

Promoting Positive Environments for Women and Girls

Guidelines for Women and
Girls Friendly Spaces in
South Sudan



HealthNet^{TPO}



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Cover Photo : UNICEF South Sudan/2016/Silvia Finaurini

Graphic Layout : Pugacioff

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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Through consultation and peer-review this publication has received valuable inputs from the following organizations:

International Medical Corps (IMC); The Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid (IsraAID); Sudd Relief and Development Action (SRDA); UNFPA; Protection Cluster; GBV sub-cluster; Confident Children out of Conflict (CCC); International Rescue Committee (IRC); Nile Hope; Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare; South Sudan Widows & Orphans Charitable Organisation (WOCO); Hope Restoration South Sudan (HRSS); Smile Again Africa Development Organisation (SAADO); Samahi.



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Foreword

Though Women and Girls Friendly Spaces (WGFS) are now considered a central component to gender-based violence prevention and response programming in South Sudan, this has only been the case since the 2013 crisis. A number of organisations currently implement WGFS – often under the name of “women’s centres” or “women’s safe spaces” – but, to date, there has been no commonly agreed understanding of what a WGFS is, what the key aims and purpose are, or what activities should be conducted.

UNICEF, on behalf of the GBV sub-cluster and with the support of key partners, initiated the development of these WGFS Guidelines to help capture and agree upon some minimum standards and shared expectations for WGFS in South Sudan. Though similar projects have been undertaken in other emergency-affected countries, due to the unique nature of the South Sudan context, all actors involved felt it was important to have a set of guidelines specifically tailored to this particular response in order to meet the real needs of humanitarian actors operating on the ground and the communities they serve.

The first version of the document was completed in mid-2016 and piloted in 2017. The content was revised based on the lessons learned by piloting the guidelines in Bor, Juba and Malakal. This version is the final piloted version, but can be treated as a working document. Any additions and/or modifications can be made based on the implementation experiences in other areas of South Sudan.

List of abbreviations

CFS = Child Friendly Spaces

GBV = Gender Based Violence

IASC = Inter Agency Standing Committee

IDP = Internally Displaced People

MHPSS = Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

NFI = Non Food Item

PoC = Protection of Civilians

PSS = Psychosocial Support

WGFS = Women and Girls Friendly Spaces

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Chapter 1

Introduction



Chapter 1

Introduction

The creation of ‘friendly spaces’ for women and girls has been a key strategy in the protection and empowerment¹ of women and girls in South Sudan since conflict re-erupted in the country in December 2013. This document provides guidance on the aims of these spaces, and how they can best be established and managed in the South Sudan context.

The methodology for drafting the guidelines consisted of a desk review of reports and guidance from other humanitarian contexts as well as field-based data collection in South Sudan, including discussions with managers and staff of organisations involved in the protection and empowerment of women in South Sudan, particularly those managing women-friendly spaces and similar facilities in Juba (Central Equatoria State), Akobo (Jonglei State) and Malakal (Upper Nile State). The guidance is also based on discussions with women and adolescent girls in Akobo and Malakal, plus representatives of male and female leadership in those locations, and groups of male community members.

Piloting of the guidelines took place in Juba (camp setting hosting internally displaced persons (IDP) and non-camp setting); Bor (non-camp setting); and Malakal (Protection of Civilian site and non-camp setting). Group discussions with staff running the Women and Girls Friendly Spaces, the field observation and informal discussion with community

¹ Empowerment can be understood as a process whereby individuals and communities’ ability to assume control over their lives and their environment is fostered. It is a core process for the establishment and running of any Women and Girls Friendly Space and it demands identifying and addressing unequal power relationships, granting equal access to information and services while also actively promoting the capacity of individuals and groups to claim for rights and take actions to achieve goals. An empowering environment should always promote a sense of ownership and belonging, while remaining an inclusive space which is also part of the wider community life.

members, particularly women and girls informed areas for revision of the guidelines. The guidelines are presented in three main sections.

- **First, the Introduction outlines the concept of Women and Girls Friendly Spaces (hereafter WGFS) and how it applies to the South Sudan context.**
- **Second, a set of Guiding Principles are introduced, which are intended to serve as the foundation for all WGFS in order to ensure that they are safe and beneficial to all women and girls.**
- **The third section outlines the practical tasks and decisions involved in establishing and running WGFS, including conducting an assessment, selecting an appropriate location, staffing requirements and capacity building, designing an appropriate programme of activities and services, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention.**

The guidelines are not meant to be rigid or prescriptive but rather to provide some broad guidance which is relevant to the South Sudan context. The intention is to assist collaboration among agencies by building a consensus around the key aims, functions and guiding principles for WGFS, as well as to strengthen existing WGFS and provide a starting point for organisations looking to establish such services for the first time in South Sudan.

1. What is a Women and Girls Friendly Space?

A Women and Girls Friendly Space (WGFS) is a formal or informal place where women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe, comfortable, and able to express themselves. Depending on the context, WGFS can provide an opportunity for women and girls to gather and socialize informally and/or can be used as a platform for conducting more structured group activities.

Physical safety

Women and girls should be free from physical harm within the place they are meeting, and the space should be located in an area which can be accessed easily and safely. Activities, staffing, scheduling and all other logistical arrangements must take into account the potential safety risks for participants, staff and the community.

Emotional safety

Women and girls should feel able to participate in WGFS activities, and to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences without judgement or criticism. Emotional safety can be established through ground rules, trust-building activities, and, most importantly, by the example set by WGFS staff.

In Nepal, WGFS are defined as a “place where females can go to at any time to feel safe and empowered and have access to information, education, recreational activities, support and services. These are often integrated spaces offering a range of services including resources, information, social networks, etc. WGFS are safe spaces for women and

girls in the community, culturally-appropriate and tailored to the context. The model can also be known as Women Friendly Spaces (WFS) yet the concept of WGFS is inclusive of female of all ages and stages. WGFS can be used for various activities such as: individual or group psychosocial support, awareness-raising, skills-building, Non Food Items (NFI) distribution and/or recreational activities. Information on critical issues can be shared in these spaces such as where/how to access humanitarian services and information on a wide range of life skills, including reproductive health, legal rights, childcare, and prevention and response to GBV. WGFS are also safe spaces that promote women’s protection and empowerment and therefore help mitigate risk of GBV.”²

A WGFS is not the same as a safe shelter (or safe house), which provides temporary overnight accommodation for those who have experienced or are at risk of violence.

2. Why Women and Girls Friendly Spaces in South Sudan?

‘There are few places in the world where it is more dangerous or disempowering to grow up female than in South Sudan’³.

In South Sudan discriminatory social norms and power inequalities between men and women affect all aspects of social, economic and political life. Moreover, communities have experienced decades of conflict and displacement. Women and girls lack opportunities to move freely and safely, partly because areas of South Sudan are still threatened by

² Source: Guidance on Female-friendly spaces (ffs)1_Nepal Earthquake Response (v.1) (https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/system/files/documents/files/brief_guidance_on_female-friendly_spaces_v1_05_12_15.pdf)

³ CARE (2014) ‘The Girl Has No Rights’: Gender-Based Violence in South Sudan

insecurity and partly because public spaces culturally and traditionally belong to men. There are few opportunities for women and girls to gather together and support one another. Whilst South Sudan has a history of women's associations, which have provided opportunities for women to meet and share the issues affecting them, many such associations have collapsed due to conflict and displacement. Opportunities to generate income have reduced as the economic situation has become more difficult in South Sudan, which has further increased the vulnerability of women and girls. Some women whose husbands have been killed or who are away from home have had to take up new roles as breadwinners, without the necessary skills to take them on. Many women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual assault during the conflict, as well as the loss of loved ones, property and homes, resulting in high levels of distress.

In non-camp settings, women often have been able to maintain and or re-establish their own support networks (e.g. women's associations), which may have not been disrupted in the same way as those who are staying in camp settings. Here women also have a higher level of leadership and ownership of these associations, girls might have good social networks, and opportunities to spend time together in evenings chatting, singing, dancing and enjoying themselves. However, both women and girls continue to face serious challenges such as the lack of resources, pervasive gender based violence, early/forced marriages, lack of access to services such as health and education, and sometimes struggle to meet the basic needs of their families.

Women and girls living in displacement settings, such as Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites, Internally Displaced People (IDP) sites or refugee camps, face additional challenges. Many of these sites are extremely

crowded, so without a WGFS there would be no space for women and girls to meet and socialise. There is an increased risk of harm to women and girls in these settings due to congestion and the disintegration of formerly supportive community-based systems and networks. In addition, they may find it difficult to identify and access the services they need in an unfamiliar environment. WGFS can thus provide women and girls with a safe place to gather in order to access services and information. They can also provide much needed psychosocial and peer support. 'Safe gathering points also offer them an opportunity to engage with each other, exchange information, and rebuild community networks and support'⁴.

What to call WGFS in South Sudan?

In South Sudan, places for women to gather have different names, including 'women's centre', 'female-friendly space' and 'women's safe space'. Regardless of the name chosen, what matters most is what happens in the space. Some things to consider when deciding on a name are:

- It might be helpful to include 'girls' in the name (e.g. 'women and girls' safe space) so that adolescent girls feel that the centre also belongs to them.
- It is often helpful to allow the women and girls to choose a name that is meaningful to them. An example from another country is 'Hope Centre'. These names may be in a common local language, so that all women and girls feel ownership.
- It is equally important to avoid choosing a name that would risk identifying women and girls in need of support and further stigmatising them. For example, it is best to avoid names that explicitly link the centre with gender-based violence or other sensitive issues (i.e. 'GBV centre' would not be advisable).

These guidelines use the neutral term "women and girls friendly space (WGFS), but in practice the women and girls involved in each WGFS should have an opportunity to participate in naming the centre.

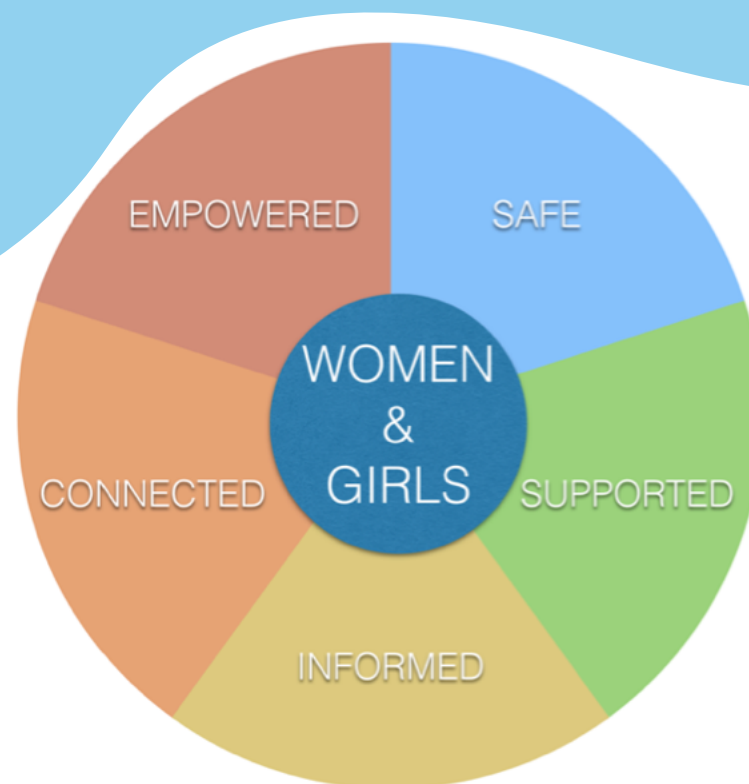
⁴ DFID (2013) *Violence against Women and Girls in Humanitarian Emergencies* (p15) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271932/VAWG-humanitarian-emergencies.pdf)

3. Aims of Women and Girls Friendly Spaces in South Sudan

In South Sudan, WGFS function in various contexts, including displacement settings (PoC and IDP sites and refugee camps) and more established, stable communities.

Since the issues affecting women and girls vary across the various settings, WGFS need to function differently depending on the context. However, core aims for all WGFS in South Sudan are:

- To be a place where women and girls have easy access, privacy and feel safe.
- To be a place where women and girls can obtain information about available services, including gender-based violence (GBV) services and receive support (either through WGFS or through referrals).
- To reduce emotional distress, through psychosocial support, recreational activities and peer support.
- To provide information on issues relevant to the lives of women and girls.
- To connect women and girls to other services (such as livelihoods or medical services).
- To develop or strengthen women's and girls' social networks, build relationships and create opportunities for experience sharing.
- To empower women and girls so they are more able to identify solutions and strategies to address concerns and to act and advocate for themselves.



WGFS aim to create an empowering and inclusive environment where women and girls attending feel safe, supported, connected, empowered and better informed about their rights and opportunities.

In addition to the core aims, a WGFS could have a combination of other aims which might develop from the very beginning or over time, depending on the context as well as on the available resources and the capacity of those involved in running the WGFS.

Some additional aims for South Sudan might include:

- **To promote peace building. In a context where people from different ethnic groups are together, women and girls can model positive relationships for others in the community, and can even play a role in resolving conflicts in the community. Traditionally, women and religious leaders have played a significant role in community-based peace building initiatives and WGFS can provide an organised platform for these activities to take place.**
- **To develop the potential of women and girls to take on leadership roles in the community.**
- **Act as a forum for women and girls to share their concerns with representatives of service providers and other decision makers.**
- **To support women and girls in disseminating information amongst others in their community in whatever way is appropriate (e.g. through community discussions, informal conversations, drama events).**

Although WGFS can be an important means to prevent and respond to the consequences of exposure to very adverse events, such as war, violence, physical and emotional abuse, it is also important that enough attention is paid to those daily living circumstances and challenges, such as poverty, lack of educational, recreational and income-generation opportunities and pervasive negative gender stereotypes which also greatly affect the participation of women and girls in society and their emotional and physical wellbeing. Therefore, it is important that WGFS are always part of larger emergency and recovery efforts.



Chapter 2

Guiding Principles for Women and Girls Friendly Spaces

The set of guiding principles outlined in this section should underpin all planning, implementation and decision-making around WGFS activities. They apply to WGFS in all contexts in South Sudan, including PoC sites, refugee camps, IDP sites and other communities, although the ways in which they are used may differ according to each context.

The guiding principles build on the core principles outlined in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2007) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Emergencies.⁵ This means that any WGFS which has these principles underpinning its approach will be integrating psychosocial support into all its work. The guiding principles also take into account the Inter-Agency Standing Committee [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#) (2015).⁶

⁵ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-emergency-settings>

⁶ <http://gbvguidelines.org/>

1. Do No Harm

The ‘Do No Harm’ principle is fundamental and involves prioritising the physical and emotional safety of women and girls who participate in activities, and of the staff and volunteers associated with the WGFS. The ‘safety’ and ‘confidentiality’ elements of the survivor-centred approach (IASC GBV Guidelines) are core to this principle. The ‘respect’ element of the survivor-centred approach is also crucial; in order to ‘do no harm’, all actions should be guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights and dignity of the women and girls involved in the WGFS. In a conflict-affected context such as South Sudan, this also implies understanding the conflict dynamics and ensuring that the WGFS and related activities aim to reduce conflict drivers and increase contributions to building peace in the community.

Whilst this principle underpins all decisions, it will be particularly key to those made about the location and accessibility of the centre; the processes put in place to establish and maintain community acceptance of the WGFS; avoidance of stigmatisation (for example, of GBV survivors); ensuring confidentiality; and planning for staff training, particularly to ensure understanding and application of both the survivor-centred approach and the code of conduct for staff and volunteers. Staff with little knowledge and skills or those staff who do not receive regular supervision can cause harm to women and girls unknowingly. Therefore, it is important to provide regular supervision support and discussion on code

of conduct, including provisions for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, to reduce possible harm to women and girls.

2. Build on existing capacity, resources and structures

This principle involves making efforts to build on local capacities, support self-help, positive coping mechanisms and strengthen existing resources. Even a community which has been severely affected by an emergency will still have its own resources and capacities, and it is far more effective to identify, mobilise and strengthen these than to establish new systems. Building on people's skills and capacities has a positive psychosocial impact, it is empowering, and it creates a sustainable foundation for the WGFS. In some settings, this may involve international organisations working closely with local organisations and building their capacity through the establishment of the WGFS.

An assessment which focuses not only on needs, but also on the resources available within the community, is crucial. Through this assessment, existing community support systems (e.g. women's associations) can be identified and strengthened, and community leadership structures can be involved in establishing the WGFS. Even from the beginning, women and girls can start to take the lead, and opportunities can be built in for them to take on additional responsibilities as time goes on. Leadership committees can be established to facilitate women and girls' input into planning and managing activities.

In non-camp settings, this may be more straightforward because the women and girls already know each other, and ideally the WGFS would work through existing groups which have already been established and are led by the women and girls themselves. In camp settings, it is a more complex process because the women and girls may be from different

areas and/or backgrounds, may speak different languages, are unfamiliar with each other and the context, and need time to build relationships and trust each other before they can begin to 'own' the WGFS. The first step in these settings will be to facilitate the development of strong relationships between the women and girls, which can then be built upon. However, even in newer or more temporary settings, such as PoCs, women and girls can be involved in establishing the WGFS, such as:

- Making decisions about how to decorate and arrange the physical space of the WGFS.
- Teaching each other skills like decorating bedsheets and henna designs.
- Women leaders can take on certain responsibilities, such as mobilising women for particular activities.

'We have women [in the community] who are rich in knowledge, they have not been to class, they have not been to school, but they are rich in knowledge in the sense that they do understand and have grown in those cultures and they know what happens, and they have been part and parcel of the process of resolving some of the community issues, if you identify such people in the community, skilled staff should be able to tap on their experience, on their knowledge and be able to guide your actions on how you are going to help them formulate that kind of friendly space. Because they actually form the backbone, everywhere you go they will tell you, 'before you talk to us we have our women leader there'. She is not a leader because she has been in school, but because of her participatory character, her confident communication and they listen to her even

when they have any problem so they are the people they always refer to'. (WGFS staff)

It is also important to recognise that some community support systems can further exclude certain women and girls, for example those from particular ethnic groups or those who are generally marginalised within that community. The guiding principles of 'do no harm' and 'focus on human rights and equity' require organisations to work with community resources and capacities so that they are inclusive and supportive of all women and girls.

3. Participation/ Community-Based Approach

Although WGFS are spaces meant for and run by women and girls, in order to ensure acceptance, effectiveness and future sustainability it is important to also seek input and support from other stakeholders. Ultimately WGFS should not be considered as isolated units, but rather as an integrated element of community life⁷.

As already outlined above, the success of the WGFS model depends on women and girls taking on leadership roles. However, the 'participation' principle goes beyond involving women and girls to include the involvement of leaders (community, religious, women's, youth) and men in the community during the planning stages, and, where appropriate, the activities. If the WGFS is to be a safe place for women and girls to go and is to be sustainable, then it must have the support and respect of a variety of stakeholders, including men and boys (see 'Cross-cutting issues: Obtaining and maintaining community buy-in' for more ideas on this).

'In addition to the women centre activities we have community dialogue sessions where we do involve all community members, women, men, boys and girls in the different groups. And we also work closely with community structures, which are the majority of the male leaders. We work closely with religious leaders and also with the women associations, and so we try to reach out to all community members in the POCs with our outreach activities'. (WGFS staff)

This principle also incorporates accountability to all those affected by the WGFS, but primarily the women and girls who are intended to benefit from it, through a system of ongoing consultation and feedback throughout the lifespan of the WGFS.

4. Focus on Empowerment

As explained on page 12, one of the key aims of WGFS is to empower women and girls, and this focus should underpin all decisions made about processes and activities. However, empowerment is not only an aim but also an important principle that should inform and be applied throughout all the phases of a WGFS, from planning to phase out. The form that this empowerment takes will depend on the context. Elements to consider include:

- **Personal empowerment:** self-confidence, self-awareness, self-respect, ability to assert one's rights and determine choices
- **Cognitive empowerment:** opportunities to learn new skills and gain new knowledge

⁷ UNFPA: Women & Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian crisis, 2015



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- Psychological empowerment: opportunities to manage feelings of distress and support each other
- Social empowerment: opportunities to strengthen social networks, opportunities to promote positive social norms and traditional practices while exposing harm associated to certain practices and challenging gender adverse social norms
- Economic empowerment: opportunities to generate income, strengthened decision-making in relation to money, reduced dependence and vulnerability to exploitation
- Political empowerment: participation in public life, opportunities to mobilise and organise for change within their community
- Understanding of rights: increased awareness of rights and of services available to assist them (e.g. right to education for girls, issues related to gender-based violence)

‘We can give them the skills in the centre, and make them strong. In our society here, women are undermined, they are told they can’t do anything, so we teach them that women can be a leader, can be a commissioner, can do anything. We do training in leadership styles, if you want to be a leader you can do this. But the idea is to let them know that they can be leaders, not just the traditional idea that only men can do these things. We give them some examples, like in other countries there are women who are presidents. So they can have a feeling, ‘I can be someone’.
(WGFS staff)

5. Focus on Human Rights and Inclusion

These guidelines are in line with the IASC GBV Guidelines, which prioritise applying a ‘human rights-based approach’, and the ‘non-discrimination’ element of a survivor-centred approach. It encourages a focus on ensuring that all women and girls are included in the activities of a WGFS, and that efforts are made to actively reach out to the most marginalised. These may include adolescent girls (especially those out of school); women and girls with physical disabilities or mental health problems; female heads-of-household; unmarried women, widows; and elderly women. In the South Sudan context, the focus on non-discrimination is particularly important, both through bringing women and girls from different ethnic groups together for WGFS activities, and in terms of staffing considerations.

‘Like the volunteers, here in this centre we have some Shilluk, Dinka and Nuer. They see us sitting with this lady who is a Nuer and am a Dinka, we are passing the

information together, we are laughing, it brings them to come together in peaceful co-existence'. (WGFS staff)

Respecting the principle of right to health, the activities of the WGFS should ensure knowledge and access to sexual and reproductive health services, including clinical care for survivors of sexual violence. This may

Framing WGFS in South Sudan

In South Sudan, WGFS have tended to be seen as primarily part of a GBV response: as a safe place for women and girls to gather, as well as an entry point for survivors to feel safe and access services and for women to learn about GBV and other related issues. Whilst GBV is a crucial issue for women in South Sudan, potential disadvantages with conceptualising WGFS solely as a GBV response are that women who participate in WGFS activities may be stigmatised, or women may not participate due to a fear of stigmatisation. There is also a risk that the focus of the centre's activities could fail to address the full range of issues affecting the lives of women and girls.

It is important to maintain a broad focus on the immediate needs and general wellbeing of women and girls (beyond GBV) and to promote positive social norms and gender equality. Through the WGFS activities, women can strengthen their connections and build trust, both among themselves and with staff and volunteers. This is beneficial for all women and girls, whether or not they have experienced GBV; and for those women who have experienced GBV it creates an environment in which they are more likely to feel comfortable disclosing and accessing services. At the same time, it is important that WGFS continue to have the capacity and technical expertise necessary to respond appropriately to survivors who disclose their experiences.

entail the identification of/or development of a referral system which includes referrals to health facilities for medical care as per the WHO, Clinical Management of Rape Survivors: Developing protocols for use with refugees and internally displaced persons, 2004.

6. Multi-layered integrated support systems

A WGFS should not be a stand-alone activity, but needs to be coordinated with other services and actors in the same location. These may include child friendly spaces (CFSs), youth centres, after-school clubs, sports centres, health services, nutrition centres, livelihoods and economic empowerment projects.

Strong referral networks and pathways are crucial in a WGFS. However, the principle of 'integrated support systems' could take coordination even further, so that links are made between actors who can collaborate in terms of activities and resources (e.g. space). For example, those organising activities in WGFS and CFSs could meet to talk about what they are doing and to coordinate activities so that mothers can attend WGFS activities while their children attend CFS activities. The extent to which an organisation can work in this way depends on its capacity, and on the availability and interest of other actors, but it is something that should always be aimed towards.

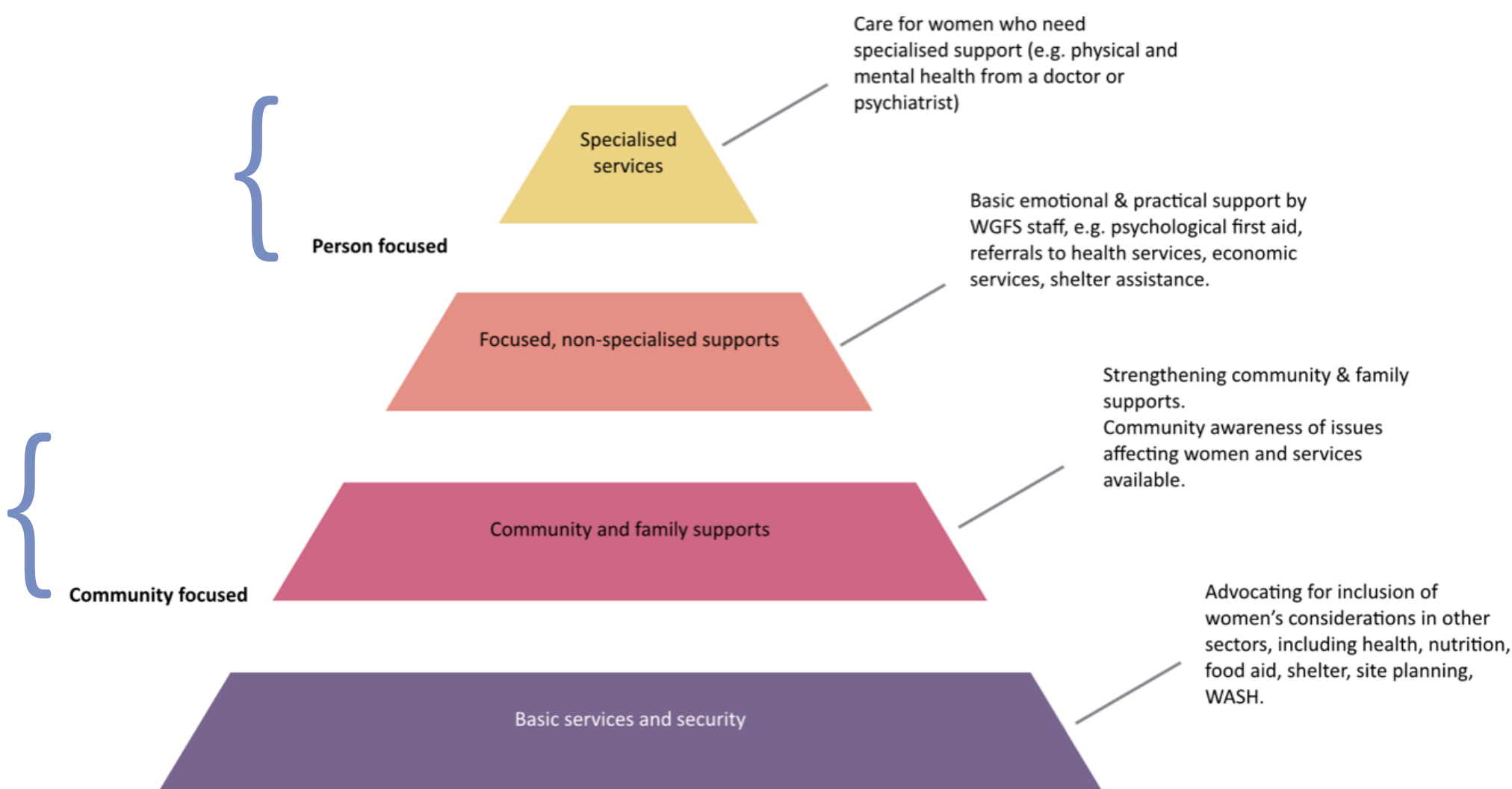


Figure 1: WGFS Intervention Pyramid, based on IASC (2007) MHPSS Guidelines⁸

⁸ Although a key component of comprehensive service provision, services that fall within the top level of this pyramid generally are not part of WGFS. However, all staff should be able to identify, refer and appropriately follow up those in need of such support. Depending on the resources and staffing available, some combination of the other three levels of the pyramid could instead be directly covered by a WGFS.

'It is important that we look at GBV response and prevention together. When we have life skills in the women's centre, it is prevention. But within these preventive activities, or psychosocial activities, a women friendly space is a place where social networks are being developed, so trust builds and women feel more relaxed to actually talk about these [GBV] issues. So at this same centre, then we need to talk about having a soft way of immediate response to whoever discloses, but also make clear that disclosures are not required. The biggest task is to be able to balance it so it doesn't look like it is a place for responding but it is a place where people are able to respond if you do want to disclose'. (NGO staff member)

Women and girls in South Sudan have been affected in different ways by their experiences of conflict, displacement and associated stresses; therefore, they need different types of support. In line with the IASC guidelines on GBV (the 'Systems Approach' principle) and guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), a WGFS should exist within a layered system of complementary supports which meet the needs of different groups, as illustrated in the pyramid in Figure 1.

The two lower levels apply to the majority of women and girls, who require basic services (e.g. food, shelter, water) and security, and strong support networks consisting of family and community members. Here WGFS may serve as a platform, allowing women and girls to advocate for basic services and improved security, and may be a place where women and girls can speak directly to representatives of service providers and/or key decision makers. WGFS can also play a key role in strengthening women's community support networks through the core activity of

strengthening social relationships between women, and facilitating women's access to other support networks and services within the community. In addition, the outreach activities conducted by WGFS serve to raise community awareness of issues affecting women and girls.

A smaller proportion of women and girls may have higher levels of distress, which cannot be managed by community and family supports, and some WGFS may have the capacity to provide focused, non-specialised supports such as psychological first aid, basic individual PSS, case management and/or support group sessions and referral to economic activities. In other cases, the WGFS staff can serve as a referral point to connect women and girls with other organisations which can provide such support.

A minority of women and girls in any setting will require the types of specialist mental health services provided by psychiatrists or psychologists. WGFS will never operate at this level of the pyramid. In some locations, it may be possible for a WGFS to make referrals to such services, but at the time of publication, most locations in South Sudan lack such services.

Although availability and quality of service provision will differ across settings, and it will not always be possible to meet the needs of all women and girls, a "multi-layered support systems" is important to ensure a focus on both prevention and response, and to encourage coordination between the variety of services and systems available to support women and girls. To enable women and girls to be aware of available services and to access them at other levels, efforts should be made to seek out options for referral. Where referral is not possible, WGFS staff should help women, girls and their families identify strategies to cope with the challenges they face, while simultaneously advocating for the establishment of necessary services.

7. Tailor-made approach

In South Sudan there are a variety of contexts in which WGFS may be established – POCs or other organised camp-like settings; non-camp settlements; communities hosting IDPs; etc. Similarly, the aims and nature of a WGFS will be different in an acute emergency versus protracted emergency or recovery/ development situations.

‘At the initial or at the outset or aftermath of crisis, the main purpose is to give them [women and girls] space to socialise, to interact and vent their stressful or traumatic experiences. But gradually it will grow to a centre for access to information and skills, and sometimes to bigger level skills to improve and empower women economically and also socially as well. Economically like income generating activities, and socially is to provide more skills training on leadership and advocacy so that they can take roles in the community as leaders to advocate for their rights’. (WGFS staff).

In the acute emergency stage, the focus will be mostly about strengthening social support networks and providing psychosocial support and information (such as on life skills and other lifesaving messages), as well as providing access to basic services. In the early stages of an emergency, WGFS might have handicraft activities, which are generally less of an income generating activity than a ‘shared activity’ which brings women together and gives them the opportunity to talk, share experiences and build relationships.

In the recovery stage of an emergency, the focus of a WGFS might shift to a stronger focus on women’s empowerment aiming to help them gain

confidence and self-worth, develop leadership and entrepreneurial skills and an ability to earn an income. Decisions about activities should be led by the women themselves. In a protracted emergency, women commonly express a desire for skills-building and income-generating activities, as well as developing leadership and advocacy skills. Mobile WGFS for remote and/or hard to reach locations could also be considered depending on the context and the wishes of the community.

As time goes on, the needs of women and girls are likely to change and it is important that WGFS evolve if they are to remain relevant and useful. Regular feedback and evaluation mechanisms are very important in order to achieve this (see ‘Monitoring and Evaluation’).

8. Sustainability

Sustainability should underpin all decisions made, from the initial establishment of the WGFS through its development and the organisation taking a step back as women and girls take on increasing responsibility for running the activities and services. However, ‘sustainability’ has a different meaning in camp and non-camp settings.

In camp contexts, which are intended to be temporary, sustainability will be mainly about developing the skills, knowledge and leadership abilities of women and girls so that when they go back to their home areas they are able to continue using the capacity they gained from their involvement in the WGFS. This might include sharing information with other women and girls, taking on leadership roles, and/ or generating income using the skills they learned in the WGFS.

‘Even if tomorrow they say this conflict is over and they are getting back home, what skills are they taking back home? We really want to see that skill goes on and they are able to

form their own groups when they get back home'. (WGFS managers)

In the non-camp context, where women and girls are more likely to stay long-term, sustainability is more about ensuring that they will take on the leadership of the WGFS and are able to continue with their activities whether the organisation is there to support them or not. Whilst organisations often need to provide some material support to WGFS, it can be counterproductive if the women and girls are dependent on the organisation providing materials in order for their activities to continue.

'We can't be here for long, it's good to teach someone to be independent, to help one another. Whenever you're dealing with the community and you take over everything yourself, whenever you leave the place no-one will take responsibility. It is good that you support them technically'. (WGFS staff)

As time goes on, organisational staff should take a step back from the WGFS and have less involvement as the women take over the leadership. The organisation's role can be to provide material and technical support where it is necessary.

Cross-cutting issue: Obtaining and maintaining community buy in

Community buy-in is essential if a WGFS is to function effectively and if women are to feel safe participating. Relatives, particularly husbands and fathers, and community leaders have considerable influence over the ability of women and girls to participate in activities. In some locations, WGFS have been perceived by men as places where women and girls are encouraged to reject their culture and challenge their husbands. This perception threatens to put women and girls who participate in WGFS

activities at risk, and can prevent some from taking part at all. It is essential, therefore, to understand the perspectives of men when establishing a WGFS, and to mobilise community support for it. WGFS should not exist in isolation but are part of a broader programme of activities which take place within the community as a whole.

'We are in support of the centre, as men, we really like the centre because it also helps the women to come together and share their experience and share their ideas. Also, they can advise themselves, some of them have problems and when they come there they will interact and be able to advise each other. Even reduce the issues to do with family issues because they will find an advice from one another. But they can give us the chance to go and see what is going on there so we can all have an idea'. (Men's group discussion)

All of the Guiding Principles can help to strengthen community buy-in. Clearly, the 'Do no harm' and 'Sustainability' principles require a focus on this issue. In addition, an emphasis on 'Participation', 'Building on available resources and capacities', and an 'Integrated support system' can go a long way in ensuring that the broader community supports and contributes to the success of a WGFS.

In South Sudan, various ways of achieving community buy-in have been successful in different contexts. These include:

- Dedicating time to conduct community discussions and raise awareness before activities begin. As much as possible, women and girls from the community should be involved in decision-making processes relating to the WGFS to ensure it is perceived as belonging to them, rather than to the organisation.

- Outreach activities, such as house-to-house visits, informational sessions at nutrition and/or health centres, and general meetings and activities to spread messages related to the WGFS. Develop culturally appropriate and context-specific key messages on presenting the WGFS to communities, including community leaders, men, etc.
- Exhibition of talent (knowledge and skills learned from WGFS activities) to community/audiences could be helpful to build more trust with community members and receive their buy-in. For example, women and adolescent girls who make bedsheets or other materials at a WGFS may choose to display their items at community events.
- Locating the WGFS near health services increases acceptance and can also facilitate referrals.
- Ensure that there is some community contribution to the establishment of the WGFS, to complement the contribution of the organisation. In some locations, the community contribution can be in the form of construction materials (poles, grass); where this is not possible the community can contribute labour, such as setting up the tent, decorating the WGFS or providing security to the WGFS locations through volunteers.
- Inviting men to come and participate in certain discussions which are relevant to them. Some examples of such activities include discussions on parenting, health and hygiene, nutrition and peace building as well as how men can engage to improve the safety and well being of women and girls which benefits the community as a whole. Men often appreciate the invitation, which can increase their acceptance of the WGFS. However, it is important to note that these sessions require careful planning and management to ensure that all opinions are

Ideas to strengthen community buy-in

- Dedicate enough time on awareness and community discussions before activities with women and girls begin and before construction begins
- Ensure there is some community contribution to the establishment of the WGFS (e.g. labour during construction or materials like sand).
- Invite leaders and others from outside the WGFS (both male and female) to participate in specific consultations, discussions and activities
- Outreach activities which include men and boys as both targets for outreach and as agents of change.
- Work closely with leaders in the planning and implementation phases.
- Consider activities that may have benefits for the wider community (e.g. a group of adolescent girls may decide to organise themselves to fetch water for people with mobility problems in their area).
- Establish a Community Task Force, consisting of key men and women for wider consultation

heard and respected and that women feel safe and confident enough to share their views when men are present. It is recommended that there be a least one female and one male facilitator for any joint session/activities to better manage expectations and any sensitive issues that may arise. Moreover, it is important that the space remains a WGFS for women and girls thus while some discussions and activities may be extended to men to obtain buy-in it is important that

the spirit of the WGFS remains the same and focuses on the needs and activities of women and girls.

- Working closely with female and male community leaders and other community structures. If leaders see benefits of WGFS, they will pass that message to others. The importance of understanding the context and leadership structures along with engaging leaders from the start is essential.
- Buy-in is enhanced if the WGFS is seen to have a positive impact for the wider community at an early stage. For example, family members often see it as an advantage for women to attend literacy and numeracy classes. In some settings, it may be possible for women and girls attending the WGFS to take action to alleviate an issue affecting the whole community.
- It can be helpful to have a man among the trained outreach officers and community mobilisers, a 'champion', who can advocate for the work being done by the WGFS within the community and who may, as a male, have more access to and influence with men. The 'champion' should be a respected and influential person who is convinced of the value of what is being done in the WGFS, and can sway other men of the utility of WGFS.
- Establish a Community Task Force made up of key men and women in each community (youth leaders, religious leaders, members of women's association etc.) to help the volunteers deliver messages to the community and conduct advocacy activities.
- Occasionally ask selected community leaders to come to listen to the needs and concerns of women and/ or girls. It is important that these sessions are carefully managed so that the women and girls have the

opportunity to express their opinions, rather than listening to a speech from the leader.

- Consider half-walls so that passers-by can see what is going on inside the WGFS, but cannot hear what is being discussed.

While WGFS activities may sometimes involve men and boys, this should be done in a planned and managed way, always ensuring that it does not hinder the participation and empowerment of women and girls.

'In [another country], there were times when men were invited for discussion with the women, not that they are there every day but they might do a joint discussion, they come around, they see what women are learning so that when they go back they even don't doubt what is going on there. And there were also some discussions where women who were willing to bring their husbands to certain discussion, they would talk to their men to come, so they knew what women were doing'. (NGO staff)

Chapter 3

How to Establish and Run Women and Girls Friendly Spaces





Chapter 3

How to Establish and Run Women and Girls Friendly Spaces

Phases and key activities for establishing and running WGFS

Phases	Key activities
Preparation phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult government and community leadership for political and community buy-in of WGFS project 2. Conduct assessments of needs and resources in the project area 3. Conduct service mapping and develop referral pathways 4. Conduct SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) analysis for WGFS project 5. Select WGFS location and activities 6. Hire WGFS staff and prepare monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools 7. Conduct WGFS program planning and budgeting workshop among stakeholders 8. Prepare sustainability and phase-out plan based on the information gathered from above steps

Implementation phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train staff and volunteers 2. Construct/renovate WGFS locations/sites 3. Develop and sign Memorandum of Understanding for any WGFS which makes use of existing and available government or public structures 4. Implement the WGFS activities identified in preparation phase 5. Execute the referral mechanism 6. Conduct regular mentoring and supervision of staff during WGFS project implementation 7. Conduct M&E visits to the WGFS location/sites 8. Conduct project progress review meetings and revise the WGFS activities or methodology of implementing WGFS activities 9. Compile and document the lessons learned and best practices
Exit phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize stakeholders meeting to share progress, challenges and lessons learned 2. Review the phase-out plan with stakeholders in light of new information gathered and experiences gained in implementation phase 3. Agree with stakeholders on actual phase-out/handover process 4. Execute the step by step handover process as per revised phase-out plan 5. Organize a final exit meeting with stakeholders

1. Assessment

The first step in establishing a new WGFS will always be a comprehensive assessment to find out (a) whether the intervention is appropriate for the particular context, and (b) if so, what the focus and nature of its activities should be. The assessment is an opportunity to collect information on

strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to further inform WGFS activities. The assessment may take place very rapidly at the onset of an emergency or, in more stable environments, could be conducted over the course of a few weeks or months. Where possible, an initial assessment can be combined with other assessments taking place at the same time, in collaboration with other actors. In all cases, assessments must be participatory, actively engaging women and girls as well as other groups. During an assessment it is important to gather information which can be used for the SWOT analysis to decide on how WGFS should be designed.

The IASC GBV Guidelines suggest that an assessment should include consultations with the following parties:

- Key stakeholders and actors providing services in the community
- GBV, gender and diversity specialists
- Men and women of all ages and backgrounds of the affected community, paying particular attention to women, girls and other at-risk groups
- Community leaders
- Community-based organisations (i.e. organisations for women, adolescents/youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, etc.)
- Representatives of humanitarian response sectors
- Local and national governments
- Members of host communities in IDP/refugee settings

Assessments conducted prior to establishing WGFS in South Sudan have often included the following elements:

Deciding whether or not a WGFS should be developed

The issues to be considered when deciding whether a WGFS is appropriate include:

Whether other similar services or community support systems are available which meet the same needs. The broad aims of the potential WGFS should be clear before the assessment begins, so that it is possible to identify whether those aims are being met in other ways in the target community. If so, setting up a parallel service would not be appropriate.

Safety concerns: there may be circumstances in which bringing a group of women or girls together in a WGFS would increase their risk of harm (either emotional or physical). For example, in situations where women and/or girls are targeted for attacks in public, it may not be safe to bring groups of girls together in a clearly identifiable location. If this risk cannot be managed effectively, it would not be appropriate to establish a WGFS at this time.

Staff capacities and organisational resources: in South Sudan, it is often not possible to recruit staff with formal education, skills and experience in the field of psychosocial support. Yet it is likely that some women and girls participating in WGFS activities will require such support. Where no staff are available with skills in 'focused, non-specialised support' (see Figure 1), the WGFS should restrict its activities to the most basic level (see "Activities and Services") until enough capacity for conducting more specialised PSS activities has been established (through recruitment, training and/or referral and coordination with other organizations able to fulfil this need).

Availability of other services: in some settings, services such as clinical management of rape, or mental health services, are not available. An organisation seeking to establish a WGFS in such circumstances would need to make a decision about whether it is appropriate to do so – and subsequently limit the activities they conduct -- given that issues may arise which they are unable either to respond to either directly or by referral to a nearby service provider.

- Observe and get to know the community, find out what women and girls already do in terms of socialising and problem solving, and what the gaps are. Understand the community leadership structures, culture, norms, social life, needs and capacities.
- Identify leaders, including women leaders and other influential women; meet with them, explain and discuss. Listen to their ideas.
- Period of intensive consultation with the community, listening and giving information, including both women and men. It is important to do this as well as talk to leaders, and to talk to a wide variety of people, making additional efforts to seek out those who may be marginalised (e.g. people with disabilities, the elderly). Find out whether people are in favour of a WGFS being established and, if so, find out what women and girls would hope to gain from it. In essence, these discussions should also help the organisers understand potential positive or negative impact of a WGFS, as well as comprehend who would be the most appropriate people to lead it, the best location and what services/activities would best meet the needs of women and girls in the community.
- Identify needs and strengths/ capacities of both women and adolescent girls as well as available resources in the community.
- Connect with other actors in that location to avoid duplication of services and coordinate services (e.g. across different sectors, such as child protection, livelihoods, etc.)

The lists of 'Do's and Don'ts' on page 35 of the IASC GBV Guidelines can be helpful when planning an assessment. Once this process is coming to a close, a decision should be made together (i.e. including representatives of all those involved in the assessment) as to whether a WGFS is appropriate in this context and at this time.

In some cases, an organisation may decide that it is better not to establish a WGFS when staff capacity and the lack of other services in the area do not allow them to meet women's needs effectively. Others may decide to establish a WGFS with limited aims which reflect the resources and capacity available, and to search for creative solutions to issues as they arise. The latter approach can be effective if the WGFS is led by a strong, experienced manager who is able to adjust programming to meet emerging needs, develop good working relationships with other service providers, advocate for the establishment of other services, and put in place an appropriate training and mentoring plan for the WGFS staff [see 'Staffing requirements and capacity building']. There is an option to set up a basic safe space and develop it as time goes on, using the 'Guiding Principles' to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of women and girls (and WGFS staff) is prioritised. A WGFS can serve as a platform for advocacy and improving other services in a location.

1.1 Deciding your Target Groups

WGFS are usually intended to be accessible to all adult women and adolescent girls. As women and girls differ in various ways (age, educational level, marital status), a range of activities and approaches need to be included within a single WGFS so that it is perceived as accessible to all girls and women living in the target community.

The assessment conducted during the early stages of the WGFS must include discussions with a variety of women and girls in order to find out what activities would attract them, and the times and days they are able to attend the centre.

The most vulnerable women and girls can often be excluded due to logistical challenges, and a failure to actively engage them during the assessment process. Extra efforts may need to be made in order to enable some women and girls to participate in WGFS activities. For example:

- Adolescent girls have different needs and interests than adult women and often report they are not interested in participating in activities alongside their mothers. Girls who attend school are likely to have different needs and interests to those who are out of school, or those who are married⁹.
- Elderly women, may have mobility problems or have difficulties in participating in activities requiring good eyesight or dexterity (e.g. embroidery).
- Women or girls who are working, particularly female heads of households, may struggle to find the time to participate in activities during the standard 'working hours'.
- Women and girls with disabilities.
- Women and girls from minority communities

Meeting the needs of the various groups may require having separate sessions for groups with different needs (e.g. elderly women) or a separate space within the WGFS compound (e.g. for adolescent girls). It may also involve having 'outreach groups' who meet at times the WGFS is closed (e.g. evenings or weekends) or in areas closer to women and girls with mobility problems (e.g. elderly women, or those with disabilities affecting mobility).

⁹ For useful guidance on establishing centres and activities for adolescent girls, see Population Council (2010) *Girl Centred Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs*. (<http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>)

1.2 Prioritising Safety

There are advantages to separate spaces and/or meeting times being established for adolescent girls, so they can decorate it as they like and feel some ownership of the space. However, it is important that their meetings are facilitated by a mentor, staff member or volunteer to ensure that misinformation is not spread between the girls, and that the space remains safe.

*'In [one of our centres] there are some girls that are already married and trying to influence other girls that early marriage is something which would be good for them'.
[NGO staff member]*

*'If we create a space for girls to stay in, you know the young guys are there also waiting to interact with these girls'.
[NGO staff member]*

1.3 Service mapping and referral pathways

The needs of women and girls attending WGFS are immense and it would never be possible to address all their needs through WGFS activities. Hence, proper coordination with and referrals to several other service providers and humanitarian actors are paramount to address the multiple needs of women and girls identified through needs assessment. Therefore, WGFS staff should conduct a service mapping either through individual visits to service providers, joint meeting with service providers/humanitarian actors or revision of existing service mapping/referral pathways. A service mapping should include contact details of the service providers (physical address, contact number of the focal point), full list of types of services provided, the location where the services are available, and the hours the services are available, the target group for which the

services are provided and information whether services are free or to be paid. The Protection Cluster 5Ws (Who is doing what, where and when) data collection tool can be used to collect information about actors and the services they provide. Below an example is provided for Raja county, Lol state, South Sudan.



HNTPO/ South Sudan/2015/Bruno Bierrenbach Feder

Name of the Organisation	Contact Person, contact number and e-mail address	Types of activities/ services	Time frame (ongoing/planned/ expected date of start)	Location	Target groups	Any other useful information
HealthNet TPO	Boniface Duku +211 956XXXX Email: XXXX@gmail.com	Medical services Psychosocial support Income generating activities (IGA)	Ongoing Ongoing Planned after December 2017	All PHCC and PHCU of LOL state Raja, Mangaya and Diemzuber	General Population Survivors of GBV, psychosocial distress, trauma and IDP population	Services are free of cost Plans to start psychosocial hotline services in 2018 IGA support will be provided to the women and girls attending WGFS
Cordaid	Dr. Albert 211 956XXXX Email: XXXX@gmail.com	Medical services	Ongoing	Raja Hospital	General population	Health services are for all and free of cost
AFOD	Kennedy +211 956XXXX Email: XXXX@gmail.com	Nutrition services	Ongoing	Diemzuber, Kur, Ring and Ere	Mothers and children	
ALIMA	Franciso +211 956XXXX Email: XXXX@gmail.com	Child health services	Ongoing	Pediatric Unit, Raja Hospital	Children	
ICRC	Emily +211 956XXXX Email: XXXX@gmail.com	GBV response and psychosocial support	Ongoing	Raja	Survivors of GBV and vulnerable groups (children and elderly)	Plans to extend the services to Sopo
Raja Catholic Church	Fr. Richard +211 956XXXX Email: XXXX@gmail.com	Food and non-food items distribution, religious Teaching and conflict mitigation	Ongoing	Raja	Vulnerable populations (poor, children, women and elderly)	

When information about service providers is collected:

- Develop a drawing/map indicating the location and services provided by various stakeholders;
- Validate the information in the map by organizing service providers' meeting or asking for written feedback about the information included in the drawing/map;
- Make this map available to all the staff so that they can make the most appropriate decision for referral of individuals needing services;
- Post this drawing/pathway with pictures on selected public places, so that people have access to information about available services;
- Update the service mapping every year and/or as necessary if the availability of the services changes.

Referral mechanism

Organize a service providers meeting to discuss conditions of referral, the referral pathways, the format of the referral form to be used, documentation of the referral cases and follow up mechanisms. In ANNEX 7 two examples of referral forms are provided. At the local level organisations would need to agree on which format is most relevant and useful to their setting.

2. Location, Space and Other Logistics

Decisions about the most appropriate location for a WGFS and the ways in which the space should be structured should be made by the women and girls themselves and will depend greatly on the context. The issues to be considered when making decisions about the WGFS space include:

- How much control do women and girls have over the space?
- How safe do they feel in that space?
- How safe is it for them to travel from their homes to the space?
- How private is the space? Are women and girls able to talk about sensitive issues? Is there a place for private (one-on-one) conversations?
- Is there a space for children to play or be taken care of while women and girls participate in activities?
- Is it accessible to women and girls in that population, including those with disabilities?
- Consider proximity to other services – particularly CFS, schools and health services. For example, being close to a CFS has advantages because women can take their children there and know they are safe, but at the same time there needs to be enough separation for women to talk freely about potentially sensitive issues without their children overhearing.

'They should feel that they are at home. Because we even tell the women this is your home, when you are coming to the centre, feel that you are coming to your second home. Even the decorations that they hang on their walls at home, they should put in the centre. When they are here they feel that they are visiting their neighbour, they are at home and they don't feel they are in a separate facility'. (WGFS managers)

All WGFS should have a private room which can be used by staff members for individual discussions with a woman or girl. A few WGFS also have a separate space for examination in the case of rape, which contains a hospital bed and a screen. This enables a doctor to conduct the

examination in the WGFS instead of the survivor having to go to the hospital or clinic. Where examination facilities are not available within WGFS, survivors of rape should be referred to the nearest health facility without delay. Immediate referral will facilitate timely access to life saving medical treatment.

There can be difficulties getting suitable places for a WGFS in camp settings, because of the limitations on space and the fact that space is allocated by the camp managers. In these situations, WGFS managers need to undertake advocacy with camp managers so they understood the issues to be considered when allocating space for a WGFS.

One of the decisions to be made when considering what might be the most appropriate location for a WGFS is whether to have a space used exclusively for women's and girls' activities, or to use a space within another facility (e.g. church, school, community centre). There are advantages and disadvantages to both options, as outlined below.

'I remember in [another country], men said 'you call them women centres, what about us?' We tried to change the name to say, 'ok, let's have like a community centre', and what happened at the end of the day, the men took over the centres and the women didn't have any space to actually use them. We need to be careful otherwise we might lose what we want to have in terms of who needs the services, it will be a problem because it might become a centre for different activities' [NGO staff member]

Separate space for activities for women and girls

Advantages:

- Women and girls can decorate the place the way they like, and develop ownership of it.
- Women and girls have increased decision making power over the use of the space, be it for informal or formal activities.
- Privacy is enhanced.

Disadvantages:

- Could contribute to negative attitudes from community if the centre is seen only to benefit women and girls.
- Going to the centre could be seen as stigmatising if it is associated with GBV.

Using space within another facility

Advantages:

- The activities of women and girls are more integrated into the other activities of the community.
- Reduced risk of stigma or other unintended consequences.

Disadvantages:

- Women and girls lack ownership of the space, which could limit the activities they are able to do and the ways in which the group/centre develops.
- Lack of privacy.
- Potential lack of clarity in decision-making regarding the use of the space by different groups.

Logistics and Supplies

In South Sudan there are complex logistical issues which make it difficult to be certain when materials will be available, especially outside Juba. Women and girls can become demoralised when the expected supplies do not arrive on time; so where possible they should be kept fully informed of changes in planned activities and the reasons for the change. Volunteers can pass these messages on in the community, as well as WGFS staff informing women and girls during sessions. Where possible, activities which are not dependent on supplies being brought from the outside should be prioritised. The creative use of local materials should be encouraged.

3. Activities and Services

The range of activities offered by any WGFS depends on: (a) the needs and interests of women and girls and (b) the context and capacity of the organisation. The range of activities which could be included is vast, but it is important to maintain a balance between structured activities, services and time to socialise. Activities need to be appropriate to the age and interests of those participating, with special needs also being taken into account (e.g. people with disabilities).

As much as possible, women and girls should take the lead in planning activities, but in some contexts will need guidance to enable them to

consider a range of options and take into account the outcomes of the different choices. As time goes on, it is anticipated that staff will have less input and women and girls will take over more of the leadership responsibilities, including planning and implementing activities.

In all WGFS, a weekly and daily activity plan must be developed and clearly communicated both within the WGFS and in the broader community. Written information may not be appropriate in areas where literacy levels are very low, so information can be communicated orally or using pictures.

Foundational activities

In emergency contexts, as well as some others where capacity is low, it is recommended that WGFS begin with a set of basic activities which form a solid foundation which can be built upon as time goes on. In the same way as a house must be built on a solid foundation, it is essential that a WGFS is based on a set of core activities, which are provided in a robust manner. Over time, depending on the capacity of the organisation, this foundation can be built upon with a set of more complex activities but these will only be effective if the foundational activities are strong.

These foundational (minimum) activities can be a good option in situations where capacity is low and/or there are few resources available. They take into account the most pressing issues/needs and create space for women and girls to come together and support one another, which has value in and of itself.

The foundational activities are:

- a) Activities which are popular amongst women and girls in that context, and which involve some kind of social interaction. Popular activities which require few resources can be identified

during the assessment stage. The purpose of these activities is to bring women together so that they can begin to build relationships, share experiences, find things in common and support each other. It is not important which activity is the focus of these sessions, as long as it will attract women or girls (depending on who the target group is). Activities which have been found to be popular in the South Sudan context include: 'tea-talk' sessions and various handicrafts, such as embroidery, bead-making, knitting and crocheting. Different activities can be used to



attract different age groups. Ideally, women or girls would lead these sessions, teaching and supporting each other. They could be inter-generational sessions, with older women teaching younger women.

- b) Open days/ unstructured sessions, which women and girls can come to even if they do not participate in any other WGFS activities. They are free to do any activity or none on this day; the focus is on socialising and enjoying themselves (e.g. sing, dance, chat), although materials may be available for hair plaiting, nail painting, henna.
- c) Information and awareness-raising sessions. Topics discussed will be determined by the context, what services are available, and what the women are interested in, but could include:
 - how women can participate in decision making,
 - how women can bring peace to their community,
 - antenatal care,
 - Gender Based Violence (GBV),
 - general safety-related issues
 - hygiene promotion,
 - basic reproductive health information,
 - rights of women/girls, child protection and parenting
 - available services, including SGBV services, and referral pathways,
 - stress management and coping strategies.

These sessions should be planned according to the issues being faced by the women and girls currently, and could be facilitated by representatives of other organisations or community structures.

Topics need to be tailored to the context and available services. For example, it would not be appropriate to do awareness raising on the health implications of sexual violence if there are no services available to women in that location.

- d) Referrals to other services where necessary, depending on women's needs. A clear referral pathway must be in place, and all WGFS staff should be familiar with it, and their roles in relation to referrals. In most WGFS, the Case Worker will take responsibility for managing referrals and follow-ups.
- e) Outreach activities are essential in order to maintain community buy-in, and to access women and girls who are not able to participate in WGFS activities (e.g. women who are working long hours to provide for their families). Outreach activities can be conducted by trained and supervised volunteers, and could include home visits, community meetings and dialogues, informal conversations at water points and other areas where people spontaneously gather. Outreach activities can also include establishing informal groups for women who cannot access the normal WGFS activities (e.g. by meeting in the evenings or at weekends).

While selecting WGFS activities, WGFS participants may want to include activities for the benefit of the broader community. For example, assisting a member who has experienced a loss in her family and/or helping a vulnerable member of the community (an elderly person without family support or a person with a disability who may need assistance in performing some daily tasks). This should be voluntary and up to the discretion of the WGFS members. The Guiding Principles outlined earlier should be integrated into all activities, to ensure that a psychosocial approach is integrated throughout the work of the WGFS.

What is Psychosocial Support?

Psychosocial support is community based. It is not [primarily] individual psycho-therapy ... It is about helping communities to regain their connections, their voice, their wisdom and resources ... Through psychosocial support, communities determine their common goals so that they can care for their own people'. Psychosocial activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Life-skills sessions in schools
- Basic counselling for families who are affected by HIV/ AIDS
- Early childhood development activities
- Support for communal spaces/ meetings to discuss, problem-solve and organise community members to respond to an emergency
- Broadcasting radio messages on positive coping
- Structured recreational or creative activities (e.g. music and dance groups)
- Support groups for teachers to help them manage stress
- Programmes to support families to care for family members with specific needs such as persons with disabilities or older persons
- Establishing a mentor-mentee system for young adults to reach out to vulnerable youth in the community.
- Providing a programme of gardening
- Discussion for women whose children have been forcibly recruited by an armed group
- Family tracing and reunification
- Psychological First Aid

Advanced/Optional Activities

Where an organisation has the capacity to offer activities in addition to the foundational ones, there are many options available. The decision as to which additional activities to offer depends on the needs and interests of women and girls, plus the knowledge, skills and experience of staff. Some of the more advanced activities currently offered in WGFS in South Sudan are outlined below:

- Training in entrepreneurial and livelihood skills which are appropriate to the context (e.g. bakery or catering training, tailoring, computer training and hairdressing).
- Financial education or small business skills (record-keeping and how to manage money).
- Adult education, such as literacy and numeracy classes.
- Life skills trainings appropriate to the context and age group.
- Parenting skills training.
- Orientation on maternal and neonatal health, sexual and reproductive health rights.
- Psychosocial support and/or case management for women experiencing high levels of distress, including some survivors of GBV.
- Psycho-education/ stress management sessions (including relaxation exercises).
- Meetings between representatives of agencies and women and girls to hear the concerns of women and girls. This not only gives agencies an opportunity to identify issues affecting women and girls, but gives women and girls an opportunity to practice leadership and advocacy in a safe space. This is especially useful in settings where there is no formal women's committee; where such a

committee exists it would be more appropriate to coordinate the WGFS activities with the women's committee.



- Women and/or girls can work together to identify issues having a negative impact on the community, then develop action plans and put them into practice. This type of activity is both empowering for the women or girls involved, and beneficial for the community.
- Participants in WGFS activities can find ways to reach out to other women and girls to spread key messages on wellbeing (e.g. early marriage, nutrition) through drama and other methods that the women or girls feel will be most effective in a given context.
- Activities that re-connect them with their home and culture (e.g. traditional games, bead-making, etc.).

- Drama, music and dance sessions. These may be especially appealing to adolescent girls and female youth.
- ‘Mentoring’, where women or girls with more experience mentor younger/ less experienced women. This is especially useful for adolescent girls, if young women slightly older than them can be identified. These may be young women who have gone further in school than others, are interested in developing their skills and show leadership potential. They can run activities and serve as role models for the adolescent girls¹⁰.
- Inter-generational discussions, with women of different ages sharing experiences and thoughts in a semi-structured way.
- Gardening and farming. In some locations, produce is sold and the income is used to maintain the WGFS structure and pay for materials to be used during sessions.

Where possible, these activities can be supported or conducted by other actors with expertise in the subject, rather than (or alongside) WGFS staff. For example, a livelihoods actor could provide input on group lending and small business skills; education actors could provide teachers to run literacy and numeracy sessions; health care actors could offer awareness-raising sessions on health issues.

¹⁰ For guidance on establishing a mentoring system, see Population Council (2010) *Girl Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs*. (<http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>).

Handicraft activities

Many WGFS in South Sudan have a significant focus on craft activities, such as knitting, bead-work, crocheting and embroidering bedsheets. These activities are enjoyed by the women, so are a good way to bring them together and encourage conversation and relationship-building (with each other and with the WGFS staff). The activities are sometimes seen as income-generating activities, but there is a very limited market for the goods produced, especially outside of Juba and other major cities. The only way women can generate an income from these activities is to rely on the NGO to market them, which has limited sustainability and creates a dependence on the organisation.

Craft activities have a value, but there is a danger that they can become an end in themselves. It is important that the activities are used to bring women and girls together, but the focus of the WGFS does not remain on these activities; rather, they are used as an entry point to other more psychosocial/empowerment-type activities. This depends on staff having a good understanding of the aims of the WGFS and being supported to broaden the activities.

Livelihoods activities and economic empowerment

For many women and some adolescent girls in South Sudan, economic empowerment is a priority. They would like training in skills which could help them generate an income, and/ or support to establish a small business.

Such activities could be very beneficial, and economic empowerment can be an important element of GBV prevention work since women who are unable to meet their basic survival needs are often forced to resort to risky coping strategies (e.g. venturing into dangerous areas to collect firewood or grass to sell; survival sex). Therefore, many WGFS would like to include such activities within their programme. However, it should be noted that livelihoods activities require a certain level of staff capacity, and to move into this area requires longer-term planning on the part of organisations. It requires staff with skills and expertise in livelihoods programming in order to ensure that activities will actually have the desired effect. Entering into this field without sufficient planning and capacity could have unintended negative consequences, so organisations are encouraged to work towards livelihood activities in a step-by-step way, rather than rush to introduce them too early in the process.

In locations where livelihoods projects exist, or there are savings groups for women or other economic empowerment projects (for example, IRC's EA\$E project), it would be helpful to link women and girls to these activities, rather than try to implement them within the WGFS itself.

4. Staffing Requirements and Capacity Building

In most WGFS, the basic full-time staff requirements in order to run the foundational activities (see 'Activities and Services' for a description of the foundational activities) are:

- One WGFS manager (female/male)
- One or more Women's Support Officer (female)
- Two or more Case Workers (female/male)
- Two or more Outreach officers/Community mobilisers (male/ female)
- Security guard(s)

Sample job descriptions for these core positions can be found in Annex 2. Given that the target population of WGFS are women and girls, it would be beneficial to have a majority of female staff to preserve the female ownership of the space but also improve participation of women and girls. WGFS staff do not need to be exclusively women however. There may be qualified men who could contribute to the effective running of the space, implementation of certain activities and coordination with the community. Ultimately, the hiring of staff (including gender of the staff) is at the discretion of each organisation. Volunteers can be recruited for activities such as outreach (house-to-house visits; facilitation of community dialogues; informal conversations at waterpoints and other gathering places), other community work such as awareness-raising campaigns, and care of small children who come to the WGFS with their mothers. As time goes on, the volunteers can take on a wider range of activities. Incentives can be given to volunteers to sustain motivation and encourage ongoing volunteerism; these need not be financial but could be in the form of trainings and/or material goods.

When the WGFS develops beyond the foundational stage, it will be necessary to recruit for additional positions depending on the direction the WGFS will take. These positions require specific skills and/ or training and supervision. Depending on the activities selected and considering the transition and or phase out plans developed, additional staff (full or part time) may include:

- **Psychosocial Support Officer**
 - Provide psychosocial services and activities
 - Ensure Guiding Principles are being fully implemented
- **Livelihoods/ Income Generating Activities Officer**
 - Conduct market assessment and identify opportunities for women and girls to earn an income in that context
 - Develop a plan to train and support women to develop the relevant skills
 - Develop linkages with other relevant actors (e.g. economic empowerment programmes, VSLA groups)
- **Education Officer**
 - Identify the key educational needs and interests of women and girls
 - Identify appropriate teachers and organise sessions
 - Monitor the effectiveness of the education sessions
- **Psychosocial care provider**
 - Provide individual psychosocial support where required
 - Organise and facilitate support group sessions
- **Mentors** (women from the community with whom adolescent girls can identify, and who can serve as role models)
 - Plan and facilitate activities with adolescent girls, with the support of the Women's Support Officer
 - Refer girls in need of individual support to a case worker
- **'Activity specialists'** who visit the WGFS for their specific activity only, depending on which activities are included in the WGFS schedule.



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Requirements

It may be challenging to recruit WGFS staff who have qualifications and experience in a relevant field, especially if women are required for certain positions. Therefore, recruitment should focus on personal skills and capacities, and evidence that potential staff are committed to supporting and working with women and girls (perhaps demonstrated through some form of voluntary activity). Plans for recruitment should be accompanied by a plan for immediate capacity-building, recognising that staff may not arrive completely equipped with all the necessary skills and knowledge.

While selecting/recruiting WGFS staff, it is important to check references of prospective staff.

Requirements for foundational activities

Skills and capacities

- Passion and enthusiasm
- Empathy and sensitivity
- Facilitation skills
- Communication
- Trustworthy
- Community mobilisation
- Good networking skills
- Willingness and ability to grasp new concepts
- Promotion of gender equity
- For some positions – ability to read and write (either English or Arabic). Some positions may require basic computer literacy for record-keeping.

Core training

- GBV basic concepts
- Core psychosocial support principles (WGFS Guiding Principles)
- Referral mechanisms and services available in the local area
- Record keeping
- Psychological First Aid
- Staff welfare/ self-care
- Code of Conduct
- Child protection
- Mentoring and supervision of staff

Requirements for other activities

The requirements depend on the direction the WGFS takes, but the areas in which staff may need to have skills, experience and/ or training include:

- Individual psychosocial support
- Group psychosocial support
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Assessment (and analysis)
- Leadership
- Management of people/supervision
- GBV case management
- Coordination
- Conflict management/Peacebuilding
- Training skills
- Mental health and psychosocial support/ Community based psychosocial support
- Livelihoods
- Advocacy
- Report writing
- Where there are facilities for clinical management of rape, there is a need to ensure adequate training for the personnel delivering these services.

Capacity Building

Capacity-building of WGFS staff is crucial in South Sudan in order to ensure that staff and volunteers are able to safely, effectively and ethically perform their duties. A capacity-building plan should be in place from the beginning; an ad hoc approach will not be effective in this context. Similarly, training alone will not be effective; it must be combined with coaching and mentoring if people are to learn and implement new skills. Ideally, organisations would have an individual who is responsible for supporting staff on day-to-day basis as they implement what they have learned. Where this is not possible, a WGFS should focus on foundational activities only, until capacity has been strengthened.

The focus of training is often on staff providing direct WGFS services, but managers may also need to develop their skills in certain areas. It should not be assumed that managers have skills in all aspects of WGFS activities, especially as the activities start to develop away from the foundational activities alone.

Training programmes can be enhanced by:

- Exchange visits and experience-sharing meetings for staff of WGFS from different organisations or working in different contexts.
- Peer-to-peer support, and/ or group supervision, particularly where there are a number of case workers.
- Sharing of training tools and resources between organisations and/or across project sites.

Due to the importance of capacity-building in South Sudan, it is essential that proposals and budgets include this, and that advocacy takes place with donors and others regarding the central importance not only of training, but also of ongoing coaching and mentoring.



5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation activities are essential in order to:

- Provide accountability to stakeholders (including the women and girls involved in the WGFS, the broader community, and funders) regarding the results of WGFS programming.
- Provide information to develop and improve WGFS programming in subsequent phases of implementation, and to identify any unintended consequences of programming
- Help develop a more effective evidence base for WGFS programming.

A monitoring and evaluation plan must be in place from the beginning. The elements included in the plan and the tools which will be used depend on the indicators which are established for the WGFS (see Annex 6 for more information about identifying appropriate indicators). Important elements of a monitoring and evaluation plan include:

- A baseline assessment is conducted as soon as (or before) the WGFS is established in order to demonstrate change over time.
- Training of selected staff and volunteers to collect accurate monitoring data, and, where appropriate, to collate and analyse it. Staff may also be involved in collecting evaluation data, although evaluations are often conducted by external bodies.
- Women and girls must have opportunities to participate in monitoring and evaluating the WGFS activities and processes, and members of the wider community as well. The guiding principle of 'participation' applies to M&E processes, as does that of 'do no harm' (see Annex 5 on ethical considerations in assessment, monitoring and evaluation).

- Monitoring information is collected continuously, and evaluation data is collected at regular intervals. To know whether there has been a change (evaluation), it is necessary to collect the same information, in the same way, at different times (e.g. every year; or the beginning, middle and end of the programme period).

There is often a temptation to collect too much information. Carefully selected indicators can be a good guide to capture the most relevant information.

Monitoring

Monitoring refers to a routine and continuous process of collecting relevant programme information, analysing this information at regular intervals and comparing actual results to expected results in order to measure a programme's performance. If the project has a log frame, monitoring usually focuses on project inputs, processes, activities and outputs. Tools which can be used for monitoring include:

- Attendance lists
- Participant register
- Activity records to assess the quality of the activities and any challenges faced (e.g. in terms of supplies and logistic support)
- Checking in at the end of every session to asking how women felt about it.
- Group discussions to explore women's feelings about the centre and the activities
- Monitoring staff skill levels and attitudes.
- Observation tools/checklists
- Case management follow-up records (if relevant)

In all cases, the information is compared to what is expected by that stage in the process. Any discrepancies are explored in an attempt to understand the cause. For example, if attendance lists show there has been low attendance, or an unexpected decrease, WGFS staff could meet with participants to ask how they feel about the sessions or explore if there are certain risks or other factors that have arisen that are preventing women and girls from participating in the sessions. Learning must take place continuously to enable adjustments to be made at any point.

Some examples of monitoring forms can be found in Annex 6.

Evaluation

Evaluation activities assess whether the changes that the programme aimed to bring about in the lives of individuals, families and communities have happened as intended. If the project has a log frame, evaluation activities usually focus on outcomes and impact (plus outputs, in some cases).

Questions answered by evaluation activities

- Did we achieve what we said we would achieve?
- Were there any unintended consequences?
- Did our intervention cause the observed change?

Tools which can be used for evaluation include:

- Knowledge tests to assess the extent to which women and girls have learned new information. (Note: it may be helpful to conduct such tests verbally, since literacy levels are low in South Sudan).
- Group discussions to explore women's feelings about the centre and the activities
- Group and individual discussions to assess community perceptions of the WGFS, what they think it is for and what they think it achieves.
- Participatory satisfaction surveys
- Most Significant Change technique

Some of these tools are described in detail in Annex 6.



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6. Phase Out

Whilst WGFS may be active indefinitely, they should not have long-term external involvement. To this end, a phase out or transition plan should always be considered and it is important that women and girls, the community and other important actors, including local organisations and if possible governmental structures, should be involved from the very outset. The principle of sustainability is paramount in this respect. Unless strong community support, local capacity and infrastructures are

available, it is not recommended to pursue a long term WGFS. The following considerations are helpful when planning and implementing a phase out plan¹¹:

- Ensure that the community is aware from the outset that a phase-out period and/or handover will take place. Provide information as soon as possible about when this will occur.
- Always use a community-based approach that will support ownership and also transition of the WGFS to the community and or local organisations.
- Allow women, girls and other community members to make key decisions about the transition, including the design and implementation of the transition strategy.
- Develop in close consultation with the community and other stakeholders a phase-out or transition plan that links with broader recovery planning from the very outset. This may mean for instance transitioning some or all of the activities of the WGFS into existing community resources such as community centres, churches or schools.
- Be prepared to be flexible and adapt plans on the basis of the changing context.

¹¹ Adapted from Global Protection Cluster, TOWARDS EFFECTIVE CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE PROGRAMMES IN EMERGENCIES, Global Protection Cluster, 2014.

MINIMAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TRANSITIONING A WGFS

Planning from the outset:

- Include options for transition and steps to be taken in your initial plans. Align these with broader recovery planning.
- Contingency planning - What do you do in case the WGFS gets damaged or destroyed for example? Or if there is an outbreak of a communicable disease? How will you deal with these unforeseen developments or unintended consequences?

Communicate and consult:

- All stakeholders (staff, partners, government, community & religious leaders, community members, families & children) need to be informed that the WGFS may be a temporary measure to offer support to women and girls in the first phase of the emergency and during early recovery; it is not a long-term substitute for community support and mobilization.
- Consult with women, girls and community members on how they would like to transition the work of the WGFS. Discussions around transition should be taking place from the outset and be on-going throughout the monitoring process. To make sure the community accept and understand the consequences of closure or transition of a WGFS it is important that the staff meet with community members at an early stage of the exit/transition process and again later in the process. Regardless, of whether the WGFS transitions into a longer-term initiative or phase out completely, it is important to establish a constant dialogue with community members about the plans and future of the WGFS. If there are plans to maintain a WGFS on a more permanent basis then this should be planned and designed in consultation with women and girls and the wider community.

Coordinate:

- Coordinate with other WGFS implementing agencies on time-line for phase out. Have discussions with available services on the type of support they can give after the phase out of the WGFS. Coordinate with service providers to see what activities they will maintain and what kind of support they might need over the long term to do so. Coordinate with other sectors and agencies regarding population movements, their transition plans and dates for closure etc.

Assess:

- Assess the capacity of community members, community based organisations, local NGOs and government agencies to continue WGFS activities, to take on the next phase of the project, including the management of the WGFS or other form it will transition into.
- Assess the support needs of women and girls and capacity of long-term stakeholders to meet these needs - Ensure that the needs will continue to be met.

Reinforce capacity in line with needs identified in assessment.

Identify an agreed model for phase out with all stakeholders – communicating what the chosen model is to all those involved.



IMPORTANT ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER IN TRANSITION PLANS

- Management structure: can be managed by a local NGO, INGO, government, community, women, adolescent girls, community volunteers, etc. The possible ownership of the center and materials, and arrangements for management once the initial organisation withdraws should be a priority throughout the use of the WGFS. The active role of women and girls in that new set up is possible and should be promoted.
- Equipment transfer: carry out an inventory, consider donor and agency procedures and policies with regards to asset transfer requirements and ensure you comply, set-up on-going M&E system wherever possible, support thinking around how those managing materials will ensure maintenance, consider costs of transporting materials and storing them if necessary and finally address the issues of transparency when handing over materials by communicating with all stakeholders what materials you are handing over, to whom and why you are handing it to them.
- Space: ensure the current space does not have to be returned to someone once post emergency recovery is completed. Otherwise, help develop alternate plans for conducting future activities in another location.
- Women and Girls: need to be clear on what will happen to the women and girls attending the center once you withdraw your support. Caution and care needs to be exercised in particular with regards to extremely vulnerable individuals (disabled, certain ethnic minorities, specific age groups, etc) who will not be able to so easily reintegrate into previously existing services. Consider what can and should be done to support them.
- Staff and volunteers need to be made aware of next steps, other opportunities for staff, volunteers, others engaged in the running of the WGFS. They must have early warning and consultation on the process.
- M&E: system for monitoring what happens could be set-up where funding is available, thus enabling you to see the impact of your programming. Visits after you are gone looking at how skills learnt are being used, how women and girls are now, how materials and space is being used, what new activities are being implemented, etc. would all provide valuable lessons for future programming.
- Finances and budget: women, girls, communities, partners or government agencies taking on the on-going management of activities need to be clear on budget requirements and have plans on how they will raise the necessary funding. In addition there may be specific costs associated with transition, such as movement of materials, payment for closing ceremony etc.

Additional resources

Gender-based violence

Gender Based Violence Area of Responsibility (2015) Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience, and Aiding Recovery http://gbvguidelines.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf

WHO (2004.) Clinical Management of Rape Survivors: Developing protocols for use with refugees and internally displaced persons. <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/emergencies/924159263X/en/>

Staffing issues

Gender Based Violence Area of Responsibility (2014) Core Competencies for GBV Program Managers and Coordinators in Humanitarian Settings (<http://gbvaor.net/?get=005885|2015/04/Core-Competencies.pdf>)

Antares Foundation (2012) Managing stress in humanitarian workers: Guidelines for good practice (<https://www.antaresfoundation.org/guidelines#.VscCptBXqMM>)

Psychosocial support

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2007) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_psychosocial_june_2007.pdf

TPO Uganda & UNICEF South Sudan (2015) Community-Based Psychosocial Support for Children and Adolescents in South Sudan: A Toolkit of Resources (http://media.wix.com/ugd/fdfc2d_8bee86d477074676a96efa892afbe547.pdf).

UNHCR (2013) UNHCR's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Persons of Concern: A Global Review <http://www.unhcr.org/51bec3359.pdf>

World Health Organization, War Trauma Foundation and World Vision International (2011). Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers. WHO:

Geneva. (http://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/guide_field_workers/en/)

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Network (mhps.net): a networking site for MHPSS practitioners with many useful resources.

Adolescent girls

Girl Hub (2014) Girl Safety Toolkit: A resource for practitioners (<http://www.girleffect.org/media?id=3050>)

Girl Effect (nd) The Essential Guide to Safe-Space Programmes for Girls (<http://www.girleffect.org/media?id=3111>)

Population Council (2010) Girl Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs. (<http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>)

Monitoring and evaluation

IFRC (2009) Training session on supporting volunteers and staff in IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support Community-based psychosocial support: Trainer's book (<http://pscentre.org/resources/community-based-psychosocial-support-trainers-book/>)

IRC (2015) Researching Empowerment, or Empowerment through Research? <http://gbvresponders.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Research-that-Empowers-Advocacy-Brief.pdf>

UNICEF, (2011) Inter-Agency Guide to the Evaluation of Psychosocial Programming in Emergencies. (<http://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Inter-AgencyGuidePSS.pdf>)



Annexes

- I. Do's and Don'ts for establishing a WGFS
- II. WGFS Sample organogram and job descriptions
- III. Sample Code of Conduct for WGFS staff
- IV. Examples of activities within a WGFS
- V. Ethical Issues to consider in assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation Activities
- VI. Examples of monitoring and evaluation tools
- VII. Referral and Feedback Forms

ANNEX 1: DO'S AND DON'TS FOR ESTABLISHING A WGFS

PHASES	DO	DON'T
ALL	Prioritise the physical and emotional safety of women, girls and staff in all decision-making	Treat women and girls as beneficiaries
ALL	Consider the needs of the whole range of women and girls in the target population (those of differing age, those with disabilities, etc.).	Assume that all women and girls have the same needs, preferences or opinions.
ALL	Ensure that 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 consulting women and girls
ALL	Build on local capacities, supporting self-help and strengthening the resources already present in affected groups	Introduce a WGFS model which is fixed, and not open to evolving in response to changing circumstances
ASSESSMENT	Collect and analyse information to determine whether a WGFS is needed and, if so, how it should be established.	Conduct unnecessary or duplicate assessments.
ASSESSMENT	Coordinate with other stakeholders to gather existing information to identify gaps in response.	Accept preliminary assessment data in an uncritical manner, or assume that assessment information is not needed
ASSESSMENT	Assess available resources in the community to inform what kind of community-based psychosocial response may be needed.	Select a location and/ or design a WGFS space which prioritises the needs and convenience of the organisations over those of the women and girls
ASSESSMENT	Ensure that the location is safe and accessible.	Assume that any location is appropriate
ASSESSMENT	Identify ways to link with other services, such as livelihoods and economic programmes, that support the wellbeing of women and girls.	Work in isolation or without thinking how the work of the WGFS fits with that of others
ASSESSMENT/ ALL	Engage communities, parents, husbands and community leaders during the planning of a WGFS and, where appropriate, the activities.	Ignore the perspectives of men and boys, and of the community as a whole
LOCATION & OTHER LOGISTICS	Choose a name for the centre which reflects women's and girls' ownership of the space.	Choose a name which could contribute to increase stigmatisation.

LOCATION & OTHER LOGISTICS	Take specific measures to ensure the WGFS is accessible and inclusive for all women and girls, including those who are providing for their families, the elderly, and those with disabilities.	Assume that because the WGFS is open to all, therefore it is automatically accessible and inclusive
LOCATION & OTHER LOGISTICS	Clearly communicate the purpose of the WGFS (as well as the potential benefits for the community) to community leaders and other community members.	Assume that everybody knows what a WGFS is and why it is being established.
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	Ensure that the timing and nature of activities are compatible with the daily routines of women and girls.	Use handicraft activities as an end in themselves, but as an entry point to other psychosocial/ empowerment activities.
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	Consider how programming can be culturally sensitive while also promoting positive gender /cultural norms and challenging potentially harmful attitudes and practices.	Set up new interventions and supports without considering how they link with, complement and build upon existing community groups and processes
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	Provide women and girls with useful, accurate information on available services that is easily understood, presented in the relevant local language, and delivered with compassion.	Conduct awareness raising only on the problems women and girls face (such as GBV) without providing information about what services are available and how/where those affected can seek support.
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	Look for existing resources within the community (e.g. assets, positive coping mechanisms and resilience techniques) to help solve problems women and girls are facing.	Focus only on women’s and girls’ problems while disregarding their strengths and capacities (e.g. assets, coping and resilience).
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	Focus on GBV prevention activities, as well as GBV response. Treat or refer sexual assault and rape survivors as soon as possible.	Emphasise GBV response at the expense of other activities designed to prevent GBV through strengthening the psychosocial wellbeing of women and girls. Do not postpone treatment or referral of survivors to other services.
STAFFING	Ensure that inclusion and ethnic diversity is taken into account when making decisions about accessibility of the centre and staffing.	Discriminate on the basis of ethnic differences
STAFFING	Ensure that all staff are supported and supervised, and benefit from continuous capacity-building.	Assume that staff already have all the necessary skills and knowledge

STAFFING	Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and adhere to an appropriate Code of Conduct	Obligate WGFS staff sign a Code of Conduct without providing an orientation, and ensuring understanding
STAFFING	After trainings, provide follow-up supervision and monitoring to ensure that new skills and knowledge are being used correctly.	Use one-time, stand-alone trainings for staff without follow-up
STAFFING	Coordinate with other service providers which work with women and adolescent girls, particularly child-friendly space providers, health care providers and economic/ livelihood service providers	Operate the WGFS as a “siloed” intervention, disconnected from other services and activities in the community.
STAFFING	Select activities based on the needs of the community and the knowledge, experience and capacity of your staff.	Attempt to implement more advanced services and activities (e.g. individual psychosocial support, livelihoods) without ensuring that the organisational capacity is in place to do so safely and effectively.
MONITORING & EVALUATION	Ensure that a clear referral system is in place, and that it is well understood by all those working in the WGFS (staff and volunteers).	Start providing referral without adequate orientation of staff and volunteers on how to adequately implement it and follow it up.
MONITORING & EVALUATION	Actively and regularly seek feedback from women and girls using a variety of mechanisms.	Rely solely on having a complaints box to obtain feedback from women and girls
MONITORING & EVALUATION	Ensure that the aims and nature of the WGFS evolves as circumstances change, based on results of feedback and evaluation activities.	Get “stuck in a rut” of implementing the same activities over and over without reviewing the context and seeking feedback from participants.
MONITORING & EVALUATION	Ensure that mechanisms are in place from the beginning of the intervention to monitor activities through participation of women and girls.	Establish a M&E system without involving women and girls or by only involving them at the last minute.
PHASE OUT	Plan for phase-out in advance, and allow for sufficient time	Stop all activities when funding is over without prior proper planning
PHASE OUT	Use a community based approach that will support ownership and transition of the WGFS to the community and or local organizations	Assume that communities and local organizations are aware from the outset that a phase out period or handover will take place.

ANNEX 2. STAFFING

Below you will find a possible combination of staff and roles for the running of a WGFS which takes into account on-going projects in South Sudan and other experiences developed in similar contexts. It is important to remember that this structure is not meant to be prescriptive. Selecting staff for the WGFS is a process that always requires close cooperation with the community and should take into account your organizational policies and structures.

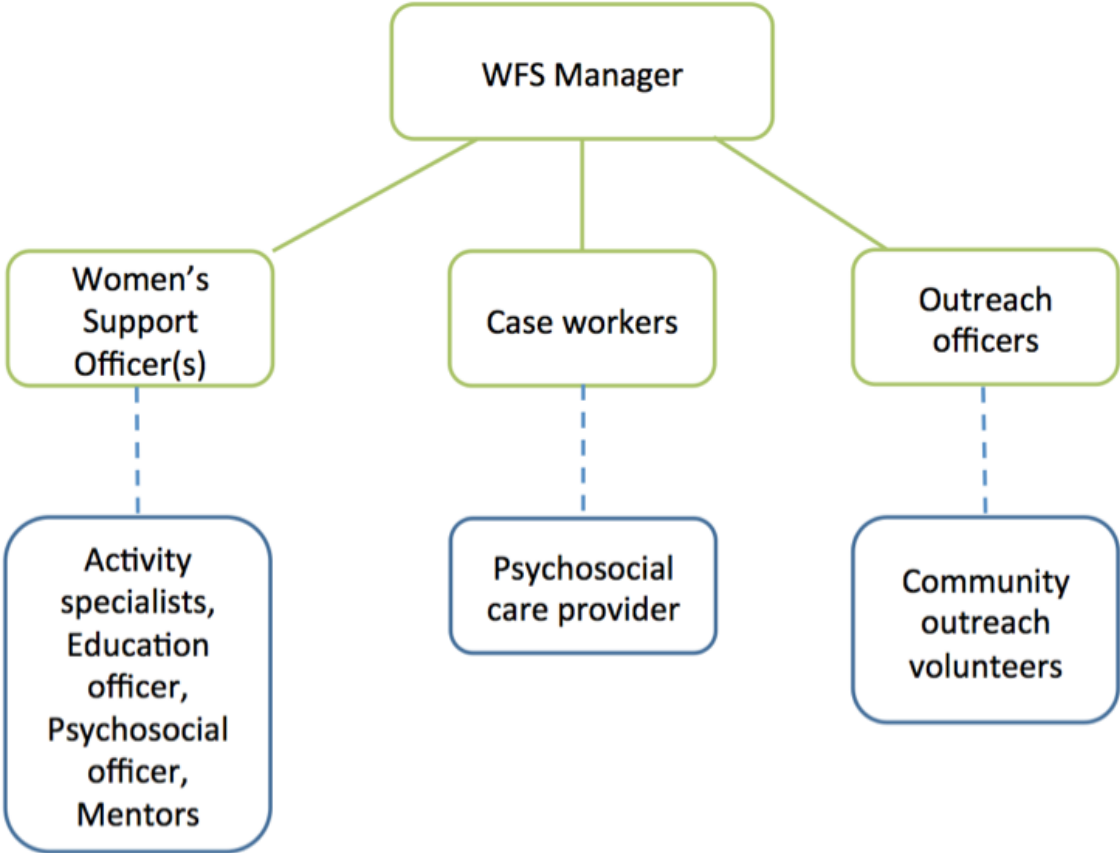
Depending on the size of the programme, of the centre, the number of individuals having access to it, the presence of other services in its surroundings, available human and material resources and other similar contextual considerations, some roles and functions might overlap or might not be needed. As always, being flexible is important. For instance, if there are more women and girls that the centre can comfortably accommodate in, consider having more than one shift (such as one in the morning and one in the afternoon). This choice will also have implications regarding the number and type of staff you might need.

In essence, the organogram presented below highlights a possible combination of roles and responsibilities that can ensure:

- 1) The effective day to day management of a WGFS (including monitoring of activities and support to staff) and proper coordination with other sectors/services as needed/relevant;
- 2) The provision of case management services /referral, follow up and psychosocial support by appropriately trained staff;
- 3) Specific support (tailored on actual identified needs) through activity specialist and/or dedicated staff;
- 4) The provision of outreach services /community mobilization.

Although we have not included other general support staff (e.g. guards/cleaners, etc.) these might however often be needed to support the work of the WGFS.

Possible WGFS Staff composition



Core staff *

Additional staff

* Core staff here refers to staff that is required for the design and implementation of foundational activities, whereas the inclusion of additional staff will depend on what additional activities a particular WGFS implements.

Job Descriptions for core staff

The key responsibilities of the WGFS staff will include those outlined below. You should always make sure that all staff understand the code of conduct and have signed it.

WGFS manager: ensures the proper overall implementation of the WGFS Project.

- Provide overall supervision of and support to staff
- Ensure that the Guiding Principles outlined in these guidelines underpin all activities and processes
- Monitor activities, including helping the Women's Support Officer to reflect on what is working well and how activities could be improved
- Monitor staff performance and provide ongoing feedback and mentoring
- Support staff in developing weekly activity plans for the WGFS, which are then shared within the WGFS and the broader community
- Ensures that confidentiality protocols are in place and that they are appropriately followed by relevant staff
- Participate in coordination meetings (and initiating informal coordination discussions) with other relevant actors to ensure integration of services
- Create and oversee consultation mechanisms to facilitate sharing of women's and girls' views on the WGFS activities and other services available.

Women's support officer: ensures that activities are properly implemented and women and girls are properly cared for and supported at the WGFS.

- Ensure that the Guiding Principles underpin all activities and processes
- Develop weekly plans which are then shared within the WGFS and the broader community
- Monitor activities, to include keeping attendance lists and activity records
- Facilitate activity sessions, or support women/ girls to lead the sessions
- Helping activity leaders/ facilitators to reflect on what is working well and how activities could be improved
- Refer women or girls in need of individual support to a case worker.

Case worker: ensures that women and girls in need of focused and or specialised services receive appropriate support and follow up.

- Case management services
- Referrals to other services (such as medical, legal and protection), as required, plus follow-up
- Basic focused psychosocial support and accompaniment to other services as necessary
- Ensure mechanism for reporting issues, including for GBV, MH and PS support services

- Ensure referral pathways are being used effectively
- Ensures that a referral tracking system is in place and that periodic monitoring of referrals and follow up are conducted.

Outreach officer: ensures that the outreach team works with and for the surrounding community.

- Manage the community outreach volunteers
- Support volunteers to identify key issues affecting women and girls, then plan and conduct awareness sessions in communities on these issues under the supervision of staff with sufficient technical expertise
- Conduct safety audits and safety mapping, and follow up with relevant actors
- Refer women or girls in need of individual support to a case worker, if/as necessary.

How many staff on duty?

Although formal minimum standards have not been established in South Sudan, it is recommended that the centre is always staffed with at least two staff when it is open.

ANNEX 3. SAMPLE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WGFS STAFF

The Code of Conduct is part of a set of policies and practices designed to ensure that the 'Do no harm' principle is upheld in all the work of an organisation, including that related to a WGFS. The policies and practices should involve:

- Training of all staff in the Code of Conduct, including what is expected of them, and what they should do if they find out that a colleague has breached the Code of Conduct.
- A system of responding in situations where the Code of Conduct is breached, or is suspected to have been breached.

A Code of Conduct helps staff understand the kinds of behaviour that are considered abusive or exploitative, no matter whether this stems from conscious misconduct or ignorance. The Code of Conduct should apply to all staff and volunteers, who must participate in an orientation session and then sign to confirm that they agree to be bound by the Code of Conduct and uphold its principles.

There are many Codes of Conduct around, and most organisations have their own version. The sample Code of Conduct below is adapted from the InterAid Uganda Code of Conduct, and can be used by other organisations as the basis for their own version.

Principle 1: Treat all individuals fairly, with respect and dignity

- This is our basic obligation. Behaviour or comments by any staff that degrade a beneficiary is totally unacceptable no matter whether the beneficiaries are around or not. Avoid favouring any individual.

- Look at beneficiaries as human beings not cases. Endeavour to talk to them directly and visit them, involve them in finding solutions to their problem.
- Protect the rights of children and certain groups of women who are especially at risk by understanding the specific situations of women, men, girls and boys in a beneficiary community to enable us better protect them and ensure their best interests are considered.
- Comprehend difficult experiences of refugees and other persons of concern.
- Keep informed of the guidelines and at all times recognize the special needs of each of these groups and act in their best interests.

Principle 2: Uphold the integrity of [your organisation] by ensuring personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.

- Integrity refers to the overall personal and professional behaviour of staff. It includes honesty, truthfulness and loyalty to the office. Avoid criticising partners and agencies in public. Honour private legal or financial obligations this is a matter of integrity and honesty. Failure of which may be treated as a disciplinary matter under the staff regulations and rules.
- Staff should not implicate [the organisation] by undertaking activities that verge on illegality.

Principle 3: Perform official duties and conduct private matters in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in [the organisation].

- The use of one's office for personal gain is unacceptable and unprofessional. Avoid accepting any favour or gift from any source which might constitute a real or apparent attempt to influence our decisions or actions.
- Staff who manage decisions related to assistance and procurement may be subject to pressures or offers which involve dishonest practices thus must be careful to act and be seen to act with the utmost transparency and integrity. In case of any doubt consult the supervisor to seek guidance.

Principle 4: Contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding

- All managers and staff are responsible for building a teamwork environment. Politeness, respect, tolerance, and moderation should be the norm. Good performance is not only about how quickly and how efficiently we perform our tasks but also how we interact with others.
- Team spirit means transparency in decision making and is fostered by staff taking a positive and optimistic approach to their work.
- There must be trust and open dialogue between management and other staff.
- Managers should be open to all views including those of their junior staff, particularly when those views are opposed to their own. Managers are expected to set a good example.

Principle 5: Promote the safety, health, and welfare of all staff as a necessary condition for effective and consistent performance

- Staff should strictly observe safety and security instructions and demonstrate responsible behaviour that minimises risks for themselves and others.

Principle 6: Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which you have access by reason of your employment

- Disclosure of sensitive or confidential information without authorization may seriously jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of [the organisation] and its staff and endanger the beneficiaries.
- We are all responsible for the resources entrusted to us by [the organisation] and must be able to account for them.

Principle 7: Prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation and abuse of persons of concern.

- Having at our disposal scarce resources puts us in positions of power vis-a vis the people whose survival may depend on our assistance.
- Unequal power relationships exist between staff and the beneficiaries, thus we must keep in mind that sexual, emotional, financial or employment relationships between staff and beneficiaries could be perceived as an abuse of power and trust or as a conflict of interest
- Sexual relationships with beneficiaries undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of [the organisation] and are strongly discouraged. Where there is doubt staff may consult the supervisors. Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) constitutes a serious misconduct and is subject to mandatory reporting and

disciplinary measures. Therefore, WGFS staff: 1) should not have sexual relationships with anyone under the age of 18; 2) should not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favours; 3) should report any concern or suspicion of SEA by any aid worker whether in the same agency or elsewhere; and 4) should create an environment that prevents SEA and promotes the Code of Conduct. The reporting should be in line with Community Based Complaints Mechanism (CBCM) if in place and operational and/or to existing SEA focal points of area of operation. Additionally, individuals can report to a trusted individual within their own organisation who is aware of reporting procedures on SEA. This may be a supervisor, a human resources officer, a head of office or a SEA focal point.

Principle 8: Refrain from involvement in criminal or unethical activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interest of [the organisation]

- No staff member of integrity will engage or support an illegal, exploitative, abusive or unethical activities that violate human

dignity. Sexual exploitation and abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct.

- The exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.

Principle 9: Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism in the work place.

- These include sexual harassment and abuse of power.
- Discrimination and harassment have a negative effect on the work place environment, the career and wellbeing of staff. Managers at all levels have a responsibility to uphold the highest standards of conduct free from intimidation and personal favouritism because of their authority and its inherent danger of abuse.

When the Code of Conduct is violated, depending upon the nature and gravity of the misconduct, disciplinary actions such as warning, suspension or immediate dismissal will be taken by the management of the organisation.

ANNEX 4. EXAMPLES OF ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

All the foundational activities included in the main narrative section of these guidelines can be implemented in any WGFS, even if personnel have limited technical expertise and/or limited resources are available. In contrast, those listed below are examples of activities that require the presence of at least one expert staff that can supervise and mentor others and/or where some additional training and expertise (such as relatively strong facilitation and listening skills) might be needed. For this reason we consider them as being more advanced or optional activities that can be introduced over time in the programme schedule of the WGFS. All the activities have been selected for their ease of use and their potential for adaptation to different contexts and are presented according to their degree of specificity (i.e. from general to more specific topics) and the level of staff capacity required (from low to high) in order to implement them autonomously.

For each activity a short description of when to use it, how to use it and the staff capacity required it is therefore included. Also, its suitability for use with groups, adult women and/or adolescent is specified.



Fig. 1: Overview of activities

	Safety mapping and Planning	Participative Ranking Exercise	Intergenerational activities	Relaxation exercises	Journey of life	The adolescent kit for expression and innovation	Say and Play	Better parenting
When to use it	A/M/E/P	A/I/M/E/P	I/M/P	I	I	I	I	I
With Whom	All	All	groups/all	Staff/all	Adolescents	Adolescents	Parents and caregivers	Parents and caregivers
Staff capacity required	low	low	medium	medium	medium	high	high	high

A = Assessment phase

I = Implementation phase

M = Monitoring phase

E = Evaluation phase

P = Phase out phase

1. SAFETY MAPPING AND PLANNING

When to use it: You can use this activity as part of the WGFS assessment phase or later during implementation in order to develop action plans to strengthen the safety of women and girls (e.g. through advocacy, awareness raising or other actions). Girls or women map their community using drawings, marking which times and places are safe and which are not. This activity is suitable for both adolescent girls and adult women.

How to conduct this activity: For a simple description of how to conduct this activity, see pages 30-31 of Population Council (2010) *Girl Centred Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs*. (<http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>). You will need to adapt the exercise for groups of illiterate women or girls by asking them to draw symbols to represent safe and unsafe places, rather than write the names.

Staff Capacity Required

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. It is a very participatory and interactive methodology, so facilitators need to have the skills to engage women and girls and get them to focus on the relevant issues.
- Listening skills. This exercise involves encouraging women and girls to share their opinions, and listening to them.
- Problem solving skills. Facilitators need to have the skills to respond to the issues raised by the women and girls, and to help them find ways to address the problems identified.
- Advocacy skills: to help women and girls to put their 'action plans' into practice. This would include supporting them to advocate for themselves, but also to advocate directly with higher-level stakeholders, on behalf of the women and girls.

2. PARTICIPATIVE RANKING EXERCISE

When to use it: The aim of the participative ranking exercise is to enable women and girls to discuss and identify their main concerns, and possible options to prevent or respond to these concerns. It can be used during any phase of the WGFS programme. Combined with follow-up discussions to explore some of the key concerns in more depth, can be used to develop action plans that the women or girls can put into place to address them. This activity is suitable for both adolescent girls and adult women.

How to conduct this activity: The exercise can be carried out over several sessions, in a flexible way. The 'concerns' exercise should be completed in a single session, with later sessions focusing on exploring prevention and response options for some of the concerns identified.

Biggest Concerns

1. Facilitator introduces the session and explains that aim of the group is to understand what are the biggest problems facing women or girls (depending on the group) in the community.
2. Encourage participants to name major problems. The note-taker lists 'problems' in the order they are suggested (numbering each clearly in turn). Ask questions to clarify the nature of each suggested 'problem'.
3. Continue until ten problems have been identified, or until there are no new suggestions.
4. If the participants do not identify a concern that you suspect may be present in this setting, ask "In some communities _____ has been mentioned as a problem; is that a problem here?"
5. The facilitator and participants then select objects (e.g. stones, pencils, leaves, cloth etc.) to represent each of the problems identified. The facilitator goes through each concern in turn and decides together with the participants what object can be used to

represent it. Once linked with a concern, the objects are put on the ground in front of the facilitator.

[This step can be completed once a full list of concerns has been identified; however, it is often easier to find an object to represent each concern as that concern is identified].

6. The facilitator says that while all these problems are a concern, some are more serious problems than others. The facilitator gives each participant a small object (e.g. a pebble) and asks them to decide individually which of the problems they have discussed is the most serious for women or girls in their community. When they have decided, they should put their pebble next to the object representing the problem they have chosen.
7. The object with the most pebbles next to it is the 'top priority' problem for that group of women or girls. The facilitator asks the women or girls why they chose that problem as the most serious.
8. That object is then removed, and the group members are asked to choose the most serious problem from those that remain. They vote in the same way, putting their pebble next to the object they have chosen, and the facilitator asks for their reasons. The object representing the second priority problem is removed, and placed next to the first.
9. This process continues until all ten objects have been placed in a line on the ground: the biggest problem at one end of the line, and the lesser problems at the other.

Prevention and response options: action planning

In a later session, one of the problems identified can be considered, focusing on the possible options for prevention or response. The women or girls can choose which issue to focus on first; others can be discussed in later sessions.

A similar process can be followed, with women and girls invited to come up with as many possible prevention and response options as possible for

the identified issue. The facilitator helps the process using questions such as:

- What coping strategies do women/girls use to deal with this issue? (this can include both harmful and protective strategies)
- What do other people do to protect women/ girls from this issue? (i.e. Government, NGO, community, family).
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of these protective measures?
- What more could be done to protect women/ girls from this issue, or to help them cope with it?
 - What could women/ girls do? What could their families and communities do? What about NGOs or government?

This session can be held as an open discussion. However, it is important that the facilitator or a volunteer takes notes of what the women or girls decide, and that one or more 'action points' are agreed upon by the end of the session. When deciding on action points, it is necessary to also identify who will implement the action point and by when. In most cases, it should be the women or girls themselves who implement the action point, although WGFS may offer support. Progress in relation to the 'action point' should be reviewed in subsequent sessions.

Staff Capacity Required

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. It is a very participatory and interactive methodology, so facilitators need to have the skills to engage women and girls and get them to focus on the relevant issues.
- Listening skills. This exercise involves encouraging women and girls to share their opinions, and listening to them.

- Problem solving skills. Facilitators need to have the skills to respond to the issues raised by the women and girls, and to help them find ways to address the problems identified.
- Advocacy skills: to help women and girls to put their ‘action plans’ into practice. This would include supporting them to advocate for themselves, but also to advocate directly with higher-level stakeholders, on behalf of the women and girls.
- Follow-up skills. This activity is designed to be conducted over several sessions, and the ‘action points’ created must be followed up. Failure to do so will be demoralising for the women and girls involved. Facilitators must be committed to seeing the process through to the end.

3. INTER-GENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES¹²

When to use it: Inter-generational activities bring together people of different ages in order to explore, study, play or work to get to know one another better and reach for a common goal. These activities encourage cooperation and interaction between the generations of children, youths, adults and the elderly.

The aim of inter-generational activities is to promote better mutual understanding between the different generations. They are based on the internal resources that everyone has, whether young or old. These activities are beneficial because they encourage communication and cooperation, lead to mutual respect and improved knowledge of one another; all of which contribute to more closely bound communities.

How to conduct this activity: Inter-generational activities can be done in many ways: meet and talk; do or make things together; do something for others; help one another. Examples include:

- Parents and their children playing together
- Young people teaching new technologies to the older generation, or helping them with household tasks.
- Adults who advise or coach young people (mentors)
- Older people who pass on traditions (sewing, cooking) to young people
- A mixture of all the generations performing traditional singing and dancing for the community, or working together on a project.

Staff Capacity Required

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. Facilitators need to have the skills to engage people of different ages and get them to focus on the relevant issues.
- Listening skills. This exercise involves encouraging people to share their opinions, and listening to them.
- Problem solving skills. Facilitators need to have the skills to respond to the issues raised, and to help find ways to address the problems identified.
- Advocacy skills: to help people to put their ‘action plans’ into practice. This would include supporting them to advocate for themselves, but also to advocate directly with higher-level stakeholders, on behalf of the women and girls.

4. RELAXATION EXERCISES

When to use it: These exercises can be done as a group at the beginning or end of an activity session. They are suitable for both adolescent girls

¹² Adapted from Terre des Hommes (2011) Working with children and their environment: Manual of psychosocial skills (<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/library/working-children-and-their-environment-manual-psychosocial-skills>)

and adult women and can also be used as a staff care component for the staff of the WGFS.

How to conduct this activity: Practicing relaxation techniques can reduce stress symptoms by:

- Slowing heart rate
- Lowering blood pressure
- Slowing breathing rate
- Reducing activity of stress hormones
- Increasing blood flow to major muscles
- Reducing muscle tension and chronic pain
- Improving concentration and mood
- Lowering fatigue
- Reducing anger and frustration

Below two simple relaxations technique exercises are illustrated.

Relaxation technique 1: Breathing meditation for stress relief

With its focus on full, cleansing breaths, deep breathing is a simple, yet powerful, relaxation technique. It's easy to learn, can be practiced almost anywhere, and provides a quick way to get your stress levels in check.

Practicing deep breathing meditation

The key to deep breathing is to breathe deeply from the abdomen, getting as much fresh air as possible in your lungs. When you take deep breaths from the abdomen, rather than shallow breaths from your upper chest, you inhale more oxygen. The more oxygen you get, the less tense, short of breath, and anxious you feel.

- Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.

- Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
- Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.
- Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

If you find it difficult breathing from your abdomen while sitting up, try lying on the floor.

Relaxation technique 2: Progressive muscle relaxation for stress relief

Progressive muscle relaxation involves a two-step process in which you systematically tense and relax different muscle groups in the body.

With regular practice, progressive muscle relaxation gives you an intimate familiarity with what tension—as well as complete relaxation—feels like in different parts of the body. This awareness helps you spot and counteract the first signs of the muscular tension that accompanies stress. And as your body relaxes, so will your mind. You can combine deep breathing with progressive muscle relaxation for an additional level of stress relief.

Practicing progressive muscle relaxation

- Make yourself comfortable.
- Take a few minutes to relax, breathing in and out in slow, deep breaths.
- When you're relaxed and ready to start, shift your attention to your right foot. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your right foot, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 5.

- Relax your right foot. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your left foot. Follow the same sequence of muscle tension and release.
- Move slowly up through your body, contracting and relaxing the muscle groups as you go.
- It may take some practice at first, but try not to tense muscles other than those intended.

Staff Capacity Required

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. It is a participatory and interactive methodology, so facilitators need to have the skills to guide and engage women and girls and get them to focus on the exercises.

5. JOURNEY OF LIFE: COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN (CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS) (REPSSI) ¹³

When to use it: This activity can be used with adolescents up to age 18, and is designed to be delivered by staff or volunteers (including youth) who have education to approximately Grade 7 or above, and experience in working with young people.

The workshop aims to strengthen the resilience of children and adolescents so that they can have the confidence to face and resolve the difficulties they encounter in life. It can increase the ability of adolescents

to address or seek support for meeting their psychosocial needs and enhance their awareness of the resources available for support.

How to conduct this activity: The workshop is described in detail in TPO Uganda & UNICEF South Sudan (2015) *Community-Based Psychosocial Support for Children and Adolescents in South Sudan: A Toolkit of Resources* (http://media.wix.com/ugd/fdfc2d_8bee86d477074676a96efa892afbe547.pdf)

The Journey of Life for Children can be completed in one day, but it can be more effective to divide the workshop into a number of shorter sessions which last no more than two hours. The workshop is run like a game, divided into 13 activities, with detailed guidance on the purpose and steps involved in each one. Separate guidance is given for younger children (5-12 years) and adolescents (13-18 years). The manual includes a schedule plan (including timings) for the workshop, and the information required to run each session.

Staff Capacity Required

The workshop can be facilitated by one or two people, but two is preferable so that participants can be given individual support where necessary. The requirements of the facilitator(s) are outlined below.

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. It is a very participatory and interactive methodology, so facilitators need to have the skills to engage young people and get them to focus on the relevant issues.
- Listening skills. Journey of Life is about encouraging young people to share, and listening to them.
- Problem solving skills. Facilitators need to have the skills to respond to the issues raised by the girls, and to help them find ways to address the problems identified.

¹³ <https://www.repssi.org/the-journey-of-life-community-workshop-to-support-children>

- Understanding referral pathways: facilitators must have a good understanding of the referral pathways which function in the area in which they work. Whilst they can be trained to identify signs of distress indicating that an individual needs additional support, they should already be aware of the functional support networks and referral pathways which exist.
- At least one facilitator should speak the local language.

One facilitator could be a volunteer or community resource person, but they should work alongside trained, full-time paid staff. Both facilitators should be supervised and mentored by more experienced full-time staff.

6. THE ADOLESCENT KIT FOR EXPRESSION AND INNOVATION (UNICEF) ¹⁴

When to use it: This kit is designed to be used with adolescents aged 10-17, and can be implemented by a professional or para-professional facilitator who has skills and experience in working with adolescents.

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents in humanitarian situations to develop key competencies that can help them to improve their psychosocial wellbeing, learn new skills and engage positively with their communities. During field-testing in South Sudan, it was found to address the challenges of growing up and emotional problems among adolescents due to the conflict and displacement, including issues related to sexuality, peer pressure, dealing with stress and emotions.

The kit aims to enable adolescents to:

- develop key competencies that can help them to recover emotionally from crisis

- build healthy relationships
- learn new skills
- engage positively with their communities

How to conduct this activity: The kit is described in detail in TPO Uganda & UNICEF South Sudan (2015) *Community-Based Psychosocial Support for Children and Adolescents in South Sudan: A Toolkit of Resources* (http://media.wix.com/ugd/fdfc2d_8bee86d477074676a96efa892afbe547.pdf)

The Adolescent Kit is based on groups of adolescents coming together in a safe space on a regular basis. It is a package of guidance, tools and activities which are based on psychosocial principles. Each of the activities in the Kit is designed to help adolescents to acquire or practice their knowledge, attitudes and skills within one or more of ten competency domains. Some activities introduce these competencies at a basic level, while others offer the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to a higher standard. The activities can be used flexibly, depending on the interests of the adolescents involved.

Part of the process involves adolescents identifying the challenges they face and the resources they have, including themselves and their social networks. They develop action plans focused on a specific challenge (e.g. drug use, early marriage) and prioritise them. They then identify a number of actions they wish to take to address the selected issue, and implement them, one at a time. When each action has been addressed, they go to the next. This requires facilitators to work with the group over a long period of time, to support them through the implementation of their action plans, and it involves advocacy with other stakeholders, with the support of facilitators.

The Facilitator's Guide includes a package of technical guidance, tools and activities. It outlines how to run structured sessions of activities for

¹⁴ <http://adolescentkit.org>

adolescents in humanitarian situations, and to work with them through different stages that address their interests and needs. All the materials are available on-line and can be downloaded.

In order to be effective, one session should take no more than two hours with adolescents. To complete the 4 cycles, it would require 2-3 sessions per week spread over 4-6 weeks, but the Adolescent Kit is a very flexible tool, and the sessions can be combined to fit into the time available.

Staff Capacity Required

The Adolescent Kit activities can be facilitated by one or two people. The requirements of the facilitator(s) are outlined below.

- Strong conceptual skills. There are some key concepts within the methodology that they will need to understand (e.g. 'Knowing ourselves').
- Strong facilitation skills: during field-testing it was clear that many facilitators prefer to provide information and move on, but the benefit of this tool will only come when they support young people to share their experiences and opinions. Facilitators need to value this approach and recognise its benefits.
- Creative and innovative to improvise when materials are not available.
- Advocacy skills: to help the young people to put their 'action plans' into practice. This would include supporting the young people to advocate for themselves, but also to advocate directly with higher-level stakeholders, on behalf of the young people.

Since the Adolescent Kit is a longer-term activity, including the implementation of action plans, it is more appropriate for the facilitators to be full-time, paid members of staff, rather than volunteers. Initially, two facilitators should work together in order to provide peer-support and guidance to each other. They should receive supervision and mentoring

¹⁵ http://www.coregroup.org/storage/HIV_AIDS/PCI-SayAndPlayKit.pdf

from a staff member with more experience of facilitation and implementing activities with adolescents. As facilitators become more competent, they could run workshops alone, but should continue to be supervised and mentored by a higher-level member of staff.

7. SAY AND PLAY: A TOOL FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM (Project Concern International)¹⁵

When to use it: This tool is designed for use with parents and caregivers, who can be taught to use the activities with their children. It is suitable for women and adolescent girls who are mothers.

The 'Say and Play' toolkit focuses on enhancing interactions between caregivers and children. Sessions with adults enable them to develop skills to help them meaningfully interact with their children and build positive relationships. The activities enhance communications and relationship building between caregivers and children. The activities are designed to be implemented with groups of adults, who can then use the revised versions with children. The guidance is very clear, with step-by-step instructions for seven topics. The topics are: What do children need to grow?; Helping young children with their problems; Children on their own; When the caregiver is sick; Talking to children about death; Our hopes; Caring for children.

How to conduct this activity: The toolkit is described in detail in TPO Uganda & UNICEF South Sudan (2015) *Community-Based Psychosocial Support for Children and Adolescents in South Sudan: A Toolkit of Resources* (http://media.wix.com/ugd/fdfc2d_8bee86d477074676a96efa892afbe547.pdf).

The seven topics in the toolkit do not all need to be covered; each can be delivered as a stand-alone session. The training of adults is designed to be conducted over a two-day period, but the content can be divided into

smaller sessions and delivered over a period of days or weeks according to participants' interest and availability. It is recommended that no more than 20 adults participate in the sessions at one time.

Staff Capacity Required

The workshop for parents/ caregivers/ other adults working with children can be facilitated by one or two people. The requirements of the facilitator(s) are outlined below.

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. It is a very participatory and interactive methodology, so facilitators need to have the skills to engage community members and get them to focus on the relevant issues.
- Listening skills. Say & Play is about encouraging people to share, and listening to them.
- Problem solving skills. Facilitators need to have the skills to respond to the issues raised by participants, and to help them find ways to address the problems identified.
- At least one facilitator should speak the local language.

One facilitator could be a volunteer or community resource person, but they should work alongside trained, full-time paid staff. As the volunteer or community resource person becomes more competent, they could run workshops alone, but should continue to be supervised and mentored by trained full-time paid staff.

8. BETTER PARENTING TRAINING FOR CAREGIVERS OF HIGHLY VULNERABLE CHILDREN (Yekokeb Berhan (PACT and FHI 360) and REPSI)¹⁶

When to use it: The Better Parenting Training Manual is suitable for use with anybody who interacts with children, including youth who have parenting responsibilities. The training could also be delivered to WGFS staff and volunteers, who could then share their knowledge with others using the Better Parenting Job Aid that accompanies the Manual.

The training consists of five sessions, each lasting approximately 2 ½ hours:

1. Understanding Parenting
2. Understanding Children
3. Learning Parenting Skills #1: Communication and Setting Limits
4. Learning Parenting Skills #2: Discipline and Monitoring
5. Being a good example to children

Following their own training, participants should share what they have learned at the community and household levels with as many caregivers as possible. At this level, they should use the Job Aid as a visual tool to stimulate discussion and learning. This can be done via a series of Community Conversations with small groups of parents and caregivers, or more informally in the home, during visits with caregivers and other family members.

How to conduct this activity: The toolkit is described in detail in TPO Uganda & UNICEF South Sudan (2015) *Community-Based Psychosocial Support for Children and Adolescents in South Sudan: A Toolkit of Resources* (http://media.wix.com/ugd/dfdc2d_8bee86d477074676a96efa892afbe547.pdf).

¹⁶ <http://www.fhi360.org/resource/better-parenting-training-caregivers-highly-vulnerable-children-facilitators-manual>

Training can be conducted in one of the following two ways:

1. Via a local workshop over the course of 3 ½ days.
2. Via 5 sessions of 2 ½ hours each. Sessions should be held no less frequently than once a week in order to maintain continuity.

Staff Capacity Required

The community workshop can be facilitated by one or two people. The requirements of the facilitator(s) are outlined below.

- Strong facilitation skills, with previous experience of using a participatory approach with groups. It is a very participatory and interactive methodology, so facilitators need to have the skills to engage community members and get them to focus on the relevant issues.

- Listening skills. The 'Better Parenting' sessions involve encouraging people to share, and listening to them.
- Problem solving skills. Facilitators need to have the skills to respond to the issues raised by participants, and to help them find ways to address the problems identified.
- At least one facilitator should speak the local language.

One facilitator could be a volunteer or community resource person, but they should work alongside trained, full-time paid staff. As the volunteer or community resource person becomes more competent, they could run workshops alone, but should continue to be supervised and mentored by trained full-time paid staff.

ANNEX 5. ETHICAL ISSUES TO CONSIDER WHEN CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

“Ethics are the morals and values that determine how people choose the correct action to take. Projects aimed at ending violence against women should follow ethical standards that respect and protect women’s rights to safety, dignity and privacy”¹⁷

The following are some aspects to be taken into considerations when conducting any assessment, monitoring and or evaluation activity with women and girls attending WGFS and with other community members. They highlight common pitfalls you might fall into and ways to avoid them. Regardless of what methods you choose to collect your data, always remember to follow the principle of ‘do no harm’.

POTENTIAL HARM	ACTION TO REDUCE RISK
Taking people away from their normal activities in order to answer questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define the purpose of the assessment or evaluation. Ensure the activity is necessary and justified, with a clearly defined purpose and that potential participants have a clear understanding of the activity <i>before</i> they agree to take part.
People are asked the same questions over and over by different organisations (or by the same organisation several times), leading to frustration and feelings of being exploited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Search for and use results from previous assessments to inform your work.• Coordinate the evaluation with other organisations so that people are not subjected to repeated questioning covering the same or very similar issues.• Provide feedback to participants after the assessment or evaluation is completed.

¹⁷ How to design projects to end violence against women and girls a step-by-step guide to taking action. Available online at: http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/evaw%20toolkit%20unw_finalcompressed.pdf

The opinions of certain groups of people (e.g. community leaders, men, adults) are privileged, and those who are marginalised do not have an opportunity to contribute to decision-making (planning) or evaluations.

People expect the organisation to come back with more resources to address the issues raised during FGDs and individual interviews. Participants may expect to benefit personally. When expectations are not met, people become disappointed and angry, and mistrust service providers.

People don't understand what is involved in the assessment or evaluation, and once they start they don't like it, they don't want to answer the questions.

People who agree to participate in the assessment or evaluation do not feel listened to, or feel that their experiences and opinions are not valued.

In the process of exploring sensitive topics or issues, assessment or evaluation may raise painful feelings amongst participants.

- Ensure that the evaluation activity is a participatory and collaborative process with stakeholders and affected populations. Actively seek out the views of diverse sections of the affected population (particularly those whose voices are typically marginalized); make every effort to ensure informed consent and that participation is voluntary.
- Clarify limits and consequences of the evaluation to avoid raising unrealistic expectations.
- Conduct consent and interviewing procedures appropriately. Informed consent should be documented for specific evaluation activities and limited to an agreed time period.
- Be aware of ongoing consent. Allow people to withdraw their consent during discussions by making it acceptable not to answer a question or to keep silent if they wish.
- Interviewers should have appropriate skills and experience.
- Provide feedback to participants after the assessment or evaluation is completed.
- Avoid probing too much. Be careful not to ask too many questions about difficult issues, or about the person's own painful experiences.
- Ensure that functional support systems are in place to assure the wellbeing of participants. If you notice that a participant is distressed or in a situation where they need help, there must be services/plans in place to refer them to someone who can help them.
- Interviewers should be trained and competent to deal with distress during interviews or group discussions. Ask whether the person wants to continue. Aim to end the session on a positive note while focusing on the individual's or group's strength.

Unintentional release of information that could put participants at increased risk of psychological or physical harm.

- Respect privacy and confidentiality of participants. Information that could identify individuals should not be disclosed publicly. Confidentiality is defined as 'conditions under which the information revealed by an individual participant in a relationship of trust will not be disclosed to others without permission. There are exceptions to confidentiality, however, such as to ensure the immediate safety of a child or vulnerable adult.

Further resources:

Ethical issues are discussed in the '*Inter-agency Guide to the Evaluation of Psychosocial Programming in Humanitarian Settings*', and in the '*IASC Reference Group MHPSS Assessment Guide*'.

You can find more resources on ethical evaluations at: http://betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/ethical_guidelines

MONITORING TOOLS

1. PARTICIPANT REGISTER¹⁸

A Participant Register helps you keep track of the women and girls taking part in WGFS activities. By capturing a few basic characteristics about each participant, you can gain a better understanding of who is utilising the services and to assess whether certain groups of women or girls have been unintentionally excluded from taking part in activities at the centre. Before designing a participant register, the WGFS team needs to decide which characteristics are important to include in the context you are working in (e.g. 'Nationality' is not likely to be important if all the women and girls are South Sudanese). Often, it is most helpful to have just a few pieces of information; collecting too much information can overwhelm the staff with data.

Information you might want to collect could include:

- Age
- Language
- Marital status
- Number of children
- For adolescent girls – whether they are in school or not (and if so, which class and which school)
- Where they live
- Whether they have attended before or this is their first time

¹⁸ A good example of a participant register is provided in the “Tools and guidance for monitoring and evaluating CFS” Manual available online at: http://cpwg.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/01/Guidance-for-CFS-ME_1.pdf

2. SAMPLE ACTIVITY REPORT (included with permission from Confident Children out of Crisis)

An activity record is essential in order to record and keep track of the activities taking place within the WGFS. It is also an important tool to inform staff and women and girls attending about changes to the WGFS activity schedule as time progresses and the WGFS diversifies its activities. Although it may take a few days to establish a proper activity plan, it is important that you have one as soon as possible with changes being made as the WGFS is developed.

The activity record should be updated as regularly as the schedule changes. Copies of old schedules should be stored for monitoring and reviewing changes and to assist in the compilation of project reports. Try to prepare an activity schedule, disaggregated by age group, as shown in the example below. Update the schedule and keep copies of old schedules on file for review.¹⁹

Details of the Activity

Project Title:	
Name of Activity:	
Date of Activity:	
Location of Activity:	
Facilitator(s)	

Background and Aims of the Activity

[Box to be expanded]

Overview of the Activity (e.g. Discuss the methodology used, the areas covered in the activity per day, key moments in the training)

[Box to be expanded]

Beneficiaries reached (those directly participating in an activity)

	Number
Adolescent girls aged 11-14	
Adolescent girls aged 15-17	
Adult women aged 18-25	
Adult women aged 26-50	
Adult women aged 51 and over	
TOTAL NUMBER:	

¹⁹ Description adapted from the “Tools and guidance for monitoring and evaluating CFS” Manual .

Reasons for any variance between planned and actual number of people reached

[Box to be expanded]

Challenges encountered during the activity implementation

[Box to be expanded]

Comments from participants

[Box to be expanded]

Key actions/ follow up areas for Project Staff

Action/Follow Up Area	By Who?	By When?

Name and position of staff member compiling this report	
Date of submission of the report	

3. REFERRAL RECORDS

Records should be kept of any referrals made to other service providers. A referral tracking system should be in place from the very start of the WGFS in order not only to record the number of women and girls attending the WGFS who are referred to other services, but also to record information such as the type of services for which referrals have been made and information on follow up activities by the WGFS staff. A simple format for recording referral cases is presented below.

Referral number	Clients code number	Date of referral	Place of referral	Reason of referral	Follow up action by referring agency
1	AU003	6 April, 2017	Juba Teaching Hospital	Need for advanced psychiatric treatment	Family visit to ensure medicine is provided according to prescribed schedule.
2	BC005	22 September, 2017	IMC	Clinical management of rape	Provide psychosocial support to the survivor and family members.

It is a good idea to periodically conduct (e.g. on a bi-weekly or monthly basis) a monitoring review of the number of referrals made, which services the referrals are sent to and status of follow-up actions.²⁰

Remember that case files are highly confidential and should always be kept in a locked and secure location. Access to them should be restricted only to authorized staff and the details of any registered client should not be discussed with non-authorized staff or persons in or outside the WGFS. All WGFS that use case management should have confidentiality protocols in place, detailing what information can be shared with whom and for what purpose. If in doubt, you should therefore ask your WGFS manager about it and make sure that your WGFS also has one.

²⁰ Adapted from the “Tools and guidance for monitoring and evaluating CFS” Manual and the “Case management practice within Save the Children child protection programmes” Manual available online at: <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Case-Management-Practice-Within-Save-the-Children-Child-Protection-Programmes.pdf>

EVALUATION TOOLS

4. STEPS IN EVALUATION

Monitoring is the first step in evaluation because it provides a solid base of information about the WGFS activities and participants, which is the starting point of evaluation.

Evaluations can range from simple, basic information gathering to complex analyses of data. However, **how** we do it is similar, regardless of the complexity of the design, following the steps below.

1. Identify the aims and objectives of the programme
2. Identify the indicators which will provide your information
3. Find a way to collect information about those objectives/ indicators
4. Decide who you want to collect information from
5. Collect the information (usually at more than one point)
6. Analyse the information to find out whether your programme is achieving its objectives
7. Use your findings to revise your objectives and/ or your activities, and/ or the way you collect your evaluation information.

Step One: Identifying Aims and Objectives

The first stage of an evaluation is to specify the aims and objectives of the programme.

Aims: a broad description of what the programme intends to achieve

E.g. To improve the emotional and social wellbeing of women and adolescent girls in Maban.

Objectives: clearly defined, specified goals which contribute to the aims

E.g. 80% of women and adolescent girls who participate in at least one WGFS activity a week for three months will report having more friends at the end of the three-month period than they did at the beginning.

Aims:

- The project team sits down and identifies the group(s) the project is targeting (e.g girls aged 16 to 17, young women aged 18 to 25, women aged 26 to 50, and elderly women aged above 50).
- Discuss and write down the aims and objectives of your programme (separately for each group if you have more than one).
- Discuss and write down **how** the project team thinks the programme will achieve each aim and objective.

Invite an outside facilitator if possible. It can sometimes be helpful to have somebody from outside the team in this discussion, to ask questions and

encourage the programme team members to be very specific about their objectives.

Then consult with women and girls. It is good to find out what they would want to achieve by participating in the WGFS, and take this into account when specifying your objectives. The aim of the information-gathering process is to understand from your target group what a 'positive change' would look like, and what their priorities are. Not all of the changes identified through this process will be things that your programme can help with. However, you can go through the list of issues identified and pick out the ones that you think would be useful and realistic objectives for your programme.

Objectives: Once you have finished the activities above you should end up with a list of possible objectives for the WGFS. Keep your list short, 4 or 5 objectives will be enough in most cases.

The objectives should be things your programme can influence, they should be simple, small and realistic.

For example...

AN OVER-AMBITIOUS OBJECTIVE: 'To prevent conflict'

Even if you can find a way to measure this, you're unlikely to find any positive change – there are so many other factors which influence conflict that any effect your programme has is likely to be lost.

A SIMPLE AND REALISTIC OBJECTIVE: 'To improve relationships between women of different ethnic groups who participate in WGFS activities'

This could be measured by the number of friends women say they have from different ethnic groups, or the amount of time women from different ethnic groups spend interacting with each other during sessions.

Step Two: Identifying the indicators which will provide your information

Once you have a list of objectives, you need to decide on the best **indicator(s)** for each. An indicator is information you can collect to tell you whether an objective has been achieved.

Possible Indicators for a WGFS

Women/ Girls

- % of women/ girls participating in awareness raising and other activities.
- % of women/ girls taking part in decision-making on WGFS programming.
- % of surveyed women/ girls that can identify where to seek GBV services.
- % of women/ girls participating in the WGFS who report satisfaction with the quality of services.
- % of women/ girls with increased knowledge about GBV, access to services and case management
- % of women/ girls able to identify at least two ways they have benefited from participating in WGFS activities
- % of women/ girls who participated in an information session on [subject] and that can demonstrate increased knowledge of the [subject] at the end of the session

Community

- % of community members who demonstrate increased awareness of women's and girls' rights.
- % of community members who know where women and girls can go for help for specified issues (e.g. GBV).
- % of community members able to identify at least two ways in which the community has benefited from the WGFS activities.

- Get the whole programme team together.
- Go through your objectives, one by one, and for each one, decide what type of information would tell you whether this objective is being achieved.
- Indicators should be based on information you can collect easily.
- You can have more than one indicator for each objective.

Step Three: Decide on a way to collect information

There are various ways to collect information to enable you to assess whether the indicators you have selected have been achieved. These include:

- Questionnaires
- Individual interviews
- Group discussions
- Observation

It can be difficult for women and girls to give unstructured feedback on WGFS activities and processes. It is necessary to provide some form of structure to feedback sessions, and clear questions. Due to low literacy rates amongst women and girls in South Sudan, written questionnaires and surveys are normally not the most appropriate approach. Some suggested tools for collecting data are outlined below.

- Group discussions
- Measure of satisfaction
- Most Significant Change technique
- Guide to creating and using a simple checklist to measure change.

Collecting baseline data before the WGFS starts is fundamental, in order to be able to design a proper evaluation and demonstrate that your work

is really making a change. However, often organisations, especially smaller ones, do not have enough research capacities and might find it difficult to conduct a proper baseline assessment on their own. For this reason, it is important during the planning phase to consider ways to partner with other organizations that might provide additional support or that have already conducted similar activities and are willing to share their findings. A baseline can also confirm whether important changes have occurred after your original plan that you might need to consider for the set-up of the WGFS.

5. GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Experience of many organisations working with women and girls in South Sudan is that group discussions are a particularly useful format for obtaining feedback. Women and girls enjoy these sessions and are comfortable discussing issues in a group. Group discussions should be held regularly (e.g. every quarter) to make sure that change over time is captured and that the feedback provided during the sessions can be used to adapt and improve programming. At least two people will be needed to run a group discussion; one to facilitate and one to take notes. The note-taker should try to write down as accurately as possible whatever participants say. She/ he should also make a note of the characteristics of those who participated. A suggested format for this can be found in the following page.

Group discussions can be held with various types of participants, including adolescent girls, adult women, staff and community members (male, female, leaders, others). Each type of group should be held separately, since people are more likely to speak freely when they are amongst others similar to them. Each group should consist of 10-15 people (no more than 15). Depending on the topic under discussion and the degree of expertise of your staff you might want to decide whether to hold a group discussion or not, particularly when participants fall within younger age brackets. In any case, it is important that you remember the principle of do not harm and avoid exposing women and girls to unnecessary questions or duplicating meetings.

Sample note-taker's information sheet for Focus Group Discussions (FGD's) [adapted from IRC material]

Focus group discussion facilitator: _____

Does the facilitator work directly with the participants: Yes/ No

Note taker: _____

Does the note taker work directly with the participants: Yes/ No

Date: _____ Location: _____

Translation necessary for the interview: Yes/ No

If yes, the translation language was from: _____ to _____

Sex of FGD participants: N. Male _____ N. Female _____

Age of FGD participants: N. 10-14 years _____

N. 15-19 years _____

N. 20-24 years _____

N. 25-40 years _____

N. Over 40 years _____

Guidance for group discussions [adapted from IRC material]

Information for facilitators

Focus group discussions (FGD) must be conducted in a **transparent and confidential** manner. **Ethical considerations and the safety of both the participants and the facilitators are paramount.**

The team should assure participants that all information shared within the discussion will remain confidential. The note takers must ensure that any information identifying or associating individuals with responses must not be transcribed or relayed to any outside parties. Some questions may result in sensitive responses. You should take all potential **ethical concerns** into consideration before the discussion, considering the safety of respondents, ensuring that all participants agree that no information shared in the discussion will be divulged outside the group. You must obtain **verbal informed consent** from the participants. The group should be made of like members – community leaders, adult women, youth, adolescent girls, etc. The discussion should not last more than one to one and a half hours.

In order to increase acceptance and ensure that participants are not the 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 mobilising participants for the FGD, explain to the participants what the discussion will be about and invite them to come along.
3. Ensure that the women and girls focus group discussion are conducted separately to reduce power structures that may be present and prevent girls from speaking freely.

Explanation and procedure of the focus group discussion

1. Introduce all facilitators and translators
2. Explain the purpose of the discussion

- Provide general information about the programme
- Explain to the participants why you are conducting a FGD

The purpose of this group discussion is to understand your concerns and needs, because we want to provide high quality services and activities. We want to know:

- How do we know if what we do here is helpful to you?
- How can all of us work together to make this a safe and supportive space and program?
- What roles do you want to play?
- What else do we need to know or understand?

3. Explain what you will do with this information to manage expectations. Do not make any false promises

4. Emphasise that participation is voluntary

- No one is obligated to respond to any questions if s/he does not wish
- 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

5. Agree on confidentiality

- Explain that the facilitators and participants should keep the discussion confidential. This includes, not sharing details of the discussion later, whether with people who are present or not
- Agree in advance what you will say if asked about the group discussion. If the topic discussion is on a sensitive matter, one

option is to explain for instance that you were speaking about the health concerns of women and girls.

6. Ask the group to set ground rules for the discussion including but not limited to;

- Being respectful when others speak
- Not interrupting a person who is speaking
- Explain that the facilitator might interrupt discussion, but only to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak and no one person dominates the discussion

7. Set a time keeper for the FGD

- The discussion should last between 30 minutes to 1 hour, but no longer than 1.5 hours.

8. Ask permission to take notes

- Explain that no individual's identity will be mentioned and or written
- The purpose of note taking is to ensure that the information collected is precise
- If possible, have one staff member ask the questions and one staff member write down the answers

9. Obtain verbal consent from the participants

- Ask the participants if they understand what the discussion entails. Ask the participants if they give their consent to participating in the discussion and if they agree that [the organisation] has their consent to use the information to inform the services that they provide

10. Begin the focus group discussion

GROUP DISCUSSION TAKES PLACE

Thank everyone for coming and participating in the FGD.

If anyone would like to discuss anything with me in private, I will be here for the next twenty minutes.

The questions asked during a group discussion will vary depending on the issues you are interested in (determined in part by your indicators). Some possible questions are listed below.

Questions for staff

- What is the role of women and girls in planning the activities?
- What activities are led by women and girls?
- In what ways do women and girls have ownership of the WGFS?

Questions for community members (men and women)

- How would you describe the WGFS?
- Do you know women/ girls who attend? Do you know women/ girls who don't attend? What are the reasons that some women/ girls do not attend?
- Have you/ the community been involved in supporting the WGFS? Do you think the community could be more involved? If so, how?
- Who else is providing services for women and girls here? How is the relationship between the WGFS and these other sources of support?

Questions for women and girls

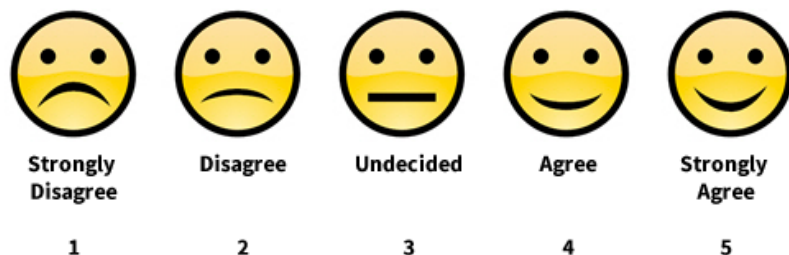
- Do you feel physically safe in the WGFS? What makes you feel safe/not safe?
- Do you feel emotionally safe in the WGFS? What makes you feel safe/not safe?
- Is the WGFS in the right place? If not, why not? Where would be a better place?
- What opportunities are there in the WGFS to express your thoughts and opinions?
- Have you made friends at the WGFS? What has helped you to make friends? What has made it difficult for you to make friends?
- What do your family and other people you know think about the WGFS?
- How would you describe this WGFS to someone who has never seen it or been here before?
- Why do you keep coming to the WGFS? What makes you happy about coming here?
- Which activities have you participated in? Which did you like? Which did you not like? Why?
- How has your experience participating in the WGFS affected other parts of your life?
- What does your husband/family think about you being here?
- Who would you recommend to come? Who would you not recommend to come?
- If you could dream about starting a perfect WGFS, how would you do it?
- Suggestions and recommendations. What else do you need?

6. MEASURE OF SATISFACTION

Measures of satisfaction are often useful as part of an evaluation. Often these are conducted through written satisfaction questionnaires, which are not appropriate in South Sudan. An alternative, participatory methodology is outlined below.

Preparation

- Decide on the questions you want answers to (perhaps related to your indicators). These must be worded as positive statements of opinion participants can agree or disagree with. For example, I have made new friends at the WGFS²¹.
- Prepare five²¹ pieces of paper, each with a face illustrating a different level of happiness. These faces are to illustrate how much a participant agrees with the statements you read. [You will need to test the faces in advance with some of the people you intend to include in the evaluation, to make sure they understand what the faces represent]. For example:



²¹ Sometimes people struggle to choose between five options. If this is the case, you can reduce to four or three – but be aware that the fewer the options, the more difficult it will be to demonstrate change.

Process

1. Put the five pieces of paper on the floor in the middle of the group. Explain what each face represents. Then check participants' understanding using a simple example (e.g. 'If I said 'The weather is very cold today', which of the faces would you choose to show how much you agree with what I said?'). Continue explaining and checking until everyone understands.
2. Give each participant one small object (e.g. pebble).
3. Read out the first statement and ask participants to put their pebble next to the face that represents how much they agree with the statement.
4. Make a note of how many pebbles have been placed against each picture.
5. If you like and you have time, you can ask participants to give their reasons for their choice, and make a note of what they say.
6. Go to the next statement, and continue in the same way.

Possible statements to assess satisfaction

- I have made friends at the WGFS
- I enjoy participating in the literacy classes
- I have learned new things at the WGFS
- I feel able to talk to WGFS staff about my problems
- I feel safe at the WGFS
- I tell my friends and neighbours to come to the WGFS

7. SATISFACTION WITH CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES (adapted and included with permission from IMC)²²

The purpose of the client feedback form is to evaluate the services offered by the ___ GBV programme to survivors of Gender Based Violence and to assess their level of satisfaction with services. It could be used or adapted by other organisations which offer case management services. In order to do so safely, it is essential that the person who conducts the feedback interview (who should not be the person who provided the case management services) is trained and supervised, and has signed the Code of Conduct.

The client feedback form is a way to receive feedback from the women and girls who have used case management services, and can help to improve the services offered. It is not a way to evaluate individual staff members, and this should be made clear both to the staff and to the women and girls who are asked to give feedback.

Due to the low literacy levels amongst women and girls in South Sudan, the feedback form should be completed through an interview with the survivor. With the permission of the survivor, another case worker or manager should conduct the interview. The survivor should be told that no questions will be asked about her case; the questions are just to get information on the services she received and that all responses will be kept confidential.

For ___, the feedback interview is conducted three months after their first contact with the case manager, or at the time the case is closed if this is sooner than three months. The needs of the client should always be considered first and the decision to administer the client feedback form should be determined on a case to case basis. If the case worker and manager feel that conducting the feedback interview would have a negative impact on the client, the interview should not be conducted. As always, the 'Do no harm' guiding principle takes priority.

²² please note that this tool should be used only after proper training and supervision.

8. CLIENT SATISFACTION FORM

Step 1: Case worker providing PSS and case management to ask permission from the client

The social worker providing PSS and case management services will read the consent form to the client and ask the client's permission to have another case worker/ manager interview them. The case worker providing treatment then signs and dates the consent form. The client's name will not go anywhere on the consent form or the survey. Once consent is given, the case worker providing services will arrange for another case worker/ manager to interview them. The interviewing Case worker/ manager will read the statements under "Step 2" and "Step 3" to the client before interviewing them.

Step 2: Message from the interviewing Case worker/ Manager

If you agree, I am going to ask you some questions. I will not write your name on the form and the interview will remain confidential. This information will help the ___ GBV programme to provide survivors with better services. I will not ask you any questions about what brought you to the ___ GBV program. I will only ask questions about the services you received.

- If the survivor wants psychosocial support from the Case worker who is interviewing her this should not be denied, but should be given separately from the client feedback form

Step 3: Client feedback survey

You do not have to participate but your responses will help us ensure that we provide the best possible services. If you agree, you can answer as many or as few questions as you feel comfortable answering. You can also choose to stop answering questions at any point. Your services and support will not be affected in any way if you do not agree to participate or if you do agree but do not answer all of the questions. The interview

should take about ten minutes. Will you agree to answer some questions about the services you received? (Yes / No)

Date Interviewed: _____

- 1) How did you find out about the ___ GBV services? You may say more than one. (PROBE: Any other way?)

[multiple choice responses inserted here, depending on the context]

- 2) Did you experience any problems accessing the ___ GBV services?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If yes] Please explain the problems that you had accessing the ___ GBV services.

- 3) What kind of assistance were you expecting from the ___ GBV program? You may say more than one. (PROBE: Any other assistance?)

[multiple choice responses inserted here, depending on the context]

- 4) Were your expectations met?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain how your expectations were not met.

- 5) Were you treated in a respectful way by the case worker?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain how the case worker could have been more respectful.

- 6) Did you feel comfortable when talking to the case worker?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain what would have made you more comfortable.

- 7) Did you feel like the case worker believed what you told her?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain why you felt like the case worker didn't believe you.

- 8) Did you get information that was helpful to you?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain how the information could have been more helpful.

- 9) Did you feel pressure from a service provider at any time to make a decision or do something that you did not wish to do?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain what happened when you felt pressured to make a decision or do something that you did not wish to do.

- 10) In general, did you feel better after using the ___ GBV services?

Yes/ No/ No response

[If no] Please explain what, if anything, the ___ GBV services could have done that would have made you feel better.

- 11) Is there anything else you want to tell us about the services you received?

Thank you for taking the time to take part in this interview, we hope that the responses to these questions and your honest feedback will help us improve the ___ GBV services.

For the case worker:

Did the client say anything else, good or bad, about the services that they received?

9. MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE TECHNIQUE²³

This Most Significant Change technique is useful to include alongside other evaluation methods because it can help identify any unexpected changes that have occurred as a result of your programme. It also gives participants and programme staff an opportunity to talk about the programme in their own words.

Women/ girls who participate in WGFS activities

Ask participants the following question:

What is the most significant change that happened to you since you got involved with the WGFS? Why is it significant for you?

There are a number of ways you can collect the participants' stories of their most significant change. Choose the one which seems best to you and your programme team.

- a) The participant can write their own story.
- b) The participant can be 'interviewed' by a member of programme staff, who writes the story for the participant. If you do this, make sure you read back the story to the participant, so he/ she can

Whichever method(s) you choose, the following points are important:

- The stories should be around a page in length - the more specific and detailed the story is, the more useful it will be.
- A member of the programme team should check that the stories have enough information to be understood by somebody from outside that context.
- It is important that the stories include an explanation of why the change is significant to the participant. A member of the programme team should make sure that stories include these reasons, and, if necessary can ask questions to help the participant to think about why this change is important to them (e.g. 'why is this significant to you?'; 'what difference has this made to you?')

make additions and corrections. Try to use the participant's own words as much as possible.

- c) If you have access to a digital camera, each participant can take a photograph that would illustrate their most significant change (or a member of the programme team can take the photo for them). The photograph is stored on a computer, along with an explanation of what the photo means to the participant.
- d) A group discussion can be held, during which participants share stories of how their lives have changed since becoming involved with the programme. These stories can be recorded on tape, or by taking notes.

²³ Based on Davies,R. & Dart,J. (2005) The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique: A Guide to its Use (<http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm>)

Programme Staff

Programme staff who have regular contact with participants (i.e. WGFS staff, including volunteers) can take part in the same exercise, but the question should relate to changes in the participants. For example:

- Looking back over the last six months, what do you think is the most significant change in the lives of the people involved in the programme?
- From your point of view can you describe a story that shows how the WGFS has made a difference in the lives of women and girls attending?

The stories can be collected in any of the ways described above.

Getting permission to share stories

You will need to get permission from the individuals concerned to use these stories for evaluation purposes. This involves:

- Explaining to the participant how their story will be used, and who will see it.
- If the participant does not wish their story to be used for evaluation, they can still participate in the process, but their story will not be shared.
- If the participant is willing for their story to be used for evaluation, they should:
 - be asked whether they want their name to accompany the story.

- check whether other people named in the story are happy to be included.

Girls under a certain age may need parental consent to participate in this process.²⁴

If you know or think the stories collected could be used by your organization also for purposes other than evaluation (e.g. communication or advocacy purposes) it is very important to highlight this as well during the consent process.

Use of the Stories for Evaluation

When you have collected stories from multiple participants and staff, they need to be organised in a way that makes sense both to you, and to people outside the programme. The programme team can do this by:

- a) Reviewing all the stories and sorting them into piles, according to common themes (i.e. stories related to learning a new skill or stories related to improved knowledge of services) have something in common).
- b) Giving a name to each of the piles – these names will be the main ‘themes’ identified by your project.
- c) Writing a description of each theme, using some of the stories as examples to illustrate each theme. You can also say how many participants’ stories referred to each theme.

Another way to use the stories of change is as individual case studies (with the permission of the individual concerned).

²⁴ For further guidance please refer to the Child Protection Minimum Standards, available online at: <http://cpwg.net/minimum-standards/> and the Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Assault (IRC), available online at: http://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/IRC_CCSGuide_FullGuide_lowres.pdf

10. GUIDE TO CREATING AND USING A SIMPLE CHECKLIST TO MEASURE CHANGE

From: TPO Uganda & UNICEF South Sudan (2015) *Community-Based Psychosocial Support for Children and Adolescents in South Sudan: A Toolkit of Resources* (http://media.wix.com/ugd/fdfc2d_8bee86d477074676a96efa892afbe547.pdf).

Purpose: To identify the main areas of change that programme staff and/or participants hope to achieve through the programme; then to develop a checklist to measure these factors at the beginning and end of the programme in order to assess change.

Participants: In most cases, the development of the checklist will be conducted by programme staff who are familiar with (a) the community the programme will be used with, and (b) the aims and content of the programme. If possible, it is useful to include representatives of the target community, if they have the type of knowledge described above.

Activity One: Listing and ranking of key changes to be achieved through the programme/ activity

1. Participants identify all the changes they would like to see amongst individuals/ families/ communities as a result of the intervention of activity. List all of these in a large piece of paper (flip chart size). Continue until at least 5 desired changes have been identified.
2. Participants use objects (pebbles, pens, paper clips, whatever is available) to rank the desired changes in order of importance. Each participant should have one object, and should place the pebble next to the change they think is **most** important.
3. The recorder should record how many objects are placed by each change. Identify the change with the most vote, and make a note of it. It

can be useful also to make a note of why people voted for this one – why did they think this change was the most important?

4. Now, remove the ‘top priority change’ from the list and return the objects to the participants. Repeat the process 4 more times, with each person placing their object beside the change that they think is most important. Continue to record how many objects are placed next to each change.

5. At the end of this process, you should have a list of the top 5 priority changes that programme staff (and community representatives if appropriate) think are the most important.

Activity Two: Developing the checklist

For each of the five priority changes, programme staff should develop questions which can be asked of participants in the intervention at the beginning and the end of the process. In order to do this effectively, programme staff need to think about:

- a) What question will be easily understood and will give the information needed?
- b) What response format will be most appropriate? ‘Free response’ type answers should be avoided because it is more difficult to compare responses before and after the intervention.

Activity Three: Collect the data

You can ask the questions of all the people who participate in the activity, or just a sample of them (i.e. a smaller, more manageable version of the larger group which still contains enough diversity to adequately represent the whole group) . This decision depends on the number of participants you have, and how many people you have to collect the data.

In many cases, staff will have to sit with the participant and ask the questions verbally, then write down the responses.

Make sure you collect the information from the same people at the beginning and end of the activity (and possibly again after three or six months). In order to do this, you will need to write down their names, but you should be very careful to keep all the information they give you confidential.

Activity Four: Analyse the data

At the simplest level, just organise the ‘before’ and ‘after’ response into a spreadsheet so you can compare them, or write them on a piece of paper.

- Look at what changes.
- Identify any patterns (positive or negative) and make a note of them.
- Think about the changes you hoped to see – have they happened, according to the responses you received from participants?

Example: ASSESSMENT OF WELLBEING

Date of assessment		Stage of assessment	<i>Before activity/ After activity</i>
Interviewer's name			

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name of respondent			
Age		Gender	<i>Male/ Female</i>
Location		Time displaced	

Explain that you would like to ask the person some questions about their life.

Explain that you would like them to tell you how often they have some experiences or feelings, and explain the response options (never, rarely, sometimes, very often, almost always).

Tell them that you will keep their information confidential, and nobody else will see this form.

MAKE SURE THAT THE FORM IS KEPT SAFELY AND NOBODY ELSE CAN SEE IT. DESTROY IT ONCE YOUR EVALUATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

Answer by **making a ring around the letter** corresponding to the person's answer. For example:

2

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Very often	Almost always
1. How often do you meet with friends?	0	1	2	3	4
2. How often in the past week have you felt happy?	0	1	2	3	4
3. Do you feel alone?	0	1	2	3	4
4. Do you do things that you enjoy?	0	1	2	3	4
5. Do you feel hopeful about your future?	0	1	2	3	4

ANNEX 7. REFERRAL AND FEEDBACK FORMS

Referral

(To be completed by the organization of first contact with the patient)

Date: _____ **Site Code** _____ **Patient Code** _____

Referred by: _____ **Referred to:** _____

Reason(s) for referral (services requested by the patient)

Feedback

(To be returned to the referring organization after your interventions)

Date: _____ **Patient Code** _____

Service(s) provided? **Yes** **No**

If yes, mention the date: _____

If not, why?

Remarks/Recommendations

Completed by: _____

PROMOTING POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SOUTH SUDAN

Overall Goal: WGFS are aimed at creating an empowering and inclusive environment where women and girls attending feel safe, supported, connected, empowered and better informed about their rights and opportunities

A MULTI LAYERED SUPPORT SYSTEM

Person focused

Identify, refer and follow up those women and girls in need of specialised support (e.g. physical and mental health from a doctor or psychiatrist)

Provide basic emotional & practical support by WGFS staff (e.g. psychological first aid, referrals to health services, economic services, shelter assistance, etc.)

Community focused

*Strengthen community & family supports.
Increase community awareness of issues affecting women and of services available*

Advocate for the inclusion of women's considerations in other sectors, including health, nutrition, food aid, shelter, site planning, WASH

Underlying core principles: 1. Do No Harm 2. Building on existing capacity, resources and structures, 3. Participation, 4. Empowerment, 5. Human Rights and Inclusion, 6. Integrated Support System, 7. Tailor-made approach, 8. Sustainability



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