
Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium

Gender-Based Violence Global Technical Support Project

JSI Research & Training Institute

Newsletter

Human Resources: Part II

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Contact email: gbvresources@jsi.com
Web site: www.rhrc.org

About the GBV Newsletter

There are many similar issues and challenges that GBV program managers and staff face every day – regardless of their geographical location or organizational affiliation. *The GBV Newsletter* provides a forum for discussion as well as information about resources, news, and other items of interest. Periodically, *The GBV Newsletter* contains articles exploring specific issues to discuss, offers concrete strategies and ideas for resolving them, and encourages creative problem-solving and ongoing dialogue.

This newsletter includes the second article in a two-part series that explores human resource issues specific to humanitarian aid programs addressing gender-based violence in populations affected by armed conflict.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, and submissions to *The GBV Newsletter*. Email us at gbvresources@jsi.com

Issues and Notes from the Field

I am facing a major problem.... The [GBV community committee] members cite frustrations from other section and block leaders because they regard the committee as home breakers, etc. Any advice on how to approach this? -June Munala, protection, Dadaab Refugee Camps, Kenya

One way to approach this is to strengthen the GBV committee members' skills in behavior change communication and community development approaches. The problem June describes is a frequent occurrence in GBV programs. Community-based GBV committees see the gender and power issues clearly, are passionate in their beliefs (which are often contrary to the majority beliefs in the society), and these committee members are far ahead of their fellow community members in terms of gender awareness and willingness to change. Often, these GBV committees are the people in the community who push for change in the culture - and as such, they can experience hostility and sometimes retaliation. They are pushing for change, and people will push back. Some of those problems could be minimized if committee members are more skilled in community development and participation and understand more thoroughly the concepts of behavior change. The homebreaking accusation is a common one, too. Again, it is a few people zealously guarding "the norm" because they don't understand or believe that the norm (gender discrimination, acts of gender-based violence) is life threatening – or at least harmful - for many. In short, these committees need to work smarter (not necessarily harder) to do their work within the community, working carefully and methodically toward behavior change. And always remember that change does not occur overnight. Gender beliefs and cultural norms are long standing. It takes time.

To Our Readers: Are community-based GBV committees in your setting facing similar negative reactions and misunderstanding in the community? Or is there another challenge you are facing that you would like to share with others? Write to us at gbvresources@jsi.com. This space is for you to share your experiences, challenges, and successes.

GBV Resource People

There is an ongoing need for knowledgeable and capable GBV resource people who can work as short- or long-term GBV consultants or program managers in populations affected by armed conflict. The GBV Global Technical Support Project receives requests for information from organizations that need these specialists. We are in regular contact with an informal network of GBV “experts” and keep a few CVs on file that we occasionally send to organizations requesting help finding someone with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for this work. If you are interested and would like us to have your CV to possibly send to interested organizations looking for staff, send your CV to gbvresources@jsi.com. Please note that we are not an employment service, not a referral service, and we have no job openings. Rather, this is an attempt to strengthen GBV programming by supporting organizations in finding properly qualified staff.

Announcements and Resources

NEW WEB SITE AND EMAIL LIST: Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI)

The SVRI is a project aiming to create a network of experienced and committed researchers, policy makers, activists and donors who will work together to ensure that the many aspects of sexual violence are addressed. Activities include an interactive website on sexual violence research and an email discussion group. The SVRI email discussion group is a forum where knowledge, experience and action about sexual violence can be discussed and shared. . The SVRI list is a moderated global forum. In addition to sharing information about the SVRI and its work as well as the work of others, we engage in group discussions around specific issues relating to sexual violence research. SVRI is a global initiative, with members from around the world (over 40 countries at last count), and currently hosted at World Health Organization (WHO). For more information and to join the Sexual Violence Research Initiative:

Email svrimail@who.int Web site <http://www.who.int/gender/violence/sexviolresearch/en/>

NEW TRAINING RESOURCE: *Training Manual: Interagency & Multisectoral Prevention and Response to GBV in Populations Affected by Armed Conflict (draft)*

A step-by-step facilitator’s guide for conducting GBV planning and training workshops. The purpose of the workshop is to build the capacity of an interagency, multisectoral team to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in conflict-affected populations. The workshop builds individual knowledge, understanding and skills while building a sense of teamwork and collaboration. From the GBV Global Technical Support Project, this manual is a result of five years experience conducting, testing, and revising workshops and seminars for planning GBV interventions in field settings around the world. This training manual is presented as a draft for use in the field. Modules will be revised, and new modules added to the curriculum in the final version. Will be available online at www.rhrc.org or write to gbvresources@jsi.com

NEW HEALTH PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE: *Improving the Health Sector Response to Gender-Based Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals in Developing Countries*

This manual is based on the experiences of an International Planned Parenthood initiative to integrate services for survivors of gender-based violence into reproductive health programs. It provides tools and guidelines for program managers working in developing countries addressing several topics, including: *planning a program *implementing routine screening *providing specialized and emergency services *building reference networks, etc. It also includes practical tools to assess provider attitudes to gender-based violence, establish support groups, monitor the quality of care, and more. PDF file available at IPPF/WHO website http://www.ippfwhr.org/publications/publication_detail_e.asp?PubID=63 from where you may also request a CD-ROM copy.

NOTE: Materials listed in this section are available as indicated. If you have trouble downloading or accessing web sites, we can help you to obtain the document. Email us at gbvresources@jsi.com

Human Resources, Part II

Training, Supervising, and Supporting GBV Program Staff

By Lisa Ehrlich, Martha Saldinger, Beth Vann

Since the early 1990's, humanitarian actors have increasingly sought to address gender-based violence through a variety of programs and activities in displaced settings worldwide. One major challenge to these humanitarian efforts is finding and keeping appropriate human resources to do the work. Good managers and leaders are needed to develop GBV programs and activities in field sites. Staff and volunteers are needed to provide direct services to survivors and to work with communities on prevention. These staff members are usually national or refugee staff and may be community workers, GBV counselors, nurses, midwives, legal advisors, focal points, or other service providers. Or, they may be members of a community-based GBV committee working on prevention and awareness-raising. Whether paid in cash or in kind, GBV staff need training, supervision, and support so that they can be successful in providing good quality services that support the goals and objectives of the program.

Part One of this article explored issues related to finding and keeping GBV program managers (see GBV Newsletter 2004:3, June 2004). Part Two describes finding, training, supervising, and supporting GBV staff to enable their success.

There are several steps involved in managing human resources in any program. These include:

- Develop useful job descriptions and identify skills needed to do the work
- Recruit and hire qualified staff
- Conduct new employee orientation
- Evaluate training needs and provide training
- Supervise staff

The following is a brief description of each of these steps. The footnotes and resources section in this article describe some materials available that can provide more details, guidance, tools, and concrete suggestions for accomplishing each step.

Develop job descriptions

Job descriptions are written documents that clarify job duties, responsibilities, and limitations. A carefully developed job description should provide clear guidance to staff about what they are expected to do. They are initially important because they attract potential employees and help you to select qualified staff that will fulfill the job needs. Once an employee is hired, job descriptions continue to be important by guiding the employee's work and evaluating her/his performance.

To develop a job description, you will need to clearly identify in writing what a staff person will be expected to do in the position. You should also include information about working conditions, equipment used, knowledge, skills, and attitude needed, and relationships with other positions.¹ The employee's responsibilities can be divided into essential functions/major responsibilities and secondary functions², which will help the employee prioritize work activities and meet the manager's expectations. ***A well-written job description clearly articulates the ways in which the staff member will be expected to contribute to achieving the overall objectives of the program.***

Developing job descriptions for service providers and community workers in addressing GBV requires a heightened sensitivity to the potential dangers and the appropriate limitations of the scope of work. Job descriptions can explicitly describe the limitations in the scope of work, and the organization's standard operating procedures should support those limits. For example, job descriptions may clarify the staff member's degree of involvement in particularly sensitive situations such as irate and abusive partners accosting staff working with survivors, community leaders spreading false information, or other dangerous or troubling scenarios that may arise. Limits of authority and referral mechanisms should also be clearly stated in the position description.

If a program is already operating, reviewing current job descriptions is a good starting point. The current job description can be compared with information from staff about their actual work, because existing job descriptions and actual duties and priorities may not be the same. One way to identify the accuracy and utility of an existing job description is to survey current staff, soliciting information about major job responsibilities in order of time devoted to each one.

Managers also have a responsibility to consider the larger picture of how any job fits into an entire program and organizational structure, which should be diagrammed on an organizational chart.

¹ Heathfield, Susan. *Job Descriptions: Why Effective Job Descriptions Make Good Business Sense*. Available online at <http://humanresources.about.com/library/weekly/aa080402a.htm>

² Pacific University Job Description Development Guidelines at: www.pacificu.edu/offices/hr/forms/pdfs/Employment/JOBDESCRIPTIONDEVELOPMENTGUIDELINES.pdf

After job duties, responsibilities, and limitations are well defined, the skills, abilities, and personal qualities needed to do the work will be clearer. Good communication and appropriate language skills will be required for anyone working in a GBV program. For jobs that involve working with survivors, the community, or other organizations in the setting, personal qualities will be important. Some examples include having a personal commitment to gender equality; reliability; trustworthiness; honesty and integrity. Technical skills may be needed, although you may need to build those skills through training (discussed below) after staff are hired. Some examples of technical knowledge and skills are: knowledge about gender-based violence, its causes and survivor needs; listening and interviewing skills; training and community development; behavior change communication; knowledge of relevant laws, procedures, and policies.

It is important to identify knowledge and skills needed so that you have a clear idea of what you are looking for when recruiting staff and/or on what you need to train newly hired staff members who lack the needed skills.

Recruit and hire qualified staff

The success of a GBV program depends largely on the trust of the community. Recruiting staff is a highly visible activity and an important opportunity to demonstrate your organization's and program's transparency, fairness, and general trustworthiness. Be sure to make the recruitment process as open and fair as possible. Involve community leaders in the process, but do not allow leadership politics to influence your decisions. Make sure that all community members have access to recruitment information and have the opportunity to apply for the position.

Consider using objective measures, such as checklists, for screening job applicants. This will enable you to select the most qualified for interviews. When interviewing candidates, it is useful to use a standard set of questions for all interviewees. This will enhance your ability to make a fair comparison among applicants.

Get at least two personal references from each candidate, and contact those references. Many GBV programs also consult with a small committee of trusted community members when selecting staff from among the refugee population. This will increase the chance that the staff you select are "acceptable" to the community. If the community does not approve of your selections, staff will have difficulty being successful in their work.

Another important issue in recruiting and selecting staff involves the question of literacy and numeracy. Reading, writing, and simple math skills will be necessary for many jobs in GBV programs. This is a gender issue, and often presents a special challenge to programs operating in settings with low literacy rates among females. You may find highly qualified and desirable candidates with very low reading skills. One solution is to offer literacy and numeracy training for new staff. Although this takes time and resources, the long term benefits will probably outweigh the shorter term costs.

Conduct new employee orientation

When staff are selected, one of the first tasks is to establish orientation and training schedules.

New employee orientation includes information about the organization's culture, mission, approach, and operating procedures. Orientation should also build new employees' understanding about the program's goals, objectives, policies, guiding principles and the performance standards drawn from them. It should cover all activities, including reporting and referral procedures established by the interagency GBV team.³

It is excellent practice to require all staff (including volunteers) to agree to codes of conduct that include confidentiality oaths and other agreements⁴.

Evaluate training needs and provide training

After the orientation, most GBV staff will require technical training. During the recruitment and orientation phases, you will have already gathered background information about the new staff and identified some of their existing knowledge, skills, and abilities. Existing knowledge and skills should be compared to the knowledge, skills, and abilities already clarified when job descriptions were written. This comparison will enable you to establish a list of training topics and concrete objectives for training. Then, you can develop a training plan and schedule. There is at least one guide readily accessible that may help you in developing your training objectives and plan.⁵

Some types of training you may offer are incremental and refresher training. Incremental training consists of modules that build on the knowledge/skills gained in earlier modules. You may spread out incremental training over time, having the staff take the first module now and other modules over time as they increase their job responsibilities and require additional skills and knowledge covered in later modules. Refresher training is meant to repeat material taught in earlier trainings. This type of training reinforces important concepts and skills that are integral to the work. It can also help to standardize the approach taken by staff members in different field locations.

Supervise staff

Supervising staff and volunteers involves giving ongoing support and feedback to maximize performance and address any problems. This is very challenging in humanitarian and emergency settings where managers are busy and staff work in remote field sites. Nevertheless, it is crucial for managers to remember that working on GBV is stressful, emotional, and can be very frustrating because few cases are ever fully "resolved". This is very difficult for most people to live with on a daily basis. Without active support and supervision, staff burnout and secondary trauma emerge, and staff may begin to involve themselves in unsafe situations with survivors and perpetrators. Supervising and supporting staff, live and in person, is an essential function of the work of the program manager.

³ Vann, Beth. *Gender-Based Violence: Emerging Issues in Programs Serving Displaced Populations*, RHRC Consortium (2002)

⁴ *Gender-Based Violence Tools Manual for Assessment, Program Design Monitoring and Evaluation*, RHRC Consortium (2004)

⁵ Vann, Beth. *Gender-Based Violence: Emerging Issues in Programs Serving Displaced Populations*, RHRC Consortium (2002). Table 6-1. Guide for Training and Capacity Building with GBV Program Staff, pp 41-44.

Training sessions, policies, instructions, and written procedures are never enough when managing staff. You will also need to be an active supervisor and have regular, quality personal contact with your staff. Some ways to do this are through giving constructive feedback, frequently monitoring the needs of your staff for additional training, providing on-the-job training, and addressing staff questions and concerns. Opportunities for these supervisory activities are staff meetings, observations and field visits, one-on-one meetings, and group supervision.

Discussions and debriefing sessions after particularly difficult incidents or situations are excellent opportunities to support and supervise staff. Staff can discuss frustrations and problem-solve how to deal with such situations more effectively in the future.

One supervisory issue that most people find extremely challenging is addressing performance problems. Avoiding the problem is one of the most common pitfalls for supervisors. If, however, performance problems are not properly addressed and questioned, they cannot be resolved and this will affect the program's outcomes. There are ways to confront problems and require staff performance changes without alienating the staff member. Sometimes talking about the problem will reveal needs for training or other support. When addressing staff problems, remember to maintain confidentiality and respect for the person, and to document your discussions and actions.

Positive feedback to individual staff members should be given frequently. It is important that the manager model positive behavior. Use concrete language to describe the behavior or attitude demonstrated by the staff member, with positive words to communicate praise, approval, and the individual's important contribution to the success of the program. For example, "When you noticed that the woman was upset during the meeting, it was great that you spoke with her and offered support in private. You were very sensitive to her needs, and that is exactly what we want to be doing in our work." Clear, believable, and concrete praise and complimentary statements about an individual's work performance will boost staff morale and confidence, helping to build a positive, collaborative team.

Summary

It can be argued that human resources are "the GBV program". With skilled, knowledgeable, capable staff that are well supported by the manager and the organization, a GBV program can achieve excellent results. Investing time, energy, and resources in staff and volunteers is the best investment that can be made in the GBV program.

Staff Development Resources

The following is a list of some resources that can be useful specifically for GBV staff development. There are many more training and development materials available; they are too numerous to list here. The GBV Global Technical Support Project maintains a resource center to assist field programs with information, reference, and support. Copies of some of the materials listed here, and other resources, can be obtained through the resource desk. Email: gbvresources@jsi.com.

Staffing and Supervision

Perlmutter, F., Bailey, Netting. *Managing Human Resources in the Human Services: Supervisory Challenges* (Oxford Press) 2001.

Considered by some social workers to be an authoritative source for supervision-related management in social services programs.

Order at: <http://www.oup.co.uk/isbn/0-19-513707-8>

Weinbach, R., *The Social Worker as Manager: A practical guide to success, 4th Edition* (Allyn and Bacon) 2003.

Overview of supervision and management in the profession of social work, with practice-based guidance and examples.

Staff Training

The Oxfam Gender Training Manual, Suzanne Williams, Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994.

Comprehensive training manual, with workshops, exercises, and handouts on a variety of gender topics ranging from basic information to gender analysis for program developing. Workshops for groups of men, women, and mixed groups.

Note: Oxfam has local distributors in many countries. To find out the best location to purchase this training manual:

Oxfam Publishing

274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ England

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 312255

Fax: +44 (0) 1865 312393

Email: publish@oxfam.org.uk

Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium Web Site

The RHRC Consortium Web site includes a GBV bibliography with links to various sites and training resources by sector and topic.

www.rhrc.org

Training Works!: what you need to know about managing, designing, delivering, and evaluating group-based training, JHPIEGO, 2002.

This handbook summarizes the tasks that should be completed at each stage of staff training to ensure an effective training course.

JHPIEGO

Brown's Wharf

1615 Thames Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21231-3492, USA

Tel. 1-410-537-1800

Email: info@jhpiego.net

Download at: <http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/english/6read/6training/Tngworks/index.htm>

Guides & Manuals - GBV Programs in Populations Affected by Armed Conflict

Clinical Management of Survivors of Rape, WHO and UNHCR, 2002.

A step-by-step guide to the development of health care protocols for use in refugee and IDP situations. In revision, anticipated publication 2004.

Publication number: WHO/RHR/02.08

UNHCR DOS

94 rue Montbrillant

Geneva 1202 Switzerland
Email: bailey@unhcr.ch
Also available through UNHCR offices world wide
Internet download: www.rhrc.org;

If Not Now, When? Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Refugee, Internally Displaced, Post-Conflict Settings. Jeanne Ward, Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (2002).
An overview of the state of programming to address GBV in conflict-affected settings. Includes country profiles and recommendations for action to strengthen action in field sites.

RHRC Consortium
Available for download: www.rhrc.org

Gender-Based Violence: Emerging Issues in Programs Serving Displaced Population. Beth Vann, Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (2002).
Discussion, analysis, and recommended solutions for some of the key issues and challenges in developing and implementing programs to address gender-based violence in populations affected by armed conflict. Includes chapters specifically addressing human resources in GBV programs.

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Gender-Based Violence Tools Manual for Assessment, Program Design Monitoring and Evaluation, Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (2004).
Forms, tools, and instructions for assessment and monitoring/evaluation of GBV programs. Includes situation analysis, prevalence survey, focus groups, sample staff recruitment guides and job descriptions, Incident Report Form, terms and definitions, M&E tracking sheets, and report formats. CD-ROM or hard copy.

RHRC c/o Women's Commission
122 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10168 USA
Is available for internet download: www.rhrc.org;

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response, UNHCR, 2003.
This updated version of the 1995 Guidelines includes detailed guidance for developing community-based, multisectoral, and interagency prevention and response plans. It describes the minimum recommended standards for survivor assistance services and prevention activities. It includes tools to conduct situation analyses, monitoring and evaluation indicators, and an Incident Report Form recommended for use world wide.

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