

Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in Gender-Based Violence Programming in Humanitarian Settings

Tool 2: Group discussion guide

Purpose of this guidance note

This tool provides guidance on conducting group discussions and includes a set of discussion questions.

Composition of groups

Group discussions should be conducted with men and women separately to gather in-depth information about their specific and varied needs. Women should lead the discussions with other women to ensure the space is comfortable and that participants feel free to express themselves, and to ensure that women are safe to talk about the violence they are exposed to, in line with the WHO *Guidelines on Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Researching, Documenting and Monitoring Sexual Violence in Emergencies*.¹ Persons with different types of disabilities can participate in the same group discussion, according to their communication skills and abilities. Separate and/or specific groups may be necessary to facilitate effective participation of the following groups:

- adolescent girls and young women with disabilities;
- people who are deaf and use sign language to communicate;
- persons with intellectual disabilities who might prefer to use drawing, stories or photos to stimulate discussion. In such cases, smaller groups (4-6 participants) may be necessary.

In some settings, it might be most effective to have a separate group for people with new disabilities (e.g., acquired through war injuries) to explore their specific concerns. It may also be helpful to run separate, parallel discussions or activities with caregivers and persons with disabilities in the same or a nearby venue. This can create a safe space for each group to explore their different concerns, may decrease the demands on caregivers who now would not need to come on multiple days and increase the participation of people who are not used to being separated from their caregivers.

Timing of groups

Group discussions are best conducted with 8-10 participants and should not last longer than 90 minutes. If groups take longer than this to complete all activities in the Group Discussion Guide (see below), you may wish to conduct Parts A and B on one day, and Parts C and D another day, if participants are willing and able to return.

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Facilitation

Facilitation of groups will require at least one person to lead the discussion and one person to take notes. As much as possible, group discussions with women and girls should be facilitated by women (this includes the person leading the discussion, the note-taker and the translator) and group discussions with men and boys should be facilitated by men. The question guide should be shared with translators in advance so they are familiar with the questions that will be asked and, if possible, should be back-translated so that you are sure their understanding of the questions is accurate.

It is important that everyone in the group have the opportunity to speak. This may mean that the facilitator interrupts or redirects the discussion and encourages participation to make sure everyone has the chance to say what they want.

At the end of the Discussion Group Guide, there is a Group Documentation Form, which should be completed for every group. It includes a place to record the composition of the group and the date, and space for the note-taker to document the discussion.

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Instructions

- Introduce all facilitators and translators.
- Present the purpose of the discussion:
 - » Give general information about your organization.
 - » Explain that the purpose of the meeting is to understand the safety and security concerns of persons with disabilities and their caregivers, and the particular risks of women and girls. This information is important to improve their participation and access services in the community.
 - » Explain what you will do with this information and make sure that you do not raise false expectations.
- Remind participants that:
 - » Participation is voluntary.
 - » No one is obligated to respond to any questions if they do not wish.
 - » Participants can leave the discussion at any time.
 - » It is not essential that participants share personal experiences if they do not wish.
- Explain confidentiality. It is important that participants understand how the information they provide will be kept confidential. All participants in the group should understand the following:
 - » Names or personal information that will identify individuals should not be shared in the group.
 - » The details of what participants in the discussion have said should not be shared with others in the community.
 - » Remind participants that the reason we want to keep these conversations confidential is so everyone feels safe in the discussion space and will be safe when they leave.
- Explain that someone will be taking notes to ensure the information provided is accurately documented. All participants in the group should understand the following:
 - » The identity of participants will not be documented or shared.
 - » The purpose of the notes is to ensure that the information collected is not misrepresented and important points are not missed.
 - » If they do not want something to be written down, they should let the facilitator know.

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Questions and participatory activities

The discussion guide is broken down into four parts, representing key assessment areas. Each part comprises several questions that can be answered through activities or discussion.

Part A: The intersection of disability and gender (30 minutes)

Guiding question 1: *What types of disabilities do people in our community have? Do women and girls have disabilities that are different from men and boys?*

Purpose: This question will help gather information about what disabilities exist in the community and whether there are differences between men and women.

Facilitation:

- Ask everyone to draw a picture representing the different types of disabilities they know exist in the community. Stick these on the wall or draw them in the sand. Alternatively, you can use your own pictures of persons with different types of disabilities and ask people to identify which ones are most common in their community.
- Ask the group to talk about persons who are isolated in their homes, or those with more “hidden” disabilities, like intellectual or mental disabilities.
- Ask the group: Do women and girls have disabilities that are different from men and boys?

Guiding question 2: *How does the community treat women and girls with disabilities? How does the community treat men and boys with disabilities?*

Purpose: This activity will help identify how the community perceives women, girls, boys and men with disabilities and how this affects their roles, responsibilities and opportunities. It will also help to understand the expectations of women, girls, boys and men with disabilities and the reality of their daily life, including the support they may or may not receive from others in the community.

Facilitation:

You can use pictures of women and men with disabilities undertaking different roles in the community to stimulate the discussion. See pictures in [Tool 4: GBV and disability: A training module for GBV practitioners in humanitarian settings](#).

- Begin by asking the group:
 - » What tasks or roles are women with disabilities expected to undertake in the community? What about men?
 - » Is it expected that women with disabilities will also undertake the tasks expected of women without disabilities? Why or why not?
 - » Is it expected that men with disabilities will also undertake the tasks expected of men without disabilities?
 - » How might the spouse or family treat a woman with disabilities if they are unable to undertake these roles? How might the community treat women with disabilities if they are unable to undertake these roles? How would they treat men with disabilities if they are unable to undertake these roles?

Part B: Safety and security of women and girls with disabilities (30 minutes)

Facilitation:

- Begin by explaining that “we would now like to ask you a few questions about the safety and security of women and girls with disabilities in the community.”
 - **Use pictures of places in the community or ask participants to draw a map of the general area, camp or site.** Maps can be created on paper with colored pens or in the dirt/sand using natural materials such as sticks and pebbles. Make sure that they include common places where women and girls spend time throughout the day or gather for social reasons (e.g., home, school, market or community spaces).²
1. Ask the group to select the places where women go to meet each other. Ask the group to select the places where girls go to meet each other.
 2. Ask the group “Do women and girls with disabilities also go to these places where their peers are going? Why/Why not? What types of barriers do they experience? Are these barriers different depending on the type of disability?” (e.g., physical versus intellectual disability). Be sure to ask this question for women and girls separately. Do not put them together in a single question.
 3. Ask the group: “In this community, where do women with disabilities feel safe? Where do they feel unsafe or avoid going? What makes this place safe or unsafe?” Refer to the map or drawings as appropriate. Repeat the questions asking about girls.
 4. Ask the group: “Can you describe the kinds of violence women with disabilities face in the community? What about girls with disabilities? How does it differ according to the type of disability?” (e.g., physical versus intellectual disability).
 5. Ask the group: “What happens to the people who commit these acts of violence against women and/or girls with disabilities? Are they punished? If so, how?”
 6. Ask the group: “How does the family respond to a woman with disabilities who has been raped or sexually assaulted? How do they support her? What about for girls with disabilities?”
 7. Ask the group: “What do women and girls with disabilities do to protect themselves from violence? What support systems do they have? What does the community do to protect them?”

Part C: Services in the camp for survivors with disabilities (15 minutes)

Preparation:

Develop short, contextually appropriate case studies about gender-based violence (GBV) committed against persons with disabilities. Use these to guide the questions below. It is important that these case studies are not linked to a specific story or person from the community. A few sample case studies are provided here, but they should be adapted to your context.

Sample Case Study 1: A young girl who is deaf and can’t speak left her shelter during the night to use the latrine. When she exited the latrine, a man grabbed her, pulled her behind the latrines and raped her.

Sample Case Study 2: A single woman has difficulty moving and is unable to work. One day a man comes to her and offers her help. She takes his food and money. After a week, he says that he will no

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longer help her unless she has sex with him. At that time, she has sex with him.

Sample Case Study 3: A man with intellectual disabilities is living with his sister and brother-in-law. His sister frequently tells him that he is “useless” and a burden on the family. He tries to help by doing household chores, but other men sometimes tease him when they see him doing these activities.

Facilitation:

Begin by explaining to the group, *“We would like to ask you some questions about the services and assistance available in the camp for people with disabilities who experience violence. We are going to begin by sharing a fictional scenario with you, and we will ask you some questions.”*

Read the first case study aloud and ask the questions below. When finished, ask the same questions using a second case study.

1. Ask the group: “If the person with disabilities in the story reported that she/he experienced this type of violence, how do you think people would respond?”
2. Ask the group: “Do survivors with disabilities share experiences like this with other people? What makes it difficult for them to do so?”
3. Ask the group: “Where could this person go to receive appropriate assistance? What kind of assistance and support could the survivor receive?”
4. Ask the group: “Is it likely that this survivor would seek such assistance? What might prevent her/him from seeking assistance?”

Part D: Inclusion of people with disabilities in GBV programming (30 minutes)

Guiding question 1: *What can be done to prevent violence against people with disabilities?*

Facilitation:

- Ask the group: “What could be done in this community to create a safe environment for persons with disabilities?”

This question can be asked about women with disabilities, girls with disabilities and specifically about those with intellectual and mental disabilities. Refer back to the community map to ask about ways to make specific places safer and more inclusive for these different groups.

- Ask the group: “Who is aware of services that help to respond or reduce gender-based violence in this community?”

Guiding question 2: *What are the barriers survivors face to accessing services or participating in activities?*

Facilitation:

- Describe the activities your organization and other organizations run that help to prevent or respond to gender-based violence.
- You may want to use photos to describe these activities.
- This can be followed by additional questions:

- » “How many of you were aware of these activities before the group discussion?”
- » “How did you know that these services existed? How did you get the information?”
- » “What helps persons with disabilities to access these services (facilitators)? What prevents persons with disabilities from accessing these services (barriers)?”

Guiding question 3: *What skills and capacities can persons with disabilities contribute?*

Facilitation:

Split the group into pairs to discuss:

- One activity that I would like to participate in the future.
- One thing that I am good at.
- One thing I can contribute or share with others.

Each person presents to the facilitator what the other shared. This can be done through speech, drawing or even acting and is a good activity to engage persons with disabilities in program improvement.

Conclude the discussion

- Thank participants for their time and their contributions.
- Remind participants that the purpose of this discussion was to better understand the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls.
- Repeat what you will do with this information and what purpose it will eventually serve.
- Remind participants about keeping discussions confidential, particularly if people described any personal experiences.
- Remind participants not to share information or the names of other participants with others in the community.
- Ask participants if they have questions.
- Make the participant aware of the services and activities available through your organization.
- If anyone wishes to speak in private, explain that you or someone else will be available after the meeting.

See next page for group discussion documentation form.

Notes:

5. <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241595681/en/>
6. See Community Mapping Guidance Note in the GBV Emergency Toolkit http://www.gbvresponders.org/filedepot_download/26/82

To download the complete *Toolkit for GBV Practitioners, the report “I See That It Is Possible”: Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in Gender-based Violence Programming in Humanitarian Settings* and *Stories of Change*, visit http://wrc.ms/disability_GBV



Group Discussion Documentation Form



Facilitator name: _____

Note-taker name: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Translation: Yes No

If yes, the translation was from _____ (language)

to _____ (language)

Group description: _____

(e.g., adolescent girls with disabilities or women with disabilities)

Sex of participants: Male Female

Age of participants:

10-14 years

15-19 years

20-24 years

25-40 years

Over 40 years

NOTES: _____

(continue on another sheet of paper if necessary)