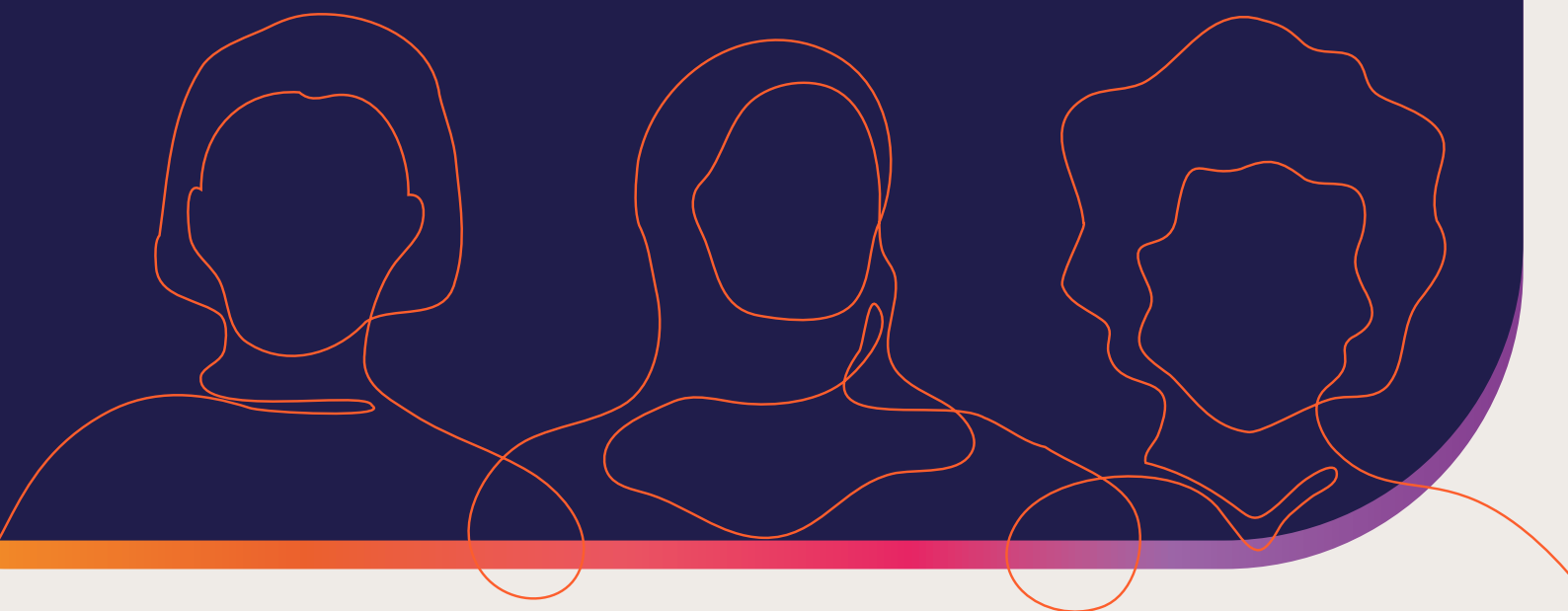




Technical Adviser Toolkit

VAWG Prevention Programming:
Examples From What Works II



Acknowledgements

This toolkit was developed to support the work of technical advisers in the What Works II initiative. The main authors are: Petronille Geara, Alice Kerr-Wilson and Tina Musuya.

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Contents

Acronyms	4
Introduction	5
Tool 1 Technical Adviser Generic Job Description	6
Tool 2 Partnership Tips for TAs	10
Tool 3 Guidance on the Co-Design Process	14
Tool 4 Top Tips for TAs Involved in Co-Design	21
Tool 5 Practical Questions to Develop a ToC and Design a VAWG Prevention Intervention	23
Tool 6 Stakeholder Analysis	27
Tool 7 Questions to Guide Discussions on Risks	29
Tool 8 Defining Roles and Responsibilities	30
Tool 9 Co-Design Workshop Report Template	31
Tool 10 Guidance on Integrating Self- and Collective Care	33
Tool 11 Decision-Making Tool for Assessing the Technical Support Package for Grantee Partners	34
Tool 12 Grantee Partner Technical Support Approach Template	37
Tool 13 Documentation of Adaptations of VAWG Models and Approaches	40
Tool 14 Log for technical support	45
Tool 15 Guidance for TAs Engaging in the GPT Meeting	46
Tool 16 Guidance for Handling Disclosures	48
Tool 17 TA Grantee Partner Visit Report Template	50
Tool 18 Guidance on Collaboration Between TAs and Originators Working on the Same Project	52
Tool 19 Guidance for TAs to Support Grantee Partners' Ethical Closure	56
Tool 20 Practice-Based Learning Report/Brief	58
Tool 21 Guidance for Backstopping Support for TAs	60
Tool 22 Guidance for Supporting Transition of TAs in VAWG Prevention Projects	64
List of Tools and Authors	69
References and Inspiration	70



Acronyms

APM	Annual Programme Meeting
EEI	External engagement and influencing
FP	Focal points
GPT	Grantee Partnership Team
HQ	Headquarters
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LPT	Learning Partnerships Team
OTA	Originator technical adviser
PGC	Programme and grants coordinator
PBL	Practice-based learning
PI	Principal investigator
RfP	Request for proposals
STA	Senior technical adviser
TA	Technical adviser
TAG	Technical advisory group
ToC	Theory of Change
VAWG	Violence against women and girls

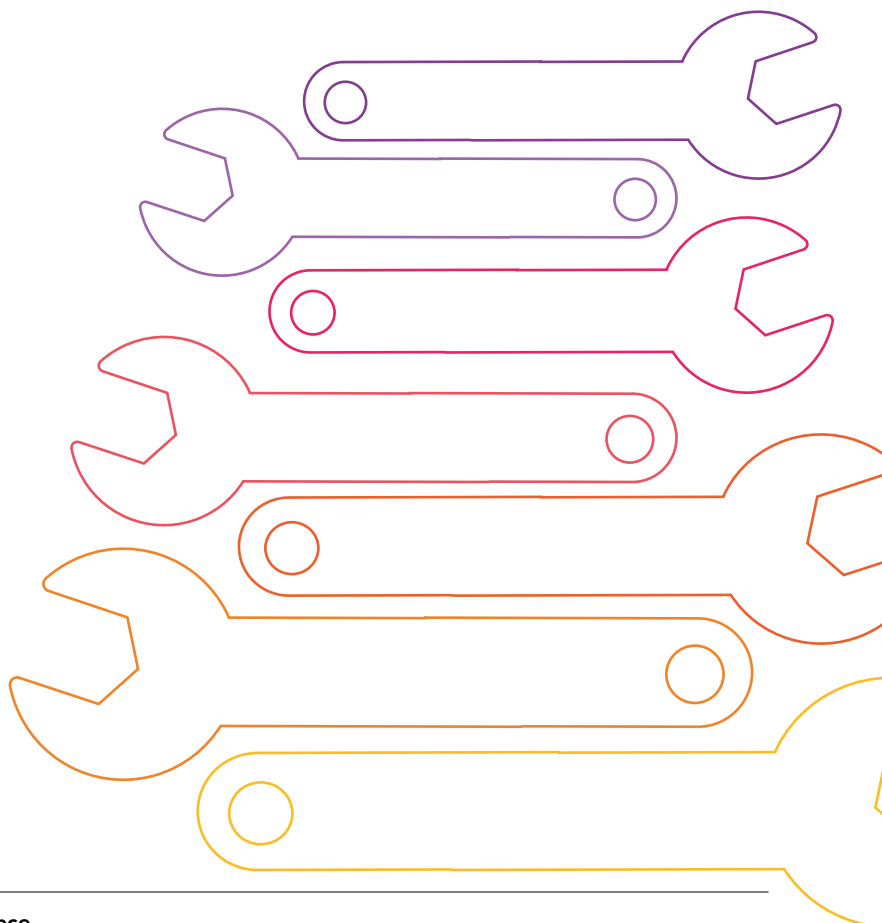


Introduction

This toolkit was developed to support technical advisers (TAs) working in violence against women and girls (VAWG) prevention programming. This toolkit provides examples of the tools that were developed and used by TAs working with What Works II grantee partners in various aspects of their roles. It should be read together with the Guidance Note for Technical Advisers that outlines the approach that What Works II took in providing technical support to grantee partners. Each tool included has been tested by at least one TA.

The toolkit covers technical support throughout the different phases of the project cycle, including design, implementation and closure of VAWG prevention projects. These tools can be adapted to suit the different needs and expertise of different actors, and we hope that TAs and staff involved in similar programmes will also find these tools useful.

The technical support guidance can be found via the following [link](#).





Tool 1 Technical Adviser Generic Job Description

Purpose of this tool: To provide a standard job description that can be used when hiring new technical advisers. Words and phrases in square brackets should be replaced or deleted as required. For a more junior TA, the competencies and years of experience can be reduced.

Job Title:	Technical adviser
Band/Level/Grade:	[X]
Department/Organisation:	[X]
Location:	[X]

Programme scope

[Organisation name] is seeking a technical adviser to support a [X-year] project in [country], funded as part of the [programme name] which aims to [programme goal].

[Programme description].

[Definition of technical support within the programme].

TA scope of work

The technical adviser will provide direct capacity strengthening support to the [project name], which is to be implemented by [grantee partner(s)] and aims to [summary of project and what it hopes to achieve].

Specific responsibilities

The TA will work with [grantee partner(s)] on the [project name] in the following ways:

1) Direct support to the [project name]

Inception and co-design ([X] months)

- Support to strengthen the design of the project as required, to ensure it is contextually relevant, evidence-based and aligns with [programme name] aspirations. This may include support to develop the project's Theory of Change (ToC), logframe, curriculum, workplan and other areas as relevant.
- Work with [project name] to assess their capacity strengths and needs and to develop a capacity strengthening plan that will be revisited annually, plus a related technical support package based on their needs.
- Develop a technical adviser workplan outlining the technical support to be provided, with benchmarks and measures of progress.
- Work with the programme and grant coordinator to review [grantee partner(s)]'s regular reports, track progress and provide feedback. Also provide complete quarterly updates on the project as part of the Grantee Partnerships Team.



Implementation ([X] years)

- Provide support to strengthen different areas of the project as agreed during inception, continue to complete the capacity strengthening tool at the end of each year of project implementation, and update the capacity strengthening plan.
- Facilitate learning opportunities between the project and other [programme name] projects in [country location] or with a similar thematic focus.
- Feedback on the technical support will be collected from [grantee partner(s)] through the project's regular reporting mechanisms, check-ins between the project and one of the team leads, and also [additional accountability mechanisms].

Ethical closure ([X] months)

- From the start of the project, the TA will work together with [grantee partner(s)] to ensure that they establish concrete plans for sustainable, ethical closure for when the funding ends. This means being accountable to the women and girls and communities in which they work and to lay the groundwork for continued progress.

2) Participation in broader [programme name] activities

- Participation in relevant [programme name] orientation sessions organised by the [organisation name] gender based violence (GBV) lead/TA manager/team lead and the TA shortly after joining the programme.
- Attend regular meetings together with other [programme name] TAs and team leads to collectively discuss specific capacity strengthening issues and receive programme updates.
- Where appropriate, attend and/or facilitate quarterly Community of Practice (CoP)/webinar sessions with project partners on specific themes.
- Work closely with other staff supporting the programme as required.

Key working relationships

Position reports to: Internally within [name of hiring organisation], this position will report into the [manager job title]. Externally, this position will report to the technical support team lead.

Position directly supervises: No direct reports

Other internal and/or external contacts:

Regular communication with [other relevant programme staff].





Job requirements

- **Education:** Master's/post-graduate degree in public health, social work, humanities, women's studies or other relevant field; or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- **Work experience:** Minimum of [number of years] of field-based violence against women and girls (VAWG), violence against children (VAC) prevention experience, or another relevant sector, within humanitarian or international development settings. Extensive experience of working on gender equality and women's rights in [country/region], ideally on [relevant thematic area]. Demonstrable experience providing project technical support and developing the technical capacity of others. Experience working closely and managing relationships with external partners and stakeholders. Experience in technical tools and materials development, monitoring and evaluation, and research in relation to VAWG/VAC desired.
- **Demonstrated skills and competencies:**
 - Builds strong, reciprocal partnerships by valuing stakeholder expertise, fostering shared ownership, and aligning on goals, roles and ways of working.
 - Delivers tailored, context-sensitive support that reflects local priorities, cultural considerations and operational realities.
 - Provides sustained, systematic assistance through structured, timely and consistent engagement across all phases of programme delivery.
 - Applies evidence-informed approaches by integrating current research, practical learning and cross-project insights into implementation.
 - Promotes gender-transformative practice by advancing gender equality, addressing power imbalances and supporting long-term social change.
 - Works flexibly and responsively, adapting support to emerging needs and changing conditions while maintaining focus on agreed objectives and values. Can manage a complex and varied workload, and works effectively under pressure.
 - Communicates openly and clearly to build trust, support accountability and enable constructive feedback, problem-solving and aligned expectations.
 - Able to leverage a deep understanding of social inclusion to ensure the [programme name] approaches are inclusive of the requirements and rights of women, girls and children with diverse needs and experiences.
 - Ability to operate in a complex organisation across functions and work on own initiative as well as collaboratively as part of diverse international teams.
 - Demonstrates expertise in the theory and practical application of gender-transformative approaches and results through excellent communication and presentation skills, and has gender transformative training experience.
- **Language skills:** Excellent written and spoken English. [Project local language] competency would be an asset.



Working environment

This position will be based in [project country], with travel to project sites in [regions or districts], other parts of [project country], and elsewhere if needed.

All [programme name] employees commit to and uphold the programme's principles throughout all aspects of their work. These are [detail programme principles].

[Add any additional requirements of the technical support organisation].

Time commitment

Up to [X] days over [X] years, including direct in-person support to projects as well as attending relevant orientation sessions, [regular team meetings and other regular programme meetings or events].

Timeframe

The [project name] project is expected to start on [start date] and will last until [end date], including an inception phase and ethical closure.

Compensation/salary

[Provide information on salary, bonus opportunities and employee benefits in line with the hiring organisation's employment policy and practice].



Tool 2 Partnership Tips for TAs

Purpose of this tool: Provides concrete tips for TAs working on partnership issues with grantee partners.

Timing: Throughout the lifecycle of the project.

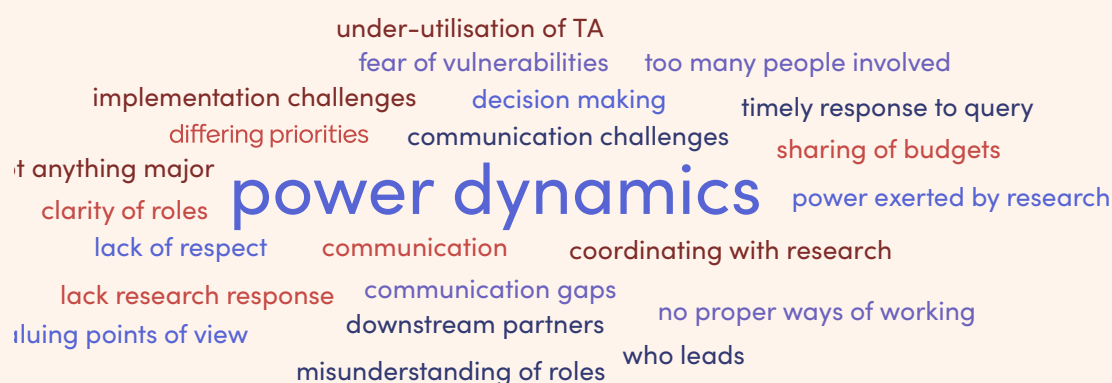
Reflecting on partnership support: LPT insights

In September 2025, the Learning Partnerships Team (LPT) convened two dedicated sessions to reflect on their experiences to date in supporting partnerships and to share key tips to guide TAs' work in fostering effective partnerships.

TAs play a significant role in facilitating partnerships across various settings. Their efforts can involve supporting collaboration between grantee partners within a consortium; building connections between grantee partners and researchers, liaising with other What Works II implementation consortium advisers; collaborating with originators if applicable; and supporting grantee partners' partnerships with external stakeholders such as government representatives, members of civil society and donor staff.

According to data from the LPT Mentimeter (September 2025), **many TAs devote at least half of their working time or more to supporting partnerships**, highlighting the centrality of this responsibility within their roles. TAs shared the partnership challenges they most commonly encounter in their projects, and these are shown in Word Cloud below. The issue of power dynamics emerged as the most prevalent challenge, underscoring the complexity and importance of managing relationships within partnerships.

What do you think are the underlying causes of these partnership challenges?





Exploring the root causes of partnership challenges

During their reflections, TAs identified several underlying factors that contribute to the challenges faced in partnerships. Understanding these root causes is essential for addressing issues effectively and fostering more robust collaborations.

- **Lack of clarity on roles:** Ambiguity regarding each partner's responsibilities can lead to confusion, duplication of efforts or tasks being overlooked.
- **Pressure to perform:** High expectations, tight deadlines, limited budgets and changing political situations may create stress and strain relationships within the partnership.
- **Misalignment of expectations:** When partners have differing assumptions about outcomes, processes, intervention model or commitments, this can result in misunderstandings and dissatisfaction.
- **Power dynamics:** Imbalances in influence or decision-making between partners can hinder open communication and equitable participation.
- **Positionality:** Position within the project could lead to some voices being sidelined, creating communication barriers that generate misunderstandings, biases about local partners being implementers and not knowledge producers, and unequal access to decision-making.
- **Lack of shared values:** Differences in organisational culture or core values can make it difficult to establish trust and common purpose.
- **Poor communication:** Ineffective information sharing or a lack of transparency can result in tensions.
- **Lack of accountability:** Without clear mechanisms to ensure that commitments are honoured, it can be challenging to maintain trust and meet partnership goals.
- **Limited capacity:** Constraints on time, resources, or expertise may impede partners' ability to engage fully and contribute meaningfully.
- **Too many support staff:** An excess of individuals involved in support roles can complicate coordination if they are siloed in their engagements with the grantee partner.
- **Avoiding or delaying difficult/uncomfortable conversations:** Where a partnership does not have a clear feedback process, this is likely to leave tensions unresolved. In these situations, a small trigger is likely to complicate the situation.
- **'Forced marriages' between organisations:** Where grantee partners were paired with unfamiliar research partners, this was sometimes challenging, especially when grantee partners were not used to being evaluated by an external body. Some partners have do not have experience of a technical support partnership, and it takes a while for them to build trust and work collaboratively with the TAs.

Practical advice for TAs navigating partnership challenges

"Partnerships have to be intentionally nurtured; they are living things and do not automatically work out."
(Technical adviser, September 2025)

At the start

- Where possible, hold in-person meetings to build relationships and trust. Ensure a values alignment through discussion of individual, organisational and programme values and goals and the way in which everyone will work together. Outline the key principles of technical support.



- Define roles and responsibilities from the outset. Allocate time at the start of partnerships to discuss expectations and establish clear roles, formalizing agreements if required.
- Normalise sharing challenges with grantee partners early in relationships, by clarifying a constructive feedback process. Foster open and honest communication, including ways of working together. Agree how the group will address challenges if they arise.
- Clearly define resource sharing procedures from the start.
- Recognise challenges may shift throughout the partnership and create time to reflect going forward.
- Reiterate foundational feminist principles for technical support, including the importance of partnership and power-sharing, and tailored and contextual systematic support that is evidence-informed, gender transformative, respectful, flexible and open.

Shared responsibility

- Clarify where to seek help; TAs and partners are jointly responsible for problem-solving.
- Explore solutions collaboratively.
- Involve additional colleagues (e.g. accountability team, programme and grants coordinators and LPT co-leads) as appropriate for resolving issues.
- Hold each other accountable when timelines flip or priorities clash in a manner that is supportive and not punitive

Inclusive communication and clarity

- Lead communications when needed and address power imbalances.
- Clarify the preferred channels of communication and frequency of check-ins.
- Encourage clear and open communication to prevent frustration.

Act as a bridge between parties

- Facilitate difficult conversations and navigate complex contexts.
- Be open and proactive, and act as a buffer between parties including translating between research and implementation languages and priorities.
- Observe tensions and mediate by listening deeply.
- Model feminist and collaborative values in all engagements.
- Clarify escalation pathways for urgent matters. Draw on the What Works II accountability pillar¹ for support when needed.

¹ The What Works II initiative has an accountability pillar committing to strive to be accountable at multiple levels: to women and girls affected by the programme and research at the community level; to grantee partners, consortium members, consortium governance, the FCDO; and to the global movement ending violence against women and girls. The programme understands the practice of accountability as being mindful of centring the voice and agency of women and girls into actions and structures.

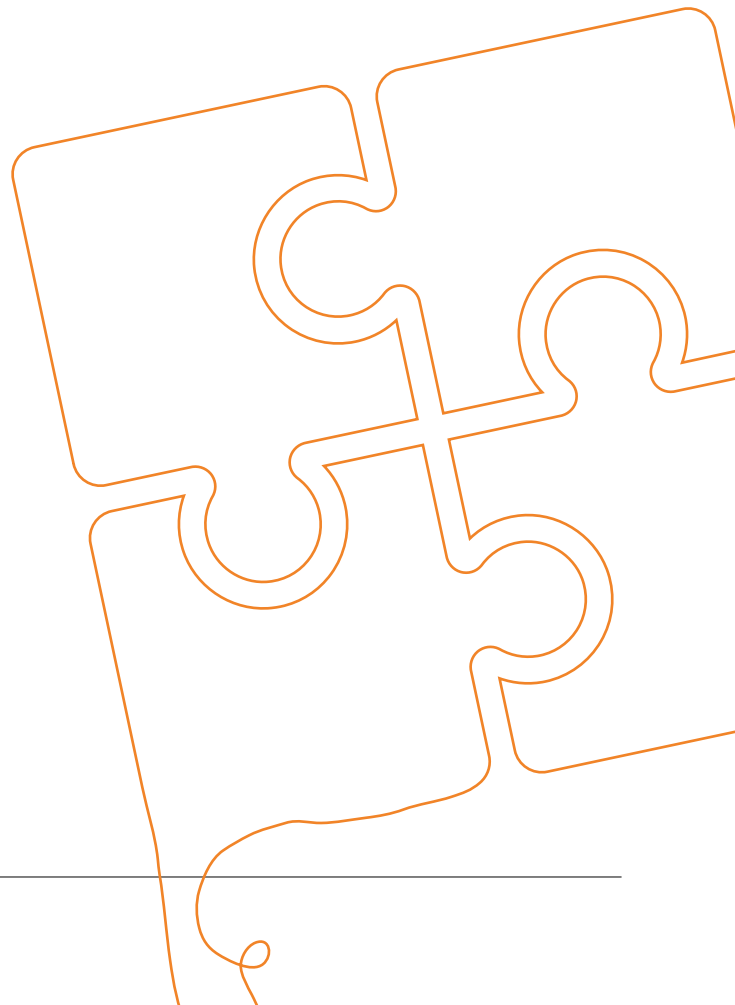


Be alert

- Address problems before escalation and ensure all partners understand their roles.
- Proactively acknowledge and address emerging issues.
- Reframe challenges as learning opportunities

Nurture

- Promote shared goals and acknowledge different perspectives.
- Nurture partnerships intentionally; they require ongoing effort.
- Support smaller organisations in being heard.
- Facilitate joint reflection and learning sessions to create enabling partnership practices.
- Prioritise wellbeing and self and collective care
- Manage expectations; perfect partnerships are rare but effective teamwork is possible.
- Invest in building and maintaining positive relationships. Celebrate wins, recognise effort and condole with individuals experiencing loss.



Tool 3 Guidance on the Co-Design Process



Purpose of this tool: To provide guidance to the TA and other programme staff on how to support the co-design process with the grantee partner.

Timing: To be used once the project has been selected and before implementation

Responsible person: TA and other staff supporting the project

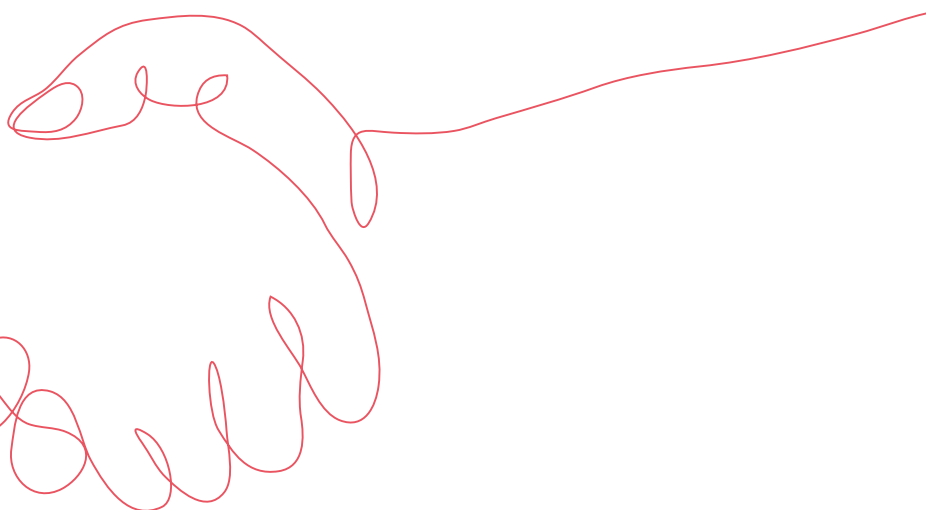
Purpose of co-design

Each project awarded by the What Works II initiative requires collaborative co-design among the partners, including the TA and other programme staff supporting the project, implementation partners, and local research partners, to finalise the project design and to jointly determine the priority research questions and related outputs. This process provides the foundation for project implementation and allows the research team to start determining the research questions and design.

This document provides guidance to the What Works II initiative staff supporting the grantee partner in the planning for co-design, including the **in-country co-design workshops**. This includes pre-planning, the week-long workshop (which takes place in country), and the post-workshop follow up for ongoing project planning. The workshop should be seen as part of a broader inception process before implementation of the project and research begins.

Co-design working definition and goals

Co-design is an ethical principle and practice, which enables a more equitable distribution of power and the development of better solutions by involving multiple stakeholders (including those with lived and localised experience) in shared and transparent decision-making across all facets of research and programme design and implementation. The What Works II implementation and research consortia have agreed co-design is a core component of their shared principles and ways of working.





The goals of co-design processes during the inception period are:

- To ensure that joint decisions, including agenda development and outcomes for the workshop, are collaborative, iterative and underpinned by the feminist principles of What Works II.
- To ensure that the process and workshop facilitation is guided by language and cultural considerations, for example respecting different workdays and avoidance of national and religious holidays etc.
- To hold discussions in representative small groups or in a roundtable setting where all contributions are given equal consideration.
- To aim to achieve understanding and consensus, where all participants should be prepared to accept an outcome that may be different from their own preferences.
- To develop positive, trusting working relationships among the grantee partners and grantee partnership team – including local researchers.
- To collectively establish what success looks like for the project and for preventing VAWG.
- To recognise existing power dynamics between implementers, researchers and practitioners, and ensure power in decision-making is shared between partners equitably.
- To develop inclusive approaches that meaningfully engage a diverse group of women and girls.
- To engage on an overarching ToC, logframe, workplan, etc., with work taking place before, during and after the workshop.
- To acknowledge that project implementation can and will influence research, and vice versa. The process should ensure complementarity to the different implementation and research processes, bringing them into alignment.
- To agree on decision-making processes and accountability mechanisms, including establishing communication and check-in processes and approaches to problem solving.

The specific objectives of the in-country co-design workshop are to:

- Increase understanding of the grantee's project approach, capacities and priorities, and determine if adaptations are needed.
- Agree upon the roles and responsibilities of all partners.
- Ensure shared understanding of What Works II VAWG prevention and inclusion principles.
- Identify implementation approaches, as well as key research questions, acknowledging these components will inform and have implications upon the other.
- Finalise implementation and research design, which will be iterative and continue beyond the co-design workshop.
- Discuss and start to understand how feedback from community members/stakeholders, especially diverse women and girls, on the proposed project and research approach will be collected (e.g. a community advisory board).

The guidance and example agenda (see Table 1) included in this document should be adapted for each project.



Guidance for co-design process

1) Inception phase

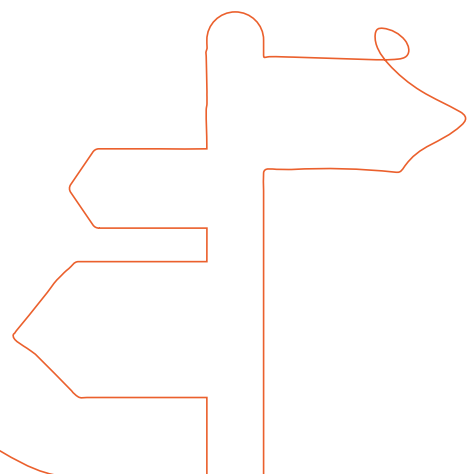
Inception phase refers to the period in the project timeline from when contracts are signed to post-workshop. It covers broader initiation and development activities of the grantee partnership team and grantees before the project implementation and research starts. **The inception phase can be broadly considered as three periods:** pre-workshop, co-design workshop (held in country for one week) and post-workshop.

Ongoing processes of collaboration and decision-making are put in place beyond the inception phase to foster participatory decision-making and collaboration, including the accountability pillar reflection cards and accountability groups (see What Works II Accountability Guidance note), grantee partner and local research partner capacity self-reflection tool, individual grantee partner capacity strengthening plans, annual grantee meetings, and so on.

2) Pre-workshop planning

In preparation for the in-country co-design workshop, the TA and other programme staff supporting the project should meet at least twice, with an aim to collectively achieve the following outputs:

- Review key documents (including any curricula and facilitator guides that exist) to deeply understand the project.
- Make and keep an up-to-date repository of important documents in a shared folder.
- Outline what is most important for that project (e.g. curricula, ToCs, logframes, feedback forms for what is worked on in inception, proposal, due diligence documents and sign off).
- TAs and principal investigators (PIs) should collect and store documentation in the relevant shared file on the model that project is drawn from, to know what evidence base they are drawing from and to recognise gaps.
- Meet with the grantees online and agree collaboratively a co-design workshop agenda.
- Develop and finalise materials for the workshop.
- Plan collaboratively with grantees the facilitation, venue etc. for the in-country workshop.





3) Co-design workshop

The TA and other programme staff supporting the project shall decide on the detail for the workshop (see Table 1 for detailed example agenda), but should broadly cover the below points. The amount of time spent on each topic will be dependent on the amount of preparation work undertaken beforehand and the needs of the particular grantee partner.

- Day 1: Setting the foundations for a strong partnership: Introductions, getting to know each other, and covering the core tenets of the What Works II initiative, the project and its core elements (laying foundations for ToC) and the TA partnership and research partnership.
- Day 2: Outlining expectations: what it is hoped the project will achieve (the ToC)?
- Day 3: Setting out research parameters: what are the broad research gaps/questions this project is aiming to address?
- Day 4: Defining the programmatic approach: Bringing the intervention and the research together under a shared framework.
- Day 5: Next steps: Agreeing how to work together.

Include a daily reflection process to ensure goals were achieved and incorporate flexibility as required.

4) Post-workshop expectations/outputs

The post co-design workshop step allows partners to finalise the details of the co-design. The duration of the post-workshop stage can vary between two and four weeks depending on the time the grantee partner has before RFP submission. Post-workshop, the TAs need to:

- Write a brief co-design report (the co-design report template is in Tool 9).
- Review and provide inputs to the narrative proposal and other relevant documents, including the ToC, logframe, workplan and budget, risk register.
- Reach out to the relevant focal points for additional support (M&E, EEI, accountability, safeguarding, finance etc) as needed.
- Coordinate with the research PI and local research team to make sure preliminary research questions are developed, as the grantee partner will need them to finalise the proposal.
- Meet with the grantee partner as needed to finalise the proposal documents.
- Meet with the STA and other staff supporting and implementing the project, as well as researcher partners, at least two or three times during the co-design process to finalise outputs for implementation. This includes the meeting with the research PI and local research team to look at more detailed research planning and develop research protocols, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application, data collection tools, consent forms, etc.



Example co-design workshop agenda template from the What Works II initiative

Template to be adapted based on the needs of each project/grant

Day	Topic	Facilitator	Outputs
Day 1: Foundations: Introductions, getting to know each other, the project and the core tenets of the What Works II initiative			
Suggested times to be adapted on a per project basis	Introductions & ice breakers	Rotating	Team members become familiar with each other, and relationships are built
	Introductions to organisations	Rotating	Team members become familiar with each organisation
	Introduction to What Works II initiative		Team members become familiar with What Works II initiative, and priorities including: • What Works II feminist principles around accountability, intersectionality, inclusion and centring women in their diversity • Wider programme (Both What Works II consortia, FCDO, portfolio of work etc)
	Objectives over the five-day workshop	Joint	Team members understand what to expect over the workshop
LUNCH			
	Self and collective care	TA	Introduce concepts of self and collective care, highlight their importance in the programme and share ideas around self and collective care practices (Tool 10).
	Prevention of VAWG principles	Implementation TA	Implementation TA shares VAWG prevention principles
	Wrap up		Wrap up and summarise Day 1 and highlight objectives and any adjustments needed for Day 2
Day 2: Expectations: What it is hoped the project will achieve (the ToC), led by the grantees			
	Ice breakers	Rotating	Team members become familiar with each other, and relationships are built
	Brief review of Day 1	Rotating	Team members understand key decisions and outstanding questions
	Deep dive into programmatic approach	Grantee partner	Grantee partner introduces theory of change and does a deep dive into activities, outputs and outcomes they hope to achieve – workshoping takes place. Context, lessons learned from previous implementation (what went well? What didn't go well and why? What do we need to change for this design?), introduction of the model, intended outcome(s), ToC, risks and assumptions, outputs and activities (indicators if possible), roles and responsibilities, resource allocation, workplan



Day	Topic	Facilitator	Outputs
LUNCH			
	Continue deep dive into programmatic approach	Grantee partner	Address any outstanding questions on the programmatic approach from the first session
	Wrap up		Wrap up and summarise Day 2 and highlight objectives for Day 3
DAY 3: Research: What do we think this research can answer in terms of gaps in the field? TA and PI discuss prior to attending			
	Ice breakers	Rotating	Team members become familiar with each other, and relationships are built
	Equitable research principles and partnerships	Research PI	Discuss how we want to research with other organisations and community members. Decolonising and intersectional research principles
	Identification of research and learning questions	Research TA and Research partner	Team members understand how their project is situated within the larger VAWG prevention field and key questions that could be answered in the project are identified and prioritised
	Ethical considerations	Research TA	Team members identify potential ethical issues with the study design and data collection (e.g. comparison groups, privacy of interviews) and develop mitigation plans
LUNCH			
	Study design and timeframe	Research TA and local research partner	Team members begin to plan the overarching study design and timeframe to answer the agreed upon research and learning questions. Begin to establish next steps in research planning.
	Data collection procedures and study flow	Research TA and research partner	Team members begin to plan when to, how to and who will collect data to confirm data collection procedures and study flow. This will feed into processes such as the research protocol and IRB process
DAY 4: Programmatic approach: Bringing the intervention and the research together			
	Ice breakers	Rotating	Team members become familiar with each other, and relationships are built
	Programme delivery details	Grantee partner	Discuss programme delivery such as training of key facilitation staff
	Practice-based learning	Implementation TA	Identify opportunities for practice-based learning and methodologies to capture practitioner insight. Also identify areas for skills strengthening
LUNCH			
	Existing M&E systems	Grantee	M&E tools and existing grantee systems are introduced



Day	Topic	Facilitator	Outputs
	Placeholder for discussing any programme / implementation questions from previous sessions	Implementation TA	
	Bringing together research and programmatic approaches		Shared reflections and clarification on the programmatic approach to support robust research design and ensure both programmatic and research considerations are understood before finalising ToC. Possible SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) activity
Day 5: Next steps: Agreeing how we will work together, including influence, accountability and ways forward			
	Ice breakers	Rotating	Team members become familiar with each other, and relationships are built
	Equitable partnerships	Implementation TA	Discuss how we want to work with other organisations and community members
	Influence strategy preview	Implementation & research TAs	Team members identify key stakeholders for engagement and key strategies and products to shift policy and programming in their setting
	Finance/grant review	Implementation TA	Team members have a space to query additional administrative questions or concerns related to the grant
LUNCH			
	Timelines	Implementation TA	All partners understand key milestones, timelines and deliverables for the overarching project
	Roles and responsibilities	Implementation & research TAs	All partners have a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities
	Ways of working	All	Team members agree on ways of working and workplan going forward
	Accountability mechanism reminders	Implementation TA	Team members are reminded of feminist principles and accountability mechanism for the project
	Workshop close	All	Key decisions and next steps are identified and input into a shared workshop report and workplan



Tool 4 Top Tips for TAs Involved in Co-Design



Purpose of this tool: To share tips and learning related to the co-design process based on TAs' experience with the first group of What Works II grantee partners.

Timing: Read this tip sheet prior to the co-design process.

Responsible person: TA

Overall tips

- **Prepare yourself** with the request for proposal (RfP) package including narrative, budget, workplan, risk matrix, delivery chain etc by reading through all available information.
- **Review the co-design guidance** (Tool 3) and build your process from this.
- **Familiarise** yourself with the effective components of VAWG interventions².
- **Clarify your role** as TA and other people's roles. Take steps to plan a clear process and emphasise shared responsibility.
- **Understand the objectives** of the co-design process: to help the partners develop the ToC, logframe, etc.
- **Prepare all the tools** you need to be able to do the co-design, including understanding the sectors that the partners are involved in, and really understand the activities that they are undertaking.
- **Engage with the partners** beforehand and have some time together with other programme staff supporting the project to reflect on how to plan and move forward. Ideally have weekly meetings for a few months before the co-design workshop takes place.
- **Integrate accountability** throughout the programme³.
- **Be aware of the power** in the room. Do your own power analysis and work around addressing this.
- **Acknowledge that co-design takes a long time** and is a continuous process.
- **Be open to learning** and address any hurdles that may come up. For example, the grantee partner and the in-country researcher may repeatedly seek clarification from you – try to create time to respond to their questions.
- Remember to **include aspects of accountability, advocacy and safeguarding**. Consider inviting other pillar leads/advisers to the planning meetings.
- **Reach out** to LPT co-leads or any other TA for support on how to get started if need be.
- **Invite representatives** from the UK Embassy/High Commission e.g. social development advisers/ other advisers and government officials to the co-design workshop if possible, to get them on board.

² See Jewkes et al., 2020, [Effective design and implementation elements in interventions to prevent violence against women and girls](#)

³ See [What Works II Accountability Guidance Note](#)



Tips for dealing with power issues

- Have patience, communication and trust with the partners.
- Have a deeper conversation on **equitable partnerships and role clarity**. This can be done when discussing the feminist principles of the programme.
- Have a regular reflection on **ways of working, shared responsibility** and how to address tensions and conflicts.
- Where there is **originator involvement**, set a specific time to discuss roles and harmonise the approach to supporting the grantee partner.
- **Bring in additional people to support**, if necessary, though this can also be tricky as they bring a new dynamic to the relationship.
- **Enforce respect and feminist principles⁴**.
- Be well prepared and demonstrate your competency, and how you can add value. This can help toward being accepted by partners and researchers.
- Whenever things are uncomfortable, constructively raise issues, **use your voice and ask for clarification**.

Tips for approaching budget

- If it is early on in the project process, invite the programme finance officer supporting the project to present the **main requirements for the budget**.
- Make sure that you **review the budget** to check that key activities have been included and that it makes sense in relation to the workplan and ToC. There will also be a finance officer reviewing it, but they may not review the ToC.
- Ensure that aspects of **accountability, advocacy, safeguarding and M&E** are included in the budget.

Tips to support multi-component scale projects

- From the start **have a conversation about all the components**, whether any can be dropped to ensure that there is sufficient budget for the key components.

⁴ What Works II feminist principles include centring and being accountable to women and girls, challenging structural inequality, taking an intersectional approach, collaborative and shared ownership. and prioritising well-being and the care of others.



Tool 5

Practical Questions to Develop a ToC and Design a VAWG Prevention Intervention



Purpose of this tool: To equip TAs with the relevant questions to be asked in order to develop a ToC and a logframe for the VAWG prevention intervention.

Timing: During the co-design process, especially the co-design workshop.

Responsible person: TA and Implementing partner.

Developing a Theory of Change (ToC) for a programme involves asking a series of strategic questions to ensure that the programme's goals, strategies and outcomes are clearly defined and interconnected. By addressing these questions, a comprehensive ToC can be developed – one that outlines the logical sequence of actions and expected outcomes, providing a clear framework for implementing and evaluating the programme.

Below are some key questions to guide the development of a ToC for a VAWG prevention programme, and which will also inform the development of key documents in the RfP:

Key questions

1) What is the problem or need to be addressed?

- What type(s) of VAWG (e.g. intimate partner violence, early/forced marriage, sexual violence, harmful traditional practices) is the programme seeking to address?
- What evidence or data (e.g. qualitative research, results of randomised control trials) supports the existence and prevalence of this form of VAWG in the target context?
- Are there lessons to be learned from previous implementation of similar VAWG prevention interventions in this or similar contexts? If yes, what are they? What were the key successes, gaps or challenges?

2) What are the long-term goals or desired outcomes?⁵

- What ultimate changes or impacts does the project seek to achieve in relation to the prevention of VAWG (e.g. reduced prevalence, reduced experiences of VAWG, positive changes in harmful social norms, increased access to services)?
- How will these outcomes improve the situation or contribute to creating a safer, more equitable environment for women and girls and help shift the systemic drivers of VAWG?

3) What are the intermediate outcomes or milestones?

- What is/are the key attitude(s), practice(s) or system-level changes that need to take place to contribute to the long-term prevention of VAWG?
- How will progress towards these outcomes be measured (particularly in terms of shifting gender norms, community engagement or institutional response)?

⁵ Ideally the ToC outcomes align with the evaluation outcomes.



4) What strategies or activities will be implemented?

(This will inform the discussion around the workplan)

- What VAWG-specific actions, interventions or activities will the project undertake to achieve its goals (e.g. community mobilisation, curriculum delivery, norm change workshops, media campaigns, capacity building for service providers)?
- How do these activities align with the desired VAWG prevention outcomes?
- How do these activities fit into the outcomes and pathways for change for VAWG prevention?
- What is the process for implementation? What is the proposed sequence of implementation of these activities and why (e.g. what activities need to be implemented first to ensure an effective delivery of the intervention)?

5) Who is the intervention primarily planning to engage?

- Who will benefit from the project's activities and outcomes? Who are the primary and secondary individuals/groups/communities of the project (e.g. women and girls, men and boys, community leaders, service providers)?
- What are the characteristics and needs of these individuals/groups/communities (gender, age, social and contextual characteristic) in relation to preventing VAWG?

6) What resources are required?

(This will inform the discussions around budget)

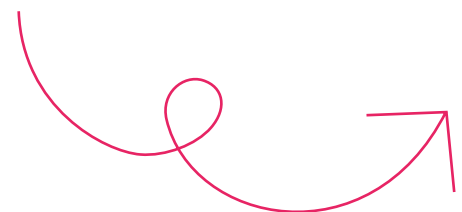
- What inputs (e.g. funding, personnel, materials) are necessary for the project to be implemented effectively?
- Who will be implementing these activities? What support do they need?
- How will these resources be secured and allocated?

7) How will stakeholders be involved?

- Who are the key stakeholders (e.g. WROs, survivors, local leaders, health and justice actors, traditional authorities, funders, community members) involved in the project? If WROs are not leading the work, is there a plan for engaging them? If yes, how?
- How will stakeholders be engaged and informed throughout the project?

8) What are the potential barriers or challenges?

- What obstacles or risks (e.g. contextual, cultural, institutional, reputational, security, delivery risks, fiduciary, safeguarding) might hinder progress in VAWG prevention?
- How will these barriers be addressed or mitigated?



**9) What are the underlying assumptions?**

- What assumptions are being made about how and why the specific VAWG strategies will lead to the desired outcomes?
- What external factors or conditions are assumed to be in place for the success of the VAWG prevention project? Are there risks of these shifting over the project's lifespan?

10) What is the context where it is proposed to implement the project?

- What current or likely contextual dynamics are anticipated to impact on the intended groups for the intervention. Who will they impact, when will this happen, and where?
- Are there any seasonal and climate dynamics to take into consideration while planning this project (e.g. harvest, wet season, floods, crop failure/success, seasonal malaria, hunger season, cyclones)?
- What are the social and economic dynamics we need to take into consideration while planning this project (e.g. rise/reduction in conflict/displacement, a positive new health policy, election results, inflation, epidemics, particular social norms, practices, government policies)?
- What is the status of women's rights in relation to VAWG for the country/local context where the proposed intervention will be implemented (including incidence of VAWG, political climate opportunities and barriers, existing country/regional/ local VAWG legislation, policies, action plans and strategies)? How can the intervention engage and connect with women's movements?

11) How will progress and success be measured?

(This will inform the discussions around M&E)

- What indicators or metrics will be used to assess progress and VAWG prevention outcomes?
- How will data be collected, analysed and reported in an ethical way that is sensitive to VAWG (e.g. gender or disability disaggregated data, inclusion indicators)?
- If the intervention is being evaluated, how will programme and research teams collaborate to enable real-time feedback and revision?

12) What is the timeline for implementation?

- What are the key milestones and deadlines for the VAWG project activities and outcomes?
- How will the timeline be managed and adjusted if necessary?

13) How will the project be adapted or improved over time?

- What mechanisms will be in place for feedback and learning (e.g. community consultations and feedback, women and girls input, staff reflections)?
- How will the project adapt to new insights, respond to changing conditions or new information?



Additional tools to support co-design

This tool is intended to provide overall guidance on the essential elements that need to be covered during co-design. The TA and grantee partner may choose to use it or not depending on how far the preparation for the co-design has evolved. The TA and the grantee partner may choose to facilitate it in an interactive way using a flipchart working in groups, or guide a group discussion and document the discussion using the What Works II template.

The logframe is a structured planning, monitoring and evaluation tool used to design and manage development programmes or projects. It presents the key components of a project, including its goals, outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs, in a clear, logical matrix format that shows how each level contributes to the next. The outcomes of this tool discussion should inform the ToC, logframe and budget.

Example of a logframe template:

PROJECT NAME							
ORGANISATION NAME							
Reference number (given on approval)		Date of last approval	leave blank				
IMPACT	Impact Indicator 1	Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)		
	Planned						
	Achieved						
	Source (means of verification) (means of verification)						
	Impact Indicator 2	Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)		
	Planned						
	Achieved						
	Source (means of verification) (means of verification)						
OUTCOME	Outcome Indicator 1	Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	Assumptions	
	Planned						
	Achieved						
	Source (means of verification) (means of verification)						
	Outcome Indicator 2	Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)		
	Planned						
	Achieved						
	Source (means of verification) (means of verification)						
INPUTS (£)	FCDO (£)		Other (£)	Total (£)	FCDO SHARE (%)		

Tool 6 Stakeholder Analysis

Purpose of this tool: To identify project stakeholders, their level of influence over the project and their level of support to the project; and to anticipate conflicts and risks and try to mitigate them.

Timing: During the co-design process and co-design workshop.

Responsible person: TA

A stakeholder analysis as part of programme design is a critical tool for identifying, understanding and managing the various individuals, groups and organisations that are part of the project. This tool is to be done collectively during the co-design workshop and takes approximately one to two hours to complete.

Stakeholder name (organisation)	Type	Sector	Geographic coverage	Level of support for outcome (0 very low - 4 very high)	Level of influence over outcome (0 very low - 4 very high)	Steps needed to increase support/influence.
District commissioner	Local authority	Policies and access	District	4 (very high)	4 (very high)	Engagement and meeting with the local authority to share the objective of the programme, then sharing updates about the progress. Involving them in decision-making etc.



Proposed prompts to use while filling out this table:

Stakeholder identification

- What is the name of the stakeholder (organisation)?
- What type of stakeholder is this (e.g. government, NGO, private sector, donor, multilateral, community group, academic institution, civil society organisation)?

Sector

- Which sector does this stakeholder primarily operate in?
- Which specific outcome or sub-outcome is this stakeholder most connected to (e.g. policies and access, service delivery, financing and resource allocation, monitoring, evaluation, learning, research and evidence generation)?

Geographic coverage

What is the geographic coverage of this stakeholder's work (e.g. local, district, national, regional, global)? Specify location if relevant.

Level of support (0-4): How supportive is this stakeholder of the specified outcome?

- 0 = very low support, 1 = low support, 2 = moderate support, 3 = high support, 4 = very high support.
- What factors justify this support rating?

Level of Influence (0-4): How much influence does this stakeholder have over achieving the outcome?

- 0 = very low influence, 1 = low influence, 2 = moderate influence, 3 = high influence, 4 = very high influence.
- What factors justify this influence rating?

Steps needed to increase support/influence

- What actions could be taken to increase this stakeholder's level of support for the specified outcome?
- What actions could strengthen this stakeholder's influence on achieving the outcome?
- What incentives, evidence or partnerships may help increase their commitment?
- What barriers currently limit their support or influence, and how could these be addressed?
- What specific next steps should be prioritised?



Tool 7 Questions to Guide Discussions on Risks

Purpose of this tool: To guide the discussion on risks related to the VAWG prevention project.

Timing: During the co-design process, especially the co-design workshop.

Responsible person: TA



The TA may choose whether or not to use this tool, depending on how the discussions with the grantee partner go and the progress made during the co-design planning and workshop.

The questions below help identify, assess and prioritise potential risks that could affect the successful implementation and outcomes of the project. The risk matrix could be used to document the outcomes of the discussion. It is important to note that asking these questions as a TA can help inform project design and initiate discussions about potential risks that may affect implementation. Addressing these risks from the co-design stage can help strengthen the intervention and improve implementation.

- 1) What are the risks to the project based on assumptions made about the context and/or the internal capacity to deliver? Consider external risks⁶ and internal risks⁷.
- 2) What is the likelihood of this risk?
- 3) How will it affect the project?
- 4) What is the mitigation action?
- 5) How might the project cause unintended harm to clients, partners, the community, staff or the environment?
- 6) Which groups of clients, community members, partners and staff are most at risk and why?
- 7) What mitigation action is needed?

⁶ External risks are factors outside the project's direct control that may affect implementation or outcomes, such as political instability, changes in government priorities, funding fluctuations, insecurity, humanitarian crises, economic conditions, natural disasters, restrictive policies, or resistance from communities or stakeholders.

⁷ Internal risks are factors related to the organisation's or project's capacity to deliver, such as staffing, technical expertise, leadership, financial management, coordination, procurement, timelines, monitoring systems, partnerships or organisational processes.



Tool 8 Defining Roles and Responsibilities



Purpose of this tool: Aims to help clarify the roles and responsibilities of different grantee partners involved in a consortium and What Works II team members. These roles and responsibilities might change depending on the type of intervention and agreed segregation of roles and responsibilities.

Timing: During the co-design process and co-design workshop.

Responsible person: TA drawing from the delivery chain map already submitted with the application. In cases where delivery chain mapping doesn't exist, this tool can be used to guide the segregation of responsibilities among multiple partners.

Example	Roles and responsibilities	Grantee partner 1	Grantee partner 2 (if consortium)	Grantee partner 3 (if consortium)	WW II team member(s)
	During design	Lead project design programmes Conduct risk assessment Engage government stakeholders Develop the ToC	Lead consultations with communities Conduct context analysis Contribute to the development of the ToC		Coordinate the co-design process Review existing evidence and relevant programmes Provide technical review and quality assurance of the ToC and proposal documents
	During inception				
	During implementation				
	During closure				
	Documenting learning				

Tool 9 Co-Design Workshop Report Template



Purpose of this tool: Aims to document the main achievements, challenges and lessons learned of the co-design workshop.

Timing: After the co-design workshop.

Responsible person: TA

Date and location:

Attendance and organisation:

Recommendations and next steps:

(examples of recommendations and next steps during co-design)

- Follow up closely on the proposed adaptations for the adolescent girls and boys in school curriculum.
- Mobilise internal and external resources to mitigate safety and security risks.
- Follow up closely on documenting the mainstreaming enablers to capture the mainstreaming story of change.

Achievements:

(examples of achievements during co-design)

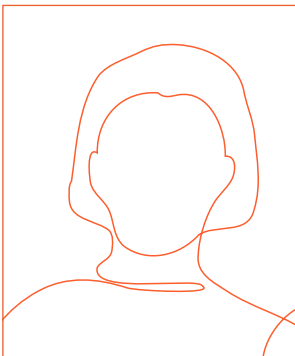
- **Changes to the ToC:** Changes were made to capture different pathways of change including communities, schools and institutions that support positive behaviours and actions against VAWG and VAC.
- **Mainstreaming component has been strengthened and well-articulated:** Mainstreaming the intervention in the education sector. In addition, elements of engagement of the government and WROs have been strengthened as enablers of mainstreaming. Moreover, specific activities that allow the capture of advocacy and influencing with the government have been added to the intervention and reflected in the logframe.
- **Founding of a good relationship with the partner:** The co-design workshop allowed TAs to start building trusting and collaborative relationships with the grantee partner(s)'s management and lead staff of the programme.
- **Development and delivery of the main documents for the RfP:** At the end of the workshop, the main documents needed for the submission of the RfP were almost finalised, including the ToC, logframe, indicators and targets, workplan and draft budget, as well as the clarity on the proposed intervention activities. Moreover, a first draft of the research protocol has been developed.

**Challenges:**

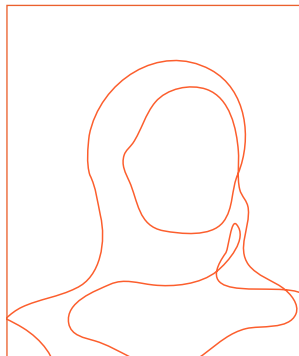
(examples of challenges during co-design)

- **Technical support modality:** Based on the discussions and the context updates, it appears that provision of in-person technical support will be challenging, especially with ongoing conflict settings.
- **Challenging security situation:** There are heightened safety and security risks which not only impact the technical support modality but also affect monitoring of the implementation. These also impose a need for extreme measures of security during any visit to the country.
- **Lack of clarity:** The proposed adaptation of the VAWG prevention intervention in schools is unclear.
- **The proposed timeframe of the intervention:** The timeframe for implementation seems to be short (two years) relative to the aims of decreasing different types of violence and changing social norms.

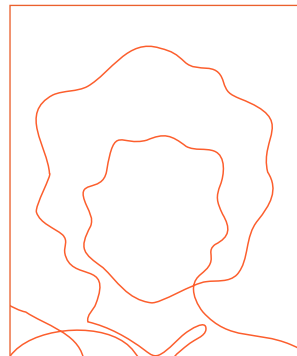
Include a photo if available, listing the names of individuals in the photo.



Name



Name



Name



Tool 10

Guidance on Integrating Self- and Collective Care



Purpose of this tool: To provide a shared framework and further resources for systematically embedding self and collective care across What Works II programming.

Definition of self-care: Diverse practices and/or actions that nurture wellbeing, including emotional, physical, spiritual and relational aspects.

Definition of collective care: Emphasises that care is a shared responsibility – and that communities, organisations and movements must actively create cultures that centre wellbeing and care.

A feminist care framework for VAWG prevention

A feminist approach recognises that centring self and collective care is a political act, interconnected with broader efforts to dismantle patriarchy and create vibrant movements to end violence. As such, we must rethink care practices – not as optional complements, but rather as essential components of VAWG prevention. By embracing and actively nurturing self and collective care, What Works II partners create a foundation for quality and ethical programming that is sustained by energy, creativity and joy. This is also critical for addressing the risk of burnout and secondary trauma, given that violence prevention often necessitates bearing witness to violence and its many harmful consequences to survivors, families and communities.

TA role

From the inception phase, TAs can support partners in understanding a feminist framework for self and collective care across their teams and partners. Beyond this, TAs can guide partners in identifying specific, culturally resonant actions to systematically embed self and collective care within their organisation and What Works II project. This may require consideration of (1) organisational values and leadership; (2) policies and structures; and (3) planning and resourcing specific care activities. TAs can also model the integration of collective care practices into meetings, workshops, etc., and share additional resources as helpful.

Further resources:

- Chigudu, Hope (2021), Healing Through Rituals: A Guide for Sustaining Wellbeing and Activism. Women's International Peace Centre, https://wipc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Healing-Through-Rituals-A-Guide-for-Sustaining-Wellbeing-and-Activism_.pdf
- CHS Alliance, Staff Care & Support Guidelines, <https://www.chsalliance.org>
- FRIDA, Self-care isn't selfish (website), <https://youngfeministfund.org/solidaritystorms/self-care/>
- Jessica Horn (2020), Self and Collective Care: Resist By Flourishing. GBV Prevention Network and JASS, https://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ZINE_SelfCollectiveCare.pdf
- JASS, We Rise Toolkit (website), <https://werise-toolkit.org/>
- (TARSHI, Talking About Reproductive and Sexual Health Issues (website), <https://tarshi.net/selfcare/self-careand-wellbeing/>
- USAID and CARE-GBV (2022), How to embed self- and collective care in organizations addressing gender-based violence [No.5 in a series]. Washington (DC), https://makingcents.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CARE-GBV_05_Self_Collective_Care-v9-508c.pdf



Tool 11 Decision-Making Tool for Assessing the Technical Support Package for Grantee Partners

Purpose of this tool: Aims to assess the level of technical support needed by a grantee partner.

Timing: To be filled out by the TA during the inception and co-design period at the latest.

Responsible person: TA



Process

The TA makes a first attempt to fill out this document – meeting with the grantee partner to get the required information is highly recommended. The next step is a discussion of the findings and recommendations between the TA and the grantee partner to agree together on the level of technical support based on the grantee partner's needs. The final level of support will be agreed upon, in collaboration between the grantee partner and the technical support provider/What Works II senior technical adviser (STA) and the LPT co-lead.

Factors influencing the level of technical support	Technical support questions to be asked	Answers Document briefly
1. Technical support structure within the organisation (staff expertise and experience (low, medium, high) and staff turnover and training needs)	1) How long has the organisation been working in the VAWG prevention/response field? 2) What is the organisation's experience in design and delivery of VAWG or VAC prevention/response programming? 3) How long have the staff members implementing this project been working with you? 4) How long have the staff members on this project been implementing the same intervention? 5) Are there staff members dedicated to providing technical support? 6) What is the turnover rate in your organisation or for this project? How often do staff members leave? 7) What training do you provide for new staff members? 8) What is the frequency of follow up? 9) How do you capture training needs? How do you address emerging training needs? 10) How are staff supervised? To what extent do the supervisors have programming experience?	



2. Available resources	1) Does the organisation have the requisite staff with the relevant technical skills to implement the project? 2) If yes, is there budget available for the staff? 3) If not, have you budgeted to hire the relevant technical support? 4) Is the technical support budget spread across different staff positions? 5) Is the project fully funded, or do you anticipate gaps? 6) How long is the funding for?	
3. Project complexity and scope	1) How many stakeholders are engaged in this project? 2) Who are the stakeholders? 3) Have they worked together before? 4) What is the geographical coverage of the project? 5) Is the intervention based on a single model or on more than one?	
4. Scale and reach	1) Is the project implemented in multiple regions or countries? 2) How many people will the project reach directly and indirectly? 3) Does the project receive any resources either directly or indirectly from government? 4) Is the proposed intervention working with government agencies either through referrals, trainings or response services?	
5. Project stage	Which stage is the project in⁸? Design Inception Implementation Evaluation Closure	
6. Type of project	Is it an innovation (new or innovative approaches, or a pilot) project or a scale project including mainstreaming?	

⁸ Further guidance on specific tasks and tools to be used in each of the implementation phases is included in this document and its annexes.



7. Monitoring and evaluation needs of the project	1) What are the data and evidence requirements, including M&E specific tools, data collection methods, means of verification, interpreting complex data sets? (You can coordinate with the M&E focal point if you are not familiar with these.) 2) Do you have a dedicated staff member coordinating M&E? 3) How will documenting learn from practice? Who's going to be involved, what will the pace of information collection and documentation be?	
8. External factors and context	1) What is the gender, economic, political and socio-cultural context? 2) What are the emerging issues during implementation (e.g. new trends in VAWG, such as TFGBV)?	
9. Donor requirements	What are the donor requirements for monitoring, reporting and evaluation? (You can check with fund management and M&E colleagues.)	

Conclusion: Document your recommendation for the technical support package to be provided to the grantee partner in the different phases of the project's lifecycle.

Now go to Tool 12 to inform your discussion with the grantee partner on the level of technical support needed.



Tool 12

Grantee Partner Technical Support Approach Template

Purpose of this tool: Aims to support the grantee partner and their consortium partners to have a harmonised technical support approach for the project funded under What Works II, where the same approach, model and tools are used across locations or across partners.

Timing: To be developed during the inception phase.

Responsible person: TA in consultation with the grantee partner.

In the case of a consortium, consortium partners should also be involved. This tool will help inform discussions with the grantee partner and support agreement on the level of technical support required for the project.

1) Existing technical support structure and roles and responsibilities for the grantee partner

- What is the current structure for technical support in your organisation? (Structure refers to the staff members and titles responsible for technical support provision.)
- Do you have staff members with the relevant technical skills to implement the project?

Headquarter (HQ) level (if applicable):

.....
.....

National/country level:

.....
.....

Community level:

.....
.....

Technical support focal points (FPs) for this project:

.....
.....



2) Existing technical support structure and roles and responsibilities for the local partner (if working in a consortium)

HQ level (if applicable):

National/country level:

Community level:

Technical support FPs for this project:

3) Role of the TA for technical support provision in What Works II

Discuss any needs in relation to technical support, structure, model, tools or anything else required from the What Works II TA to make sure support is provided. This is also linked to the capacity strengthening plan.

The What Works II TA:

4) Organisation’s technical support model for the programme delivery under What Works II

What is the current technical support model in your organisation? (Model refers to how technical support will be provided to beneficiaries, stakeholders or implementing teams. This support could be individual – one-on-one training, technical consultations – or group-based – workshops, group training sessions.)



5) Technical support activities/forms and tools throughout the project cycle

Technical support activities can include monitoring visits, consultation and feedback, ethical closure, handling a disclosure during implementation and practice based learning.

The following actions need to be taken in order to fill out the table:

- Identify the current tools used to document technical support provision for each of the technical related activities.
- Agree on the technical FPs from the organisation(s) and preferred communication channels for technical support.
- Discuss a unified technical support provision for organisations working in a consortium for the project under What Works II.

Example

Type of technical support activity	Description of the technical support activity	Tool used for documentation	Duration and frequency	Lead person
Training	Delivery of training on the curriculum	1. Training materials 2. Pre- and post-training tests of the training with community (annex X) 3. Training evaluation form (annex X)	Once before the implementation of the activities. A refresher training might be conducted based on emerging needs and common challenges during implementation	Capacity building manager, supported by capacity building officer and programme manager

6) Ways of working with grantee partners for technical support provision

Include brief information on: shared understanding of the work, communication, ownership, flexibility, decision-making process, mutual commitment to learning and change, accountability to each other.



Tool 13 Documentation of Adaptations of VAWG Models and Approaches

Purpose of this tool: To facilitate systematic reflection and documentation of the adaptation process for projects implemented in new contexts or target populations. The tool draws on an approach developed for TAs supporting adapted projects under the What Works II initiative.

Timing: During and after the adaptation process.

Responsible person: TA with inputs and validation from the grantee partner.

Definition of adaptation: Adaptation is the deliberate and planned process of modifying the content, delivery or implementation of a programme to “optimise its fit” for a different context or population. The process “upholds the original programme’s core components to achieve intended outcomes and impacts”. Sharma, V., et al (2022), IPV-Adapt+ Framework.

Sources: This tool has been developed drawing on feedback from members of the What Works II Learning Partnerships Team and two other draft tools: Geara, P. (2025), Documenting adaptations of VAWG interventions: Technical Assistance Toolkit; and Musuya, T. (2025), Documenting Learning from Adaptation in VAWG Prevention Projects.

1) Original model

Provide details of the original model in the table below:

Name of the original model/project/intervention	
Who originally designed and implemented the original model?	
Where was it implemented?	
When was it implemented?	
What were the main objectives of the original model?	
What were its key components?	
Is there a detailed manual and facilitators guide?	
How was it implemented (e.g. via trained community facilitators/teachers/health sector workers)?	
How were staff and facilitators selected, supported and trained?	
Was there an evaluation of the original model? If so what were the primary results and lessons learnt?	
If possible, share a link to the original manual, brief or evaluation	



2) Adaptation process

Provide details of the adaptation process in the table below

Name of the adapted model/project	
Where did the adaptation take place?	
When did the adaptation take place?	
What type of adaptation took place? Tick all of the relevant boxes	☐ New context/country ☐ New population ☐ New modalities/implementation innovations ☐ Integration of new issues ☐ Expansion or scale ☐ Other: (please add details)
Who led the adaptation process? This could be an individual, organisation or team	
Which actors did you consult to inform the adaptation process? Tick all of the relevant boxes	☐ Community ☐ Government ☐ Originator of model ☐ NGOs ☐ WROs ☐ Other: (please add details)
What triggered the adaptation process? Tick all of the relevant boxes	☐ Knowledge regarding prevalence/types of VAWG ☐ Social norms underlying VAWG ☐ Population dynamics ☐ Knowledge regarding existence of VAWG services ☐ Donor request ☐ Community feedback ☐ A desire to work in a new context or population ☐ New practice-based learning ☐ Available resources from earlier implementation of model e.g. curricula, documentation of implementation process ☐ Other: (please add details)
Did you use a particular framework⁹ to inform the adaptation of your model? Please provide details	
Did you document the adaptation process and how?	

⁹ Frameworks could include the Adapt-IPV framework, Prevention Collaborative Prevention Triad etc



3) Comparing the adaptation and original model

Compare the adapted model and the original and provide more detail on the adaptation process through answering the following questions.

- What was the adaptation process, including the steps taken, group(s) consulted and any tools used?
- What specific components were adapted? Why?
- What was maintained? Why?
- How was fidelity¹⁰ to the core components of the original model ensured?
- Did the adaptation process uphold principles of accountability, care, equity and voice?
- What tensions showed up? And how were tensions addressed?
- How were those most affected by the intervention involved?
- What challenges did you encounter?
- Did the project have enough time, resources for an ethical and thoughtful adaptation?

If the intervention had previous iterations, complete a comparative table highlighting changes.

Core element	Original model	Adapted model



¹⁰ The components of fidelity include adherence to the original project's content, methods and delivery, dose (duration and frequency of exposure to intervention); quality of delivery; participant responsiveness and project differentiation (the extent to which it is clearly different to other project) Sharma et al, (2022), IPV Adapt+ Framework.



4) People and resources

What resources were needed to complete the adaptation? Complete the table below.

Resources needed	Details
Human resources (e.g. local staff and facilitators, external technical experts, local partners, mentors/supervisors)	
Financial resources (e.g. funds for workshop and meeting costs, external consultants, piloting the adaptation, travel costs)	
Material and technical resources (e.g. curriculum and manuals, training materials, ICT tools)	
Partnerships and institutional support (e.g. government, community and civil society buy-in)	
Knowledge and evidence (e.g. research on the previous model, data on VAWG in that context, practice-based learning and organisational monitoring data)	

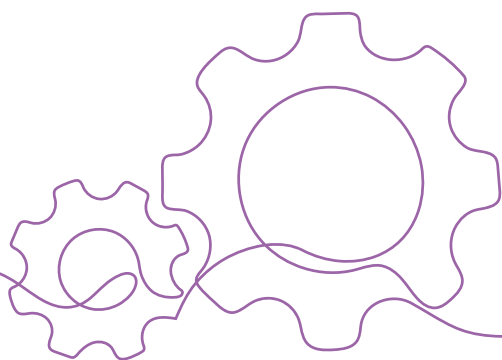
- Was there anyone/any group you would have wished to involve, but did not?
- If so, are there other ways to engage and bring them into the process?
- Were there any additional resources that would have been helpful?



5) What was learnt

The following questions relate to the piloting process and what was learnt from the adaptation process that are worth sharing for future adaptations.

- If available, what were the key lessons learnt from adapting previous versions of the model? How were these lessons incorporated into the adaptation process for this intervention?
- To what extent was the adaptation tested or piloted before finalising? What was the main feedback from the pilot?
- If there was limited or no testing or piloting, were there any means of making changes to the model during its implementation?
- What insights emerged? How did this influence thinking and next steps?
- How will this adaptation change or influence future practice in terms of how the organisation will adapt other models?
- What can be shared with others undertaking an adaptation process?





Tool 14 Log for technical support



Purpose of this tool: To record the TA's regular interactions with grantee partner(s).

Timing: Throughout the lifecycle of the project, at every interaction with the grantee partner(s).

Responsible person: TA

Date	Request, question, technical support activity	Support provided and actions	Time dedicated to each request/question



Tool 15

Guidance for TAs Engaging in the GPT Meeting



Purpose of this tool: To support TAs in their engagement in the Grantee Partnership Team (GPT). This is a regular meeting which some people choose to have once per fortnight, others once per month, and others every six weeks.

Participants: Grantee partners, What Works II team, (STAs, originator TAs if applicable, grants coordinators, accountability and EEL team) and research team (PI and co-PI and all other members of the research team). Please note that there is flexibility regarding the inclusion of grantee partners. Some GPTs choose to involve them in meetings, while others hold separate sessions – it depends on what best supports partner engagement.

Duration: 1-1.5 hours

Tips for how TAs can prepare to engage effectively in the GPT

Regular GPT meetings bring together grantee partners, the research team and technical advisers to reflect, problem solve and align support for the grantee partner. The TA's engagement helps ensure that technical support is grounded, centred on the partner and responsive. Use this checklist to prepare and contribute effectively.

1) Before the GPT meeting

- Ground yourself in the partner's current programme and What Works II realities. Review reports and previous meeting notes, updates from What Works II and any useful resources related to the agenda items.
- Prepare updates on the technical aspects of the programme, from your regular follow ups and check-ins with the grantee partner
- Prepare one or two key technical insights or questions.
- Coordinate with other TAs on technical issues to align approach and avoid overlapping.
- Decide what you hope to learn from the meeting.
- If the grantee partners are involved:
 - Share the agenda in advance and clarify the purpose of each agenda item.
 - Encourage them to view GPT as learning partners rather than as an oversight team and come prepared with: a few achievements or promising practices; a challenge or implementation pain point they would like input on; a learning, adaptation or emerging question from implementation; and any implications for research, scale, innovation or programme quality.



2) During the meeting

- Listen actively and with empathy. Understand grantee partners' realities and ask them about their ideas for possible solutions before offering advice.
- Engage with curiosity. Use prompts such as "I'm curious about...".
- Connect the dots. Link discussions to broader aims including What Works II goals, effective VAWG prevention, adaptation, innovation, PBL, scale and backlash.
- Be proactive in problem solving. Spot risks early and offer practical next steps.
- Remember to take notes.

3) How to spot risks

- **Strain or misalignment:** Pay attention to tone and language. Are partners expressing fatigue, frustration or uncertainty?
- **Relationship dynamics:** Notice team tension, withdrawal or one person dominating discussions. Who is not speaking, or whose perspectives are being overlooked?
- **Implementation clues:** Are partners reporting delays, budget strain or staff turnover? Is there evidence that core feminist principles (e.g. safety, consent, participation, survivor centeredness) are being compromised for output targets? Are there contextual shifts (political, social or funding) that might affect delivery?
- **Accountability:** Make risk-sharing a practice of mutual accountability and collective care. Invite reflective conversation by asking open, curious questions such as:
 - Where do you feel most stretched right now?
 - What feels most difficult right now?
 - What are you noticing that we should all pay attention to?

4) After the meeting

- Follow up. Send promised inputs or notes within a few days.
- Note emerging risks categorise them as research, programmatic, relational, contextual or ethical. Discuss them privately with the wider technical team or your backstopping co-lead if needed. Ensure that responses are supportive, not punitive (e.g. extra support, flexible timelines or useful resources).
- Reflect on your contribution. Ask yourself, did I help the partner think more clearly, feel supported, or connect ideas? Regularly ask the partner how they are experiencing your support.
- Remember to prepare with clarity, engage with curiosity, and follow up with care.



Tool 16

Guidance for Handling Disclosures



Purpose of this tool: This tool is intended to guide grantee partners and their teams in responding safely, ethically and appropriately when a participant in the activities or intervention discloses having experienced any form of violence during implementation of activities.

Timing: Any time a disclosure happens.

Responsible person: TA to share the tool and train the grantee partner(s)' staff to use it if needed. Grantee partners and implementers who interact with communities.

Definition: Disclosure is when a person discloses that they have been subjected to violence (including all types of violence). In the context of What Works II, it means women, girls, men and boys taking part in the intervention of a grantee partner. This could also mean teachers, facilitators or staff members implementing the intervention.

How to handle disclosure

- Thank the person who is sharing for their trust and thank the group for their acceptance and containment.
- Remain calm.
- Listen carefully with a non-judgmental attitude, facial expressions and body language.
- Show empathy and respect.
- Do not ask the person further questions about their story.
- Share healing statements (e.g. I believe, you, it's not your fault).
- Introduce available support services.

Suggested script for handling an individual disclosure



Thank you for your trust – I appreciate you sharing such sensitive information with me. It requires a lot of courage. I believe you and I am sorry this happened to you/I am so sorry you are going through this. You are not to be blamed for the violence; this is not your fault. You deserve to be treated with respect, and no one should be hurt like this."

Suggested script for handling disclosure in a group



Thank you for your trust, I appreciate you sharing such sensitive information with me. It requires a lot of courage. I believe you and I am sorry this happened to you/I am so sorry you are going through this. You are not to be blamed for the violence; this is not your fault. You deserve to be treated with respect, and no one should be hurt like this."

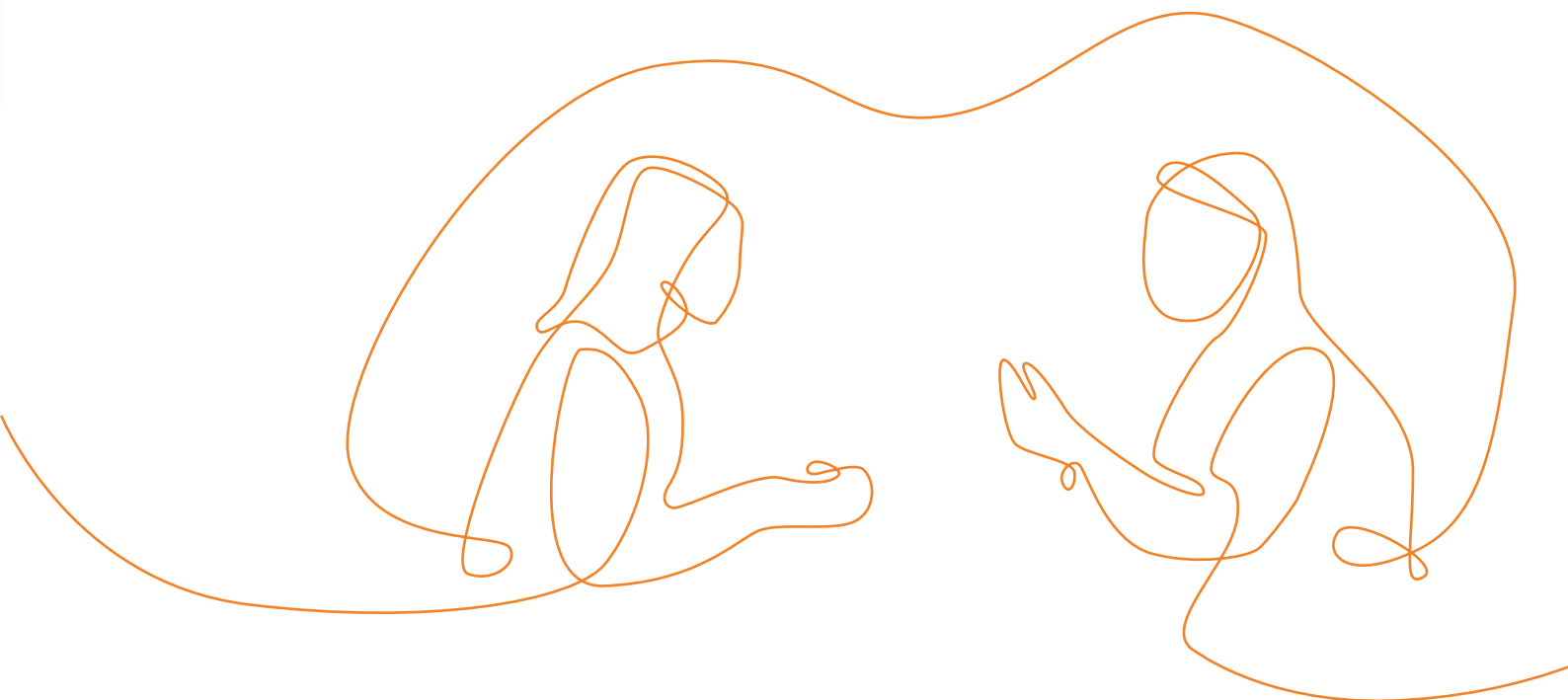


I would like to ask you not to share more details for your own psychosocial wellbeing. When we share everything all at once, we might regret it afterwards or we might start wondering why we did it and what the group members will think about it."



What to do following disclosure

Introduce the available services for support in the community. If a disclosure indicates that a participant or another person has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, through the actions of a programme participant, staff member, representative or any other individual associated with the programme, please follow the safeguarding procedures outlined in your organisation's safeguarding policy.





Tool 17 TA Grantee Partner Visit Report Template



Purpose of this tool: To document the TA's field visits to the grantee partner.

Timing: After a field visit.

Responsible person: TA

Project name:

Implementing organisation(s):

TA name:

Names of any others conducting a joint visit:

Dates of visit (from-until):

Location(s):

Objective(s) of the visit:

Agenda (summary of each day):



Key people met with:

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Key notes and observations from trainings, meetings, project locations etc:

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Overall reflections:

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Achievement/progress noted:

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Challenges or sensitivities noted:

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Actions and recommendations:

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Tool 18

Guidance on Collaboration Between TAs and Originators Working on the Same Project



Purpose of this tool: To guide TAs to work collaboratively with originator TAs (OTAs) and partners, translating research into practice, in order to maintain fidelity to the original model while adapting to the new context, and supporting partner-centred learning throughout the project cycle. This tool also provides guidance on what to look out for, how to build relationships with the originator, and tips on how to deal with challenges that may arise.

Originator role

Originators are organisations or individuals who have developed evidence-based VAWG prevention models that What Works II wishes to scale. What Works II recognises their unique expertise and centres their guidance in maintaining intervention fidelity while adapting interventions to new contexts. OTAs work closely with partners, dedicated TAs and research teams to support the co-design, adaptation, implementation and learning processes of scale projects. Under What Works II, originator involvement varies across contexts and requires intentional coordination between partner-contracted OTAs and long-term TAs. While some originators have established adaptation processes, for others this may be their first experience adapting a model and providing technical support.

Note: TA/OTA collaboration includes role clarification and differentiation, but the main objective is a complementary, coordinated way of working – shared planning, regular coordination, joint decisions on fidelity versus adaptation, documentation of PBL, and consistent messaging to the partner so support is coherent, timely and contextually relevant.

1) Pre-inception

- Onboard OTAs to the What Works II initiative and ways of working, while understanding their technical support approach to ensure alignment.
- With the grantee partner, ensure OTAs understand the context, partner capacity, and early adaptation needs of the project.
- Clarify TA/OTA roles, and grantee partner responsibilities, decision-making, and communication channels early to avoid duplication and ensure research insights translate into partner realities. OTAs primarily support how to ensure fidelity during adaptation by sharing guidance on the dosage, adherence, quality of delivery, programme differentiation, and participant responsiveness of the VAWG model, which is tailored to the partners' context.
- Intentionally build trust and relationships across OTAs, research teams and partners throughout the project cycle, while beginning early reflection on sustainability and ethical closure.



2) Inception and co-design

This is a critical entry point for originator engagement, as the design of the new project is beginning to take shape. It is important to collaboratively envision the programme component early on. Sharing key questions or areas where insights are needed can support more informed and meaningful collaboration.

- Co-create the co-design agenda with OTAs and partners using the LPT co-design guidance. Include sessions on the model and co-facilitate the co-design workshop with OTAs and grantee partners. Explicitly clarify TA and OTA roles and responsibilities, ways of working under What Works II, and the technical support partnership, and present a unified technical support/capacity strengthening plan to partners. Remember to have all of the above documented and shared with all key partners.
- Identify essential elements required for fidelity and key areas for adaptation, while ensuring that adaptations are informed by local context, community needs and implementation realities.
- Identify potential programme and partnership challenges early, and agree on how these will be addressed while centring the partners' feedback
- Agree how lessons learned by OTAs will inform adaptation and implementation, and how partners will feed back to TAs, OTAs and the research team.
- Integrate ethical closure planning from the outset, including expectations around knowledge transfer and partners' long-term independence.
- Coordinate regularly with OTAs and include them in all communication related to What Works II activities, including periodic GPT meetings.

3) Implementation

OTA engagement may vary by project context. Depending on need, OTAs and the TA will work as one team, coordinating across model adaptation, implementation support through closure and documentation of PBL. Together, the TA will:

- Co-lead with OTAs to build a shared understanding of technical fidelity and contextual adaptation of the VAWG model (language, examples, images, delivery), documenting what changes and why.
- Jointly mentor and learn alongside the partner in real time, using monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) data and emerging lessons to identify and address fidelity risks, facilitate regular learning loops with the OTA, document key insights, and create space for reciprocal reflection to validate and strengthen emerging implementation practices.
- Work with OTAs to connect research and practice by translating evidence into practical guidance and use implementation learning to strengthen the model.
- Establish regular communication points (e.g. every six months) throughout the project where the OTA can join and learn about the adaptation and implementation, and be a resource for problem solving.
- Continue to nurture trust with OTAs and partners by addressing challenges early through open dialogue and joint problem solving.
- Align with OTAs on key learnings and messages for What Works II events/consortium spaces such as Annual Programme Meetings (APMs), Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) forums, Community of Practice (CoP) meetings, while reinforcing sustainability and ethical closure.



4) Harmonising and documentation (towards the end of implementation)

- With OTAs, consolidate learning with grantee partners, prioritising adaptations, problem-solving approaches, and what the TA partnership enabled.
- Co-document practice-based learning, clearly showing how research informed practice and how implementation realities informed research.
- Maintain shared feedback loops with OTAs to support trust and joint reflection.
- Revisit ethical exit planning with OTAs, confirming partners' readiness to sustain and adapt interventions independently.

5) Ethical closure/transition

- With OTAs and partners, finalise documentation of key lessons (what worked, what changed and what to carry forward).
- Acknowledge and celebrate contributions of OTAs, partners and communities.
- With OTAs, confirm partners have the capacity, resources and confidence to sustain work independently, close out with reflective space for ethical closure, ongoing relationships and practice-based learning.
- Co-facilitate structured handover spaces with OTAs and partners, guided by the TA transition and closure tools.

Tips for navigating challenges when working with originators

Originators bring valuable technical expertise and evidence-based models, but working with them can also involve navigating power dynamics, fidelity versus adaptation, and research-practice tensions. The role of the TA is often to bridge these worlds and support collaborative learning to ensure effective technical support to grantee partners. Across all of the above steps, the TA should:

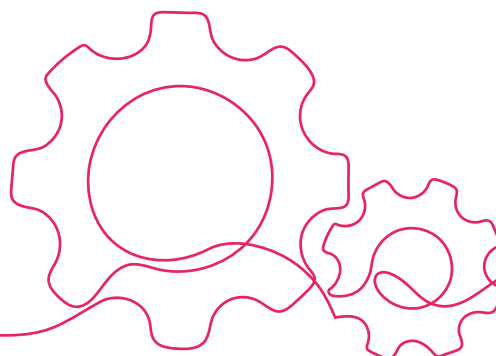
- Acknowledge and manage power dynamics, ensuring partner voice and contextual expertise shape decisions.
- Work with originators to identify core versus adaptable elements at co-design stage, and work with the implementing partners to understand what adaptations/changes would compromise integrity and fidelity to the original model.
- Clarify roles and expectations early and revisit them as needed across the project cycles.
- Invest in trust, communication and collective care, addressing tensions early and seeking support from the co-leads when challenges persist.
- Centre feminist and ethical partnership principles, ensuring knowledge flows both ways between and among partners involved in the project.



Process for addressing challenges early and transparently

When tensions arise, the TA is encouraged to follow the process outlined below.

- **Pause and clarify the issue:** Focus on the specific issue, not personalities. Clarify whether the tension relates to technical interpretation, fidelity versus adaptation, roles and decision-making, ownership and visibility, What Works II compliance issues, communication gaps, or timelines or deliverables, etc.
- **Use open dialogue and joint problem solving:** Focus discussions on shared programme goals and learning, rather than blame. Remember to raise concerns early and privately using constructive framing, e.g. “I would value your perspective on this...”.
- **Shift from holding positions to problem solving together:** Position discussing challenges as part of learning to strengthen the intervention, do not challenge expertise, and work to agree on practical next steps while protecting the working relationship even when disagreements arise.
- **Seek support:** The TA should not carry difficult dynamics alone – support is helpful when the issue remains unresolved after direct discussion with the OTAs, disagreements affect programme quality and partner relationships, communication has broken down, or power dynamics are limiting open discussion, and the situation is causing direct stress or affecting wellbeing. Remember to reach out to the co-leads, your line manager and the accountability pillar for further support.
- **Centre feminist and ethical partnership principles:** Embedding the principles mentioned above means partnerships should value equity, mutual respect, accountability and shared ownership of learning. The TA needs to recognise contributions from originators, implementing partners and communities and ensure knowledge flows both ways – not only from research to practice but also from practice to research.





Tool 19 Guidance for TAs to Support Grantee Partners' Ethical Closure

Purpose of this tool: Supporting TAs to think through key aspects of ethical closure. It provides examples of the key messages to be conveyed to different stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle. It clarifies who communicates what to whom, ensuring consistency, alignment and transparency in engagement with community members, leaders, gatekeepers, teachers, facilitators and relevant partners.

Timing: Planning for closure begins as soon as overall project planning starts. It ensures that sustainability and transition considerations are integrated from the outset rather than treated as a final-stage activity.

Responsible person: TA

The TA role is to support grantee partners on the following aspects:

Reflections on the project

- What are essential aspects of the project that must not be lost? How can the essential aspects (or impacts) of the project be sustained?
- What risks are there if closure is not managed ethically?
- What survivor-centred and do-no-harm measures, including referral pathways, will be available after the project closes?
- How will knowledge and tools be transferred before closure and to whom?
- Who will take forward the work locally? Will the government take anything up? Will the community?
- What resources are required to sustain essential aspects (or impact) of the project?
- What messages need to be communicated to whom prior to closure?

Technical guidance on final reporting

- Reviewing partners' final programme reports and providing technical feedback on how results, challenges and lessons learned are documented.
- Supporting partners in strengthening the analysis of implementation experiences and linking them to the programme objectives.
- Continuing to provide on-demand technical advice to partners as they finalise activities, documentation or interpretation of programme outcomes.
- Supporting partners in finalising practical resources that can continue to be used after the project ends.

Technical debrief with implementation teams

Conducting technical debrief meetings with programme staff to reflect on the implementation.

Interpretation of monitoring and evaluation data: Assisting partners in interpreting monitoring data and evaluation findings. Supporting the review of briefs and articles related to the intervention.



Example messages on ethical closure

It is important to remember that this is a living document. Messages and stakeholder engagement approaches are continuously reviewed and revised as implementation progresses.

Example

Phase	Staff conveying messages	Message conveyed to	Message
Example from CISP: Implementation and closure.	Community facilitators and teachers and CISP/NoFYL staff members as relevant	Community leaders, Gatekeepers Any relevant stakeholder	At the beginning of implementation, while introducing the curriculum, it's very important for the facilitator to convey that: <i>"The intervention is limited in time and activities will be implemented within a specific period of time; these include community engagement, training for community facilitators in communities and teachers in schools, implementation of the curriculum, and phase out (referral and linking to other services as needed)."</i> This helps set expectations and to define the timeframe of the intervention from the start.
		Men and women in Communities Care (CC) discussions in communities	- At the beginning of implementation, while introducing the curriculum, it's very important for the facilitator to convey that: "These group meetings/sessions will be over in 13 weeks." - At session seven, remind the participants that: "We are halfway through the curriculum and only six sessions remain." - During week 11, remind participants that: "We have only two sessions together before the end of these meetings." - During week 12, remind participants that: "We only have one more meeting." - During last session, either at the beginning or at the end during the closing ritual or celebration, say: "This is the last time we will meet, and I would like to thank you for your participation."
Specific actions related to exiting communities and schools	CISP/NoFYL staff members as relevant	Community leaders Gatekeepers Any relevant stakeholder	Schedule and conduct closure meetings with key stakeholders and community leaders to formally communicate your departure, review achievements, discuss remaining tasks or challenges, and clarify expectations moving forward.
	Community facilitators and teachers and CISP/NoFYL staff members as relevant	Men and women in CC discussions in communities Boys and girls in CC discussions in schools	Share resources with the communities. Provide a list of available services for community members and girls and boys in schools, including linking them to available case management services if needed. Organise a feedback session with community members to gather their perspectives on the intervention, what they found valuable, and areas they believe need further attention or improvement.



Tool 20 Practice-Based Learning Report/Brief



Purpose of this tool: To document the practice-based knowledge of the practitioners.

Timing: After each cycle of the intervention, if the intervention is in cycles; or at least once in the lifetime of the project.

Responsible person: TA with inputs from grantee partners/community activists and practitioners.

Date:

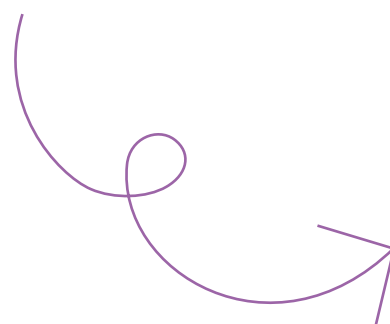
Time:

Note taker:

It is very important to emphasise that practice-based learning (PBL) is rooted in the practitioners' knowledge and expertise, which may be gained through observation, personal reflection, discussion, team brainstorm, engagements with the community, formal learning activities, and more.

Collecting PBL is valuable throughout the key stages of the implementation:

- **Design:** During early-stage discussions when designing or adapting interventions (e.g. why was this approach chosen? Who contributed to the design? How?).
- **Implementation:** As work unfolds through real-time decisions and informal adaptations (e.g. what's actually happening on the ground? What decisions are being made, by whom and why?).
- **Monitoring and feedback:** Through data tracking, check-ins or informal conversations (e.g. what's shifting? What patterns or signals are emerging?).
- **Reflection and evaluation:** At the end of a phase or project, through feedback or debriefs (e.g. What changed, for whom, and how? Were there any surprises, sensitivities or gaps?).





The below table provides key questions that allow TAs to capture PBL, and which are applicable to any of the project phases. Always think about the why, what, how and who.

Questions and reflections	
What activity did you do? (co-design, adaptation, implementation, monitoring, closure and evaluation)	
Why is this worth documenting?	
What is working well and why? How do you know?	
What is not working well and why? How do you know?	
Actions taken to address any challenges and why	
Who was involved?	
What are the adjustments/ refinements that were made to the intervention activities (e.g. curriculum, trainings, recruitment, school committees) if any. Why?	
What are we learning as we implement and make the changes?	
Any unexpected results? How did you learn about these?	
Any disagreements, dilemmas and gaps?	
How is the work being perceived by community members? What is going well? What is falling short?	
Additional reflections of staff. This can include quotes, notes from community observations etc.	



Tool 21 Guidance for Backstopping Support for TAs



Purpose of this tool: Explains how team leads can provide effective support to TAs working with grantee partners. It may be useful for programmes that use team leads or senior advisers to provide assistance to technical support roles.

Timing: Throughout the lifecycle of the project.

Responsible person: Backstopping co-lead.

Role of the backstop

Within What Works II, LPT co-leads provide backstopping support to TAs as they assist grantee partners across projects. The backstop role helps ensure that technical support is consistent, relational, evidence-informed, and grounded in feminist principles, learning and partnership approaches. Backstops also act as ‘thought partners’, helping TAs reflect on emerging challenges and adapt their support where needed.

TAs are recruited as technical specialists with expertise in supporting organisations to prevent VAWG in diverse settings. Their employing organisations remain responsible for ensuring that TAs have the required skills, supervision and access to relevant professional development. Backstops provide additional programme-specific guidance, coordination and reflective support, including through regular one-to-one meetings and wider team learning spaces.

The sections below outline the types of support that backstops may provide across different stages of a project.

Onboarding

- Hold initial orientation meetings with the new TA to clarify their role, responsibilities, the programme structure, relevant teams and key ways of working.
- Provide access to key technical support tools, guidance materials and relevant programme resources.
- Share core evidence and learning products from earlier phases of the programme, including flagship evidence reviews and design guidance. For What Works II this included evidence from the first phase of the initiative e.g. [Effective Elements](#) and [Evidence Review](#).
- Introduce the TA to the relevant programme teams and clarify communication channels.
- Invite the TA to complete a skills and experience matrix to identify strengths, areas for support and any training needs, in coordination with their line manager or employing organisation where appropriate.
- Create space for the TA to be introduced at the next relevant team meeting.
- Share relevant online learning opportunities on VAWG prevention and related technical areas.
- Introduce the TA to the grantee partner through email and, where useful, an online meeting. For new partnerships, clarify the TA's role, the expected level of support, anticipated visits and the areas of capacity strengthening covered by other advisers.



Design

- Allocate additional backstopping time where needed, recognising that the design phase is a critical stage for shaping strong, evidence-informed projects.
- Ensure the TA is familiar with core prevention concepts, relevant evidence, programme guidance and key project documents before providing design support.
- Support the TA to build strong relationships with project partners and, where possible, participate in co-design processes in person.
- Orient the TA to partner capacity reflection tools and capacity planning processes so that they can support grantee partners effectively.
- Check in regularly with both the grantee partner and the TA on progress, relationship quality and any support needs, making adjustments as necessary.
- Facilitate connections between the TA and other advisers working on similar themes, contexts or technical questions.

Implementation

- Continue to meet regularly with TAs to review progress, identify risks, assess whether support is sufficient and strengthen relationships between partners.
- Provide high-level review of key project documents and help troubleshoot issues to maintain alignment with the project's theory of change.
- Support the TA to guide learning and adaptation processes so that emerging evidence and practice insights inform implementation.
- Share opportunities for grantee partners and TAs to participate in relevant communities of practice, programme meetings, learning exchanges and external events.
- Offer reflective peer support and coaching to strengthen analytical and adaptive technical support skills, including help with complex partnership dynamics.

Ethical closure

- Encourage the TA and grantee partner to plan for project completion, documentation of learning and sustainability from the start of their engagement.
- Support the TA to help partners strengthen the tools, frameworks and confidence needed to sustain programming independently and document practice lessons, promising approaches and innovations.
- Support the TA to manage closure communications with partners and communities in a transparent and respectful way, including final reflection spaces that recognise care, mutual appreciation and wellbeing.
- Create opportunities for TAs to reflect on their support role, recognise achievements and draw lessons from challenges encountered across projects.



Regular communication and support

- Meet with each TA at least monthly, with additional meetings for new, complex or high-risk projects where needed.
- Review monthly TA updates or logs to stay informed about partner interactions, implementation activities, research updates, challenges and emerging support needs.
- Check regularly whether TAs feel adequately supported, recognising that support needs vary by individual, project stage and context.
- Serve as a thought partner for navigating complex technical, relational or contextual issues with grantee partners and other actors.
- Promote collective care and feminist leadership practices, including reflection, boundary-setting, humility and accountability in all engagements.
- Facilitate debriefing sessions with TAs after major visits, workshops or significant partner engagements.

Participation in project meetings

- Backstops are not expected to attend every project or grantee partner meeting. Once a TA is fully oriented and relationships are established, regular attendance by the backstop may no longer be necessary.
- When backstops do attend meetings or engage with TAs, they can identify common themes across projects and bring these into wider team learning spaces for joint reflection and capacity strengthening.
- Where appropriate, backstops can support TAs to promote coherent ways of working across project teams and with additional technical advisers.

Managing challenges

- The backstop and TA should agree together on the most appropriate approach for addressing challenges as they arise.
- In some cases, the TA may only need a space to discuss an issue and test possible solutions before managing the situation directly.
- For more complex challenges, such as those involving partners, government relationships or research activities, the backstop may need to take a more active role. This may include joining meetings, drawing on support from other programme areas, or helping the TA address tensions early through reflective, non-punitive and dignity-affirming approaches.
- Significant challenges that cannot be resolved at project level and may affect delivery should be escalated through the appropriate programme management and donor communication channels.

TA transitions

- When a TA leaves their role, the backstop may need to help maintain continuity of support and facilitate a smooth handover to a new TA, in line with agreed transition processes.



Monitoring, feedback and learning

Grantee partners should have multiple opportunities to provide feedback on the technical support they receive. Backstops can use these feedback channels to understand what is working well, identify areas for improvement, and support continuous learning across projects. They should:

- Review periodic partner feedback mechanisms that include questions on TA support and discuss key insights with TAs.
- Use annual capacity assessments or similar reflection processes to understand partner perspectives on technical support.
- Draw on accountability and reflection tools that allow grantee partners to share feedback on the quality, relevance and usefulness of TA support.
- Use programme meetings and learning events as additional opportunities for partners to share reflections with technical advisers.
- Where feasible, schedule brief conversations with grantee partners to gather deeper insights on TA support and identify practical improvements.





Tool 22

Guidance for Supporting Transition of TAs in VAWG Prevention Projects



Purpose of this tool: To guide smooth, values-driven transitions of TAs that maintain continuity, uphold trust with partners, and sustain the feminist principles underpinning What Works II and VAWG prevention work.

Timing: At TA handover.

Responsible person: The outgoing TA, incoming TA, the co-leads and the respective grantee partner(s).

Thoughtful transition planning is essential to safeguard continuity of support, protect institutional memory and sustain trusted relationships, while upholding the feminist principles that anchor the programme's accountability to women and girls. Because TAs, while serving as consortium members, provide close technical support to grantee partners and typically have limited time on projects, it is important to plan for flexibility to support smooth transitions. This tool is designed to guide the outgoing and incoming TAs, co-leads and relevant grantee partners through a shared, structured handover process that reinforces integrity, care and collective responsibility.

Definition of a handover space: A handover space is a structured transition in which responsibilities, knowledge, relationships and contextual understanding are intentionally transferred, going beyond administrative updates to include reflection on ongoing work, relational dynamics, risks, and values supporting continuity, trust and accountability during change. Although not always a formal technical term, the concept aligns with established transition management and knowledge transfer guidance, including the Project Management Institute Guide¹¹, which emphasises structured processes that protect institutional memory and ensure continuity.

Passing the baton, keeping the trust

Honour the relationships and knowledge built by planning and communicating early

The What Works II LPT sees transitions in the spirit of our aspirational feminist principles – not as endings, but as moments of continuity and gratitude.

- Where possible, begin transition planning early, ideally one to two months before the TA moves, and notify the co-leads and the LPT.
- The outgoing TA should reach out to GPT, including the grantee partner, and notify them as soon as possible.
- Clarify timelines for handover and how the handover will happen, including introduction of the new TA and closure of the outgoing TA's responsibilities.
- Co-create a transition communication plan, covering who informs who, when and in what tone.
- Frame the transition positively as part of technical growth and strengthening, not disruption.
- Avoid abrupt transitions as they risk disempowering grantee partners, especially WROs which rely on trust-based accompaniment.

11 Project Management Institute (2021), *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)*, Seventh Edition.



- Before closure, the outgoing TA should facilitate a handover space (not just a document) where the GPT (inclusive of the grantee partner) can voice what they have learned together and what still needs nurturing for the project.

Document living knowledge and processes, not just deliverables

- LPT transitions emphasise context and reflection, not just outputs.
- The outgoing TA should prepare a handover note or transition pack on current project status and milestones including:
 - Update on the status of the project including implementation and research activities, key project staff members, outstanding technical priorities and upcoming deliverables.
 - Information on how often the TA meets with the grantee partner.
 - Insights on what has worked and what has not, and why.
 - Reflections on the gender and power dynamics that shaped the project's implementation and the research.
 - Tips for maintaining fidelity to models while staying adaptive and political (for scale projects).
 - Lessons learned, challenges and recommendations for next steps.
 - Archive key documents (meeting notes, reports, workplans, partner correspondence, current program curriculum, etc.) in shared folders for continuity.
- The outgoing TA should meet with the backstopping co-lead and the incoming TA to explain the handover note/transition package.

Facilitate relationship continuity, led by the outgoing TA with the support of the backstopping co-lead

- Recognise that transitions can shake partners' confidence if not handled with care.
- The outgoing TA should introduce the incoming TA early through GPT meetings, emails or short partner learning sessions, and share clear information about how ongoing commitments (technical support, reviews, check-ins) will continue.
- If possible, have the incoming TA reach out to partners early, not to discuss workplans, but to listen and build trust.
- Organise a joint handover meeting with grantee partners and the research team to align priorities and expectations.
- Whenever possible create space for the incoming TA to co-facilitate a meeting with the outgoing TA. This will endorse and position the incoming TA as an ally and skilled TA, and sustain trust and legitimacy with partners.
- The outgoing TA needs to intentionally model reciprocal accompaniment – listening, affirming, sharing power rather than positioning themselves as the 'expert'.
- Allow for a short overlap period, if possible, for real-time learning and observation. This overlap allows the incoming TA to see the 'soft systems' – values, relationships and politics not visible in reports.



Safeguard programme and technical quality

- The outgoing TA should review and update technical guidance notes, models or tools to ensure clarity and minimise interpretation gaps.
- The outgoing TA should encourage the new TA to prioritise listening and observation in the first weeks to understand context before making major shifts.
- The outgoing TA to onboard the incoming TA to maintain continuity in technical approach while allowing for innovation and contextual adaptation.

Emphasise collective care and accountability

- The outgoing TA and incoming TA should promote space to reflect on wellbeing (self and collective care and setting boundaries).
- The backstopping co-lead and outgoing TA should build team rituals for intentional closure and welcome, appreciation notes for the outgoing TA and incoming TA, reflective emails or gratitude rounds to honour contributions and build continuity
- The backstopping co-lead and outgoing TA should hold a learning debrief with the GPT inclusive of the grantee partner, and a separate reflection at the LPT to discuss what this transition teaches about shared accountability and feminist practice in technical support.
- The incoming TA is encouraged to step in with humility, collaboration, shared power and curiosity, ready to learn, listen and co-create.

Monitor and support post transition

- The co-leads should schedule a check-in with the incoming TA (after two to four weeks) to assess how the transition is going and whether partners need additional support.
- The co-leads should document lessons learned from the process to strengthen future transitions.

Step by step transition process

In an ideal situation, the following step-by-step process would apply:

- 1) Outgoing TA notifies GPT and grantee partners of the transition and timeline one to two months in advance.
- 2) Outgoing TA, incoming TA and backstopping co-lead agree on a transition plan detailing who communicates what, when and how.
- 3) Outgoing TA prepares a handover package including final RfP package, project status, milestones and upcoming deliverables, key partners and contact points, lessons learned, challenges and recommendations. All key documents (meeting notes, workplans, reports, correspondence) are archived in shared folders for continuity.
- 4) Incoming TA reads the RfP package and all the key documents.
- 5) Incoming TA meets with the outgoing TA/backstopping co-lead for any questions and discussions.
- 6) Outgoing TA introduces the incoming TA early to partners through GPT meetings, joint emails or short sessions.
- 7) Joint handover meeting with grantee partners and research teams organised to align expectations



and ensure smooth transition.

- 8) Backstopping co-lead facilitates a closure and welcome moment (e.g. appreciation notes, reflection space) to honour contributions.
- 9) A learning debrief is held with GPT and grantee partners to reflect on transition lessons and shared accountability if possible
- 10) Two to four weeks post-handover, co-leads check in with the incoming TA and partners to review progress and identify support needs.

Tips for co-leads to manage an abrupt TA exit

Practical tips for back stopping co-leads to effectively manage an abrupt exit of a TA while ensuring continuity, trust and collaboration across teams.

Communicate transparently in a timely manner

- Inform the LPT and GPT including the project partner, research team and other TAs. Frame the departure honestly but constructively (e.g. X has moved on to new opportunities; we are putting in place measures to ensure continued support).
- Avoid sharing unnecessary details; focus on continuity and reassurance.

Stabilise relationships and maintain confidence

- Reach out to the grantee partner to acknowledge the transition and reaffirm ongoing support.
- Emphasise that the partnership and learning processes remain on track.
- Offer additional check-ins to sustain trust and smooth the transition.

Ensure knowledge continuity

- Liaise with the PGC to request the departing TA hands over key documents such as current TA/ capacity strengthening plans, progress notes/reports, partner-specific strategies, challenges and pending actions.
- Upload all the grantee partner related TA key documents in an accessible shared folder or repository. An IRC box folder is preferred.
- If possible, hold a handover meeting with outgoing TA, the grantee partner, and the incoming or interim TA.

Redistribute responsibilities thoughtfully

- Assess which tasks are urgent or ongoing and provide clarity on what you can temporarily support.
- Coordinate with PGC and TAG to ensure coverage without overburdening them.
- Clearly define who will be the interim point of contact for partners and researchers.

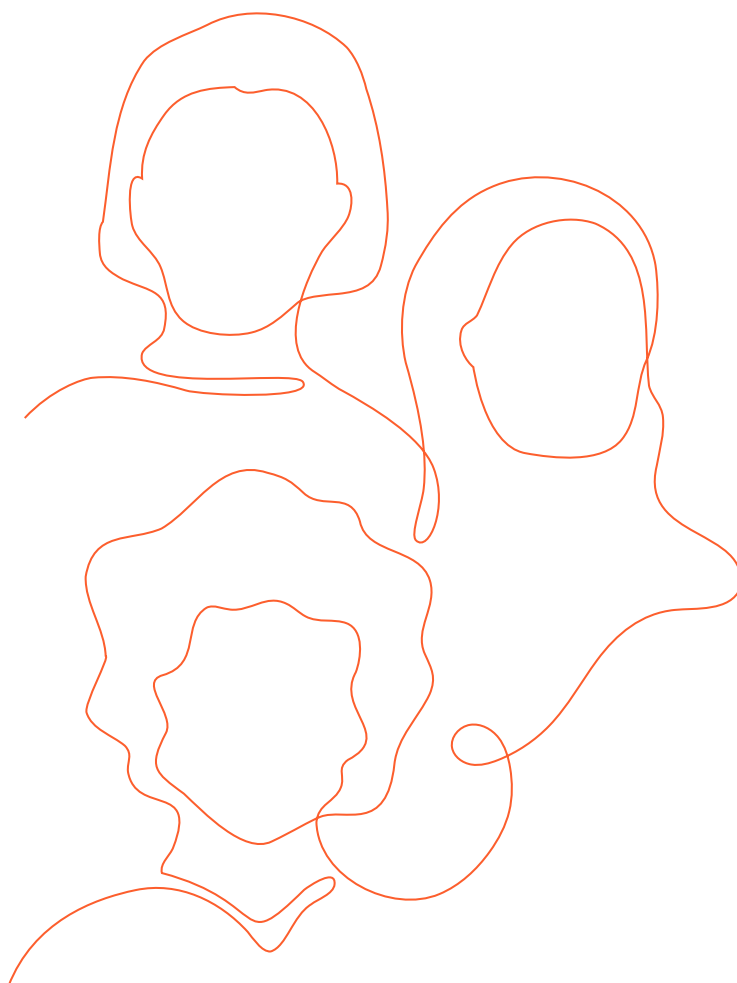


Strengthen communication loops

- Keep the research team informed about the transition and any expected work realignment.
- Use the regular GPT meetings to monitor follow-up and ensure continuity.
- Encourage joint troubleshooting across the GPT.

Embed care and support

- Recognise that abrupt transitions can cause emotional strain on the team and partners and even the best transitions can raise feelings of anxiety or uncertainty.
- Create space for the GPT to process the change and reaffirm collective commitment.
- Reinforce principles of care, transparency and shared accountability.





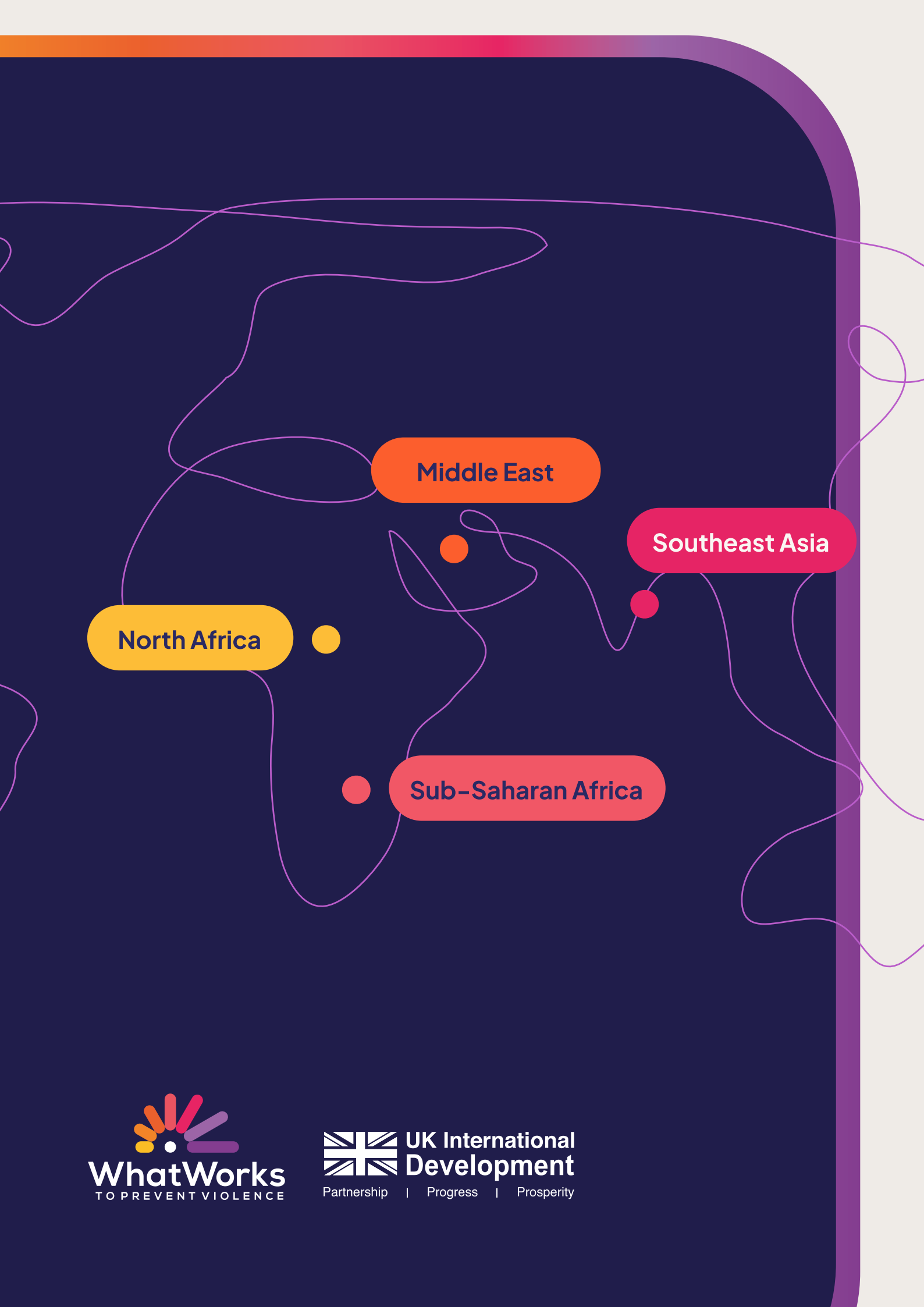
List of Tools and Authors

Tool		Developed by
Tool 1	TA Generic Job Description	Adaptation of the ToR for the What Works II TAs employed by CARE
Tool 2	Partnership Tips for TAs	Alice Kerr-Wilson based on feedback from TAs in the What Works II LPT
Tool 3	Guidance on Co-Design Process	Sarah Homan, Alice Kerr-Wilson, Shanaaz Mathews, Tina Musuya, Teresa Nunes, Chelsea Ullman, Mary Waithera
Tool 4	Top Tips for TAs Involved in Co-Design	Alice Kerr-Wilson based on feedback from TAs in the What Works II LPT
Tool 5	Practical Questions to Develop a ToC and Design a VAWG Prevention Intervention	Petronille Geara
Tool 6	Stakeholder Analysis	
Tool 7	Questions to Guide Discussion on Risks	
Tool 8	Defining Roles and Responsibilities	
Tool 9	Co-Design Workshop Report Template	Sophie Namy
Tool 10	Guidance on Integrating Self- and Collective Care	
Tool 11	Decision-Making Tool for Assessing the Technical Support Package for Grantee Partners	
Tool 12	Grantee Partner Technical Support Approach Template	Petronille Geara
Tool 13	Documentation of Adaptations of VAWG Models and Approaches	Alice Kerr-Wilson, Petronille Geara, Tina Musuya
Tool 14	Log for technical support	Petronille Geara
Tool 15	Guidance for TAs Engaging in the GPT Meeting	Tina Musuya
Tool 16	Guidance for Handling Disclosures	Petronille Geara
Tool 17	TA Grantee Partner Visit Report Template	Petronille Geara
Tool 18	Guidance on Collaboration Between TAs and Originators Working on the Same Project	Tina Musuya
Tool 19	Guidance for TAs to Support Grantee Partners' Ethical Closure	Petronille Geara
Tool 20	Practice-Based Learning Report/Brief	Petronille Geara
Tool 21	Guidance for Backstopping Support for TAs	Alice Kerr-Wilson
Tool 22	Guidance for Supporting Transition of TAs in VAWG Prevention Projects	Tina Musuya



References and Inspiration

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