

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

Tool 3: Individual interview tool

Purpose of this tool

This tool provides guidance on how to gather information from a community member with a disability who may not be able to participate in a group discussion. The tool includes questions to guide the interview and an observation checklist to help the interviewer get a sense of the environment in which the person lives.

Location of the interview

It is critical to prioritize safety when conducting an individual interview. While the purpose of individual interviews is to reach those who may not be able to participate in group discussions, that does not necessarily mean the interview should take place in the person's home. When arranging an individual interview, the interviewer should ask the individual whether they prefer the interview be conducted in their home, or if they would feel more comfortable in another location. This may mean delaying or rescheduling the interview until you can identify a safe, quiet space and help the person get to the location.

Length of the interview

Individual interviews should not be longer than one hour total. Given the time required to properly initiate the interview (i.e., introduce yourself, get informed consent) and to conclude the interview appropriately, the time the interviewer has for the discussion itself is closer to 45 minutes. It is important to be mindful of this so that you can pace the interview and prioritize questions accordingly.

Instructions

Identify and approach the person with a disability, and introduce yourself. Greet them in the same way that you would greet others in your community. Talk to the person directly to try to establish an optimal method of communication. This includes asking them which mode of communication will be best for them. Ask if they would like to participate and whether they feel safe doing so, and watch for any signs that they not want to or do not feel safe participating. If this is the case, do not proceed — the interview should be stopped immediately.

If the individual has shown interest and consents to participate, present the purpose and ethical guidelines that will be followed during your visit:

- Provide general information about your organization.
- State that the purpose of the meeting is to understand the safety and security concerns of persons with disabilities and their caregivers, and how we can improve their access to programs and services in the community.
- Explain what you will do with this information, and make sure you do not raise any false expectations.

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- Explain that participation is voluntary.
- Explain that no one is obligated to respond to any questions if they do not wish.
- Explain that no one is obligated to share personal experiences if they do not wish.
- Explain that if they don't wish to continue with the interview, it can be stopped at any time. It should be explained that this will not affect the services that they are already receiving or their opportunity to seek services in the future.

For people with limited communication abilities, ask the caregiver (if present): **How does [state the name of the person] tell you that she/he is unhappy or uncomfortable with something? What makes her/him happy or sad?** Use this information to facilitate the interview if verbal communication is not possible and respect any indications that the participant is not comfortable or willing to continue.

You can also ask the person if they are comfortable with you asking questions to the caregiver. If this option is pursued, the individual should be able to hear the discussion, and continue to be engaged and contribute in whatever way possible. It will be important to support the caregiver to use language that will not harm or disempower the person with a disability. If this happens, help to rephrase the conversation so that the individual is talked about in a more positive way. For example, you might use the term “has a disability” rather than “suffers from disability.” It is also important to remember that the caregiver will often give different information than the individual would, and thus talking with them not a substitute for talking with the individual. As always, respect any indications that the participant is not comfortable or does not want the interview to continue. If this is the case, the interview should be stopped immediately.

Interview questions

1. Tell me a bit about yourself. **Additional prompts:** What kind of things do you enjoy doing? How long have you been living here? Who lives in your household?
2. What kind of community activities do you participate in? **Additional prompts:** Ask about education, women’s groups, health and livelihoods activities, as appropriate. What things do you like about these activities? What things do you find difficult about these activities?
3. Are there any places or activities in the community where you feel uncomfortable or unsafe? What makes these places uncomfortable or unsafe for you?
4. Are there any places or activities in the community where you feel most comfortable or most safe? What makes these places comfortable or safe for you?
5. Do you have contact with other women and girls your age? If so, who provides you support? Where do you go to meet them? If not, what are the challenges to meeting and socializing with other women and girls?
6. Where do you go or who do you talk to if you have problems and concerns? **Additional prompts:** Where do people go if they have experienced some kind of sexual abuse or exploitation? Have you heard about services for survivors who have experienced sexual violence? When do people decide to go to these services? Do people with disabilities have difficulty accessing these services?
7. Are there any services or programs for women/girls in the community that you would like to access or participate in? What has prevented you from accessing these services or activities in the past? How could we help you to participate in this activity or access this service? **Additional prompts:** Ask about different GBV prevention activities that are running in the community – like women’s groups, SASA! activities, awareness-raising, campaigns and trainings.

Observation checklist

During an individual interview, it can be useful to make some notes about what you observe about the individual and their environment. This can help to determine other things in the participant's home life and relationships that may affect their health, safety and well-being. It can also help to identify additional needs, concerns and ways to support the person with a disability to participate in your program and access your services.

The questions below may be useful for guiding your observations.

Communication
How does the person communicate? Watch other family members to see how they interact with the person. Do they use speech, writing or gestures?
Physical
Describe the person's personal appearance and hygiene. Are they dressed in an appropriate way compared with other men and women in the household or community (e.g., Are they naked or partially clothed when others are fully clothed? If so, ask caregivers for a blanket and/or clothing before continuing with the interview). Do they appear to have good hygiene (e.g., Are they more clean or less clean than other women or men in the household)? How are they moving around the room?
Environmental
What is the current state of the individual's home? Is the home of the same quality and/or standard as nearby homes? What is the current state of their surrounding community? How close are they to important facilities (e.g., health centers, schools and community meeting points)?

Conclude the interview

- Thank the person (and the caregiver if present) for their time and their contributions.
- Remind the interviewee that the purpose of this discussion was to understand the safety and security concerns of persons with disabilities and how we can improve our GBV programs.
- Explain what you will do with this information and what purpose it will eventually serve.
- Ask the interviewee (and caregiver) if they have questions.
- Provide information to the interviewee (and caregiver) about the services and activities available through your organization, and facilitate referrals to psychosocial support or other assistance, as requested.

See over for individual interview documentation form.

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

