



United Nations Population Fund



ESTABLISHING WOMEN & GIRLS' SAFE SPACES

Training Manual - **Participants Guide**



Training Manual Participants Guide



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1. Introduction

The creation of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS) has emerged as a key strategy for the protection and empowerment of women and girls affected by the Syrian crisis. This Participant's Guide is designed as an accompaniment to support participation in a training on establishing and managing women and girls' safe spaces - as such, it is complementary to the Facilitator's Guide. The content of both guides is based on 'Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian Crisis', developed by the United Nations Population Fund, as well as international experience in establishing safe spaces and working with women and girls, including survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

This Training

This Participant's Guide is intended as a supporting document for individuals participating in training on how to establish or manage safe spaces for women and girls.

This training will support you to:

- Have a deeper understanding of the experiences of women and girls and how to respond to their needs;
- Understand the need for, and objectives of women and girls' safe spaces;
- Understand how to design, establish, monitor and evaluate women and girls' safe spaces in accordance with the guiding principles.

Participants in the training should have some prior experience working with women and girls, particularly in the fields of social work, case management, counseling, and related fields. Participants should also have some basic knowledge and/or experience of working with survivors of GBV. This training could also benefit managers and or supervisors of programmes with WGSS. Other skills and experience may be useful, including work with life-skills activities or economic and/or social empowerment programs for women and girls.

As a participant, you may not have all this experience or knowledge. The organizer or facilitator of the training may have shared with you a package of materials to prepare you for participation. If not, refer to Annex 1: Additional Materials. In particular, the online training included in the section on Gender-Based Violence may be useful in preparation for this training.

Since those managing and working in or around safe spaces should also be prepared to respond to likely disclosures of violence, and run the space in such a way that it will be supportive of those who have experienced violence, this training will also give basic information on GBV and core support to GBV survivors. However, it should be noted that this is not a comprehensive training on GBV, case management, counseling or psychosocial support; individuals wanting such training should seek additional support.

Methodology

This training follows methodologies that support adult learning - it is not designed as a series of lessons in which you will be taught information verbatim; rather it will allow you to bring your own experiences and learning, using this as the foundation for understanding. There are, therefore, no 'right' answers to give during exercises and discussions. The methodology is highly participatory; exercises and activities are intended to prompt questions and reflection, leading to shared learning. Participation is therefore about more than listening and repeating information; you are encouraged to think critically about information that is presented, and share your thoughts and questions with the group as the training progresses. It is also recommended that you spend a few minutes after each day of the training reviewing your own notes and reflections and noting any remaining questions that you might have for the next day.

How to Use This Guide

This Participant Guide is structured to follow the flow of the training. This introductory section gives overall information about women and girls' safe spaces and the training objectives and process.

Section 2 follows the sessions of the training itself, providing key information to ensure that you can follow discussions and exercises without needing to take notes of everything that happens during the session. It also provides space to take notes on your learning and remaining questions so that you effectively generate your own learning guide as you move through the training. The guide will remain a reference as you move into working in safe spaces.

Each session includes the following sections, marked by the relevant icon:



Learning Objectives: the intended outcome of each session is highlighted to allow you to follow the training process and manage your own learning.



Notes & Reflections: This space allows you to take notes on what you are learning and how this relates to your own experience. You can use it to note down key information that seems particularly relevant to you; however, keep in mind that much of the key information is already included in your guide, or if it has been presented on slides it will also be provided to you after the training.



Burning Questions: As the training is designed in such a way that each session builds on the last, there may be some questions or discussions prompted early in the training that are not discussed or answered until later sessions. While you should feel free to raise questions as they occur, you can also use this space to note them in order to ask later.



Key Messages: This icon highlights the key messages that you should keep in mind for each session. It serves as a reference for essential information.

Lastly, Section 3 contains annexes with complementary information to support your learning.

It is important to note that most sessions will begin with some kind of participatory activity, exercise, or reflection. The aim of such exercises is to encourage you to think, reflect and analyze, thereby allowing you to better absorb and understand the information; therefore, it is important to not use the Guide to give the answer to such questions or exercises. For example, the facilitator may ask you to reflect on the objectives of women and girls' safe spaces – while this information is included in your Guide so that you can continue to refer to it later, it is essential for this process to think of your own responses first and read the information in the Guide afterwards. Remember that there are no 'right' answers, and this process is about your own reflection and learning.

Keeping Yourself Safe and Well

While this training is not primarily focused on gender-based violence, discussion about GBV does form a significant part of the content. It is not easy to talk about violence or abuse, especially when you may have some kind of connection to someone who has experienced violence. It is important to think about how we look after ourselves and each other throughout this training, to make sure we maintain a safe learning environment.

This training is not about personal disclosures. If you want to give examples during the training, you may want to do so in the third person (e.g. 'I heard an example...', or 'I know someone who...') to keep yourself safe. If you feel uncomfortable during the training, you may need to step outside for a moment – that is fine. You are also encouraged to talk to your facilitator if you find things are becoming uncomfortable for you. If you need support for yourself or someone you know who has experienced violence, contact your supervisor or the facilitator of the training outside the training itself. They will help you find the support you may need.

Lastly, it can be difficult or uncomfortable to think about the way our society treats women and girls; for women, this is often because they have experienced it or know someone who has. For men, this can be because they are being pushed to question their own beliefs and behaviors. You are encouraged to engage in this learning process, and to help make an environment in which your colleagues can engage in it as well. You are an important agent for change in supporting women and girls and this training is designed to create a process within which you can learn to do that as well as possible.

2. Training Content

Session 1: Opening/Introduction & Safe spaces - Who, What, Why?



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:

- understand the objectives, structure and process of the training
- be able to articulate what women and girls' safe spaces are and why they are important

What are Women and Girls' Safe Spaces?

A safe space is a formal or informal place where women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe. The term 'safe,' in the present context, refers to the absence of trauma, excessive stress, violence (or fear of violence), or abuse². It is a space where women and girls, being the intended beneficiaries, feel comfortable and enjoy the freedom to express themselves without the fear of judgment or harm. The key objectives of a safe space are to provide an area where women and girls can:

- Socialize and re-build their social networks;
- Receive social support;
- Acquire contextually relevant skills;
- Access safe and non-stigmatizing multi-sectorial GBV response services (psychosocial, legal, medical);
- Receive information on issues relating to women's rights, health, and services³.

These spaces may take different names such as women centers, women community centers, or listening and counseling centers, to name a few. Women and girls' safe spaces are not the same as shelters or safe spaces at reception centers or one-stop centers. See Annex 2 for more information on the difference between WGSS and shelters, reception center safe spaces, and child friendly spaces.

Why Women and Girls' Safe Spaces?

In most societies, women have limited space to meet, and public spaces are often inhabited largely by men⁴. Traditionally, women's responsibilities include taking care of children, cooking, carrying out household chores, and generally looking after the family. While these roles may change during crisis, where women may find themselves working or becoming the breadwinner, they remain responsible for the household nevertheless.

"For many girls in the developing world, the opportunity to move freely in the community becomes limited at the onset of puberty."⁵ Parents often keep their daughters inside the house, protected from any contact with males. "This unofficial restriction on female mobility tends to persist throughout life. While not necessarily codified in a specific way, there are functional curfews for women in many parts of the world—be it in an urban park in a Western country, or in an impoverished community in the developing world"⁶.

In the Syrian context, women have become more isolated as a consequence of the crisis. Their mobility has been curbed significantly. Women and their family members reported having limited movement of women and girls outside the home due to fear of sexual violence, harassment, and indiscriminate attacks.⁷

Refugee women and girls reported that being strangers in host countries and perceived as using community resources to which they are not entitled, makes them particularly vulnerable. Further, they noted that women had to take on roles they had not played in Syria, such as working or going out to get aid. While freedom of mobility was somewhat limited for many women and girls prior to displacement, increased fear of sexual assault and harassment has placed even further restrictions on displaced women and girls⁸.

However, "evidence suggests that 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 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 and girls' social assets"⁹.

Men and boys also experience violence - in every context, but particularly in contexts of ongoing conflict. However, women and girls experience gender-based violence at a frequency and with a severity that far exceeds that experienced by men and boys. This is due to the lack of power and inferior status that most women and girls have to live with, which leaves them vulnerable to various types of violence. In addition, the restrictions on freedom of movement, decision-making, and lack of control over resources mean that women and girls very rarely have their own spaces, or areas where they can gather in the community.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Safe spaces are emotionally and physically safe places for women and girls
- WGSS allow women and girls to connect with others, receive information, guidance and support, access services, build social networks - and importantly they help to reduce vulnerability and risk for women and girls in crisis situations.
- They are especially important for women and girls because these groups experience particular vulnerabilities and violence, and often have reduced mobility and increased isolation compared to men and boys in general, and in an exacerbated way in crises.

Session 2: GBV Basics



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:

- Know what GBV is;
- Be able to cite various examples of GBV;
- Understand the root causes of GBV;
- Understand the consequences of GBV on women & girls, families, communities and perpetrators.

Definitions¹⁰

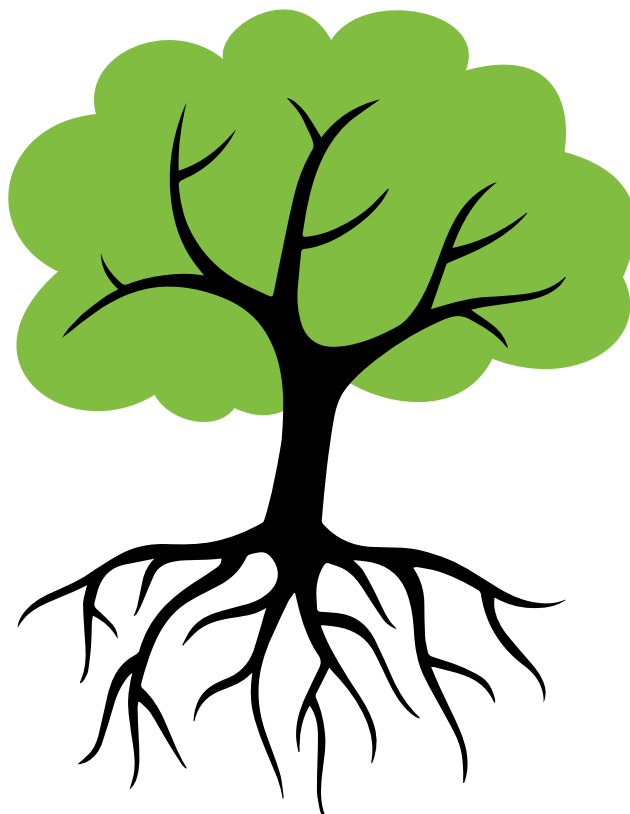
Sex: Refers to the biological and physical characteristics that define men and women. This includes reproductive systems (women have breasts and internal reproductive organs capable of gestating children, men have external reproductive organs, etc.).

Gender: Refers to the social differences between males and females that are learned. Though deeply rooted in every culture, social differences are changeable over time, and have wide variations both within and between cultures. "Gender" determines the roles, responsibilities, opportunities, privileges, expectations, and limitations for males and for females in any culture.

Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.

The Gender-Based Violence Tree

We can think of gender-based violence as a tree that has very broad and deep roots. The trunk and branches, the heart of the tree, represent the violence itself, the leaves represent the consequences of GBV, and the roots represent the causes (the deeper the roots go the more important the causes). You can also imagine rain around the tree, which represents the exacerbating or supporting factors, without which GBV would still exist but which help the tree to 'grow'. Note down some of the examples of these elements that you have brainstormed as a group.



Examples of Gender-Based Violence¹¹

Physical	Sexual	Emotional & Psychological	Socio-Economic
Hitting Punching Slapping Choking Cutting Shoving Shooting Murder Burning/setting clothes on fire Acid attacks Forced pregnancy or abortion ... or 'any other act that results in pain, discomfort or injury.'	Sexual advances and comments Requiring sexual acts in exchange for services (e.g. teachers, humanitarian workers) Sexual abuse (touching of genitalia or of a sexual nature) Rape Female genital mutilation/cutting Forcing someone to engage in prostitution Forcing someone to watch sexual acts Early & forced marriage Sexual slavery Sexual violence in detention ...or any other 'form of non-consensual sexual contact.'	Insults Verbal abuse Using children to control Threats of physical or sexual violence Intimidation Humiliation Forced isolation Stalking Harassment Unwanted attention, remarks, gestures or written words of a sexual and/or menacing nature Destruction of cherished things ...or any other 'mental or emotional pain or injury.'	Forcibly taking earnings Preventing use of contraceptives Controlling access to wages, food, shelter, clothing, health care, etc. Preventing girls from attending school Denying inheritance Preventing entry into public office or representative roles Restricting movement ...'denial of rightful access to economic resources/assets or livelihood opportunities, education, health or other social services.'

Consequences of Gender-Based Violence

Women & Girls	Families & Communities	Perpetrators
Physical consequences such as: bruises, open wounds, broken bones, internal injuries, permanent disabilities (up to and including death). Mental & Psychological consequences such as: depression, anxiety, panic disorders, sleeping disorders, flashbacks, low self-esteem, suicidal tendencies. Sexual and reproductive consequences: Sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancy, pregnancy complications, sexual dysfunction, miscarriage Behavioral Consequences: Alcohol and drug abuse, sexual risk-taking, self-harm. Economic & Social consequences: Stigma, social isolation, rejection, loss of wages/earnings.	Direct impact on children of experiencing abuse or witnessing abuse of their mother or siblings, as well as mother or siblings not being able to take care of children and household due to violence. Economic impact on family of losing survivor's ability to earn income and look after children.	Imprisonment, loss of social status. However, perpetrators also experience positive repercussions of using violence - it can create social status rather than taking status away, keeps them in control of their household, ensures their needs are prioritized (e.g. food and sexual relations whenever he chooses)



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females.
- GBV is widespread and pervasive, and covers many different forms including physical, sexual, emotional/psychological and socio-economic violence.
- GBV causes serious physical, sexual, psychological, behavioral, and socio-economic consequences, up to and including death.
- The main cause of GBV is inequality in power and status between men and women.

Session 3: Understanding the lives of women and girls



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:

- have a better understand of their own power and that of others
- feel an understanding with, and empathy for, the situation of women and girls

Power Walk

Who was your character?

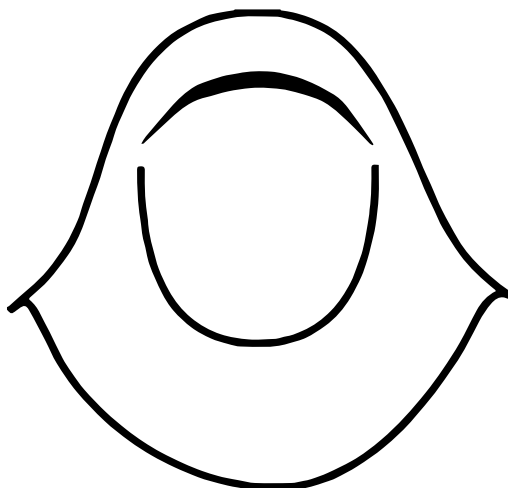
Did you advance or stay behind?

How did it feel?

How does this relate to your everyday life?

Asma

Asma is a woman living in the site or community where you live or work (you may have given her another name). As a group, you thought about all the messages and restrictions that Asma hears and understands from those around her, including family, friends, and community and religious leaders. Note here some of the items you brainstormed.



Put yourself in Asma place. How does the image make you feel?

What does it make you think you should keep in mind when working with women and girls?

It is important to remember that every woman and girl who comes to use safe spaces could be Asma - she could be a survivor of GBV, but even if she is not, she comes to safe spaces with a background and a lifetime of experiences of being a woman or girl in a world where her opportunities are limited and where she is expected to behave in a certain way - and punished if she does not. As safe spaces staff, it is important to respond to, and try to counteract, the negative messages that Asma and other women like her have experienced in their lives. When thinking about safe spaces and how to set up and manage them, keep Asma in mind, and do everything that you can to create more space and opportunity for her



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Women and girls experience discrimination, restrictions and violence that prevents them from advancing.
- It is essential to understand the experiences of women and girls in order to provide quality services and activities that respond to their needs and priorities.
- While not all women and girls have experienced GBV, it is the daily reality of many of the women and girls you will work with in safe spaces.

Session 4: Principles of Safe Spaces



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:

- Understand the guiding principles underpinning women and girls' safe spaces

Principles of Women and Girls' Safe Spaces

Leadership and empowerment of women and girls

- A safe space should be women and girl-led and offer an inclusive and empowering environment for them.
- Women and girls should be included in planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the space to ensure relevance and ownership.
- There should be regular exchanges with them about how the space is to be run and managed.
- Women and girls should decide the opening hours, as well as the types of activities.

Client/survivor centered

- The design of the safe space, the activities and services it offers, and the discussions it organizes should prioritize the safety and confidentiality of women and girls.
- Any case files, documentation of services, and client data kept at the center should be properly secured (in lockable cabinets, accessible only by those providing services).
- The center should be open to all women and girls, and their wishes, choices, rights, and dignity should be respected.
- They should be provided with information about available services and options.
- Staff should be extensively trained on the principle of non-discrimination.

Safe and accessible

- The safe space should be located in an area that is conveniently accessible to women and girls, and assures safety and privacy.
- The decision on where to locate the safe space should be led by women and girls.
- Accessibility should also consider timings and days that work best for them.
- If possible, consideration must be made to support the transportation costs to and from the space.
- A safe space should also take into consideration the special needs of women and girls living with mental or physical disabilities in terms of accessing centers. It can be useful to hold special discussions with these women and girls (and their caregivers) to determine what considerations are important to ensure their access.
- A code of conduct should be adopted – and all staff should be trained on it (see Annex 3).

Community involvement

- While the safe space should be a space designed for and run by women and girls, its sustainability will require the input and support of many stakeholders.
- Husbands, parents, and community leaders have a lot of influence over the ability of women and girls to participate in programmes, so it is essential to understand their perspectives while setting up a safe space, and to mobilize community support for the WGSS so that women and girls are able to safely participate in all activities.
- Safe spaces should not be isolated units, but an extension of broader community life.
- Engaging men and boys to ensure they understand the purpose, location and benefits of the safe spaces will enable the participation of a larger number of women and girls.
- Consider the community and their perception of the safe space in deciding what you will call it and how you will talk about it. Even if your safe space provides GBV services, for example, you may choose to describe it in a way that will be more accepted by the community.

Coordinated and multi-sectoral

- The safe space should take into consideration the varying needs and experiences of women and girls.
- It should deliver services and activities that respond to the life cycle of girls and women, including issues related to GBV prevention and response.

- Activities and services should be decided with women and girls. The range of possible activities is rather vast and should be decided with the involvement of women and girls, and according to the specific situation.
- In some cases, a center may host a range of services from sexual and reproductive health, to psychosocial support, to legal services; at other times, some of these services will be available elsewhere (remembering that psychosocial support and related services should only be provided by staff with the relevant expertise and training).
- A clear internal and external referral system should be in place and staff and volunteers should be able to activate it safely and confidentially.
- It would be useful to be part of the wider GBV coordination network and standard operating procedure process.
- Integrating the safe space into other community systems can allow activities for women and girls to proceed with less scrutiny and more safety. This is also the case for GBV services – if they are provided within safe spaces that also house other activities for women and girls, they can be safer, more confidential and less stigmatizing.

Tailored

- A safe space should be inviting enough for women and girls to feel welcomed and engaged.
- Maintain balance between structured activities, services, and times to socialize.
- Activities and approaches need to be culturally and age appropriate as the needs and interests of a -16year-old girl are bound to be different from those of a -35year-old woman. This is one of the key reasons why activities should be decided together with women and girls.
- A safe space should also take into consideration the special needs of women and girls living with mental or physical disabilities. It can be useful to hold special discussions with these women and girls (and their caregivers) to determine the kinds of activities and services they need.

Reflect on the principles you have discussed in this session, and think about how each of these principles could be applied in practice when working with women and girls' safe spaces.

Leadership and Empowerment of Women and Girls:

Client/Survivor-centered:

Safe and Accessible:

Community Involvement:

Coordinated and Multi-Sectoral:

Tailored:



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Safe spaces should foster and encourage the leadership and empowerment of women and girls, they should be women- and girl-centered, tailored to the needs of different groups, safe and accessible, connected and coordinated with other services and owned/accepted/supported by the community
- These principles are not arbitrary - they have been developed from experiences working with women and girls, and are designed to respond to the things they see, hear, and experience in the rest of their lives.
- Safe spaces often serve as entry points to specialized GBV services - either housed within the center, if staff have the capacity and training, or elsewhere - which can help to reduce stigmatization for survivors of GBV seeking support. Attention should be paid to how safe spaces are described and presented in the community to ensure acceptance and ownership.

Session 5: Initial Assessment before Establishing a WGSS



- Learning Objective:** By the end of the session, participants will:
- have stronger knowledge of the kinds of information needed to establish and run safe spaces
 - understand the challenges involved in undertaking initial assessments before establishing a WGSS

Initial Assessment Scenario Exercise

Zinta refugee/IDP camp, home to over 300,000 refugees, was established here in Azar more than two years ago in order to respond to the influx of refugees from Taria, who are fleeing ongoing violence and destruction. Most Tarian refugees living in Zinta camp have been there for many months, some for up to two years; however, a new wave of people has just arrived due to escalating violence in Taria. Your organization, Unite, has a mission to promote, protect and empower women and girls in conflict settings and you are here to conduct an assessment to determine whether Women and Girls Safe Spaces should be established in this setting.

Use the outline below to note down information you collect during your assessment. Use the map of Zinta camp on the following page to note any locations that seem, from the information you gather, to be particularly safe or unsafe for women and girls in this camp, as well as any potential locations for safe spaces activities.

Initial Assessment Outline

In your assessment, you should gather the following kinds of information that will inform your decision-making of where, when and how to establish a WGSS:

Safety & security - What are the risks for women and girls and how can they be addressed? Are there groups of women and girls who are particularly vulnerable?

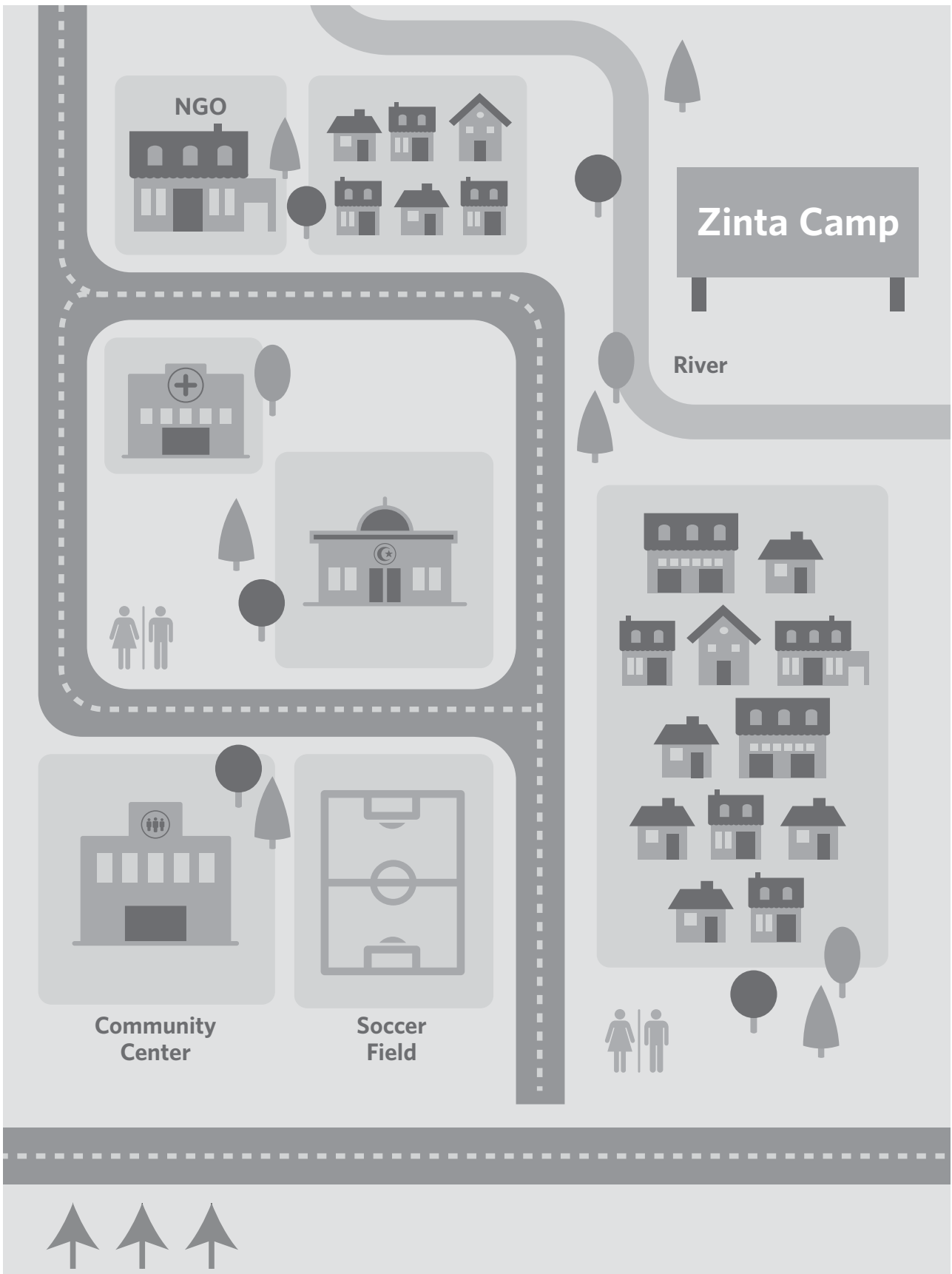
Location - What structures are already available? Are they inside or outside? Are they safe and private?

Time - What times are most convenient and safest for women and girls? What time are the structures/spaces available? Do women and girls want to do activities together or separately?

Activities and services - What kinds of things do women and girls want to do in safe spaces? What kinds of things did they do before the crisis? Who are the marginalized groups, and how can you reach and engage them? Are there specialized services available for survivors of GBV and how does the referral pathway work?

Partnership - How can you work with other services? Can you work with local community organizations or other NGOs?

Map of Zinta Camp



Reflection Questions

What did you find out about safety? Was it easy to find a location that was safe for women and girls?

Did you find contradictory information? If yes, how did you prioritize the voices of women and girls in what you found out?

Who was missing from your assessment? Who did you not hear from and how could you change that?

When conducting initial assessments, keep in mind the following elements:

- Any assessments should follow the principles of safe spaces, in particular being women- and girl-centered, empowering and safe. Women (and girls, if safe) should be consulted on all issues in your assessment. Keep in mind that in some contexts, women or girls speaking individually or in groups to outsiders may put them at risk - make sure that you plan your assessment in ways that will not create danger for women and girls.
- Pay attention to the **safety of adolescent girls**, who may face particular risks if involved in information-gathering exercises. As a general rule, you should not ask girls younger than 14 to participate in assessments, unless you have specialized training and targeted safeguards in place (but do gather information about the risks and priorities of these groups through older girls, women and community members). Girls between 15 and 18 years old can be involved in assessments; however, it is recommended to include them in focus groups rather than individual interviews, and it is essential to get consent from their parents or guardians to do so, and ensure the safety of the girls.
- Do not create expectations that you will not be able to fulfill. Do not promise activities or services if you are not sure you can provide them. You should collect only information you will use, not just information that might be interesting. Make sure the time of women, girls and other community members is contributing to something useful. Initial assessments will not give you all the information you will ever need to run safe spaces. Rather, they will provide an initial foundation of safety, security and set-up that you can further develop with women and girls once safe spaces are established.

In initial assessments before establishing a WGSS, you are looking for the following information.

Safety and security

- The risks for women and girls in the community
- The support systems that already exist (or existed previously)
- Particularly vulnerable groups (e.g. women and girls with disabilities, women and girls engaged in transactional sex)
- Any risks that setting up a safe space would entail for women and girls, and how to mitigate them

Location

- Structures or spaces that already exist and could possibly be used for safe spaces (community centers, health centers, school rooms, mosques, someone's home, outside spaces, etc.) - as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each (see Annex 5 for more information).
- If there is a need to build a new structure and how/where this could be done

- The safety of potential locations for women and girls, including physical safety in the structure itself as well as proximity to other locations that may be safe or unsafe (e.g. locations where men congregate, locations that are unsafe at certain times of day, etc.).
- If it is an existing space, whether it is used by others and whether time can be made exclusively for women and girls (e.g. is it a center used mostly by men where women or girls will feel uncomfortable or unsafe going)

Set-up

- Accessibility for women and girls with disabilities – for example, ramps for those using wheelchairs. (For more information, see the GBV and Disability Toolkit in Annex 1 – Additional Resources.)
- The presence of multiple spaces to be used for different things, including:
 - Activities space for a minimum of 20 people
 - A private room for provision of case management and individual counseling services (if those will be available at your safe space);
 - A day care area for children accompanying mothers
- If outside, a privacy fence or wall (discuss with women and girls how enclosed the space should be) and enough shaded space for comfortable outdoor activities
- While these questions should be part of the initial assessment in terms of finding potential spaces, the exact set-up of the space will likely require more discussion with women and girls, including those with disabilities (and their caregivers).

Time

- When women are available
- When girls are available
- Times that are safe/unsafe for women and girls to travel and congregate
- Opening hours should be decided on with the participation of women and girls

Activities and services

- Activities that women are used to doing/want to do
- Activities that girls are used to doing/want to do
- How comfortable different groups of women and girls feel doing activities with other groups (e.g. girls with women, married girls with unmarried girls, women/girls with disabilities with other women/girls, different religious or cultural groups, etc.)
- If you are considering conducting economic empowerment activities, the assessment should include a market survey - however, it is recommended that this kind of activity be introduced in later phases, once safe spaces are established and functioning. Such assessments and activities also require specialized skills and expertise.
- The services available for survivors of GBV, and how women and girls access them

Partnerships

- Key stakeholders that need to be involved in setting up safe spaces (local groups, government bodies, community or religious leaders, women's groups, existing NGOs, potential partners, etc.)
- The best model to use in setting up safe spaces - i.e. whether it needs to be a formal safe space established by an external NGO, or a less formal space established through a local women's organization, etc.
- Existing services (e.g. GBV case management and support, primary and reproductive health care, organizations supporting people with disabilities, etc.)

See Annex 6 for sample tools for this kind of initial assessment.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Ensure that the principles of safe spaces are in place from the very beginning of any assessment - in particular, initial assessments should be conducted, by, with and for women and girls.
- Keep a strong focus on safety and security of women and girls throughout assessments.
- Collect information that will be useful in the initial stages of setting up safe spaces.

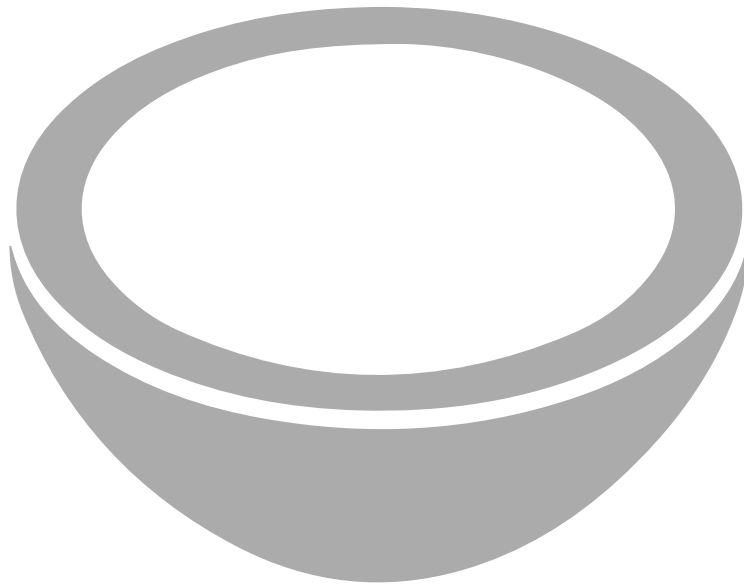
Session 6: Activities and services



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:

- understand the kind of information that is needed to decide and plan on safe spaces activities and services
- have practiced using women- and girl-centered methods to plan safe spaces activities

You can think of safe spaces as a bowl that can contain many different things¹² - the bowl is essential, and it needs to be strong (hence the principles and importance of establishing the safe spaces in a women-centered way), but every bowl can contain different things, just as a variety of different activities and services can be provided in women and girls' safe spaces, depending on the context, the participants, etc.



Imagine that this is your safe spaces bowl. The use of the principles you have learned keeps this bowl strong and allows you to fill it with activities and services that are needed or desired in your context.

Focus Group Discussion Practice

You have just spent time practicing how to work with women and girls to identify the kinds of activities and services they need, want or would benefit from in safe spaces.

How difficult was it to run a focus group discussion?

What was challenging? Would do you want to focus on next time?

Activities and Services

While activities and services will vary depending on location, context, participants, budget and other considerations, there are some broad categories that can provide guidance and ideas:

Support to GBV survivors

(this element requires additional expertise and should only be provided by teams that have received specialized training - this will be further discussed in the next session) depending on the activity and service, this can take place in a Women and Girls Safe Space or through outreach activities in the community.

Prevention, risk mitigation and women and girls empowerment activities

All activities should be customized according to the specific needs of women and girls. They can be arranged, both within and outside the safe space. When arranging such activities, it is important to emphasize working with women and girls, and with the community as a whole, to promote a safer environment, and to encourage community ownership of GBV prevention and risk reduction.

Activities can include the following:

Psychosocial and Recreational Activities, be they formal support groups or recreational:

- **Age-appropriate support group sessions** around a 'center-piece,' which can include coffee/tea sessions, make-up, hairdressing, sewing activities, and henna application. Appropriate and desirable 'center-pieces' should be identified during group-based consultations with women and girls in the targeted communities. Such activities require the leadership of professional psychosocial staff;
- **Recreational activities** led by women and girls in the community, with resources procured by the organization. Sewing, make-up, hair dressing, computer literacy, language, crochet, painting, drawing, theater performances are all examples of activities carried out in the Syrian crisis region;

Structured vocational trainings in classes that begin and end in cycles. If possible, certificates should be awarded to participants upon completion of the training. These activities require additional training and expertise and should be discussed with management.

Life skills training, both formal and informal, that support the development of abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life, such as for example sessions on self-management or effective communication. The training should be customized and age appropriate;

Livelihood activities These activities should be carefully developed and generally require additional training and expertise. If income-generating activities are not based on careful market analysis, they will not generate income. Yet, they can still be an important psychosocial support for women and girls;

Information and awareness-raising

- Safe spaces can be a useful entry point for important information for women and girls, including on GBV, hygiene, health, nutrition, women's rights, child feeding practices, positive coping strategies, life skills, etc.
- This kind of activity can range from informal (inviting someone to share information with the group) to formal (developed curricula delivered over several sessions).
- The kinds of information session should be decided with women and girls, in such a way that it does not put them at risk (for example, in some contexts, if parents or male relatives found out that information about reproductive health was being shared with girls or women, it may be dangerous).
- Make sure that these sessions do not compromise the integrity of the safe space - for example, bringing male experts into the space may in some circumstances go against the principles of empowerment of women and can compromise the safety of women participants.
- Make sure the focus remains on creating a supportive, engaging, empowering space for women and girls, and does not shift to simply sharing information. Women and girls are often not used to having a space for themselves, or spending time doing things that they like, so this may be hard for them at the beginning. It is important to continue to emphasize the importance of being together and supporting each other, even without structured sessions.

Safety audits, mapping and groups

- Regular safety audits to assess security risks for women and girls, and to identify opportunities with other sectors to mitigate those risks. Safety audits should be coordinated through the GBV coordination mechanisms, where feasible and safe to do so. Findings from safety audits should be shared with other relevant sectors, such as Shelter, CCCM, and WASH, and with camp managers/leaders so that they can ensure that the location and any programmatic approaches being implemented therein, are safe for women and girls.
- The involvement of women and girls from within the community to conduct safety mapping is strongly recommended.

Outreach activities These activities offer opportunities to access women and girls whose movement may be restricted in some way. Building upon existing women groups and support networks within the communities is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of outreach activities. These initiatives can include:

- Home visits and home-based tea/coffee sessions to inform community members about activities and services. In this context, it is essential for the outreach teams to be fully aware of issues of privacy and confidentiality, and of the referral system;
- Engagement with community structures, religious and community leaders. Such outreach work should include working with men and boys in the community to prevent GBV and to empower women and girls;
- Development of more informal safe spaces around the main physical safe space. These can take the form of women groups that meet regularly, and are supported to carry out activities outside of the main center.

When considering the kinds of activities you will implement, keep in mind the following elements:

Engagement of women and girls: all activities should be decided together with women and girls so they reflect their needs and priorities, and are appropriate to the ages of participants and the context.

Safety: Activities should not pose additional risk for women and girls. Work with them to make sure this is the case, and to mitigate any risks of their participation where necessary.

Diversity: activities should reflect the different needs and comfort levels of women and girls of different ages, abilities, marital status, religious cultural backgrounds, interests and skills. Some women or girls may want to do different activities from those of different ages or life stages - however, in other cases women and girls enjoy the opportunity to interact with and learn from others.

Progressive implementation: Start with basic activities and progress to others once the safe spaces are functioning well. Starting with all potential activities at once can overwhelm staff and lead to the failure of safe spaces.

Structure: Try to have a balance of structured and unstructured time for women and girls. Women and girls are often not used to having a space for themselves, or spending time doing things that they like, so this may be hard for them at the beginning.

Enabling Participation: Things like child care, and transportation to and from the center, are important considerations to increase access for women with young children. Services can be provided by volunteer or incentive staff. At a minimum, provide space and toys for children to play with and be mindful of women's child-care responsibilities when planning activities.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Activities and services should be set up in such a way that they do not pose additional risks for women and girls.
- Women and girls should be engaged in decisions about the kinds of activities to develop and offer.
- Whether or not the safe space offers specialized services will depend on capacity and training. However, referrals to such services should always be available, if those services exist.
- Different groups of women and girls (different ages, marital status, cultural background, etc.) may want to have different activities and times, or may prefer to combine. This should be discussed and decided with women and girls.
- Ensure accessibility (e.g. for women and girls with disabilities) and address issues that may affect participant such as child care and transport.

Session 7: Supporting GBV survivors



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will understand how to manage disclosures of violence from participants.

While not all women and girls who come to safe spaces will have experienced GBV, you can safely assume that many will, and you need to be ready to respond to their needs.

This is not a training on how to provide case management, counseling or individual, targeted psychosocial support to survivors of GBV - while that is one activity that can occur in safe spaces, it requires specialized, in-depth training and should not be attempted by those who have not been trained, as even well-intentioned efforts without the right skills and knowledge can do significant harm.

However, disclosure will likely occur at some point during safe spaces activities, so this section of the training talks about how to handle disclosure and behave towards survivors in a way that will support their recovery and not do further harm;

Given that many participants in safe spaces may have experienced violence, even if they do not disclose it, this session will discuss how to conduct all safe spaces in ways that are supportive and non-judgmental.

Survivor-Centered Approach

A survivor-centered approach to GBV seeks to empower the survivor by putting her in the center of the helping process. A survivor-centered approach embraces each individual survivor's physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual aspects. This approach also considers a survivor's cultural and social history as well as what is happening in her life that could support and facilitate recovery. GBV is a manifestation of power inequalities and limited choices. If service providers—who are always placed in a powerful position relative to the survivor—impose their perspectives, opinions or preferences on the survivor, they may unintentionally create another experience where the survivor feels even further disempowered or abused. The survivor-centered approach recognizes that:

- Each person is unique
- Each person reacts differently to GBV and will have different needs as a result
- Each person has different strengths, resources and coping mechanisms
- Each person has the right to decide who should know about what has happened to them and what should happen next

Know what resources are available, including health, psychosocial services and legal services, if applicable. Refer to the Standardized Operating Procedures in force in your location if available, know how to access services and support the survivor to do so - for some, this will mean referring to other staff within your safe space, while for others it will mean external referrals to other existing services. It is not your role to provide counseling (unless you have specialized training to do so and can provide this support in a safe, confidential and sustained manner outside of the training).

It is also essential to follow the guiding principles of support to survivors of GBV.

Guiding Principle #1: Safety

The safety and security of the survivor and others, such as her children and people who have assisted her, must be the number one priority for all actors. Individuals who disclose an incident of gender-based violence or a history of abuse are often at high risk of further violence from the perpetrator(s) or from others around them.

Guiding Principle #2: Confidentiality

Confidentiality reflects the belief that people have the right to choose to whom they will, or will not, tell their story. Maintaining confidentiality means not disclosing any information at any time to any party without the informed consent of the person concerned. Confidentiality promotes safety, trust and empowerment.

Guiding Principle #3: Respect

All actions taken will be guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights, and dignity of the survivor.

Guiding Principle #4: Non-Discrimination

Survivors of violence should receive equal and fair treatment regardless of their age, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic.

The way we interact and communicate with survivors is also important, and can help us to put the above principles into practice. Many women may feel guilty or ashamed about or blame themselves for the violence they have experienced. Such feelings make it especially difficult for them to talk about what has happened. Effective and compassionate communication is integral to survivor-centered care and has the additional function of supporting psychological healing from related trauma.

Here are some key considerations¹³ in working with survivors:

Help the Survivor Feel Safe

If the disclosure has happened in a group setting, ask if she wants to speak with you privately. Make sure you meet in a safe, confidential place, and that other group members who may have heard the disclosure are reminded of the principle of confidentiality that they have agreed to.

Be Reassuring, Comforting and Supportive

Do not rush her, overwhelm her with questions or force her to tell you details. Remember that this may be the first time she has talked about her experience. Most women do not disclose their experiences of violence to service providers because of fear, shame and stigma. Survivors often feel guilty for the violence they experience (remember Asma and the messages she hears from those around her). They need reassurance that what they have experienced is not their fault. GBV is never the fault of the survivor, no matter what she wears, does, or says, or where she goes. Violence is always the responsibility of the perpetrator. Survivors rarely lie about GBV experiences, and in any case it is not your role as someone working in safe spaces to determine the facts of what happened to the survivors. What she needs is someone to believe and validate her. It is also important to validate the survivor's choice of disclosing violence to you. You can do all this with the following simple phrases, known as 'healing phrases':

- I am sorry this happened to you/I am sorry you are going through this
- I am glad that you told me/thank you for sharing that with me
- You are very brave for telling me this
- It is not your fault
- I will help you get the support you need

Do NO harm - Be Careful Not to Traumatize the Survivor Further

Remember that it is not your role to get all the information about what happened, or to provide counselling, unless you are a specialist psychosocial support staff. Your role is to listen to what the survivor wants to tell you in a supportive way, and ensure she receives the support she needs. Do not push the survivor to tell more of her story than she wants to share, or to give graphic details. Do not get angry or frustrated with her. Above all, do not 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.

Respect Survivor's Thoughts, Beliefs and Opinions

Help the survivor to regain control of her experience. She should be able to speak when she wants, and remain silent when she wants. A survivor's power has often been taken away by her experience, so you need to help her to regain it. Do not make decisions for her. If you believe she should seek formal psychosocial support, but she doesn't want to go, help her to explore what the advantages and disadvantages might be (and how you could help her to overcome the disadvantages), but do not force her to do something she does not want to do. Survivors are the only ones who fully understand their own experience and situation, and she may have reasons for not wanting to access certain services that she cannot explain to you - for example, perhaps one of the staff in the health center is related to her family and will tell them that she has been there seeking services. It may also take some time for survivors to feel comfortable seeking formal services - do not get frustrated or angry with her choices or any perceived delay.

Communicate Effectively

1. Pay attention

- Give the survivor your undivided attention. Recognize that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly.
- Look at the survivor directly.
- Put aside distracting thoughts.
- Try not to mentally prepare what you want to say because it will take your focus away from listening.
- Avoid being distracted by environmental factors. For example, side conversations.
- "Listen" to the survivor's body language and tone of voice.

2. Show that you are listening

- Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting. You should sit squarely with the survivor and make sure you are at the same level. Remain open and relaxed and lean in towards her.
- You should try not to have a desk or table between you and the survivor. Do not sit directly opposite from each other as it may make her feel trapped and under scrutiny. The best seating arrangement is to kitty-corner to each other. With this set-up the space in front of her is free, it's easy to look at each other, and she can also look away if she is finding it hard to look at you while she's talking.
- Use other facial expressions to express your concern.
- Nod your head or use facial expression or gestures to encourage the person to say more or to let them know you understand.
- Note your tone of voice and make sure that it doesn't sound angry, frustrated, or surprise. You want your tone of voice to remain as even as possible without sounding emotion less.
- Encourage the survivor to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and uh-huh.
- Don't interrupt.

3. Use appropriate language

Use language that the survivor can understand. Speak in simple terms, and avoid jargon. If the survivor is a child, make sure you adapt your language to a level that you would normally use with children of that age. For example, instead of telling a survivor that there are psychosocial support staff in the camp that you can refer them to, you might say 'there are people in the camp you can talk to who can help you'.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- All interactions with survivors should operate on a principle of survivor-centered support, empowering her to make decisions and take back her agency.
- Respect the guiding principles of safety, confidentiality, respect and non-discrimination.
- Keep in mind the kind of interaction and communication survivors need to feel supported and safe.

Session 8: Supporting GBV survivors - Practice



Learning Objective: By the end of this session, participants will feel more comfortable communicating with women who have experienced violence.

Role Play Practice

How did the exercise make you feel?

What was challenging about the experience?

It can be very difficult to listen to a survivor's experience, especially when you have your own emotions or experiences to manage. You are not expected to be perfect at this. At this stage of the training you should make sure to take care of yourself, stepping out of the room if you need to and ensuring you have some time to stop and reflect if the exercise was difficult for you.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Show respect and do not judge anyone disclosing violence
- Show compassion and empathy, do not force or rush
- Allow the survivors to lead the process - what does she want to happen? She needs to be supported to take her power and agency back.
- Pay attention to your communication and body language.
- Remember that it is not your role to provide counselling or specialized psychosocial support - make sure you refer to the relevant services within or outside of your safe space.
- Since you will not always know if a woman or girl has experienced violence, these recommendations are valid for all women and girls participating in safe spaces.

Session 9: Scheduling



Learning Objective: By the end of the sessions, participants will understand how to work with women and girls to schedule safe spaces activities in a safe and participatory way.

Scheduling Activity

Activity ¹⁴	Midnight to Sunrise	Sunrise to Mid-morning	Mid-morning to Noon	Noon to mid-afternoon	Mid-afternoon to sunset	Sunset to late evening	Late evening to midnight
School-related activities							
In school							
In transit from/to school							
Doing Homework							
Personal care							
House chores							
Child care							
Domestic duties outside							
Employment							
Socialization							
Sleep and rest							
Other (fill depending on context)							

What did you notice about the days of women and girls?

How easy was it to find a time when women and/or girls are free and safe to travel?



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Participation of women and girls is essential in choosing not only the activities in safe spaces but also the timing.
- Safety of women and girls is a key element in determining safe spaces schedules.
- The availability of the chosen space will also have an impact on scheduling.

Session 10: Resources



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will understand the kinds of physical, financial and human resources needed to establish and run WGSS, have resources to manage their own stress and that of their WGSS staff

What kind of resources do you think would be needed to establish and run a women and girls' safe space?

Equipment & Furniture

Materials

Space

Staff

Other

The equipment and budget needed for your safe space will vary considerably depending on the context, wages (or volunteer stipend guidelines), materials costs, etc. However, you should make sure you budget enough for the key elements such as:

- Furniture, such as desk and chairs, stationary equipment and, if possible, a computer for administrative tasks, cushions, rugs, floor mats, etc.;
- Lockable cabinets;
- Staff for activities, services and management of the safe space;

- Child care staff or volunteers
- Toys or books for children;
- Cleaning staff and supplies;
- Full-time guards if needed;
- Transportation to and from the safe space, if possible;
- Funds for referrals, if needed (e.g. health consultation costs);
- Drinks or snacks, if needed.

Additional materials will be needed depending on the kinds of activities decided for your safe space. Of course, women and girls should be consulted in any decisions about the equipment and materials required.

Staffing

Staffing will depend on a few factors, including how many women and girls you are going to serve and what kinds of activities you will have in your safe space; however, certain roles are common and necessary.



A possible combination of staff and their roles is outlined below. All staff should understand the code of conduct and sign it.

Center manager

- Provide overall supervision of and support to staff;
- Represent the WGSS;
- Liaise with Project Coordinator and/or Assistant Project Coordinator;
- Consolidate monthly reports;
- Coordinate all monitoring and evaluation activities related to the WGSS and ensure data quality; and
- Coordinate with other relevant sectors, as needed.

Case manager(s)/Social worker(s)/Psychologist

- Case management services;
- Referral to any other service (health, specialized PSS, legal, etc.), when requested by survivor;
- Provision of one-on-one counseling services (by technically trained staff);
- Accompaniment to support services, police, or family as requested by survivor;
- Safety planning services; and
- Participation in outreach services.

Response officer(s)/Psychosocial worker(s)

- Emotional support groups and activities;
- Peer support groups;
- Life skills;
- Refer clients to case workers, as relevant; and
- Participate in outreach services.

Prevention officer/Community mobilizer

- Conduct safety audits; follow-up with other relevant sectors;
- Conduct safety mapping with women and girls;
- Support volunteer outreach team;
- Hold GBV information and awareness sessions through activities; and
- Establish and support community-based safety groups, as needed.

A peer-based outreach team (volunteer or incentive-based workers)

- Decide the size of the outreach team according to the size and geographical scope of the community. The outreach team should be of mix gender and age (younger adolescent and older adolescent girls, and adult women). Since the outreach team is volunteer-based, its responsibilities should not conflict with any other home-or income-based responsibilities;
- Conduct home-based information sessions/activities for those who cannot come to the center;
- Raise awareness among women and girls in the community about the WGSS and its available services and activities;
- Link staff with women and girls in the communities; and
- Build relationships with other community groups.

Activity volunteer or child minder

- Guide recreational activities; and
- Organize activities for children

Center Upkeep/Support Staff

- 24 - hour guards; and
- 1 - 2 cleaners to support with coffee/tea sessions or other large events

Staffing Considerations

Consider **paid staff and volunteer staff**, depending on your budget availability. However, be careful to avoid exploitation of volunteer staff or undervaluing their skills and abilities. The roles and tasks that women normally perform are often undervalued and underpaid, and we want to avoid duplicating that dynamic. Therefore, it is important to think about incentives for volunteer workers such as stipends, in-kind support (for example clothing, household items), and/or capacity building.

Consider **diversity** of staff in terms of origin, religious or cultural affiliation, and inclusion of those with disabilities. Some women and girls in safe spaces may prefer that staff come from their own community, while others feel more comfortable and confidential when staff come from other communities. Inclusion of women and girls in this decision-making process is key.

Prioritize the hiring of **female staff**. Some male staff may be included, for example as outreach workers, or when this can be strategic in terms of engagement with leadership structures or police. However, it is important to make sure that women are not excluded from these roles - it can be helpful to have a man and a woman working together so that women are empowered to take on roles that would otherwise not be available to them, as well as to model to the community the principle of women's engagement and leadership.

A comprehensive **capacity-building programme** with provisions for coaching, mentoring, and regular supervision should be developed to achieve this objective. This training should include, at a minimum, the basics of GBV, communication skills, referral pathways, and ways to organize group activities; prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. If you are going to have specialized psychosocial support or case management, remember that case managers and response officers will need much more in-depth training and constant supervision;

Consider having some **specialized staff or volunteers for particular activities**, and general supervisors and/or managers who oversee the overall operation, providing support and mentoring to others.

Provide resources such as training guides, online trainings, books and other materials to support learning and encourage their use.

Make sure staff have read, understood and signed a **code of conduct** on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and have a plan in place to investigate and deal with any allegations.

Self- and Staff- Care

Working with women and girls in crisis situations can be intensive and demanding work, and it is essential for you to take care of yourself (and your team, if you supervise staff) to ensure your own health and your ability to continue to support women and girls. This section gives some information on stress, stress management and self-/staff-care techniques.

Stress

Stress is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. But this can also be a bad thing, if their stress is in response to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength.

Many different things can cause stress -- from physical (such as fear of something dangerous) to emotional (such as worry over your family or job.) Identifying what may be causing you stress is often the first step in learning how to better deal with your stress.

Stress Management/Self-Care & Staff Care Strategies

Self Care

First, identify your stressors (the things that create stress for you) in your work and personal life. Second, identify the activities in your life that reduce stress, and give you energy. Make a plan to do one of your chosen activities at least once per week, or during times of particular stress.

Buddy System

Choose one person in your team that you would feel comfortable sharing sensitive information with. As buddies, you are each responsible for checking in with the other on a regular basis, and monitoring the emotional well-being of your buddy. You can decide how you want to do check-ins: meeting at the office or elsewhere, sitting down together or while doing other activities (e.g. walking, listening to music, etc.) but you must have a regular plan to meet (and prioritize it, even when work or personal life is busy and stressful). It is also your responsibility to keep an eye out for your buddy – if you notice that they seem stressed or unhappy, ask them how they are and try to engage them in activities to help them feel better.

Supervisor Individual and Group De-brief

If you supervise staff, make sure you meet with each of them individually once a month to de-brief, hear how they are feeling and if required, do relaxation exercises together. You should also meet with the group of employees together once per month. You can use the questions below as a guide for de-briefing sessions, and follow the same principles as for case management and psychosocial support: create an environment of physical and emotional safety, establish a relationship of trust, be open and show that you are paying attention and listen without judgment. If needed, you can support your staff to develop strategies to address the particular stressors in their work, but sometimes all people need is a safe space to share their thoughts and feelings.

Professional Support

Keep in mind that sometimes stress is severe enough that these strategies will not be enough; in this case, you may require professional support.

Stress Management Techniques & Activities

- Exercise (walking, jogging, etc.), listening to music, reading, dancing, prayer, singing, meeting with friends, etc.
- 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.

- Visualization
 - Find a quiet place and close your eyes. Think of the most calm, 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. Return here when you are feeling stressed or worried.
- Muscle Relaxation
 - Make a fist with each hand and squeeze each hand tight. Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze...and Relax. Now, while you squeeze your fists again, tighten your arms to squeeze your body, Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax. Now, this time also squeeze your legs together while making a fist and squeezing your arms together, Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax. Repeat. Shake out your hands, arms and legs.

Group De-briefing/Stress Management Exercises

- Writing it Out
 - Divide into pairs or small groups. Explain that you'll be asking them to write about a difficult or stressful experience in your work, and then they will read what they wrote to their partner/others in the group. They will not need to hand in what they wrote, and can choose not to read out what they wrote if they choose. Ask them to spend 5 minutes writing about a difficult work situation and what helped them to manage the situation.
 - After 5 minutes, ask them to spend 5 minutes reading what they wrote to their group. Listeners should not give advice or analyze what is said, they should only listen. After everyone in the smaller groups has had a chance to read, return to the full group. Debrief - what was the experience like? Did anything surprise you? What was difficult, what was useful?
- Success Stories
 - When suffering is so pervasive and the needs so 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 a success, other team members should help them. Doing this on a regular basis can begin to help staff recognize what they are accomplishing, rather than focus exclusively on what still needs to be done. This can be a helpful - and simple - strategy against burnout.
- Creative Expression
 - The leader 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?"
 - using drawing, painting, sculpting, etc. After 10 minutes of drawing, you would have each group member place their artwork on the wall (if possible) or on the ground for other team members in the group to see. The group members can discuss their reactions to the art, and their experience of making their artworks.
- Poetry in motion
 - The leader asks the group members to tear a piece of paper into strips, and prepare to write. The leader then instructs the participants, as follows: "Without thinking too much, What strengths and personal qualities do you have inside yourself that allows you to do this work?"
 - The leader asks the group members to tear a piece of paper into strips, and prepare to write. The leader then instructs the participants, as follows: "Without thinking too much, What are some of the rewards of this work?"
 - From here, the leader can divide the group into smaller groups (of no more than 5 people each). The group is then asked to put their pieces of paper together into a poem. 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 keeps them strong.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Safe spaces require certain equipment; while some equipment is optional, there are certain elements that are essential to good safe spaces operation, including lockable cabinets for personal information.
- Staff health and well-being is important. We cannot help others if we are overwhelmed ourselves. We have a responsibility to ourselves and our employees to support managing and relieving stress.
- Staff and volunteers should be carefully selected and trained.
- Staff skills and attitudes should be regularly monitored.
- Ongoing staff learning and development should be prioritized.
- All staff should be trained on, and sign a code of conduct, including one on the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation.

Session 11: Monitoring, Evaluation and Phase Out



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:
 Understand the objectives and major kinds of monitoring and evaluation
 Understand the key elements to consider in phasing out of safe spaces

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are essential parts of safe spaces work. It is important to make sure that safe spaces are truly safe for women and girls, that they are operating in the ways we expect and that they are responding to their intended purpose. If this is done on a regular basis, accountability and quality of the center's programmes are ensured. All obtained data should be stored safely and most importantly should never compromise the safety of GBV survivors. There are several kinds of monitoring and evaluation that can be done in and around WGSS.

Attendance & Process Monitoring

This includes using simple tools like admission sheets for new beneficiaries (if they give consent to this), sign-up and sign-in sheets for activities and programmatic records that indicate which activities take place, how often, and how many people participate. This category also includes monitoring of materials and resources used for safe spaces (e.g. how many books, art materials etc. are made available for recreational activities).

Feedback from Women and Girls

It is important to maintain the women- and girl-centered nature of safe spaces, including throughout the monitoring and evaluation of WGSS. Safety monitoring is one of the most important elements of safe spaces - we must ensure that women and girls are not put at risk by participating in these activities. In addition, feedback from women and girls should cover their satisfaction with various aspects of safe spaces, including the location, session times and activities as well as their suggestions with regards to what could be improved. Safety audits, focus group discussions, individual satisfaction surveys and beneficiary interviews can support getting feedback from women and girls.

Staff Skills & Attitudes Monitoring

The skills and attitudes of staff in women and girls' safe spaces are essential. Those managing safe spaces should regularly check the skills and attitudes of their staff to ensure they are operating in a women- and girl-centered way and not reinforcing the negative attitudes and prejudices that women and girls encounter in other areas of their lives. This will require continuous capacity building for staff, and can be monitored using the skills and attitudes checklist (see point 5).

Change Monitoring

It is also important to find out if the safe spaces are achieving a change in the lives of women and girls who participate. This can be more challenging than the activity, process and safety monitoring above, and may require specialists or additional capacity building to do well. However, some qualitative information can be captured through focus group discussions with women and girls, as well as individual interviews with beneficiaries as well as staff members, which should be done on regular basis in order to see trends and if issues were addressed after the assessment. Other, more sophisticated tools include the Most Significant Change methodology, which can be found in the Additional Resources section.

The following are some **samples of key monitoring and evaluation tools**, which should be adapted to your context before use. Depending on the center's capacities and environment, they can be reflected on digital applications (e.g. on phones or tablets), soft copies on laptops or computers or hard copies on paper. The center manager coordinates the data management and ensures that data collection takes place in a safe and ethical manner. S/he is also responsible for data quality and data consolidation for analysis and reporting purposes.

1. Admission Sheet

It is good practice to monitor the numbers of new beneficiaries that start coming to the WGSS. This way the center manager is also able to know the overall number of beneficiaries that have attended the WGSS within a specific timeframe. A standardized admission sheet can include information on the person's sex, age, marital status, number of children, ethnicity, area of origin (if an IDP or refugee), referral information (referred by whom), depending on the center's context and needs. The admission form can also be used as a small

assessment tool to register the vulnerability of the person coming (e.g. widow, divorcee) and/or and issues such as concerning access barriers to the center or expectations.

2. Sign-up and Sign-In Sheets for Activities

To enable better time and resource planning, people attending the center should sign up for activities. Likewise, when activities take place, people attending them should sign-in to enable tracking of beneficiary numbers per activity. The tracking of services to GBV survivors should be done in a confidential manner, consistent with international best practice on ethical and safe data collection. All data on beneficiaries should be disaggregated by age and sex and a differentiation should be made between beneficiaries that have come before on and those that are attending the activity for the first time.

Admission and sign-in data can be used to account for how many people have visited the center and have taken part in activities in a specific timeframe. They also give information on how many services the center has provided to how many people.

3. Safety Audit

See Annex 6 – Assessment Tools. The safety audit should be conducted at regular intervals to assess the ongoing safety and security of women and girls in their broader camp/community, as well as in accessing and using the safe space itself. Once your safe space is established you should review the questions included in the safety audit to determine if any additional questions are required, keeping in mind that this is an observation-based tool, and does not include interaction with women, girls or community members.

4. Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews

See introductory information included in Annex 6 – Assessment Tools. Focus Groups and interviews with beneficiaries and staff members can serve as important tools to gather information on the safety and security of women and girls participating in safe spaces, satisfaction with the activities and services provided, as well what impact of safe spaces activities and services have on people's lives. The following are suggested questions to be used in focus group discussions and interviews for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Violence and Safety

- If women or girls experience violence, where do they go for help?
- Do women feel safe coming to the safe space? If not, why?
- Do girls feel safe coming to the safe space? If not, why?
- How do you think the community perceives the safe space?
- Are there groups of women or girls who cannot access the space? Why?
- Are there any risks for women and girls in participating in safe spaces activities and services? Does it create problems?
- Does the presence of the safe space make women more or less vulnerable to violence?

Activities and Services

- Do the activities in the safe space respond to the needs of women? Of girls?
- Do you think the activities and services in this center help the women and girls in your community that need the most help?
- How could they be adapted to better suit your needs?
- Please select each two activities and/or services in this WGSS that you think are the most important for 1) empowering women and girls, 2) preventing GBV to happen, 3) for GBV survivors to experience healing and feel more secure.
- How were activities decided on? (Probe: by women and girls or NGO, don't know, etc.)
- Were you satisfied with the performance of the staff of the center during the past month? Do you think there is enough staff? (can be asked if the interviewer is not a center staff person) Are the times of activities convenient for women? For girls? How could they be adapted?
- What kinds of activities would you like to see in the safe space in future? How could women and girls be supported to be more engaged in the safe space?
- For staff members: Have you recently received any training? If yes, what kind of trainings? What type of training is needed for staff members of the safe space?

For staff members: Do you feel that you have the necessary resources (equipment/human capacity) to provide GBV services and run activities effectively? If not, what should be improved?

Cross-Cutting

- Without mentioning any names, can you tell us of a woman or girl that experienced a positive change outside of the WGSS, because of what she experienced or learned at the WGSS?
- What would woman and girls that are GBV survivors do if this WGSS did not exist and they needed help?
- Do you feel that you are being respected and honoured by everyone in this WGSS with regards to your personal opinions, belief and your background?
- Do you feel that this WGSS make your life better in some way? If yes, how does it make your life better?
- Is there another place nearby where women and girls can receive the same services or do the same activities? If yes, what same activities and services are offered by a place nearby?

5. Staff Skills and Attitude Checklist

This is an observation- and interview-based tool. It should be used by supervisors to monitor the skills and attitude of staff and volunteers working in safe spaces.

Observe the interaction of the staff or volunteer with women or girls during activities in the safe space. For Sections 1-3, mark 1 if the statement is untrue, 2 if partially true, 3 if completely true. For Sections 4 & 5, you will need to conduct a brief interview with the individual privately.

Skills Add additional items below, as appropriate and required.	1	2	3	Comments
1. Communication				
Uses clear and appropriate language				
Uses gestures and body language in an effective way				
2. Respect & Non-discrimination				
Treats all women and girls equally				
Supports women and girls to make their own decisions (does not impose)				
3. Engagement and Empowerment				
Encourages all women/girls to participate				
Supports those with special needs to participate				
Makes women and girls feel comfortable in all interactions				
4. Support to Survivors of GBV				
Can explain the services that are available and how to refer survivors to them				
Can cite 3 examples of good communication techniques with survivors				

If individual scores 14-21: Individual has strong skills in working with women and girls in safe spaces. Continue to monitor and support.

If individual scores 7-14: Individual needs targeted support to achieve quality work with women and girls. Develop capacity-building plan, focusing on areas scoring 1 or 2, and monitor to ensure no harm is caused to women and girls.

If individual scores 0 - 7: Individual does not have the required skills to work with women and girls in safe spaces. Recommended to change their role to one not requiring direct interaction with women and girls and establish capacity building plan.

5. Knowledge and Attitude	True	False	Comments
Women should be allowed to decide the kinds of activities they want to do in safe spaces.			
Girls should be able to decide the kinds of activities they want to do in safe spaces.			
Women are never responsible for the GBV they experience			
Girls should have the freedom to move around where and when they like			
Women should have the possibility to make decisions about their own lives			

If individual responds 'true' to most or all questions, no action required. If individual responds 'true' to 3 questions or fewer, capacity-building is required to ensure the individual is not causing harm to women and girls by reinforcing existing harmful attitudes and beliefs. Begin by discussing the statements with the individual and trying to better understand their reasoning. Work with management to establish capacity-building plan.

Considerations in Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important to have a **monitoring and evaluation plan**, including what you want to measure, when, how and why. It should be developed by the organizations in close cooperation with managers of WGSSs.

Less can be more. It is essential to **only collect information that you are going to use** - monitoring and evaluation take time, energy and resources from WGSS staff but also from women and girls, so use it wisely. Ensure that all information you collect will be used to reinforce the quality and safety of safe spaces.

Confidentiality - make sure that all information collected either does not include individual information (e.g. is about aggregate numbers - '7 women above the age of 18 participated in a sewing activity on Monday the 1st of March') or if it does involve individual women (e.g. a list of names of women participating in the activity) that it is a) absolutely necessary to have that information written down b) that it is stored in a safe and secure location, in a locked cabinet, and c) that women and girls are aware of how information about them is being collected and stored.

Only use the tools and materials that you have the skills and knowledge to use well. Some tools and methods may require additional training and expertise.

Ensure the **engagement of women and girls** in monitoring and evaluation. This can include the use of participatory monitoring and evaluation methods, asking the views of women and girls into how they would like to give feedback (e.g. what kind of methods do they prefer, with what frequency, how much time they are willing to give to the process, etc.), as well as training women and girls to use the monitoring and evaluation methods and gathering information from their peers, if appropriate.

If possible, **inter-agency or coordinated evaluations** can help provide an outside perspective and provide conclusions that apply more widely.

Ethics in Data Collection

The below information is an extract from the World Health Organization Guidelines on Ethical and Safety Recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies. While the guidelines are specifically targeted at those working with survivors of sexual violence, the guidelines are also valid for the broader context of women and girls' safe spaces - given that many participants will also be survivors of violence, even if they have not disclosed that violence to staff. Therefore, when assessing, researching or documenting activities connected with safe spaces, keep the following principles in mind.

1. The benefits to respondents or communities of documenting sexual violence must be greater than the risks to respondents and communities.
2. Information gathering and documentation must be done in a manner that presents the least risk to respondents, is methodologically sound, and builds on current experience and good practice.
3. Basic care and support for survivors/victims must be available locally before commencing any activity that may involve individuals disclosing information about their experiences of sexual violence.
4. The safety and security of all those involved in information gathering about sexual violence is of paramount concern and in emergency settings in particular should be continuously monitored.
5. The confidentiality of individuals who provide information about sexual violence must be protected at all times.
6. Anyone providing information about sexual violence must give informed consent before participating in the data gathering activity.
7. All members of the data collection team must be carefully selected and receive relevant and sufficient specialized training and ongoing support.
8. Additional safeguards must be put into place if children (i.e. those under 18 years) are to be the subject of information gathering.

Phase-Out

Engagement and ownership: Working with community groups, women's groups or local NGOs early in the process with a clear plan for the next phase can be helpful. Key stakeholders should be involved in discussions about what should happen with safe spaces.

Engagement and safety of women and girls: As always, these key principles should be kept in mind. Ask women and girls what they want to happen with safe spaces and how they think it could be done. Make sure their safety will not be at risk.

Allowing sufficient time: Safe spaces are not an instant creation - they take time to establish and even more time for women and girls to start feeling comfortable interacting in a space and making it their own. Plan for sufficient time for this to happen, as well as adequate time for a handover of activities to another organization or group - including capacity building of those who will take over running the safe space.

Early planning: Phase-out should be a consideration from the very beginning of safe spaces planning and assessment - and should be discussed with women, girls and community stakeholders from that point. Know how long you can/want to be involved with safe spaces and plan accordingly - being upfront about your time or budget limitations can prevent frustrations later. Be mindful of financial considerations - you should not simply phase out of safe spaces because you have no more budget to cover their operation, as this can undo the good work you have done with the safe spaces themselves and lead to increased risks for women and girls.

Be flexible: Your phase-out plans may need to change depending on the context, security, and women and girls themselves. Try to plan the budgetary and time flexibility to allow this.



Notes & Reflections



Burning Questions



Key Messages

- Ensuring engagement and ownership by women and girls and their communities from the beginning of safe spaces implementation is essential - in and of itself, as well as to allow for later phase out.
- Empower women and girls to make key decisions.
- Plan enough time, and resources, to ensure a smooth handover.

Session 12: Open Discussion & Conclusion



Learning Objective: By the end of the session, participants will:

- Be able to summarize their learning from the training.
- Feel energized and connected around their involvement in WGSS.

Do's and Don'ts: a checklist for women and girls' safe spaces

DO	DON'T
Ensure women and girls are involved at each stage of the project cycle, and that they lead the establishment and running of the space	Impose a ready-made model without considering women and girls
Coordinate with the government and other agencies that implement GBV programmes, as well as the GBV coordination mechanism	Ignore linking up the WGSS with other services
Adopt a multi-sectorial approach within the center through a referral system	Isolate the WGSS so that it is only able to provide a certain kind of service or activity
Engage communities, parents, husbands, and community leaders in key decisions	Restrict the scope of the WGSS to being a facility sans community engagement
Make the WGSS accessible and inclusive for women and girls; keep diversity as a key consideration, and include meeting the needs of persons with disabilities	Assume that because the WGSS is open to all, therefore it is accessible and inclusive
Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and adhere to an appropriate code of conduct	Make the WGSS workers sign a code of conduct, regardless of whether they understand or care about it
Ensure that the timing and nature of activities are compatible with the daily routines of women and girls	Predefine the timing and types of activities without consulting women and girls
Ensure that the location is safe and accessible Ensure that activities are women-lead	Assume that any location will work Treat women as benefices
Ensure that all staff is supported and supervised, and benefits from continual capacity-building	Assume they are able to do their job
Ensure that mechanisms are in place to monitor activities through participation of women and girls (i.e.: client feedback, staff supervision)	Rely solely on having a complaints box for feedback
Plan for phase-out in advance, and allow for sufficient time	Halt all activities once funds run out



Notes & Reflections

3. Annexes

Annex 1: Additional Resources

Safe Spaces

- Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian Crisis, UNFPA (<http://www.unfpa.org/resources/women-girls-safe-spaces-guidance-note-based-lessons-learned-syrian-crisis>)
- Additional Resources for Activities in Safe Spaces for Women and Girls: A Literature Review, UNFPA ({Insert link here})
- Girl-Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen & Expand Adolescent Girls Programs, Population Council (<http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>)

Gender-Based Violence

- Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery, IASC (gbvguidelines.org)
- Managing Gender-Based Violence Programmes in Emergencies, UNFPA, <https://extranet.unfpa.org/Apps/GBVinEmergencies/index.html>.
- Managing Gender-Based Violence Programmes in Emergencies E-learning Companion Guide, <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/managing-gender-based-violence-programmes-emergencies> (available in Arabic).
- Core Concepts in GBV: Facilitator Manual, International Rescue Committee, (<http://gbvresponders.org/response/core-concepts/>)
- Various GBV resources, including prevention, service provision, empowerment adolescent girls, disability inclusion, emergency response, IRC (gbvresponders.org)

Disability Inclusion

- GBV and Disability Toolkit, WRC & IRC (gbvresponders.org)

Case Management & Psychosocial Support

- Caring for Child Survivors Implementation Guidelines, UNICEF & IRC (http://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/IRC_CCSGuide_FullGuide_lowres.pdf)
- Interagency Guidelines for Case Management and Child Protection. The Role of Case Management in the Protection of Children: A Guide for Policy and Programme Managers and Caseworkers(http://www.themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/documents/Ref_Doc_CP_Case_Management_Guidelines_2014.pdf)

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- Taskforce on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, United Nations (pseataaskforce.org)

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies, WHO (<http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/pht/SGBV/en/>)
- Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (gbvims.org)
- The 'Most Significant Change' Technique: A guide to its use, Rick Davies and Jess Dart (<http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf>)
- Review of monitoring and evaluation resources, (betterevaluation.org)

Annex 2: Women and girls' safe spaces versus other spaces

Safe spaces versus safe houses and shelters¹⁵

Women and girls' safe spaces, as defined above, 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 accredited. Admission is contingent on specific criteria and strict standard operating procedures of confidentiality. Safe shelters deliver specialized services and provide beneficiaries with personal security.

Safe spaces versus women safe spaces in reception areas¹⁶

Women and girls-only safe spaces in reception areas of refugee camps differ from safe spaces. The former are a first entry point into the refugee camp. The primary objective of such areas is to minimize the risks for women and girls undergoing the processes of being assigned shelters, receiving initial assistance packages, and entering the camp. These areas can also be used to provide information regarding the services available to women and girls, and ensure connection to other services when specific vulnerabilities are identified.

Safe spaces and child-friendly spaces¹⁷

Child-Friendly Spaces (CFSs) 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. CFSs typically cater to children i.e., boys and girls under 18 years of age. In some contexts, however, they may also engage and benefit young people aged above 18 years.

Safe spaces for women and girls and CFSs do, however, share some common elements. At times, they may also cater to similar populations. This is particularly true with regard to adolescent girls. In this respect, it should be appreciated that the purposes of CFSs and those of safe spaces do not overlap, but are seen to be complementary. In the Jordanian context, safe spaces for women and girls typically house very specialized response services for SGBV survivors, while CFSs are less specific and provide referrals to specialized protection services.



Annex 3: Gender-Based Violence Definitions¹⁸

The Inter Agency Guidelines for Integrating gender based violence interventions in humanitarian action define GBV as “an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e: gender) differences between male and females. IT includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty”.

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) developed a GBV classification tool for the purposes of standardizing GBV data collection across GBV service providers.

The criteria used to generate the classification tool’s seven types of GBV were:

- Universally-recognized forms of gender-based violence
- Mutually exclusive (they do not overlap)
- Focused on the specific act of violence; separate from the motivation behind it or the context in which it was perpetrated

Each of the definitions below refers to the concept of **consent**. Consent is when a person makes an informed choice to agree freely and voluntarily to do something. There is no consent when agreement is obtained through:

- the use of threats, force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, manipulation, deception, or
- misrepresentation
- the use of a threat to withhold a benefit to which the person is already entitled, or
- a promise is made to the person to provide a benefit.

Six Core Types of GBV. The six core GBV types were created for data collection and statistical analysis of GBV. They should be used only in reference to GBV even though some may be applicable to other forms of violence which are not gender-based.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 4. Forced Marriage:** the marriage of an individual against her or his will.
- 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.
- 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, harassment, unwanted attention, remarks, gestures or written words of a sexual and/or menacing nature, destruction of cherished things, etc.

Annex 4: Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Every staff member or volunteer working in or with women and girls' safe spaces should read, understand and sign a code of conduct that specifically addresses the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). The following is the text of United Nations Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse¹⁹, which serves as a code of conduct for UN staff and agencies. Additional resources to support the development of targeted codes of conduct can be found at pseataaskforce.org.

Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of preventing and addressing cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and taking into consideration General Assembly resolution 57/306 of 15 April 2003, "Investigation into sexual exploitation of refugees by aid workers in West Africa", promulgates the following in consultation with Executive Heads of separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations:

Section 1 Definitions

For the purposes of the present bulletin, the term "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Section 2

Scope of application

- 2.1 The present bulletin shall apply to all staff of the United Nations, including staff of separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations.
- 2.2 United Nations forces conducting operations under United Nations command and control are prohibited from committing acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and have a particular duty of care towards women and children, pursuant to section 7 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1999/13, entitled "Observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law".
- 2.3 Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/253, entitled "Promotion of equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat and prevention of sexual harassment", and the related administrative instruction¹ set forth policies and procedures for handling cases of sexual harassment in the Secretariat of the United Nations. Separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations have promulgated similar policies and procedures.

Section 3

Prohibition of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

- 3.1 Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and have always been unacceptable behaviour and prohibited conduct for United Nations staff. Such conduct is prohibited by the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules.
- 3.2 In order to further protect the most vulnerable populations, especially women and children, the following specific standards which reiterate existing general obligations under the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, are promulgated:
 - (a) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal;
 - (b) Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence;
 - (c) Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance;
 - (d) Sexual relationships between United Nations staff and beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of

- (e) the United Nations and are strongly discouraged;
- (e) Where a United Nations staff member develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not and whether or not within the United Nations system, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms;
- (f) United Nations staff are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Managers at all levels have a particular responsibility to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

3.3 The standards set out above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Other types of sexually exploitive or sexually abusive behaviour may be grounds for administrative action or disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal, pursuant to the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules.

Section 4

Duties of Heads of Departments, Offices and Missions

- 4.1 The Head of Department, Office or Mission, as appropriate, shall be responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and shall take appropriate measures for this purpose. In particular, the Head of Department, Office or Mission shall inform his or her staff of the contents of the present bulletin and ascertain that each staff member receives a copy thereof.
- 4.2 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall be responsible for taking appropriate action in cases where there is reason to believe that any of the standards listed in section 3.2 above have been violated or any behaviour referred to in section
- 3.3 above has occurred. This action shall be taken in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct.
- 4.3 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall appoint an official, at a sufficiently high level, to serve as a focal point for receiving reports on cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. With respect to Missions, the staff of the Mission and the local population shall be properly informed of the existence and role of the focal point and of how to contact him or her. All reports of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse shall be handled in a confidential manner in order to protect the rights of all involved. However, such reports may be used, where necessary, for action taken pursuant to section 4.2 above.
- 4.4 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall not apply the standard prescribed in section 3.2 (b), where a staff member is legally married to someone under the age of 18 but over the age of majority or consent in their country of citizenship.
- 4.5 The Head of Department, Office or Mission may use his or her discretion in applying the standard prescribed in section 3.2 (d), where beneficiaries of assistance are over the age of 18 and the circumstances of the case justify an exception.
- 4.6 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall promptly inform the Department of Management of its investigations into cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and the actions it has taken as a result of such investigations.

Section 5

Referral to national authorities

If, after proper investigation, there is evidence to support allegations of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, these cases may, upon consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, be referred to national authorities for criminal prosecution.

Section 6

Cooperative arrangements with non-United Nations entities or individuals

- 6.1 When entering into cooperative arrangements with non-United Nations entities or individuals, relevant United Nations officials shall inform those entities or individuals of the standards of conduct listed in section 3, and shall receive a written undertaking from those entities or individuals that they accept these standards.
- 6.2 The failure of those entities or individuals to take preventive measures against sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, to investigate allegations thereof, or to take corrective action when sexual exploitation or sexual abuse has occurred, shall constitute grounds for termination of any cooperative arrangement with the United Nations.

Annex 5: Possible locations²⁰

Location	Pros	Cons
New Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be chosen with the consent of women and girls Space can be shaped and organized New systems can be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be less sustainable Require more resources to set up May take time for the community and women to get to know it and trust
Community Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalize access of women and girls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could be uninspiring May not be set up for girls May not be appropriately located (near a football field or an area traditionally only frequented by men and boys) May need community negotiation to make women and girl- only times
Mosques and churches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respected place for women and girls to meet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May reinforce traditional gender norms
Open-air spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available Free Girl groups are very visible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May require back-up for bad weather Doesn't ensure access to community entitlements and therefore could reinforce girls' exclusion Girl groups are very visible
Homes of respected community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respected place for women and girls to meet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May reinforce traditional gender norms May be restrictive for certain community members



Annex 6: Assessment tools

A number of tools exist that can be used to support initial assessments before establishing women and girls safe spaces, which include key information interview, focus group discussions (FGDs), safety audits and community mapping. Each tool is described below and links to various examples of tools is included.

With any tool that is used the topics to consider gaining more information about are:

- **Safety and security:** What is the safety and security of women and girls in the community
- **Location of the safe space:** What would be an appropriate location for the WGSS; what are potential access barriers (transport, security etc.)
- **Set up:** What should the safe space look like? Should there be fences? etc
- **Partnerships:** Who should be involved in the set-up of the WGSS (stakeholder mapping)
- **Time and commitment:** What are the busy time slots and commitments of women and girls in the community
- **Activities and services:** What are already existing services and assistance for women and girls in the community (health services, community and/or psychosocial services, referral systems)? What activities and services are appropriate or needed for women and girls in the community

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Groups Discussions (FGD)

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Groups Discussions (FGD) are tools that can be used for initial assessments before establishing a WGSS but also for monitoring activities and evaluations that try to capture performance and impact of the WGSS.

Key informants may include individuals with a particular kind of community-level access or information (i.e., doctor, teacher, village chief, camp leader, women's committee leader, etc.); however, this tool can also be used for individual interviews with randomly identified community members.

Participants in an FGD should be made of like members – community leaders, adult women, youth, adolescent girls, etc. – and should not include more than 10 to 12 participant.

Prior to conducting an interview or FGD it is important to always get consent of the persons that give the information. Before starting an FGD, the facilitator should reassure participants that no identifying information be written down and names of participants will not be gathered. All participants should agree that no information shared in the discussion will be divulged outside the group.

FGDs and individual interviews take time (FGDs should not last more than 60 minutes for girls to 90 minutes for women).

In order to increase acceptance and ensure that participants are not targets of community suspicion, threats or violence, be sure to consider:

1. If you do not feel it is safe to have this discussion, or that it may cause risk for staff or participants, do not proceed.
2. Before mobilizing participants, meet with community leaders and/or local government to explain the purpose of the assessment visit – to better understand the health and safety concerns affecting women and girls after the crisis – and the presence of the assessment team in the community.
3. Where possible, link with a range of local women's leaders – formal and informal – during participant mobilization. Women leaders may be involved in one focus group, but should not be present in all groups to ensure that women feel free to speak openly.
4. Where relevant, carry out focus group discussions in the displaced, refugee or returnee community, as well as in the host community.
5. Ensure that staff facilitating focus group discussions do not ask probing questions in an effort to identify the perpetrators of violence (i.e., one specific armed group).

Before starting an interview or a FGD the following steps should be ensured:

1. Introduce the translator or other support staff for the interview or FGD facilitation, if applicable
2. Present the purpose of the interview or FGD:
 - General information about your organization
 - Purpose of the assessment is to understand concerns and needs for women and girls
 - Explain what you will do with this information and make sure that you do not make false promises
 - Participation is voluntary
 - No one is obligated to respond to any questions if s/he does not wish
 - The Interviewee or the FGD participants can leave the discussion at any time

- No one is obligated to share personal experiences if s/he does not wish
 - If sharing examples or experiences, individual names should not be shared
 - Be respectful when others speak
 - When conducting an FGD, the facilitator might interrupt discussion, but only to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak and no one person dominates the discussion
3. Agree on confidentiality:
 - Keep all discussion confidential
 - Do not share details of the discussion later, whether with people who are present or not
 - If someone asks, explain that you were speaking about the health problems of women and girls
 4. Ask permission to take notes. It is important to obtain consent of all participant. If one person does not feel comfortable with recording the discussion, please invite them to leave the discussion. Reconfirm that no one's identify will be written down and that the purpose of taking notes is to ensure that the information collected is precise

When ending an interview or FGD, the following steps should be considered:

- Thank the interviewee/FGD participants for the invested time and contributions.
- Remind the interview/FGD participants that the purpose of this discussion was to better understand the needs and concerns of women and girls in this location.
- Explain the next steps. Again, repeat what you will do with this information and what purpose it will eventually serve. Also inform the interview/FGD participants if you will be back.
- Remind the interview/FGD participants of their agreement to confidentiality.
- Remind the interview/FGD participants not to share information or the names of other FGD participants with others in the community.
- Ask the interview/FGD participants if they have questions.
- If anyone of the FGD participants wishes to speak in private, respond that the facilitator will be available after the meeting.

Important points:

- If disclosure happens during the FGD, it is important for the facilitator to offer a referral after the FGD with the participants consent.
- Facilitators should be trained in conducting key informant interviews and focus group discussions.
- The tools used for interviews and FGDs should be adapted to the context and hence appropriate in the context of intervention. Some questions are sensitive and therefore ethical considerations should be reviewed prior to the interview, particularly considering the security of both parties. It is possible to take out some questions if necessary due to security or other concerns.

Safety Audits and Observational Risk Assessments²¹

The focus of Safety Audits is to reduce risks for women and girls in the location, in particular in camps. Safety Audit tools are mainly based on observation, but can include interviews. While in some environments full safety audits, including interviews with community members and key focal points in the location, can be conducted, other contexts only allow small observational risk assessments, owing for example to the security situation.

Generally, Safety Audits can cover the following topics:

- **Camp Layout:** crowdedness of location; existence of areas for people with specific vulnerabilities (e.g. female-headed households); electricity infrastructure and availability; registration procedures in camps; access to and infrastructure of sanitation facilities for women and girls; safety with regards to access to schools or markets; existence of barriers or checkpoints by armed groups in the location
- **Services & Facilities:** food allowances, availability and access; distribution of NFIs to women; availability and access to water; access to firewood and charcoal collection points; security staffing and capacity in the location; existence of protection focal points; areas of increased risk for women and girls; availability of and access to services for survivors of GBV and respective staffing capacity; existence of GBV reporting mechanisms
- **Decision Making:** existence of GBV committees; representation of women and decision-making bodies, such as camp committees

It is important that tools used for Safety Audits or similar observational risk assessments are always adapted to the context and hence appropriate in the context of intervention. Example of tools:

- <http://gbvresponders.org/resources/> - Available in English and Arabic
- 2012, GBV Assessment & Situation Analysis Tools

Community Safety Mapping²²

Original version available in Arabic at www.gbvresponders.org

A community map is an excellent tool for collecting qualitative data, especially in cultures that have a strong visual tradition. Maps can be created on paper with colored pens or in the dirt/sand using natural materials such as sticks and pebbles.

This approach can be incorporated into focus group discussions as a means of better assessing:

- the community's knowledge of services available to women and girls (number, location and quality of medical and psychosocial care, for example),
- The challenges women and girls may face in accessing services (privacy, distance, safety, for example), and
- the community's perception of areas that present high risks to women and girls (public or remote areas where sexual assaults or harassment are likely to take place, for example).

To incorporate community mapping into your assessment, follow the introductory guidance found in the Focus Group Discussion tool. Identify questions that may be "mapped" rather than addressed through discussion, and proceed with the following steps:

1. Request that a participant draw a map of the general area, camp or site. (Have materials ready – sticks, stones or other potential drawing materials – ready in case participants do not naturally reach for something.)
2. As the map is taking shape, other participants are likely to provide input or to get involved. Give plenty of time and space.
3. 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.
 - Where do people in the community go if they need medical treatment?
 - Where do women or girls go to meet together? Where did they go to meet before the crisis?
 - Is there a place where women or girls can go to discuss their problems together?
 - Are there places on the map that are not safe for women and girls during the day?
 - Are there places on the map that are not safe for women and girls during the night?
 - Where might a woman go for help if she is the victim of violence?
 - Where might a girl go for help if she is the victim of violence?
 - What places are considered acceptable for women and girls to go to?
4. Record any visual output from this process, whether it is drawn on the ground or on paper. Be accurate and include identifying information (place names and the date the map was created).

For more information and detailed tools for initial assessments before establishing a WGSS see:

- <http://gbvresponders.org/resources/> - FGD and Interview sample tools available in English and Arabic
- 2010 Handbook for Coordinating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings, [page 256ff](#)
- 2015 UNFPA, *Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian Crisis*,
- 2012, GBV Assessment & Situation Analysis Tools, [page 260ff](#)

Using Key informant interviews, FGD and safety assessments for Monitoring and evaluation of WGSS is recommended. (Please see more information in Annex 19). Regular safety audits can assess security risks for women and girls, and to identify opportunities with other sectors to mitigate those risks. Findings from safety audits should be shared with other relevant sectors, such as Shelter, CCCM, and WASH, and with camp managers/leaders so that they can ensure that the location and any programmatic approaches being implemented therein, are safe for women and girls.

The type of questions that should be considered during monitoring activities are below:

- Are women and girls **satisfied** with the activities and services offered in the WGSS?
- Are vulnerable women and girls in the community **reached** through this WGSS? If not, why?
- How are women and girls **participating** in the design and implementation of activities?
- What **improvements** need to be made to ensure better access and participation of women and girls?
- What is the impact of coming to the WGSS on women and girls lives? (sense of well-being, sense of safety, healing, empowerment)

For more information see:

- 2015 UNFPA Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, [page 76ff](#)
- IRC GBV Emergency Response & Preparedness, Participant Handbook, [page 41ff](#)

4. References

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- 22- Ibid.



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