coordination and referral as it is critical for GBV survivors, as well as women and girls requiring gender-specific services. • Clear and common goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning the needs and objectives of diverse stakeholders. • Supporting local partners without building dependency. • Increased numbers of “spaces” in areas; more time needed to identify, select and build partnerships.
<p>3. Build local organizational and human capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What capacities are needed? • What capacities already exist? • What indicators will we use to monitor progress in building these capacities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on existing capacity whenever possible, prioritizing partners with aligned vision and approaches over organizational capacity only. • Model appropriate organizational and individual behaviors which are gender-equitable based on using “power with” rather than “power over” approaches. • Create environments that support partnerships based on equality, complementarity, transparency, responsibility, and results-oriented action. • Monitor progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing a monitoring system to track capacity building. • Providing appropriate, non-exploitative incentives to volunteers. • Reducing staff turnover.

<p>4. Mobilize local and external resources as an Exit Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What inputs will we need to maintain services? • Who can provide these inputs? To what extent are they available locally? Externally? • Which benefits of the program can be sustained without continued inputs? • To what extent can the benefits be sustained without ongoing inputs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to progress toward sustainability, e.g. where communal income-generation opportunities are offered in the WGSS, encourage women to reinvest in purchasing materials for continued benefit of other women and girls. • Generate / procure resources locally through other community-based organizations. • Increasingly bring external resources under local control. • Advocate for long-term needs of women and girls to equally access skills development and opportunities to practice skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in finding adequate or available local resources. • Sources of other funding may not buy in to all the original program's objectives. • Resisting the tendency to cover a lack of sustainability by simply finding a new donor to fund inputs. • Sustaining program impacts among women and girls beyond the physical structure.
<p>5. Stagger phase out of various activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key elements of the program? • Which elements are dependent on others? • What are the key phases of the exit plan and timeline for the program components? • How will it be implemented? How will it be monitored? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility – the logical sequence for staggering phase out of various activities may change once activities have been implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enough time in program cycle to start seeing the impact of activities on women's and girls' decision-making and sense of empowerment. • Difficulty identifying program activities other than recreational activities which can be transitioned to in a staggered phase-out.

<p>6. Allow roles and relationships to evolve and continue after exit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of ongoing support would be most useful (e.g. coaching, mentorship, technical assistance)? • How will such ongoing support be funded when the project finishes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of preventing slippage of program results by re-entering if necessary, or establishing some form of remote support and assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of funding for ongoing support. • Availability of program staff who can focus enough time and energy on ongoing support in an area where a full program doesn't exist.
--	---	--	--



2. DEFINING THE EXIT STRATEGY AND PLANNING THE EXIT ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Now that you have completed the questions in the Planning Matrix (Activity 1) – developed in collaboration with relevant stakeholders – it's time to define and articulate your Exit Strategy.
- ✓ The following questions and activity table will assist you to frame your strategy, identify activities, assign responsibilities, draw up a timeline, select benchmarks and develop a monitoring plan.

With whom: This should be done internally by the WGSS program team and GBV senior management. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 should also be asked by engaging WGSS members. This can be done in a group meeting or in the form of a facilitated workshop.

The task: Given the timeframe / funding cycle of your specific program, answer the following questions in order to develop your Exit Strategy and to plan specific exit activities.

1. What should the strategy achieve? (What are the objectives?)
2. What Exit Strategy do you propose for this program or specific components of your program?
3. Does this resonate with what women have identified? What about adolescent girls?
4. What will be your overall criteria for exiting?
5. What exit activities (as different from program activities) need to be implemented to meet the exit criteria of the Exit Strategy and to achieve the objectives?

6. Specify who (identify partners, stakeholders - not necessarily a person's name) should do what type of exit activity and when.
 7. What are benchmarks for measuring the implementation and results of each exit activity?
 8. Decide who should monitor each benchmark and when to monitor them.
 9. Develop the budget for your Exit Strategy. Be sure to include the costs for each exit activity, and for monitoring.
- ✓ You should record your responses to the above questions. You may want to use a matrix, like the one below, for this exercise.

EXIT ACTIVITY/ ACTION IDENTIFIED	WHO WILL DO THIS?	WHEN IN THE PROJECT CYCLE WILL THIS BE DONE?	HOW WILL IT BE MONITORED?	WHO WILL DO THE MONITORING AND WHEN?	BUDGET: WHAT IS THE COST OF THIS ACTIVITY?
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					



3. DEVELOPING YOUR EXIT STRATEGY TIMELINE

- ✓ Having a flexible timeline will be key to the success of your Exit Strategy. Below is some guidance that will help you to establish a working draft of your timeline. Note the difference for a one-year vs. a five-year program.
- ✓ Consider plotting your Exit Strategy timeline alongside your program's implementation timeline. This will help you to see both holistically, and improve your ability to link various steps in your exit plan with those of your program implementation plan. For example, there may be a monitoring system already in place to collect information on certain programmatic indicators. This will save you the time and effort of setting up a separate monitoring system for your Exit Strategy.

Important Points To Remember For Your Timeline

- ✓ Has advocacy (i.e. for further donor support or government participation) been included as a component in your Exit Strategy? If yes, have partners been identified to participate in this effort?
- ✓ It is critical to share your Exit Strategy plan with your staff, as well as your partners and their staff.
- ✓ Early planning of an exit can help organizations transfer staff to other programs and assist others to find other work.
- ✓ Wherever possible, ensure that your local partner is supported to collect monitoring information. This will increase their capacity and ownership while gradually reducing your responsibility and resources.
- ✓ How will you maintain contact, and support phased-over activities after exit?

DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING THE FLEXIBLE EXIT STRATEGY TIMELINE

(1 YEAR PROGRAMS)

For a one-year program, it is critical to develop your Exit Strategy within six to nine weeks of your program's inception.

Implementation of Exit Strategy activities, including monitoring, should start as soon as the strategy is developed.

Conducting quarterly reviews of your progress and the results of your monitoring activities is advised. The review process, other learning and changes in the political and environmental context may inform necessary revisions of the Exit Strategy.

Conceptual strategy modifications may be warranted, however, more often, specific Exit Strategy activities and benchmarks will need adapting along the way. Modifications should be made and shared with stakeholders.

DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING THE FLEXIBLE EXIT STRATEGY TIMELINE

(5 YEAR PROGRAMS)

For a five-year recovery or development program, it is advised that you develop your exit strategy within six months to a year of your program's inception. In the first two years of the project, activities are implemented, steps for program exit and benchmarks continue to be identified and perhaps modified, and ongoing monitoring is conducted.

Quarterly reviews of progress and results of monitoring activities are recommended shortly after program start up. The quarterly reviews and the midterm evaluation, other learning and changes in the political and environmental context may inform ongoing adjustments and revisions of the Exit Strategy.

Over time, conceptual modifications may be warranted, particularly after the midterm evaluation. Specific exit strategy activities and benchmarks will also then need adapting. Any modifications in the strategy should be shared with stakeholders. During years three to five, the exit process is underway. Ideally, activities are progressively reduced while the donor or a non-implementing program team observes and assesses the phase over/out process to draw and apply the lessons learned to the ongoing exiting process.



TOOL 38:WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT CLOSURE MEETING

WHY USE WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT CLOSURE MEETING GUIDANCE NOTE¹?

This note sets out guidance for conducting Partnership Project Closure Meetings (PPCMs), an important and mandatory step in the partnership project cycle.

PPCMs bring together the WGSS service provider and partner program and operations staff to:

- Ensure that the partnership agreement is closed out responsibly;
- Review the outcomes of the partnership project;
- Capture learning from partnership project implementation; and
- Explore opportunities to continue to build the partnership beyond the partnership project, where appropriate.

WHEN TO USE WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT CLOSURE MEETING GUIDANCE NOTE?

The PPCM should take place 30 days prior to the partnership agreement's end date, to allow adequate time for completion of closure actions. The meeting's length will range from one to three hours, depending on the scope and complexity of the program and partnership agreement.

The PPCM should take place before the WGSS service providers' internal Grant Closing Meeting for its prime donor award.

HOW TO USE WGSS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT CLOSURE MEETING GUIDANCE NOTE?

Use the following to guide and structure the PPCM:

Participation

The partnership or technical lead generally convenes the PPCM. The WGSS service provider and partner program, grants, and finance focal points should participate, as well as supply chain and admin/HR focal points, where relevant. One staff member should take meeting minutes. The PPCM should take place at a mutually convenient time and location.

It is also valuable for senior management of both the WGSS service provider and partner organization to participate, at least for part of the meeting, to demonstrate commitment to the partnership, as well as to address any issues that may arise.

¹ Adapted from IRC's PEER (PARTNERSHIP EXCELLENCE FOR EQUALITY AND RESULTS SYSTEM).

Preparation

All WGSS service provider and partner meeting participants should be provided with the following documents in advance of the PPCM:

- Partnership agreement with proposal, budget, and work plan;
- Latest project (including report against monitoring framework) and financial reports;
- Latest partnership project and finance/compliance review and reflection (monitoring) reports;
- List of inventory and assets with disposal plan;
- Updated Partner Project Support Plan; and
- Updated Partner Project Tracker and Monitoring Schedule.

Where available, the following documents should also be provided:

- Project monitoring data and surveys;
- Organizational Development Plan;
- Client feedback;
- Audit reports.

Prior to the PPCM, WGSS service provider participants should meet to review the partnership project status and confirm the draft meeting agenda, identifying key issues to be addressed. The WGSS service provider should provide the draft agenda to the partner in advance, usually with the partnership project closure letter, inviting the partner to identify any other specific issues. The draft agenda should identify the WGSS service provider as the meeting chair, as well as the discussion leads for each agenda item from both partners.

Sample Meeting Agenda and Outcomes

The PPCM should include the following standard agenda items, in addition to any issues specific to the partnership project and context:

- **Project Review**

Summary overview of project progress and impact, including key challenges and successes. Review of project evaluation (where applicable). Summary of additional key information, including critical information from project monitoring data and surveys, coordination, needs assessment data, context analysis, and client feedback. Lessons learned from the project's successes and challenges are discussed and recorded to inform future implementation. Final phases of implementation plans are reviewed with necessary adjustments made and agreed.

- **Agreement Review**

Review partnership agreement requirements, policies, and regulations (donor/ grant / host country/ WGSS service provider) pertaining to the partnership project closure.

- **Inventory and Asset Plan**

Review relevant grant inventory regulations and finalize inventory disposal plan. Confirm whether plan requires donor approval.

- Budget Review

Review most recent financial report and spending projection. Identify key procurement, expense and liquidation deadlines. Revise and agree on spending plan in accordance with final implementation plan.

- Personnel

Discuss staff management plan for partner staff charged to the partnership agreement.

- Audit

Confirm the meeting of audit requirements met or arrangements for meeting audit requirements.

- Reporting

Confirm final program and financial reporting schedule. Discuss any feedback on recent reports.

- Key Document and Material Storage

Review retention requirements for program documents and materials.

- Organizational Capacity-Strengthening Plan

Where organizational development support is an element of the partnership, review progress against the Organizational Development Plan. Where the partnership agreement has supported the capacity-strengthening plan, consider follow-on opportunities and resources required.

- Partnership Project Closure Checklist

Review Closure Checklist to confirm all issues addressed.

- Partnership Project Tracker and Monitoring Schedule

Discuss any incomplete partnership project actions originating from the Partner's Project Capacity Review (Pre-Award Assessment), partnership project and finance/ compliance review and reflection (monitoring), partner audits, or previous partnership project review meetings. Decide on next steps.

- Transition Planning (where the partner is assuming full responsibility, independent of the IRC, following the partnership agreement)

Review progress, successes, and challenges against the transition plan. Consider any ongoing support needs (if any), and opportunities for resourcing.

- Future Planning

Discuss future plans and opportunities for the partnership, following the closure of this partnership agreement. Refer back to the broader strategic vision of the partners for the partnership – what comes next in that vision? What has changed in the context or the relationship to warrant an adjustment to that vision? If future funding is anticipated, what is the status and timeline? If funding gaps are anticipated, identify how to manage the gaps. Note lessons learned for incorporation in the new partnership agreement.

- Partnership Relationship

Discuss the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and successes of the partnership. Has the partnership adhered to the fundamental principles of equality, transparency, complementarity, responsibility, and a results-oriented approach? Discuss mutual WGSS service provider /partner feedback on performance in the partnership. Document lessons learned. Discuss future opportunities to build on the partnership, including upcoming funding opportunities (unless the partnership has already achieved its objectives or otherwise may not continue).

- Partnership Project Closure Certification (if relevant to organizations' processes)

Confirm that the WGSS service provider will provide a 'Certificate of Partnership Project Closure' confirming the completion of all reporting, payment, disposition and other required close out actions, as the final external step in the partnership project management process.

Managing Partner Meetings: General Guidance²

Partnerships rely - especially in the early phases - on people meeting each other either on a one-to-one basis or as a partner group. Meetings easily become repetitive, tedious and unproductive if they are not highly focused and well-managed. It is a skill to create a good meeting environment and to ensure that any meeting:

- Achieves its goals;
- Keeps all parties actively engaged throughout;
- Concludes all the items on the agenda;
- Allocates follow-up tasks and timetables for completion;
- Agrees on decision-making procedures that will operate between meetings;
- Alerts those present to issues to be addressed at a future meeting;
- Summarizes all decisions taken; and, above all,
- Ends at the pre-agreed time.

This comprehensive approach to meetings (whether formal or informal) will engender a sense that everyone's input is valued and their time constraints are respected. At their best, meetings will also be able to operate as a partnership-building tool – through the way in which responsibilities for managing the meeting, such as chairing / facilitating / record-keeping, are shared. Other ways of making meetings meaningful and lively include:

- Allowing opportunities for social interaction;
- Brainstorming a new and topical issue;
- Inviting a very interesting guest speaker;
- Sharing a relevant experience – perhaps a visit to a project or holding the meeting at the premises of a new partner organization and seeing their work at firsthand; and
- Using the meeting for enhancing learning, by ending with a review of what worked well and what could be improved in the way the participants interacted.

If attendance at partner meetings begins to drop off, it should be taken as a sign that the meetings are no longer engaging or important enough for partners to make the effort to come – changes are required.

2 This guidance is extracted in its entirety from The Partnering Initiative, 2011. The Partnering Toolbook. International Business Leaders Forum. <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolbook-en-20113.pdf>

After the PPCM

Within a week of the PPCM, the WGSS service provider should share draft meeting minutes (see the WGSS Partner Meeting Notes Template) with the partner for input. The WGSS service provider should then finalize and share the minutes with the partner meeting participants, including senior management, and file appropriately.

This PPCM should also inform the development of the Partnership Project Review Memorandum, an important step in the close-out process.